

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

Final Draft: January 19, 2010

## 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) Coordinate events requiring use of University facilities including, but not limited to, scheduling rooms and other related arrangements for Legislative Assembly meetings;
- 4) 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”), the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students, and other University of Nebraska entities
- 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) 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 Representation
- 1) The duties of the Vice-Chair of Representation shall be to maintain the GSA web site ;
  - 2) Maintain the GSA listservs, including the task of obtaining graduate student email addresses;
  - 3) Check the GSA email daily, forwarding emails to the appropriate persons
  - 4) Chair the Diversity Committee;;
  - 5) Ensure each department is represented in the Legislative Assembly and that each representative is clear on the requirements of their position;
- 1.6 Vice-Chair of Social Events
- The duties of the Vice-Chair of Social Events shall be to:
- 1) Chair the GSA Social Events Committee
  - 2) Communicate with graduate students and the community at-large about GSA events;
  - 3) Coordinate activities with other University graduate student organizations with the Vice-Chair of External Affairs;
  - 4) Compose a monthly calendar of non-GSA events pertaining to graduate students
- 1.7 Vice-Chair of Graduate Student Appreciation Week
- The duties of the Vice-Chair of Graduate Student Appreciation Week shall be to:
- 1) Chair the GSAW Committee;
  - 2) Communicate with graduate students and the community at-large about GSAW;
  - 3) Coordinate GSAW activities with other University graduate student organizations;
- 1.8 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 Constitution Committee;
  - 3) Chair the GSA Elections Committee
  - 4) Provide advice concerning the rules of order for all Executive Committee and Legislative Assembly meetings.
- 1.9 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 previous Legislative Assembly meeting attendance and voting records;
  - 3) Compile the monthly reports submitted by GSA executive officers and committee chairs into a single report to be made available to the Legislative Assembly.
  - 4) Maintain the Blackboard site
- 1.10 All Executive Officers shall maintain a protocol and procedures manual to be passed onto successive Executive Officers.
- 1.11 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 Executive Officers and Campus representatives.
- 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.

### 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 from GSA members; no sooner than thirty days preceding the Election Meeting and no later than the Friday prior to the Legislative Assembly meeting when elections will occur, such that the sitting Executive Committee will have sufficient time to nominate any vacant positions ;

### 3.3 Nominations Process

All GSA members can submit nominations for any Executive Officer position. 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. Failure to accept a nomination prior to the Election meeting will result in the removal of consideration of the student for the position. If the position would be vacant following the removal of the student, the Chair of the Elections Committee can call for nominations from the Executive Committee and the Legislative Assembly. Standard election procedures in 3.4 would then apply.

### 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 Representation
- 6) Vice-Chair of Social Events
- 7) Vice-Chair of Graduate Student Appreciation Week
- 8) Vice-Chair of Legislative Affairs
- 9) 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 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, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 and Constitution may be made by petition to the Legislative Assembly. A petition for amendment 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, the amendment will then enter the mandatory thirty-day review period as documented in 5.3.
- 5.3 Prior to a vote, the Legislative Assembly must allow a minimum of thirty days for review of the proposed amendment by the membership of the GSA and take steps to publicize the proposed changes to GSA members. After the mandatory thirty day review period, 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 minimum of a four-fifths vote of voting members present. The Legislative Assembly can vote by simple majority to table the amendment vote until a later meeting to allow for more discussion among the GSA. The Legislative Assembly can also vote by a two-thirds majority to kill the amendment. After the mandatory thirty-day review period, the proposed amendment will have a maximum of 90 days to be ratified by the Legislative Assembly. If more than 90 days has passed and ratification has not occurred, the proposed amendment is considered to be defunct.

## VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

- 6.1 These GSA Bylaws are effective January 20, 2010.





