

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

Graduate Assistants United Chapter of University of Rhode Island/AAUP

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

- 1-1 The Graduate Assistants United (GAU), Chapter of the URI/AAUP, shall consist of graduate assistants paying Chapter dues. URI graduate students who were graduate assistants in the past semester may retain active membership in the GAU for the following semester by paying Chapter dues in full at the beginning of the first semester in which they are no longer graduate assistants.
- 1-2 Members eligible to vote on collective bargaining issues shall be limited to members of the Graduate Assistants United (GAU), Chapter of the URI/AAUP.

ARTICLE II OFFICERS

- 2-1 The officers of the Chapter shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The term shall be for one year. The vote will be by members eligible to vote under Article I. Provision shall be made to ensure the anonymity of the voter.
- 2-2 The President has the authority to call meetings of the Chapter, shall preside over meetings, and has the responsibility for carrying out the purposes and aims of the organization.
- 2-3 The Vice President has the responsibility for acting in the absence of the President.
- 2-4 The Secretary shall record minutes of meetings of the Chapter and of the Executive Committee and shall have custody of all records except financial records of the organization.

- 2-5 The financial authority shall be the Treasurer in conjunction with the Executive Committee. The treasurer shall prepare the budget and shall report to the membership on the financial state of the Chapter at a general meeting, at least once a year. The Treasurer shall be bonded by a corporate surety company for not less than 10% of the funds he annually handles. All checks shall be signed by the Treasurer and one other officer.

ARTICLE III

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 3-1 The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers, the immediate Past President, the chair of the Grievance and Conflict Resolution Committee, two other members elected from the membership at large, and a graduate student appointed by the URI Graduate Students Association (GSA). The GSA may also appoint an alternate who may attend Executive Committee meetings, but shall not vote except in the absence of the primary appointee. All other members shall have a full vote. The at-large members shall serve for terms of one year. Elections shall be by a plurality. Fifteen days written notice in advance of any election shall be sent to members. The vote will be by members eligible to vote under Article I. Provisions shall be made to ensure the anonymity of the voter.
- 3-2 Nominees for Executive Committee positions must be members at the time of nomination. Elected Executive Committee members who lose their membership in the GAU Chapter of the URI/AAUP as outlined in Article I, may continue to pay Chapter dues for as long as necessary to complete their term of office.
- 3-3 The Executive Committee has the power and authorization to act for the organization between meetings. The membership at a general meeting can always rescind, repeal, or amend any action of the Executive Committee except when the action is no longer within control of the members or when the action has been specifically assigned as the power of duty to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee also has the duty to administer and carry out the collective bargaining agreement as ratified.
- 3-4 The Executive Committee shall report regularly on its activities to the membership.

- 3-5 A member holding elected office in the National AAUP or membership on the National Council of the AAUP, shall serve as an ex-officio, voting member of the URI/AAUP Executive Committee so long as s/he hold such office or membership.

ARTICLE IV THE NEGOTIATING TEAM

- 4-1 The Negotiating Team shall consist of up to five members appointed by the Executive Committee, including at least one member from the Executive Committee. Efforts shall be made to have representation outside of the Executive Committee.
- 4-2 A new Negotiating Team shall be chosen for each new contract period. Effort will be made to ensure that at least one Team member is from a previous Negotiating Team.
- 4-3 The Negotiating Team shall be appointed by the Executive Committee (including the officers) from nominees solicited from the membership. When vacancies occur, they shall be filled as soon as possible by appointment by the Executive Committee. Efforts shall be made to have representation from the different colleges of the University and include Graduate Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants..
- 4-4 The Negotiating Team shall have authority to conduct contract negotiations with the Board of Regents (or its successor) and the University Administration. The Team shall be responsible to and shall report to the Executive Committee. Should any questions of policy arise in which no agreement between these two bodies can be worked out, these questions shall be brought before the membership for determination. As soon as a contract is ratified by both parties, the Negotiating Team will cease to exist.

ARTICLE V CONTRACT RATIFICATION

- 5-1 Prior to the ratification of the contract between the bargaining unit and the University, the provisions of the contract shall be explained and discussed in a meeting (or meetings) of the GAU Chapter called by the President. Unless the Executive Committee jointly with the Negotiating Team decide otherwise, at least five (5) days shall be allowed members of the unit for study of the proposed contract terms. Copies of the proposed agreement shall be made available to all members of the bargaining unit.

- 5-2 Voting shall be by a majority of those eligible members voting. The vote will be by a secret ballot at the ratification meeting. Special ballots shall not be allowed, except under special individual circumstances that require members to be absent from the URI campus for research or graduate assistant duties at the time of the ratification meeting. These circumstances will be evaluated on an individual basis by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI COMMITTEES

- 6-1 The Executive Committee shall appoint all special and standing committees that are deemed appropriate except as provided for elsewhere in the Constitution or in the current contract. At least one member of each special and standing committee shall be chosen from the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII DUES

- 7-1 Annual dues shall be established by a majority vote of the members at a general meeting, and no changes may be made in the rate of dues and no assessment may be levied except by the procedures stated in this Article and only after five (5) days notice in writing has been given of the proposal.

ARTICLE VIII MEETINGS

- 8-1 There shall be at least one meeting of the membership each semester. There shall be a meeting at least two weeks before the end of the Spring Semester for the election of officers and members of the Executive Committee. The President is obliged to call a meeting when requested by the Negotiating Team or when he/she receives a petition signed by 40 members of the Chapter. Except in unusual circumstances, an agenda shall be made available to members before general meetings.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

- 9-1 Amendments to this Constitution shall be made as follows: the proposed amendment shall be distributed to the membership at least ten (10) days prior to a general meeting at which the proposed amendment shall be considered; voting on the amendment will take place either at a subsequent general meeting or by mail ballot, but in any case, it will be by secret ballot. Any amendment to the Constitution must be approved by two-thirds of those voting, providing that those voting constitute at least one-third of the membership.

ARTICLE X

BY-LAWS

- 10-1 By-Laws governing procedure, structure of committees, and like matters shall be adopted by a majority of those members voting either at a general meeting or by mail ballot as determined by the Executive committee.

ARTICLE XI

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- 11-1 Every member has the right to information concerning the rules, actions, and other matters affecting the membership of the Chapter. The Chapter shall forward a copy of each collective bargaining agreement to those members whose rights are directly affected by it, shall make available to each member an up-to-date copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Chapter, shall permit any member to examine the accounts and minutes of the Chapter and the Executive Committee as well as the list of the names and addresses of the membership.

ARTICLE XII

THE GRIEVANCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION COMMITTEE

- 12-1 The Grievance and Conflict Resolution Committee shall consist of the Chair and a minimum of two and a maximum of four persons selected from those members who are members of the bargaining unit as defined by the Rhode Island State Labor Relations Board. The chair of the Committee shall be elected from the membership. The vote will be by secret ballot at a general meeting. The other members shall be appointed by the Executive Committee from the list of nominees.
- 12-2 The Grievance and Conflict Resolution Committee shall have the duty of carrying out the functions relating to the complaint and grievance provisions of the collective bargaining agreement.
- 12-3 The Grievance and Conflict Resolution Committee Chair, as a member of the Executive Committee, shall be responsible to and shall report to the Executive Committee. Should questions of policy arise in which an agreement between these committees cannot be resolved then these questions shall be brought before the membership for determination.

ARTICLE XIII

RATIFICATION

- 13-1 This Constitution shall become effective when ratified by a majority vote of the membership except that the present officers and the present membership of the Grievance and Conflict Resolution Committee shall retain office until the first elections under this Constitution.

Adopted September 24, 2002