Bylaw
Amend ASUN Bylaws and Special Rules: Graduate Student Assembly

WHEREAS, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (ASUN) has recently incorporated the Graduate Student Association to its structure as the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA); and

WHEREAS, further clarification is required in the ASUN Bylaws in regards to the structure and functioning of the GSA.

THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED, that the following amendments be introduced into the ASUN Bylaws and Special Rules.

Part I – The Senate

Article V – Boards, Committees, Commissions, and Other Entities

Section 14. Graduate Student Assembly

As a unique population with roles as students, teachers, researchers, and/or staff, graduate students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln require a special representative body that is tailored to their needs. The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) will exercise the student governance of affairs solely involving graduate students at the University, as well as collaborate with the ASUN Senate, officers, and committees on issues affecting the entirety of the University’s student body.

Subsection A. Membership

1. The GSA shall consist of one (1) Department Representative per Department of the University that awards a graduate degree, who shall be a graduate student in said Department, elected or appointed as follows:
   a. For such Departments where a Departmental Graduate Student Association (DGSA) exists, said organizations shall be responsible to determine the method of election or appointment of the Department Representative, which must be stated in the organization’s Constitution and/or Bylaws.
   b. In Departments without an organized DGSA, the Graduate Chair shall be responsible for organizing the selection of the Department Representative.
   c. The constituent DGSA or Graduate Chair shall fill all Departmental Representative openings within a period of one (1) month of the vacancy’s occurrence, after which such vacancy may be filled by an At-Large Representative appointed by the Vice President of Representation and approved by two-thirds (2/3) of members present and voting of the Assembly.
   d. At-Large Representatives shall meet all the qualifications of office required for Departmental Representatives and shall hold all the same powers to attend, speak, and vote at meetings.
2. All Department Representatives shall serve a renewable term of one (1) academic year beginning in the fall semester.

3. For each principal Departmental Representative an alternate may be appointed.

Subsection B. Officers

1. The Graduate Student Assembly shall have the following officers: President, Executive Vice President, Vice President of Student Affairs, Vice President of Representation, and Vice President of Finance.

   a. The President shall represent the GSA in all University and student government business and shall be a voting member of the ASUN Executive Committee. The President, or his/her designee, shall chair all GSA meetings, serve on the Academic Planning Committee, and the Graduate Council.

   b. The Executive Vice President, or his/her designee, shall serve as the recording secretary for all GSA meetings, on the Graduate Council. If the office of the President becomes vacant, the Executive Vice President shall act as President for the remainder of the term. At the request of the President, the Executive Vice President may attend ASUN Senate and Executive Committee meetings.

   c. The Vice President of Student Affairs shall serve on the Parking Advisory Committee and the Student Affairs Advisory Council and may attend ASUN Senate and Executive Committee meetings at the request of the Executive Vice President, when he/she is meant to attend.

   d. The Vice President of Representation shall ensure that all Department Representatives have been appointed and are fulfilling their duties, as well as nominate graduate students to University-wide committee positions.

   e. The Vice President of Finance shall be responsible for the finances of the GSA.

   f. Additional responsibilities of officers shall be defined in the GSA Bylaws.

2. The President and Executive Vice President shall be directly elected during the ASUN Spring Elections and may not concurrently serve as Departmental Representatives.

   a. Only graduate students shall be eligible to vote and be elected as officers of the GSA. In addition the candidates must meet any one of the following four criteria:

      i. Previously served on the GSA for at least one academic semester.
      ii. Previously served on the GSA Executive Committee for at least one academic semester.
      iii. Previously served on a GSA standing committee for at least one academic semester.
      iv. Previously served on any DGSA Executive Committee as defined by that department.

   b. Candidates for President or Executive Vice President may run in a Student Election Group (SEG), independently, or as write-ins.

   c. To be eligible for election to the office of President or Executive Vice President of the GSA a candidate must have completed nine (9) semester hours of graduate credit at the University.
d. Provided the office of the President and/or Executive Vice President becomes vacant, the Assembly shall elect among its membership or officers a President and/or Executive Vice President, in said order.

e. Candidates for President and Executive Vice President of the GSA, as well as Graduate Senator candidates shall be allowed to speak at Open Forum during the GSA meeting prior to the ASUN Spring Elections. With the aforementioned exception, all Electoral Commission Rules shall apply for the election of the President and Executive Vice President.

3. The Vice President of Student Affairs, Vice President of Representation, and Vice President of Finance shall be elected by the membership of the GSA following the ASUN Spring Elections, and may not concurrently serve as Departmental Representatives. The times and methods governing the election of these officers will be specified in the GSA Bylaws.

4. The President, Executive Vice President, Vice President of Student Affairs, Vice President of Representation, Vice President of Finance, and standing committee chairs shall constitute the GSA Executive Committee.

Subsection C. Advisors

1. The GSA Advisor shall be nominated by the GSA President and confirmed by the Assembly with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting, and must be a graduate faculty member.

2. The ASUN Director of Administration shall serve as an advisor to the GSA.

3. The immediate past President shall serve as an ex officio advisor to the GSA provided they meet all ASUN and GSA provisions for participation.

Subsection D. Standing Committees

1. The GSA Bylaws shall determine the number, nature, and composition of the standing committees. Standing committee chairs shall be elected by the membership of the GSA following the ASUN Spring Elections. The times and methods governing the election of standing committee chairs will be specified in the GSA Bylaws.

2. The Executive Vice President shall appoint, taking into account individual preferences and the advice of the Executive Committee, all Department Representatives to at least one (1) standing committee.

3. Service in University-wide or ASUN committees shall exempt Department Representatives from service in GSA committees.

Subsection E. Reserved Powers

ASUN delegates the GSA the power to:

1. Recommend to the Senate bills and resolutions pertaining to issues important to or involving graduate students;

2. Develop a strategic plan with measurable goals to assess the success of the Graduate Student Assembly in meetings its goals;
3. Serve as the liaison between graduate students and the Office of Graduate Studies, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Council;

4. Manage and allocate funds originating from student fees and contributions obtained from University and non-University sources to the effect of carrying out its purpose in accordance with federal, state, municipal, University, and ASUN directives, and collaborate with the President of ASUN to set the GSA budget within the ASUN budget;

5. Nominate graduate students to University-wide committees and offices, as selected by the Vice President of Representation, and confirmed by the GSA first, and the Senate subsequently;

6. Adopt and modify its own internal Bylaws, and submit them to the Senate, that can reject them by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, but may not introduce any modifications;

7. Provide uniform rules for the organization of Departmental Graduate Student Associations, subject to University and ASUN regulations, and the oversight of the Student Services Committee;

8. Protect the interests of graduate students on campus and pursue any actions furthering their causes; and

9. Promote student government in all levels, as well as networking among graduate students, and between graduate students and the other members of the University community.

Subsection F. ASUN-GSA Relations, Settlement of Issues, and Dissolution

1. No alteration may be introduced into this Section of the ASUN Bylaws without written request or consent of the GSA. Such modifications must initially be approved by three-fourths (3/4) of the members present and voting of the GSA and ultimately by three-fourths (3/4) of the members present and voting of the Senate.

2. The GSA and ASUN officers shall conduct a periodic review of the structure and function of the Assembly and suggest any changes towards its improvement. No more than two (2) years may elapse between such reviews.

3. The Student Court shall have the authority to settle conflicts arising between the ASUN Senate and officers and the GSA. The University Appeals Board shall serve as appellate jurisdiction to the Student Court.

4. The GSA may by three-fourths (3/4) vote of members present and voting, at any time, petition the Senate for its dissolution or separation. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of members present and voting of the Senate shall be required to dissolve the GSA or approve separation. In the case of dissolution, all outstanding assets and liabilities will be transferred to ASUN. In the case of separation, all assets and liabilities rightfully belonging to the GSA shall be transferred to the GSA.