

# GHANAIAN UNION OF MANITOBA INC.



## CONSTITUTION



# **GHANAIAN UNION OF MANITOBA INC. CONSTITUTION**

As amended in Winnipeg, Manitoba on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021

## **PREAMBLE**

The Ghanaian Union of Manitoba Inc. is a non-profit organization created by and for Ghanaians and people of Ghanaian heritage residing in Manitoba. Our purpose is to promote solidarity among Ghanaians in Manitoba and to propagate Ghanaian and African culture.

## **SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION**

The constitutional order established in this instrument shall be the ruling document of Ghanaian Union of Manitoba Inc.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **Article 1 – Name**

The name of the organization shall be known as “Ghanaian Union of Manitoba Inc.”

### **Article 2 – Definitions**

1. The Ghanaian Union of Manitoba Inc. is also referred to as “GUM”.
2. "Ghana" refers to the sovereign state on the west coast of Africa.
3. "Ghanaian" for the purpose of the organization means:
  - a. a person born in Ghana or
  - b. a person born of parent(s) with citizenship from Ghana or
  - c. a person who has legally acquired citizenship from Ghana or
  - d. a person of Ghanaian heritage/ancestry or
  - e. the spouse of a Ghanaian as described herein under (a), (b), (c) and (d).
4. "Executive" means the governing body or the elected members of the governing body of GUM.
5. “Fiscal Year” is the period from January to December of each calendar year.
6. “Dues” refers to the full annual dues without a rebate.

### **Article 3 – Union Goals**

1. To promote unity among Ghanaians in Manitoba, support its membership, protect the common interests of its members and pursue activities of mutual interest and benefit.
2. To encourage goodwill and understanding between Ghanaians and Manitobans by participating in cultural, social and educational programs.
3. To cooperate with other groups and organizations having similar aims and objectives.



4. To encourage cooperation and support between GUM and organizations serving Ghanaian students in Manitoba e.g. Ghana Students Union of Manitoba as well as other Ghanaian organizations in Canada and abroad.
5. To keep Ghanaians informed about events of national interest by keeping in touch with the Ghana High Commission in Ottawa, Ghanaian Consulates in Canada as well as other Ghanaian organizations in Canada and abroad.
6. To mediate internal differences among community members when approached by individuals concerned, whenever possible.
7. To engage in activities that will assist in financing and supporting community projects in Ghana and in the Ghanaian community in Manitoba.
8. To establish a Foundation as a subsidiary body of GUM with the latter having oversight responsibility. The Foundation shall:
  - a. report to GUM;
  - b. assist and raise funds for charitable projects and causes.

#### **Article 4 – Membership**

1. Membership may be conferred to all Ghanaians (as defined in Article 2.3 of this Constitution) who reside in Manitoba.

#### **Types of Membership**

- Individual
  - An individual aged 18-54 years with no dependants.
- Senior
  - An individual who is at least 55 years old.
- Family
  - Parents or Guardians with dependants who are under 18 years of age.
- Student
  - Must be 18 years of age or older and
  - Must have proof of enrolment in a secondary or post-secondary educational institution.

*Note: Emancipated or independent youth 17 years of age or younger may be eligible for student membership, to be determined on a case-by-case basis.*
- Associate
  - This membership is granted to non-Ghanaians with the interest of being part of the union.
  - These members, once approved/accepted, are considered Active Members e.g., must pay their registration and annual dues.



- Honorary
  - Honorary membership may be granted to non-Ghanaians upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee on condition that such membership will not be detrimental to Ghanaian Union of Manitoba goals.
  - For Ghanaians: Honorary membership may also be granted to long-standing Active Members or Ghanaians who have made special or significant contributions.
 

*Note: A long-standing Active Member is someone who meets “the magic 105”, where your age plus years of dues payment equals 105.*
  - Decisions on this type of membership should be made in consultation with the Board of Patrons.

## Membership Status

- Active
  - A member is considered active if they have paid the one-time registration fee and their full annual dues or are in the process of paying the annual dues on a payment plan.
  - To maintain Active Membership, one has to pay their annual dues.
  - January 31<sup>st</sup> is a hard deadline for all lump sum payments.
  - For those on payment plans, applications and first payment must be received by January 31<sup>st</sup>.
 

*Note: The first payment must be up to one-third of the member’s full amount.*
  - Arrangements with the Treasurer must be honoured. Otherwise, the individual becomes Inactive.
  
- Inactive
  - A member is considered Inactive if their annual dues are not paid (in full) in a calendar year.
  - To become Active, the member must pay a reactivation fee up to double the registration fee, as well as the dues for that year.
  - Any rebates for dues payment are applicable upon reactivation of membership.

## Member Identification

- Active Members shall be issued a personalized identification card.

## Member Discipline

Disciplinary action will be taken if a member does not conform to the rules and regulations of GUM. This could include fines, suspension or termination of membership.

## Article 5 - Administration and Management

1. The running of GUM shall be vested in the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Secretary, Assistant Social Secretary, Financial Secretary, Youth Coordinator, and two Members-at-Large. The immediate Past President is on the Executive Committee but has a non-voting role.



3. A Board of Patrons consisting of no more than five persons shall be nominated and approved by the general body of GUM.
4. The following sub-groups shall exist within GUM:
  - a. **GUM Cultural Group** - culture and dance
  - b. **Golden Club** - see to the welfare and mental well-being of members (50+ years).
  - c. **GUM Choir** - music and performance
  - d. **Youth Group** - see to the welfare of youth (up to 25 years)
5. The Executive shall call for the appointment of the following Committees as well as other Committees as needed.

### **Standing Committees**

- Constitutional Review
- Election Committee
- Post-Election Transition
- Membership
- Independence Day
- Social Media
- Finance/Fundraising
- Disciplinary
- Educational
- Folklorama
- Youth Committee (Youth are defined as anyone 25 years of age and younger)
  - Note: This committee is set up to organize events for the youth group; this is the governing committee for the youth group, chaired by the Youth Coordinator*
- Board of Patrons

### **Ad-Hoc Committees**

- Entertainment
- Social and welfare

### **Committee Membership**

Only Active Members of GUM are eligible to serve on Committees. Membership will depend on the tasks and terms of reference for the specific Committee. There must be at least one Executive Member on each Committee except the Election Committee. Committee members are nominated and approved at a General Meeting.

### **Committee Terms of Reference**

Terms of reference should include the following:

- Committee size - must be an odd number,
- Length of term,
- Duties,
- Code of conduct (e.g., attendance, commitment, meeting expectations, etc.),



- A final report, or an annual report for committees that are ongoing
- Any other terms as needed.

### **Article 6 - Term of Office**

1. The Executive shall be elected for a three-year term.
2. A member of the Executive can only serve in the same position for two consecutive terms.
3. After serving in the same position for two consecutive terms, an Executive member can be elected to a different position.
4. An elected Executive member can resign their position by tendering in a resignation letter to the Executive Committee specifying their final day in office.
5. An Executive Member can run for a different position by first resigning their current position before contesting in the next election
6. The **Board of Patrons shall serve for a period of four years.**

### **Article 7 – Meetings**

1. Meetings may be held in person, virtually, or both. Voting on the agenda may proceed as long as a quorum is met.
2. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held following the end of each fiscal year. All Executives must report on their portfolio at the AGM and a financial report must be presented.
3. General Meetings shall be held at least six times a year, including the AGM.
4. Executive Meetings shall be held at least six times a year.
5. The Executive may call for Emergency Executive Meetings or Emergency General Meetings as needed.
6. Any member may bring forth an issue they believe is an emergency to the Executive. The Executive shall decide whether an issue constitutes an emergency. Generally, an Emergency Meeting should only be called due to unforeseen circumstances to consider matters of an emergent or urgent nature. This could include if there is imminent danger to the health, safety, or integrity of the organization or its members.
7. Emergency Executive Meetings:
  - a. To call an Emergency Executive Meeting, a quorum consisting of a majority of the Executive Members including either the President or Vice-President must be met.



- b. There must be a minimum of 24 hours notice prior to an Emergency Executive Meeting.

8. Emergency General Meetings:

- a. To call an Emergency General Meeting, a quorum consisting of a majority of the Executive Members including either the President or Vice-President must be met.
- b. If the Emergency General Meeting is to be held virtually, there must be at least 48 hours' notice to the general membership.
- c. If the Emergency General Meeting is to be held in person, there must be at least three days' notice to the general membership.

9. Committee meeting schedules shall be determined by each Committee.

10. Quorums

- a. At General Meetings a quorum shall consist of 25% of the Active membership excluding Executive Members.
- b. At Executive Meetings and Emergency Executive Meetings, a quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the Executive members including either the President or Vice-President
- c. At Committee Meetings, a quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the members including the Committee Chair.
- d. For Constitutional amendment changes to pass, a quorum shall consist of 50% of the Active membership excluding Executive Members.

11. To be eligible to vote at a general meeting, a person must be:

- a. An Active Member, and
- b. Eighteen years of age or older.

12. An agenda should be circulated at least three days before the meeting.

13. Minutes of a meeting should be circulated within four weeks after the meeting is held.

**Article 8 – Voting and Procedures for Election**

1. Elections shall be conducted by the Election Committee.
2. A voters list shall be compiled by the Election Committee based on a member's Active status on the first day of the Election process.
3. Elections shall be held in May of the election year.
4. To be eligible to vote, a person must be:
  - a. An Active Member,
  - b. Eighteen years of age or over, and
  - c. On the voters list.



5. Before a general election all payments on a payment plan must have been honoured, otherwise the member is ineligible to vote.
6. Proxy voting is permitted. The person casting the proxy vote must meet the eligibility requirements as stated in Article 8.4.
7. To be eligible to become an Executive member of the Union, a person must:
  - a. be an Active Member for the past two years;
  - b. have attended at least 50% of General Meetings for the past two years;
  - c. be willing to uphold the terms of the Constitution and By-laws;
  - d. not have been suspended or disciplined by GUM;
  - e. not be convicted of an indictable offence;
  - f. be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident in Manitoba.
8. A person can be nominated for multiple positions if qualified.

### **Article 9 – Fees & Donations**

1. The fiscal year shall run from January to December.
2. Each new member of 18 years or older shall pay a one-time registration fee of \$10.00.
3. An Inactive Member who would like to return to Active membership must pay a reactivation fee up to double the registration fee, as well as the dues for that year.
4. Dues for each type of member are as follows:

<b>Membership Type</b>	<b>Annual Dues (After July 15th.)</b>	<b>After Rebate (Before July 15th.)</b>
Children under 16 yrs.	No fee	No fee
Family Kids (16 & 17 yrs.)	\$2.00	\$2.00
Family Adults	\$75.00	\$60.00
Individual/Associate	\$75.00	\$60.00
Senior	\$60.00	\$50.00
Student	\$30.00	\$30.00
Honorary	No fee	No fee

5. To be eligible for the rebate, dues must be paid in full by July 15<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year.



- a. All those on payment plans who pay in full by July 15<sup>th</sup> are eligible for the rebate. For plans with payments on or after July 16<sup>th</sup>, members will pay the full amount.
  - b. Those who pay the lump sum by January 31<sup>st</sup> will pay the rebate amount.
6. Dues can be paid in installments upon consultation with the Treasurer.
  7. Donations are accepted at all times and can be include in-kind, monetary, or material contributions.
  8. Funds may be solicited by the Executive when necessary.
  9. Financial statements/reports shall be presented at all Executive and General Meetings.

### **Article 10 – Constitutional Amendments**

1. The Constitution and By-laws must be reviewed every five years.
2. The Constitution and/or By-laws may be amended by the following procedure:
  - a. The Executive Committee shall call a General Meeting and shall circulate the proposed amendment to all members no less than seven days before the general meeting at which the amendment shall be voted upon.
  - b. The proposed amendment shall be discussed and voted upon at the general meeting.
3. In the event of conflict and questions of interpretation regarding this Constitution and By-laws, the current Executive shall provide the final interpretation in consultation with the past members of the Constitution Committee and/or past Executive Members.



## **GUM BY-LAWS**

### **By-law 400 – Membership**

#### **401: Code of Conduct**

Members will abide by the following:

1. adhere to any provision of the Constitution, By-laws, and written policies of GUM;
2. must not conduct themselves in a way which may be detrimental to GUM;
3. not be convicted of an indictable offence.

#### **402: Termination of Membership**

Membership is terminated when:

1. the member dies;
2. a member fails to maintain qualifications for membership;
3. the member resigns by delivering a written resignation to the Executive in which case such resignation shall be effective on the date specified in the resignation;
4. the member is expelled in accordance with Section 403 below or is otherwise terminated in accordance with the Constitution or By-laws;
5. GUM is liquidated or dissolved under rules by the Companies Office.

Upon any termination of membership, the rights of the member, including any rights in the property of the organization, automatically cease to exist.

#### **403: Discipline, Suspension and Revoking Membership**

Violation of any of the items listed in Section 401 can be brought to the attention of the Executive by any member. The Executive shall have authority to fine, suspend or revoke membership of any member for any one or more of the items in Section 401 after an investigation by the Disciplinary Committee.

The Disciplinary Committee will define the modalities for suspensions and revoking of membership e.g., length of time. Fines should not exceed the equivalent of the individual annual dues and will be dependent on the seriousness of the misconduct.

In the event it is determined that a member should be suspended or expelled from membership, the Executive shall provide 21 days notice in writing (either mailed or emailed) of suspension or expulsion to the member and shall provide reasons for the proposed suspension or expulsion. The member may make written submissions to the Executive in response to the notice received within the 21-day period. In the event that no written submissions are received by the Executive, the Executive may proceed to notify the member that the member is suspended or expelled from membership. If written submissions are received in accordance with this section, the Executive will consider such submissions in arriving at a final decision and shall notify the member concerning such



final decision within a further 21 days from the date of receipt of the submissions. A suspended or expelled member can appeal through an elder member of GUM.

#### **404: Incentives for Active and Honorary Members**

Members are to communicate any of the major life changes or events below to the Executive of GUM. Events and expressions of goodwill beyond those listed below shall be left entirely to the discretion of any individual(s) who may decide to provide such functions. GUM does not organize any life changing events but will help advertise such events and send a representative on request e.g., Baby Showers, Wedding Showers, Celebrations of Life, Graduation Ceremonies and Parties, Milestone Celebrations.

##### **404-1: Life Changes or Events**

- Wedding
  - A congratulatory card.
  - A gift not exceeding the equivalent of the couple's annual membership dues.
- Birth
  - A congratulatory card.
  - A bouquet of flowers.
  - A gift not exceeding the equivalent of an individual member's annual dues.
- Birthdays
  - Youth attaining the age of 18 years.
    - Birthday card.
    - Gift card - not exceeding one third of an individual member's annual dues.
  - Attaining the age of 50 years, and every 10 years thereafter.
    - Birthday card
    - A gift not exceeding the equivalent of an individual member's annual dues.
- Sickness (hospitalization)
  - A get-well card.
  - Flowers or their equivalent e.g., fruit basket.
  - Flowers or their equivalent should not exceed the value of an individual member's annual dues.
- Funerals
  - Death of an Active or Honorary Member
    - Beneficiary: Next of kin
  - Death of a spouse, mother, father or child (biological or adopted) of an Active or Honorary Member
    - Beneficiary: Member

In the case of a death as specified above the following goodwill shall be extended:

- a. A cash token equivalent to the sum of two individual members' annual dues.
- b. A bottle of gin, an equivalent spirit, or non-alcoholic option.



- c. A card of condolence.
- d. A bouquet of flowers.

*Note: The location of death does not matter. In addition, the total amount of items b, c, and d should not exceed the equivalent of an individual member's annual dues.*

#### **404-2: Education**

- Graduation from High School, Community College, Trade School or University (Bachelor's degree)
  - Gift not exceeding the equivalent of half a student member's annual dues
- High School graduating students of the Cultural Group
  - Gift not exceeding the equivalent of half of an individual member's annual dues.
- Obtaining a Master's degree
  - Gift not exceeding the equivalent of a student member's annual dues.
- Attaining a PhD Degree
  - Gift not exceeding the equivalent of an individual member's annual dues.

#### **404-3: Events**

- Active Member discounts at events:
  - Active Members get a discount of up to 50% on tickets.
- Annual Members-Only Appreciation Event:
  - All Active Members will have free entrance.

#### **404-4: Member Awards**

- Annual Community Awards
  - Recipients receive a plaque (size: 5 x 7 in.) not exceeding the equivalent of half an Individual member's annual dues.
- Other Awards
  - Annual Meeting Attendance and Punctuality Award (excluding members of the Executive)
    - A gift not exceeding the equivalent of one-third an individual member's annual dues.
  - Milestones for Active Membership Anniversary Award
    - For 10, 20, and 30 years of Active Membership
    - The anniversary years are based on a member's Active status within the period being calculated. Example: if you have been Active for seven out of the last 10 years then you would have accumulated seven years towards the Membership Anniversary.
      - Bronze Anniversary: 10-year pin + Gift Certificate
        - Total amount must not exceed the equivalent of an Individual member's annual dues.



- Silver Anniversary: 20-year pin + Engraved pen
  - Total amount must not exceed the equivalent of the sum of two individual member's annual dues.
- Gold Anniversary: 30-year pin + Plaque and Canadian Mint Coin
  - Total amount must not exceed the equivalent of the sum of three individual member's annual dues.

#### **404-5: Migration**

- Active Member moving away
  - A gift not exceeding the equivalent of the member's annual dues.
- New Community Member(s)
  - Contact the new member (e.g., via letter, phone, and/or in-person visit).
  - Present a gift (e.g., a bouquet of flowers or fruit basket). Value should not exceed the equivalent of an individual member's annual dues.

*Note: Not applicable to international students.*

#### **By-law 500 – Administration and Management**

1. After an election, all members of the Executive Committee must surrender all records, money and property belonging to GUM to their successor or a person designated by the new Executive Committee by the next general meeting. Outgoing Executive Members shall obtain a declaration to the effect that the surrender has been complete, satisfactory, and that they are not indebted to GUM.
  - a. In the event of resignation or termination, this process is to take place within two weeks of leaving office.
2. All Executive Members must fulfill the duties for which they were elected. These include:
  - a. Being present at meetings as per By-law 500.5.
  - b. Fulfilling their roles as per By-laws 501 to 510.
  - c. Working with other Executive Members to advance GUM's values and goals.
3. If an Executive Member fails to fulfill their duties or if a complaint arises, the following actions shall be taken:
  - a. The Disciplinary Committee investigates the complaint.
  - b. If the complaint is valid and the member's actions are found to be detrimental to GUM, the President gives a first verbal warning. The date and time of the verbal warning must be documented.
  - c. If the verbal warning is ignored, a second warning will be given in writing.
  - d. If the issue persists after the second warning, the Executive Member shall be made to resign.
4. In the case where the complaint is made against the President, the immediate Past President in consultation with the Patrons shall take the actions ascribed to the President as stated in 500.3. In the case where the Immediate Past President is not



able to perform this function, the Patrons shall take the actions ascribed to the President as stated in 500.3.

5. Absenteeism at Executive Committee Meetings:
  - a. Executive Members must attend at least two-thirds of all Executive Committee Meetings within each 12-month period after being elected to a position.
  - b. Failure to attend two-thirds of Executive Committee meetings in a 12-month period will result in disciplinary action as per By-law 500.3.
  - c. If an Executive Member is unable to attend a meeting, the President or the Secretary should be informed ahead of the meeting.
  - d. If an Executive Member knows they will be absent for an extended period of time, they must discuss a leave of absence with the entire Executive.
6. In the case where the absent member is the President, the immediate Past President in consultation with the Patrons shall take the actions ascribed to the President as stated in 500.3. In the case where the Immediate Past President is not able to perform this function, the Patrons shall take the actions ascribed to the President as stated in 500.3.
7. Removal of Executive Members:
  - a. Following removal or forced resignation, an Executive Member will be given 48 hours to surrender all records, money and property belonging to GUM to the President or a person designated by the Executive Committee and they shall obtain a declaration to the effect that the surrender has been complete, satisfactory, and that they are not indebted to GUM.
  - b. Once an Executive Member has been removed from office, they are not eligible to run for any Executive position for the next five years.
8. Unless authorized at a General Meeting, the Executive Committee has no power:
  - a. to borrow an amount exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) once every twelve months;
  - b. to spend an amount exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500.00) over the amount approved in the budget for any function or event.
  - c. to engage in any investment activities.
9. The Financial Secretary shall present a budget for the upcoming fiscal year at the end of the previous fiscal year.
10. The Executive shall see to it that GUM is registered with the Manitoba Companies Office and that GUM's Annual Return of Information is submitted as required by the Manitoba Companies Office (which is by June 1<sup>st</sup> of each year).
11. The Ghanaian Union of Manitoba letterhead, seal and stationery shall be used solely for GUM business.
12. Electronic communications must be made through official GUM domains.



13. The Executive must endeavour to inform the General Membership about major dealings concerning GUM.
14. The Executive must follow all Provincial and Federal privacy legislation; information collected must not be given out without the consent of the member concerned.
  - a. Consent forms will be generated as needed for specific situations (i.e., photo taking, emails, newsletters, etc.).
  - b. All personal information shall be protected by electronic and physical means.
  - c. Retention of personal information should abide by all municipal, provincial, and federal laws and regulations. This includes retaining copies of documents for at least 10 years before secure disposal.
15. The Executive Members must represent the interests, aims and objectives of GUM and maintain a good working relationship with each other.
16. The Executive must actively encourage people to volunteer for GUM, especially the general membership
17. All Executive Members must report directly to the President.
18. In the event of a vacant Executive position, the rest of the Executive should endeavour to fill the responsibilities of that role until the position is filled.
19. There are four positions on the Executive Committee that have signing authority; President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
  - a. Cheques and withdrawals shall require two of these signatories. One of the signatories must be the President or Vice-President.
20. GUM Executive, volunteers and Committee Members are encouraged to undertake some form of training to help with their roles. Examples of training include:
  - a. [Robert's Rules of Order](#)
  - b. Board/Executive Committee Management
  - c. Financial Reporting
  - d. Organizational Development
  - e. Community Engagement

## **Executive Positions**

### **501 – The President**

The President shall:

1. Be the Chief Officer of the Ghanaian Union of Manitoba.
2. Chair GUM meetings, except where a separate chair has been designated.
3. Co-sign cheques with the Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer.
4. Co-sign binding documents (e.g., contracts) with the Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer.



5. Be the spokesperson and represent GUM unless otherwise designated by the Executive Committee or by the members at a General Meeting.
6. Work hand-in-hand with the Vice-President.

### **502 – The Vice-President**

The Vice-President shall:

1. Act as President in the absence of the President.
2. Co-sign cheques or binding documents with the Secretary, Treasurer or President.
3. Work hand-in-hand with the President.
4. Chair at least two Standing Committees of GUM (e.g., Independence Day and Social Media).
5. Serve the rest of the term as the President in the event of resignation, retirement, death or dismissal of the sitting President.
6. Act as the spokesperson and represent GUM where necessary.

### **503 – The Secretary**

The Secretary shall:

1. Co-sign cheques or binding documents with the President, Vice-President or Treasurer.
2. Be in charge of all correspondence and ensure that the appropriate members on the Executive are notified.
3. Liaise with the Social Media committee and ensure consistent messaging across all platforms.
4. Uphold the legal requirements of all documents in their possession.
5. Ensure meetings are effectively organized and minutes recorded.
6. Keep and circulate minutes of meetings within four weeks after the meeting is held.
7. Maintain effective records (names, addresses and phone numbers) of all members and update such records on an on-going basis.

### **504 – The Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall:

1. Collect and receive membership fees, dues and other monetary contributions made physically or electronically.
2. Issue receipts physically or electronically upon payment of monies and keep an accurate record of all payments.



3. Maintain effective records of all Active and Inactive Members and update such records on an on-going basis.
4. Deposit or cause to be deposited in a Chartered Bank, Credit Union or Treasury Branch all monies belonging to GUM.
5. Process payment requests/invoices and arrange payments as appropriate.
6. Reconcile monthly bank statements with GUM records.
7. Co-sign cheques with the President, Vice-President or Secretary.
8. Chair the Finance/Fundraising Committee.
9. Have familiarity with bookkeeping and a spreadsheet program or application.
10. Work hand-in-hand with other members of the Executive Committee, especially the Financial Secretary.

#### **505 – The Financial Secretary**

The Financial Secretary shall:

1. Prepare an annual budget.
2. Prepare the annual financial report and present it at the Annual General Meeting.
3. Keep records of all income and expenditure.
4. Keep records and review all financial dealings of GUM.
5. Present current financial statements at Executive Meetings and General Meetings.
6. Be a member of the Finance/Fundraising Committee.
7. Work hand-in-hand with other members of the Executive Committee, especially the Treasurer.
8. Have familiarity with bookkeeping and a spreadsheet program or application.

#### **506 – The Social Secretary**

The Social Secretary shall:

1. Be in charge of all social events and other recreational activities.
2. Chair the Entertainment Committee.
3. Arrange facilities for GUM events and meetings.



4. Liaise with the Secretary and the Social Media committee and ensure consistent messaging across all platforms, especially concerning events.
5. Work hand-in-hand with other members of the Executive Committee, especially the Assistant Social Secretary.

### **507 – The Assistant Social Secretary**

The Assistant Social Secretary shall:

1. Undertake tasks as assigned by the Social Secretary to ensure the smooth running of events.
2. Act as the Social Secretary in the absence of the Social Secretary.
3. Serve the rest of the term as the Social Secretary in the event of resignation, retirement, death, or dismissal of the sitting Social Secretary.
4. Be a member of the Entertainment Committee and perform any other duties assigned by the Executive Committee.
5. Work hand-in-hand with other members of the Executive Committee, especially the Social Secretary.

### **508 – The Youth Coordinator**

The Youth Coordinator shall:

1. Chair the Youth Committee.
2. Liaise with Ghanaian students and student groups in Manitoba.
3. Develop relationships with other youth groups.
4. Organize events/outreach specifically for youth in the community.
5. Be in charge of youth member recruitment.
6. Report on youth issues and concerns to the Executive Committee.
7. Work hand-in-hand with other members of the Executive Committee, especially the chair of the Membership Committee.

### **509 – Members-At-Large**

There will be two Members-At-Large on the Executive Committee.

The Members-At-Large:

1. Must each chair at least one Standing Committee. The Membership Committee must be chaired by one Member-At-Large.
2. Shall be in charge of member recruitment.



3. Shall perform other duties assigned to them by the Executive Committee.
4. Shall work hand-in-hand with other members of the Executive Committee, especially the Youth Coordinator.

### **510 – The Immediate Past President**

The Immediate Past President shall:

1. Be on the Executive as a non-voting member.
2. Be a member of the Disciplinary Committee.
3. Be the go-to person for questions on procedures and established precedence.

### **511 – Committees and Groups**

Standing Committees:

1. Constitutional Review
  - a. Review and update the GUM Constitution and By-laws.
  - b. Bring to the General Meeting changes required in the GUM Constitution and By-laws.
  - c. Receive suggestions and feedback from the General Membership on changes to the GUM Constitution and By-laws.
2. Election
  - a. Organize and execute GUM elections.
  - b. Ensure elections as free, fair, and transparent.
3. Post-Election Transition
  - a. See to the smooth transition from the old Executive to the new Executive.
  - b. Members should only include all the out-going and in-coming Executive Members.
4. Membership
  - a. Recruit and maintain GUM membership.
5. Independence Day
  - a. See to the planning and execution of the Ghana Independence Day Celebration.
6. Social Media
  - a. Maintain GUM's presence on social media sites.
  - b. Respond to questions posed through social media.
  - c. Advertise GUM and other community events on social media.
7. Finance/Fundraising
  - a. Raise funds for GUM.
  - b. Seek and apply for funding through funding agencies including federal, provincial, and municipal opportunities.



c. Contribute to financial reports.

#### 8. Disciplinary

a. Examine alleged breaches of discipline within GUM and make a formal judgment or decision about the problem or disputed matter.

#### 9. Educational

a. Work towards the establishment of Ghanaian culture classes e.g., language and dance.

b. Educate membership on Ghanaian culture and cuisine e.g., storytelling, cooking classes.

c. Games e.g., ampe, tsaskele (Ghana's version of baseball), stay.

#### 10. Folklorama

a. See to the planning and execution of Ghana's pavilion.

#### 11. Youth Committee

a. Manage and contribute to planning of events and activities for youth.

b. Work hand-in-hand with other Committees especially the Social Media Committee.

#### 12. Board of Patrons

a. Act as advisors to the Executive Committee.

b. Assist in public relations duties to promote the aims and objectives of GUM.

c. Assist in fundraising activities.

d. Assist the Disciplinary Committee when needed.

#### Ad-Hoc Committees:

Examples include:

1. Entertainment

2. Social and welfare

#### Sub-Groups:

##### 1. Cultural Group

a. This is a performing group.

b. Promotes Ghanaian culture through music and dance.

c. Performs at events based on invitation to showcase Ghanaian culture.

d. Made up of different age groups:

i. Kids: 0 - 10 years

ii. Youth: 11 - 24 years

iii. Adults: 25+ years

##### 2. Golden Club

a. Membership is open to adults 50 years of age and older.

b. See to the welfare and mental well-being of members.

c. Educates the general GUM membership on retirement, wills, old age security (OAS), pension plans and end-of-life preparations.



- d. Educates and inform members about seniors' programs.
3. GUM Choir
    - a. Membership is open to youth and adults.
    - b. This is a performing group.
    - c. Promotes Ghanaian culture and performs at events based on invitations to showcase Ghanaian music and performance.
  4. GUM Youth
    - a. Governed by the Youth Committee.
    - b. Membership is open to youth 25 years of age and younger.
    - c. See to the welfare and mental well-being of youth members.
    - d. Collaborate and reach out to other youth groups.

### **By-law 600 – Terms of Office**

1. The term of office for an Executive Member begins at the next general meeting after an election.
  - a. In the case of a by-election, the term of office begins immediately and lasts until the next General Election for that position.
2. Each member of the Executive Committee shall hold office for a term of three years.
3. At the end of a term an election will be held. If no suitable nominees come forth, the outgoing Executive Member may continue in the same position until a suitable replacement is found.
4. In the event that no suitable replacement is found for a particular position or the outgoing Executive Member does not wish to stay on, the position may remain vacant until a by-election is held.
5. An Executive Member can hold the same office for only two consecutive terms.
  - a. *Example: A President can be elected from 2021 to 2024 and then from 2024 to 2027. After which they can no longer be elected as a President for 2027 to 2030.*
6. After the second term of office, an Executive Member can be elected to a different position if so desired.
  - a. *Using the President in the example above, from 2027 to 2030 the person can be elected to a different position e.g., Secretary or Treasurer.*
7. To ensure continuity, all outgoing Executive Members, after their term of office, shall offer guidance to their successor as needed.
8. A member of the Executive Committee shall be removed from office for violating the tenets or the Code of Conduct.



9. In the event that a member is unable to complete their term of office a by-election shall be called to fill the position.

### **By-law 700 – Meetings**

1. Meetings should follow [Robert's Rules of Order](#).
2. Meetings must be held in a publicly accessible location and where possible, should offer virtual options (e.g., Zoom, teleconferencing, or recording meetings for distribution) to encourage participation.
3. The GUM Annual General Meeting must be held once per fiscal year on a date fixed by the Executive. The meeting must be held within three months after the fiscal year ends.
4. Notice of the Annual General Meeting, and any General Meeting, shall be circulated to all members at least 14 days in advance of the meeting. There must be at least one reminder three days before the meeting.
5. At General Meetings, snacks and drinks (excluding alcohol) will be provided.
6. Executive Members are expected to present a brief report on their portfolios at Executive and General Meetings.
7. Lateness and/or absenteeism by members to Executive and General meetings is discouraged. Members who miss meetings are encouraged to read the subsequent meeting minutes.
8. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, the Chair or the Secretary should be informed ahead of time. All regrets shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.
9. If a quorum is met, any decision made at the meeting is binding. If quorum is not met, issues may be discussed but decisions made are not binding.
10. Any of the Ghanaian languages can be used to express one's opinion at meetings provided an interpreter in said language is available at such meetings.
11. All Active Members in good standing shall have voting privileges at General Meetings. Reusable voting cards will be provided to each Active Member in good standing upon arrival. For virtual meetings, alternative measures such as hand raising or typing in responses shall be used.
12. Any vote held at an Executive Meeting, General Meeting, Standing Committee, or Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting shall be conducted by the respective Chairperson and results will be determined by a simple majority of the votes cast by Active Members.
13. Each Active Member is entitled to one vote. In the event of a tie, the motion does not pass.



- a. If the motion does not pass a new proposal must be submitted and can then be voted on.

## **By-law 800 – Elections: Voting and Procedures**

### **Elections**

1. The full set of rules and guidelines relating to elections can be found in the **General Election Procedure Guidelines** document. Salient points from that document are included herein, including the method for voting in elections.
2. All elections held by GUM shall be free, fair, and transparent.
3. Executive Committee members shall be elected in a General Election.
  - a. If there is a vacant position following a General Election a by-election shall be held at a General Meeting to fill the vacancy.
4. General Elections shall be organized by the Election Committee.
5. The Election Committee shall be formed at least three months prior to a general election.
6. All Active Members 18 years of age and older are eligible to be members of the Election Committee except those running for an Executive position in the election for which the Committee is formed.
7. All persons who wish to run in a General Election must:
  - a. Meet the criteria outlined in Article 8.7 of the GUM Constitution.
  - b. Identify another Active Member to sponsor their nomination
    - i. Persons interested in running for President, Secretary, Treasurer, or Financial Secretary require two sponsors.
  - c. Fill in a nomination form.
8. Commencing in 2021 and every third year thereafter, there shall be an election for the positions of President, Treasurer, Assistant Social Secretary, Youth Coordinator, and Member-at-Large-1.
  - a. Elections will be held in 2021, 2024, 2027, 2030, etc.
9. Commencing in 2022 and every third year thereafter, there shall be an election for the positions of Vice-President, Financial Secretary, Social Secretary, Secretary and Member-at-Large-2.
  - a. Elections will be held 2022, 2025, 2028, 2031, etc.



10. The following shows the staggering of the various Executive positions:

Every three years (starting 2021)	Every three years (starting 2022)
President	Vice-President
Treasurer	Financial Secretary
Assistant Social Secretary	Social Secretary
Youth Coordinator	Secretary
Member-at-Large-1	Member-at-Large-2

11. In the event of a by-election, candidates wishing to run must still meet requirements listed under Article 8.7.
12. Nomination of candidates will be accepted on the day of the by-election without a separate nomination form.
13. Candidates require another Active Member present at the by-election to second their nomination.
14. If a candidate nominates themselves for President, Secretary, Treasurer or Financial Secretary, they require two Active Members to second their nomination.

### Voting

1. Each position will be identified by a coloured ballot form in a General Election.
2. Each Active Member 18 years of age and older is entitled to one vote to be cast on the provided ballot forms.  
*Note: Active Members must be registered before the start of the election period. Registration on the day of an election is prohibited.*
3. Proxy voting is permitted. The person casting the proxy vote must meet the eligibility requirements as stated in Article 8.4.
4. To vote by proxy the **Proxy Voting Form** must be filled in and submitted to the Elections Committee.
5. It is the responsibility of the member who requires a proxy to discuss their voting preferences with the person who will vote for them and ensure they trust them to execute the correct choice.
6. General Elections and by-elections are decided by a simple majority.



7. In the event of a tie the current President will draw the winner from a hat.

### **By-law 900 – Finances, Fees and Donations**

1. All GUM funds shall be deposited in a chartered financial institution as approved by GUM.
2. Banking and cheque signatures:
  - a. There shall be four signatories (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) to GUM accounts.
  - b. Cheques and withdrawals shall require two of these signatories. One of the signatories must be the President or Vice-President.
3. Limit of indebtedness:
  - a. The Executive shall not arrange for overdraft protection, a line of credit, or a loan exceeding \$1000.00 (within a 12-month period) without approval at a General Meeting
  - b. Unless authorized at a General Meeting, the Executive Committee has no power:
    - i. to spend an amount exceeding \$500.00 over the approved budget for any function or event; or
    - ii. to engage in any investment activities.
4. Sources of funding:
  - a. Membership dues
  - b. Donations
  - c. Grants
  - d. Wills and bequeaths
  - e. Investment activities
  - f. Any other funding
5. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall document all monies received by GUM and how they are disbursed.
6. The Executive shall coordinate all finance and audit activities.
7. The Finance/Fundraising Committee is primarily responsible for identifying potential funding sources. All members, including the Executive, are encouraged to identify potential funding sources and alert the Executive of these sources.
8. A financial report must be presented at the GUM Annual General Meeting.
9. GUM finances must be reviewed at least once every two years by an external entity (i.e. outside of the Executive) through one of the following processes:
  - a. Financial review
  - b. Partial audit
  - c. Full audit



Every effort shall be made to find a volunteer to conduct these reviews.

10. The external entity shall be approved at a General Meeting. The external entity shall have access to all books and financial documents of GUM. A report of the findings shall be presented at the General Meeting.

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THIS CONSTITUTION IS HEREBY ADOPTED AS THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE GHANAIAN UNION OF MANITOBA INC. BY THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING THIS 31<sup>ST</sup>. DAY OF JANUARY TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-ONE IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD IN THE CITY OF WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, CANADA.

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