



Ontario Medical Students Association (OMSA)

Bylaws

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Bylaws of the Ontario Medical Students Association

OMSA Council Preamble

Ontario Medical Students Association (OMSA) was established in 1974 by students who saw a need for official representation of medical students at a provincial level within the Ontario Medical Association (OMA). Since its inception, OMSA has been the representative body of medical students to the OMA and is currently the third-largest section with over 3,500 official members. OMSA represents students from the six medical schools of Ontario: the University of Ottawa, Queen's University, the Temerty Faculty of Medicine (University of Toronto), Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine (McMaster University), Schulich School of Medicine (Western University), and Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) University. OMSA is a student-led organization dedicated to developing and implementing projects to benefit the needs and interests of Ontario's medical students, as well as advocating at the provincial level on behalf of students. OMSA is headed by the OMSA Council who works to organize and execute OMSA initiatives with the help of OMSA committees.

OMSA hosts or assists with several events throughout the school year to support Ontario's medical students, including the Ontario Medical Student Weekend (OMSW), the OMA General Council (GC) Student Ambassador Program, the OMSA Wellness/Winter Retreat, the OMSA Leadership Summit, the Ontario Student Medical Education Research Conference (OSMERC), the provincial Day of Action, and the EDID Conference. Additionally, OMSA provides other beneficial services to our members, such as the annual equipment sale, conference grants, innovator grants, mentorship programming, and clerkship kits.

OMSA advocates for medical students on several platforms. Unless otherwise decided by the OMSA Council, the President will be the Executive member who will observe the OMA Board of Directors and act as the Section's delegate to the OMA's Priority and Leadership Group (PLG). Members of the Executive Board can apply to sit on OMA Panels and Working Groups, and participate in meetings of the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine (COFM), the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO), and the Professional Association of Residents of Ontario (PARO), when invited to do so.

ARTICLE 1. DEFINITIONS

“OMSA” or “the Association” refers to the Ontario Medical Students Association; “OMA” refers to the Ontario Medical Association.

“General Members” refers to any medical student enrolled in an Ontario medical school.

“OMSA Council” or “Council” or “Council members” refers to the OMSA Executive Board plus all VP Externals from each Ontario medical school .

“OMSA Executive Board” or “Executive Board” or “Executives” refers to the Vice Presidents, the President, and the President-Elect of the Association .

“Subsection” refers to any of the six subsections of OMSA, defined as the students at each of the six Ontario medical schools.

“VP External” refers to the two designated representatives from each Ontario medical school. These representatives are usually, but not exclusively, the school’s locally elected VP Externals.

“Chair of the Council” is a non-voting member of Council; this position is to be filled by the OMSA President-Elect.

“Main motion” is a proposal for the Council to take a certain action, or to express itself as holding certain views.

“OMA Member Honoraria and Expense Claim form” is the annual form provided by the OMA which outlines the process by which members may claim honoraria and expenses.

“Meeting entitlements” are the maximum entitlements for meetings in any calendar year as distributed by the OMA to each section, as outlined by the OMA financial policy.

ARTICLE 2. OVERVIEW OF OMSA COUNCIL

2.1 Composition

The composition of the Executive Board is described in the OMSA Constitution, Sections 5 and 6.

2.2 OMSA Council Member Duties

The Executives and their duties are as follows:

a) President

- 1) Act as a ex-officio member of all committees
- 2) Represent and speak for the medical students of Ontario represented by OMSA
- 3) Have the power to delegate responsibilities to other OMSA Executives
- 4) Maintain regular communication with the OMA Board via email, teleconferencing, and board meetings attendance whenever possible
- 5) Oversee all OMSA projects and events
- 6) Hold co-signing authority on all financial transactions with the VP Finance
- 7) Along with the President-Elect, organize the annual OMSA Annual General Meeting and Leadership Summit
- 8) Oversee and implement all strategic plans and priorities
- 9) Regularly communicate with CFMS, PARO and other relevant organizations
- 10) Meet regularly with the President-Elect to ensure they are informed on all

- OMSA events, decisions, and strategic discussions
- 11) Act as Chair of the OMA Section of Medical Students
 - 12) Act as the delegate to the OMA Priority and Leadership Group on behalf of the OMA Section of Medical Students

b) President-Elect

- 1) Fulfill the same duties of the President and any additional duties as delegated by the President
- 2) Act as President-Elect for one year, before transitioning into the President role
- 3) Act as the Chair of the OMSA Council, including calling, setting the agenda for, and leading all meetings of the Council
- 4) Oversee the Ambassador Program
- 5) Act as Chief Electoral Officer
- 6) Act as the alternate delegate to the OMA Priority and Leadership Group on behalf of the OMA Section of Medical Students
- 7) Shall not hold voting power on any executive and council motion
- 8) Shall not have signing authority on any OMSA financial transactions
- 9) Meet regularly with the President to ensure they are informed on all events, discussions, and strategic discussions

c) Vice President of Student Affairs

- 1) Oversee the annual Wellness/Winter retreat, designed to promote learner wellness and student connection
- 2) Oversee the mentorship program
- 3) Coordinate the Clerkship Kits
- 4) Oversee all Student Affairs portfolio committees (Mentorship, WEPS, Wellness/Winter Retreat and Mental Health Research)

d) Vice President of Advocacy

- 1) Direct the advocacy activities of the Association
- 2) Co-ordinate year-round advocacy efforts to ensure a strong and uniform voice on behalf of medical students in Ontario. This includes, but is not limited to, facilitating:
 - a) Letter-writing to MPPs
 - b) Publishing opinion and editorial articles
 - c) Social media presence on issues important to medical students
 - d) Writing of position papers
- 3) Manage strategic partnerships and collaborations with external organizations
- 4) Coordinate OMSA's provincial Day of Action
- 5) Develop support and resources for medical students in Ontario to be advocates
- 6) Liaise with the Public Relations and Government Relations staff at the OMA to support the advocacy efforts of the Association
- 7) Oversee all Advocacy portfolio committees

e) Vice President of Public Relations

- 1) Plan and direct a general communications strategy for the Association

- 2) Maintain the Association's website
- 3) Maintain the Executive email accounts of the Association, ensuring that privacy and confidentiality of internal communications are maintained
- 4) Maintain the Association's social media accounts including, but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter
- 5) Prepare the OMSA communiqué and ensure its timely release
- 6) Create and be responsible for an OMSA banner, OMSA paraphernalia, and OMSA brochures
- 7) Record the minutes of all Council meetings and Executive Board meetings
Communicate and distribute minutes of all Council meetings to the head office of the OMA for insertion into the minute books provided for this purpose and for appropriate distribution as well as to all OMSA general members
- 8) Ensure materials meet OMSA's bilingualism standards
- 9) Oversee all Public Relations portfolio committees
- 10) Act as Secretary of the OMA Section of Medical Students

f) Vice President of Education

- 1) Direct the educational activities of the organization and advocate for students in all aspects of medical education
- 2) Represent the Association on external committees and at forums primarily concerned with education
- 3) Oversee the Medical Student Education Research Grants Program
- 4) Develop and maintain education modules and documents in collaboration with external partners on topics of interest to students, especially those which are not directly covered in undergraduate medical education, including, but not limited to:
 - a) Incoming Student Handbook
 - b) OMSA Interest Group Database
 - c) Clerkship Resources
 - d) Alternative and Adjunct Careers Guide
- 5) Work with all Vice Presidents on education initiatives within their portfolios including, but not limited to, the Vice President of Advocacy with position papers and modules
- 6) Oversee the Ontario Student Medical Education Research Conference
- 7) Oversee all Education portfolio committees (Education Services, OSMERC, MSERG and Medical Education Policy)

g) Vice President of Operations

- 1) Archive all relevant documentation of all Council activities
- 2) Maintain the OMSA Constitution and Bylaws
- 3) Update the History of OMSA document annually
- 4) Update the OMSA Council Handbook annually
- 5) Facilitate the hiring process for all OMSA committees
- 6) Oversee the internal functions of the council
- 7) Conduct midterm and final evaluations of council members and council functioning based on long-term strategic planning

- 8) Provide oversight and support to organizers of the Ontario Medical Students Weekend (OMSW), and maintain up-to-date transition documents, in conjunction with the VP Finance
- 9) In conjunction with the VP Finance, President and President-Elect, offer support for the annual Leadership Summit
- 10) Oversee the Governance Committee

h) Vice President of Finance

- 1) Have co-signing authority with the President
- 2) Maintain accounting records and provide quarterly financial updates to the executive
- 3) Submit a written year-end report and present a projected budget for the following year to the all attendees of the Annual General Meeting, to be approved by the outgoing Council
- 4) Oversee all grants distributed by OMSA
- 5) Organize, develop, and oversee all contracts, partnerships, sponsorships, and agreements that relate to the financial wellbeing of the organization or its members, including, but not limited to:
 - a) Partnerships and agreements relating to the sale and/or distribution of medical school equipment,
 - b) Agreements for the purposes of establishing or maintaining organizational financial stability
 - c) Sponsorships for the purposes of funding specific OMSA run events
- 6) In conjunction with President and President-Elect, liaise with sponsors to ensure productive working relationships
- 7) Oversee event and initiative specific budgets associated with various OMSA portfolios in collaboration with the associated Vice President
- 8) Chair the Grants and Awards Committee
- 9) Provide oversight and support to organizers of the Ontario Medical Students Weekend (OMSW), and maintain up to date transition documents, in conjunction with the VP Operations
- 10) Act as Treasurer of the OMA Section of Medical Students

i) Vice President of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization (EDID)

- 1) Chair the Ontario VP EDID roundtable and support all local member school VP EDIs in their roles
- 2) Organize anti-oppression training for all OMSA Council members in conjunction with the VP Operations
- 3) Assist VP Operations with committee member selection processes and performance reviews
- 4) Assist VP Finance with budget review and grant distribution
- 5) Oversee the Internal EDID Committee, External EDID Committee, and the Northern Ontario and Rural Medicine (NORM) Committee.

j) The Vice Presidents of External Affairs (“VP External”) shall:

- 1) Send an updated school report to the Council prior to each Council meeting.
- 2) Work with VP Externals from other schools to share ideas and problem solve common issues
- 3) Represent their school's interests at all Council meetings
- 4) Work with the remaining OMSA Council to execute OMSA services and events

2.3 Council Member Expectations

OMSA Council members shall attend OMSA meetings having read the agenda and all attached material, which will be shared a minimum of five days prior to the meeting and be prepared to engage in discussion.

Each pair of VP Externals and each Executive Board member shall submit a written report to the Chair of the Council one week prior to each OMSA meeting. These reports shall highlight all new or developing activities or news from each portfolio.

Each Vice President shall oversee the committee(s) that lie within their portfolio and shall be responsible for regularly liaising the activities of the committee(s) to Council.

OMSA Council members are expected to be present at all OMSA meetings and events, unless there is a legitimate conflict that meets the criteria herein. Council members must attend at least 2/3rds of a meeting in order to be considered present.

If an OMSA Council member is unable to attend an OMSA meeting or will be late, they shall notify the Chair of Council (OMSA President-Elect) in writing 48 hours prior to the meeting, with justification.

In the event that a Council member is absent from a meeting or event due to unforeseen reasons, a follow-up regarding the absence shall be initiated by the member with the President and President-Elect, in writing. The member shall endeavour to fulfill their duties despite this absence.

The following reasons are considered justifiable for an absence:

- a) Any scheduled conflict with an academic requirement including, but not limited to, classes, exams, academic conferences, clerkship rotations, and clerkship electives.
- b) Illness
- c) Extenuating circumstances, subject to the approval of the President and President-Elect)
- d) Any alternative reason, subject to the approval of the President and President-Elect)

If a member is not fulfilling their duties as stated, they may be subject to review for removal as per article 2.4.

2.4 OMSA Council Member Removal

The Council may vote by a 2/3 majority to expel a member if that said member is acting in one or all of the following:

- a) Not fulfilling their duties as stated by OMSA's Bylaws and Constitution
- b) Is acting against the values of the Association as deemed by at least 2 members of OMSA Council

The member subject to removal will be notified regarding the motion by the President at least ten days before the next council meeting. The member that is subject to removal will be given an opportunity to address Council prior to a vote on the motion..

The motion to remove a council member will be held in camera. Voting on the motion shall be done by secret ballot. The results will be circulated to Council and to the member for review during the meeting.

If a member either resigns or is removed from OMSA council, the position shall be declared an "Unfilled Position" and shall be subject to the Elections policy. If the position is a VP External, the respective host school will be responsible for producing a new school representative to OMSA Council.

2.5 Vacant OMSA Executive Board Positions

Should a position on the Executive Board become vacant, the position will automatically be considered an "Unfilled Position" and the selection process will immediately commence in accordance with the Elections Policy.

The President may, at their discretion, postpone the commencement of the selection process for an Unfilled Position on the Executive Board until the next duly called Council Meeting.

Under extenuating circumstances, Council may decide, by 2/3rds majority, to conduct an internal elections process for a vacant position on the Executive Board. In this case, a call for nominations will only be distributed to OMSA Chairs and/or Committee Members and the process of selection will be at the discretion of the current Council..

ARTICLE 3. OMSA COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

3.1 OMSA Council Meetings

Seven meetings shall be held between September and May of each school year on dates agreed upon by Council members. Meeting dates shall be decided upon at the first Council meeting in September. Every effort should be made to set the meeting dates 60 days in advance of the meeting. Meetings should be scheduled approximately every six weeks during the academic school year.

All in-person meetings will be held in Toronto at the OMA offices. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings may also take place virtually.

3.2 OMSA Council Meeting Procedure

The President and the Chair of the Council will have the authority to interpret and apply Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

3.2.1 Agenda Items

The core agenda items shall include the following:

- a) Updates: opportunities for council members to provide updates on the work they are doing within their portfolio. These shall be written reports from each of the schools and the Vice Presidents as outlined in article 3.2.1
- b) Discussion Items: opportunities for council members to engage the rest of council for discussion and feedback
- c) Motions: opportunities for council members to vote on decisions pertaining to changes to programming, budget, or the Constitution

3.2.2 Voting

Voting shall proceed by a show of hands abstaining, in favour and against, unless a secret ballot is requested. Any Council member may request to vote on a motion by secret ballot. For non-unanimous motions, a simple majority is required. To call the question, make changes to the constitution or bylaws, create or change an Association position paper or policy paper, or to remove a council member, a 2/3 majority is required.

3.2.3 In camera

For discussions to which only the OMSA Council Members may be privy, any member of Council may motion for the meeting to go in camera.

The following situations are examples of those that may require a motion to be in camera:

- d) Discussion regarding OMSA's discretionary fund or budget
- e) Matters which are sensitive should not be disseminated to anyone other than the OMSA Council Members.

Any discussion which occurs in camera shall not be recorded in the official minutes but a separate minutes document may be written and distributed only to Council members.

Any discussion which occurs in camera shall not be discussed outside the setting where the discussion is held. In camera sessions are confidential.

ARTICLE 4. COMMITTEES

4.1 Committees

OMSA shall have different committees to undertake activities to further the vision, mission, and values of the organization while fulfilling the responsibilities assigned to them by Council. .

Committees may be established or dissolved at any time during the academic year.

4.2 Creation of committees

If any Council member wishes to create a new committee, they shall put forward a proposal, which includes a Terms of Reference, to the OMSA Council for approval.

4.3 Committee Chair

All committees shall be overseen by an OMSA Executive (Vice President), except under certain circumstances as agreed upon by the OMSA Council. These circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a) Committees that do not fall into the scope of one Vice President's portfolio
- b) Committees that require an exceptional time commitment
- c) Committees that are initiated by a non-Executive member of the OMSA Council

4.4 Terms of Reference

Each committee shall have an associated Terms of Reference. These Terms of Reference shall be updated at the start of each academic year by the Executive Board and approved by the President and President-Elect.

The Terms of Reference shall include but not be limited to the committee's:

- a) Chair name and council position
- b) Purpose and objectives
- c) Roles of committee members
- d) Approximate time commitment

Terms of Reference shall be made accessible to OMSA general members.

In addition to the Terms of Reference, each Committee Chair should strive to develop year goals and timelines within four weeks of committee hiring.

4.5 Membership

Each committee shall be made up of OMSA Council members and/or members of the medical student body at large.

Committee positions for the OMSA student body at large shall be filled through a standardized application process as outlined in the Hiring Policy

ARTICLE 5. REIMBURSEMENTS

OMSA Council members will be reimbursed for reasonable and approved expenses associated with Council business, either through the OMA or OMSA.

5.1 Monitoring Meeting entitlements

Working with the OMA as necessary, the VP Finance shall monitor and record expenses throughout the school year and provide regular updates to the President. In particular, the VP Finance will inform the President if OMSA is approaching the maximum allowed entitlements.

Due diligence will be taken to ensure that the OMA entitlements are spent maximally each year, while minimizing the expense that OMSA incurs.

ARTICLE 6. OMSA Events

OMSA is responsible for organizing, funding, and executing, at minimum, the following events at least once a year, barring a significant extenuating circumstance as determined by Council.

- a) Ontario Medical Student Weekend (OMSW)
- b) Wellness/Winter Retreat
- c) Leadership Summit
- d) Day of Action Weekend
- e) Annual General Meeting
- f) Ontario Student Medical Education Research Conference (OSMERC)
- g) EDID conference

OMSA shall keep accurate and up-to-date records regarding the expectations for the planning, organization, and execution of each event (OMSA Events Policy).

ARTICLE 7. ELECTIONS

The Elections policy of OMSA is described in a separate document (OMSA Elections Policy).

ARTICLE 8. POLICY PAPERS

Position papers endorsed by OMSA Executive Council shall be subject to the Policy Paper Endorsement Protocol (Appendix B) for approval.

ARTICLE 9. AMENDMENTS

On 7 days' notice by email, the Bylaws may be amended at any OMSA Council meeting, by a two-third majority on the motion.