

**BYLAWS OF
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES COUNCIL OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA**

Example reference:

“Article (Art.) 3, Section (§ or Sec.) 2, Paragraph (¶ or Para.) A, Point (Pt.) b”

These Bylaws shall govern the operations of the Graduate Student Council (hereafter “Council”) of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (“GSAS”) at the University of Virginia (“UVA”), as dictated in the Council’s Constitution. A record of their amendment and ratification is located at the end of the main body of said Bylaws.

I. DEFINITIONS

Section 1. General

- A. A “representative” is a GSAS student elected by their enrolling department to represent the graduate students of said department.
- B. The "General Body" consists of the duly elected GSAS department representatives serving on the Council.
- C. A “quorum” of the General Body represents a majority (greater than 50%) of the elected representatives.
- D. A “General Body Meeting” is an official monthly gathering with a quorum of representatives.
- E. A “vote” is an official Council decision agreed upon by a quorum of the General Body unless a different threshold is noted.
- F. The "annual term" begins with the General Body Meeting of May and ends with the next General Body Meeting of May unless otherwise noted.
- H. The “fiscal year” begins July 1 and ends June 30.

II. MEETINGS

Section 1. General Body Meetings

A. The Council shall conduct monthly General Body Meetings during the Spring and Fall semesters. Meetings may be held during the Summer semester at the discretion of the Council.

B. Additional meetings may be called by the President when necessary or by petition from one-third of all voting members.

C. The President shall make reasonable public notice of the date, time, and location of all Council meetings and distribute an agenda to all voting members in advance.

D. Meeting facilitators and attendees shall observe Robert's Rules of Order during General Body Meetings. The President and Parliamentarian have discretion to enforce Robert's Rules of Order. Information about the Council's use of Robert's Rules of Order shall be made available to the General Body (Appendix B).

E. Online Meetings

1. When the Council cannot feasibly conduct an in-person General Body Meeting, the President may instead choose to call to order an online General Body Meeting.
2. Unless agreed upon at the previous General Body Meeting, notice of an online meeting shall be made as soon as possible and once again three (3) to seven (7) days before the online General Body Meeting is to take place.
3. Online General Body Meetings shall operate as in-person meetings insofar as it is possible via the chosen digital platform.
4. At minimum, online General Body Meetings shall include audio-visual communication and a method for sharing documents among participants.

F. Asynchronous and Online General Voting

1. When the General Body cannot bring a vote to the floor in a timely manner, a member may motion for an asynchronous online vote on an urgent matter.
2. Motions to vote asynchronously must be seconded in advance before being circulated to the General Body.
3. The General Body shall be allotted a length of time no less than 24 hours to debate the motion.
4. Any amendments to the motion must be available for discussion for at least 12 hours, either concurrently, if time allows, or consecutively, if necessary, adding time to the overall debate period as necessary.

5. Once debate has concluded, the Executive Committee shall circulate a ballot on the motion, amendment, or amended motion. Ballots on motions must be open for at least 72 hours. Ballots on amendments must be open for at least 36 hours.

III. ELECTIONS

Section 1. Officer Elections

A. Elections for President, Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Communications, and Vice President of Finance (hereafter Executive Board) will take place online after the April Council meeting.

B. At the April Council meeting, the President will request nominations from the voting members of the Council. One candidate may be nominated for multiple positions. Each candidate will be allowed a reasonable amount of time to present their qualifications to the Council and answer questions from the Council and others in attendance.

C. If more than one candidate is nominated for an office, the discussion of the candidates shall proceed as follows:

1. All candidates nominated for the position shall be asked to leave the room.
2. Council members shall be given the opportunity to discuss, speak in support of, or in opposition to, each candidate without the candidate present. Such discussions shall last no longer than 10 minutes, unless the Council passes a motion to extend the discussion.
3. Individually, candidates shall return to the room to answer additional questions, after which he or she shall leave the room. Each candidate shall receive no more than five minutes for Q&A.

Section 2. Committee Chair Elections

A. Elections for Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs will proceed in the same manner as the Executive Board, except without the discussions referenced in Article I §B.4

B. The vote shall proceed as follows:

1. The VP of Administration will compile a list of all candidates and positions to create an online ballot to be sent to the Council. This ballot should be sent within 24 hours of the April Council meeting.
2. Council members will have 72 hours to vote in this election.
3. Winners will be selected through instant runoff ranked choice voting.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

Section 1. *Email Listserv*

A. The VP of Communications shall be responsible for monitoring and maintaining the official Council listserv, which exists for communication with and dissemination of information to graduate students.

B. SYMPA Name: GSASC

1. This list shall contain all active members of the Council, both Reps and nonvoting members.
2. This list shall be used to communicate with or solicit information from the Reps and to disseminate information to departmental graduate student email lists.
3. Messages distributed via this list shall be limited to those publicizing events and opportunities for GSAS graduate students, as well as news and information from the Council. Personal notices or outside advertisements are prohibited.
4. Communications may be sent to this list by any member of the Council to be approved by the VP of Communications before distribution.

Section 2. *Microsoft Teams and Related Online Platforms*

A. The Council shall keep financial, meeting, and similar records on the Microsoft Teams channel for posterity.

B. Where the President has not deemed confidentiality necessary, these records shall be available for viewing to the General Body.

C. Council members may use the Teams platform to request information from, share relevant materials with, and conduct other official business for the good of the General Body.

D. Records, including communications, shall be subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests that have been confirmed with the Dean of Students Office.

Section 3. Social Media

A. The Council shall maintain as necessary a social media presence to connect with the GSAS student body.

V. COMMITTEES

Section 1. General Committee Policies

A. All voting members of the Council shall serve on at least one committee. However, Council officers, members of the Student Council, Honor Committee, or Judiciary Committee, and representatives appointed by the President to official University committees are eligible for exceptions.

B. Committees shall consist of at least one chairperson and, as necessary, additional members to assist the chairperson(s).

C. The President and Vice-President of Administration shall assemble a list of committee assignments at the beginning of the academic year, taking into account the preferences of each Council member and committee chairperson.

D. The President and Vice-President of Administration are empowered to make changes to committee assignments with the consent of the appropriate member(s) and committee chairperson(s).

E. Committee chairpersons are ultimately responsible for the tasks assigned to their committees but may delegate tasks to committee members as they see fit.

F. The Council may choose to have any committee chaired by multiple co-equal chairpersons.

Section 2. Standing Committees

A. Finance Committee

1. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the Council's finances.

2. The Finance Committee shall annually propose a fiscal-year budget to the Council and, once it is approved, ensure full use of the available funds without excess spending.
3. The Finance Committee shall meet before each General Body Meeting to review all submitted funding requests and prepare recommendations to the Council for adoption at General Body Meetings.
4. The Finance Committee shall bring all submitted funding requests discussed at the monthly Committee meeting to the next General Body Meeting with their recommendation(s) for funding.
5. The Vice-President of Finance shall chair the Finance Committee, which shall consist only of voting members and officers of the Council.
6. Funding Request Guidelines (Appendix A)
 - a. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for developing and maintaining funding request guidelines.
 - b. The Finance Committee shall use these guidelines to determine their recommendation (or lack thereof) for a funding request when presenting it to the General Body.
 - c. The Finance Committee must notify the General Body of any changes made to the guidelines and submit any non-technical changes to the General Body for approval by vote.

B. Graduate Education Committee

1. The Graduate Education Committee shall be responsible for addressing issues related to graduate education, including topics such as curriculum, advising, teaching, and funding and representing students' interests to external entities.
2. The committee strives to act as a conduit between GSAS administration and the graduate student body. As such, the committee should work directly with the associate dean to address shared priorities.
3. Additional committee members shall be assigned to assist the chair.

C. Social Committee

1. The Social Committee shall be responsible for organizing events and activities to encourage social interaction among graduate students across departments.
2. The Social Committee may use Council funds to sponsor events, provided that such funding does not violate Art. III §A ¶3 of these Bylaws.

D. Research Committee

1. The Research Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the annual Huskey Graduate Research Exhibition and regular Council-sponsored research grant cycles for GSAS students.
2. The Research Committee shall be responsible for organizing events and activities to encourage collaboration and innovation in GSAS student-led research.
3. The Research Committee may use Council funds to sponsor events, provided that such funding does not violate §III.A.3 of these Bylaws.
4. At the discretion of the chairperson(s), graduate students who are not voting members of the Council may serve on the Research Committee in a non-voting capacity.

Section 3. Ad-Hoc Committees

A. Ad-hoc committees may be formed to address issues that do not fall under the purview of a standing committee.

B. Ad-hoc committees may be formed at the discretion of the President or by majority vote of the Council.

C. Ad-hoc committees shall be subject to a vote by the General Body to determine their renewal at the end of each annual term.

VI. BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

Section 1. Guidelines

A. The Council and the Finance Committee will follow the Board of Visitors guidelines for the use of Student Activity Fee funds. In particular, the Council recognizes that: *the purpose of the student activity fee is to provide financial support for student organizations that are related to the educational purpose of the University of Virginia. As a required student fee, the monies collected by the University for funding student activities are public funds which must be administered in a manner consistent with the educational purpose of the University as well as with state and federal law.*

B. The Council and the Budget Committee shall make funding decisions according to the criteria set forth and agreed upon with the General Body and described in “GSAS Council Funding Policy” (Appendix A)

C. The Council’s funds may not be used for the following items, in accordance with University policy:

1. Religious activities
2. Philanthropic contributions and activities
3. Political activities
4. Activities which would jeopardize the University’s tax exempt status
5. Loans or temporary deposits for any of the items listed above.

C. Budget

1. The Vice-President of Finance, with the approval of the Finance Committee, shall submit a budget for the upcoming academic year to the Council during the September general body meeting, at which point a vote to ratify the budget will be held.
2. This budget shall specify:
 - a. Anticipated revenues for the upcoming academic year
 - b. The size of any surplus left over from the current year
 - c. Funds allocated to the Executive Board to prepare for regularly scheduled meetings

- d. Funds allocated to committees for their operations, such as research exhibitions, interdepartmental events, and intramural teams
 - e. The size of a reserve fund for use in financial emergencies
3. This budget shall remain in force for the entire academic year but may be altered at any time by a majority vote of both the Finance Committee and the Council.

VII. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Record of Amendments to the Bylaws

A. The following is a record of amendments made to the above document.

1. Upon adoption, these amendment provisions shall take effect May 1, 2023.

Appendix A. Funding Guidelines (approved May 1, 2023)

Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Student Council Funding Policy

Definitions

1. An internal funding request is a request made by a standing committee or the Executive Committee of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Council
2. An external funding request is a request made by any other graduate student or graduate student organization (e.g., departments or intramural teams)
3. The Finance Committee refers to the standing GSAS Council committee whose responsibility is to review funding requests and manage the GSAS Council budget
4. The General Body refers to the full membership of the GSAS Council
5. A PO (purchase order) is used for expenditures from outside vendors. For example, if you wish to rent space from Firefly you should use a PO. Those not familiar with UVA procurement should work with a department administrator when generating a PO. Managers of external vendors will be able to assist when generating a PO
6. A worktag is a collection of funding and event codes to classify costs and identify an account for reimbursements

Applying for Funds

Timeline

1. All requests, whether internal or external, must be submitted with sufficient time for both the Funding Committee and General Body to review and approve the request.
2. Formally, the request must be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to the Finance Committee meeting, which meets in the last week of a month, for a timely review. Requests submitted after this deadline may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, or be reviewed at future meetings.
3. The Finance Committee may respond to requests with questions or concerns regarding the event's fulfillment of the guidelines' funding requirements. Questions shall explicitly state the requirement which may be unfulfilled in the request. Any questions the Finance Committee has for the requesters to clarify must be sent to the requesters at least 72 hours before the Finance Committee meets to decide on the request. Requesters shall respond to these comments at or before the Finance Committee meeting.
4. The Finance Committee shall inform requesters of the Committee's intended recommendation to the General Body no later than 24 hours after the monthly Committee meeting. Requesters may appeal the Committee's recommendation to the General Body at the relevant General Body Meeting.
5. Additionally, the event for which funding is being requested must occur at least seven (7) days after approval by the General Body, whose meetings occur during the first week of the month.
6. Examples:

- a. An event occurring in the second week of October must be submitted seven days prior to the September Finance Committee meeting
 - b. An event occurring in the first week of November must also be submitted seven days prior to the September Finance Committee meeting
7. Exceptions to the timeline:
- a. No external events may be held prior to the second full week of September. Internal events may be held prior to the second full week of September on a case-by-case basis
 - b. No events may be held after the first full week of June, and all requests for events in June must be submitted in time for the April Finance Committee meeting (and, by extension, the May General Body meeting)
 - c. Any event in January or the first week of February must be approved at the November Finance Committee meeting and December General Body meeting
 - d. Requests for additional funds for an event already approved by GSASC may be approved if the event occurs within 7 days of the general body meeting following approval of the request.

Rules for Funding Requests

Fundable and Non-Fundable Expenses

1. The GSASC can fund the following expenses:
 - a. Food
 - b. Disposable Goods (e.g., paper goods and utensils)
 - c. Printing and Copying Services
 - d. General Services (including security, music, tech support, web hosting, space rental, driving, etc.), which must go through UVA Procurement Services, and be paid using a PO or PTAO
 - e. Alcohol, with an alcohol approval form through the VPSA. This form is necessary for On-Grounds events where alcohol is served, or Off-Grounds events where the venue is not licensed to serve alcohol
2. The GSASC cannot fund the following expenses:
 - a. Speaking fees
 - b. Non-disposable goods
 - c. Lodging or transportation of non-UVA students
 - d. Paid media advertising
3. Generally, the GSASC can fund perishable goods in support of events

General Guidelines for Funding Requests

1. Preference is given to events which involve students from multiple departments and programs and to events sponsored by multiple student organizations
2. Funding of an event by GSASC shall not exceed \$12/GSAS student attending (based on expected attendance).

3. All funds must be used to the direct benefit of UVA Graduate Students. In particular, at least 50% of an event's funds must go to UVA Graduate School of Arts and Sciences students
4. Overspending on the part of an individual will be at the discretion of GSASC to fund
5. If a department or organization overspends the overage will be billed back to that department or organization
6. Budgets must include a breakdown of the cost of each event, source for those costs, proposed expenditure method (reimbursement, PO, etc.), any cosponsorships or other sources of funding, and how those funds will be used. Budgets must be submitted as spreadsheets, using the template provided on the GSASC website.

Additional Guidance for External Requests

1. Department Events
 - a. These events must be open to graduate students in multiple departments/programs
 - b. The maximum amount that will be approved for an event hosted by a single department at any meeting will be \$300
 - c. If multiple departments request and event, then the maximum amount will be \$600.
 - d. Requesters may submit an additional request for the same event at a later date (granted that the request still complies with the Funding Policy) for up to \$300 additional funding, regardless of whether the event is sponsored by one or more departments
 - e. If an expenditure totals more than \$300, the vendor must be registered with UVA procurement and a PO must be used for payment. Under no circumstances may multiple individuals split an expense over \$300 and both apply for reimbursement
2. Intramural registration:
 - a. Either teams or individuals may request funds to join intramural sports leagues through UVA Recreation.
 - b. Teams of graduate students may request funds to join intramural sports leagues in the Charlottesville-Albemarle region; individuals (free agents) may not request funds except to participate in individual non-team based sports or events.
 - c. Requests for funds must meet the following requirements:
 - i. The majority of an intramural team are GSAS students.
 - ii. Applicants are capable of meeting all other requirements needed to participate in a league at the time of their request.
 - iii. Requests are exclusively for player and/or team registration fees.
 - iv. Requests must include a roster of those for whom registration fees are being requested.
 - v. Requests are capped at a maximum of \$200 or the league's registration fees for players in the team, whichever is less.
 - vi. All intramural requests must be submitted as reimbursements.

- d. Applicants may only request funds once per semester.
- e. At the end of a league season, applicants must provide a record of play and final roster to the GSASC Vice President of Finance.

Additional Guidance for Internal Requests

1. Committee and General Body Meetings
 - a. Food for Committee and General Body meetings is exempt from funding request submission and approval, but must still adhere to the expenditure type guidelines and timelines for reimbursement/PO form submission detailed above.
 - b. Committees are limited to funding food for one (1) meeting per month, and funding does not roll over for months with no meeting
 - c. Funding for committee meeting food is capped at \$8/head.
 - d. Alcohol may not be funded using the committee's food budget.
2. Internal requests for amounts greater than \$600 must submit at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Finance Committee meeting, to allow for additional time to clarify the request in advance of the Finance Committee meeting.

The Funding Process

The Application Process

1. All funding requests, whether internal or external, must be submitted through the Graduate Council Funding Request Form.
2. In advance of the Finance Committee meeting at which their request will be reviewed, the Committee may submit questions to the requestor concerning the request.
3. Each requestor, or a representative thereof, must attend the Finance Committee meeting at which their request is being reviewed. The Committee may ask clarifying questions about the request.
4. After reviewing all requests, the Funding Committee will vote whether to advance each request to the forthcoming General Body meeting, taking into consideration the request's compliance with the funding policy, and the available budget.
5. The General Body will discuss and vote on funding requests advanced by the Committee, taking into consideration the merits of the request.
6. The VP of Finance will inform requesters of the decision of the General Body. Approved requests that seek to use a PO will be connected with the GSAS finance specialist at this point. Approved requests that seek reimbursement will be provided the GSASC worktags for reimbursement at this point.
7. The requester must submit a one (1) page post-event report to the GSASC Vice President for Finance within 14 days of the completion of the event. This report must contain the following information:
 - a. Attendance counts
 - b. A brief statement on the worth and efficacy of the event

- c. Itemized receipts of the expenditures to which the GSASC provided funding

Disbursing and Reimbursing Funds

1. Funds will be disbursed only after approval by the General Body.
2. All reimbursement forms may be found on the GSASC website.
3. If a student is being reimbursed, the requester must submit a reimbursement request through Workday accompanied by an original and itemized receipt for APPROVED expenditures not to exceed \$300 per student per event. An electronic copy of the itemized receipt must also be given to the VP of Finance.
4. For events paid for by PO, GSCAC will initiate a PO for the approved amount. The requester must then provide the PO to the vendor for the approved expenses.
 - a. Please note that PO must be initiated before an event takes place. When possible, please seek the aid of a department administrator or the management of any service provider to initiate the PO,
 - b. We encourage the use of POs for more expensive events.

Penalties for Misuse of Funds

1. Violations of the above policies, and/or the policies and procedures of any germane group, body, or corporation, and/or violations of the laws of the land, may result in sanctions against the requesting agent.
2. It will be the duty of Finance Committee to identify when a violation has occurred. Then, a report will be made to the council body, who will vote on whether a violation has occurred. If the body agrees that a violation has occurred, it will then suggest a sanction. Sanctions will ultimately be determined by the VP of Finance and reviewed by the Executive Committee.
3. Three-Strike Violations
 - a. Certain violations are not themselves sufficient to merit a sanction. In these cases, it will take three violations to merit a sanction.
 - b. Examples of these sorts of violations include the following:
 - i. Minor delays in paperwork filing
 - ii. Incomplete paperwork
 - iii. Gross overestimation of attendance
 - iv. Significant underprojection of expenses
 - v. Failure to appear at the relevant Finance Committee meeting
 - vi. Violations of similar severity
 - c. Strikes roll over for two principal semesters. For example, points earned in the Fall of 2015 will expire at the end of Fall 2016.
4. Immediate Violations
 - a. Certain violations are themselves sufficient to merit a sanction. In these cases, it will only take one violation.
 - b. Examples of these violations include:

- i. Misrepresenting the event/item/service requested for,
- ii. Altering receipts
- iii. Spending without approval
- iv. Leaving a request process open through year's end (if a request is left to the end of the fiscal year, where money has been spent but the rest of the paperwork (including the report) is incomplete)
- v. Violation of rules, policies, or laws of sufficient weight during the event (e.g., underage drinking, the presence of drugs, funds being spent on nonstudents, etc.)
- vi. Violations of similar severity

5. Sanctions

- a. Request not eligible for further funding: This sanction locks the original funding, preventing any more funds from being allocated to the request AND overages being funded under the mercy of the body.
- b. Request funding curtailed: If malfeasance is uncovered or occurs after funding is given but before the money is spent, then the funding will be lessened under this sanction.
- c. Request funding approval withdrawn: If malfeasance is uncovered or occurs after funding is given but before the money is spent, then the funding will be removed entirely under this sanction.
- d. Requester not permitted to submit requests; organization needs a new representative: This sanction is designed for instances wherein the process is befuddled by the representative of the organization, but the organization and event have sufficient merit that conservation is desirable. This sanction does not penalize the event/organization, but it requires them to select a new representative so that the issues do not happen again.
- e. Requester not permitted to submit requests; organization/person cannot get Funding.
 - i. This sanction is essentially a ban on funding.
 - ii. This sanction requires a timeframe be set at the time of sanctioning (e.g., a semester, a year, until years end, etc.).
 - iii. It is possible, but not advisable, to make the duration set by a condition (e.g., a change in organizational leadership, in the law, in university policy, etc.).
- f. Actions submitted for disciplinary review: the issue has been turned over to the relevant university authorities.
- g. Actions submitted for legal review: the issue has been turned over the university legal department and/or law enforcement.