



UNIVERSITY *of the*  
SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN

Royal Road, Maracas, St. Joseph, Trinidad

# USC RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

## CONSTITUTION

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

# CONSTITUTION

## **Article I: Title of Organization**

The name of the organization shall be called University of the Southern Caribbean (USC) Research Association/Club. This name shall never be changed under any circumstances. This organization will be affiliated to the University of the Southern Caribbean (hereinafter referred to as USC), located at Maracas Royal Road, Maracas, St. Joseph. For the purposes of this document, the organization shall be referred to as 'USC Research Association/Club' or simply 'Association'. The USC Research Association/Club is a semi-autonomous body, subject to the rules and regulations of USC and will conduct its affairs and operate within the jurisdiction of the rules, regulations and policies of USC.

## **Article II: Aims and Objectives**

The aims and objectives of the Association include:

- To create awareness towards research among USC's freshmen and sophomores
- To equip students with the basic knowledge about research methods, both qualitative and quantitative
- To teach students the proper way to cite literature using APA (6th edition), MLA or Chicago/Turabian style of writing
- To de-mystify the research procedures
- To break the culture of silence among the students and empower them to develop a mind of inquiry and critical thinking.
- To be a peer support system to students doing all courses in research methods and english composition
- To collaborate with undergraduate and graduate students to be better informed about research at these levels
- To consult with, mentor and/or accompany the USC Alpha Research Expedition Team on primary field research study.
- To undertake or aid in primary field research locally, regionally, and internationally.
- To make research a fun learning activity

### **Article III: Membership**

Membership should consist of officers and members of the Association.

All members will be subject to the rules and regulations of the constitution and, by joining the Association, will be deemed to accept these regulations and codes of conduct that the association has adopted. Presently enrolled and past students of the University of the Southern Caribbean as well as past and presently employed faculty are deemed acceptable for membership. Membership fees will be set annually and determined at the Annual General Meeting.

### **Article IV: The Executive Committee**

The organization shall have an Executive Committee elected annually by the membership to direct the ongoing activities and foster the aims of the organization. Only registered members will be allowed to hold positions on the executive. Past or present faculty members shall not be allowed to hold the positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer or Secretary.

The officers of the Executive Committee will be composed of the:

- Research Coordinator
- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Event/ Programming Coordinator
- Advertising Coordinator/ Promoter
- Fund raising Coordinator
- Ex-officio member
- President's Assistant
- Floor Members
- Sponsors

## Position Descriptions

### Responsibilities of the Officers:

Research Coordinator – This person automatically retains a position on the Executive by being the director of the Department of Research and Innovation at the University of the Southern Caribbean. He/She oversees the entire operation of the association as the association falls within the jurisdiction of the department.

President – Oversees the general running of the organization, liaises with relevant ... , makes final decisions concerning the planning and execution functions and activities.

Vice-president – Deputizes for the president whenever he or she is unable to fulfill their duties. In the event of the president's resignation the vice president will assume the presidential role until the position is replaced by the membership.

Secretary – records and keeps the minutes of all held meetings. Responsible for all correspondence of the association.

Treasurer – Responsible for all the association finances. The treasurer is responsible for the collection of subscriptions and maintenance of accounts. This person produces detailed reports on the financial standing of the association and also liaises with the vice president on financial matters relating to estimates for expenditure.

Event/Programming Coordinator - Under the direction of the President, the Programming Coordinator is responsible for planning and executing various events for the association's community throughout the year.

Public Relations Officer – Will be responsible for publicly relating from the executive to the general membership and university community whether it be through internet, posters or any other suitable medium. Also responsible for all publicity outside the association, that is contacting any other persons deemed appropriate by the committee.

Fund raising coordinator – On approval from the president - works with the treasurer, event/programming and public relations officer to hold events or activities which would bring in profit as funds for the association.

Ex-officio members – Persons deemed a member of the committee by virtue of their office. When these members cease to hold office, their membership is terminated automatically. The Vice President for Academic Administration will hold this position.

President's Assistant – Person deemed fit by the President to assist him/her only with tasks related to the efficient functioning and monitoring of the association. This person may help with liaising between the President and other executive members and assisting with paperwork and meetings etc.

Floor Member – Will be responsible for assisting all executive members, except the President, when needed in completing minor tasks for the improvement and functioning of the association. This person will act in the role of secretary when needed or when the appointed secretary is absent from executive meetings.

Sponsors – Persons who are willing to aid in the development and maintenance of the association by providing their expertise, financial aid or devoting their time or any other form of assistance that would help the association to attain its goals and objectives.

Additional positions can be suggested, voted on, and created at the Annual General Meeting by members of the association as needed. Elections for the Executive Committee shall take place only at the Annual General Meeting. Each officer shall not be elected more than two times consecutively for the same position. Executive members Assistant positions shall be filled by co-option by the committee as the need arises. Sub-committees may be co-opted where the need arises and at the discretion of the committee.

#### **Article V: The Disciplinary Committee**

Members for the disciplinary Committee shall be chosen at every Annual General Meeting and shall serve for the duration of one year from the date of appointment. This committee shall comprise two independent individuals not registered as members of the association and one elected Executive Member. One independent, non member shall serve as Chairman to this committee. This committee will address all disciplinary actions against members of the Executive.

## **Article VI: Finance**

All Association monies will be banked in an account held in the name of the association. The Treasurer will be responsible for all finances. In cases where the treasurer is unable to carry out his/her role, the Secretary will be selected to manage the finances of the association. The financial year of the Association will end on the \_\_\_\_\_ September each year. An audited statement of annual accounts will be presented by the Treasurer at the Annual General Meeting. Any cheques drawn against association funds should hold the signatures of the Treasurer plus up to two other executive members. All membership fees will be payable to the Treasurer.

## **Article VII: Meetings**

The USC Research Association will conduct Annual General Meetings, Extraordinary General Meetings, Executive Meetings and public forums.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be given by the Secretary to all members of the association no less than twenty one (21) clear days before the meeting date. The AGM will receive a report from officers of the Executive Committee and a statement of the audited accounts. The quorum for AGM will be two thirds of the Executive. When a quorum is not met, the association can only take limited procedural actions. These limited actions include fixing the time to which to adjourn, adjourn, or take measures to obtain a quorum, such as contacting absent members. Any other business that is conducted is not valid unless it is ratified at a later meeting where a quorum is present. However, there is no obligation to ratify such actions.

Nominations for officers of the Executive Committee will be sent to the Secretary prior to the AGM. Elections of officers are to take place at the AGM. All members have the right to vote at the AGM. The Annual General Meeting will take place on the \_\_\_\_\_ September each year. The Executive Committee has the right to call Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) outside the AGM. Procedures for EGMs will be the same as for the AGM. Notice of EGMs will be given by the Secretary to all members of the association no less than seven (7) clear days before the meeting date.

Executive Meetings shall take place twice per semester on a date agreed on in advance. The quorum for such meetings is deemed to be two thirds of the Executive Committee.

Public forums held with the general student population of USC will be held as seen fit by the Executive.

**Article VIII: Discipline and Appeals**

All complaints regarding the behavior of members should be submitted in writing to the Secretary. The Secretary will forward the complaint to the Disciplinary Committee within three (3) days of receipt. The Disciplinary Committee will meet to hear complaints within 14 days of a complaint being lodged with the Secretary. The committee has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action including the termination of membership. The outcome of a disciplinary hearing should be notified in writing to the person who lodged the complaint and the member against whom the complaint was made within seven (7) days of the hearing. All decisions made by the Disciplinary Committee are final.

**Article IX: Dissolution**

A resolution to dissolve the association can only be passed at an AGM or EGM through a majority vote of the membership. In the event of a dissolution, all remaining assets of the USC Research Association will become the property of the University of the Southern Caribbean.

**Article X: Amendments to the Constitution**

The constitution will only be amended through agreement by majority vote at an AGM or EGM.

**Declaration**

The University of the Southern Caribbean Research Association hereby adopts and accepts this constitution as a current operating guide regulating the actions of members.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
(PRESIDENT)

DATE:

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_  
(SECRETARY)

DATE:

## USC Research Association Rules and Guidelines

1. Anyone wishing to register as a member of the Association must be a past or presently enrolled student of USC or a past or presently employed faculty member of USC and have a passion for research.
2. A monthly membership fee of TT\$10 is required.
3. Annual General Meetings shall be held on \_\_\_\_September of each year.
4. The Executive Committee is mandated to attend all AGMs, except in the cases that are out of the control of the member (this is subject to acceptance by the other members of the Executive).
5. Executive Meetings shall be held on the \_\_\_\_\_ of each month.
6. Any Executive Committee member being absent from two (2) consecutive Executive Meetings will be terminated.
7. Disciplinary action will be taken against Executive Members who are absent from Executive Meetings without providing plausible notice to the Secretary at least 24 hours before. Exceptions will only be made for emergency circumstances and are subject to the acceptance of other Executive members.
8. Executive Members are required to submit reports from their offices to the Secretary in cases where they are absent from Executive Meetings.
9. Should an Executive Committee member be unable to complete his/her term in office, another Executive Committee member or other registered member shall be temporarily appointed to hold the position until elections can be held at the next AGM.
10. Should an Executive Committee member fail to serve efficiently in his/her office, disciplinary action will be taken and another Executive Committee member or other registered member shall be temporarily appointed to hold the position until elections can be held at the next AGM.



11. Executive members will serve no longer than one year per term and can be re-elected for no more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same position.
12. At least two members of the Executive should be re-elected into any two positions for every term in order to guide new members.
13. All finances will be handled by the Treasurer, and in cases where the Treasurer cannot fulfill his/her duty, only the Secretary can take up this responsibility.
14. In the case that the treasury reaches a sum of TT\$500, all monies must be deposited into the Association's bank account.
15. All association members and officials must show tolerance, courtesy, good manners, fairness, honesty and integrity in their dealings within and on behalf of the association. Failure to do so will result in suspension upon further notice or termination of membership depending on the severity of the offense.
16. Fraternization among the elected Executive is prohibited. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in suspension upon further notice. Exceptions are made only to persons who have established intimate relationships before being elected onto the Executive. These members are still expected to act professionally while carrying out duties within and on behalf of the Association.
17. All registered members must avoid any relationship between/among other members that cause harm to others or that would impede or impair their professional functioning within the association. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in suspension until further notice or termination of membership depending on the severity of the offense.
18. The Association is opposed to discrimination in any form. All members have a responsibility to make everyone feel welcome and to ensure that membership of the Association is a positive experience. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in termination of membership.
19. All Association members will act responsibly and look to protect and ensure the safety and well-being of everyone at all times. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in suspension upon further notice.

20. All Association members should endeavor to protect and further the Association's good reputation at all times. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in termination of membership.