

# CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES COUNCIL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

## Article I. STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE

*Section 1:* The Graduate Student Council (hereafter Council) of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (hereafter GSAS) shall be composed of officers of the council, voting and non-voting representatives from the various departments and degree-granting programs of GSAS, and the GSAS representatives to the Honor and Judiciary Committees of the University of Virginia.

*Section 2:* The purpose of the council shall be:

- A. To maintain cohesion and foster the interchange of ideas among the graduate students of GSAS;
- B. To coordinate and promote activities of interest to GSAS students;
- C. To serve as liaison between the student body and the faculty and administration;
- D. To receive and consider any criticisms, problems, suggestions, or petitions submitted by a member or members of the student body, faculty, or administration and take the necessary, proper, and responsive action;
- E. To hold regular meetings to conduct Council business.
  - 1. Meetings of the Council shall be held during the regular academic year when classes are in session. Meetings may also be held during the summer, at the discretion of the council.

## Article II. REPRESENTATION

*Section 1:* Any student registered for a degree offered by the GSAS and regularly enrolled for any course or courses in the GSAS shall be eligible to serve as a voting member of the council.

*Section 2:* Each student registered and enrolled as such shall contribute a designated fee, as set by the University Board of Visitors and assessed through the University Bursar, at the start of every enrolled semester for the maintenance of the Council, its programs, and its activities.

*Section 3:* The students of the GSAS shall be represented on the Council as follows:

- A. Each GSAS department or degree-granting program (hereafter department) is entitled to elect one voting representative to the Council.
- B. Departments with enrollments at least twice as large as the median average for the GSAS are entitled to elect a second voting representative to the Council.
- C. Departments with enrollments at least four times as large as the median average for the GSAS are entitled to elect a third voting representative to the Council.

- D. The number of representatives per department shall be determined using the official enrollment figures from the previous academic year.

*Section 4:* The council shall also include the following non-voting representatives:

- A. The GSAS representatives to the University Honor and Judiciary Committees shall be ex-officio members of the Council and shall keep the Council and graduate student body informed of the affairs of their respective organizations.
- B. At the discretion of the Council, graduate student representatives from any of the other Graduate or Professional Schools at the University, as well as graduate student organizations not specifically affiliated with any GSAS department or program, may serve on the Council in an advisory capacity.
- C. At the discretion of the Council, students who are not elected as voting representatives from a department may serve on the Council as non-voting representatives.
- D. At the discretion of the Council, non-students who are affiliated with the University, or have been affiliated with the University within the previous calendar year may serve as non-voting representatives.

*Section 5:* No voting member may represent more than one department or cast more than one vote under any circumstances.

*Section 6:* Any voting member acting as Chair for a meeting of the Council may only vote to break a tie.

*Section 7:* Quorum for meetings will be no less than 7 voting members of the Council, each representing a different department.

*Section 8:* Except as the President may designate, meetings of the council shall be open to all GSAS students and the University community at large.

### **Article III. OFFICERS**

*Section 1:* The officers of the Council shall be the President, Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Communications, and Vice President of Finance. All officers of the council, except for the President, must continue to represent their departments as voting representatives during their term in office.

#### **A. The President:**

1. Shall represent the Council to the GSAS and University administrations, as well as the university at large;
2. Shall chair the Council and preside over its meetings, but shall appoint another voting member to serve as chair in the event of his/her absence or whenever a conflict of interest exists;

3. Shall form committees of the Council as the need arises;
4. Shall be an ex-officio member of all Council committees;
5. Shall form committees of the Council as the need arises;
6. Shall appoint an interim Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Communications, or Vice President of Finance in the event of such vacancies, subject to the approval of the council;
7. Shall determine a meeting schedule for the academic year and make arrangements for a regular meeting place, in consultation with the Council;
8. Shall have the power to appoint graduate students to serve on University governing bodies or committees, subject to the approval of the council;
9. Shall vote in Council meetings only to break a tie, except when another member of the Council is acting as chair.

B. The Vice President of Administration:

1. Shall assist the President by performing whatever additional executive duties are required;
2. Shall work with the Vice President of Communications to assign members to council committees and to support and oversee the committees of the Council;
3. Shall be an ex-officio member of all Council committees;
4. Shall assume the duties of the President in his/her absence and shall become the President in the event of such a vacancy, or appoint another member of council to fill the vacancy if he/she unable or unwilling to do so, subject to the approval of the Council;
5. Shall be a voting member of the Council, except when acting as chair.

C. The Vice President of Communications:

1. Shall recruit representatives to the Council, and may represent the Council to all departments, programs, and graduate student organizations in the GSAS;
2. Shall work with the Vice President of Administration to assign members to council committees and to support and oversee the committees of the Council;
3. Shall make contact with graduate students in other schools at the University;
4. Shall keep minutes of all meetings and ensure they are available to members in a timely fashion;
5. Shall maintain the records of the council;
6. Shall oversee the Council's webpage;

7. Shall maintain the Council's mailing list;
8. Shall be an ex-officio member of all Council committees;
9. Shall be a voting member of the Council, except when acting as chair.

D. The Vice President of Finance:

1. Shall, in conjunction with the University administration, maintain the financial records of the Council and report the current financial status at all meetings;
2. Shall be in charge of the disbursement of funds in payment of legitimate debts incurred by the Council;
3. Shall assist the Finance Committee to coordinate all funding requests from outside parties;
4. Shall be a voting member of the council, except when acting as chair.

*Section 2:* The officers of the Council shall, as necessary, represent the Council and the students of the GSAS in local, state, regional, or national boards, panels, or organizations. The President may also appoint a proxy to represent the council in these situations in the event none of the officers are available or willing to do so.

*Section 3:* In the event that any officer will not be present on grounds for a period of more than two consecutive months during the academic year, the President may appoint a member of the Council to serve as an acting officer in their absence.

#### **Article IV. ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES**

*Section 1:* The officers and representatives of the Council shall be elected as follows:

- A. The President, Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Communications, and Vice President of Finance shall be elected by the Council, a two-thirds majority of votes cast being necessary for election to office. If no candidate wins a two-thirds majority, a run-off election shall be held between the two candidates receiving the most votes.
- B. Voting representatives shall be elected or appointed by the graduate students enrolled in each GSAS department. No individual shall represent a department in which he or she is not currently enrolled.

*Section 2:* The term of office for the officers of the Council shall begin May 1 and end on April 31. Notwithstanding this term, each department retains the right to recall and replace its representatives according to its own method and schedule of selecting representatives to the Council.

*Section 3:* Vacancies shall be filled as follows:

- A. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Communications, or Vice President of Finance, the President will nominate, in a timely manner, an individual to complete the remainder of the term, subject to approval by the Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- B. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice President of Administration will assume the office of President and fill the vacancy in the office of Vice President of Administration according to the preceding provisions. If the Vice President of Administration is unable or unwilling to serve as President, they will nominate, in a timely manner, an individual to complete the remainder of the term, subject to approval by the Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- C. The graduate students in each GSAS department shall be responsible for replacing representatives as vacancies occur.

## **Article V. IMPEACHMENT**

*Section 1:* Any officer of the Council may be impeached and removed from office for gross or continued failure to perform constitutional duties. Any member of the Council may initiate impeachment proceedings by introducing an appropriate resolution at a meeting with quorum present.

*Section 2:* Should two-thirds of the voting members present vote in favor of an impeachment resolution, the officer will be notified of the vote result and be given one week to request the opportunity to address the Council at the next regularly scheduled meeting and have a vote to confirm the removal from office. Two-thirds of the voting members present voting in favor of the confirmation shall be sufficient for immediate removal from office.

*Section 3:* Should the officer in question decline to request a confirmation vote within one week of notification, or should the officer fail to appear at the next regularly scheduled meeting, the removal from office will be automatic and immediate.

## **Article VI. AMENDMENTS AND BY-LAWS**

*Section 1:* Amendments to this constitution shall be adopted by a majority vote of the Council. Amendment proceedings shall not be initiated unless a quorum is present.

*Section 2:* By-laws may be adopted to facilitate the implementation of any article of this Constitution by a simple majority of the Council.

## **Article VII. ADOPTION**

Upon adoption, these amendment provisions shall take effect April 1, 1994. Recognizing the disparity of the current operation of the GSG with the GSG Constitution passed in 1979, until April 1, 1994 the GSG shall continue to operate in its provisional form.

Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2004 shall take effect immediately.

Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 shall take effect immediately.

Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013 shall take effect immediately.

Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014 shall take effect immediately.

Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016 shall take effect immediately.