THE CONSTITUTION

OF

THE CANADIAN THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

I PREAMBLE

As Christian students pursuing the study of theology, we have assembled in the cause of promoting and advancing ecumenism. To further this endeavour we have formed an association hereby constituted and named The Canadian Theological Students' Association (hereinafter referred to as the "C.T.S.A.").

This document speaks of our purposes and objectives. It shall serve to guide our efforts and shall be considered as binding on our enterprises, unless so altered from time to time by due process.

II STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

The purposes of the C.T.S.A. shall be:

1. to pursue meaningful, innovative and effective ways to foster ecumenism among Christian students engaged in preparation for the ministry and/or theological scholarship of the various theological institutions (places of study) throughout Canada.
2. to foster dialogue and understanding regarding theological issues among these students.
3. to foster and promote the participation of Christian students in the ecumenical movement.
4. to provide a forum for the discussion of ecumenical concerns by students in an ecumenical setting at a national level.
5. to facilitate dialogue between theological institutions at a student level.
6. to provide an opportunity for Christian students to work together ecumenically with particular emphasis upon the planning and implementation of the Annual Conference (as hereinafter provided for in section VIII).
7. to rejoice and celebrate our diverse traditions.

III EFFORTS AND ENTERPRISE

Recognizing that many ways exist to foster ecumenism at the student level, chief among the C.T.S.A.’s enterprises is the planning and implementation of an Annual Conference while continuing to seek other ways to carry out its purposes.

IV MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the C.T.S.A. is open to all students enrolled in a theological institution in Canada, and who subscribe to the purposes of the C.T.S.A.

V SPONSORSHIP

Given the transitory nature of the student population**,** theStudent Association can join with another ecumenical organization governed by an agreement by both parties.

VI LANGUAGE

1. The C.T.S.A. shall endeavor to operate in both French and English, and shall be sensitive to include both in its operations, recognizing, however, that financial constraints and limited need may make it necessary to restrict the availability of bilingual services. The C.T.S.A. invites, and indeed encourages from its membership any input as to how the needs of the membership in matters pertaining to the use of English or French may be met.
2. The C.T.S.A. recognizes that language is a significant expression of our cultures and traditions. The C.T.S.A. promotes usage of language that affirms the dignity of all people in all its publications and proceedings.

VII ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Recognizing the need for a sustainable structure that will allow for the administration of our purposes, efforts, and enterprises, and to maintain the continuity of the organization, the day to day operations of the C.T.S.A. shall be carried out by the National Committee which shall be composed, and shall operate according to the duties as hereinafter defined.

1. The Composition of The National Committee

The National Committee shall be composed of 6-7 persons all of whom shall be members of the C.T.S.A. in good standing. The members of the National Committee shall be elected for one term by a majority vote of the delegates at the Annual Business Meeting, with an option to re-offer for a second term. Should any member of the National Committee fail to meet the C.T.S.A. criteria for whatever reason his/her membership shall be immediately terminated, and her/his alternate will be installed into the office. In the event that the alternate is not available, another member of the C.T.S.A. shall be invited to assume the duties of the terminated member.

1. Resignation/Termination

The National Committee shall also have the authority to demand the resignation of any member of the National Committee who no longer has an interest in the C.T.S.A. as determined by the National Committee in its sole and unfettered discretion, or who fails to attend two or more planning meetings of the National Committee without prior notice of a reason acceptable to the National Committee. If during its term in office, any members of the National Committee shall experience personal conflict, such that it interferes with the orderly functioning of the National Committee, every effort shall be made by the National Committee with the assistance of the Continuity Person to resolve the difficulty internally.

1. Regional Representation

For the purpose of fair and equitable representation from across the country, six (6) members of the National Committee shall be members of the C.T.S.A. attending theological institutions (places of study) in each of the following six (6) geographical regions.

1. The Pacific Region: the province of British Columbia, along with the Yukon.

2. The Prairies Region: the provinces of Manitoba**,** Saskatchewan**,** Albertaandthe Northwest Territories.

3. The Atlantic Region: the provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

4. The Ontario Region: the province of Ontario, other than Toronto.

5. The Quebec Region: the province of Quebec and the Territory of Nunavut.

1. The Toronto Region: the city of Toronto and vicinity,

and each of said members shall be designated as a "Regional Representative".

Any Regional Representative or his/her alternate may also be an officer of the National Committee (as hereinafter defined), except the offices of the Chairperson[s], and the Continuity Person.

1. Election Process

Prior to the Annual Business Meeting, each contingent of delegates from the above mentioned Regions shall provide the National Committee with the names of two nominees to serve on the following year’s National Committee. The current National Committee will strike a small selection committee to establish an election slate, with alternates, seeking a balance of gender, denominational and linguistic diversity. This selection committee must be comprised of outgoing National Committee members who are not standing for re-election. The slate will then be presented to the Annual Business Meeting for approval.

E. The Officers of The National Committee

The National Committee shall delegate among itself those responsibilities necessary for the effective functioning of the C.T.S.A. and the Annual Conference

1. The National Committee Chairperson

This person shall chair the National Committee meetings, and the Annual Business Meeting (as hereinafter provided for in Section IX), or select another member of the National Committee to fulfill this duty. Furthermore, the Chairperson shall ensure that the National Committee causes the C.T.S.A. to carry out the purposes, efforts, and enterprises of the C.T.S.A. as herein defined.

2. The Local Planning Committee Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons

This/These person(s) shall chair the Local Planning Committee charged with organizing the annual conference under the direction of the National Committee. The Local Planning Committee Chair(s) will serve as a liaison between the National Committee and the Local Planning Committee. The Local Planning Committee Chairperson(s) must be a student(s) of the hosting college(s).

3. The Secretary

The Secretary shall also be a Regional Representative and shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of all the meetings of the National Committee and the circulation of said minutes to all members of the National Committee. The Secretary shall be elected by majority vote of the National Committee at its first meeting following the Annual Conference. In addition, the Secretary shall be responsible for the recording of the minutes of the Annual Business Meeting (as hereinafter provided for in section IX) and the mailing or electronic mailing of copies of said minutes to members of the C.T.S.A., upon approval of same by the National Committee in office at the time of the Annual Business Meeting. The Secretary shall also advise the National Committee of all correspondence that from time to time is received. The Secretary shall ensure that all approved amendments to the Constitution are included in all subsequent editions of the Constitution.

3. The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall also be a Regional Representative and shall be responsible for keeping a full and accurate account of all financial transactions of the C.T.S.A., and for presenting a report of same at the Annual Business Meeting. The Treasurer shall be elected by majority vote of the National Committee at its first meeting following the Annual Conference. The treasurer will serve as the C.T.S.A. representative on the Howard Mills Fund Committee.

4. The Continuity Person

The Continuity Person shall be appointed by the outgoing National Committee at each Annual Conference from among the members of the outgoing National Committee and shall hold no more than one term on the succeeding National Committee. The Continuity Person shall serve as an advisor to the National Committee so as to facilitate continuity between the incoming and outgoing National Committees. This position may not be filled in a given year if two members of the outgoing National Committee are returning to serve a second term.

5. NC Liaison to the Sponsoring Body

A person will be appointed.

F. Duties of the National Committee

* 1. The National Committee shall have the authority to conduct the day to day affairs of the C.T.S.A. between Annual Business Meetings, subject to the authority of the Annual Business Meeting.
  2. The National Committee shall begin its term in office six (6) weeks following the Annual Meeting that elects its members and shall remain empowered until six (6) weeks following the Annual Business Meeting that elects its successors.
  3. The National Committee shall meet as frequently as it sees fit so as to fulfill its mandate. The location of these meetings shall be at the discretion of the National Committee. Given the tremendous costs associated with having members of the National Committee travel to its meetings, every effort should be made to limit these expenditures.
  4. After the ABM the incoming National Committee shall, from its members, fill the offices of Secretary and Treasurer and NPC liaison to the sponsoring body. It shall also select a signing officer from among the Regional Representatives. These shall come into effect six weeks following the ABM.
  5. During its term in office the National Committee may retain any person it requires to assist it to fulfill the mandate of the C.T.S.A. Such a decision must take into account any costs which may arise from such involvement. The National Committee shall establish the registration fee for the Annual Conference occurring during its term in office, and shall be directly responsible for the oversight of the Conference with the Local Planning Committee responsible for execution. The National Committee shall select, or authorize the selection of, a conference site, approve a budget, oversee the development of the conference schedule, select a theme, and be responsible for hiring contract staff as required. Nearing the end of its term, and before the Annual Business Meeting, the National Committee shall select one of its number to serve as the Continuity Person to the subsequent National Committee if needed. This role may be filled by a member of the current committee if re-elected, or if no member of the current National Committee is re-elected, a member would be appointed.
  6. Following the Annual Business Meeting, and within the final six weeks of its term, the National Committee shall gather to review its year in office, with special emphasis being placed upon the operation of the Annual Conference. A report shall be made of the National Committee's findings, which shall be forwarded to its successor. Furthermore, the National Committee shall review the Minutes of the immediate past Business Meeting, and authorize the Secretary to release them to the membership.
  7. All decisions of the National Committee shall be made by majority vote of the members of the National Committee in attendance at the time that such vote is called for. All proceedings of the National Committee shall, otherwise than as herein specifically stated, be conducted according to a process to be decided upon by each National Committee, at its first meeting.
  8. All costs associated with travel, lodging and registration of members of the National Committee to and from National Committee meetings and the Annual Conference shall be paid by the C.T.S.A. As well, all reasonable costs and expenses of the National Committee incurred in the course of its duties as defined herein shall be paid by the C.T.S.A.

VIII THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

1. The Annual Conference, hereinafter referred to as the "Conference", shall be held on a date set by the National Committee in co-operation with the host theological institution or cluster of same (see immediately below). The Conference shall be held in compliance with the stated purposes of the C.T.S.A.
2. The Conference shall meet in various regions of Canada. The location of the Conference will normally alternate every two (2) years between: 1. the Atlantic or Quebec region; and 2. one of either the Pacific or Prairies regions. In the intervening year, the Conference shall meet in one of the other two regions, Ontario or Toronto.
3. The site of the conference shall be selected by the National Committee and shall be associated with or close to that theological institution (or institutions) acting as host of the Conference. The host theological institution for the Annual Conference shall be determined by majority vote at the Annual Business meeting. The C.T.S.A. encourages ecumenical hosting where at all possible, with various theological institutions working in co-operation. The hosting institution or institutions must be either accredited by the Association of Theological Schools or affiliated with at least one of the Churches/Organizations that are members of the Canadian Council of Churches**.**
4. Participation in the Conference is open to all members of the C.T.S.A. who are required by the National Committee to pay the necessary registration fee and have done so. The Conference shall recognize two categories of participants:
   1. Delegates - A delegate is the official representative from a theological institution, and is accorded the right to vote at the Annual Business Meeting. The delegate shall have the cost of her/his transportation, accommodation, and most meals while participating in the Conference included in the registration fee.

Each theological institution with a full time student body of seventy-five (75) full-time equivalents (as defined by the Association of Theological Schools in Canada and the United States) or more may send one or two delegates. Each theological institution with a student body of under seventy-five (75) full-time equivalents may send one delegate.

Observers - A theological institution may not have an observer attend a conference without also having a delegate in attendance. Afterwhich, each theological institution may send as many observers as it chooses. The observer will not be considered as the official representative, and shall not have voting rights at the Annual Business Meeting. The Annual Business Meeting shall be closed to observers unless opened in accordance with Section IX Paragraph A.

Observers may be nominated for the National Committee and may participate in the regional meeting, but may neither vote nor make nominations for the National Committee.

Observers shall secure their own travel, and the cost of their participation in the Conference shall include most meals and accommodation.

1. At each Annual Conference, there shall be held one Regional Representative Meeting for each region delineated in section VII, C. Each Regional Representative Meeting shall be restricted to all members in attendance at the Annual Conference attending a theological institution in the corresponding region. The sole purpose of each Regional Representative Meeting shall be to select one nominee for the corresponding region. Each Regional Representative and alternate nominee shall be selected at each Regional Representative meeting by the delegates in attendance; provided, however, that any person not in attendance at the meeting shall not have the right to participate in the selection of the Regional Representative and alternate nominees.
2. In all instances, the National Committee shall be the final authority in all matters pertaining to the organization, planning and administration of the Annual Conference.
3. The National Committee shall encourage wherever possible, meeting facilities and accommodations which reflect social justice values such as: accessibility; Linguistic diversity; non-profit organizations vs. Commercial operations; good stewardship in terms of cost; environmental responsibility.

IX THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

1. The Annual Business Meeting, hereinafter referred to as the "Meeting", shall be held each year at the Conference to address operational issues pursuant to the general administration of the C.T.S.A. The Meeting shall be chaired by the National Committee Chair or the chair’s representative from the National Committee. The meeting shall be open to delegates and members from the National Committee with vote. The ABM shall be closed to observers unless the ABM moves to open the meeting to the observers in which situation observers will be permitted to attend with voice but no vote for the duration of the said ABM.
2. The Meeting shall have the authority to determine any matters related to the C.T.S.A., and without restricting the generality of the foregoing, shall have the authority to determine the following matters:

The adoption of the previous year's Meeting's minutes.

The adoption of the Treasurer's Report.

The selection of the host theological institution for the subsequent conference.

The election of the Chairperson[s].

The election of the members of the National Committee.

Conveyance of appreciation to the outgoing National Committee.

Proposals by delegates for expenditures of C.T.S.A. finances.

Proposed amendments to the Constitution.

1. The Annual Business Meeting shall be conducted in accordance with Bourinot's Rules of Order or Robert's Rules of Order at the discretion of the National Committee Chair. At the beginning of each Annual Business Meeting the National Committee Chair shall indicate which rules are to be in effect for that Meeting.

X AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

Any member of the C.T.S.A. may propose an amendment to the Constitution by submitting the amendment in writing to the National Committee Chair at least two (2) days prior to the Annual Business Meeting and the proposed amendment shall be signed by the sponsoring member and another member of the C.T.S.A. who are in good standing.

Upon reception of the proposed amendment, the National Committee Chair shall publicly announce it, and post it in an obvious place at the Conference site. All proposed amendments shall be addressed at the Meeting for disposition. A vote of seventy-five (75) percent of Delegates in attendance at the Meeting shall determine the outcome of a proposed amendment. Once an amendment is approved by the Meeting, it shall immediately take effect.