

## **Human Rights Research and Education Centre**

### **Constitution**

#### **1. MISSION STATEMENT**

##### **Values**

1.1 The human rights of individuals and peoples represent a universal system of values upon which the activities and interventions of the Human Rights Research and Education Centre are based. These values include:

- Human dignity;
- Equality;
- Respect for fundamental freedoms;
- Social justice and the right of each person to economic, psychological, physical and democratic security;
- The right of peoples to self-determination.

Human rights imply a relationship of indivisibility and interdependence as between themselves.

##### **The mandate**

1.2 The Centre is a university-based research and teaching institution. As such, it promotes research training and support, and the creation and dissemination of knowledge and analysis with respect to human rights.

1.3 The Centre has obligations vis-à-vis the community. As such, it contributes to the mobilisation of knowledge while ensuring respect for, and promotion of, human rights values.

1.4 As a research institution in a university context, the Centre places great importance on the following operating principles:

- Academic freedom;
- Freedom of expression;
- Research and communication ethics;
- Respect for others;
- The principle of equity, diversity and inclusion.

1.5 The Centre has a mandate to analyse this system critically, paying particular attention to the needs of the holders of rights, and to the obligations of non-state, public and institutional actors who should ensure respect for such rights.

Human rights: a multidisciplinary concept at the heart of public policy across Canada and the world

1.6 The Centre recognizes the need to approach issues regarding human rights from a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective, in order to respect such rights and explore their requirements in a complex, interconnected world. To this end, the Centre intends to place particular emphasis on public policy questions concerning peace, migration and immigration, health, environment, international trade and investment, poverty and vulnerable groups.

### **The means**

1.7 In order to fulfil its mandate, the Centre will place particular emphasis on the following strategies:

- Its mandate will take into account the University's Strategic Plan and the guidelines for the management of the University's research centres and institutes.

- It will promote its activities through the strategic use of new communication technologies;

- It will put its mandate into action taking into account the different contexts of today's world: local, national, regional, international and global;

- It will devote a portion of its resources to the needs and research of graduate students in all disciplines and to the University of Ottawa's research institutes and centres;

- It will make sure to surround itself with partners, researchers and collaborators who are representative of its mandate;

In order to make real the desire to come to a better understanding of the global system of human rights, it will ensure that it retains both the quality and the capacity to welcome foreign students and visitors.

## **2. MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTRE**

The governance of the Centre is ensured by three bodies: the Centre's management, the Management Committee and the Advisory Board.

2.1 The Centre is managed by the Director and the Associate Director. The Director and Associate Director are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Centre, with the support of the Management Committee.

Director

2.2 The appointment and term of the Director shall meet the following conditions:

- The respective Deans of the Common Law Section, the Civil Law Section and the Faculty of Social Science, after consultation with the Management Committee and taking into account the guidelines for the management of the University's research centres and institutes, appoint the Director;

- The Director is a full-time faculty member of the University of Ottawa from one of the partner faculties;

- The term of this position is five years, renewable for a maximum of five years.

2.3 The Director is responsible for:

- Directs the research and teaching activities of the Centre and ensures its outreach;

- Oversees the development of the Centre's strategic plan and annual reports;

- Represents the Centre at conferences, events and meetings, both internally and externally;

- Ensures relations between the Centre and the various university authorities;

- Submits to the Management Committee proposals for changes to the Centre's Constitution and programs.

Associate Director

2.4 The appointment and term of the Associate Director shall be according to the following conditions:

- Appointment of an Associate Director shall be made by a temporary appointment committee constituted by the Director and the respective Deans of Common Law, Civil Law and Social Sciences (or their delegates);

- This position shall be a regular full-time indeterminate administrative position of the University of Ottawa;

2.5 The Associate Director has the following responsibilities:

- Responsible for the overall management of research activities, the human, financial, budgetary, physical and material resources of the Centre;

- Participates in the development and implementation of the Centre's areas of strategic research and development;

- Oversees the Centre's promotional activities;

- Represents the Centre at conferences, events and meetings, both internally and externally;

- Is responsible for preparing the Centre's budget;

- Assists the Director in the development and finalization of the strategic plan;
- Assists the Director in the preparation of the Centre's annual reports.

### **Joint Responsibilities of the Director and Associate Director**

#### **Strategic Plan**

2.6 Within six months of appointment, the Director, in collaboration with the Associate Director, shall prepare a five-year Strategic Plan for the Centre in relation to its research, teaching, outreach and related activities. The plan shall be presented to the assembly of Members of the Centre and to the Advisory Board for comments and recommendation. The final version of the Strategic Plan shall be approved by the Management Committee.

2.7 Copies of the final version of the Strategic Plan shall be sent to the members, the respective deans of the partner faculties, and to the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI).

#### **Annual Reports**

2.8 The Director, in collaboration with the Associate Director, is responsible with preparing an annual report to the general public that describes the Centre's most significant achievements and challenges during the past year and the major goals for the coming year (and their relation to the five-year Strategic Plan), as well as a report on the financial situation.

2.9 The Directors also prepare an annual report for the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI) according to the dates and categories of information required by this office and a report for the Faculty of Social Sciences. These reports are available for consultation by members of the Management Committee, partner faculties, and the Advisory Committee.

#### **Management Committee**

2.10 The mandate of the Management Committee is to manage the Centre. The Director and Associate Director are accountable to the Management Committee.

2.11 The Management Committee shall consist of 5 members (or 6 if the Gordon F. Henderson Chair is not also the Director). The Committee shall consist of:

- *Ex-officio* members: the Director; the Associate Director; one member of the Centre from each of the partner faculties, as determined by the faculties concerned; and, in cases where the Gordon F. Henderson Chair is not also the Director, the Gordon F. Henderson Chair in Human Rights;

- One member is selected from the student members of the Centre who reports, updates/informs, consults, communicates and collaborates with HRREC student members on relevant issues that arise at the Centre. The selection process for the Student Representative is detailed in the document "The Role of the Student Representative on the HRREC Management

Committee (MC)" (Appendix 1). The term of the position is 2 years starting July 1<sup>st</sup>;

- The Director shall act as Chair for meetings of the Management Committee;
- The Associate Director acts as the secretary of the Management Committee.

2.12 The mandate and functions of the Management Committee are to:

- Assist the Directors in overseeing the Centre's management, in implementing the Strategic Plan, in preparing Annual Reports, in fundraising and in managing Centre finances;
- Assist the Associate Director in developing policies and protocols regarding day-to-day activities, expenditure policies, fundraising and use of physical space;
- Review documents prepared by the Associate Director on financial and administrative matters;
- Assist the Directors in selecting members and in developing policies about membership;
- Assist the Directors in developing policies regarding public programming, and community outreach;
- Assist the Directors in selecting and organizing public lectures and other Centre scholarly activities;
- Assist the Directors in overseeing the promotion of research and in designing research strategies;
- Elaborate procedures and protocols to ensure transparency and to avoid conflicts of interest in the exercise of these functions;
- Approve or propose amendments to the Centre's Constitution.

2.13 The Management Committee shall meet at least once per academic session and at least twice per calendar year. The Management Committee may make binding decisions by an absolute majority of its members.

### **Advisory Board**

2.14 Composition of the Advisory Board:

The Advisory Committee consists of up to 7 members, appointed by the Management Committee upon nomination by the Director. Potential committee members are drawn from the following groups:

1. The Centre's key institutional partners (e.g., relevant centres and institutes within the University of Ottawa or other surrounding academic institutions);
2. Selected community partners who are active in the Centre's core research areas;

3. Leaders in human rights and social justice research from Canadian and international universities;

- One cannot be a member of both the Advisory Board and the Management Committee.

2.15 The mandate and functions of the Advisory Board are to :

- Provide input and feedback on the Centre's most important strategic projects, including the Centre's five-year strategic plan and fundraising efforts;

- Facilitate the outreach of the Centre within the external human rights community;

- Promote the Centre's research and education mandates.

2.16 The Advisory Board shall meet once per calendar year, either face-to-face or virtually, depending on the availability of its members. There is no quorum requirement for meetings called to address the strategic plan.

- The Advisory Board shall be convened by the Director at the suggestion of the Management Committee.

- The Advisory Board shall select a chairperson and a secretary from among its members by a simple majority.

- The Chairperson of the meeting shall be responsible for communicating the minutes of the Advisory Board meeting to the Director and the Associate Director.

- The Associate Director shall provide a copy of the minutes received to the members of the Management Committee

2.17 The term of office for members is three years, renewable twice, at the request of the member himself. The request is submitted to the Management Committee for approval.

### **Membership**

2.18 The Management Committee shall be responsible for appointing the members of the Centre. In determining the membership of the Centre, the Management Committee shall be guided by the membership provisions of the Constitution and the mission statement at the beginning of the Constitution.

2.19 The overall membership shall be divided into the following categories:

Membership is organized into the following categories:

- Academic members;

- Community members;

- Student members;

- Fellows

#### Academic members

2.20 Academic members are full-time faculty members employed at the University of Ottawa. Part-time faculty and other faculty members wishing to become members of the Centre must qualify themselves as Community members or as Student Members.

#### Community members

2.21 Community members are drawn from the broader human rights community (as described in the mission statement at the beginning of this constitution).

#### Student members

2.22 Student members may include those from the graduate student population who may or may not be working under the direction of a full-time faculty member and who are members of the Centre, or who are working on human rights and social justice projects within the Centre or on campus.

#### Fellows

2.23 HRREC Fellows are professors, researchers or professionals from organizations other than the University of Ottawa who have demonstrated excellence in human rights research. Fellows maintain academic activity and engage with the Centre in a variety of capacities, including consultation, strategic advice and project collaboration.

2.24 Nominations for all categories of membership in the Centre may be made by the candidates themselves, by the Centre, or by one of the Deans of the partner faculties. Decisions on the appointment of members shall ultimately rest with the Management Committee.

#### Roles and Responsibilities of Members

2.25 Members are responsible for actively contributing to the mission of the Centre by undertaking a research program and outreach activities and for ensuring visibility for the Centre in their publications, research and outreach activities and funding applications related to human rights. Members also contribute to teaching activities organized or supported by the Centre and lead initiatives to implement human rights principles and research in public policy.

HRREC members are welcomed into the Center for a period of three years and, as of January 2020, are asked to participate in or contribute to at least three (3) activities or events per year. This is intended to ensure greater member participation in our initiatives and to encourage more opportunities for networking and connections among colleagues and researchers.

2.26 The languages used at the Centre are French and English.

## Amendments to the Constitution

2.27 The Director or any member of the Management Committee may propose amendments to this Constitution.

2.28 Any proposed amendment must clearly indicate the current constitution in its entirety and the proposed new wording or provisions.

2.29 The proposed amendment shall be presented to the Management Committee for such comments and suggestions as they deem appropriate.

2.30 The proposed amendment may be amended, as the proponent deems appropriate, in response to the comments and suggestions made by the Management Committee, and properly submitted (as set out in this Part) for adoption.

2.31 To be adopted, the proposed amendment must be approved by at least two-thirds of all members of the Management Committee.

2.32 Once the amendment is adopted, the Associate Director will prepare a new version of the Constitution which will be distributed to the members of the Centre, the Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI) and the Deans of the partner faculties. The text will also be available on the Centre's website.

Signature

HRREC DIRECTOR

HRREC Assistant DIRECTOR