

BY-LAWS OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA – LINCOLN

First Draft: March 5, 2007

This Draft: April 8, 2008

I. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

1.1 *Executive Chair*

The duties of the Executive Chair shall be to:

- 1) Serve as an official representative from the Graduate Student Association (“GSA”) to the University of Nebraska – Lincoln (The “University”) and other non-University communities;
- 2) Chair all Executive Committee meetings and Legislative Assembly meetings;
- 3) Call special meetings of the Executive Officers;
- 4) Prepare agendas for Executive Officers and Legislative Assembly meetings;
- 5) Meet periodically with the GSA Office of Graduate Studies Liaison;
- 6) Meet monthly with the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs;
- 7) Meet at least once per academic semester with the Vice Chancellor of Research and Graduate Studies;
- 8) Meet at least annually with the University Chancellor.

1.2 *Vice–Chair of Internal Affairs*

The duties of the Vice–Chair of Internal Affairs shall be to:

- 1) Oversee all standing and ad-hoc committee chairs;
- 2) Appoint members of the Legislative Assembly to serve as committee chairs;
- 3) Remove committee chairs who fail to perform the necessary duties and responsibilities required of the position of committee chair
- 4) Coordinate events requiring use of University facilities including, but not limited to, scheduling rooms and other related arrangements for Legislative Assembly meetings;
- 5) Manage and maintain Recognized Student Organization (RSO) related documents.

1.3 *Vice–Chair of External Affairs*

The duties of the Vice–Chair of External Affairs shall be to:

- 1) Maintain a list of all GSA facilitated appointments to committees and facilitate the process of appointing graduate students to serve on University committees;
- 2) Serve as liaison to the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (The “ASUN”);
- 3) Serve as the GSA liaison to the National Association of Graduate–Professional Students;
- 4) Coordinate activities with other University graduate student organizations;
- 5) Serve as a student representative on the University Graduate Council.

1.4 *Vice–Chair of Finance*

The duties of the Vice–Chair of Finance shall be to:

- 1) Maintain all GSA fiscal records; including monthly balancing the ledger against the current SOFS account balance;
- 2) Provide a current fiscal report of GSA in the monthly minutes of each Legislative Assembly meeting;

- 3) Chair the GSA Finance Committee;
- 4) Coordinate with GSA Executive Officers and standing committees on budgets and activities;
- 5) Present fiscal requests to the University's Committee for Fee Allocation;
- 6) Coordinate with the Executive Committee to identify possible sources of funding from institutes, grants, and other sources in an effort to raise funds for GSA.

1.5 *Vice-Chair of Public Relations*

The duties of the Vice-Chair of Public Relations shall be to:

- 1) Maintain the GSA web site and listservs;
- 2) Oversee all GSA publications and promotional materials and ensure that such publications meet University guidelines;
- 3) Serve as the primary contact for the media;
- 4) Communicate with outside organizations and the community at-large about GSA events and information;
- 5) Chair the GSA Social Events Committee.

1.6 *Vice-Chair of Legislative Affairs*

The duties of the Vice-Chair of Legislative Affairs shall be to:

- 1) Maintain the GSA Constitution and By-Laws;
- 2) Chair the GSA Elections Committee;
- 3) Provide advice concerning the rules of order for all Executive Committee and Legislative Assembly meetings.

1.7 *Vice-Chair of Information*

The duties of the Vice-Chair of Information shall be to:

- 1) Serve as the recording secretary for all Executive Committee and Legislative Assembly meetings;
- 2) Maintain a current list of voting members of the Legislative Assembly and also maintain Legislative Assembly meeting attendance and voting records;
- 3) Maintain a current list of persons, such as deans, graduate advisors, University administrators, leaders of the University Faculty Senate, leaders of ASUN and others that are frequently contacted by the GSA;
- 4) Facilitate and coordinate communication with other campus entities;
- 5) Compile the monthly reports submitted by GSA executive officers and committee chairs into a single report to be made available to the Legislative Assembly.

1.8 All Executive Officers shall maintain a protocol and procedures manual to be passed onto successive Executive Officers.

1.9 All Executive Officers may be called upon to perform additional duties as mutually agreed upon with the Executive Officers.

II. COMMITTEES

2.1 All members of the GSA shall be eligible to serve on any GSA committee.

2.2 The standing committees of the GSA shall be the committees on Finance, Elections, Diversity, Quality of Life, Academic Affairs, Social Events, and Graduate Student Appreciation Week.

2.3 *Finance Committee*

The Finance Committee shall assist the Vice-Chair of Finance in preparing an annual budget and monitor all GSA expenditures. The Finance Committee shall prepare an annual fiscal report for submission to the Legislative Assembly.

2.4 *Elections Committee*

The Elections Committee shall assist the Vice-Chair of Legislative Affairs in overseeing the election of the Legislative Assembly and the Executive Officers. The Elections Committee shall inform eligible departments regarding the election of departmental representatives to the Legislative Assembly.

2.5 *Diversity Committee*

The Diversity Committee shall encourage and promote participation in the GSA by students from throughout the University community, including but not limited to students from racial and ethnic minorities, international students, women, and the GLBTQ community, and ensure that GSA programming is available and pertinent to the diverse graduate student community.

2.6 *Quality of Life Committee*

The Quality of Life Committee shall identify and advocate on behalf of University graduate students any issues affecting the quality of graduate student life including, but not limited to, housing, transportation and parking, child care, and health benefits for University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate students.

2.7 *Academic Affairs Committee*

The Academic Affairs Committee shall identify and advocate on behalf of University graduate students any issues pertaining to the academic quality of life, including, but not limited to, access to facilities and funding for research, the faculty-graduate student mentoring relationship, and academic policies pertaining to graduate education for University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduate students.

2.8 *Social Events Committee*

The Social Events Committee shall plan, coordinate and execute social events throughout both Fall and Spring semesters for all GSA members.

2.9 *Graduate Students Appreciation Week (GSAW) Committee*

The Graduate Student Appreciation Week Committee shall plan, coordinate and execute events for the celebration of Graduate Student and Professional Student Appreciation Week as determined annually by the National Association of Graduate–Professional Students.

2.10 *Ad-Hoc Committees*

The Executive Committee shall create ad-hoc committees as necessary and identify the participants and purpose of said committees.

2.11 *Removal of Committee Members*

A member of any GSA committee who consistently fails to fulfill the duties and responsibilities required of the position may be removed. Duties and responsibilities of committee members include attending scheduled committee meetings, communicating as necessary with other committee members including the committee chair, and performing committee-related tasks as assigned. The committee chair has the authority to remove any committee member for failing to fulfill the duties and responsibilities required of the position.

2.12 *Removal of Committee Chairs*

A committee chair of any GSA committee who consistently fails to fulfill the duties and responsibilities required of the position may be removed. Duties and responsibilities of committee chairs include overseeing all tasks assigned to their committee, holding periodic committee meetings necessary to further the progress of committee-related tasks, and filing monthly committee reports to the Executive Committee. The Vice-Chair of

Internal Affairs has the authority to remove any committee chair for failing to fulfill the duties and responsibilities required of the position.

III. EXECUTIVE OFFICER ELECTIONS

3.1 *Eligible Candidates*

All current University students who have the intention of remaining a graduate student for the full term of the next academic year as outlined in 6.3 of the GSA Constitution that have satisfied any one of the following three criteria are eligible for nomination to any of the Executive Officer positions:

- 1) Previously served on the GSA Legislative Assembly for at least one academic semester;
- 2) Previously served on the GSA Executive Committee for at least one academic semester;
- 3) Previously served on any GSA committee as outlined in Section II of the GSA By-Laws for at least one academic semester.

3.2 *Nominations Period*

Nominations will be taken at two different times during the election process; (1) prior to the Legislative Assembly meeting when elections will occur (the "Election Meeting") but not sooner than thirty days preceding the Election Meeting; and (2) the Legislative Assembly meeting of the elections prior to hearing candidate speeches.

3.3 *Nominations Process*

All GSA members can submit nominations for all Executive Officer positions. Self-nominations are permitted. GSA members may also be nominated for multiple Executive Officer positions. Nominations prior to the Election Meeting as outlined in 3.2 shall be submitted to the Elections Committee via e-mail to the GSA email account. Upon receipt of nominations, the Elections Committee will notify nominated students via e-mail as to their intention to accept or reject the nomination, except in the case of self-nominations.

3.4 *Election Procedure*

Officer Elections will occur in the following sequence at the Elections Meeting:

- 1) Executive Chair
- 2) Vice-Chair of Internal Affairs
- 3) Vice-Chair of External Affairs
- 4) Vice-Chair of Finance
- 5) Vice-Chair of Public Relations
- 6) Vice-Chair of Legislative Affairs
- 7) Vice-Chair of Information

In the event that candidates are nominated for multiple positions, each position shall be filled in sequence until all positions are filled. However, once a candidate nominated for multiple positions has been elected to an Executive Officer position, they shall no longer be eligible to be a candidate in any of the remaining elections as outlined in 4.6 of the GSA Constitution.

3.5 *Candidate Speeches*

Each candidate shall be allowed one nominating speech, to be no longer than two minutes, during the Legislative meeting of the elections before voting is conducted.

3.6 *Candidate Voting*

Each Legislative Assembly member and Executive Committee member shall have the right to submit one vote, for each Executive Officer position, during the Election Meeting. All candidates shall have the right to vote for him/herself.

3.7 *Voting*

A plurality of votes is necessary to win in the case of two or fewer candidates for the same Executive Officer position. In the event that more than two candidates are running for the same Executive Officer position, a Borda count method as outlined in 3.8 will be used in the voting process to ensure that the candidate preferred by the most voters is elected.

3.8 *Borda Count*

The Borda count shall involve the ranking of candidates by each voter. Each candidate receives 1 point for each last place vote received, 2 points for each next-to-last vote received, etc., all the way up to N points for each first place vote (where N is the number of candidates). The candidate with the largest point total wins the election. In the event of a tie between multiple candidates, the last place votes of the tied candidates will be dropped and the candidate with the largest point total from the remaining votes will be declared the winner. If a tie between candidates still persists, the tiebreaker will consist of a re-vote to be conducted between only the remaining tied candidates. The candidate with the most votes in the tiebreaker vote will be deemed the winner.

IV. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order: Simplified and Applied*, 2nd Edition shall govern meetings where they are not in conflict with the bylaws, rules of order, or other rules of the society.

V. AMENDMENTS

- 5.1 Amendments to the GSA By-Laws may be made by petition to the Legislative Assembly. A petition for amendment, sponsored by at least two members of the Legislative Assembly, may be submitted to the Executive Committee at any time.
- 5.2 Once a petition for amendment has been submitted, the amendment will be subject to review and approval by the Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs. Following this review process, the amendment will be presented as a proposal at the next meeting of the Legislative Assembly.
- 5.3 Once the amendment has been formally presented to the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Assembly must delay voting on the proposed amendment for a mandatory review period of thirty days or until the next scheduled meeting of the Legislative Assembly. To be presented for ratification at the next meeting of the Legislative Assembly, the proposed amendment must receive support from a minimum of 10% of the existing Legislative Assembly, not including the two sponsoring members. Intent to support the proposed amendment shall be submitted by members of the Legislative Assembly via email to the GSA email account.
- 5.4 After the mandatory review period and assuming the proposed amendment has received the necessary Legislative Assembly support, the amendment may be ratified at the next Legislative Assembly meeting, with a quorum present as defined in 5.5 of the GSA Constitution, by a two-thirds vote of voting members present.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

- 6.1 These GSA Bylaws are effective April 8, 2008.