

CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

- Article I. The graduate student body at the University of Rhode Island shall be organized under the name of the Graduate Student Association of the University of Rhode Island, hereafter referred to as the GSA.
- Article II. Aims
- Section 1. The GSA shall attempt to:
- A. operate the best form of student government, securing the freedom of choice for all graduate students to the end that it enhances the academic, health, intellectual, and social interests of all its members;
  - B. stimulates communications among its members throughout the university community and the community at large;
  - C. maintain an awareness of all issues of concern to its members and, whenever possible, act upon such issues.
- Section 2. The GSA shall:
- A. represent the interests of its members to the university community and to the community at large;
  - B. establish and maintain an attitude and an atmosphere conducive to graduate studies in the university community and community at large.
- Article III. Membership
- Section 1. All students enrolled in a full-time or part-time program leading to a graduate degree at the University of Rhode Island are members of the GSA, except as noted in Article III, Section 2.
- Section 2. A member of the GSA may withdraw in accordance with the By-Laws
- Section 3. Associate/ex-officio members of the GSA may include post-doctoral researchers, representatives from University organizations, and a liaison from the undergraduate senate. These members will be recognized at meetings and be allowed to speak but not vote.
- Article IV. The Graduate Senate
- Section 1. The governing body of the GSA shall be the Graduate Senate.
- Section 2. The Graduate Senate will be made up of Department Representatives.
- Section 3. One Faculty Advisor may be a non-voting member of the Graduate Senate.

- Section 4. Department Representatives of the Graduate senate will be remunerated at a sum of \$50 per semester, to be paid at the end of each semester, provided that they attend a minimum of two meetings per semester.
- Section 5. Department Representatives may schedule a meeting with any two Executive Board officers, to take place within one week of a missed Senate meeting, in the case of a class or work conflict to fulfill duties under Article V, Section 3. Other instances may be approved on a case-by-case basis by a majority vote of the Executive Board. Such meetings meet the requirements under Article IV, Section 4, for remuneration. Voting proxies will be accepted if notice is provided by the absent Senator, prior to a Senate meeting.
- Section 6. Graduate Student groups will be officially recognized by the GSA once they meet the following criteria. They may be represented at GSA meetings per the By-laws Article VI, Section 4.
- A. group must provide a constitution (and by-laws if available), mission statement, and list of members
  - B. group must consist of 66% graduate students
  - C. group must be associated with an institution at URI
  - D. group must have non-discriminatory policies
  - E. should there be a conflict between the group's policies and those of the GSA, the GSA policies supersede the others
  - F. group recognition with the GSA is for recognition only, speaking at meetings will be permitted, but voting will not be allowed (by the group, with the exception of the group rep being a department senator)

Article V. Graduate Senate Responsibilities and Powers

- Section 1. The Graduate Senate shall be responsible for determining the fiscal and operation policies which govern the GSA.
- Section 2. The Chairperson of the Graduate Senate shall call and preside over all Graduate Senate meetings.
- Section 3. The Dept. Representatives shall be responsible for presenting any required or relevant information on their respective area to the Graduate Senate. They shall also communicate to the students and faculty in their departments all relevant information concerning the Graduate Senate and its policies.
- Section 4. The Graduate Senate may create ad-hoc and temporary committees as necessary.
- Section 5. All Graduate Senate committee Chairpersons shall submit regular reports to the Graduate Senate. Their duties shall be commensurate to and in accordance with their respective titles.

Article VI. The Executive Council

Section 1. The Executive body of the GSA shall be called the Executive Council and will consist of graduate students at the University of Rhode Island.

Section 2. The members of the Executive Council shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, two At-Large Representatives, and Office Manager of the GSA. There may also be a position of Past-President open to the previous year's GSA President.

Article VII. Executive Council Duties and Powers

Section 1. The Executive Council shall be responsible for executing the policies determined by the Graduate Senate. It shall report to the Graduate Senate regarding its implementation of such policies.

Section 2. The President of the GSA shall receive as remuneration for the full performance of his/her duties the sum of \$950 or 100% of student fees, whichever is larger, each semester to be paid at the end of each completed semester. The Vice-President, Past-President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be compensated for the full performance of their duties with the sum of \$475 or 50% of student fees, whichever is larger, per individual, to be paid at the end of each completed semester. The At-Large Representatives will be compensated for the full performance of their duties with the sum of \$285 or 30% of student fees, whichever is larger, per individual, to be paid at the end of each completed semester. Said fees are to be paid from the budget of the GSA. If performance of any officer is contested then the matter will go before the Senate for a vote.

Section 3. The President of the GSA shall be the Chairperson of the Executive Council. He/she shall call and preside over Executive Council meetings. He/she shall maintain full and constant communication with the Executive Council. He/she shall represent the GSA and its interests within the university community, and in all other areas encompassed by the GSA. He/she shall present to the Graduate Senate Executive Council nominations for GSA committee Chairpersons and for graduate student representatives for any university committee or organization requesting such personnel. In the absence of the Vice-President, he/she shall act as Chairperson of the Graduate Senate.

Section 4. The Vice-President of the GSA shall assume all presidential duties, specified in Article VII, Section 3, in the absence of the president. He/she shall act as Chairperson of the Graduate Senate. He/she shall have the responsibility of seeking out potential appointees to various university committees and organizations requesting graduate student representation, such names to be submitted to the Executive Council for approval.

- Section 5. The post of Past-President may be filled by the previous year's President. The Past-President shall be a voting member of the Executive Board. He/she shall act as a consultant to the other Board members regarding the operation of the GSA, actively assist with recruitment of Senators, maintain office hours similar to other Board members, and serve in a public relations role to promote involvement of graduate students with the GSA.
- Section 6. The Secretary of the GSA shall be responsible for the agenda and for keeping current and detailed Senate minutes (meetings). He/she shall coordinate reports of those committee and organization representatives responsible to the Graduate Senate. He/she shall be responsible for maintaining communication between the GSA and all graduate students. As such, he/she shall be responsible for informing via email all graduate students of GSA upcoming meetings and events.
- Section 7. The Treasurer of the GSA shall be responsible for the disbursement of all GSA funds except as noted in the By-Laws. He/she shall also maintain complete and accurate records of all financial transactions, and present an updated financial report at each Executive Council and Graduate Senate meeting. In conjunction with the Budget and Finance Committee, he/she shall prepare an operating budget in good form.
- Section 8. The At-Large Representative/Webmaster will be responsible for keeping the GSA website updated to inform graduate students of upcoming events and announcements.
- Section 9. The At-Large Representative/GAU Liaison will be responsible for attending all Graduate Assistants United executive board meetings and keeping the GSA Executive Council and Senate informed of any ongoing issues in the GAU.
- Section 10. Any duties, obligations, or privileges not specifically delegated to an officer in the Constitution or By-Laws shall be so designated by majority vote of the Executive Council.
- Section 11. In the case that an executive committee member has not fulfilled his/her duties, as defined in the constitution, for 45 consecutive days during the academic year, the other executive members may by unanimous vote decide to remove the absent member from office after notifying the member at least one week prior to the vote. The executive committee may then call an emergency meeting of the Graduate Student Senate with at least one week notice to registered department representatives. A 2/3 majority vote is necessary for approving the executive committee's decision. An appointment must then be made by the Senate for the position.

Section 12. The executive committee shall be responsible for maintaining a reserve balance of a minimum of 30% of the previous year's operating budget. These funds are to be used only in the event that cash-on-hand is not available to meet the needs of the current fiscal year's budget. If the account falls below the 30% minimum, it is to be replenished by the end of the fiscal year to pass on to the future executive council.

Article VIII. Meetings

Section 1. Regular meetings of the Graduate Senate shall be called at least three times per semester during the Fall and Spring semesters. Meetings are to be held during the first and last months of each semester, with a third meeting to be held in between.

Section 2. Special meetings of the Graduate Senate shall be called by the Executive Council as deemed necessary. All Department Representatives are to be given at least one week notice of any additional meetings.

Section 3. Any two members of the Executive Council may call a special Executive Council meeting, the meeting to take place as soon as feasible. All voting members must be notified.

Article IX. Amendments

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution may be made after specific written notification of proposed changes has been made available to the GSA. Written copies of the proposed changes shall be made available to the GSA at least one Graduate Senate meeting prior to voting on the amendment (s). The GSA shall be notified (date, time, and location) of the impending vote and any constitutional changes must be ratified by a 2/3 majority of those graduate students present at the meeting.

Section 2. The By-Laws may be altered by a majority vote of the Graduate Senate. Proposed changes must be announced one meeting prior to voting.