CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS
MAY 2, 1991
REVISED March 2017
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Article I

(Definitions)
1. The Graduate Student Association, hereinafter called the GSA, shall be the governing student organization of the graduate student body.
2. The Governance Body shall consist of the officers of the executive committee and the graduate senators.
3. Graduate Student Organization (GSO).
4. Graduate Research Grant Award (GRGA).
5. Professional Development Award (PDA).
6. Executive Committee (EXCOM).
7. GSA Logo.

Article II

(Purposes)
1. To work for academic, social, and economic advancement of all graduate students to promote better communication among graduate students and the entire University student body.
2. To ensure appropriate representation of the graduate students in the affairs of the University pertaining to or affecting graduate education.
3. To promote rapport among graduate students, faculty and administration.
4. To administer the use of all properties and funds under GSA control.
5. To coordinate the functions of those student organizations which pertain to the membership of the GSA.
Article III

(Composition)

1. Composition: All current and incoming graduate students who are in good standing with the University and the GSA are members of the GSA.

Article IV

(Executive Committee, Term of Any Office, Vacating or Removal from Any Office)

1. The Officers of the GSA shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, GRGA Co-Chairs, PDA Co-Chairs and shall hereinafter be referred to as the Executive Committee or EXCOM.

2. Only GSA members in good standing shall be eligible to hold any GSA office.

3. All elected office terms are from June 1 of the year elected through May 31 of the following year.

4. The Executive Committee shall serve as a standing review board to present grievances to the appropriate University Offices or Graduate Student Organizations.

5. The Executive Committee will neither appropriate nor spend any funds not explicitly allowed for in this document or approved at a GSA Governance Body meeting. Any violation of this provision will result in personal culpability and liability for any or all EXCOM members. Violation of this provision will be considered an immediate vacation of office for any offending individual or individuals.

6. Resignation of EXCOM members: such resignations must be submitted in writing to the GSA Advisor.

7. The following rules are for the removal of officers:

   7.1. Any EXCOM officer may be removed if the individual is absent for two Governance Body meetings in any academic semester if so voted by a simple majority vote of the Governance Body.

   7.2. In addition, an EXCOM officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Governance Body.

   7.3. Dereliction of duty is just cause for removal from office.

Any vacant office may be filled by a simple majority vote of the Governance Body.
Article V

(Duties of the Executive Committee)

1. President:
   1.1. To preside over all meetings and ensure parliamentary procedure is adhered to as set out in Robert's Rules of Order, except as amended in this document.
   1.2. To prepare, post, and make available an agenda for all meetings.
   1.3. To represent the GSA and the Graduate Student Body.
   1.4. To call special meetings under the provisions outlined in Article VIII.
   1.5. To convene the Executive Committee.
   1.6. To create and dissolve committees of the GSA subject to Governance Body approval.
      1.6.1. This executive privilege does not apply to the GRGA and PDA committees, as they are integral and permanent GSA entities.
   1.7. To be Ex Officio member of all committees.
   1.8. To provide a written and oral report of the EXCOM’s activities at the last Governance Body meeting of the year.

2. Vice President:
   2.1. To assume the responsibilities of President when the latter is unable to do so.
   2.2. To assume the office of President when the office is vacated by the President.
   2.3. To be responsible for the planning and orchestration of all GSA sponsored functions, communications with the GSO’s, manage collegiate link website.
   2.4. To conduct a role call at all EXCOM and Governance Body Meetings.

3. Secretary:
   3.1. To record the minutes of all EXCOM and Governance Body meetings.
   3.2. To present written copies of these minutes at every Governance Body meeting for review, possible corrections, and approval or disapproval.
   3.3. To post these minutes at all locations specified by the Governance Body.
   3.4. To receive and maintain with the GSA Advisor all records of the GSA including minutes, committee reports, EXCOM member reports, correspondence, Graduate Student Organization (GSO) Constitutions and list of Officers with contact information, flyers, pamphlets, announcements, etc.
   3.5. To maintain a roster of Governance Body members. This roster shall include, at a minimum, the individual's name, office, organization represented, and contact information.
   3.6. To record the role call at all EXCOM and Governance Body Meetings. This information will be included in the minutes.
   3.7. To be responsible for the written communication of the GSA.
3.8. To send and post notices of all Governance Body and Special meetings as outlined in Article VIII.
3.9. To maintain an accurate GSA constitution.
3.10. At the end of the school year to prepare a report listing (1) the number of years that each GSO has been in existence, and (2) the names of any GSOs and officers of those GSOs who are not in good standing with the GSA.

4. Treasurer:
   4.1. To be responsible for the financial transactions of the GSA.
   4.2. To present a written financial report at all Governance Body meetings.
   4.3. To maintain all of the financial records of the GSA with assistance from the Student Activities Bookkeeper and GSA Advisor.
   4.4. To pay the usual operating expenses listed below:
      a. Office supplies.
      b. Repairs to Equipment (Owned by the GSA).
   4.5. To produce all financial records for inspection, when requested in writing, by any member of the Governance Body.
   4.6. To work with the GSA advisor and Student Activities Office to allocate and disburse GSO funding under the guidelines listed in Article XI.

5. GRGA Chairperson
   5.1. The establishment of an appropriate review committee.
   5.2. The management of timely meetings to review applications on an annual basis.
   5.3. The preparation and publication of application materials to the student body.
   5.4. The timely presentation of committee decisions to the EXCOM.

6. PDA Chairperson
   6.1. The establishment of an appropriate review committee.
   6.2. The management of timely meetings to review applications on a monthly basis.
   6.3. The preparation and publication of application materials to the student body.
   6.4. The timely presentation of committee decisions to the EXCOM.

7. General Officer Responsibilities
   7.1. All EXCOM Committee members are required to submit a detailed End-of-Year report detailing their offices activities from the year.
   7.2. If there are EXCOM positions that are not filled, the existing members of the EXCOM will fulfill the responsibilities of the unoccupied position. It is up to the existing EXCOM to determine how the responsibilities are distributed.
Article VI

(Senate)
1. The Senate shall be composed of one Senator from each recognized GSO and shall be elected as prescribed in Article X.
2. Alternate Senators will also be elected and will serve in the absence of the Senator.
3. The President or the Vice President of a GSO may serve as a proxy for the Senator or Alternate Senator.

Article VII

(Elections)
1. GSA Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, PDA Chair and GRGA Chair):
   1.1. The Officers shall be elected from the membership of the GSA.
   1.2. Election of officers shall be coordinated with the designated GSA Advisor to coincide with the end of the academic year during the month of April. All members of the GSA may vote in the election.
   1.3. Every effort will be made to ensure that no more than two persons from any one academic department may hold a position on the Executive Committee in any one year. In the event that there are no nominees from other academic departments the GSA Senate may vote to make an exception.
   1.4. No person may hold two elected positions within the GSA in any one year.
   1.5. Nominations:
      1.5.1. Any graduate student in good standing with the University and the GSA may nominate or second individuals for GSA office.
      1.5.2. No individual may nominate or second themselves.
      1.5.3. Nominations must be in writing on the form provided by the GSA. The nomination information will include the full name of the nominee, nominator, and secondary, as well as the academic department affiliation, GSO membership (if any), student identification number, personal contact information, and statement attesting to the good standing of these respective individuals. Additionally, the nominee must include a statement attesting to having read the GSA Constitution.
      1.5.4. Nominations must be returned to the designated GSA Advisor at least one week before elections are to be held.
   1.6. If there is an incomplete slate of officers elected, any vacancies may be filled by a simple majority vote of the Governance Body.
1.7. If election results are held under contention, a formal inquiry is to be conducted with the designated GSA Advisor and/or a representative of Student Activities and Leadership.

2. Senators shall be elected according to the terms outlined in their GSO Constitution.

**Article VIII**

(Meetings)

1. Governance Body Meetings:
   1. The Governance Body will meet at least once a month to conduct necessary business.
   2. Meetings shall be conducted according to the parliamentary procedure described in Robert’s Rules of Order, unless otherwise amended in this document.
   3. Notices of agenda and meeting dates, times, and locations shall be posted at least one week in advance of the meeting on the GSA Website. Notices shall also be e-mailed to the officers of each GSO.
   4. Only members of the Governance Body, i.e., the Graduate Senate and EXCOM, may vote at Governance Body meetings by a show of hands. Discussion on any item is always open to all.
      1.4.1. The President of the GSA shall only cast a vote in the event of a tie. The President must vote either YEA or NAY.
      1.4.2. The President may not make, nor second, nor amend any motion.
      1.4.3. A motion can be made, seconded, and passed by a simple majority of the Governance Body to allow all members of the GSA to vote on an active item at that meeting. This voting privilege expires upon resolution of the particular item.
   5. No GSA meetings shall be held without a quorum. A quorum shall consist of 1/3 of the Governance Body.
   6. Every GSO must be represented by a Senator, Alternate Senator, or Proxy at Governance Body meetings. Any GSO that fails to have this representation shall for the first unexcused absence be mailed a written warning from the GSA Secretary. The second unexcused absence will result in a lock on all GSA funding pending written response from the GSO. Upon receipt of this written response the EXCOM will determine further action regarding this matter. Upon a third unexcused absence, the GSO shall cease to be recognized by the GSA and any unexpended GSO funds will revert back to the GSA General Fund. Written notification of this shall be sent to the GSO’s Advisor. The offending GSO may seek redress at a Governance Body meeting.

2. Special Meetings:
2.1. A special meeting of the Governance Body may be called by the President of the GSA or by a simple majority vote by the EXCOM.

2.2. Special meetings can only be held at reasonable times.

2.3. Special meetings can only be held on a routine day of classes during the fall or spring semester that is followed by a routine day of classes. No special meeting shall be held without a quorum. A quorum shall be 1/3 of the Governance Body.

2.4. Notification of a special meeting shall be at least one week in advance of the meeting.

2.5. Special meetings should only be held if the agenda for this meeting cannot wait for a regular meeting of the Governance Body.

2.6. All absenteeism penalties are waived for special meetings.

2.7. Notice of the special meeting location, agenda and meeting dates, times, and locations shall be posted at least one week in advance of the meeting on the GSA Website. Notices shall also be e-mailed to the officers of each GSO.

Article IX

(Advisor)

1. The Director of Graduate Administration, or the Vice Provosts designee, or other appropriate University official (subject to disapproval by the Governance Body) will serve as advisor to the GSA.

Article X

(GSO Recognition and Requirements)

1. In order to be recognized and funded by the GSA for the current academic year, the following must be submitted to the designated GSA Advisor by the last Monday in September:

   1.1. A list containing the students’ full name, school I.D. number, and the signature of the student;

   1.2. A completed form that states contact information of the GSO’s officers;

   1.3. The GSO’s latest version of its Constitution;

   1.4. The “Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing” document signed by the GSO President;

   1.5. GSOs that do not register by the deadline of the last Monday in September may register at any time during the school year by completing the documents listed above and submitting them the designated GSA Advisor. These clubs will be eligible for seed funding and to apply for funds once they are approved by the Executive Committee.

2. All GSO constitutions must conform to the following format in order to be recognized by the GSA and/or be eligible for funding:

   2.1. Name of organization.
2.2. The purpose of the GSO must be consistent with the Purposes of the GSA listed in Article II.

2.3. Membership in the organization:
   2.3.1. Voting members: This must be open to all University graduate students in good standing with the University and the GSA.
   2.3.2. Nonvoting members: If any, for example, faculty, staff, alumni, undergraduates, etc., consistent with Article II.

2.4. Election of officers: Elections of officers are to take place during the last full week in April. Only voting members may hold the offices required in these guidelines. The following are the required officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Senator, and Alternate Senator. The President or Vice President of a GSO may serve as a proxy for the Senator or Alternate Senator. No individual will hold more than one office at a time. Notification of elections must occur at least seven days in advance.

2.5. Executive board (powers and duties of each office): To be determined by the GSO.

2.6. Standing committees or sub-committees: An organization may form committees or additional offices consistent with the organization's purpose. These committees or non-required offices may include nonvoting members.

2.7. Meetings:
   2.7.1. At least one per semester with notification at least seven days prior to the meeting date.
   2.7.2. Copies of at least one meeting's minutes per semester must be submitted to the GSA secretary.

2.8. Advisor: An advisor will be chosen from the University Faculty or Staff.

2.9. Amendments: The GSO constitution may be amended by 2/3 of the voting members present. Any voting member may propose an amendment which will then be voted on at the following general meeting, after which an accepted amendment will be submitted to the GSA for approval and adoption.

2.10. By-Laws: Bylaws may be proposed by any member of the club and will be carried by a 2/3 vote of the voting membership present at the meeting.

2.11. Power of Restriction: The power to restrict a GSO's funds or representative event is to be held by the GSA.

2.12. No new GSO will be recognized by the GSA if its purpose is similar to that of a currently recognized GSO. GSOs founded in the same academic year with similar purposes may be required to merge by the GSA.

2.13. Recreational sports clubs should be recognized and funded through the Athletic Department and not the GSA.
2.14. The GSO will follow Chapter 269 of the General laws, Section 17, 18, 19-AN ACT PROHIBITING THE PRACTICE OF HAZING. No GSO will haze in any way.

**Article XI**

**(Funding)**

1. **Sources:**
   
   1.1. There are two primary sources of funding for the GSA. There is an annual allocation from the University administration and rolled-over funds from the previous year.

   1.2. The GSA account is a non-interest-bearing account which is administered by the GSA Advisor business office. A sum of $5000.00 shall be reserved by the business manager to ensure solvency of the GSA.

   1.3. Ticket sales (such as for GSA sponsored events) are a possible source of income.

   1.4. Other fund raising activities may be conducted in accordance with the Purposes of the GSA (Constitution Article II).

   1.5. Funds raised by GSOs, including event (party) ticket sales, must be deposited in a separate revolving account with the Student Activities Bookkeeper, and remains with the GSO as discretionary funds.

2. **Expenditures:**

   2.1. Professional Development and Graduate Research Grant Awards (PDAs and GRGAs). The disbursement of funds for PDAs and GRGAs is governed by the guidelines of their respective committees.

   2.2. Activities (such as senate and committee meetings).

   2.3. Regular operating expenses including the cost of a bookkeeper:

   - 2.3.1. GSA-sponsored and approved special events such as guest speakers, banquets, conferences, social activities, etc. The GSA shall allocate 35% of the annual University’s allocation as funds to be distributed to clubs.

   - 2.3.2. Each fully registered GSO Club shall automatically receive a stipend of $100.00, to be used for GSO activities as determined by a majority vote of the GSO.

   - 2.3.3. Event proposals should be submitted two weeks before the posted meeting to the Executive Committee and GSA Advisor. Proposals not submitted by the deadline might not be considered at the next meeting.

   - 2.3.4. Recognized GSO proposals which were submitted to the Executive Committee by the deadline will be included in the agenda for the subsequent monthly meeting. It will be up to the Senate to approve or deny funding of all proposals. All proposals must be voted on using the Roberts Rules of Parliamentary procedures.
2.3.5. GSO must be present at the meeting and available to answer any questions regarding the proposal for funding consideration.

2.3.6. All event proposals must follow the guidelines of the University in order to be funded.

2.3.7. In the event of unexpected expenses, GSOs may submit a revised funding request from the GSA Senate at monthly meetings.

2.3.8. Permissible club expenses are defined by the University, Office of Procurement and Student Activities regulations.

2.4. Reimbursement for expenses:

2.4.1. Official University forms must be used for GSA expenses.

2.4.2. Club expenses require the signature of the club advisor.

2.4.3. Reimbursement to EXCOM members require the signature of both the Treasurer or President and the GSA advisor.

2.4.4. The GSA Advisor (or designee) must sign all funding requests.

2.4.5. Pro-card purchases or purchase orders must be arranged with the individual designated by Student Activities Bookkeeper.

2.4.6. On-campus catering requests must be made in cooperation with the Student Activities Bookkeeper, or the appropriate designee.

2.4.7. Receipts are required for all expenses.

2.4.8. The GSA Advisor may disapprove requested purchases or reimbursements which do not conform to University policy.

**Article XII**

*(Amendments and Bylaws)*

1.1. Amendments: The GSA constitution may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the Governance Body. Any Governance Body member may propose an amendment, which will then be voted on at the following Governance Body meeting.

1.2. By-Laws: Bylaws may be proposed by any member of the Governance Body and will be carried by a 2/3 vote.

University of Massachusetts Lowell Graduate Student Association
Constitution Revision Committee 2017
Fang Zhang, President, GSA
Monal Thorat, Vice President, GSA
Deepa Naganarayanan, Treasurer, GSA
SriVignuHarshaVardhan Gogulapati, GRGA Co-Chair, GSA
Sourabh Kulkarni, PDA Co-Chair, GSA
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