CONSTITUTION
OF THE
GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT

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Preamble

We, the graduate students of the University of Maryland, College Park, in order to secure and protect the welfare, rights, and interests of all graduate students at this institution, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution of the graduate student body, and, in so doing, outline a graduate student body organization charged with serving and representing all graduate students under a unified organization.

Article 1: Name and Purpose

1.1. Name

1.1.A. The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Student Government of the University of Maryland, College Park (GSG).

1.2. Purpose

1.2.A. It shall be the supreme graduate student governmental body for implementing the objectives set forth in the Preamble, subject only to the laws of our state and the nation, and the right of review by the President of the University of Maryland, College Park, or his/her specifically designated representative.

1.2.B. It shall formulate policies promoting and governing the activities and welfare of graduate students of the University of Maryland, College Park, and it shall advise the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School, Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Provost, the Graduate Council, the University Senate, the President of the University, the Maryland General Assembly, and any other relevant agency or organization on the graduate student viewpoint concerning all matters affecting graduate students.

1.2.C. It shall be responsible for the allocation of the Student Activity Fee of graduate students and supervise and provide input regarding all other Mandatory Fees.

1.2.D. It shall act to improve the quality of education and enhance the quality of life of all graduate students.

Article 2: Membership

2.1. All graduate students are members of the GSG and are granted all the rights and privileges of this Constitution.

2.2. The GSG shall be comprised of the executive (Executive Committee) and legislative (Assembly) branches. The duties and responsibilities of these branches are set forth in this Constitution.

2.3. All members shall be entitled to vote in special and general elections of the GSG. Any graduate student has the right to call for a University-wide referendum/recall election, provided that a petition signed by at least one-twentieth of the GSG’s total membership is submitted as specified by statute.
Article 3: The Executive Committee

3.1. The Executive committee shall consist of the following offices:

3.1.A. President

3.1.B. Vice President for Legislative Affairs

3.1.C. Vice President for Financial Affairs

3.1.D. Other offices may be created in any bylaws, as provided under Article 7.

3.2. Duties and Responsibilities of the President

The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the organization. The duties and responsibilities of the President shall be to:

3.2.A. Appoint any non-elected executive officials with notice to the Assembly.

3.2.B. Recommend graduate students for appointments to, or removals from, University-wide councils, committees, and boards with notice to the Assembly.

3.2.C. Sign or veto, within ten University working days all legislation passed by the Assembly. If legislation is neither signed nor vetoed within this time period, it shall be deemed approved.

3.2.D. Other duties and responsibilities may be provided in the Bylaws, as provided under Article 7.

3.3. Duties and Responsibilities of the Vice President for Legislative Affairs

The duties and responsibilities of the Vice President for Legislative Affairs shall be to:

3.3.A. Act as President, if for any reason, the office becomes vacant, or when requested to serve in the President’s absence.

3.3.B. Perform such duties as the President may assign him/her in the administration of the organization.

3.3.C. Preside over the Assembly.

3.3.D. Other duties and responsibilities may be provided in the Bylaws, as provided under Article 7.

3.4. Duties and Responsibilities of the Vice President for Financial Affairs

The duties and responsibilities of the Vice President for Financial Affairs shall be to:

3.4.A. Oversee the financial affairs of the GSG.

3.4.B. Order the disbursement of funds of the GSG as authorized by the Bylaws or the Assembly.
3.4.C. Perform such duties as the President may assign him/her in the administration of the organization.

3.4.D. Other duties and responsibilities may be provided in the Bylaws, as provided under Article 7.

3.5. Election of Members of the Executive Committee

3.5.A. The election of officers shall take place in general elections to be held in either March or April. All currently enrolled graduate students shall be eligible to vote in these elections. Those graduate students seeking offices may be nominated by themselves or by another member of the GSG. Following nominations, a University-wide vote shall take place to decide the elections. The candidate who receives the most votes for a given position shall be deemed elected to that office. In the event of a tie the vote of the current Assembly will decide the outcome as defined in the Bylaws.

3.5.B. No person shall be elected to the same Executive Office more than twice, and no person who has held Executive Office for more than one semester of a term to which some other person was elected shall be elected to that same office more than once.

Article 4: The Assembly

4.1. The Assembly shall be composed of graduate students as outlined below:

4.1.A. Elected representatives from every active graduate program (Program Representatives)

4.1.A.1. Program Representatives shall serve terms of one year.

4.1.A.2. Representatives may serve unlimited consecutive terms, provided that they are selected by the graduate students in their programs as defined by the Bylaws.

4.1.A.3. Each program shall be entitled to one representative for each one hundred of its graduate students or part thereof, with minimum representation of one representative per program.

4.1.A.4. Program Representatives shall have voting rights.

4.2. Meetings of the Assembly

4.2.A. The Assembly shall meet a minimum of once per month from September to June.

4.2.B. Special meetings may be called at the request of the President, or by a petition signed by at least twenty voting members of the Assembly.
4.2.C. Meetings shall follow parliamentary procedure as outlined in Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised. A Parliamentarian may be appointed provided by the Bylaws.

4.2.D. A quorum of one-third plus one of the Assembly must be present in order to conduct official business.

4.3. Duties and Responsibilities of the Assembly

4.3.A. All legislative powers granted herein shall be vested in the Assembly.

4.3.B. The Assembly shall consider and take appropriate action on all matters submitted by any graduate student.

4.3.C. The Assembly may override a presidential veto on any action by a two-thirds majority vote of its total present and voting membership.

4.3.D. The Assembly shall form and disband such standing and ad hoc committees as it deems necessary.

4.3.E. The Assembly shall be charged with the investigatory duties of the GSG.

4.3.F. The Assembly, by a majority vote of its total present and voting membership, may initiate impeachment proceedings for just cause against appointed or elected members of the GSG.

Article 5: Committees

5.1. Standing Committees

5.1.A. Budget and Finance Committee

The Budget and Finance Committee shall oversee the disbursement of the Student Activity Fee of graduate students.

5.1.B. Elections Committee

The Elections Committee shall organize and oversee the elections of members of the Executive Committee and Assembly Representatives.

5.1.C. Rules Committee

The Rules Committee shall review all proposed legislation before it is brought to the Assembly, as well as set the agendas of the Assembly meetings.

5.1.D. Governance Committee

The Governance Committee is formed pursuant to the Bylaws and shall hear all appeals of decisions made by the Executive Committee, the Assembly, or financial decisions, in the event that they are challenged on constitutional grounds. The
committee shall be the final authority on all matters within its purview, and its
decisions shall not be subject to appeal.

5.2. Committees

Additional committees may be established as deemed necessary by the Assembly.

Article 6: Faculty Advisor

6.1. The Graduate School’s Associate Dean for Student Success shall serve as the Faculty
Advisor for the GSG.

Article 7: Bylaws

7.1. The Assembly may adopt bylaws such as it deems necessary in keeping with this
Constitution. The Bylaws shall be adopted, changed, or amended by a two thirds majority
of the Assembly’s total present and voting membership. The Bylaws shall include the
duties of all Executives and Assembly Members and the duties of standing committees.

Article 8: Amendments and Reviews

8.1. Amendments to this Constitution must be approved by a majority of votes cast during a
general election, and shall be valid only in the event that at least one-twentieth of the
GSG’s total membership votes in said elections.

8.2. Any member of the graduate student body may propose amendments to this Constitution.

8.2.A. Amendments shall be presented in writing to the Rules Committee, which shall
transmit the text of an amendment to the members of the Assembly at least fourteen
days in advance of the Assembly meeting at which the amendment is to be
considered.

8.2.B. Amendments approved by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly’s total present
and voting membership shall be placed on the ballot of the next general election.

8.2.B.1. Amendments that only correct typographical errors or revise changes in
titles may be done by the Assembly without being subject to a general
election.

8.2.C. Should amendments not be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly’s total
present and voting membership, any graduate student shall have the right to call
for a graduate student body wide referendum on said amendments, provided that a
petition calling for such a referendum is signed by least one-twentieth of the GSG’s
total membership and is submitted as specified by the Constitution or Bylaws.

8.2.C.1. If approved in referendum under the same conditions outlined in Article
8.1, the amendment shall be approved.
8.3. The current Constitution and Bylaws shall be reviewed every fifth year by a special committee appointed by the President. All recommended amendments from said committee shall be administered according to Article 8.2.

Article 9: Appeals

9.1. Any member of the graduate student body may challenge the constitutionality of an action taken by the GSG by submitting an appeal, signed by least one percent of the GSG’s total membership or one-third of the voting members of the Assembly, as specified by the Constitution and Bylaws.

9.2. The Governance Committee shall consider all properly submitted appeals in a timely manner, and shall render a decision as specified by the Bylaws. Decisions of the Governance Committee on issues of constitutionality shall be binding and shall be effective immediately.

Addendum

With support of the GSG President, Stephanie Cork, and the GSG Advisor, Dean Jeff Franke, we add the following language as an Addendum to this Constitution:

The Graduate Student Government does not restrict membership or discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, citizenship status, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. (For definitions of “personal appearance” and “sexual orientation,” see the University’s Code of Human Relations (“Code”), http://www.president.umd.edu/sites/president.umd.edu/files/documents/policies/VI-1.00B_2.pdf.

Furthermore, the Graduate Student Government understands and is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities of abiding by University of Maryland, College Park policies.

AMENDED 4/25/2010
CURRENT REVISION 2/10/2015