

**Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism  
The University of Western Ontario**

**Constitution**

The Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism is an established forum for interdisciplinary research and advanced study into theoretical problems and practices that cross major fields and sub-disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Since its creation in 1986, as Canada's only centre for interdisciplinary theoretical research, housed between the Faculties of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Information and Media Studies, the Centre has come to be internationally recognized for its approach to "theory" as a distinct object of inquiry with its own intellectual genealogies and discursive history.

**I.     General**

General amendments to the rules of procedure contained in the Centre's Constitution shall require the approval of a two thirds majority of the Core Faculty. Every other change shall be approved by a simple majority of those present at a meeting and voting. Changes to the Constitution will be approved at the annual meeting of the Centre's Core Faculty.

**II.    Director of the Centre**

- a)     The Director of the Centre must be a member of the Core Faculty of the Centre, and shall be appointed for a period of three years, following the provisions of Letter of Understanding E of the 2006-2010 Collective Agreement for UWOFA-represented faculty. Upon the recommendation of a Selection Review Committee, agreement by the Steering and Advisory Committee and Provost, a Director may be reappointed for a second term normally of three years.
- b)     The Director of the Centre shall be an ex officio member of all committees within the Centre.
- c)     The Director shall have overall responsibility for the conduct and efficient operation of the Centre, including the Centre's operating and student funding budgets, and for its research and graduate education mandates.
- d)     The Director shall be responsible for communication concerning the Centre with the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS), with other appropriate individuals outside SGPS, and with other entities within the University.

**III.   Members of the Centre**

### 1. Membership

The Centre is composed of all persons appointed as Core Faculty as defined below.

### 2. Eligibility

Members are full-time faculty who are appointed to the Centre from academic units within the University and the Affiliated University Colleges. Membership in the Core Faculty is granted by the Graduate Studies Committee and the Director, and membership is required for a faculty member to act as primary supervisor of Master's (M.A.) and Doctoral (Ph.D.) Theses.

To qualify for membership faculty should have some previous involvement with the activities of the Centre. This involvement may take the form of: a) teaching a course for the Centre; b) acting as examiner for a Centre MA or PhD thesis exam. All faculty appointed to the Centre must be eligible to be appointed to the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

To maintain membership in the Centre, faculty have to remain active in the Centre's mission of graduate education and professional training. Active involvement may include: a) teaching a course for the Centre on a periodic basis; b) participation in the mentoring and supervision (as supervisor, second reader, or examiner) of Centre students; c) participation in the professionalization seminar; d) participation in service and research work on behalf of the Centre.

In early January of each year, the Director shall report in writing to Chairs of core faculty members' home units, for the purpose of individual members' annual performance evaluation, on the teaching, service and research activities of core faculty members.

### 3. Meetings

- a) The Centre's Core Faculty shall meet at least once yearly, either in the fall or winter term.
- b) Should five Core Faculty members of the Centre request a meeting, the Director shall call it within ten working days. Such a request must include notice of the matters to be raised at the meeting.
- c) Whenever possible, meetings shall be arranged so as to accommodate, within reason, the schedule of Core Faculty members.
- d) Summary minutes for the relevant previous meeting, and the Agenda for the scheduled meeting, shall be circulated at least five working days prior to the scheduled meeting.

- e) The Program Coordinator shall be present at Centre meetings.

#### 4. Methods of Communication within the Centre

- a) All Core Faculty members shall maintain a uwo e-mail account. Centre communications will make use of this medium.

### IV. Committees of the Centre

#### General

- a) Committee responsibilities are considered to be part of the normal duties of Centre core faculty.
- b) Committee members are elected and tenure of membership is normally three years. If a replacement position is required in any committee, the new member will complete the remaining portion of the term of the retiring member.
- c) Nominations will be open and need not be seconded. The aim is, where practicable, for nominations and composition of committees to reflect the range of interests and faculty of the Centre.
- d) Voting for Committee membership shall be done electronically, with the Centre's Program Coordinator acting as scrutineer for the election.
- e) Only in the event of a tie, will the Director cast a deciding vote.

### V. Standing Committees of the Centre

#### 1. Graduate Studies Committee

##### a) Composition:

- i) Centre Director, who shall chair the Committee.
- ii) Four members of the Core Faculty, elected by the Centre core faculty for three years, according to a system of staggered terms. The aim is, where practicable, for nominations and composition of the committee to reflect the range of interests and faculty of the Centre.

iii) Two graduate students – if available, one from the M.A. program (M.A. II) and one from the Ph.D. program, elected by the students for one year, who will be present at meetings unless asked by the Committee chair to leave for reasons of confidentiality or conflict of interest.

b) Responsibilities:

i) General supervision of the graduate programs of the Centre, including the recommendation to the Centre of yearly graduate course offerings.

ii) The admission of students and the allocation of financial aid.

iii) The adjudication of internal and external student award applications.

iv) To review and decide, with the Director, applications for membership in the Core Faculty of the Centre, for visiting fellowships, and for post-doctoral fellowships.

v) To consider appeals and complaints referred to the committee by the Director.

vi) To assist the Director in preparing a four-year academic plan, an annual report, and an annual budget plan.

2. Research Committee

a) Composition:

i) Centre Director, who shall chair the Committee.

ii) Four members of the Core Faculty, elected by the Centre faculty for three years, according to a system of staggered terms. The aim is, where practicable, for nominations and composition of the committee to reflect the range of interests and faculty of the Centre.

iii) Two graduate students – if available, one from the M.A. program and one from the Ph.D. program, elected by the students for one year.

b) Responsibilities:

i) To administer the Centre Speaker Series.

ii) To coordinate and manage conferences, and to address other research-related issues and initiatives as they arise.

3. Qualifying Exam Committee

a) Composition:

i) Three examiners, elected by the Centre Core Faculty to serve for three years, according to a system of staggered terms. The aim is, where practicable, for nominations and composition of the committee to reflect the range of interests and faculty of the Centre.

ii) The Committee shall elect its own chair for a period of one year, on a rotating basis.

iii) Normally the Chair of the Committee and at least one of the other two examiners will be members of the Core Faculty of the Centre for the Study of Theory and Criticism with full SGPS doctoral supervisory privileges.

b) Responsibilities:

i) To interpret and apply existing policy regarding the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination.

ii) To set and grade the Qualifying Exams.

4. Steering and Advisory Committee

a) Composition:

i) The Dean, or designate, of the Centre's Host Faculty shall be the Chair of the Steering and Advisory Committee.

ii) The Deans, or designates, of participating academic Faculties.

iii) The Director of the Centre.

iv) Three Core Faculty members elected by the Core Faculty, with staggered two year terms. The aim is, where practicable, for nominations to reflect the range of interests and faculty of the Centre.

v) Two student representatives from the Centre elected by the Centre students for a one year term (one M.A. and one Ph.D. student). Student representatives are ex-officio (non-voting) members.

b) Responsibilities:

i) To work with all interested parties to promote the continued success of the Centre.

ii) To serve as a liaison for relations between the Centre, the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the Centre's host academic unit, and its participating and affiliated academic units in matters that pertain to the funding and support of the Centre.

iii) To provide the Director and the Centre with advice on administrative matters and its relations to other units and externally.

iv) To advise the Director on issues relating to strategic direction and management of the Centre.

v) To approve a four-year academic plan, an annual report, and an annual budget plan, all of which are to be prepared by the Director in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee.

vi) To coordinate with participating academic units on matters pertaining to associated teaching and/or degree programs, such as the structure of degree and thesis requirements, and teaching placement for Centre students in their degree programs.

vii) To advise the Director on the addition or reclassification of academic units as "participating" or "affiliated" academic units, as per procedures established by the Steering and Advisory Committee.

## 5. Nominations Committee

Composition:

i) Centre Director, who shall chair the Committee

ii) Three full-time members of the Core Faculty elected by the Centre Core Faculty for two years, according to a system of staggered terms.

Responsibilities:

i) To recommend to the Centre Core Faculty a slate of candidates to serve on all Standing Committees of the Centre, to be voted on by the Core Faculty.

ii) To make it possible for members of the Core Faculty to nominate candidates

iii) To select its nominees in order to achieve, where possible, an equitable distribution of committee work among the Core Faculty to reflect the range of interests and faculty of the Centre.

## VI. Ad Hoc Committees of the Centre

1. In addition to ad hoc committees struck by the committees of the Centre, ad hoc committees may also be struck from time to time at the request of the Director of the Centre, or of the Centre's Core Faculty, to examine and recommend particular matters of policy and practice to the Centre.
2. Upon being convened, an ad hoc committee shall determine its methods and procedures. The Director will act as Chair.

VII. Voting

1. All questions arising in the Centre or in its committees, shall normally be decided by a simple majority of those present and voting. General amendments to the rules of procedure contained in the Centre's Constitution shall require the approval of a two thirds majority of the Core Faculty.
2. The Centre may from time to time decide, by majority vote of the Core Faculty, to resolve questions, or conduct elections, by confidential ballot.