

The Constitution of the International Students' Union of Tromsø (ISU Tromsø)



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I. Letters of Introduction from the Architects of the Constitution and the Regulations:

January, 2002:

In October 2001 the present executive of The International Students' Union (ISU) felt the need to establish a new constitution for ISU as the only constitution available was the Foreign Student Union (FSU) Constitution from 1990. This constitution was considered to be too extensive and out-dated and therefore was subject to extensive revision. The main purpose was to shorten the Constitution but nevertheless achieve a document which will give ISU the means to challenge the demands of a varying international student society.

The following people were commissioned to work on the new ISU constitution:

Marielle Bistervels (Netherlands, ISU President autumn 2001)
Holger Grohganz (Germany, ISU Vice-President autumn 2001)

Work on the Constitution started in late October 2001. The first draft of the Constitution was distributed to the Executive members of ISU for discussion on 29th of November 2001. A discussion took place at an Executive meeting on 3rd December 2001 in order to finalise the Constitution. A list of amendments was embedded into the Constitution. The incoming comments were embedded into the Constitution. A final draft was sent to all members with known email addresses in order to give insight into this document on 22nd January 2002. A printed version was laid out before the start of the General Assembly on 24th January 2002. The final draft was voted on at the General Assembly on 24th January 2002 after some final amendments have been explained to the GA. 25 members with voting rights were present. The result was 24 votes in favour and 1 vote against. The final draft was accepted as the new Constitution of ISU.

June, 2011:

The executive members felt the need for revising the constitution of ISU Tromsø, as the constitution available was last amended 9 years ago, in 2001, and some things needed to be updated. Although the Constitution of ISU Tromsø has been a source of inspiration for some other ISU local branches (like ISU Stavanger), it was necessary to improve our constitution to fit better with the current situation of the organization, and to ensure better commitment, and focus of the organization.

Work on the new draft started in October, 2010. Mashhood Ahmed Sheikh (President) prepared a draft with proposed constitutional changes, and distributed them among the Executive members in an Executive board meeting on 16th May, 2011. The Executive members discussed the constitutional amendments. After thorough discussion, and changes to the proposed amendments, the changes were approved by the Executive members consisting of Mashhood Ahmed Sheikh (President), Amitap Kumar (Vice President), Anup Gupta (General Secretary), Yograj Dhungana (Treasurer) and Glennda Alina Villaflor (Organising Officer), on 16th May, 2011. Former ISU Tromsø Executive members; Lyonel Perabo, and Sabine Kaiser were shown the proposed constitutional draft, and their suggestions were taken. Similarly, the constitutional

draft was consulted with Sebastian Bantow (International Coordinator at the Students Parliament) and his suggestions were considered.

Another Executive board meeting consisting of Mashhood Ahmed Sheikh (President), Amitap Kumar (Vice President), and Anna Loppacher (Organising Officer) was held on 20th June, 2011 to discuss the constitutional changes proposed by Anna Loppacher (Organising Officer).

A General Assembly was organized on 21st June, 2011, and the changes approved by the General Assembly were incorporated in this new constitution. A special 'thank you' is due to the present Executive members for their foresight and willingness to embrace change.

II. The Constitution of the International Students' Union of Tromsø (ISU Tromsø).

Article 1: The International Students' Union of Tromsø

- 1.1 The organisation to which this Constitution refers is known as The International Students' Union of Tromsø, abbreviated and referred to hereafter as "ISU Tromsø".
- 1.2 ISU Tromsø is an independent, democratic, non-religious, non-racial, non-partisan, non-profit, student-run organisation committed to the interests of all international students studying at the University of Tromsø.
- 1.3 ISU Tromsø embraces diversity and welcomes all international students to its activities and proceedings. ISU does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, gender, political or sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, language fluency, or country of origin (See also Article 4.4 and 4.5 of the constitution).
- 1.4 The official language of ISU Tromsø is English.
- 1.5 ISU Tromsø is autonomous part of the ISU Norway, Student Democracy of the University of Tromsø and the Norwegian Students' Organisation (Norsk studentorganisasjon, NSO).

Article 2: Objectives

- 2.1 The main objective of the ISU Tromsø is to ensure the rights and welfare of the current and the future international students at the University of Tromsø.
- 2.2 ISU Tromsø represents the interests of all members in whatever way possible, including amongst other things: Statements and comments made by the University of Tromsø, matters concerning members in general, e.g. general welfare, social problems, language, accommodation, admission to the university.
- 2.3 To oppose and bring to light any discrimination, injustice, inequality or intolerance that obstructs the achievement of these purposes above.
- 2.4 ISU Tromsø, where deemed necessary or appropriate, shall aid, assist, collaborate, or participate in actions, activities, or events of diverse nature, that advances ISU Tromsø as an organization, improve the quality of life of international students, or are in keeping with the bylaws or intentions of the Constitution.
- 2.5 Forward unity amongst members, socially, culturally and otherwise.
- 2.6 Forward good relations between members and the community in which they live and study.
- 2.7 Keep contact with and assist other organisations with similar or compatible objectives.
- 2.8 ISU Tromsø will co-operate with the Student Board (Studentrådet) of the University of Tromsø to further common objectives.
- 2.9 As desired, organise and/or participate in any actions and functions that advance, or are compatible with the above objectives.

Article 3: Membership

- 3.1 A member of ISU Tromsø is a student with a student ID number and a valid semester card, living in Troms and meeting one of the following requirements:

- 3.1.1 Any student not holding a Norwegian passport
- 3.1.2 Holding two (2) valid passports or hold dual-citizenship.
- 3.1.3 Have formally informed both the ISU Tromsø and NSO that they would like to become a member of the ISU Tromsø. The membership is subject to approval by ISU Tromsø President.
- 3.2 All international students studying at the University of Tromsø are automatically members of ISU Tromsø.
- 3.3 Any past Executive member can be hired temporarily (with approval of two-third majority of the Executives) as an External Advisor for guidance, mediation, consultation, or any tasks for the furtherance of ISU Tromsø objectives. The External Advisor can be hired for one semester at a time. The External Advisor does not have a membership status, or an Executive status. The External Advisor can be contacted for consultation, in case of any problems or challenges the Executive may face. The opinion of the External Advisor is not binding on the Executives.

Article 4: Privileges

- 4.1 All members shall be entitled to participation in the ISU Tromsø General Assembly (GA).
- 4.2 All members have the right to vote at the General Assembly.
- 4.3 All members shall be entitled to participation in all activities organised by ISU Tromsø.
- 4.4 The ISU Tromsø will strictly not tolerate nor encourage any form of discrimination on or off Campus among international students (See also Article 1.3 of the Constitution).
- 4.5 The ISU Tromsø Executive has the right to ban members from activities, for due cause, for a period of up to four (4) weeks. The decision can be made with two-third majority of the Executive members. In extreme cases, in particular acute violation(s) of Article 4.4, a member may have their rights under Article 1.2 and 3.2 of the Regulations, and Article 4.1, 4.2, and, 4.3 of the Constitution, be revoked, and may be banned indefinitely from the activities and proceedings of ISU Tromsø (See also Article 3.2 of the Regulations, and Article 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 of Constitution).
- 4.6 Any member levied with a loss of privileges shall be notified in writing. Members shall have the right to a fair appeal.
- 4.7 In the end of the semester, a compensation of 1000NOK would be given to each of the Executive board members with the approval of the majority of the Executive members present in an Executive meeting.

Article 5: ISU Tromsø General Assembly (GA)

- 5.1 The General Assembly is the primary decision-making body of ISU Tromsø
- 5.2 There shall be at least one General Assembly per semester as soon as this is considered convenient by the Executive for the members.
- 5.3 A General Assembly is called either by the President, or the two-third majority of the Executive members.
- 5.4 At least 10 days notice must be given for a General Assembly. It is the responsibility of the Executive members to ensure that the General Assembly is advertised explicitly among the international students, so that a maximum number of members participate.

- 5.5 An agenda must be available for collection by members at the ISU Tromsø office.
- 5.6 Any ballot shall not be valid until at least 2% of the ISU Tromsø members are present.
- 5.7 A detailed programme for the General Assembly is stated in the Regulations.

Article 6: The Executive

- 6.1 The Executive shall be elected at the General Assembly. The Election procedure is described in the Regulations.
- 6.2 The Executive shall consist of President, Vice-President, Academic Affairs and Welfare Officer, Secretary General, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, Web-Master, I.T Officer and up to 4 Organising Officers.
- 6.3 President, Vice-President, Academic Affairs and Welfare Officer, Secretary General and Treasurer have to be of non-Norwegian origin.
- 6.4 There cannot be more than three (3) Executive members from the same nationality/citizenship (This condition can be waived if there is no other candidate available).
- 6.5 All the Executive members work on voluntary basis [except the compensation under Article 4.7 of the constitution], but expenses like administrative costs, and other costs necessary to work for the ISU Tromsø can be covered with approval from both the President and the treasurer, or the two-third majority of the Executive members.
- 6.6 It is compulsory for the President, and the Academic Affairs and Welfare Officer to have studied at least one semester at the University of Tromsø before they file for candidature in the elections (This condition can be waived if there is no other candidate for these two positions).
- 6.7 The Executive shall manage the daily affairs of ISU Tromsø.
- 6.8 The Term of Office of the Executive shall be one semester. As an exception to this rule is the Term of Office of the President in order to ensure continuation in ISU Tromsø. The President is elected on the Autumn General Assembly of ISU Tromsø. Outgoing Executive members are allowed and encouraged to candidate for Executive positions again.
- 6.9 The President's position cannot be held for more than two consecutive years.
- 6.10 The obligations of each member of the Executive are stated in the Regulations.

Article 7: Status of the Constitution and Regulations

- 7.1 The Constitution shall be made available to all the members.
- 7.2 The Constitution and the Regulations shall be binding on the Executive and all members of the organisation.
- 7.3 Issues, measures, or decisions found to be strictly contrary to the language or intent of the Constitution, shall require the formal amendment of the Constitution.
- 7.4 Any action contrary to the Constitution shall be subject to approval by two thirds of the General Assembly
- 7.5 Any action contrary to the Regulations (except Article 4) shall be subject to approval by two thirds of the ISU Tromsø Executive.
- 7.6 Any action contrary to the Article 4 of the Regulations shall be subject to approval by two thirds of the General Assembly.

- 7.7 Procedure for amendment of the Constitution or the Regulations.
- 7.7.1 The Executive members should approve the constitutional or Regulations changes to be proposed in the General Assembly by simple majority, before calling for the General Assembly. The Constitutional/Regulations changes cannot be proposed in the General Assembly without the prior approval of the majority of the Executive members.
- 7.7.2 The support of at least two thirds of the members present at the General Assembly shall be required to amend the Constitution or the Regulations.

III. The Regulations of the International Student Union of Tromsø (ISU Tromsø)

Article 1: Conduct of the General Assembly (GA)

- 1.1 The GA shall be opened by the President. The ISU Tromsø President shall, subject to the approval of the GA, chair the GA.
- 1.2 All participants in the GA shall have the right to speak. Speakers shall address the GA through the chairperson.
- 1.3 The chairperson shall have the right to remove the right to speak from any participant who disrupts or obstructs the proceedings of the GA.
- 1.4 Speakers shall adhere to the matter being considered. The Chairperson shall bring back to order any speaker failing to do this.
- 1.5 The Agenda of the GA will be followed.
- 1.6 Topics to be discussed during the scheduled spring and autumn General Assembly will include reports from the Executive about activities performed, the ISU Tromsø financial report and the elections of the new Executive. Other topics can be included on request.
- 1.7 Extraordinary GAs may be called by the Executive or any member who obtains 10% of the members' signatures for support.

Article 2: Voting Procedures

- 2.1 The various alternatives for discussion about a particular subject shall be put forward to the GA during the time allocated. A discussion will follow the suggestions made.
- 2.2 A vote shall be taken for the preferred option. Any option that receives more than 50% of the votes (excluding abstentions) shall be considered elected.
- 2.3 If there are more than 2 alternatives and none of the options receives more than 50% of the votes, there shall be consecutive ballots in which the alternative receiving the least number votes of shall be eliminated.
- 2.4 Secret ballots shall be taken on request by any 3 members of the GA. In all other cases voting shall be conducted by a show of hands. Secret ballots shall take place on ballot paper which is handed over to every member upon presentation of a University identity card.
- 2.5 No interruptions shall be allowed during the vote or the count.
- 2.6 A voting committee consisting of 3 persons shall be appointed by the General Assembly. The voting committee shall be responsible for counting of the votes.

Article 3: Election of the Executive

- 3.1 The Executive is elected by the General Assembly at the beginning of the semester. The President shall be elected at the General Assembly of the autumn semester.
- 3.2 All Members of ISU Tromsø are entitled to vote
- 3.3 An election committee consisting of 3 persons shall be elected by the General Assembly. The election committee shall be responsible for the conduct of the election.
- 3.4 Any member, indicating his willingness to take the post if elected, can be nominated for an Executive position. Nominated candidates must either be present or have indicated their willingness to work in the Executive in written form to the General Assembly.
- 3.5 All elections for Executive members shall be by secret ballot.
- 3.6 Nominations for each post and voting on each post will be done separately in the following order: President, Vice-President, Academic Affairs and Welfare Officer, Secretary General, Treasurer, Public Relation Officer, Web-Master, I.T Officer, Organising Officers.
- 3.7 If a post remains vacant after elections the Executive may appoint a member for this position. Notice shall be given to all members after the appointment (If 10 international students disagree with the new appointment within a week, then the new position will not be valid).
- 3.8 Executive members can be removed from their position by a two-thirds majority during an Executive meeting in case of:
 - 3.8.1 Economic frauds (which will be reported to the police).
 - 3.8.2 Actions contrary to the interests of ISU Tromsø.
 - 3.8.3 Actions damaging the ISU Tromsø organisation.
 - 3.8.4 Failing to attend Executive meetings on a regular basis.
 - 3.8.5 Taking actions/decisions without the approval of the President, or the two-third majority of the Executive members.
 - 3.8.6 Having contributed very little, or not at all, by the middle of semester.
 - 3.8.7 Failing to take transparent, unbiased and professional minutes of the meetings (applies to the General Secretary or whoever takes the minutes of the meetings, as delegated by the President)
- 3.9 If an Executive position becomes vacant after the removal or resignation of an Executive member the Executive may appoint a member for this position. Notice shall be given to all members after the appointment.
- 3.10 The election procedure can be changed by the election committee if considered appropriate. Changes are subject to the approval of the General Assembly.

Article 4: Obligations of the Executive

- 4.1 General obligations of Members of the Executive
 - 4.1.1 All Executive members shall further the objectives of ISU Tromsø and assist in the conduct of the ISU Tromsø activities if necessary.
 - 4.1.2 ISU Tromsø Executive members are responsible for keeping and maintaining the ISU Tromsø office and informing members when they may be contacted at the office on a regular basis.

- 4.1.3 ISU Tromsø Executive members are responsible for taking initiative in proposing specific tasks and ensuring that they are carried out in furtherance of the Objectives of ISU Tromsø.
- 4.1.4 The Executive members should be involved in decision-making processes that pertain to any international students at the University of Tromsø.
- 4.1.5 The Executive members should be loyal to ISU Tromsø.
- 4.1.6 The Executive members should send the round of evaluation to each other in the middle of the semester (mid October, or beginning of April). The evaluation should then be discussed in an Executive meeting, so that a better working plan can be made. In case any Executive member has contributed very little, or not at all, then impeachment can be considered (under Article 3.8 of the Regulations).
- 4.1.7 It is the responsibility of every Executive member to know, observe, and enforce the bylaws and the intentions of the Constitution.
- 4.1.8 Any Executive member can access and use the email address, Facebook, and any other social media account of the organization, with approval from the President or the two-third majority of the Executive members.
- 4.1.9 The public content of ISU Tromsø (on website, blog, facebook, etc.) needs to be approved either by the President, or the two-third majority of the Executive members.
- 4.1.10 In one semester, the ISU Tromsø should at least organize a minimum of five events/activities for the members.
- 4.1.11 ISU Tromsø Executive members are obliged to attend Executive meetings, unless extenuating circumstances arise. In case of absence they have to inform the President.
- 4.1.12 The agenda for the Executive meetings needs to be approved by the President or the two-third majority of the Executive members.

- 4.2 Obligations of the President
 - The President shall be responsible for the following
 - 4.2.1 representation of ISU in the Student Board of the University of Tromsø.
 - 4.2.2 representation of ISU Tromsø to local authorities
 - 4.2.3 acting as chairperson at ISU Tromsø Executive meetings and General Assemblies
 - 4.2.4 delegation of responsibilities, tasks, and duties
 - 4.2.5 representation of ISU Tromsø at meetings of the ISU Norway
 - 4.2.6 Act as a sentry to the present strengths of the organisation while acting as a visionary, creating new goals, objectives, and ideals.
 - 4.2.7 President is the main representative/face of ISU Tromsø, both internally and externally.
 - 4.2.8 Act as representative of, and prominent spokesperson for, the ISU Tromsø at various forums.
 - 4.2.9 Endorses financial decisions.
 - 4.2.10 Signs off on minutes.
 - 4.2.11 The President shall be responsible for scheduling, managing, and leading Executive meetings. The President can delegate this responsibility to any other Executive member, at his or her discretion.

- 4.2.12 Sign the bank account and all other official documents and papers.
- 4.3 Obligations of the Vice-President
 - The Vice-President shall
 - 4.3.1 assist the president in all listed duties as delegated by the President
 - 4.3.2 function as President in the absence of the President. In this case the Vice-President will receive all rights and duties of the President until the most immediate elections, where a new President is necessarily elected once more.
 - 4.3.3 provide new students as soon as possible with information about ISU Tromsø and ISU Tromsø activities.
 - 4.3.4 representation of ISU Tromsø at meetings of the ISU Norway
 - 4.3.5 be responsible for fundraising activities and events.
 - 4.3.6 serve as integral part of the Executive, assisting other Executive members in ensuring that the goals, objectives, and intentions of the ISU Tromsø are acted upon and fulfilled in a reasonable period of time.
 - 4.3.7 attend as many ISU Tromsø -sanctioned or sponsored events as reasonably feasible.
 - 4.3.8 report directly to the President.
- 4.4 Obligations of the Academic Affairs and Welfare Officer
 - The Academic Affairs and Welfare Officer shall
 - 4.4.1 be responsible for the reception and presentation of the petitions from the international students to the President.
 - 4.4.2 be a first point of contact for students who have concerns about student life, academics, housing or other issues that pertain to their quality of life as a student at the University of Tromsø.
 - 4.4.3 help direct students to faculty and staff members on campus in those cases that the ISU Tromsø may be unable to directly assist the student.
 - 4.4.4 hold office hours a minimum of one hour per week.
 - 4.4.5 be responsible for monitoring the policy of University of Tromsø regarding international students and inform the Executive members about them.
 - 4.4.6 be responsible for helping and guiding students in any practical problems they may face at the University of Tromsø.
 - 4.4.7 cooperate with other Executive members to prepare and publish articles about the members and the ISU Tromsø.
- 4.5 Obligations of the Secretary General
 - The Secretary General shall be responsible for
 - 4.5.1 keeping general ISU Tromsø correspondence
 - 4.5.2 writing the minutes of all meetings and distributing them to the Executive members
 - 4.5.3 taking transparent, unbiased and professional minutes of the meetings.
 - 4.5.4 assisting the President in writing reports.
 - 4.5.5 assisting the Academic Affairs and Welfare Officer in all tasks, as approved by the President.

4.6 Obligations of the Treasurer

The Treasurer shall

- 4.6.1 maintain and control the finances of ISU Tromsø.
- 4.6.2 work on fund raising activities.
- 4.6.3 write comprehensive accounts and present them to the Executive at the end of every semester.
- 4.6.4 present the budget and the accounts at the General Assembly.
- 4.5.5 manage receipts and return records.
- 4.6.6 advise the President on financial matters.
- 4.6.7 assist the Vice-president and Public Relations Officer in fundraising activities and events.
- 4.6.8 hold office hours a minimum of one hour per week.

4.7 Obligations of the Public Relations Officer

The Public Relation Officer shall

- 4.7.1 be responsible for making ISU Tromsø visible.
- 4.6.2 be responsible for maintaining the facebook group/profile/page, and other online visibility, along with the I.T Officer.
- 4.7.3 monitor the media possibilities for ISU Tromsø and use them appropriately with approval of the President.
- 4.7.4 be responsible for publishing press releases approved by the President.
- 4.7.5 assist the Vice President in fundraising activities and events along with the Treasurer.
- 4.7.6 hold office hours a minimum of one hour per week.

4.8 Obligations of the Web-Master

The Web-Master shall

- 4.8.1 update the ISU Tromsø homepage
- 4.8.2 ensure to reach as many members as possible with information via the internet
- 4.8.3 maintains and update the ISU Tromsø website with current information regarding upcoming events, social welfare, health concerns, and any other pertinent information for international students.
- 4.8.4 Strive to improve the quality of the ISU Tromsø website to the best of his or her ability.
- 4.8.5 hold office hours a minimum of one hour per week.

4.9 Obligations of the I.T Officer

The I.T Officer shall

- 4.9.1 assist the Web-Master in all tasks, as approved by the President.
- 4.9.2 assist the Public Relations Officer with approval from the President.
- 4.9.3 be responsible for maintaining the facebook group/profile/page, and other online visibility along with the Public Relations Officer.
- 4.9.4 be responsible for general tasks related to I.T.
- 4.9.5 hold office hours a minimum of one hour per week.

4.10 Obligations of the Organising Officers

The Organising Officers shall

- 4.10.1 co-ordinate and arrange all ISU activities
- 4.10.2 present a financial report of their activities to the Treasurer
- 4.10.3 keep ISU members aware of ISU activities
- 4.10.4 write the reports of events/activities.
- 4.10.5 hold office hours a minimum of one hour per week.
- 4.10.6 assist the Academic Affairs and Welfare Officer in all tasks, as approved by the President.

4.11 Obligations of the ISU representative in the Student Board

The ISU representative in the Student Board shall

- 4.11.1 attend the (monthly) meetings of the Student Board on behalf of ISU Tromsø.