

Constitution of the Graduate Association of Arts & Sciences of the College of William and Mary

Amended: November 15, 2010

Approved: December 1, 2010

Article I. Mission Statement

The organization described herein shall be called the Graduate Student Association of Arts & Sciences of the College of William and Mary (hereafter GSA). Its purpose shall be:

- To advance the academic and social interests of graduate students of the college.
- To assist in governing matters of honor violations within the graduate school.
- To select eligible graduate students for college committees in which graduate representation is necessary.
- To advance the recognition and integration of graduate students at the college.
- To provide a forum for the dissemination of information and ideas to the college and the community.

Article II. Membership

Membership in the GSA shall be open to any person enrolled as a graduate or unclassified (post-baccalaureate) student under the Faculty of Arts & Sciences.

Article III. Governance and Bylaws

The GSA shall be governed by the Graduate Student Association Council.

- A. The Executive Council shall consist of one representative elected from each graduate department or program under the Faculty of Arts & Sciences, and seven elected Officers. The Executive Council of the GSA shall be comprised of seven Officers, namely: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Senator, Parliamentarian, and Social Chair.
 1. Each department or program shall elect a representative to the Executive Council within two weeks after the beginning of the Fall semester. This representative shall serve for the academic year. Subsequent vacancies will be filled by election as necessary by the units involved during the academic year.
 2. The GSA will meet no later than the fourth week of the Fall semester:
 - a. To organize standing committees.
 - b. To set meeting dates of council for the academic year just beginning, which shall include at least six meetings. The President may call additional meetings if deemed necessary.
 3. GSA Council meetings are open to all GSA members, though only Executive Council members may vote, each having one vote with a two-thirds majority needed to carry any resolution except for Constitutional amendment, which are provided for under Article V.
 4. To conduct business, a quorum of the department representatives and the officers must be present.
 5. In the case of an Executive Council Officer (as described in Article III, Section C) vacancy, the position will be filled from among the current GSA department representatives and approved by a vote of the Executive Council.

- B. The purposes of the GSA Council shall be:
 - 1. To act as a forum for discussion and organization of GSA activities, i.e. academic and social projects.
 - 2. To respond to concerns raised by the Student Assembly via the GSA Representative to the Student Senate.
 - 3. To assist in the preparation of the GSA budget for the coming academic year.
 - 4. To represent the interests and concerns of Arts & Sciences graduate students to the Administration, the Graduate Council, the Student Assembly, and other college-wide policy organization through the Executive Council Officers or their delegates, and through the appointed committee representatives as provided for in Article IV, Section A, Subsection 7.

- C. As stated above, the Executive Council of the GSA shall be comprised of seven Officers, namely: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Senator, Parliamentarian, and Social Chair.
 - 1. The Executive Council may meet in executive session, open to all members of the GSA, to propose resolutions for future meetings. Resolutions are not binding unless voted on during GSA general meetings as provided for under Article III, Section A, Subsection 3.
 - 2. Executive Council Officer elections will be held in March in conjunction with the Student Assembly elections as described in Section IV of the Student Assembly constitution.
 - 3. Executive Council Officer terms begin on the last Monday of April of the year of the election.
 - 4. Executive Council cannot concurrently serve as Department Representative.
 - 5. No more than three Officers may serve from the same department or program.

Article IV. Officers' and Representatives' Duties

- A. The duties of the President shall be:
 - 1. To preside over all meetings of the GSA Council.
 - 2. To appoint a representative body of GSA students, with the support of the majority of the GSA council present, to serve as an honor council to investigate and try cases involving GSA students.
 - 3. To call special meetings of the Council as deemed necessary.
 - 4. To serve as first representative to the Graduate Council from the GSA.
 - 5. To appear with the Treasurer before the budget hearings of the Finance Committee to submit and defend the budget of the GSA.
 - 6. To appoint a Representative to the Student Senate with the support of the majority of the GSA Council present in the event that position is vacant (see Article IV, Section E).
 - 7. To appoint representatives to college-wide committees where Arts & Sciences graduate students have a seat with the support of a majority of the GSA Council present.
 - 8. To appoint the Chief Justice and Associate Chief Justice of the Honor Council.

- B. The duties of the Vice-President shall be:
 - 1. To perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President or in the event that the President resigns, is incapacitated, or otherwise fails to fulfill the presidential duties.
 - 2. To coordinate the services offered by the GSA to outside organizations.

3. To serve as Deputy Elections Coordinator on the election committee in early March in accordance with Section IV of the Student Assembly constitution (see Article VII, Section C).
 4. To oversee the Graduate Portfolio Project and encourage full participation amongst all departments and programs.
- C. The duties of the Secretary shall be:
1. To maintain the GSA website and to handle necessary GSA correspondence.
 2. To obtain a list of graduate students' names and contacts from the OGSR at the beginning of the year.
 3. To keep minutes of the meetings of the GSA Council and to assure their timely publication on the website.
 4. To publish an agenda the week before the regularly scheduled meetings and to assure their publication on the website.
- D. The duties of the Treasurer shall be:
1. To allocate funds for the GSA functions in accordance with the current college policies and to ensure that adequate funds are available to sponsor in part or whole the Graduate Research Symposium (GRS).
 2. To provide a statement on finances to each meeting of the Council.
 3. To prepare, in consultation with the other Officers, the GSA budget for the coming academic year.
 4. To submit receipts of charges to the Student Activities Accountant for payment or reimbursement.
 5. To attend, with the President, the budget hearings of the Finance Committee to present and defend the GSA budget.
- E. The duties of the Student Senate Representative shall be:
1. To attend meetings of the Student Senate of the Student Assembly and represent GSA interests there.
 2. To inform GSA members of procedures for applying for Student Assembly standing committees, especially finance and college-wide committees.
- F. The duties of the Parliamentarian shall be:
1. To attend all meetings of the Graduate Council and to serve as the Second Representative to the Graduate Council from the GSA.
 2. To report at Council meetings on issues calling for graduate student involvement or movement.
 3. To initiate procedures, debates, and motions; to carry resolutions; and responsible for collecting and tallying votes on all issues decided on in the GSA Council meetings.
 4. To draft all proposed constitutional amendments and disseminate copies to all members of the GSA Executive Council in a timely manner.
- G. The duties of the Social Chair shall be:
1. To organize and direct social functions of the GSA, including convening the Social Committee, whose duties shall include publicizing, planning, maintaining, and supervising all GSA social functions.
 2. To ensure that graduate students are informed of any GSA function or project.

3. To consult with the Treasurer on events that involve monetary transactions with the GSA.
- H. The duties of the Department/Program Representative shall be:
1. To attend all meetings of the GSA Council and represent the interests of their respective department or program.
 2. To inform and encourage participation of graduate students in college-wide events, especially those sponsored by the GSA.
 3. To assist in the organization and execution of GSA events.
 4. To represent the interests of their respective departments to the planning committee of the GRS and assist in its fruition.

Article V. Amendments

This constitution may be amended or revised by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Council. Amendments may be proposed by any member of the GSA and must be submitted in writing to a member of the Executive Council at least 72 hours prior to the next GSA Council meeting.

Article VI. Distribution of Funds

- A. Funds budgeted for the use of the several departments will not be appropriated if the Department Representative does not regularly attend the scheduled GSA meetings.
- B. The transfer of monies from one budget line to another, use of colloquia funds, and the distribution of the GSA Supplemental Conference Fund require a vote from the GSA Council.

Article VII. Election Procedure

- A. As stated in Article III, Section A, the officers of the GSA Executive Council consist of seven positions: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Senate Representative, Parliamentarian, and Social Chair.
- B. The Associate Chief Justice of the Honor Council shall serve as the Elections Coordinator. The Elections Coordinator will organize and manage the election with the liaison from the Information Technology department. If the Associate Chief Justice is a candidate for election, the President will appoint a new Elections Coordinator from the Honor Council to perform these duties.
- C. The Vice-President of the GSA will serve as Deputy Elections Coordinator. The Deputy Elections Coordinator will observe the administration of the election to ensure fairness and impartiality.
- D. The election procedure shall be as follows:
 1. Nominations:
 - a. A call for nominations will be distributed to all graduate students and departments within the College of Arts & Sciences by January 31st. Nominations announcements will be made in the *Did You Know That?* electronic newsletter of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for at least two successive weeks before the close of nominations.
 - b. The deadline to submit nominations is February 15th at 5:00 pm.
 - c. Any graduate student in the College of Arts & Sciences can nominate any graduate student in the College of Arts & Sciences, including self-nominations, for any position.
 - d. No more than three people from any given department may serve as Officers.
 - e. The President and Vice-President shall not be from the same department.

- f. If the President and Vice-President receive a majority of votes in the election, or if more than three nominees from the same department receive a majority of votes, then nominees must deliberate and select from amongst themselves to determine who will step down in order to comply with the above two stipulations (Article VII, Section D, Subsections 1-d and 1-e).
 - g. Any vacancies created by the above stipulations (including Article VII, Section D, Subsection 1-f) shall be filled by a candidate from a different department receiving the highest number of votes for the position which has been vacated. In the event that no other candidate ran for the position, it shall be treated as a vacancy and filled according to the provisions of Article VII, Section E, Subsection 1 below.
 - h. A nomination must be made in writing (either hardcopy or electronically via email) to the Elections Coordinator prior to the deadline.
2. Presentations, Questioning, and Discussion:
- a. Candidates will be required to submit written statements no more than 750 words to be posted on the GSA elections website no later than February 20th.
 - b. Candidate presentations, questioning, and discussion may be held at the March GSA Council meeting preceding elections. Alternatively, the Executive Council may set a separate candidate presentation meeting no later than the March GSA meeting. All graduate students from the College of Arts & Sciences will be notified of this meeting at least one week prior to the chosen date.
 - c. Presentations will begin with candidates for the office of President. Each presidential candidate will make their presentation in alphabetical order. Presentations will follow in a similar fashion for each of the other officers in the following order: Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Senate Representative, Parliamentarian, and Social Chair.
 - d. Each candidate will make a speech of no more than 3 minutes in length. If a candidate is unable to present during the election process, they shall submit a written statement to the Elections Coordinator to be read aloud during the meeting.
 - e. After speaking, the candidate shall answer questions relevant to their speech and qualifications posed by attending members for up to 3 minutes. The Election Coordinator reserves the right to determine whether or not a question is relevant and appropriate.
 - f. The presentations and question period shall continue until all candidates have presented and answered questions.
3. Voting Procedure:
- a. Every student enrolled as a graduate student in the College of Arts & Sciences may cast one electronic ballot in each race for which they are eligible to vote.
 - b. Elections will take place online using the College's online voting system approved to be fair and honest by the Dean of Graduate Arts & Sciences.
 - c. Voters have the choice of voting for any of the candidates or abstaining from voting.
 - d. In the event that only one candidate is running for a position, voters can either vote for the candidate or have the option to re-open nominations.
 - e. A simple majority of votes is needed to win an election. In the event that a simple majority is not reached because there are more than two candidates,

there will be a run-off election between the two candidates with the most votes.

- f. All graduate students in the College of Arts & Sciences will be notified of the date of the election at least one week prior to the opening of the electronic poll.
- g. Elections will last 24 hours, from 12:01 am to 11:59 pm, and must take place on a weekday from Monday to Thursday in the month of March.
- h. The Election Coordinator shall verify the election results, in accordance with the IT liaison and Deputy Elections Coordinator, and notify the winners of each race within 24 hours of the election.

4. Installation:

Newly elected officers will be installed during the April meeting of the GSA and hold their office from April of the year in which they are elected until the day before the April meeting of the GSA the following year.

5. Appointment of Officers:

- a. Any vacancies not filled by the elections process will be appointed and approved by a majority vote of the incoming GSA Executive Council no later than the September meeting.
- b. Any vacancies that may arise during the term of an Officer will be filled from among the current GSA Department Representatives and approved by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Council.