

# Graduate Student Engineering Group Constitution

## ARTICLE I.

### PURPOSE

Section 1. The Graduate Student Engineering Group (GSEG) shall be the coordinating student body charged with representing all graduate and professional students enrolled in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) at the University of Pennsylvania.

GSEG shall serve as a liaison among the graduate and professional student governments within SEAS, nominate graduate and professional student representatives to School and University committees, and represent the concerns of graduate and professional students to the School and University administration.

GSEG shall monitor issues of importance to the graduate and professional student community; sponsor academic, cultural, and social events of interest to the graduate and professional student community; and organize programs to enhance the quality of graduate and professional student life.

The primary vehicle for these purposes shall be the General Assembly.

Section 2. All graduate and professional students within SEAS automatically become members of GSEG while enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania and are encouraged to participate in all GSEG activities.

Section 3. Members of GSEG shall be represented by their Department or Program Representatives.

## ARTICLE II.

### DEPARTMENT AND PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. Department and Program Representatives shall consist of representatives from each of the departments and professional programs within SEAS. Professional programs that are part of a department shall be represented by their Department Representative(s).

Section 2. Each department shall have two Department Representative(s).

Section 3. The student governments of the departments and programs shall appoint, according to their own procedures, their respective Department or Program Representative(s) to the General Assembly before the second General Assembly meeting in the fall semester.

Section 4. Alternative methods for the designation of Department or Program Representatives are acceptable as outlined in the bylaws, or with the prior approval of the GSEG Executive Board.

Section 5. Department or Program Representatives shall provide documentation that certifies their status as proper representatives of their department or program.

## ARTICLE III.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The General Assembly shall consist of the following positions as described in the bylaws: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Social Events Coordinator, and department representative(s). Each General Assembly member shall report their activities to the Executive Board, which consists of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Social Events Coordinator on a regular basis.

Section 2. The members of the General Assembly shall elect the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Social Events Coordinator from the GSEG membership at the end of each spring semester by a simple majority vote. In the event that no candidate receives a simple majority of votes, there will be a run-off election between the two candidates receiving the most votes. In the event of a tie, candidates will be given the opportunity to make additional comments and ballots will be recast.

Section 3. President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Social Events Coordinator, must be nominated and elected. Self-nominations are accepted. They shall perform such duties as directed by the bylaws. The Executive Board shall serve for one year, until the election of their successors, and may be re-elected.

Section 4. The official transition of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Social Events Coordinator positions on the Executive Board will take place before the first General Assembly meeting of the fall semester.

Section 5. Individuals may hold only one Executive Board position concurrently. Current Executive Board members may run for another aforementioned Executive Board positions, but upon winning must relinquish the previously held position.

Section 6. If the President is unable to execute the duties of the office laid out in the bylaws, the Vice-President shall act as interim President until a special election to be held at a subsequent General Assembly Meeting. In the event

the Vice-President is unable or unwilling to serve as interim President, the Treasurer shall act in that capacity and in the event that the Treasurer is unable or unwilling to serve as interim President, the Secretary shall act in that capacity until the special election.

Section 7. The General Assembly and GSEG members shall be notified at least 10 days before a special election to fill a vacancy for President.

Section 8. An Executive Board member may be removed by the GSEG General Assembly at any meeting by a two-thirds vote, provided that ten days' written notice has been given and the member has been granted the opportunity to be heard.

#### **ARTICLE IV. GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS**

Section 1. The General Assembly shall meet at least once a month during the fall and spring semesters. It shall also meet on the call of the President or by petition of one-quarter of the members of the General Assembly.

Section 2. Advance notice shall be given to all General Assembly members, and a copy of any resolutions to be considered shall be made available according to the terms of the bylaws.

Section 3. A General Assembly meeting does not exist without a quorum. Quorum exists when a simple majority of General Assembly members is present.

#### **ARTICLE V. VOTING**

Section 1. Each member of the General Assembly shall have one vote in the election of the Executive Board and representatives to GAPSA.

Section 2. In order to pass the General Assembly, a motion must receive a simple majority of votes cast.

Section 3. Motions to suspend the rules or to deviate from the standard procedure of the General Assembly shall be decided by a two-thirds majority of votes cast.

#### **ARTICLE VI. NOMINATIONS TO SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES**

Section 1. The General Assembly shall nominate the President as a representative to School and University committees as soon as possible each fall. These committees include, but not limited to, SEAS Representative to Graduate and Professional Assembly (GAPSA), the Library Committee, the Staff Recognition Committee and the SEAS Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC).

Section 2. Committee representatives nominated by the General Assembly to School and University committees shall report their activities to the General Assembly on a regular basis.

Section 3. Committee representatives who fail to report regularly to the General Assembly, or who fail to attend two consecutive meetings of the committee to which they are appointed, may be removed by the General Assembly or GSEG membership, provided that seven days written notice has been given and that the representative has been granted an opportunity to be heard. The Vice-President shall communicate regularly with committee officials and representatives appointed by GSEG.

Section 4. Committee Representatives should keep the Vice-President apprised of their current contact information.

#### **ARTICLE VII. BUDGET**

Section 1. At the first General Assembly meeting of the fall semester, the outgoing and incoming Treasurers shall jointly present to the incoming General Assembly a provisional budget for the next academic year.

Section 2. Prior to the second scheduled Executive Board meeting of the fall semester, the Treasurer shall present a final budget for approval to the Executive Board. No GSEG funds may be spent after that date without Executive Board approval of a budget.

Section 3. Upon a two-thirds vote, the General Assembly may amend the budget at any time.

Section 4. The budget shall provide necessary funds for the operations of the General Assembly, for nominations of graduate and professional students to School and University committees, and for such other activities as the Executive Board may decide in accordance with its purpose and mission.

Section 5. A Department or Program Representative must attend at least half of the General Assembly meetings and comply with any additional constraints detailed in the By-Laws to receive that Department or Programs allotted funding.

Section 6. The funds for the budget shall come from Office of the Vice Provost for University Life and/or GAPSA and shall be distributed through the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences Office of Budget & Administration.

#### **ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENT PROCESS**

Section 1. In order to be adopted, a proposed amendment to the constitution must receive at least two-thirds of the votes cast. Ten days' notice, including the text of the proposed amendment, must have been given to the General Assembly.

Section 2. Amendments shall take effect after approval by the General Assembly and public posting on the GSEG website, unless otherwise specified.

## **By-Laws**

### **I. GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS**

1. Meetings shall be held at least once a month during the academic year.
2. Attendance at General Assembly meetings is mandatory for all of its members. Accordingly, the meetings shall be scheduled at a time convenient to all members.
3. Meetings shall be limited to 120 minutes unless extended by a two-thirds vote of the votes cast.
4. Meetings are open to the GSEG membership. Any graduate or professional student of SEAS who is not a member of the General Assembly may participate in discussion. However, upon a two-thirds vote of the votes cast, the General Assembly will meet in closed session.
5. Members shall be notified at the beginning of the semester of the regularly scheduled meeting dates. In the event of any meeting other than those regularly scheduled, the Vice-President shall strive to give at least five days' notice to the General Assembly. In any case, at least 36 hours' notice must be given.
6. The Vice-President shall distribute a tentative agenda for any meeting to the General Assembly not less than 36 hours prior to the meeting. Additionally, draft resolutions must also be distributed to the General Assembly no less than 36 hours prior to the meeting. Email is an acceptable mode of communication with the General Assembly.
7. Any resolution adopted by the General Assembly shall be posted to the GSEG website as soon as practical. Additionally, minutes from the General Assembly meetings shall also be posted to the GSEG website as soon as practical after approval.
8. Descriptions of each Executive Board position, as delineated by these bylaws, shall be distributed to the GSEG membership, and posted on the GSEG website.
9. All graduate and professional students of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences are eligible to run for a position as President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, or Social Coordinator of the Executive Board. Candidates may be nominated to run for a specific position up until the beginning of the election for that Executive Board position. Self-nominations are accepted.

### **II. DEPARTMENT AND PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVES**

1. Department Representative should represent their department or professional program to GSEG and GSEG to their department or professional program and are members of the General Assembly.
2. Department and Program Representatives should attend all GSEG General Assembly meetings. More than two unexcused absences per semester are grounds for dismissal and GSEG may contact the department to seek a replacement.
3. Department Representatives should serve effectively on a GSEG General Assembly in order to help GSEG carry out its mission.
4. Department Representatives are required to (1) lead the organization of at least one event OR (2) participate in the planning and/or execution of at least two GSEG events per semester.
5. Department Representatives are required to fulfill the above expectations in order to receive their Department's allotted funding.

### **III. EXECUTIVE BOARD**

#### **A. President**

1. The Executive Board shall include a President who shall lead the GSEG membership and General Assembly on all matters. The President shall be present at all General Assembly meetings.
2. The President shall be the primary GSEG representative to all the School and University administration and personnel, and shall attend all meetings with such personnel as necessary and appropriate.
3. The President, in conjunction with the Executive Board, shall devise and implement annual goals and strategies for fulfilling the GSEG mission.
4. The President shall organize, motivate, and empower student volunteers in support of all GSEG projects, initiatives, and events.
5. The President shall delegate such responsibilities and duties as appropriate to the Vice-President and other General Assembly members, including but not limited to maintaining a GSEG website and email account and taking minutes at each General Assembly meeting.

#### **B. Vice-President**

1. The Executive Board shall include a Vice-President who shall work closely with the President on all GSEG matters. The Vice-President shall participate in relevant meetings with the President and school and university officials.
2. The Vice-President shall act as President when the President is absent or unavailable. If the President is no longer able to serve, the Vice-President shall succeed the President in office until an election pursuant to provisions of the GSEG Constitution and By-Laws.
3. The Vice-President will serve as the GSEG liaison to the appointed School and University committee representatives.
4. The Vice-President shall perform other duties as delegated by the President.
5. The Vice-President shall handle logistics of General Assembly meetings.

#### **C. Treasurer**

1. The Executive Board shall include a Treasurer who shall deal with all budgetary issues, which include, but is not limited to, the distribution of reimbursements and collection of receipts for GSEG expenditures.
2. At the beginning of each academic year, the Treasurer shall present to the General Assembly a final, detailed budget expenditure report for the prior academic year. This report shall remain on file with the Executive Board for one year and shall be available for review by any member of the GSEG membership.
3. It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to prepare and present a copy GSEG's budget to the Manager of Administration & Finance in the SEAS Office of Budget & Administration as is deemed necessary.
4. Convey to the Department and Program Representatives the requirements for receiving their allotted funding.

#### **D. Secretary**

1. The Executive Board shall include a Secretary who shall record the minutes of all General Assembly and Executive Board meetings and report those minutes to the body at the next General Assembly meeting.
2. The Secretary shall monitor attendance at all General Assembly meetings, certify quorum, and take roll-call votes as needed.
3. The Secretary shall maintain current information on the GSEG website, including current contact information for all members of the General Assembly and upcoming GSEG events and programs.

#### **E. Social Events Coordinator**

1. The Social Events Coordinator shall devise and implement annual goals and strategies for fulfilling the GSEG mission of organizing social events. Specifically, it shall be the responsibility of the Social Events Coordinator to oversee all social, cultural, and outreach events organized by GSEG.
2. The Social Events Coordinator shall create and maintain budget breakdown for all social events and ticket sales for each semester and summer.
3. The Social Events Coordinator shall maintain and GSEG TicketLeap website and any business relating to ticket sales through this mechanism.

### **IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

1. In order to be adopted, a proposed amendment to the By-Laws must receive at least two-thirds of the votes cast by the General Assembly.

### **V. PERSISTENT VACANCIES IN SCHOOL REPRESENTATION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

1. When a department or program government fails to elect or appoint representatives to the General Assembly, then the Executive Board shall contact the appropriate organization(s) or administrator(s) in the given department or program. If those efforts do not result in new representatives being appointed or elected, and persons from the department in question can be found who are willing to volunteer to serve as Department or Program Representatives, then the Executive Board shall accept these persons as bona fide Department or Program Representatives and as General Assembly members in full standing. In such instances, the Executive Board will inform the school or appropriate school organization of such appointment.
2. If a department or professional program government should subsequently elect or designate Department or Program Representatives to the General Assembly, these new representatives shall take precedence over the volunteer Department or Program Representatives. Electing Department or Program Representatives to the General Assembly is the prerogative of the individual department or professional program, and the procedure described here is only meant to assure representation where the department or professional program has not exercised its prerogative. Volunteer representatives serve under the condition that a department has not elected a representative and only for the period during which that condition exists.

### **VI. NON-VOTING SEATS**

1. The Executive Board may add non-voting seats to include groups, organizations and constituencies that traditionally have not been included in the delegations elected to the General Assembly from the departments, in order to give these groups a formal mechanism for input into the General Assembly.
2. Groups not traditionally represented in the delegations elected to the General Assembly include, but are not limited to, American racial minority groups (Afro-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, etc.), lesbian and gay graduate students, international students, ethnic minorities, and others).

3. This bylaw does not pertain to religious minority groups because of the longstanding American principle of separation of Church and State, given that University of Pennsylvania and SEAS (although it is a private institution) receive funding from both the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Federal Government.
4. Non-voting members shall not count toward quorum.
5. Non-voting members may not make or second motions, although they may speak and voice their opinion and otherwise participate in meetings.
6. Non-voting members may remain in the meeting during closed sessions.
7. In order for a "constituency" to have a non-voting seat it must have an organization that can demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Executive Board, that it represents the constituency in question and can conduct an election to fill its seat.
8. The engineering professional student board, Engineering Masters Advisory Board (EMAB), shall appoint, according to their own procedures, two EMAB Representatives before the second General Assembly meeting in the fall semester.
9. The oSTEM chapter at UPenn shall appoint, according to their own procedures, one oSTEM Representatives before the second General Assembly meeting in the fall semester.

#### **VII. ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUESTS BY STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

1. Funding requests must be submitted online using the funding request form on the GSEG website.
2. The Treasurer will share funding requests with the Executive Board in a timely manner.
3. Funding requests will be voted on by the Executive Board and may be approved with a simple majority.
4. The Treasurer will report the results of the funding request to the requester within 2 weeks of submission.
5. A capped budget for this cause will be decided at the start of each semester, and be issued on a first-come, first-served basis.
6. The goal of additional funding request is to provide financial support to the events/activities that serve the graduate engineering student population, especially in mission areas that GSEG does not actively address (e.g., academic/professional development, student advocacy).