



CONSTITUTION OF THE EMORY UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Ratified: April 17th, 2017 by the 1st GSGA Legislature

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We, the graduate students of Emory University, in order to participate in the determination of University policy, establish responsible and equitable student self-government, ensure the basic student rights of personal freedom and pursuit of a quality education, and provide the opportunity for responsible individual and collective action, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the Graduate Student Government Association of Emory University.

ARTICLE I AUTHORITY

SECTION 1. DERIVATION OF AUTHORITY

In October of 1968, the Emory University Board of Trustees approved the establishment of the Student Government Association (SGA) to allow students to participate in most areas of University government, particularly in conduct matters with the understanding that faculty and administration of the University retain authority in that area.

In January of 1982, the Emory University Board of Trustees approved the establishment of a separate Student Activity Fee to be administered by the Student Government Association.

On January 31st, 2017, the student body of Emory University voted to restructure the Student Government Association and the Graduate Student Government Association into equal and autonomous bodies governed by and for their undergraduate and graduate constituencies, respectively. The restructure was passed in a student referendum in which the vote was 3,773 in favor and 364 against.

SECTION 2. AUTHORITY OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Graduate student governing authority shall be vested in the Graduate Student Government Association (GSGA) under the provisions of this constitution. The GSGA shall serve as an advocate for the graduate students of Emory University, shall ensure their rights are respected, shall act as the official voice of the graduate student body, shall represent graduate student interests in all matters, and shall enact legislation with these goals in mind.

As of February 1st, 2017, the Graduate Student Government Association has the power to lay, collect, and distribute a Graduate Student Activity Fee (GSAF), as approved by the Board of Trustees of Emory University.

SECTION 3: AUTHORITY OF GRADUATE DIVISIONS

The authority of the Graduate Divisional Councils is granted by the GSGA as indicated in the bylaws of the GSGA. Amendments to this derivation of authority shall be made in accordance with the amendment procedure of the Bylaws of the GSGA.

ARTICLE II NAME AND MISSION

SECTION 1. NAME

The name of this governing body shall be the Emory University Graduate Student Government Association; hereafter referred to as the GSGA.

SECTION 2. MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the GSGA is to promote the lives, interests and education of graduate students at Emory University by serving as a vehicle of advocacy and proactive representation of all graduate students; representing the graduate student body in university-level policy decisions; facilitating open communication between Emory graduate students, faculty and administration; establishing broad monetary policies concerning GSGA funds; actively managing the allocation of such funds for the purpose of enhancing the graduate student experience; overseeing graduate-wide student organization charters and providing a forum for open, constructive debate and legislation regarding graduate student life at Emory University.

SECTION 3. NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

The GSGA is dedicated to providing equal opportunities to all individuals and cannot and will not tolerate discrimination against or harassment of any individual or group based upon race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran's status, or any factor that is a prohibited consideration under applicable law. Emory University GSGA welcomes and promotes an open and genuinely diverse environment.

ARTICLE III THE LEGISLATURE

SECTION 1. VOTING MEMBERS

A. Graduate School Representatives

Voting members of the GSGA Legislature shall include two (2) Graduate School Representatives from each of the following graduate or professional schools at Emory University:

- i. Emory Allied Health Professions
- ii. Emory Goizueta Business School Graduate Programs
- iii. Emory Laney Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
- iv. Emory University School of Law
- v. Emory University School of Medicine
- vi. Emory Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing Graduate Programs
- vii. Emory Rollins School of Public Health
- viii. Emory Candler School of Theology

The term of each graduate school representative shall be decided by the member's individual divisional counsel.

B. New Graduate School Representatives

If at any time Emory University recognizes a new graduate division or professional school, or ceases to recognize one of the schools listed in the section above, the Legislature of the GSGA shall immediately convene for the purpose of amending this article. The requirements for recognition and the powers of a new graduate division are described in the GSGA bylaws.

SECTION 2. NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Any graduate or professional student wishing to observe meetings of the GSGA, Officers of the Executive Board, and Advisors appointed by the GSGA President, or the Office of Campus Life to represent and advise the GSGA do not have the right to vote during meetings of the GSGA Legislature.

SECTION 3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS

All Members of the GSGA Legislature are charged with providing adequate representation for the graduate community as a whole and refraining from conduct that may injure the reputation of this organization or interfere with its mission; and with upholding any additional duties or responsibilities assigned to the Legislature by the President of GSGA, the Officers of the Executive Board or the GSGA bylaws.

Voting Members of the GSGA Legislature shall have the power to:

- A. Cast a single vote on each official issue of business brought to the floor of the Legislature.
- B. Allocate the Graduate Student Activity Fee (GSAF) in accordance with university-wide regulations.
- C. Establish and enforce, by a simple majority vote, a written monetary policy to be included in the GSGA bylaws concerning the allocation of GSGA funds in accordance with university-wide regulations.
- D. Review, issue and renew the charters of graduate-wide student groups and organizations pursuant to the rules in the GSGA bylaws and in accordance with the policies set forth by Emory University.
- E. Review, issue and renew the budgets of all organizations chartered under the GSGA.
- F. Represent the concerns of the various graduate schools of Emory University and to enact all legislation necessary and proper to promote the general welfare of the graduate student body.
- G. Overturn, by a two-thirds majority vote, any presidential veto, as described in Article III, Section 2, made by the GSGA President during legislative meetings.
- H. Collaborate with the Vice President of Social Affairs in the planning of graduate events, and provide appropriate logistical support for these events.
- I. Approve the yearly budget of the GSGA, as submitted by the Vice President of Finance.
- J. Amend this constitution and the bylaws of the GSGA subject to the procedures therein.

ARTICLE IV THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1. OFFICERS ON THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Officers of the Executive Board of the GSGA shall consist of a President, Executive Vice President, Chief of Staff, Vice President of Social Affairs, Vice President of Finance, Vice President of Marketing and Communications, and Vice President of Alumni Affairs. In addition, Deputy Officers may be appointed to the executive board at the discretion of the President and Executive Vice President, as described in Article III, Section 6. Additional officers, as defined in Article III, Section 7, may be appointed as deemed necessary by the President of the GSGA in accordance with the constitution. No Officer may hold a voting or Executive position within a Graduate Division, be a Voting Member of the GSGA Legislature or hold more than one position on the Executive Board.

The President and Executive Vice President will be elected through graduate-wide campus elections, as determined by the Graduate Elections Board. The President and Executive Vice President elect will be officially sworn in during the final week of classes of the spring semester unless removed by provisions outlined in the bylaws. The terms of the other Officers of the Executive Board shall last from the time of their appointment and confirmation to the final week of classes of the following spring semester unless removed by provisions outlined in the bylaws.

SECTION 2. POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

In addition to the powers enumerated for each Executive Board Office in the following sections of this Article, the Executive Board of the GSGA shall have the power to:

- A. Cast a single vote on each official issue of business brought to the floor of each Executive Board meeting.
- B. Review and amend the monetary policies of the GSGA, as described in the GSGA bylaws, passed by a simple majority of the Voting Members of the GSGA Legislature.
- C. Consult with the GSGA President on matters of policy affecting the carrying out of their duties.
- D. Conduct the affairs of the GSGA, as provided for in this constitution or by further act of the Legislature of the GSGA.
- E. Authorize expenditures from the accounts of the GSGA or other GSAF funds in accordance with the budget policy described in the bylaws. Amend this constitution and the bylaws of the GSGA subject to the procedures therein.

SECTION 3. THE PRESIDENT - DUTIES AND POWERS

The president shall:

- A. Preside over meetings of the Executive Board of the GSGA.
- B. Attend all meetings of the GSGA Legislature, and preside over any Legislative meeting in the absence of the GSGA Chief of Staff.
- C. Reserve the right to veto any official motion or issue passed by the Legislature, provided such a veto be exacted within fourteen (14) days after the meeting in which such motion or issue was voted on by the Legislature.
- D. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees of the GSGA.
- E. Represent or appoint persons to represent graduate concerns: on Emory University committees, and other committees as may be requested or required by the GSGA.
- F. Appoint all other Officers of the Executive Board, with the exception of the Executive Vice President, subject to the approval of the majority of Voting Members of the GSGA Legislature.
- G. Complete other duties as required this constitution and the bylaws of GSGA.

SECTION 4. THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT – DUTIES AND POWERS

The Executive Vice President shall:

- A. In the absence of the GSGA President, or in the case of Presidential impeachment or vacancy in the office of the President prior to the end of the current term of office, assume the responsibilities and duties of the President described in Section 3 of this article.
- B. Advise the President on issues of policy and implementation.
- C. Assist the President in conducting the affairs of the GSGA.
- D. Complete other duties as required by the President, this constitution, and the bylaws of GSGA.

SECTION 5. CHIEF OF STAFF – DUTIES AND POWERS

The Chief of Staff shall:

- A. Coordinate and preside over meetings of the GSGA Legislature.
- B. In the absence of the GSGA President and/or the Executive Vice President, or in the case of impeachment or vacancy in the office of the President and/or the Executive Vice President prior to the end of the current term of office, assume the responsibilities and duties of the President and/or the Executive Vice President described in Section 3 and 4 of this article, respectively.
- C. Serve as the Graduate Elections Chair for the administration of Graduate-wide elections and oversee the Graduate Elections Board
 - i. The Chief of Staff may not serve as the Graduate Elections Chair should the Chief of Staff register to run for University or graduate-wide office.

- ii. In the event that the Chief of Staff proves ineligible or unable to serve as the Graduate Elections Chair, the President shall appoint a Graduate Elections Chair subject to the approval of the Legislature of the GSGA.
- D. Schedule and reserve space for meetings of the GSGA Legislature and Executive Board, and inform members of the time and place of each meeting.
- E. Compile and distribute the agenda for all GSGA Executive and Legislative meetings.
- F. Record the minutes of the GSGA Executive and Legislative meetings them to all Executive Board members and Voting Members of the Legislature, respectively.
- G. Keep attendance records of all legislative and executive meetings.
- H. Serve as Chair of the GSGA Governance Committee
- I. Complete other duties as required by the President of the GSGA, this constitution, and the bylaws of GSGA.

SECTION 6. THE VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE – DUTIES AND POWERS

The Vice President for Finance shall:

- A. Oversee all financial accounts of the GSGA and organizations chartered thereunder.
- B. Provide a report of the financial state of the GSGA at the regular meetings of the GSGA Legislature and Executive Board.
- C. Serve as Chair of the GSGA Finance Committee.
- D. Prepare the GSGA budget for submission, in consultation with the GSGA Legislature.
- E. Act as liaison between GSGA and Emory University in all financial matters affecting graduate student organizations or Graduate Divisions.
- F. Complete other duties as required by the President, this constitution, and the bylaws of the GSGA.

SECTION 7. THE VICE PRESIDENT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS – DUTIES AND POWERS

The Vice President of Social Affairs shall:

- A. Serve as Vice President of Graduate Affairs on the Student Programming Council of Emory University and attend meetings of the Student Programming Council, or request the President to appoint someone to do so.
- B. Maintain responsibility for all social, educational, and community service events supported by the GSGA.
- C. Assist Graduate Divisions with the coordination of both cross-divisional and school-specific events.
- D. Serve as Chair of the GSGA Social Committee
- E. Complete other duties as required by the President, this constitution, and the bylaws of the GSGA.

SECTION 8. THE VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS – DUTIES AND POWERS

The Vice President of Marketing and Communications shall:

- A. Oversee all marketing and communication efforts on behalf of GSGA.
- B. Work to improve graduate student awareness of GSGA on campus.
- C. Foster the effective flow of communication between graduate divisions.
- D. Serve as Chair of the GSGA Marketing Committee
- E. Complete other duties as required by the President, this constitution, and the bylaws of the GSGA.

SECTION 9. THE VICE PRESIDENT OF ALUMNI AFFAIRS – DUTIES AND POWERS

The Vice President of Alumni Affairs shall:

- A. Serve as a member on the Emory Alumni Board (EAB), Graduate Student Alumni Board (GSAB), and any other boards that the President may require.
- B. Provide the EAB with regular GSGA updates, and provide the GSGA Executive Board with updates following EAB meetings.
- C. Work to improve communications between Emory alumni and current graduate student.
- D. Serve as Co-Chair of the GSGA Student Concerns and Inclusion Committee
- E. Complete other duties as required by the President, this constitution, and the bylaws of the GSGA.

SECTION 10. DEPUTY OFFICERS

Deputy officers to the positions of Chief of Staff, VP of Social Affairs, VP of Finance, and any other officer positions (see Article III, Section 7) may be appointed by the President and Executive Vice President of the GSGA in order to assist the Executive Board and its chief officers.

Deputy officers shall:

- A. Report to and assist the presiding officer in the execution of their aforementioned responsibilities.
- B. Act as a proxy in any meetings or events in which the presiding officer is absent.
- C. Attend and vote in all Executive Board meetings
- D. Complete other duties as required by the President, this constitution, and the bylaws of the GSGA.

SECTION 11. OTHER OFFICERS

Should it prove necessary for the President to appoint any Officer other than those expressly listed by this Article, the Officer shall:

- A. Immediately assume the office upon confirmation by the Legislature of the GSGA and retain the position until the end of the term of the president that created the position.
 - i. At the end of this term, the new president shall reevaluate the position and appoint another officer to fill the position pursuant to the rules of officer appointments outlined in the GSGA bylaws.
- B. Execute only those responsibilities for which the individual was expressly appointed.
 - i. These responsibilities may not include those reserved for other members of the GSGA or the Administrative Committees of the GSGA.
 - ii. These responsibilities may in no way conflict with any rules of the GSGA nor Emory University.
- C. Retain all rights of membership on the Executive Board of the GSGA for the entirety of their term.
- D. Complete any duties as required by the President, this constitution, and the bylaws of the GSGA.

ARTICLE V MEETINGS

SECTION 1. LEGISLATURE MEETINGS

A. Frequency

The Legislature of the GSGA shall meet at a minimum of once per calendar month during the regular school year, or more frequently at the discretion of the President of the GSGA.

B. Structure and agenda

Meetings shall be conducted as described in the GSGA bylaws.

C. Quorum

In order to conduct any official business or pass any motions brought the floor of the Legislature, pursuant to the rules within this constitution and the GSGA bylaws, the majority of Voting Members must be present and all graduate schools must be represented, such that at least one Graduate School Representative from each graduate or professional school listed in Article II, Section 1 must be present. The majority of Voting Members is defined as fifty percent of all Voting Members, rounded to nearest whole number, plus one.

D. Attendance policy

Attendance by all Voting Members is required for all scheduled legislative meetings, barring an approved excuse of absence as defined in the GSGA bylaws. Policies regarding attendance shall be upheld as described in the GSGA bylaws.

SECTION 2. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS.

A. Frequency

The Executive Board of the GSGA shall meet at a minimum of once per calendar month during the regular school year, or more frequently at the discretion of the President of the GSGA.

B. Structure and agenda

Meetings shall be conducted as described in the GSGA bylaws.

C. Quorum

The minimum number of officers required to conduct official Executive Board business shall be fifty percent of all Officers, rounded to the nearest whole number, plus one.

D. Attendance policy

Attendance by all Officers is required for all scheduled Executive Board meetings, barring an approved excuse of absence as defined in the GSGA bylaws. Policies regarding attendance shall be upheld as described in the GSGA bylaws.

ARTICLE VI

APPEALS AND AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1. APPEALS

Any student or organization that brings forth an official issue to be voted upon by the GSGA legislature may appeal the decision of that vote in writing to the President or Chief of Staff of the GSGA within two weeks of the decision. The Executive Board shall review the appeal and must within one month (30 days) of the appeal submission come to a unanimous decision to overturn the original vote, uphold the original vote or resubmit the issue to be re-voted upon by the GSGA Legislature at the next legislative meeting.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENTS

A. Amendments of the Constitution

Voting Members of the Legislature or Officers of the Executive Board may submit a proposed amendment of the constitution to the GSGA Chief of Staff. The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Executive Board for review, revision, and debate. The GSGA Chief of Staff shall present the proposed amendments to the GSGA Legislature no later than one month (30 days) after its official submission to the Executive Board. The Legislature shall then have a minimum of one (1) week to review the proposed amendment before a meeting is held to discuss the amendment. If there are no revisions proposed a voting member may bring to the floor of the Legislature a motion to vote upon the amendment. The amended constitution shall become ratified, effective immediately, by a two-thirds vote by the GSGA Legislature.

B. Amendments of the Bylaws

The process of amending the GSGA bylaws shall follow the amendment policy established within the bylaws. All amendments of the GSGA bylaws must be approved by a simple majority vote of the GSGA Legislature, unless a more stringent ratifying vote is described in the bylaws.

AMENDMENT I

Ratified: September 14th, 2020 by the 5th GSGA Legislature

SECTION 1

Art. IV, Sec. 11, Par. B, Sub. i of the Constitution of the Emory University Graduate Student Government Association is hereby repealed.

SECTION 2

The President of the GSGA shall have the power to appoint a Speaker of the Legislature subject to the approval of the majority of Voting Members of the GSGA Legislature. The Speaker of the Legislature shall preside over the GSGA Legislature. The Speaker of the Legislature may appoint another member of the GSGA Legislature to preside over any meeting they are unable to attend. No Officer of the Executive Board or deputy officer, except for the President of the GSGA, shall coordinate or preside over meetings of the GSGA Legislature.

SECTION 3

The Speaker of the Legislature may not hold a voting or Executive position within a Graduate Division or hold a position on the Executive Board. This amendment shall not be construed to bar the Speaker of the Legislature from attending meetings of the Executive Board of the GSGA, as permitted by the GSGA bylaws.

SECTION 4

The Speaker of the Legislature shall be responsible for keeping the President of the GSGA reasonably informed of legislative matters and proceedings on behalf of the GSGA Legislature.

SECTION 5

All bylaws in conflict with this article are hereby void in whole or in part.

AMENDMENT II

Ratified: April 19th, 2021 by the 5th GSGA Legislature

SECTION 1

Art. III, Sec. 1, Par. A, of the Constitution of the Emory University Graduate Student Government Association is hereby repealed.

SECTION 2

The term of each graduate representative shall start by the second Monday of October and end on the second Monday of October of the following school year.

SECTION 3

Each graduate school shall elect or appoint two (2) representatives. Representatives must be elected or appointed by each Graduate Division by the second Monday of September and shall agree and be eligible to serve until the second Monday of October of the following school year.

SECTION 4

Representatives-elect shall attend and observe GSGA legislative meetings starting on the second Monday of September and ending on the second Monday of October. Until seated as representatives, representatives-elect shall not be Voting Members and shall not have the Responsibilities and Powers listed in Art. III, Sec 3 of the Constitution of the Emory University Graduate Student Government Association.

SECTION 5

On or before the second Monday of October, representatives elect shall be seated as Voting Members.

SECTION 6

All bylaws in conflict with this article are hereby void in whole or in part.

AMENDMENT III

Ratified: April 19th, 2021 by the 6th GSGA Legislature

SECTION 1

Amendment I of the Constitution of the Emory University Graduate Student Government Association is hereby repealed.

SECTION 2

The GSGA Legislature shall have the power to nominate and elect a Speaker of the Legislature subject to a simple majority vote. The Speaker of the Legislature shall preside over the GSGA Legislature. The Speaker of the Legislature may appoint another member of the GSGA Legislature to preside over any meeting they are unable to attend. No officer of the Executive board or deputy officer, except for the President of GSGA, shall coordinate or preside over meetings of the GSGA Legislature.

SECTION 3

The Speaker of the Legislature may not hold a voting or Executive position within a Graduate Division or hold a position on the Executive Board. This amendment shall not be construed to bar the Speaker of the Legislature from attending meetings of the Executive Board of the GSGA, as permitted by the GSGA bylaws.

SECTION 4

All bylaws in conflict with this article are hereby void in whole or in part.

AMENDMENT IV

Ratified: April 19th, 2021 by the 6th GSGA Legislature

SECTION 1

There shall be created a judicial panel of three judges vested with the judicial power of the GSGA. The judicial panel shall have the power to invalidate bylaws, resolutions, and executive actions that violate the GSGA Constitution and resolve legal disputes between the President and GSGA Legislature.

SECTION 2

No judge may hold a voting or Executive position within a Graduate Division, be a Voting Member of the GSGA Legislature or hold a position on the Executive Board.

SECTION 3

The Chief Judge will be elected through a graduate-wide campus election and will be officially sworn in during the final week of class of the spring. The two Associate Judges shall be appointed by the President of GSGA with consent of the GSGA Legislature by a simple majority vote. The term of all judges shall last from the time of their election or appointment and confirmation to the final week of classes of the following spring semester unless removed by provisions outlined in the bylaws.

SECTION 4

Art. IV, Sec. 5, Par. C of the Constitution of the Emory University Graduate Student Government Association is hereby repealed.

SECTION 5

- ☐ The Chief Judge shall serve as the Graduate Elections Chair for the administration of graduate-wide elections and oversee the Graduate Elections Board and the Associate Judges shall serve on the Graduate Elections Board. The Chief Judge may not serve as the Graduate Elections Chair should they register to run for University or graduate-wide office. In the event that the Chief Judge proves ineligible or unable to serve as the Graduate Elections Chair, the President shall appoint a Graduate Elections Chair subject to the approval of the GSGA Legislature.

SECTION 6

This article shall be inoperative before the graduate-wide campus election in the spring semester of the 2021-2022 school year.

SECTION 7

All bylaws in conflict with this article are hereby void in whole or in part.

AMENDMENT V

Ratified: April 19th, 2021 by the 6th GSGA Legislature

The mission of GSGA includes promotion of the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion among all Emory graduate and professional students. We believe that academic excellence cannot be attained without dignity, respect, compassion, and fair treatment for all people, including acknowledgement of both historical and contemporary injustices by gender, race, class, and other socially constructed categorizations. This belief applies not only to our student-facing efforts, but also to our GSGA internal team and operations.

AMENDMENT VI

Ratified: April 19th, 2021 by the 6th GSGA Legislature

SECTION 1

There shall be created a Council of Presidents consisting of the Chief Executives of each Graduate Division.

SECTION 2

Art. VI, Sec. 2, Par. A of the Constitution of the Emory University Graduate Student Government Association is hereby repealed.

SECTION 3

Voting Members of the GSGA Legislature may submit a proposed amendment of the constitution to the Speaker of the Legislature. The Speaker of the Legislature shall present the proposed amendment to the GSGA Legislature no later than one month (30 days) after its official submission. The GSGA Legislature shall have a minimum of one week to review the proposed amendment before a meeting is held to discuss the amendment. If there are no revisions proposed, a voting member may bring to the floor of the Legislature a motion to vote upon the amendment. The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Council of Presidents by a two-thirds vote by the GSGA Legislature.

SECTION 4

The Council of Presidents shall have a minimum of one week to review the proposed amendment before a meeting is held to discuss the amendment. The amended constitution shall become ratified, effective immediately, by a vote of two-thirds or unanimity minus two, whichever is the higher threshold, of the Council of Presidents.