**Amendment to the UTMSU Policy Manual: Operational Policy of the UTM Food Centre**

*Formerly known as UTM Food Bank, this service will henceforth be referred to as the UTM Food Centre.*

**Policy Framework:**

Food Democracy: to ensure that change comes from the bottom and that food insecure students are not further disenfranchised, we will ensure that Food Centre members guide the decision-making process and are given opportunities for community building.

Food Security: The UTM Students Union recognizes that access to good food is a human right, which is being systemically stripped away from people through systems of inequality and oppression. Food Insecurity is the inability to access good food due to economic and/or physical barriers resulting in the fear of not having enough to eat, not being able to eat the quality and the diet that is desired, and having to sacrifice other necessary expenditures in order to afford such food.

Confidentiality: UTMSU is committed to guarding the identity of our members and ensuring that this service is safe ad comfortable from social stigma.

Sustainability and Anti-Oppression: we understand that food insecurity is caused by inequality and that simply serving students with food does not end the problem. So UTMSU commits to an intersectional, sustainable approach that seeks to eradicate inequality from the core.

**Policy in Practice:**

The Student Union is to ensure that policies, values and standards are upheld at all times.

All Food Centre members will be required to fill out a registration form that will contain a membership agreement with members’ rights and responsibilities.

The VP Equity will receive complaints from members about any violations of this policy or of the Food Centre Policy Manual.

All volunteers of the Food Centre who will interact with members must attend Equity training and sign a volunteer contract.

Any changes to this portion of the Policy Manual should be made in consultation with the Food Justice Committee and the Food Centre coordinators.

**1. Food Justice Committee:**

The Student Union will ensure that Food Justice Committee meetings are held regularly at least once a month in the Fall/Winter season.

These meetings will follow the same procedures as ministry meetings.

Volunteers will be allowed in those meetings, depending on a members only majority vote at the beginning of every semester.

Minutes and agendas for committee meetings should be circulated among members ahead of time. Full disclosure will be provided to members about all issues regarding the Food Centre. The Food Centre coordinators may not make any changes without going through this process.

This committee will be in charge of amending the Food Centre’s own Policy Manual when needed. The Ministry of Equity will ratify this vote.

**2. Food Garden:**

 UTMSU is committed to hiring summer staff who will dedicate at least 4 hours of their week to maintaining the garden and supervising volunteers.

 UTMSU will also ensure that the garden is transitioned from one staff to the next while maintaining cooperation with Campus Grounds.

 No less than 50% of the harvest should go to the Food Centre, regardless of club collaborations.

**Levy and Budget:**

*The Food Centre is an equity-based service by the University of Toronto Students’ Union. After the 2009 referendum, students have voted to pay 0.50 cents per semester to support this service. As result, The Food Centre is a special levy under the Student Union, which operates as a full service.*

The UTM Students Union promises to uphold the following:

 **1. Coordinators-**

The Food Centre coordinators shall be hired by the Students Union.

One of the coordinators will receive their salary from the levy.

The union will be responsible for hiring the second coordinator using money from the reserve and/or funding.

The union shall always review the number of coordinators required on an annual basis and ensure that the Food Centre is never understaffed. The UTMSU is responsible for acquiring enough funding to hire as many coordinators as needed.

The VP Equity and the VP Internal shall administer annual coordinator evaluations.

The UTMSU Hiring Committee shall take into consideration results of the “Annual Coordinator Evaluation” and shall give hiring priority to Food Centre volunteers and members.

 **2. Resources-**

The Student Union is required to provide the Food Centre with all necessary resources to best serve its purpose.

UTMSU will ensure that no unnecessary barriers or limits are placed on members in case of funding shortage and that UTMSU will commit to finding other sources of funding before placing these barriers on members.

**3. Budget-**

The Board of Directors adjudicates the Food Centre budget *in discretion with* the Food Justice Committee—comprised of Food Centre members—and the Food Centre coordinators.

The Student Union will allocate any money leftover from the budget to a reserve for the Food Centre.

Money in that reserve shall not be used for any purpose other than the Food Centre and shall be accessible to the Food Centre at all times.

The Union will publicize the Food Centre’s annual spending and reserve pool.