

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

**ARTICLE I. STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE**

Section 1. Structure

A. The Graduate Student Council (hereafter “Council”) of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (hereafter “GSAS”) shall be composed of officers of the council, voting and non-voting representatives from the various departments and degree-granting programs of GSAS, and the GSAS representatives to the Student Council and the Honor and Judiciary Committees of the University of Virginia.

Section 2. Purpose

A. The purpose of the council shall be:

1. To advocate for and represent GSAS students to GSAS and University administration, faculty, and other student organizations;
2. To serve as a venue for council members or members of the University student body, faculty, staff, or administration to place concerns and comments before the Council body;
3. To serve as liaison between the GSAS student body and the faculty and administration;
4. To maintain cohesion and foster the interchange of ideas among the students of GSAS;
5. To coordinate and promote activities of interest to GSAS students; and
6. To hold regular meetings to conduct Council business.

**ARTICLE II. REPRESENTATION**

## Section 1. Departmental Representation

A. Only students registered for a degree offered by the GSAS and regularly enrolled for any course or courses in the GSAS shall be eligible to serve as a member of the council.

B. Each student registered and enrolled as such shall contribute a designated fee, as set by the University Board of Visitors and assessed through the University Bursar, at the start of every enrolled semester for the maintenance of the Council, its programs, and its activities.

C. The students of the GSAS shall be represented on the Council as follows:

1. Each GSAS department is entitled to elect one voting representative to the Council.
2. Departments with enrollments at least twice the median for the GSAS are entitled to elect a second voting representative to the Council.
3. The number of representatives per department shall be determined using the official enrollment figures.

## Section 2. Non-Voting Members

A. The council shall also include the following non-voting representatives:

1. The GSAS representatives to the University Student Council, the University Honor Committee, and the University Judiciary Committees shall be ex-officio members of the Council appointed according to Article IV of this Constitution and shall keep the Council and graduate student body informed of the affairs of their respective organizations.
2. At the discretion of the Council, other members of the University community may act in advisory or other roles.

E. No voting member may represent more than one department or cast more than one vote under any circumstances.

F. Except as the President may designate, meetings of the Council shall be open to all GSAS students and the University community at large.

## **III. OFFICERS**

## Section 1. Officers of the Council

A. The officers of the Council shall be the President, Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Communications, Vice President of Finance, and Parliamentarian. All officers of the Council, except for the President, must continue to represent their departments as voting representatives during their term in office.

### B. The President

1. Shall represent the Council to the GSAS and University administrations as well as the University at large;
2. Shall chair the Council and preside over its meetings, but shall appoint another voting member to serve as chair in the event of his/her absence or whenever a conflict of interest exists;
3. Shall form additional committees of the Council as the need arises;
4. Shall be an ex-officio member of all Council committees;
5. Shall determine a meeting schedule for the academic year and make arrangements for a regular meeting place, in consultation with the Council;
6. Shall have the power to appoint graduate students to serve on University governing bodies or committees, subject to the approval of the Council;
7. Shall vote in Council meetings only to break a tie.

### C. The Vice President of Administration

1. Shall assist the President by performing whatever additional executive duties are required;
2. Shall work with the Vice President of Communications to assign members to committees and to support and oversee the committees of the Council;
3. Shall assume the duties of the President in his/her absence;
4. Shall be a voting member of the Council, except when acting as chair.

#### D. The Vice President of Communications

1. Shall recruit representatives to the Council, and may represent the Council to all departments, programs, and graduate student organizations in the GSAS;
2. Shall work with the Vice President of Administration to assign members to committees and to support and oversee the committees of the Council;
3. Shall maintain contact with external organizations;
4. Shall keep minutes of all meetings and ensure they are available to members in a timely fashion;
5. Shall maintain the records of the Council;
6. Shall oversee the Council's webpage;
7. Shall maintain the Council's mailing list;
8. Shall be a voting member of the Council, except when acting as chair.

#### E. The Vice President of Finance

1. Shall, in conjunction with the University administration, maintain the financial records of the Council and report the current financial status when requested by the Council;
2. Shall oversee the disbursement of funds in payment of legitimate debts incurred by the Council;
3. Shall coordinate all funding requests from outside parties;
4. Shall be a voting member of the Council, except when acting as chair.

#### F. The Parliamentarian

1. Shall assist the President in presiding over meetings.

2. Shall be responsible for ensuring that Robert's Rules of Order are enforced if the President chooses to implement them.
3. Shall interpret the Constitution and Bylaws in light of ambiguities and shall seek to remove such ambiguities from the Consitution and Bylaws as they arise.
4. Shall maintain and update the Constitution and Bylaws as the Council deems necessary.
5. Shall enforce decorum during Council meetings.
6. Shall be a nonvoting member of the Council.

G. The officers of the Council shall, as necessary, represent the Council and the students of the GSAS in local, state, regional, or national boards, panels, or organizations. The President may also appoint a proxy to represent the Council in these situations in the event none of the officers are available or willing to do so.

H. In the event that any officer will not be present on grounds for a period of more than two consecutive months during the academic year, the President, in consultation with said officer, may appoint a member of the Council to serve as an acting officer in their absence.

#### **IV. ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES**

##### Section 1. Elections

A. The officers, as listed under Article III, shall be elected by the Council, using instant runoff ranked-choice voting.

B. Department representatives to the Council shall appointed by the graduate students enrolled in the respective GSAS department. Each department retains the right to recall and replace its representatives according to its own method and schedule of selecting representatives to the Council. No individual shall represent a department in which he or she is not currently enrolled.

C. The Council's representatives, including those to the UVA Student Council, University Judiciary Committee, and UVA Honor Committee, shall be elected by the Council, a plurality of votes cast being necessary for election.

D. The term of office for the officers of the Council shall begin May 1 and end on April 30.

## Section 2. Vacancies

A. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Vice President of Administration, Vice President of Communications, or Vice President of Finance, the President will nominate, in a timely manner, an individual to complete the remainder of the term, subject to approval by the Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

B. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice President of Administration will assume the office of President. If the Vice President of Administration is unable or unwilling to serve as President, they will nominate in a timely manner an individual to complete the remainder of the term, subject to approval by the Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

## Section 3. Impeachment

A. Any officer of the Council may be impeached and removed from office for gross misconduct or a continued failure to perform their constitutional duties. Any member of the Council may initiate impeachment proceedings by introducing an appropriate motion.

B. Should two-thirds of the voting members present vote in favor of an impeachment resolution, the officer will be notified of the vote result and be given the opportunity to address the Council at the next regularly scheduled meeting and have a vote to confirm the removal from office. Two-thirds of the voting members present voting in favor of the confirmation shall be sufficient for immediate removal from office.

C. Should the officer in question fail or decline to request a confirmation vote before the next meeting, or should the officer fail to appear at the next regularly scheduled meeting, impeachment will be confirmed and removal from office will be automatic and immediate.

## **V. AMENDMENTS**

### Section 1. Amending the Constitution

A. Amendments to this Constitution shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council in a regularly scheduled general body meeting. Amendments may not be voted on until they have been circulated to the Council and 7 days has been provided for the members of the Council to discuss the amendment and provide suggestions. By-laws shall

be adopted to facilitate the implementation of any article of this Constitution by a simple majority of the Council.

## Section 2. Record of Amendments to the Constitution

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

1. Upon adoption, these amendment provisions shall take effect April 1, 1994. Recognizing the disparity of the current operation of the GSG with the GSG Constitution passed in 1979, until April 1, 1994 the GSG shall continue to operate in its provisional form.
2. Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on April 19th, 2004 shall take effect immediately.
3. Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on April 2nd, 2012 shall take effect immediately.
4. Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on June 3rd, 2013 shall take effect immediately.
5. Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on July 7th, 2014 shall take effect immediately.
6. Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on November 7th, 2016 shall take effect immediately.
7. Upon adoption, the amendment provisions presented to the Council on May 1, 2023 shall take effect immediately.