

Constitution of the Graduate Studies Student Association of Tulane University of Louisiana

Preamble

We, the students of the Graduate Studies of Tulane University, in order to develop and further scholastic attainment; to promote understanding among the faculty, students, and alumni; to coordinate the student activities of the School of Liberal Arts and the School of Science and Engineering; to further professional and social interests; and in recognition that the unification of the students into an effective group is necessary to these ends, do establish this constitution for the Graduate Studies Student Association.

Article I: Name

This association will be known as the Graduate Studies Student Association of Tulane University (GSSA), hereinafter referred to as the Association.

Article II: Membership

All persons registered in the School of Liberal Arts and the School of Science and Engineering shall be considered members of this Association.

Article III: GSSA Assembly

Section 1: Name

The GSSA Assembly, hereinafter called the Assembly, shall be constituted following Article V, Section I of the Graduate Faculty Constitution.

Section 2: Powers

- A) The Assembly shall be the governing body of the Association, and shall have the power to formulate policies, manage the affairs of the Association, create lesser committees, and have all other powers prescribed by and necessary for the proper execution of this Constitution.
- B) A two-thirds majority shall be necessary to pass, amend, or repeal a By-law consistent with this Constitution.

Section 3: Membership

- A) The Assembly shall have one representative for every fifteen students of each department/program, not to exceed three total. If a department/program has three representatives, then one must be a first year graduate student. In addition, each recognized constituted subsidiary to GSSA shall have one representative on the assembly. A member may represent both a department and a GSSA subsidiary organization.
- B) Assembly members may send proxies.
- C) The Assembly shall have the power to elect graduate representatives to the Associated Student Body (ASB) and to the University Senate in accordance with the ASB constitution.

D) The Assembly members of each division shall have the right to elect their representation to the Graduate Honor Board at the Assembly. The nomination can come from any member of the Assembly.

E) While the Assembly shall have no power to remove any member of the Graduate Council, it shall be entitled to voice its concerns about a member of the Council to the Graduate School with a majority vote.

Section 4: Meetings

A) All meetings are scheduled by the officers of the Association.

B) There shall be at least three (3) business meetings per semester, and the first business meeting shall take place within four (4) weeks of the beginning of the semester.

C) Emergency or non-scheduled meetings may also be called in the following manner:

1) By majority vote of the officers of the Assembly.

2) By written request of the majority of the members of the assembly. Such requests are to be submitted to the president.

3) By request of the Dean of the Graduate School.

In response to these requests the meeting must occur within one week of the request.

Section 5: Voting/Quorum

A) A simple majority of the Assembly members present at the meeting is required to pass any proposal not specified in other articles of the Constitution.

B) A quorum shall consist of 2/3 of the average of the attendance at the previous three meetings.

Section 6: Right to Appear

Any member of the Association shall have the right to attend assembly meetings and shall be permitted to make motions to said assembly.

Section 7: Attendance at Meetings

A) A member's absence from a meeting without proxy for two consecutive meetings in any one term shall result in a probationary warning. The President shall notify the department or organization that they are without representation.

B) If a department or organization is unrepresented for three consecutive meetings, the President shall send notification to the head of that department or organization, and that department or organization will no longer be eligible for funding by the Association until that department or organization establishes representation for two consecutive meetings. Eligibility for funds may also be restored to a department or organization by a simple majority of the Assembly.

Section 8: Participation

Each representative to the assembly shall participate in a standing committee or special committee, or represent the assembly at the ASB Senate, University Senate, Board of Administrators, or any committee

therof, or any other University governing body that requests Graduate Student representation. Departmental and/or Interdepartmental groups whose representatives do not fulfill this obligation will be ineligible for and may not submit proposals for funding the following academic year.

Section 9: Vacancies

The assembly shall have the right to call a vote of confidence regarding an Assembly officer or an ASB representative. The petitioned officer or representative shall be given at least one week's notice in writing and shall be given the opportunity to speak in his/her defense prior to the vote. The assembly shall have the right to call a vote of this kind for the officers or members of this Assembly only. A 2/3 vote of no confidence shall be sufficient for removal of the officer or representative. After a vote of no confidence has been accepted, a new election shall be held at the next meeting to fill the vacancy. Nominations will be accepted as per article V, section 2.

Article IV: Association Officers

Section 1: The Officers of the Association

- A) President
- B) Vice-President
- C) Treasurer
- D) Secretary
- E) Financial Officer

Section 2: Nominations

Nominations for officers of the Association may be made by any member of the Association at any time prior to elections.

Section 3: Elections

Officers shall be elected by the Assembly during the last business meeting of the spring semester. In order to be elected, a candidate must gain a simple majority of the votes cast. Only votes cast for a particular position shall be counted and used to determine a majority. There will be no absentee voting in any election.

Section 4: Runoffs

If no candidate receives a majority of the votes required for election, a run-off election shall be held between the two candidates with the highest number of votes. If more than two candidates tie for the highest number of votes, all such candidates will enter the run-off.

Section 5: Term of Office

The term of office for the officers of the Association shall commence immediately following the election meeting and carry through the next election.

Section 6: Vacancies.

In the event of a vacancy in any office but that of president, the Assembly shall elect a successor according to the procedures in this article. Should the office of President fall vacant, the Vice-President shall become President, and a new Vice-President shall be elected from the Assembly by a majority vote.

Section 7: Duties of the Officers.

- A) The officers of this Association shall carry out the provisions of this Constitution and any By-laws enacted in accordance therewith.
- B) The President shall preside over all meetings of the Assembly and shall appoint all committees and committee chairpersons, with the approval of the assembly. The President shall represent the Association at ceremonial functions. The President shall act as liaison to the University Administration, the Graduate School, ASB officers and to the Office of Student Affairs.
- C) The Vice-President shall act as parliamentarian at the Assembly meetings. The Vice-President shall preside over Assembly meetings in the absence of the President.
- D) The Treasurer shall administer and keep records of the financial activities of the Assembly. The Treasurer shall be responsible for formulating a budget to be submitted to the ASB Finance Board with the approval of the Assembly as part of the annual budget process. The Treasurer shall present and discuss the budget at the introductory meeting of the Assembly.
- E) The Secretary shall make public and keep a permanent record of the proceedings of the Assembly meetings, distributing within one (1) week the minutes of said meetings. The Secretary shall have the additional duty of distributing a copy of the Constitution and By-laws at the introductory meeting.
- F) The financial officer shall oversee the handling of all proposals by GSSA subsidiary organizations. The Financial Officer shall chair the proposal committee.

Article V: Subsidiary Organizations

Section 1: Establishment

As an umbrella organization, the Assembly shall have the authority to adopt subsidiary organizations that meet the special needs of the graduate student population.

Section 2: Recognition

- A) In order to request recognition from GSSA, a potential subsidiary organization must submit the following:
 - 1) an organizational constitution
 - 2) a list of current officers of the organization
- B) Such subsidiary organizations may be recognized as one of the following two subsidiary types:
 - 1) Departmental Organizations - whose membership is limited to all graduate school students registered within the organization's academic department
 - 2) Non-departmental or Interdisciplinary Organizations - whose membership is open to all GSSA members
- C) A simple majority vote of the Assembly shall be required in order to adopt a potential subsidiary.

Section 3: Constitutions

A) Such subsidiary organizations shall be required to submit a current constitution for approval by the Assembly both during initial recognition and following any constitutional changes made by the subsidiary organization.

B) Subsidiary organization constitutions shall be subject to periodic examination by the Assembly.

C) Subsidiary Organizational constitutions may not conflict with the constitution of GSSA.

Section 4: Duties.

A representative of such subsidiary organizations shall be required to attend all Assembly meetings.

Section 4: Budgets

A) The budgets of such subsidiary organizations shall operate as separate accounts under management of the officials of each subsidiary organization with Assembly Treasurer supervision.

B) Funds shall only be spent on such matters as previously approved by the Assembly and for purposes consistent with the subsidiary organization's constitution.

C) To be eligible to receive GSSA funds, a subsidiary organization must submit a proposed budget to the Association Treasurer in accordance with the procedures established by Association officers.

D) Actual funding for subsidiary organizations must be approved by the Assembly after budget for the entire Association has been approved by ASB, and adopted by the Assembly. This will usually occur at the last meeting of the spring semester.

E) All equipment purchased by the subsidiary organization with Association funds shall remain the property of the Association and shall be returned to the Association upon dissolution of the subsidiary organization.

Article VI: Amendment and Revision

Section 1: Proposal.

Amendments or revisions to this Constitution, or a new Constitution, may be initiated by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly or by petition to the Assembly signed by not less than fifty (50) members of the Association. Publication of the proposed change shall be made by posting in the GSSA office and by written notification to each department/program for not less than ten (10) school days prior to ratification.

Section 2: Ratification of Amendments.

A proposed amendment may be ratified at the next Assembly meeting by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly representatives.

Article VII: Enactment

The Constitution shall be effective when ratified by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly representatives and after necessary approval practices by the Associated Student Body.

Enactment Clause

We, an organized body of graduate students of Tulane University, do hereby enact the above Constitution.

The Association officers at the time of the adoption of this Constitution shall continue in office until such time as they are replaced in the manner provided for in this Constitution.

REVISED and APPROVED: 4/95