

# University of Delaware Graduate Student Government Constitution

(Updated: 9 February 2022)

## **Preamble:**

We, the graduate students of the University of Delaware, believing in the right and the obligation to actively participate in the formation and execution of student and university policy, do hereby establish the University of Delaware Graduate Student Government. We strive to integrate the academic, professional, and social aspects of university life. Guided by the principles of democracy, we create this constitution of the organization to serve as the foundation for the implementation of these goals.

### *Section 1. Name of Organization*

- (a) This organization must be known as the Graduate Student Government (hereafter called the GSG) of the University of Delaware (hereafter called the University). The GSG must be the pre-eminent governance organization for students enrolled in graduate studies at the University.

### *Section 2. Statement of Purpose*

- (a) The GSG seeks to create a forum for graduate student advocacy while facilitating communication between students, faculty, and administration at the University. The GSG supports campus-wide activities promoting graduate student professionalism and collegiality. In addition, the GSG seeks to influence the course of the University (1) through representation on University committees, (2) by expressing views of the student body to the administration, and (3) by issuing statements of our position to the administration and media.

### *Section 3. Statement of Inclusion*

- (a) In an effort to create an atmosphere of inclusion and increase graduate student engagement, the GSG does not restrict membership or participation on the basis of race, nationality, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, veteran status, marital status, language, political affiliation, disability, or any other social or personal characteristic. The GSG believes an emphasis on diversity can enhance the overall experience of graduate students at the University as students learn to interact effectively and appreciate the various perspectives, talents, and abilities of others.
- (b) *University Nondiscrimination Clause:* The GSG agrees to adhere to all policies and procedures of the University and all local, state, and federal laws. Members will become acquainted with University policies and procedures as

provided in the official student handbook.

The GSG is a viable, functioning organization, composed of at least six full-time graduate students. The GSG does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, veteran, handicap status, or sexual orientation.

#### *Section 4. Living Land Acknowledgement with the Leni Lenape and Nanticoke Tribes*

- (a) With the passage of SR-2122-02 on November 8, 2021, the GSG acknowledges that the University of Delaware Occupies lands vital to the web of life for Leni Lenape and Nanticoke, who share their ancestry, history, and future in this region. UD has financially benefited from this regional occupation as well as from Indigenous territories that were expropriated through the United States land grant system. European colonizers and later the United States forced Nanticoke and Leni Lenape westward and northward, where they formed nations in present-day Oklahoma, Wisconsin and Ontario, Canada. Others never left their homelands or returned from exile when they could. GSG expresses its appreciation for ongoing Indigenous stewardship of the ecologies and traditions of this region. While the harms to Indigenous people and their homelands are beyond repair, we commit to building right relationships going forward by collaborating with tribal leadership on actionable institutional steps.

### **Article I. Membership**

#### *Section 1. Membership*

- (a) Membership in the GSG must be all students enrolled in graduate-level Academic Plans at any campus or satellite campus of the University to include both full- and part-time graduate students with active enrollment. A department may have up to three representatives one from a doctoral program, one from a master's program, and one from an online program. Membership roles are distinguished in Article I of the Bylaws.

#### *Section 2. Legislative Voting Members*

- (a) Legislative voting must be limited to those GSG members specified in Article I, Section 4 of the Bylaws.

#### *Section 3. Officers*

- (a) The officers of the GSG, to be elected following Article IV, Section 2, must consist of the President, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Vice President of Membership, the Secretary, the Outreach and Engagement Officer, and the Parliamentarian.

## Article II. Structure

The structure of the GSG must consist of an Executive Branch and a Legislative Branch.

### *Section 1. Executive Branch*

- (a) The Executive Branch of the GSG must consist of the Executive Council, the Committee Boards, and the members of each committee.

#### 1. The Executive Council

- a. The overall activities of the GSG must be coordinated by the Executive Council which consists of the President, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Vice President of Membership, the Secretary, and the Outreach and Engagement Officer, and is chaired by the President.
- b. The powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Executive Council are described in Article II, Section 2 of the Bylaws.
- c. It must be the responsibility of each officer to report to the Senate at least twice each semester on the progress of their work.
- d. The term of office of all Executive Council members must be one year. No member may serve more than two consecutive elected terms in the same office.

#### 2. Committee Boards

- a. The GSG must have two Committee Boards, the Internal Affairs Board and the Student Affairs Board.
  1. The Internal Affairs Board must be chaired by the Vice President of Internal Affairs and must consist of the committee chairs for each of the standing and ad hoc internal affairs committees.
  2. The Student Affairs Board must be chaired by the Vice President of Student Affairs and must consist of the committee chairs for each of the standing and ad hoc student affairs committees.
- b. The structure and meeting requirements for Board meetings are outlined in Article III of the Bylaws.

### 3. Committees

- a. The committee membership and organization requirements are outlined in Article III of this Constitution.

#### *Section 2. Legislative Branch*

- (a) The Legislative Branch of the GSG must consist of the Senate and the Parliamentarian.

#### 1. The Senate

- a. The Senate must be the legislative body of the GSG.
- b. The Senate membership may consist of up to three voting student senators from each of the University's graduate-degree awarding departments to include one doctoral student, one master's student, and one online student.
- c. Senator elections are outlined in Article IV, Section 3 of the Bylaws.
- d. Each senator must have responsibilities in order to maintain active standing, as outlined in Article II, Section 3 of the Bylaws.

#### 2. The Parliamentarian

- a. The chairperson of the Senate must be the Parliamentarian, whose role is outlined in Article II, Section 3 of the Bylaws.

### **Article III. Committees of the Senate**

#### *Section 1. Committee Organization*

- (a) GSG committees must exist in one of two forms: standing and ad hoc committees.
  1. Standing committees fulfill necessary roles which ensure the continuous operation of GSG functions and reflect the GSG's values and initiatives.
  2. The standing committees of the GSG must be:
    - a. Communications
    - b. Diversity

- c. Elections
- d. Events
- e. Governance
- f. Graduate College Council
- g. Mental Health
- h. Social
- i. Student Life
- j. Sustainability

3. The GSG may assemble specialized committees, called ad hoc committees, that must be provisional committees to manage temporary functions for the GSG and/or address topics of interest to the graduate student body that do not fall under the purview of the existing standing committees. Article III, Section 3 of the Bylaws delineates ad hoc committee creation and dissolution.

#### *Section 2. Committee Membership*

- (a) Committees must be governed by a chair and must consist of at least two additional senators or members-at-large, with the exception of the Governance Committee. Officers may also take on membership and hold voting rights. Article III of the Bylaws delineates the respective roles and duties of committee chairs and members.

### **Article IV. Elections and Appointments**

#### *Section 1. Elections Committee*

- (a) The Elections Committee must be the governing body of the elections process. The responsibilities of the Elections Committee are outlined in Article IV, Section 1 of the Bylaws.

#### *Section 2. Officer and Senator Elections*

- (a) The Elections Committee must coordinate all aspects of officer and senator elections.
- (b) Eligibility, terms of position, the elections timeline, and position vacancies are outlined in Article IV of the Bylaws.

#### *Section 3. Committee Chair Elections*

- (a) Eligibility: All senators in active standing and any member-at-large who is a member of a committee are eligible to serve as that committee's chair(s).
- (b) Nomination and Election: All members of the committee must meet before

the second public GSG meeting and submit nomination(s) for chair(s) of their respective committee. The committee must then elect their chair(s) through a vote by secret ballot, with simple majority determining the winner.

- (c) Appointments: If a committee is without a chair due to removal (as outlined in Article V, Section 3) or due to an unfilled chair position, the Executive Council may appoint a new committee chair by the date of the next public GSG meeting.

#### *Section 4. Graduate College Council Representative Elections*

- (a) The Elections Committee must coordinate all aspects of Graduate College Council Representative elections.
- (b) Eligibility: All students enrolled in a graduate-level Academic Plan may be nominated for a position on the Graduate College Council to fulfill the charge of representing the University's graduate student body in the goals, initiatives, discussions, and decisions of the Graduate College. Self-nominations are permitted.
- (c) Nomination and Elections: The nomination and elections procedure for Student Representatives to the Graduate College Council are outlined in Article IV, Section 5 of the Bylaws.

### **Article V. Removal**

#### *Section 1. Officers*

- (a) If an officer of the Executive Branch does not fulfill their duties as outlined in Article II, Section 2 of the Bylaws, the GSG must follow the guidelines for removal outlined in Article V, Section 1 of the Bylaws.

#### *Section 2. Senators*

- (a) If a senator does not fulfill their duties as outlined in Article II, Section 3 of the Bylaws, the GSG must follow the guidelines for removal outlined in Article V, Section 2 of the Bylaws.

#### *Section 3. Committee Chairs*

- (a) If a committee chair or co-chair does not fulfill their duties as outlined in Article III of the Bylaws, the GSG must follow the guidelines for removal outlined in Article V, Section 3 of the Bylaws.

#### *Section 4. Graduate College Council Representatives*

- (a) If a Representative does not fulfill their duties as outlined in Article III,

Section 4 of the Bylaws, the VP of Membership must recommend their removal to the Graduate College Council and follow the guidelines for further action outlined in Article V, Section 4 of the Bylaws.

## **Article VI. Amendments**

### *Section 1. Voting Procedure*

- (a) Changes to the Constitution require three-fourths Senate vote, and changes to the Bylaws require a two-thirds Senate vote.

### *Section 2. Amendments Procedure*

- (a) The procedure for amending the Constitution or Bylaws is outlined in Article VI, Section 2 of the Bylaws.