

# University of Delaware Graduate Student Government Constitution

(Updated: 5 February 2025)

## 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.
- (c) 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 Lenni 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 Lenni 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 Lenni 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 includes 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, including 4+1 students in their “+1” year. A program may have up to three representatives: one earning a doctoral level degree, one earning a master’s level degree, and one earning a fully online degree. Membership roles are distinguished in Article I of the Bylaws.
- (b) The GSG is a viable, functioning organization, composed of at least six full-time graduate students.

### *Section 2. Legislative Voting Members*

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

### *Section 3. Officers*

- (a) The officers of GSG shall consist of the President, the Vice President of External Affairs, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Parliamentarian. The election of these offices is laid out in Article V, Section 2.

## **Article II. Legislative Branch**

### *Section 1. Senate*

- (a) The Senate shall serve as the Legislative Body of the Graduate Student Government and be made up of Senators representing Graduate Programs.
- (b) The Senate shall have committees, referred to as Committees of the Senate, which will undertake the duties of the Senate.

### *Section 2. Parliamentarian*

- (a) The Parliamentarian shall serve as the Chair of the Senate. They shall serve a term of one year and a maximum of two terms. The Parliamentarian shall be elected by a simple majority of the Senate of the Graduate Student Government during the Officer Election Session in Article V Section 2.
- (b) The Parliamentarian shall be the leader of the Graduate Student Government Senators.
- (c) The Parliamentarian shall meet monthly with Senate leadership to steer the Senate and keep committees on track with their charges. This will include the Chairs of the

Committee on Rules and Governance, Operations, Housing, Transportation, Student Life, Diversity, Health and Wellbeing, and Sustainability, as well as the Chairs of ad hoc committees.

- (d) The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for appointing Senators to Senate and Executive committees.

### **Article III. Executive Branch**

#### *Section 1. President*

- (a) The President of the Graduate Student Government shall serve as the chief executive officer. They shall serve a term of one year and a maximum of two terms. The President shall be elected by a simple majority of the Senate of the Graduate Student Government during the Officer Election Session in Article V Section 2.
- (b) The President shall serve as the chief external communicator between the Graduate Student Government and University Officials.
- (c) The President shall form and Chair the Executive Council which shall include the Vice President of External Affairs, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Parliamentarian.
- (d) The President shall give regular updates to the Senate on important meetings with campus officials/ The President shall give annual updates to the graduate student body on the state of the Graduate Student Government.
- (e) The President shall be responsible for appointing graduate students to external positions at the University of Delaware.

#### *Section 2. Vice President of External Affairs*

- (a) The Vice President of External Affairs shall serve as the chief aid to the President in duties relating to external commitments. They shall serve a term of one year with a maximum of two terms. The Vice President of External Affairs shall be elected by a simple majority of the Senate of the Graduate Student Government during the Officer Election Session in Article V Section 2.
- (b) The Vice President of External Affairs shall serve as the vice-chief communicator between the Graduate Student Government and University Officials and aid the president in their activities.
- (c) The Vice President of External Affairs shall form the Executive Sub-committee on External Affairs with the Secretary and shall serve as the Chair of this committee.

#### *Section 3. Vice President of Internal Affairs*

- (a) The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall serve as the chief aid to the President in duties relating to GSG's elections and membership roster. They shall serve a term of one year with a maximum of two terms. The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall be elected by a simple majority of the Senate of the Graduate Student Government during the Officer Election Session in Article V Section 2.
- (b) They shall be responsible for maintaining and communicating GSG's senate and officer election policy to the Senate and Departments.
- (c) The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall form the Executive Sub-committee on Internal Affairs and shall serve as the Chair of this committee.

#### *Section 4. Secretary*

- (a) The Secretary shall serve as the chief aid to the President in duties relating to maintaining GSG's documentation. They shall serve a term of one year with a maximum of two terms. The Secretary shall be elected by a simple majority of the Senate of the Graduate Student Government during the Officer Election Session in Article V Section 2.
- (b) The Secretary shall be responsible for taking minutes during the public Senate and Executive Council meetings and maintaining the organization of files in GSG's archive, which is currently the GSG Google Drive. They shall aid the Vice President of External Affairs in maintaining the website and social media accounts.
- (c) The Secretary shall form the Executive Subcommittee on External Affairs with the Vice President of External Affairs and shall serve as the Vice-Chair of this committee.

*Section 5. Treasurer*

- (a) The Treasurer shall serve as the chief aid to the President in duties relating to allocating money. They shall serve a term of one year with a maximum of two terms. The Treasurer shall be elected by a simple majority of the Senate of the Graduate Student Government during the Officer Election Session in Article V Section 2.
- (b) The Treasurer shall be responsible for allocating funds to Graduate Student Organizations and purchasing for the GSG.
- (c) The Treasurer shall form the Executive Subcommittee on Funding Allocation and shall Chair this committee.

*Section 6. The Executive Council*

- (a) The Executive Council shall be formed and Chaired by the President and shall include the Vice President of External Affairs, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Parliamentarian.
- (b) The Executive Council shall oversee the activities of the GSG and advise the President when interacting with University Officials
- (c) The Executive Council shall be responsible for confirming nominations by the President.
- (d) The Executive Council shall have three sub-committees, the Executive Sub-Committee on External Affairs, the Executive Sub-Committee on Internal Affairs, and the Executive Sub-Committee on Funding Allocation.

**Article IV. Committees of the Senate**

*Section 1. Committee Organization*

- (a) The GSG shall have seven standing committees. These committees shall serve to fulfill the function of the GSG and solve issues important to graduate students. Article II of the Bylaws delineates the charge of each committee. These committees shall be:
  - i. The Committee on Rules and Governance.
  - ii. The Committee on Research Advancement.
  - iii. The Committee on Housing.
  - iv. The Committee on Transportation.
  - v. The Committee on Student Life.

- vi. The Committee on Diversity.
  - vii. The Committee on Health and Wellbeing.
  - viii. The Committee on Sustainability
- (b) 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 II, Section 12 of the Bylaws delineates ad hoc committee creation and dissolution.

*Section 2. Committee Membership*

- (a) Committees of the Senate must be governed by a Chair and must consist of at least two senators. Article II, Section 2 and Article II, Section 3 of the Bylaws delineates the respective roles and duties of committee chairs and members.

## **Article V. Elections and Appointments**

*Section 1. General Election Procedure*

- (a) All elections with multiple candidates shall be administered with ranked choice voting and instant run off.
- (b) The winner of the Election shall be the person with a simple majority.

*Section 2. Officer and Senator Elections*

- (a) Officers shall be elected by the Senate during the April meeting. The procedure for Officer Elections is outlined in Article IV, Section 2 of the Bylaws.
- (b) Senators shall be elected in May. The procedure for Senator Elections is outlined in Article IV, Section 3 of the Bylaws.

*Section 3. Committee Chair Elections*

- (a) Committee Chairs shall be elected by the Senate during the August Orientation Meeting. The procedure for Committee Chair Elections is outlined in Article IV, Section 4 of the Bylaws.

*Section 4. External Position Appointments*

- (a) An external position, including, but not limited to, a Graduate College Council representative and Faculty Senate Representative, shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Executive Council. The procedure for External Position Appointments is outlined in Article IV, Section 5 of the Bylaws.

## **Article VI. Removal**

*Section 1. Officers*

- (a) If an officer of the Executive Branch 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 1 of the Bylaws.

*Section 2. Senators*

- (a) If a senator does not fulfill their duties as outlined in Article I, Section 4 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 II 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 the Bylaws of the Graduate College Council, the President 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 VII. 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 1 of the Bylaws.