

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION**

PREAMBLE

We, the graduate students at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, to promote the well-being of the graduate student body and ensure their representation in university affairs establish this constitution. We aim to create a representative form of government for all graduate students, recognizing the duties of the Graduate Student Association to promote research, collaboration, and student rights.

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ARTICLE I. Definitions

1. The Graduate Student Association, hereinafter called the GSA, shall be the governing student organization of the graduate student body.
2. The Governance Body shall consist of the officers of the executive committee and the graduate senators.
3. Executive Committee (EXCOM):
 - 3.1. President
 - 3.2. Vice President of Operations
 - 3.3. Vice President of External Affairs
 - 3.4. Secretary
 - 3.5. Treasurer
 - 3.6. Graduate Research Grant Award Chairs
 - 3.7. Professional Development Award Chairs
 - 3.8. Graduate Senators – 2 representatives chosen from registered GSO's.
4. Graduate Research Grant Award (GRGA).
5. Professional Development Award (PDA).

ARTICLE II. Purposes

1. To work for the academic, social, and economic advancement of all graduate students to promote better communication among graduate students and the entire University student body.
2. To ensure appropriate representation of the graduate students in the affairs of the University pertaining to or affecting graduate education.
3. To promote rapport among graduate students, faculty, and administration.
4. To administer the use of all properties and funds under GSA control.
5. To coordinate the functions of those student organizations which pertain to the membership of the GSA.

ARTICLE III. Membership

1. All graduate students are general members of the GSA and are allowed to vote in general elections.
2. Only GSA members in good academic and judicial standing shall be eligible to hold any GSA EXCOM office.
3. The Senate shall be composed of two Senators from each recognized GSO and shall be chosen by their organization.
4. Committee members are voting members, chosen by their organization, within a designated committee, made up of each of the recognized GSO's.
5. The President or the Vice President of a GSO may serve as a proxy for the Senator or Alternate Senator.

ARTICLE IV. Executive Committee

The Officers of the GSA shall consist of the President, Vice President of Operations, Vice President of External Affairs, Secretary, Treasurer, GRGA Chairs, and PDA Chairs and shall hereinafter be referred to as the Executive Committee or EXCOM.

1. President:
 - 1.1. To preside over all meetings and ensure the parliamentary procedure is adhered to as set out in Robert's Rules of Order, except as amended in this document.
 - 1.2. To prepare, post, and make available an agenda for all meetings.
 - 1.3. To represent the GSA and the Graduate Student Body.
 - 1.4. To call special meetings under the provisions outlined in Article VIII.
 - 1.5. To convene the Executive Committee.
 - 1.6. To create and dissolve committees of the GSA subject to Governance Body approval.
 - 1.6.1 This privilege does not apply to the Finance, Governance, External Affairs, GRGA, or PDA committees, as they are integral and permanent GSA entities.
 - 1.7. To be an Ex Officio member of all committees.
 - 1.8. To provide a written and oral report of the EXCOM's activities at the last Governance Body meeting of the year.
2. Vice President of Operations:
 - 2.1. To assume the responsibilities of the President when the latter is unable to do so.
 - 2.2. To assume the office of the President when the office is vacated by the President.
 - 2.3. To be responsible for the planning and orchestration of all GSA-sponsored functions, communications with the GSO's, manage the Engage website.

- 2.4. To serve as the chair of the governance committee.
3. Vice President of External Affairs:
 - 3.1. To initiate, maintain, and improve relations between the GSA and other academic/professional organizations.
 - 3.2. To serve as the chair of the External Affairs Committee.
4. Secretary:
 - 4.1. To record the minutes of all EXCOM and Governance Body meetings.
 - 4.2. To present written copies of these minutes at every Governance Body meeting for review, possible corrections, and approval or disapproval.
 - 4.3. To post these minutes at all locations specified by the Governance Body.
 - 4.4. To receive and maintain with the GSA Advisor all records of the GSA including minutes, committee reports, EXCOM member reports, correspondence, Graduate Student Organization (GSO) Constitutions, and list of Officers with contact information, flyers, pamphlets, announcements, etc.
 - 4.5. To maintain a roster of Governance Body members. This roster shall include, at a minimum, the individual's name, office, organization represented, and contact information.
 - 4.6. To take and record the roll call at all EXCOM and Governance Body Meetings. This information will be included in the minutes.
 - 4.7. To be responsible for the written communication of the GSA. To send and post notices of all Governance Body and Special meetings as outlined in Article VIII.
5. Treasurer:
 - 5.1. To present a written financial report at all Governance Body meetings.
 - 5.2. To maintain all the financial records of the GSA with assistance from the Fiscal Administrator in Student Affairs and the GSA Advisor from, Student Activities & Leadership.
 - 5.3. To work with the Fiscal Administrator in Student Affairs and the GSA Advisor from Student Activities and Leadership to allocate and disburse GSO funds.
 - 5.4. To serve as the chair of the Finance Committee.
6. GRGA Chairs:
 - 6.1. The management of timely meetings to review applications on a semi-annual basis.
 - 6.2. The preparation and publication of application materials to the graduate student body.
 - 6.3. The timely presentation of committee decisions to the EXCOM.
7. PDA Chairs:
 - 7.1. The management of timely meetings to review applications monthly.
 - 7.2. The preparation and publication of application materials to the student body.
 - 7.3. The timely presentation of committee decisions to the EXCOM.
8. General Officer Responsibilities:
 - 8.1. If there are EXCOM positions that are not filled, the existing members of the EXCOM will fulfill the responsibilities of the unoccupied position. The existing EXCOM shall be tasked with determining the allocation of responsibilities.
 - 8.2. Resignation of EXCOM members: In any such case, resignations must be submitted in writing to the GSA Advisor, in the Office of Student Activities and Leadership.

ARTICLE V. Committees

1. Composition:
 - 1.1. The GSA shall maintain five standing committees (Governance, Finance, External Affairs, GRGA, and PDA). Each committee shall be comprised of a chair or co-chairs, and representatives from the GSO's.
 - 1.2. Voting members of a committee will include chairs and members of the committee.
 - 1.3. Committees may keep their internal procedure but shall follow GSA bylaws with regard to quorum, voting, etc.
 - 1.4. Quorum of the committees will be 1/3 of their voting members.
2. The Governance Committee:
 - 2.1. The Governance Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-President of Operations.
 - 2.2. The Governance committee is responsible for overseeing the GSO application process, changes to the bylaws and constitution, as well as compliance with the GSA constitution and bylaws.
3. The Finance Committee:
 - 3.1. The finance committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer.
 - 3.2. The finance committee is responsible for the initial adjudication of GSO budget proposals and providing recommendations to the governance body at each general meeting.
4. The External Affairs Committee:
 - 4.1. The external affairs committee shall be chaired by the Vice President of External Affairs.
 - 4.2. The committee shall initiate, maintain, and improve relations between the GSA and other academic/professional organizations.
 - 4.3. The external affairs committee shall be responsible for maintaining a relationship between the GSA and external organizations and keeping the EXCOM and GSA members apprised of developments.
5. The PDA Committee:
 - 5.1. The PDA Committee shall be overseen by the PDA co-chairs.
 - 5.2. The committee shall receive, review, and initiate the disbursement of funds for the Professional Development Award.
6. GRGA Committees:
 - 6.1. The GRGA committee shall be overseen by the GRGA co-chairs.
 - 6.2. The committee shall receive, review, and initiate the disbursement of funds for the Graduate Research Grant Award.

ARTICLE VI. Elections

1. EXCOM (President, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, PDA Chair and GRGA Chair):
 - 1.1. The EXCOM shall be elected from the general membership of the GSA.
 - 1.2. Election of officers shall be coordinated with the designated GSA Advisor. All members of the GSA may vote in the election.
 - 1.3. No person may hold two elected positions within the GSA in any one year.

- 1.4. Any graduate student in good standing with the University and the GSA is eligible to nominate themselves.

ARTICLE VII. Meetings and Quorum

1. Governance Body Meetings:
 - 1.1. The Governance Body will meet at least once a month to conduct necessary business.
 - 1.2. Meetings shall be conducted according to the parliamentary procedure described in Robert's Rules of Order unless otherwise amended in this document.
 - 1.3. Only members of the Governance Body, i.e., the Graduate Senate and EXCOM, may vote at Governance Body meetings by a show of hands. Discussion on any item is always open to all.
 - 1.4. No GSA meetings shall be held without a quorum. A quorum shall consist of 1/3 of the Governance Body.
2. Special Meetings:
 - 2.1. Special meetings of the GSA may be called by the President or by petition to the EXCOM by 5 voting GSA members. Notice shall be given to all GSA members at least 48 hours in advance of the meetings.

ARTICLE VIII. Advisor

The Senior Associate Director of Student Activities and Leadership or the Director of Student Activities and Leadership will serve as an advisor to the GSA.

ARTICLE IX: Graduate Student Organizations

1. The Governance Committee shall make available guidelines for writing club/organization constitutions.
2. Any GSO recognized by the GSA, or which falls under GSA jurisdiction for recognition, which does not currently have an approved constitution on file with the GSA shall be required to submit one. Any current constitutions that have been previously approved shall remain in effect as originally implemented.
3. New GSO constitutions submitted to the GSA shall be turned over to the Governance Committee, which will evaluate the constitution and approve or reject said constitution.
4. To be recognized and funded by the GSA, GSOs must be in an active, registered status with the Office of Student Activities & Leadership and any new organization must follow the new club registration process as outlined.

ARTICLE X: Amendments and Bylaws

1. Amendments to this Constitution:
 - 1.1. Meetings must be held at least three full days apart.
 - 1.2. The notice of the constitution for a proposed amendment shall be made available to all GSA members at least one week before its initial consideration.
 - 1.3. The GSA members must be provided with prior notice of the Amendment's consideration as part of the agenda, with a minimum of one week in advance.
 - 1.4. The UMass Board of Trustees, based on the University's Governance Policy (T73-098), requires constitutions or amendments to be approved by the UMass Board of Trustees.