

## CONSTITUTION

### *Article I. Statement of Purpose*

The Black Graduate Association (BGSA) is an organization dedicated to the pursuit of academic excellence and social and political awareness with respect to African-American graduate students at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The BGSA serves as a support organization for fellow graduate students while seeking to promote the professional and scholarly interests and needs of its members through a variety of activities. Most importantly, the BGSA provides a meeting ground and a forum for the exchange of ideas and the development of enduring networks while drawing upon the expertise of faculty and staff to help fulfill these needs.

### *Article II. Membership*

- A. Qualifications for BGSA membership include being a part- or full-time graduate student enrolled at UAB with an active interest in contributing to the BGSA.
- B. The responsibilities and duties of BGSA members revolve around the aforementioned statement of purpose. These responsibilities and duties will encompass a variety of activities that require active participation among its members.
- C. Honorary members will be any faculty, staff, alumni, or community leader receiving a majority vote of honorary status by financially active BGSA members.

### *Article III. Dues*

- A. Dues will be set at an amount designated by active members of the BGSA
- B. Dues should be paid no later than six weeks from the first day of each semester for a member to be considered financially active.
- C. If the BGSA, for whatever reason, is dissolved, arrangements shall be made to donate any assets of this organization to a local agency, which assists the progress of African Americans. The agency of choice shall be voted upon by financially active members of BGSA.

## ***Article IV. Officers***

- A. BGSA officers will be elected by a majority vote (51%) of all members present.
- B. Elections will be held at the April meeting of the Spring semester and the new officers will assume their responsibilities at the following May meeting.
- C. Officers will be restricted to full-time graduate students who are financially active BGSA members.
- D. Offices
  1. President – duties include conducting BGSA meetings; implementing programs agreed upon by the organization; and delegating authority, as needed, in order to ensure the successful operation of the organization in accordance with its aims and ideas. As the chief executive officer, the president has the power to enact “executive decisions” when necessary. Executive decisions consist of any decisive action conducted by the President intended to foster the aims and stated Purpose of the BGSA. These Executive decisions will be enacted only under unique circumstances.
  2. Vice President – duties include attending all meetings of the BGSA (executive board and general body) Conducting BGSA meetings in the absence of the President; chairing the Committee on Public Relations.
  3. Corresponding Secretary – duties include attending all meetings of the BGSA (executive board and general body); distributing official announcements of the BGSA through letter, electronic mail, etc.; Responsible for assuring official announcements of BGSA are grammatically correct and free of errors and adhere to the Email List Serve Policy of the BGSA when applicable, and receiving all traditional and electronic mail for the BGSA. (If the position of Historian is unfilled, the recording secretary will serve in this capacity until the position is filled.)
  4. Recording Secretary – duties include: attending all meetings of the BGSA (executive board and general body); recording the minutes of the executive and general body meetings of the BGSA which will be available to all members
  5. Treasurer – duties include attending all meetings of the BGSA (executive board and general body) Collecting all dues and fees; maintaining the financial records of the BGSA; and reporting the finances to the members. The treasurer will also head or appoint head for the newly created Finance Committee
  6. Chaplain – duties include maintaining spiritual identity and consciousness as it relates to the organization and its activities.

## ***Article V. Committees***

A. Public Relations Committee: responsible for the public dissemination of information regarding programs and activities of the organization and the production of BGSA's newsletter. Committee chair is responsible for attending all meetings of the BGSA (executive board and general body).

B. Constitution Committee: ensures that the Constitution remains valid and current. This includes updating the constitution when necessary and making necessary addendums upon organization approval; works with the president and other elected officials to ensure that the by-laws are properly administered.

C. Finance Committee: Responsible for fund-raising designs to be utilized by the organization, oversees investments and other matters involving long-term financial planning. Treasurer will have the opportunity to chair finance committee or appoint a competent member of the BGSA as the chair. The Finance Committee shall have the power to use creative and innovative strategies to raise funds for the BGSA. These methods may be enacted without majority vote. However, the President may use Executive Powers as previously outlined to veto or support these programs.

D. Activities Committee – responsible for planning community, campus, and social programs. In addition, the activities committee shall have the responsibility of engineering programs designed to facilitate recruitment of potential members of the BGSA. Committee chair is responsible for attending all meetings of the BGSA (executive board and general body).

## ***Article VI. Advisor(s)***

A. There will be a faculty and administrative advisor for the BGSA. The faculty and administrative advisor positions will be filled by any UAB faculty and administrator voted upon by members.

B. The responsibilities of the advisor are to aid, guide, and offer expertise on the operation of the BGSA.

## ***Article VII. By-Laws***

A. Regularly scheduled meetings will be announced at least one week prior to the meeting. Meeting dates, locations and times will be determined by the executive board.

B. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws of the BGSA will be by majority vote of the members present at the regularly scheduled meetings.

C. The BGSA accepts the rules or order as found in "Roberts Rules of Order: The Standard guide to Parliamentary Procedure."

D. Outgoing officers will be responsible for the detailed briefing of new officers on all issues that are directly related to the success of BGSA. They are also required to hand over all materials and files to the new officers in a timely manner to ensure the smooth transition of a new executive board.