

MENTAL WELLNESS AND CIVILITY POLICY



SOCIETY
OF ARTS
SOCIAL SCIENCES
& HUMANITIES

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Article 1.0: Introduction

1.1 Preamble

The Society of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities (SASSH) serves as one of the voices for the Faculty of Arts student body by promoting their abilities and interests within and beyond Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU). SASSH's Board of Directors (the Board) works to provide all students with opportunities and experiences which benefit both their academic and professional experience at TMU. The SASSH's Mental Wellness and Civility Policy works to provide Faculty of Arts students with the toolkit needed to account for, manage, and maintain their mental health needs while engaging in student leadership opportunities within the Faculty. It aims to provide a framework around collegial behaviour and civility to protect each student's learning and working environment so that they are able to fully participate without fear, harm, or mistreatment, and a roadmap to help address instances of incivility.

1.2 Principles and Values

The SASSH values and expects Faculty of Arts students to contribute to a respectful, harassment-free, and civil environment. The following principles and values are meant to compliment such expectation;

1.2.1 Membership Wellbeing: to encourage and ensure the mental and physical wellbeing of all members,

1.2.2 Emphasis on the Student: to highlight that the SASSH are Faculty of Arts students first and foremost and thus should not jeopardize their mental health, wellbeing or academic success for the benefit of their co-curricular endeavours,

1.2.3 IDEA Tenets: to demonstrate that the SASSH holds the tenets of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) at the forefront of all operations,

1.2.4 Academic Standing: to emphasize the required academic standing in order to continue in student leadership under the SASSH. For academic requirements for SASSH Board Members, please refer to [Article 7.2.6 in SASSH's Constitution](#).

1.2.5 Respect: to respect the diversity and intersectionality of the Faculty of Arts student body,

1.2.6 Empathy in Conflict: to have empathy at the forefront of all endeavours when conflict arises,

1.2.7 Encouraging Civility: to foster a community in which all individuals are treated with civility, respect, and dignity.

1.3 Importance

The SASSH acknowledges the importance of students' mental health and its effect on their decision-making and interactions. As the SASSH serves the Faculty of Arts students, we must ensure that we are committed to enforcing a healthy balanced lifestyle, including our mental, physical, spiritual, and intellectual health alongside our responsibilities towards ourselves, our family, friends, student body and fellow SASSH board members.

Article 2.0: Civility in Student Leadership

The SASSH is dedicated to upholding and enforcing a civil environment among all members working within the organization.

2.1 Civility in Practice

The SASSH Board shall present themselves in a manner that encourages the SASSH values and tenets and maintain civility between them. The SASSH aims to create a coordinated and strong team culture and encourages collaboration and creation of thought-out initiatives for the student body. On an everyday basis, this can look like being respectful to fellow students, staff, faculty, and stakeholders within the University no matter personal beliefs, learning styles, academic background, etc.

2.1.1 Making room for this form of interaction can be encouraged through highlighting IDEA events to the student body and Board, incorporating discussions around such into meetings, encouraging these discussions in the workplace, etc.

2.1.2 Recognizing that conflict is not always negative or hostile and to allow for difference of opinion while working towards shared goals for the sake of providing the best service to our students.

2.1.3 The manner in which this will be incorporated into the accounts of the SASSH shall be discussed at the beginning of the term in the form of formal group expectations.

Article 3.0: Incivility in Student Leadership

Every person has the right to a safe, accessible, and inclusive working environment, in order to maintain such, we must not treat any person poorly, no matter race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability, conviction for an offense, socio-economic status, and general personal circumstance.

3.1 Uncivil Behaviour

Incivility within the SASSH Board includes addressing others with disrespectful communication, exclusionary actions, hostile or aggressive behaviour, discriminatory remarks and neglecting accessibility needs. Any actions illustrated below will lead to the carrying out of Item 3.2: Disciplinary Procedures.

3.1.1 Disrespectful Communication

Effective communication between student leaders and Faculty of Arts students is essential for maintaining and enforcing an inclusive and supportive environment. Disrespectful communication through the form of demeaning language, interrupting and dismissing students, public shaming or criticism, nonverbal disrespect, unprofessional digital communication, and more is not acceptable in any capacity.

3.1.2 Exclusionary Actions

The act of excluding another student in any way, shape, or form is unacceptable. This can present in many ways including withholding information, microaggressions, peer isolation, unequal treatment, and more.

3.1.3 Hostile or Aggressive Behaviour

SASSH is dedicated to fostering a safe and respectful environment for all students, staff, and stakeholders. Hostile or aggressive behaviour of any sort is unacceptable. This may look like bullying, insulting, intimidation, cyberbullying or digital harassment, spreading misinformation knowingly, retaliation in any sort, etc.

3.1.4 Discriminatory Remarks

Discriminatory remarks are unacceptable, no matter statements, gestures, expressions, etc, in any matter. Offensive remarks, derogatory language, verbal or physical mocking, etc, are all inappropriate and will not be tolerated to any degree.

3.1.5 Neglecting Accessibility Needs

The SASSH is dedicated to implementing, highlighting, and enforcing the tenets of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility of which the SASSH is built on. The exclusion of any individual goes directly against what the SASSH stands for and works towards in their operations. This can include the exclusion of individuals with disabilities, purposefully increasing stress and anxiety of others, failing to address needs, and undermining inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

3.2 Disciplinary Procedures

The maltreatment of any student, faculty, and stakeholder in any capacity is not acceptable. In the event that civility within the SASSH Board is not followed, the following disciplinary actions will be taken in order to account for and respond to the act at hand.

3.2.1 A consultation will be scheduled with the Vice-President, IDEA and/or the President in order to discuss the maltreatment at hand and determine further action.

3.2.2 If either the Vice-President, IDEA or President deems that further action is necessary, then the Manager, Student and Alumni Experience and Engagement will be contacted for consultation.

3.2.2.1 Should a student feel uncomfortable discussing their experience with another student peer, they may seek direct consultation with the Manager, Student and Alumni Experience and Engagement first.

Article 4.0: Self-Advocacy and Disclosure

The SASSH is dedicated to building comfortability and civility between students within the Faculty in that personal needs should be advocated for for the betterment of the students academic circumstance. Students are encouraged to reach out to the SASSH if their emotional needs are not being met and the SASSH is able to provide support in any manner.

4.1 Importance

Advocating for personal needs should be a top priority in all cases. Not only are students building their skill sets within academic fields recommended to see personal success with academic and student leadership initiatives but also increases self-determination and self confidence. Self-advocacy from students also helps the SASSH make informed decisions for the betterment of the student body at hand.

4.2 Procedure

The SASSH is dedicated to providing a safe space for all Faculty of Arts students at Toronto Metropolitan University. Students have the opportunity to bring forth concerns to the SASSH Board, President, or Manager, Student and Alumni Experience and Engagement if they wish to do so. This can be done through;

4.2.1 Visiting the IDEA specialized Office Hours,

4.2.1.2 Anonymous complaints can be brought to the attention of the SASSH through the [VP IDEA Office Hours Form](#).

4.2.2 Visiting the Vice-President of IDEA's Office Hours,

4.2.3 Personally connecting or scheduling a meeting with either the SASSH Vice-President of IDEA, the SASSH President, or the Manager, Student and Alumni Experience and Engagement.

4.3 Mandatory Time Off

All SASSH Board Members are allocated fourteen (14) mandatory days of time off in accordance with Toronto Metropolitan University's Winter Semester break. Board members who wish to take this time must communicate such with the following members at least seven (7) days in advance:

4.3.1 Manager, Student and Alumni Experience and Engagement

4.3.2 President

4.3.3 Vice-President of Operations

4.4 Confidentiality

Any information communicated to the SASSH Board, or any of its members, regarding mental health, wellness, and civility concerns are to be protected and handled with care. For further information regarding the confidentiality protocols the SASSH Board must follow, please refer to [Article 13.0: Confidentiality in SASSH's By-Laws](#).

4.5 Resignations

SASSH Board Members reserve the right to resign from their position due to mental health or well-being concerns/needs if that is deemed necessary by the Board Member. If a resignation needs to occur, please refer to protocol outlined in [Article 11.0: Resignations in SASSH's By-Laws](#).

Article 5.0: Allyship and Mutual Accountability

Students at Toronto Metropolitan University should strive towards creating a unified and inclusive environment for all. The SASSH works towards advocating for, endorsing, supporting, and amplifying the voices and needs of all Faculty of Arts students. Various campus resources can be utilized to resolve the situation at hand, please refer to the Appendix 1 for a complete list of these resources.

5.1 Mental and Physical Safety

Students should not have to jeopardize their own mental wellbeing and personal safety in order to help another, no student should be excluded, left to fend for themselves, or left to tend to their own devices.

5.1.1 Discomfort With Disclosure

Being the person receiving disclosed information can be emotionally draining and damaging. Students who feel as if they are not able to recuperate after receiving this information are encouraged to reach out to the Vice-President of IDEA, the SASSH President, and/or the Manager, Student and Alumni Experience and Engagement.

5.1.1.1 If the situation cannot be resolved through this meeting, further actions may be determined between the individuals involved in **Article 5.1.1**.

5.2 Allyship Within the SASSH Board

Allyship refers to the use of one's agency to support fellow Faculty of Arts students and SASSH colleagues in professional and personal circumstances. The SASSH Board is a group who works to support one another in all initiatives. The Board is dedicated to sharing their expertise within their programs and student body in order to provide opportunities for not only one another but the student body at large. Allyship within the Board not only encourages team bonding but provides guidelines for responsibility delegation and builds trust within the Board as a whole.

Appendixes:

Appendix A: Campus Resources

1. Consent Comes First

Consent Comes First provides TMU students with support to students affected by various forms of violence in order to create a welcoming and safe environment for all students embarking on their academic journey.

2. The Centre For Student Development and Counselling

The Centre for Student Development and Counselling allows students to book one-on-one sessions with educated and experienced professionals in order to provide a space where students can thrive, grow, and excel.

3. The Medical Centre

TMU's Medical Centre, located in 181 Kerr Hall West, offers various health services to current TMU students, faculty, and staff in order to account for and respond to the physical well-being of the student body.

4. Test Centre

TMU Test Centre, including the Accommodated Test Centre (ATC) and Make Up Test Centre (MUTC), provides administrative guidance and support to students in order to aid in demonstrating their learning.

5. Community Wellbeing

Community Wellbeing is a department at TMU which works to address the needs of students and issues impacting the wellbeing of students across campus by tackling issues over time which cannot be handled by a single department.

6. The Student Experience Centre

The Student Experience Centre is a Faculty of Arts led team who work to provide Faculty of Arts students support and guidance in engaging, connecting, and goal setting with their department and further on in order to help them navigate through and past their Undergraduate experience.

7. Academic Accommodation Support (AAS)

Academic Accommodation Support (AAS) serves as the accessibility services office which works to create inclusive and inviting learning environments for TMU students.

8. Student Resources Database

The Student Resources Database encompasses and outlines various resources that TMU students have available to them which may aid in their academic, mental, or professional success in the future.