

Graduate Student Association Constitution

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Approved 4/12/2017

Article I: *Authority*

- A. The collective decision-making authority of the graduate student body shall be vested in the Graduate Student Association (hereby named “GSA”), the voting members of which shall be those individuals of JHUSOM currently elected to the Graduate Student Council to represent the student body.
- B. All matters of parliamentary procedure not provided for by this Constitution shall be resolved by Robert’s Rules of Order, as most recently revised.

Article II: *Membership*

- A. Any student from a degree-seeking program who has matriculated to the School of Medicine or whose PI/faculty mentor’s primary appointment is at the School of Medicine shall be a member of the Graduate Student Association.

Article III: *GSA Council*

Section 1: The GSA Council shall be the governing board for the GSA

- A. The Council shall be presided over by the President.
- B. The Council shall establish its own committees, lesser officers and procedures as it deems necessary.

Section 2: Membership

- A. The voting members of the GSA Council (herein “Council”) shall consist of the GSA executive board and the designated representatives of the degree-granting programs of JHUSOM.
- B. Non-voting members of the Council shall consist of the members of the standing committees, any lesser officers, and the GSA representatives to university boards and committees.

Section 3: Program Representatives

- A. One representative shall be selected from all SOM Masters of Arts, Masters of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degree-granting programs including:
 - a. Biochemistry, Cellular and Molecular Biology
 - b. Biological Chemistry
 - c. Biomedical Engineering
 - d. Cellular and Molecular Medicine
 - e. Cellular and Molecular Physiology

- f. Functional Anatomy and Evolution
 - g. Health Sciences Informatics
 - h. History of Medicine
 - i. Human Genetics
 - j. Immunology
 - k. Medical and Biological Illustration
 - l. Neuroscience
 - m. Pathobiology
 - n. Pharmacology and Molecular Sciences
 - o. Program in Molecular Biophysics
- A. An alternate shall be selected for each representative from the programs noted above. In the absence of the representative, duties of the alternate shall consist of all the responsibilities of the representative. Representatives (or alternates) are expected to participate in the regularly scheduled meetings of the GSA. Upon the third absence without representation, a designated representative shall be dismissed and their alternate shall be recommended to the program as representative. As program representatives are essential for fulfilling the core GSA functions of conveying information between the student body and the administration, the attendance record of program representatives may be taken into account when considering travel grant applications from students of different programs.
 - B. Each program representative must join or appoint a student in their program to one of the official GSA standing committees (Finance Committee, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Events Committee, and any other standing committee). Special considerations may be made for representatives or appointees unable to fulfill these roles, including but not limited to organizing a student-wide service event or organizing programming or workshops, but approval from the executive board must be given prior to these considerations.

Section 4: Adviser

- A. The JHUSOM Associate Dean for Graduate Biomedical Education shall serve as adviser to the GSA President, other Executive Board members, and the GSA Council as a whole.

Section 5: Council Meetings

- A. The Council shall meet at least once per month during the academic year.
- B. The monthly Council meetings must be attended by the President, President-Elect, the Vice Presidents, program representatives, university board/committee members, standing committee chairpersons, and at least one representative from each student group that has received funding from the GSA.
- C. The monthly Council meetings shall be open to any member of the graduate student population.
- D. The monthly Council meetings shall have written records kept, including minutes and voting records.
- E. The GSA Council, student group representatives, and university board/committee representatives are required to attend at least 75% of these monthly meetings. Failure to attend or send an alternative in their place for two consecutive meetings results in a formal reprimand; missing three consecutive meetings, or failure to attend at least half of the meetings, may result

in consideration of that representative's dismissal. All members of the GSA Council will follow the guidelines and procedures from the official GSA policy regarding attendance.

Section 6: Power and Duties

- A. The Council shall have power to:
 - a. Advise all presidential appointments.
 - b. Initiate and conduct impeachment proceedings against GSA Executive Board members.
 - c. Dismiss by majority vote any representative.
 - d. Initiate actions to revise and update the Graduate Student Honor Code.
 - e. Approve allocations of GSA funds to these categories: travel awards, student groups, GSA Council, and social events as according to the budget policy.
 - f. Approve all committee recommendations.
 - g. Pass on and take actions deemed appropriate pursuant to this Constitution and in keeping with all university policies and regulations.

Section 7: Voting

- A. Each voting member of the Council (GSA Executive Board members and program representatives or alternates) shall be allowed to cast one vote. If both a program representative and alternate are present, they must decide between themselves how they will cast their single vote. For programs that have two representatives, only one vote is allowed. These representatives must discuss between themselves how to cast their single vote.
- B. All committee and policy recommendations, amendment changes, policy changes, and other propositions must be voted upon for consent.
- C. The total number of GSA Council member votes shall be recorded in the meeting minutes for any policy changes, amendment changes, and other propositions.
- D. A quorum comprising half of all voting members is required for official business to be conducted. Propositions receiving greater than one-half of all votes cast at a meeting in which a quorum is present will be passed. If quorum is not met and propositions are introduced, a special vote will be held on these propositions no sooner than one week after all GSA Council members have been notified of the vote and the propositions to be considered. At this special vote, propositions may be passed by receiving greater than one-half of all votes cast by present members of the GSA Council.
- E. In the event of a tie, the student representative to the Faculty Senate will cast the tie-breaking vote.

Article IV: Executive Board

Section 1: Executive Board and Terms of Office

- A. The Executive Board of the Council shall be the President, President-Elect, and six Vice Presidents: Vice President of General Affairs, Vice President of Finance, Vice President of Events, Vice President of Public Relations, Vice President of Policy and Programming, and Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion.

- B. Each Executive Board member shall serve a term of one academic year, from July 1 through June 30 of the following year excepting the VP of Diversity and Inclusion who shall serve a term of two years to coincide with the position on the School of Medicine's Diversity Council.

Section 2: Chief Executive Authority

- A. The chief executive authority of the Graduate Student Association shall reside in the President.

Section 3: Eligibility

- A. No persons shall be candidates for any Executive Board position who are not graduate students of JHUSOM during the entire academic year prior to the year of the term sought.
- B. An Executive Board member cannot serve as a departmental or program representative. However, an Executive Board member can be a member of a standing committee or a representative to a university board or committee.
- C. The main residency of an officer should be the Johns Hopkins East Baltimore campus during his/her term.

Section 4: Duties of the GSA Executive Board

- A. The duties of the President shall include:
 - a. Nominate and, with the consent of the Executive Board, appoint student representatives to appropriate university committees, councils, and boards, and all other lesser officers of the GSA whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for.
 - b. Inform the GSA and the university administration of the condition of the graduate student body and to recommend measures as deemed appropriate.
 - c. Convene meetings of the GSA when deemed necessary.
 - d. Ensure that the programming goals and action items of the Council are met.
- B. The President-Elect shall:
 - a. Collaborate with the President to learn the role of the President. To become familiar with the programs of the Association and its governances, and to develop and facilitate officer transition. The President-Elect shall automatically become President at the end of the term as President-Elect.
 - b. The President-Elect shall assist and support the President as needed.
 - c. Performs the duties of the President in the absence or the disability of the President.
 - d. Will fill the role of President in the following year.
 - e. Shall mediate the transition process at the end of the year.
 - f. Fulfill any other duties as is deemed appropriate or necessary by the President.
- C. The Vice President of Events shall:
 - a. Coordinate, advertise, and execute social events for the GSA, serving as the head of the (optional) Events Committee.
 - b. Complete at least four social events throughout his or her term, excluding the monthly happy hours.
 - c. Serve as the GSA representative on the Interschool Committee, and assist in planning interschool events for the academic year.

- D. The Vice President of Finances shall:
 - a. Draft the annual budget with the help of the previous year's Vice President of Finance and the rest of the Executive Board by July 1st.
 - b. Submit quarterly financial reports to the Council for approval
 - i. Quarterly reports to be due in October, January, April, and June.
 - ii. Reports should be submitted to the Executive board one week in advance of the general body meeting.
 - c. Oversee GSA student group recognition and funding applications. Part of this duty includes keeping track of reimbursements in coordination with the GSA administrator.
 - d. Oversee travel award applications.
 - e. Head a committee to help achieve the above duties.
- E. The Vice President of Public Relations shall:
 - a. Maintain the GSA email account and moderate the GSA sponsored listservs.
 - b. Assist the Vice President of Events in marketing and coordination of GSA and Interschool events.
 - c. Maintain the GSA Weekly Digest and the GSA Calendar of Events.
 - d. Serve as a resource for student groups on marketing their events within the School of Medicine.
- F. The Vice President of General Affairs shall:
 - a. Maintain written records (minutes) of all meetings.
 - b. Maintain a written agenda for each meeting.
 - c. Submit a written copy of previous minutes to the Council for approval.
 - d. Maintain and monitor the gsa-g email account.
 - e. Maintain the official GSA website, including but not limited to:
 - i. Posting of meeting minutes of Council Meetings.
 - ii. Keeping GSA official documents, contact information, and policies up to date
 - iii. Check of the website for consistency and relevancy, bringing issues to the attention of the GSA Executive Board.
- G. The Vice President of Policy and Programming shall:
 - a. Analyze the data from the annual GSA survey, conducted by members of the MA/PhD Committee, and lead the creation of the annual action item list based on the survey data.
 - b. Hold responsibility for distribution, as applicable, and maintenance of the annual GSA survey data.
 - c. Create a quarterly report of GSA committee and action item progress to be due in October, January, April, and June.
 - i. Reports should be submitted to the Executive Board in advance of the executive board meeting for the month in which they are due.
 - ii. Report should contain progress from the beginning of the year, and may include suggestions of actions and changes to make in the coming quarter and highlight action items and/or committees that are in danger of not meeting their goals.
- H. The Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion shall:
 - a. Inform and be a resource to the GSA for diversity and inclusion concerns present in any

aspect of student lives, and make recommendations to the Council and university administration about these concerns.

- b. Serve on the School of Medicine's Diversity Council as a graduate student representative.
- c. This is a two-year position due to the term requirements for student representatives on the School of Medicine Diversity Council.

G. The President Emeritus shall:

- a. Provide advice and leadership to the Executive Board regarding past practices and other matters to assist the Executive Board in governing the GSA.
- b. Support the President and the President-Elect on as as-needed basis.

Section 5: Meetings

- A. The Executive Board shall meet at least once per month during the academic year.
- B. Any official standing committee of the GSA shall meet at least once per quarter during the academic year.

Section 6: Removal from Office

- A. Any Executive Board member shall be removed from office immediately upon:
 - a. Conviction of a violation of the Graduate Student Honor Code,
 - b. Any other high crimes,
 - c. If the officer ceases to be in good standing in his/her graduate program for any reason during the term of his/her office,
 - d. Or if the officer ceases to fulfill attendance requirements after a first warning to be issued by the President, or in the case of the President, a first warning issued by the President-Elect.
- B. Any Executive Board member may be impeached and removed from office by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Council. Such actions may be taken if the Executive Board member conducts him or herself in an unprofessional manner or fails to effectively perform his or her duties. The Council shall follow the official impeachment and dismissal protocol and policy.
- C. Upon the resignation or removal of a Vice President or President-Elect to serve, an interim officer will be appointed by the President with the approval of the Council until a general election is held among the student body.
- D. In the case that the President is removed from office for any reason with less than six months of their term remaining, the President-Elect shall immediately succeed the President, but will be able to complete the following term in office as President. With the consent of the Council, an Interim President-Elect shall be chosen until one is elected via a general election. This Interim President-Elect will only serve until the end of the term, and will not succeed as President in the following term.
- E. In the case that the President is removed from office for any reason with six months or greater of their term remaining, it is the decision of the Council to provide and recommend succession procedures for the positions of President and President-Elect for the current term and the following fiscal year.

Article V: Standing Committees and Board/Committee Representatives

Section 1: Standing Committees

The following committees, appointed by the President, shall report to the Council.

- A. The Vice President of Finances may choose to assemble a Finance Committee, which shall be comprised of the Vice President of Finance and at least one additional representative, from the program representatives or from the general student population. It may review and evaluate all monetary requests to be used, including travel award applications and allocations, but not including the initial budget.
- B. The Vice President of Events may choose to assemble the Events Committee, which shall be comprised of the Vice President of Events and at least one additional representative, from the program representatives or from the general student population. It may organize, coordinate, and advertise GSA social events for the year.
- C. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shall be comprised of the Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion and as many representatives as are needed. It shall work with the administration diversity and inclusion committees and provide recommendations to the GSA Council or executive board.
- D. The President, with consent of the Council, shall be able to form any other standing committee as deemed necessary and appropriate. These could be, but are not limited to, the following: a peer mentoring committee, a graduation committee, or an international student affairs committee. In addition, the Council has the power to recommend and vote on the formation of any other standing committees as deemed necessary and appropriate.

Section 2: University Board/Committee Representatives

- A. One GSA representative, appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board, shall sit on and inform the GSA of the activities of the following university boards and committees:
 - a. The Johns Hopkins University Graduate Board (Rotation between SON, SPH, SOM)
 - b. Johns Hopkins School of Medicine M.A./Ph.D. Committee
 - i. This board shall have two representatives each serving two year terms.
 - c. Johns Hopkins Medical School Council
 - d. University Health Services Committee
 - e. Basic Science Security Committee
 - f. Johns Hopkins Student Assistance Program
- B. Vacancies in any of the university board/committees shall be advertised to the entire student body population.
- C. University board/committee representative positions shall be appointed by the President, upon consent of the Executive Board, and announced at the next general body meeting.
- D. Each university board/committee representative shall submit a quarterly report of the activities of the board or committee on which they sit to the GSA. These reports must be given to the Vice President of Policy and Programming.
 - a. Reports are due in October, January, April, and June of their terms.
 - b. Reports should be given at least five business days before the general body meeting for

- which they will be presented by the Vice President of Policy and Programming.
- c. Reports must be submitted, regardless of activities done or inactivity.

Article VI: Elections

Section 1: Timing of Elections and Appointments

- A. Elections for the positions of the Executive Board shall be held by the last week of May prior to the academic year of their terms. Elections must be open for at least one week (five business days).
- B. Standing committee representatives and representatives from each program must be elected or appointed by the third week of the academic year of their terms. Their terms of office shall begin in the July 1 of the academic year of their term and conclude the following June 30 unless otherwise noted.
- C. University board/committee representatives shall be appointed by the third week of the academic year. Their terms shall begin in the fall of the academic year of their term and conclude in the fall of the succeeding academic year.

Section 2: Term Limits of Appointments

- A. The President-Elect and President may only serve their appointed terms (one term as President-Elect, and one term as President).
- B. Vice President of General Affairs, Vice President of Finances, Vice President of Events, Vice President of Public Relations, and Vice President of Policy and Programming may each serve a maximum of two terms.
- C. Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion may serve a maximum of one term.
- D. Program representatives and university board/committee members may serve a maximum of three terms.
- E. Standing committee representatives may serve an unlimited number of terms as long as they are still eligible.

Section 3: Election Procedures

- A. The GSA Executive Board shall be popularly elected by the graduate student body of the JHUSOM.
- B. Program representatives may be elected or chosen, at the discretion of the individual programs.
- C. Program representative elections or appointments must be decided within three weeks of the term of office, which runs from July 1st to June 30th of the following year.

Section 4: Ensuring Program Representation

- A. In the lack of a nominee in any graduate program, the Council will nominate and confirm the nomination of a representative within such programs to satisfy the requirements of one official representative. Program directors shall ensure that the selection of GSA representatives takes place at the appropriate time.

Article VII: *Finances*

- A. The fiscal year shall be July 1 through June 30.

Article VIII: *Official Policies of the Graduate Student Association*

- A. The Council will maintain a core set of official policies including but not limited to issues such as awarding of money, the annual student survey, attendance, impeachment proceedings, and meeting guidelines on the official GSA website. In addition, the GSA Council will also maintain a record of past rulings and decisions to inform the general student population and establish a precedent for future decisions.
- B. The official policies may be amended by a majority vote at which a quorum of voting members of the council is present. GSA Council members will be notified of proposed changes of at least five business days prior to the vote. If quorum is not met and propositions are introduced, a special vote will be held on these propositions no sooner than one week after all GSA Council members have been notified of the vote and the propositions to be considered. At this special vote, propositions may be passed by receiving greater than one-half of all votes cast by present members of the GSA Council.

Article IX: *Amendments*

- A. The constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the GSA council or by a two-thirds vote of the entire graduate student body, either at a special meeting or by special balloting. Notice of proposed changes shall be sent to all GSA members at least five business days prior to the vote. If two-thirds of voting GSA council members are not present when a constitutional amendment is introduced, a special vote will be held on these amendments no sooner than one week after all GSA Council members have been notified of the vote and the amendment to be considered. At this special vote, the amendment may be passed by receiving greater than one-half of all votes cast by present members of the GSA Council.