



THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

ARTICLE I - Purpose

The graduate students at the University of Alabama at Birmingham recognize the need for an organization to promote and protect their interests, to provide a forum to express graduate student concerns on academic and non-academic issues, and to enhance the quality of education and research at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, do ordain this constitution.

ARTICLE II - Membership

Students enrolled in the Graduate School of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, except those solely seeking MD, OD, or DMD degrees, are represented and supported by the Graduate Student Government (GSG). These students are eligible to become GSG members based on senator seat availability. The GSG senate consists of all voting members and the President. The University of Alabama at Birmingham and The Graduate Student Government of The University of Alabama at Birmingham prohibit discrimination in admission, educational programs, and other student matters based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, national origin, disability unrelated to program performance, veteran status or genetic or family medical history.

ARTICLE III – Executive Council and Committee

The qualifications and duties of the officers of the GSG shall be as follows:

A. Qualifications: A student must be a voting member of the GSG Senate for at least six months and be in good standing before the election or appointment to run for or hold office in the GSG. Good standing refers to a Senator who is active in their committee, regularly attends scheduled Senate and Executive meetings, and shares information with their respective schools. The Executive Council must be elected university-wide. Program directors must be contacted to ensure the student is in good standing in their program. If no qualified senators are volunteering for an empty executive position, a student who has been a voting member of the GSG Senate for less than six months but more than three months may be granted the right to run for or hold office by a majority vote of the Senate.

B. Duties: Each of the officers of the GSG shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of all standing and special committees, except where voting is allowed in the Bylaws.

Executive Council

The executive council consists of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary, who will be elected university-wide.

1. President

- a. Shall represent the GSG to the administration and the public.
- b. Shall be the chief administrative and Executive officer of the GSG.
- c. Shall serve as ex-officio, non-voting member of the GSG Senate; in the case of a tie, the president shall be a voting member.
- d. Shall provide agenda for the monthly GSG meeting.
- e. Shall call into session the GSG senate at least once a month.

2. Vice-President

- a. Shall see that all committees attend to their duties defined by the Bylaws (attached).
- b. Shall serve as acting President if the President cannot perform their duties.
- c. Shall serve as the chairperson of the Orientation Committee.
- d. Shall oversee updating the number of senators for each school annually.

3. Secretary

- a. Shall serve as the corresponding and recording secretary, responsible for keeping accurate and permanent records 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 amendments to the Constitution 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 and the monthly minutes to the Dean of the Graduate School.
- d. Shall maintain 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 GSG.
- b. Shall oversee all financial transactions of the GSG.
- c. Shall oversee the GSG checking account and all related tax information.
- d. Shall prepare and submit an itemized monthly budget report to the Senate, including a starting balance, a complete itemized list of income and expenses, and a closing balance in the budget for that period.

- e. Shall review expenditures and revenues at the end of each quarter and make recommendations concerning proposed expenditures based on the funding guidelines established by the Senate.
- f. Shall submit a yearly financial report at the last regularly scheduled meeting of each Spring Semester.
- g. If the University requests an audit, it is the responsibility of the treasurer to arrange for it.
- h. 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.

Appointed Officers

The Appointed Officers consist of the Chief of Staff, Awards Officer, and Webmaster.

1. Chief of Staff

- a. Shall be appointed by the President to improve the administrative capacity of the GSG.
- b. Shall serve as the chairperson of the Executive Council and be responsible for holding a regularly scheduled meeting of the Executive Council at least once a month.
- c. Shall serve as a surrogate upon request of the President or Vice-President for GSG and University affairs.
- d. Shall manage the execution of Presidential orders.
- e. Shall be automatically slated as a candidate on the ballot for the following year's election for the position of President.

2. GSG Awards Officer

- a. Shall maintain updated versions of the Professional Development and Travel Award policies and rules.
- b. Shall be responsible for supplying Professional Development and Travel applications to students (this may be done through the graduate school office).
- c. Shall determine and make available the semester Professional Development and Travel application deadlines.
- d. Shall be responsible for fairly administrating and allocating the appropriate moneys from the GSG funds.
- e. Shall be responsible for promptly completing the appropriate paperwork deemed necessary for Professional Development and Travel administration by the graduate school.
- f. Shall serve on the Budget Committee to provide information concerning awards disbursed by the GSG Awards Office.

3. Webmaster

- a. Shall be responsible for updating and maintaining the official UAB GSG website and Engage.
- b. Shall serve on the Communications and Marketing Committee

Executive Committee (re-visit this discussion)

The executive committee shall consist of all chairpersons from committees.

8. Chairpersons of all Standing and Special Committees

- a. Chairpersons shall be voted on within their respective committees; if there are no committee members, the executive team will vote a new chair in. The exception is made in the case of the Budget Committee and Election Committee, which have designated chairs. An individual may not be a chairperson of more than one standing committee. The individual must be part of a committee for at least six months before being able to occupy the position.
- b. Shall call the committee meeting and notify each member of the time and place of the meeting.
- c. Shall preside at committee meetings
- d. Shall notify the Executive Council of the time and place of each meeting
- e. Shall give a committee report to the GSG Senate at each regularly scheduled meeting; or, when requested, to the GSG President. The President may request a report to be submitted to the Executive Council in writing.
- f. Shall establish requirements for the active members and submit them to the Vice-President and Secretary.
- g. Shall inform the Vice-President of any senators who fail to participate on the committee actively.
- h. Shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Executive Council.

ARTICLE IV - Representatives

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

A. Qualifications: There shall be a GSG Senate composed of graduate student senators who represent each program in the Graduate School. Only degree-seeking students enrolled in programs officially recognized by the Graduate School shall be eligible to serve as voting members of the GSG Senate. Below is listed the number of students in a program and the number of allowable senators. The number of senators allowed for each program will be updated yearly by the Vice-President using the data from the institutional effectiveness and analysis office.

The 2022-2023 allowed number of Senators for each school:

School of Arts and Sciences- 3 Senators + 3 Alternates

School of Business - 3 Senators + 3 Alternates

School of Education- 3 Senators + 3 Alternates

School of Engineering- 3 Senators + 3 Alternates

School of Health Professions- 4 Senators + 4 Alternates

School of Joint Health Sciences- 2 Senators + 2 Alternates

School of Nursing- 5 Senators + 5 Alternates

School of Public Health- 3 Senators + 3 Alternates

The number of senators from each program shall be determined by the number of graduate students registered in the fall semester of the previous academic year. Each program 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 senators appointed by each graduate program at any one time. If the number of Senators decreases from the previous year based on institutional data, the Senators previously a part of the Senate will remain as long as they have fulfilled active senator requirements, but no new ones will be accepted.

B. Duties: The senators shall serve as an active senator for a one-year term (with the option of renewal by re-applying) and be a voting member of the GSG Senate.

1. Senators

- a. Shall be responsible for attending monthly Senate meetings; if they are unable to attend, the secretary must be notified at least 24 hours prior to the meeting (except for extenuating circumstances previously approved by the President and Secretary).
- b. Shall be a voting member of the GSG and must be present to vote (no absentee voting or proxy).
- c. Shall not accumulate more than 3 absences in one academic year. This will result in suspension from the position of senator with a chance to appeal.
 - a) Senator shall receive warnings after 1st and 2nd absence
 - b) Upon the 3rd absence, senator will be placed on a temporary suspension until an appeal is submitted and reviewed by a jury
 - c) Appeal shall be evaluated by a jury of five randomly selected, active members of the senate
 - d) If expelled, the representative department shall be informed, and a new senator will be selected to fill the vacancy
- d. Shall be responsible for forwarding all legislation passed by the Senate, the monthly minutes, and GSG-sponsored activities to their department.

- e. Shall be required to submit a recommendation letter from their department head or Graduate Program director to the Executive Council to obtain full voting privileges.
- f. Shall be required to serve on at least one GSG standing committee or one University Committee for the entirety of their tenure as a senator.
 - a) Requirements to serve on a committee shall be determined by each committee chair, respectively

2. At-large Representatives

- a. Shall have all the rights and duties of a GSG 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 - Elections

A. Elections shall be held each April at the regularly scheduled monthly senate meeting with voting open to all graduate students. The officers shall be elected at large by a vote of the GSG, and their terms of office shall begin on June 1st. If any office is uncontested, upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the GSG 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.

C. If any of the elected offices, except the 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 Secretary will enter the complete count into the permanent record of the GSG.

E. Elections for the committee chair should happen at large. To be a committee chair, they must be part of said committee for 6 months if running opposed, minimum 3 months if running opposed.

ARTICLE VI - Gross Dereliction of Duties

The chain of command shall be as follows for the executive council: President, Chief of Staff, Vice-President.

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

B. Any GSG Senate representatives may be expelled by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the GSG senate for gross dereliction of duties (expelled, meaning the loss of all rights as a GSG Senator).

C. Any officer or standing committee chairperson resigning from office shall announce his or her intended resignation at least two Senate meetings before the effective date of his or her resignation.

D. If an executive committee member would like to hold another position, the member must resign from the current position and re-run for the interested position. The vacant position will be open for a new member.

ARTICLE VII

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

ARTICLE VIII - Amendments

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 GSG Senate.

ARTICLE IX

This constitution shall become effective on January 5, 1977, with the most recent version made as of October 6th, 2021, pending approval of one more than one-half of the GSG members voting in the referendum. The ratification of this constitution will serve to void any pre-existing GSG instruments of right or privilege.

THE BYLAWS OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT 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 Newly Revised (10th ed.)*" latest edition

C. Call of meeting

A regularly scheduled meeting must be called monthly. GSG 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, monthly meeting. Special meetings may be called for specific business. These meetings may be called either two ways:

Ratified on September 6th, 2023

1. The President of the GSG 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 GSG 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 GSG 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. The chair may make procedural rulings. The ruling may be appealed to the Senate and affirmed or reversed by one more than one half of those present and voting. The chair of the Constitution committee (or his/her appointee) may interject if any proceedings violate the policies and procedures set forth in this constitution and its bylaws.

E. 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 Council shall set a priority for new business. Any Senate member following action on priority business may present other new business.

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

G. Tax Exemption (This Bylaw is required to qualify for Federal Income Tax exemption under IRC (c) (3) and should not be changed except to conform with changes in the Internal Revenue Law)

1. No part of the net earnings of the GSG shall inure to private shareholders or individual members
2. In the event of this GSG's dissolution, the GSG's assets shall be transferred to the Graduate School at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, for providing financial aid to UAB graduate Students.

H. All matters pertaining to the operation of the GSG, which are not directly stated in the Constitution will be left to the discretion of the Executive Council.

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 GSG Senate members present.

B. Resolutions may be introduced by any Senate member. Approval of a majority of voting GSG

Senate members present shall be required for passage of a resolution, where "majority" is defined by *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th ed.)* p. 3871.5-13 as:

"The basic requirement for approval of an action or choice by a deliberate assembly, except where a rule provides otherwise, is a majority vote. Majority vote means more than half of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote, 6 excluding blanks or abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present."

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 GSG must be approved by the resolution except GSG office expenditures. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, 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 monies raised by GSG must be approved by the Senate. Stipulations for the use of funds must be approved by the Senate.

E. All policies and guidelines related to expenditures must be approved by the Senate.

F. All proposals originating from a person(s) or committee(s) within the GSG Senate shall be made available in writing to the Executive Council before the monthly scheduled Executive

Council meeting. This proposal shall then be made available to all GSG Senators with the agenda for the upcoming GSG Senate meeting.

G. All proposals originating from an outside organization(s) shall conform to the deadlines and guidelines as posted on the GSG website.

1. The Presenter(s) of said proposal shall not vote on this resolution due to a direct conflict of interest and shall be dismissed from the meeting upon conclusion of the question/answer period following the presentation.

2. The Presenter(s) shall learn the outcome of the GSG Senate vote within 24 hours of the conclusion of the GSG Senate meeting.

H. All Senators' votes for resolutions, amendments to the bylaws, and amendments to the Constitution shall be recorded and made publicly available by being entered into the official minutes of the GSG.

COMMITTEES AND THEIR DUTIES

A. There will be an Executive committee composed of the President, Vice-President, Chief of Staff, Secretary, Treasurer, GSG Awards Officer, and Committee Chairs. The President shall be the chairperson of the Executive Council. The Executive Council 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 GSG will establish the following standing committees as needed:

1. **Social Activities Committee:** This committee shall be responsible for identifying and planning all social activities of the GSG.

2. **Community Service Committee:** This committee shall be responsible for planning community service activities of the GSG.

3. **Constitution 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 GSG Senate. Furthermore, the chair (or his/her appointee) shall attend all GSG senate meetings and Executive Council meeting to ensure that the constitution and its bylaws are not being violated.

4. **Budget Committee:** This committee shall be responsible for the supervision of application, allocation, and the usage of GSG's funds. The Treasurer will serve on the budget committee as the chairperson and a non-voting member. The GSG Awards Officer will serve on the Budget Committee as a voting member.

a. If the Budget committee does not have enough voting members to meet quorum, interim voting members may be appointed via majority senate vote, to fill the absentee voting member seats. This interim position will be maintained until the spring elections of the new Budget Committee.

5. **Election Committee:** (Refer to Article V of the Constitution) An election committee will be appointed by the GSG Executive Council in January 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 GSG officers. Information about each candidate as prepared by the candidate will be sent to the graduate school for distribution. Ballots will be available at the regularly scheduled April GSG Senate meeting. The election committee will tally votes, and an announcement of the winners will be made at the conclusion of the Senate meeting.

6. **Orientation Committee:** This committee shall be responsible for hosting the New Graduate Student Orientation at the beginning of each Fall Semester. The Vice-President shall serve as the chairperson of this committee.

7. **New Senators Committee:** The chairperson for this committee shall be the President. This committee shall be responsible for the recruitment and orientation of new senators. Orientation should introduce new senators to how the GSG functions by: training them in Robert's Rules of Order, reviewing the GSG Constitution and Bylaws, and teaching them to all members of the Executive Council with explanations of each

officer's or chairperson's role within the GSG. Finally, this committee must help new senators select one or more GSG committees to join.

8. Professional Development and Leadership Committee: This committee shall be responsible for curating and marketing the professional development activities of GSG-sponsored student organizations and the events offered by the Office of Career and Professional Development. The committee may also plan and execute professional development and leadership events for the graduate student body.

9. Communications and Marketing Committee: This committee shall be responsible for creating and distributing all advertising regarding the GSG. In addition, any branding changes must first be proposed by the Communications and Marketing Committee

Addendums:

1. Special committees may be established by the recommendation from the GSG representatives specifying the purpose and maximum number of members. Voting members of the GSG Senate must approve the establishment of the committee. Nominations for positions on special committees will be made by the GSG Senate representatives and/or Executive Council.

7. Parliamentarian

- a. Shall advise the officers and members on matters regarding the Constitution, Bylaws, and any governing documents of the GSG
- b. Shall assist with maintaining order in a meeting if requested by the presiding officer
- c. Shall serve as chair of the Constitution Committee