CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF ATMOSPHERIC AND OCEANIC SCIENCES


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ARTICLE I: Name and Purpose

Section 1. The name of this organization is Council of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences hereinafter referred to as the CAOS. (Previously known as Council of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences students (CAOSS in 2004-2005) and prior to that known as Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences Student Society or AOSSS).

Section 2. The purpose of the CAOS is to represent its members in the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, act as a liaison with the department administration and promote activities among members.

Section 3. The CAOS is an officially recognized, autonomous student group of the Post-Graduate Students Society of McGill University (PGSS). Nothing in the constitution of the CAOS shall therefore preclude the Constitution, Bylaws and Regulations of the PGSS.

ARTICLE II: Membership

Section 1. Regular members: All graduate students and PostDocs, diploma students, Trainees and Research Assistants in the AOS department at McGill University are regular members except as provided in Article II, Section 2.

Section 2. Any member wishing to withdraw from this organization can do so upon written request to the executive.

ARTICLE III: Rights and Obligations of Members

Section 1. Regular members have the right to attend, propose and speak on motions, and vote at all general meetings.

Section 2. Regular members are expected to attend general meetings of the organization.
ARTICLE IV: The Executive

Section 1. The executive is composed of a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, a postdoc/research assistant/trainee representative, two student representatives (also referred to as faculty representatives hereafter) at departmental faculty meetings, one or two alternating PGSS Council representatives, a first-year student representative and the AGSEM representative.

Section 2. The executive serves as a body to coordinate and administer the activities of the organization.

Section 3. All members of the executive must be regular members of the CAOS.

ARTICLE V: Elections

Section 1. The president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, two faculty representatives, AGSEM representative, postdoc/research assistant/trainee representative, and one or two alternating PGSS Council representatives are elected annually at a general meeting in March. The elected executive takes office as of June 1st, after a transition period, where the former executive makes sure that all documents, files and ongoing issues are passed on and explained to all members of the new executive. All newly elected executive members should be carefully informed of their specific duties during the transition period by the former executive. All newly elected executives have to meet with PGSS Student Life Coordinator at the beginning of their mandate.

Section 2. The general meeting for the election must be announced to all members at least one week in advance. In the announcement all executive positions shall be listed, shortly described and candidates for the positions are encouraged to declare themselves to a member of the current executive prior to the election.

Section 3. The first-year student representative is to be elected at the general meeting in September and must be a first-year graduate student.

Section 4. It is suggested that, whenever possible, the faculty representatives be comprised of one MSc and one PhD student, to maintain a good balance, and that they have been in the department for at least one academic term.

Section 5. Nominations are from the floor. All nominations require a seconder and consent of the nominee. Nominees shall briefly present themselves and answer questions, if any.

Section 6. Election is by ballot, unless unanimous agreement among eligible voters to vote by raised hand. All duties and related information must be clearly explained to the members prior to the election.
Section 7. A plurality of votes is sufficient for election. In the event of a tie another vote shall be taken.

Section 8. The current executive runs the election. Any regular member can be present at the counting of ballots, if the ballot option is applicable.

Section 9. The results of the elections should be communicated and made available to the CAOS members.

ARTICLE VI: Duties of the Executive

Section 1. The executive shall be responsible for carrying on the business and activities of the organization in such a way as to fulfill the organization’s purpose and objectives.

Section 2. The president:
- chairs the executive meetings and the general meetings.
- coordinates the other executive members and ensures that executive duties are fulfilled and that the members are regularly informed about their rights and obligations.
- coordinates the organization of events and polls.

The president and vice-president are a liaison to the administration.

Section 3. The secretary:
- maintains the records of the organization and maintains and organizes all documents.
- is responsible for taking minutes of all general meetings and making them accessible to all regular members, as well as taking minutes of all executive meetings and making them accessible to the executive.
- maintains the organization of the CAOS website. This includes updating the incoming events section, the administrative documents, the pictures and other announcements. This should be done at least once per month.
- keeps the mailing list updated and informs the members by email when important website updates are made.
- is also responsible for the official CAOS email address.

Section 4. The treasurer:
- manages the funds of the organization. This includes a monthly updating of records on event costs, expenses and income.
- collects the PGSS Student Life Fund and other forms of incomes.
- takes care of the reimbursement.
- will work on the yearly budget with the president, they will then propose their budget, discuss the details and vote on it at an executive meeting.
- presents an annual budget report at the general meeting in March.
- is further responsible for keeping all the financial records for seven years in a binder with all the expense forms and annual budget reports of the past seven years.

Section 5. The vice-president takes on the duties of the president when the president is otherwise unable to fulfill such duties.

Section 6. The first-year student representative is the liaison between first year members and the executive.

Section 7. The duties of the faculty representatives are:
- inform members about the departmental infrastructure and administrative procedures such as faculty and curriculum committee meetings;
- stay informed regarding academic and administrative issues and working conditions, problems and difficulties;
- make regular announcements and perform necessary polls in order to raise and discuss relevant issues at the monthly faculty meetings and intermittent curriculum committee meetings;
- add the necessary topics to the agenda at least one week prior to the scheduled monthly faculty meetings and intermittent curriculum committee meetings;
- maintain confidentiality of members unless written consent is given;
- clearly explain their role to the members at each general meeting and provide regular reports to the executive and members at large.

Section 8. The duties of the one or two alternating PGSS Council representatives are:
- attend monthly PGSS Council meetings and bring up issues from the CAOS to the Council;
- visit the PGSS website regularly and keep the CAOS members and executive informed about the upcoming events, workshops and funding deadlines;
- read PGSS documents prior to the PGSS monthly assembly and take the necessary polls among AOS department members to better represent them at the PGSS level.
Section 9. The postdoc/research assistant/trainee representative is the liaison between postdocs, research assistants and trainees and the executive, and represent their interests at meetings of the CAOS executive.

Section 10. The AGSEM representative acts as the liaison between the CAOS and AGSEM. The duties of the AGSEM representative include:

- ensure that AGSEM members’ rights are respected;
- attend monthly delegate council meetings and general assemblies and fulfill the AGSEM delegate duties;
- inform members of all union events, surveys, upcoming elections or meetings and other communications.

ARTICLE VII: Meetings

Section 1. The executive shall meet once a month and more frequently if the need arises.

Section 2. General meetings of the organization shall occur in September and March and whenever the need arises. The executive is responsible for the organization and running of these meetings. A general meeting can also be called by 25% of the regular membership at any time with a week's notice. Adequate time for the voicing of opinion by the membership shall be provided at all general meetings.

Section 3. Notice is given to all members one week before a general meeting is held.

Section 4. No one can veto a vote.

Section 5. A quorum at an executive meeting consists of three members. A quorum at a general meeting consists of 30% of the regular members.

Section 6. Decisions in the form of a motion will be decided by a simple majority of eligible voting members present. For the motion of dissolution different criteria shall be met (Article XIII, Section 3).

ARTICLE VIII: Funds

Section 1. All funds of the organization shall be deposited in the name of the organization at a financial institution to be determined by the executive.

Section 2. The authorized signatories of the organization shall be:
- the president,
- the vice-president,
- the secretary and
- the treasurer.

Section 3. Every document requiring the signature of the organization shall be signed by two of the authorized signatories described in Article VIII, Section 2.

Section 4. Fees may be proposed by the executive for a special event or activity held by the CAOS.

ARTICLE IX: Removal of Executive

Section 1. To remove a member of the executive from office a special resolution must be written and distributed to the executive and all regular members. The resolution must contain the signatures of not less than 25% of the regular members.

Section 2. Upon receipt of the resolution the executive is obliged to call a general meeting within two weeks if one is not already scheduled.

Section 3. The resolution shall be presented at the general meeting by one of the signatories. The executive member under consideration shall be provided with an opportunity to speak on their own behalf.

Section 4. A majority vote of all regular members is necessary to pass the resolution. There will be no proxy voting.

Section 5. In the event of the removal of the majority of the executive another three members of the organization shall be elected by a plurality of votes to organize within a month a by-election to replace the executive. These members have the power to speak for the organization during the transition. All assets will be frozen during the transition period.

ARTICLE X: Vacancies

Section 1. Any vacancies in the executive that occur shall be filled at a general meeting to be held within a month.

Section 2. If the vacancy occurs within two months of the regularly scheduled election meeting no by-election is necessary.
Section 3. In the filling of a vacancy in the executive, another member of the executive can be nominated with the understanding that they will resign their current position if elected. Should this occur, another election to fill the new vacancy shall be immediately held at the same meeting, unless Article X, Section 2 applies.

Section 4. If no candidate is found to fill a vacancy in the executive at a general meeting, current members of the executive can hold a maximum of two positions for a maximum of four months, after which another general meeting has to be held to fill the position. Nobody should simultaneously hold the positions of president, vice-president, secretary, or treasurer, and the two faculty representatives should be two different people.

ARTICLE XI: Appointments

Section 1. Appointments to departmental and faculty committees shall be made with the consent of the membership.

Section 2. All appointments of the membership and executive shall submit regular reports to the executive which shall be made available to the membership.

ARTICLE XII: Amendments to Constitution

Section 1. The constitution of the organization may be amended by special resolution at a general meeting.

Section 2. Members are to be made aware of proposed changes at least one week in advance by written notice.

Section 3. A simple majority of eligible voting members present is required to pass changes and amendments.

ARTICLE XIII: Equity and Diversity Policy

Section 1. The CAOS declares its opposition to all forms of discrimination and endorses the PGSS Policy Statement on Equity and Diversity.

Section 2. We recognize that historically and/or presently certain groups are systematically marginalized and denied access to full participation in the disciplines of atmospheric and oceanic

research. These include, but are not limited to: women, Indigenous people, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people of colour, ethnic minorities whose first language is neither English nor French, and people of underprivileged socio-economic status. The CAOS is committed to promoting a culture that supports the pursuit of a range of intellectual endeavours representative of the pluralistic nature of its membership.

Section 3. The CAOS encourages the participation of students from diverse backgrounds and experiences in its Executive and committee membership with a view to broadening the scope of ideas and perspectives that contribute to our community.

Section 4. The CAOS will endeavour through the usual course of its operations:

- To ensure CAOS events are as widely-accessible as possible; see PGSS Equity Checklist[^2]

- To actively support projects that aim to end discrimination or to promote diversity and equity in the Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences Department.

- Not to affiliate or collaborate with organizations known to promote or engage in unjust discriminatory practices.

**ARTICLE XIV: Dissolution of the CAOS**

Section 1. To propose dissolution of the CAOS a two-third majority decision by the CAOS executive or a petition signed by at least 51% of the membership requesting the dissolution of the CAOS is mandatory.

Section 2. Notice of the proposed dissolution shall be posted at least one week prior to the special general meeting, which the president shall call. The president further shall put forth a motion to dissolve the CAOS at the special general meeting.

Section 3. At the special general meeting the quorum as defined in Article VII, Section 5 must be met. The motion for dissolution of the CAOS shall be voted on by open ballot, and a two-third majority of all eligible voters is required to pass the motion.

Section 4. In the event that members decide to dissolve the CAOS, all assets of the CAOS become property of the PGSS, to be held in trust for a minimum period of two years. If, during this period, a new Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences PGSA is formed, the trust shall be dissolved and all assets shall become property of the new PGSA. After two years, if the trust has not been dissolved, the PGSS may dispose of the assets as it sees fit.