A CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

The graduate students of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, recognizing the need for an organization to promote and protect their interest, do ordain this constitution.

ARTICLE II

Students enrolled in the Graduate School of the University of Alabama at Birmingham shall be members of the Graduate Student Association (GSA).

ARTICLE III

The qualification and duties of the officers of the GSA shall be as follows:

A. Qualifications: A student must be a voting member of the GSA Senate for a period of at least six months, and be in good standing prior to the election, in order to run for or hold office in the GSA.

B. Duties: Each of the officers of the GSA shall be ex-officio, nonvoting members of all standing and special committee except where voting is allowed in the Bylaws. No officer may chair a standing committee. It was suggested that all officers with the exception of the president should have voting rights. President votes in case of a tie. Full voting rights for officers in the GSA meetings was approved by a vote of 22-0-0.

1. President
   a. Shall represent the GSA to the administration and the public
   b. Shall be the chief administrative and Executive officer of the GSA
   c. Shall serve as ex-officio, non-voting member of the GSA Senate except in the case of a tie the president shall be a voting member
   d. Shall provide agenda for the monthly GSA meeting
   e. Shall appoint someone from the Senate or Executive Council to preside over the GSA senate meetings
   f. Shall call into session the GSA senate at least once a month

2. Vice-President
   a. Shall see to it that all committees attend to their duties as defined by the Bylaws (attached)
   b. Shall serve as acting President in the event that the President is unable to perform his or her duties

3. Secretary
   a. Shall serve as the corresponding and recording secretary; responsible for keeping accurate and permanent record of the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Council and the Senate
   b. Shall be responsible for keeping and making available to the Executive Council and the Senate a permanent record of the Constitution and constitutional amendments passed by the Senate and signed by the Dean of the Graduate School or any other constitutionally-appointed office
c. Shall be responsible for forwarding all legislation passed by the Senate, as well as the monthly minutes, to the Dean of the Graduate School
d. Shall be responsible for maintaining a list of Senate members and an accurate attendance record of all monthly Senate meetings
e. Shall be responsible for notifying the Senate of the next session

4. Treasurer
   a. Shall be responsible for accurate financial records of the GSA
   b. Shall be in charge of all financial transactions of the GSA
   c. Shall prepare and submit an itemized, monthly budget report to the Senate. Each end of the month shall included a starting balance, and complete itemized list of income and expenses, and the closing balance in the budget for that time period.
   d. Shall review expenditures and revenues at the end of each quarter and making recommendations, based of the funding guidelines established by the Senate, concerning proposed expenditures
   e. Shall submit a yearly financial report at the last regularly scheduled meeting of each Spring Quarter
   f. If the University requests an audit, it is the responsibility of the treasurer to arrange for it
   g. Shall serve as the chair of the Budget Committee and be responsible for calling the Budget Committee into session at least once every three months

5. Travel Grant Officer
   a. Shall be responsible for maintaining updated versions of the travel grant policies and rules
   b. Shall be responsible for supplying travel grant applications to students (this may be done through the graduate school office)
   c. Shall determine and make available the quarterly travel grant application deadlines
   d. Shall be responsible for fairly administrating and allocating the appropriate moneys from the GSA funds
   e. Shall be responsible for the prompt completion of the appropriate paperwork deemed necessary for travel grant administration by the graduate school
   f. Shall serve on the Budget Committee, in order to provide information concerning awards disbursed by the Travel Grant Office

ARTICLE IV

The qualifications and duties of the senators of the GSA shall be as follows:

A: Qualifications: There shall be a GSA Senate composed of graduate student representatives who represent each program in the Graduate School. Only degree seeking students who are enrolled in programs in the Graduate School shall be eligible to serve as a voting member on the GSA Senate.

Number of students in department: Allowable number of representatives
   1 – 10: 2
   11 – 20: 3
   21- 30: 4
   31 – 40: 5
The number of representatives from each department shall be determined by the number of graduate students registered in the fall quarter of each year. Each department will be responsible for filling vacancies in the Senate. The Senate may choose to appoint at-large representatives from the graduate student population. The number of at-large representatives may not exceed one-half of the number of representatives appointed by the department at any one time.

B. Duties: The representatives shall serve for one-year terms and be a voting member of the GSA Senate.

1. Senators
   a. Shall be responsible for attending Senate meetings and if he/she is unable to attend the Executive Council must be notified at least 24 hrs prior to the meeting
   b. Shall be a voting member of the GSA and must be present to vote, no absentee voting or proxy
   c. A total of 3 unannounced absences will result in dismissal
   d. Shall be responsible for forwarding all legislation passed by the Senate, as well as the monthly minutes, to their department
   e. Members of the GSA Senate nominated on or after January 1, 2002 shall be required to submit a recommendation letter from their department head or Graduate Program director to the Executive Board to obtain full voting privileges.

2. At-large Representatives
   a. Shall have all the rights and duties of a GSA Senator (See article IV B1), excluding the right to vote.
   b. Shall obtain the right to vote upon affirmation of two-thirds of the Senate at a regular monthly meeting of the Senate.

ARTICLE V

A. Elections shall be held each April. The officers shall be elected at large by a vote of the GSA, and their term of office shall begin on June 1st. The officers shall serve for one year. If any office is uncontested, upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the GSA Senate, the candidate(s) shall assume their office(s) on June 1st. This action may be taken only at regularly scheduled monthly meetings of the Senate.

B. Any officer or standing committee chairperson resigning from office shall announce his or her intended resignation at least two Senate meeting prior to the effective date of his or her resignation.

C. In the event that any of the elected offices, except President, should be vacated for any reason, the Senate shall nominate and elect individuals to fill these positions.

D. (Please see "Election Committee" in the Bylaws) The vote count for the winners of each office and any candidate who receives at least 5% of the vote (with all other lumped as "other") will be published in the campus newspapers Kaleidoscope and UAB Report within two weeks after the election committee has determined the winners. The Vice-President will enter the complete count into the permanent record of the GSA.

ARTICLE VI

A. Any officer may be removed from office by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the GSA Senate for gross dereliction of duties.
B. Any GSA Senate representatives may be expelled by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the GSA senate for gross dereliction of duties.

**ARTICLE VII**

The GSA Senate and Executive Council serving at the time of implementation of this constitution shall abide by the duties herein

**ARTICLE VIII**

Amendments to the Constitution must be proposed at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting and cannot be voted on until the next regularly scheduled meeting. An amendment shall then be passed if approved by two-thirds of the GSA Senate.

**ARTICLE IX**

This constitution shall become effective on January 5, 1977, with the most recent version made as of July 2002, pending approval of one more than one-half of the GSA members voting in referendum. The ratification of this constitution will serve to void any pre-existing GSA instruments of right or privilege.

**THE BYLAWS OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM**

A. These Bylaws may not contradict the constitution
B. All procedures not covered by these Bylaws will follow Robert’s Rules of Order
C. Call of meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting must be called monthly. GSA officers shall determine the day, time and place of the meeting and will inform the Senate at least one week prior to the regularly scheduled meeting. Special meetings may be called for specific business. These meetings may be called either two ways:

1. The President of the GSA may call a special meeting by notifying the Senate members at least three days prior to the special meeting date.

2. The Senate members may call a special meeting by submitting to the President a petition, signed by the GSA members. Of these signers, there may be no more than two representatives from any one department. Following receipt of this petition, the President must call the special meeting within seven days. The president must notify the GSA Senate members three days prior to the established date of the special meeting. Representatives calling a special meeting may request time and place of the special meeting.

D. Conduct of the meetings

The order of the day will be as follows:

1. Call to order
2. Announcement
3. Comments of the officers
4. Reports of the committee chairpersons/officers
5. Unfinished business
6. New Business
7. Proposal Submission
8. Adjournment

E. The chair may make procedural rulings. The ruling may be appealed to the Senate and affirmed or reversed by one or more than one half of those present and voting.

F. Points of discussion to be included in the agenda must be presented in a brief written form to the presiding officer prior to the start of the meeting. The executive Committee shall set a priority for new business. Any Senate member following action on priority business may present other new business.

G. Before the meeting can conduct business, it requires quorum. A quorum shall be one-third of the GSA Senate. In the absence of quorum, any business transacted is null and void.

**AMENDING BYLAWS AND INTRODUCING RESOLUTIONS**

A. Amendments to the Bylaws must be proposed at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting and cannot be voted on until the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting. A Bylaw shall then be passed if approved by two-thirds of the GSA Senate members present.

B. Resolutions may be introduced by any Senate member. Approval of a majority of voting GSA Senate members present shall be required for passage of a resolution, where “majority” is defined by Robert’s Rules of Order as:

   **Article VIII, part 48**

   “…MajorityVote. Any legitimate motion not included among those mentioned below as requiring more than a majority vote, requires for its adoption only a majority; that is, more than one half of the votes cast, ignoring blanks [abstentions], at a legal meeting where quorum is present, unless a larger vote for its adoption is required by the rules of assembly.”

1. For resolutions allotting funds over $2000, the vote of each individual Senator shall be recorded by roll-call vote.

C. All expenditures by the GSA must be approved by the resolution except GSA office expenditures. The President, Vice-President, secretary, treasurer, travel grant officer, and any other individuals designated by the Senate shall be eligible for salary, the amount of which shall be determined by the Senate with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School.

D. All proposals originating from a person(s) or committee(s) within the GSA Senate shall be made available in writing to the Executive Board a minimum of 10 days prior to the upcoming GSA Senate meeting. This proposal shall then be made available to all GSA Senators a minimum of 6 days prior to the upcoming GSA Senate meeting.

E. All proposals originating from an outside organization(s) shall conform to the deadlines and guidelines as posted on the GSA web site.

   1. The Presenter(s) of said proposal shall not vote on this resolution due to direct conflict of interest, and shall be dismissed from meeting upon conclusion of the question/answer period following the presentation.
2. The Presenter(s) shall learn the outcome of the GSA Senate vote within 24 hours of the conclusion of the GSA Senate meeting.

COMMITTEES AND THEIR DUTIES

A. There will be an Executive Committee composed of the President, Vice-President, secretary, treasurer, and travel grant officer. The President shall be the chairperson of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will meet prior to every Senate meeting to review matters to be brought before the Senate and to decide on the order of business.

B. The GSA will establish the following standing committees as needed:

1. **Student Activities Committee**: This committee shall be responsible for identifying and planning all entertainment and social activities of the Graduate Student Association.

2. **Constitutional Committee**: This committee shall be responsible for meeting and proposing amendments to the Constitution, when needed. This committee may recommend changes in the Constitution to the GSA Senate.

3. **Budget Committee**: This committee shall be responsible for meeting in order to make recommendations concerning the GSA’s budget. The chairperson of this committee shall be the Treasurer.

4. **Election Committee**: (Refer to Article V of the Constitution first) An election committee will be elected by the GSA Senate in the winter quarter of each year. No one running for an office shall also be a member of the election committee. This committee will be responsible for organizing and holding elections for the GSA officers. The election committee shall submit to the GSA Senate at the first meeting of the spring quarter a written detailed description of the proposed election procedure to be used upon acceptance by a majority of the GSA senate. Ballots and deadlines for the GSA Election will be published in the Kaleidoscope and UAB Report for two consecutive weeks. Information about each candidate as prepared by the candidate and ballots will also be sent to the departments for posting and distribution. Immediately following the mail-in deadline, the elections committee will verify that all votes were received from eligible graduate students. The election committee will then tally the votes and determine the winners. Winners will be announced at the following regular GSA Senate meeting.

C. Other committees may be established by the recommendation from the GSA representatives specifying the purpose and maximum number of members. Voting members of the GSA Senate must approve the establishment of the committee. Nominations for positions on special committees will be made by the GSA Senate representatives and/or GSA officers.

D. The members of each standing and special committee, except the Executive Committee and the Budget Committee, shall select a chairperson. An individual may not be chairperson of more than one standing committee. The chairperson of each standing and special committee is responsible for the following or the committee will be disassembled:

1. Calling the meeting and notifying each member of the time and place of the meeting.
2. Presiding at committee meetings.
3. Notifying the President of the time and place of each meeting.
4. Giving a committee report to the GSA Senate; or when requested, to the GSA President.
   The President may request a report to be submitted to the Executive Committee in writing prior to each Senate meeting.