

**Constitution**  
for the  
**Graduate Student Government Association**  
Of the  
**Georgia Institute of Technology**

[Last revised by the Graduate Student Senate on February 19, 2022]

**THE PREAMBLE**

We the Graduate Students of the Georgia Institute of Technology, in order to represent our matters, liaise on behalf of and in service to the Graduate Student Body, and promote excellence of Graduate Education, resolve and declare Association and hereby adopt and enact this Constitution.

**ARTICLE I: THE NAME**

The name of this organization is the Graduate Student Government Association of the Georgia Institute of Technology, hereafter referred to as the Government. The abbreviation of the name of this Government is GSGA.

**ARTICLE II: THE PURPOSE**

This Government's purpose is to improve the lives of graduate students and to represent their interests to the broader Institute, including advocating graduate student needs, opinions, well-being, and happiness; improving the graduate student experience with respect to academics, student organizations, and student-faculty-administration relations; and preserving graduate student integrity.

**ARTICLE III: THE AUTHORITY**

The Constitution of this Government shall not be subject to the authority of any other student organization, graduate or undergraduate. Any law, rule, or other regulation enacted or promulgated by this Government shall be valid and binding on the graduate student body only when the same has been properly adopted and is reasonably necessary and within the scope of the authority of the respective body. No law, rule, or other regulation, which is in conflict with the Statutes, Student Code of Conduct, or official rules and regulations of the Georgia Institute of Technology may be enacted by this Government.

**ARTICLE IV: THE ORGANIZATION**

This Government shall consist of three branches: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial.

*Paragraph A.* The Legislative Branch shall be the Graduate Student Senate, hereafter referred to as the Senate, Legislative Standing Committees, and Legislative Ad-hoc Committees.

*Paragraph B.* The Executive Branch shall be the Executive Council, Executive Standing Committees, Executive Ad-hoc Committees, and the Institute-Wide Committee Representatives.

*Paragraph C.* The Judicial Branch shall be the Graduate Judiciary, hereafter referred to as the Judiciary.

*Paragraph D.* The Government shall be advised by representatives of the Office of the Provost and the Office of Dean of Students. These representatives shall be appointed by the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Faculty Development and the Dean of Students.

**ARTICLE V: THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

*Paragraph A. MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTIONS*

- a. The Senate shall include representatives from all administratively recognized departments, partnerships, or allied institutes required to pay student activity fees to the Atlanta campus of the Georgia Institute of Technology. Senators shall be elected according to the guidelines established in the Bylaws.
- b. Officer positions of the Senate shall include a Senate Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and additional positions established in the Bylaws or created by the Senate. They are required to attend meetings of the Senate. Senators may be Officers of the Senate, in which case they continue to exercise their duties as Senators.
- c. The Senate Chair presides over the meetings and shall vote only in the case of a tie. If the Senate Chair is absent, the Senate Vice Chair shall preside over meetings and shall vote only in the case of a tie. If both the Senate Chair and Senate Vice Chair are absent or no Senate Vice Chair is elected, the Senate may select a chair pro tem from within the attending membership by simple majority of the voting members to preside over the meeting, who would then vote only in the case of a tie.
- d. Senators shall be elected by their graduate student constituents before the end of the second full month of fall term. They shall be installed at the Senate meeting immediately following the election and shall serve for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. Candidates must comply with all regulations for elections established in the Bylaws.
- e. Officers of the Senate shall be elected by an absolute majority of the voting members of the Senate at the last meeting of the spring term, or at the earliest possible meeting of the following fall semester. They shall be installed prior to the end of the spring term at a date determined by the Senate upon proposal of the Senate Chair, or if elected in the Fall, at the meeting in which they are elected and shall serve for a term of one year or until their successors are installed.
- f. Any Senator may be a member of a Legislative Standing Committee or Legislative Ad-hoc Committee. Legislative Standing Committee Chairs shall be elected by Senate upon nomination of the Senate Chair in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Bylaws and shall serve for one year or until their successors are appointed.

*Paragraph B. ELIGIBILITY*

To be eligible to run for and hold the position of Senator or Officer of the Senate, graduate students must meet the requirements as outlined in the Georgia Tech Catalog for participation in extracurricular activities. Students registered with the Center for Career Discovery and Development for a work term in the Fall or Spring are eligible to serve as Co-op Senators, but may not serve as Senators or Officers of the Senate. If a Senator or Officer of the Senate loses their eligibility for the respective office, the seat or office they hold turns vacant.

*Paragraph C. REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT*

- a. Officers of the Senate may be removed from office upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.
- b. Senators may be removed from office upon presentation of articles of impeachment by the Senate, as described in the Bylaws. Removal from office becomes effective when the articles of impeachment are approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the total membership of the Senate.
- c. Whenever a Senate seat becomes vacant or is unfilled, a member of the graduate student body may be elected by the Senate upon nomination of the Senate Chair or the President to serve until the next regular election. Vacant seats filled in this manner must be filled by a member of that seat's constituency. If an Office of the Senate becomes vacant, the Senate shall elect a new Officer to serve until the next election.

*Paragraph D. DUTIES AND LIMITATIONS*

- a. The Senate shall deliberate and vote on resolutions and create Legislative Ad-hoc Committees.
- b. The Senate shall advise the President on appointments, as described in the Bylaws, and a simple majority of the voting members shall be necessary to approve of such action. Appointments of the President are subject to approval by the Senate, unless the Bylaws remove this requirement for certain positions; the requirement cannot be removed for the appointment of Executive Officers or Justices.
- c. The Senate shall advise the President on the creation of all Executive Ad-hoc Committees.
- d. The Senate shall cooperate with the Undergraduate House of Representatives in exercising general

- supervision over all student activities.
- e. The Senate, together with the Undergraduate House of Representatives, shall have the following responsibilities with regards to the allocation of the Student Activity Fee governed by the Institute's Registered Student Organizations Policy:
    1. Establishment of the Joint Finance Committee (JFC), composed of both graduate and undergraduate members.
    2. Allocation of a certain percentage of SAF revenue to be divided between the Graduate Legislative Reserve and the Undergraduate Legislative Reserve according to the fraction of Student Activity Fees paid by graduate students and undergraduate students respectively.

*Paragraph E. MEETINGS*

Meetings and parliamentary procedure follow the guidelines established in the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE VI: THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

*Paragraph A. MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTIONS*

- a. The Executive Council shall include the President, Executive Vice President and the Executive Officers.
- b. Executive Officer positions shall be established in the Bylaws or created by the President. Any Executive Officer role, except in cases excluded in the Bylaws, may be left vacant.
- c. Joint Vice Presidents shall be appointed jointly by the Presidents of both the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Governments pursuant to Joint Standing Committee appointment procedures outlined in Article VI Paragraph E. Joint Vice Presidents may be required by the Bylaws to attend the meetings of the Senate.
- d. Any graduate student who is in good standing may be a member of an Executive Standing Committee or Executive Ad-hoc Committee. Executive Standing Committee Chairs shall be appointed by the President in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Bylaws. Executive Standing Committee Chairs shall serve for one year or until their successors are appointed.
- e. Institute Committee Representatives shall be appointed by the President in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Bylaws. They shall serve for one year or until their successors are appointed.
- f. The President and Executive Vice President shall be elected as a ticket by a majority vote of the graduate student body during the spring term. They cannot serve simultaneously as Senators while in office. The President and Vice President shall be installed at prior to the end of the spring term at a date determined by the Senate upon proposal of the Senate Chair and shall serve for a term of one year or until their successors are installed.

*Paragraph B. ELIGIBILITY*

To be eligible to run for and hold the office of President or Executive Vice President or hold an Executive Officer, Executive Committee Chair and Institute Committee Representatives position, graduate students must meet the requirements as outlined in the Georgia Tech Catalog for participation in extracurricular activities. Students registered with the Center for Career Discovery and Development for a work term in the Fall or Spring are ineligible to serve in these positions.

*Paragraph C. REPLACEMENT*

- a. The President may remove Executive Officers or any Executive Standing or Ad-hoc Committee members or chairs they appointed, except Joint positions and committees, from office.
- b. The President, Executive Vice President, Executive Officers or any Executive Standing or Ad-hoc Committee members or chairs appointed by the President, including Joint positions and committees, may be removed from office upon presentation of articles of impeachment by the Senate, as described in the Bylaws. Removal from office becomes effective when the articles of impeachment are approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the total membership of the Senate.
- c. Institute Committee Representatives are not subject to Article VI, Paragraph C, Sections (a)-(b).
- d. If an Executive Committee Chair or Institute Committee Representative vacancy occurs, the President shall

- e. make another appointment to the position in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Bylaws.
- f. If a vacancy occurs in the office of President, the Executive Vice President will assume the President's duties.
- g. If a vacancy occurs in the office of Executive Vice President, including a vacancy created by assuming the office of President, then the President shall nominate a new Executive Vice President and with approval with two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Senate shall become the new Executive Vice President. If the vacancy occurs less than thirty (30) days before the next regularly scheduled election, the President may leave the position vacant.
- h. If a parallel vacancy occurs in the office of President and Executive Vice President more than thirty (30) days before the regular election, then a special election of the graduate student body following the rules of a regular election will take place.

*Paragraph D. DUTIES*

- a. The Executive Council shall inform the Senate about their conduct of business and meet with officers of the Senate on a regular basis as outlined in the Bylaws.

*Paragraph E. JOINT STANDING COMMITTEES*

- a. A Joint Standing Committee may be established by approval of both the Senate and the Undergraduate House of Representatives.
- b. A Joint Standing Committee shall be a committee composed of both undergraduate and graduate members with a statutory responsibility to both the Senate and the Undergraduate House of Representatives.
- c. The Chair of a Joint Standing Committee shall be appointed by the President of the Student Body of the larger student activity fee-paying population with the consent of the President of the Student Body of the smaller student activity fee-paying population. The person appointed as Chair of a Joint Standing Committee shall be approved by both the Senate and the Undergraduate House of Representatives. The Chair of a Joint Standing Committee must be a student activity fee-paying graduate or undergraduate student.
- d. If committee statutes require the membership of Senators or members designated by the Senate, these members are elected by the Senate upon nomination of the Senate Chair. Otherwise, unless there are no other rules established, Joint Standing Committee Representatives shall be appointed by the President in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE VII: THE JUDICIAL BRANCH**

*Paragraph A. MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT*

- a. The Judiciary shall be composed of at least three (3) and no more than nine (9) Justices at any one time. There shall be no more than two (2) Justices from any School.
- b. Justices shall be appointed by the President in accordance with the Bylaws and with the approval of the Senate with a simple majority. The Appointments last for the term of two (2) years and may be reappointed for additional terms of one (1) year each in the same manner as for the original appointment. One Justice shall be appointed as the Chair of the Judiciary by the President with approval of the Senate with a simple majority, and in accordance with the Bylaws.

*Paragraph B. ELIGIBILITY*

To be eligible to hold the office of Justices, graduate students must meet the requirements as outlined in the Georgia Tech Catalog for participation in extracurricular activities. Justices may not concurrently hold any position in the executive or legislative branches of the Graduate Student Government Association.

*Paragraph C. REPLACEMENT*

- a. Justices may be removed from office upon presentation of articles of impeachment by the Senate. Removal

from office becomes effective when the articles of impeachment are approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the total membership of the Senate.

- b. If a Justice vacancy occurs, the President shall make another appointment to the position in accordance with the Bylaws.

*Paragraph D. JOINT JUDICIARY CABINET*

In order to adjudicate issues arising jointly under the jurisdiction of the Undergraduate Student Government Association and the Graduate Student Government Association, the Undergraduate Judiciary Cabinet (UJC) and Graduate Judiciary Cabinet (GJC) shall constitute the Joint Judiciary Cabinet (JJC).

**ARTICLE VIII: THE OATH OF OFFICE**

*Paragraph A. OATH*

Upon assuming any office of the Executive, Legislative, or Judicial Branch, the following oath shall be taken: "I, (full name), do solemnly affirm that I will faithfully execute the duties and responsibilities entrusted to me by virtue of my office, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and enforce the Constitution and all other governing documents of the Graduate Student Government Association at the Georgia Institute of Technology."

*Paragraph B. REQUIREMENTS*

The President, Executive Vice President and Senate Chair shall take their oath in front of the Chief Justice at a date determined by the Senate upon proposal of the Senate Chair. All other officers shall take their oath in front of the Senate Chair during a meeting of the Senate.

**ARTICLE IX: THE JOINT GOVERNING BOARDS**

*Paragraph A. DEFINITION*

A Joint Governing Board shall function as an independent organization from this government.

*Paragraph B. ESTABLISHMENT AND CHARTER*

A Joint Governing Board may be established by adding the charter of the board to the Bylaws of both the Undergraduate Student Government and Graduate Student Government. The initial charter and any changes must be approved in the same form by both the Senate and Undergraduate House of Representatives to become effective.

*Paragraph C. CHAIR*

The Chair of a Joint Governing Board shall be appointed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Board's charter. The Chair shall be subject to approval of both houses and impeachment of each house.

**ARTICLE X: THE RATIFICATION, AMENDMENTS, REFERENDA, INITIATIVE, AND RECALL**

*Paragraph A. RATIFICATION*

This Constitution shall become effective immediately upon ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Senate and with approval of the Student Activities Committee of the Faculty Senate.

*Paragraph B. AMENDMENTS*

Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Senate, or by a petition of five percent (5%) of the graduate student body directed to the President.

Amendments become part of this Constitution upon ratification by either of the following:

- a. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the graduate students voting in a special election, provided that each proposed amendment was presented to the graduate student body at least one month prior to a referendum, with approval of the Student Activities Committee of the Faculty Senate; or

- b. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Senate and with approval of the Student Activities Committee of the Faculty Senate.
- c. Following approval of amendments as outlined above, amendments may be adopted provisionally, prior to approval by the Student Activities Committee of the Faculty Senate.

*Paragraph C. REFERENDA*

A Referendum on any question except the allocation of student activity fee funds, the chartering of campus organizations, or the revocation of campus organization charters may be called by a petition signed by at least five percent (5%) of the graduate student body directed to the President, or by a majority vote of the Senate. Referendum votes by the graduate student body must be carried by a majority of the students voting.

*Paragraph D. INITIATIVES*

An Initiative on any question except the allocation of student activity fee funds, the chartering of campus organizations, or the revocation of campus organization charters may be called by a petition signed by at least two hundred graduate students directed to the President, who shall refer it to the Senate Chair. The Senate must consider the initiated question and vote on the initiated question. A meeting of the graduate student body must be called within thirty (30) days upon receipt of a petition meeting the requirements, unless the petition is submitted during the summer term.

*Paragraph E. RECALL*

A recall election for any Officer or Justice may be called by a petition signed by at least five percent (5%) of the graduate student body directed to the President. A recall election for a Senator may be called by a petition signed by at least five percent (5%) of the electing constituency directed to the President. A special election shall then be held in which the current office holder may run against any challengers that meet the eligibility requirements for that position. The winner of the special election shall hold the position until the next regularly scheduled election.

**ARTICLE XI: THE TRANSITIONAL STIPULATIONS**

*Paragraph A. CONTINUITY OF APPOINTED OFFICERS*

Stipulations regarding the election of the Senate Chair by the Senate in Article V Paragraph A Letter e and Paragraph C Letter c shall become effective and be applied for the next regular election following the ratification of the amendments to the Constitution. Until then, the Senate Chair shall be appointed jointly by the President and Executive Vice President with majority approval of the Senate.

**ARTICLE XII: THE BYLAWS**

*Paragraph A. PURPOSE*

The Senate shall establish a set of rules, which shall be known as the Bylaws of the Government. The Bylaws shall be a lesser authority than this Constitution and shall establish additional guidelines for the Government.

*Paragraph B. RATIFICATION*

The Bylaws shall be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total membership of the Senate.

*Paragraph C. AMENDMENT*

The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate.

**ARTICLE XIII: THE NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Membership and all privileges, including voting and officer positions, must be extended to all students without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity or national origin,

religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status, unless exempt under Title IX.