

Constitution of the Graduate Representative Organization

Preamble

We, the graduate students of Johns Hopkins University's Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences and Whiting School of Engineering, (hereafter referred to as "the Homewood Divisions",) in order to promote graduate student interests, both academic and social, within the University environment and in order to represent graduate students before the faculty and administration of Johns Hopkins University, do hereby adopt this constitution for the Graduate Representative Organization (GRO). Any issue that influences and/or affects any portion or whole of the graduate student body of the Homewood Divisions shall be considered within the competency of the GRO.

Part I. General Provisions.

Article 1. Name.

The name of this organization shall be "The Graduate Representative Organization of the Johns Hopkins University Schools of Arts & Sciences and Engineering". The official abbreviation for the organization shall be GRO.

Article 2. Purpose.

The GRO shall provide a means through which graduate students express views and work to implement policies on issues affecting their interests and welfare. To this end, the GRO shall:

1. Provide a means whereby graduate students can discuss, formulate, and implement policies on any and all issues affecting their well-being.
2. Represent the interests of graduate students to the University administration, the University at large, and the greater Baltimore community.
3. Facilitate communication between and association among graduate students as well as within the University and greater Baltimore communities.
4. Provide a sense of community for and advocate on behalf of graduate students and their families through the organization of social functions and support of graduate students in need of assistance.

Article 3. Membership and Participation.

Section 3.1.

All registered graduate students, part-time and full-time, in the Homewood Divisions of The Johns Hopkins University are members of the GRO.

Section 3.2.

All current graduate departments and programs of the Homewood Divisions have the right to voting representation in the GRO.

Section 3.3.

All graduate students in the Homewood Divisions are allowed to be present as observers at all GRO General Council sessions and to participate in all GRO-sponsored events.

Part II. The General Council.

Article 4. Purpose and Composition of the General Council.

Section 4.1. Purpose.

The GRO General Council shall be responsible for determining all GRO policies, designating representatives to all relevant university committees, and monitoring the implementation of all GRO decisions.

Section 4.2. Composition.

The General Council shall consist of the following voting members:

(a) The Departmental Representatives.

(i) The following departments and programs of the Homewood Divisions shall designate, in a manner of their own choosing, one Representative to sit on the General Council per academic year.

- Department of Anthropology
- Department of Applied Mathematics and Statistics
- Department of Biology
- Department of Biomedical Engineering
- Department of Biophysics
- Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
- Department of Chemistry
- Department of Civil Engineering
- Department of Classics
- Department of Cognitive Science
- Department of Computer Science
- Department of Economics
- Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Department of English
- Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences
- Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering
- Department of German and Romance Languages and Literatures
- Department of History
- Department of the History of Art
- Department of History of Science and Technology
- Department of Humanities
- Department of Materials Science and Engineering
- Department of Mathematics
- Department of Mechanical Engineering
- Department of Near Eastern Studies
- Department of Philosophy

- Department of Physics and Astronomy
 - Department of Political Science
 - Department of Psychological and Brain Science
 - Department of Sociology
 - Information Security Institute
 - Institute for Policy Studies
 - The Writing Seminars
- (ii) A department or program of the Homewood Divisions without a departmental representative may petition the GRO for the creation of such a position to be approved by majority vote of the General Council.
- (iii) Each department may, at their discretion, designate up to one Alternate to sit in the place of the Representative at General Council meetings.
- (iv) The Executive Board of the GRO shall inform all member departments of the first GRO General Council meeting of the academic year and invite all those departments to send Representatives to this and all subsequent meetings.
- (v) Representatives are responsible to and recallable by the graduate students of their departments and must be re-designated each year.
- (b) GRO Executive Board members.

Article 5. Competencies of the General Council.

Section 5.1. Duties of Departmental Representatives.

- (a) Represent the interests of their departments through attendance of and participation in General Council meetings.
- (b) Disseminate information both to and from their departments.
- (c) Deliver *The Grad News* to the mailboxes of their departments' members.
- (d) Serve as needed on committees.
- (e) Elect the members of the Executive Board.
- (f) Familiarize themselves with GRO policies and procedures.

Section 5.2. Duties of Executive Board Members.

- (a) Represent the interests of their elected position through attendance of General Council meetings.
- (b) Report on Executive Board business to the rest of the General Council.

Section 5.3. Group Recognition.

- (a) The GRO shall maintain a current list of recognized graduate student groups.
- (b) Recognition by the GRO allows a group:
- (i) To reserve rooms on campus.

- (ii) To borrow University vans.
- (iii) To send e-mail communications to all graduate students through the GRO e-mail list server.
- (iv) To advertise in *The Grad News*.
- (c) Recognition by the GRO is not required for nor a guarantee of event funding.
- (d) In recognizing a group, the GRO does not endorse any of the group's positions, policies, or actions.
- (e) The GRO General Council shall determine whether to recognize groups by majority vote.
- (f) The criteria for being recognized as a group are as follows:
 - (i) The group must provide a benefit or service to graduate students of the Homewood Divisions.
 - (ii) The group must be registered with and abide by all the regulations and policies of Johns Hopkins University.
 - (iii) The head of the group must be a graduate student of the Homewood Divisions.
 - (iv) Every year, the group must submit to the GRO updated contact information for the group's officers.
- (g) The GRO reserves the right to terminate its recognition of a group at any time.

Section 5.4. Funding Requests.

The General Council shall vote on all funding requests for more than \$250 presented to the GRO. (See Article 12.)

Section 5.5. Policy Approval.

At the first General Council meeting of each academic year, the General Council shall review and approve its policies for group recognition, funding requests, and grant applications.

Article 6. Procedures for General Council Meetings.

Unless otherwise indicated below, *Robert's Rules of Order* may be consulted as a guide for all GRO General Council meetings.

Section 6.1. Agendas.

- (a) Any GRO member — that is, any graduate student — is permitted to submit items to the Chair for inclusion in the agenda of the next General Council meeting. Anyone in the wider Hopkins or Baltimore community may submit items to be included at the discretion of the Chair.
- (b) The first item of every General Council agenda shall be the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- (c) The second item of every General Council agenda shall be a brief report from the Executive Board, to be given by the Chair or Co-Chair. This report will include any and all expenditures made by the Executive Board since the last General Council meeting.
- (d) The third and fourth items of every General Council agenda shall be unfinished and new business, respectively.

- (e) The order of any agenda may be changed by motion, second, and two-thirds approval.

Section 6.2. Quorum.

For all General Council meetings a valid quorum requires the presence of one more than half the complete membership of the General Council.

Section 6.3. General Voting Rules.

- (a) A motion is considered carried if it garners over one half of the votes of those present (except as noted in Section 6.4 below).
- (b) With the exception of impeachments and elections, voting is by show of hands.

Section 6.4. Special Voting Rules.

Elections, making amendments to this constitution, or removing an Executive Board member from office all require special voting rules as described in sections 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, and 14.2 below.

Section 6.5. Motions.

- (a) Motions are not permitted until the chair of the meeting opens the floor to motions, after an appropriate period of discussion.
- (b) The chair of the meeting may not make motions.
- (c) Any other General Council member, Alternate, or Assistant may make a motion or second a motion once the floor is open.
- (d) Each motion must be seconded before being brought to discussion or a vote.
- (e) All motions must be considered independently in the order in which they are seconded.

Part III. The Executive Board.

Article 7. Purpose and Composition of the Executive Board.

Section 7.1. Purpose.

The Executive Board of the GRO shall be responsible for implementing all policy decisions of the General Council and for maintaining relations with the University administration on behalf of the GRO.

Section 7.2. Composition.

- (a) The GRO Executive Board shall consist of officers elected by the Departmental Representatives.
- (b) For the purposes of institutional memory, the Chair and Co-Chair of the previous year may participate on the Executive Board as Honorary Members, but they are not permitted to vote in Executive Board or General Council meetings unless they have been elected to fill another position.
- (c) At the discretion of the General Council, new Executive Board positions may be created as needed.

- (d) The General Council may approve the removal of any Executive Board position except the Chair, Co-Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer, but this change cannot take effect until the next academic year.
- (e) The number of Executive Board positions is at no point in time to exceed one half the number of represented departments as listed in Section 4.2.a.i.
- (f) At the discretion of the General Council, up to one additional person may be elected as a paid Assistant for each Executive Board position. This Assistant is not permitted a vote in General Council or Executive Board meetings; however, he or she may vote as an Alternate for the positions for which he or she is the Assistant.
- (g) The General Council may vote to change the pay rate for Executive Board positions. Any decision to increase or decrease the pay rate of Executive Board positions will not take effect until the following academic year.

Section 7.3. Elections.

- (a) Elections for Executive Board members shall be held at the end of each academic year for the following academic year. Elections shall be announced at least one month in advance of their occurrence.
- (b) One month prior to the election, the General Council shall select an Election Official.
 - (i) The Election Official shall not run for any elected office for the election for which he or she serves.
 - (ii) The Election Official shall:
 - a) Solicit and receive nominations from graduate student of the Homewood Divisions and submit them at the election.
 - b) Conduct the elections for each Executive Board position.
 - c) Tabulate and certify the results of each elected position and post the results by the following day.
- (c) Nominations may also be accepted from the floor, but all candidates must accept their nominations in person or by written permission.
- (d) All recognized Departmental Representatives present, or their Alternates, shall be eligible to vote, providing they or their Alternates have attended at least half of the meetings of the General Council.
- (e) Voting shall be by secret ballot and conducted by the Election Official.
 - (i) Those candidates receiving a majority of votes shall be considered elected. No absentee ballots shall be accepted.
 - (ii) In the event that there are more than two candidates running for the same position, the Election Official shall immediately count the votes. If no one candidate receives a majority of votes during the first polling, a run-off election between the two candidates having the most votes in the first polling shall immediately follow; the candidate receiving the majority shall be considered elected.

- (iii) Each position must be voted on in succession.
- (f) If there are no candidates for an Executive Board position at the election at the end of the academic year, when one is found during the following year, he or she shall be elected by the method described in Section 7.4 below.

Section 7.4. Special Elections.

- (a) If an Executive Board member should resign or an office otherwise become vacant before the annual term has expired, the Departmental Representatives shall elect a replacement for the remainder of that term.
- (b) The Executive Board shall solicit nominations from graduate students of the Homewood Divisions and submit them at the first General Council meeting after an office has become vacant.
- (c) Nominations may also be accepted from the floor of a General Council meeting, but all candidates must accept their nominations in person or by written permission.
- (d) All recognized Departmental Representatives present shall be eligible to vote.
- (e) Voting shall be by secret ballot and conducted by the acting Secretary.
 - (i) The nominee receiving a majority of votes shall be considered elected. No absentee ballots shall be accepted.
 - (ii) In the event that there are more than two candidates running for the same position, the acting Secretary shall immediately count the votes. If no candidate receives a majority of votes during the first polling, a run-off election between the two candidates having the most votes in the first polling shall immediately follow; the candidate receiving the majority shall be considered elected.
- (f) The Executive Council shall tabulate and certify the results of each elected position and announce the results at the next General Council meeting.

Section 7.5. Impeachments.

- (a) To begin impeachment proceedings against an Executive Board member, a majority of all Departmental Representatives must approve the motion.
- (b) If the Departmental Representatives vote to impeach any Executive Board member, the General Council shall make the petition public and put the issue to vote at the next General Council meeting. At this impeachment proceeding, the Executive Board member in question may not serve as chair.
- (c) Voting shall be by secret ballot and conducted by the Secretary. If the Secretary is the member in question, the General Council will designate another member to conduct the vote.
- (d) Members of the Executive Board may not vote in an impeachment.
- (e) No absentee votes will be accepted.
- (f) If greater than two-thirds of all Departmental Representatives agree to remove the Executive Board member in question from office, he or she shall immediately cease to be a member of the Executive Board.

- (g) Upon completion of the vote, the General Council will notify all Departmental Representatives, all Executive Board members, and the Dean of the Student Affairs of the results.

Article 8. Executive Board Officers.

The following and all additional Executive Board Officers shall hold paid positions at a pay rate to be determined by the General Council.

Section 8.1. Chair and Co-Chair.

The Chair and Co-Chair of the GRO in cooperation shall:

- (a) Chair all General Council and Executive Board meetings of the GRO.
- (b) Serve as the primary liaisons between the GRO and University administration and all other University and non-University bodies or representatives.
- (c) Appoint representatives to those University committees and councils on which the GRO is entitled to a seat. These appointments must be confirmed by vote in the General Council no later than the end of the second General Council meeting following the appointment. The Chair and Co-Chair must keep abreast of all University committees and councils on which the GRO is entitled to a seat and assure that the seat is filled and that the GRO member filling that seat reports to the Executive Board.
- (d) Be responsible for seeing that the duties of all committees are carried out.
- (e) Prepare the second item of the agenda for General Council meetings. This shall be titled "The Executive Board Report," as described in Section 6.1b above.
- (f) Be responsible for sending out the agenda of each General Council meeting at least three days prior to the meeting.
- (g) Maintain GRO documentation, such as this constitution and varying policy documents.
- (h) Shall prepare the annual budget with the assistance of the Treasure, as laid out in Article 11.
- (i) Be paid for no more than 500 hours per academic year.

Section 8.2. Secretary.

The Secretary of the GRO shall:

- (a) Be responsible for maintaining the records of GRO affairs, including but not limited to the minutes of all GRO meetings (General Council meetings, Executive Board meetings, and meetings between GRO members and University administrators).
- (b) Organize and facilitate the logistics of GRO meetings.
- (c) Take attendance at all GRO meetings.
- (d) Count the votes at all GRO meetings, except for regular elections as described in section 7.3 above.
- (e) Distribute announcements and information to members of the GRO, including General Council meeting minutes.
- (f) Maintain and distribute to the General Council lists of all current Program or Department Representatives and Alternates as well as all committee chairs and members.

- (g) Be paid for no more than 100 hours per academic year.

Section 8.3. Treasurer.

The Treasurer of the GRO shall:

- (a) Prepare and maintain any necessary budgets and accounts.
- (b) Submit to the Chair a listing of all Executive Board expenditures to be included in the Executive Board Report.
- (c) Facilitate all reimbursements and transfers of GRO funds to all individuals and groups per General Council or Executive Board approval.
- (d) Shall assist in the preparation of the annual budget with Chair and Co-Chair, as laid out in Article 11.
- (e) Be paid for no more than 150 hours per academic year.

Article 9. Competencies of the Executive Board.

Section 9.1. Individual Responsibilities.

- (a) All members of the GRO Executive Board are held to represent the general interest of the entire graduate student body. They are to refrain from representing the interests of the respective departments from which they come.
- (b) All Executive Board members shall be required to write at least one article for *The Grad News* per academic year, which shall include a description of the goals and accomplishments of that member in the given role.
- (c) Executive Board members shall regularly submit relevant information on their accomplishments in their role to be presented as part of the Executive Board Report given at each General Council meeting.

Section 9.2. Collective Responsibilities.

- (a) The Executive Board shall meet on a regular basis throughout the year.
- (b) It shall ensure the smooth operation of GRO administration and all GRO activities.
- (c) It shall maintain regular office hours as needed.
- (d) The Executive Board has the right to approve expenditures of \$250 or less without the approval of the GRO General Council, but all expenditures of any amount must be reported to the General Council in the next Executive Board Report.
- (e) In the event that the Executive Board is called upon to make a decision but, for whatever reason, a decision cannot be reached, that decision shall fall to the General Council.
- (f) At its discretion, the GRO Executive Board may appoint temporary positions or committees — such as *GRO Guide* editors, GRO Symposium Organizer, sports league coordinator, or travel grant committee — and determine their scope, purpose, and appropriate compensation levels.
- (i) Such appointed positions and committees are open to any graduate student in the Homewood Divisions.

- (ii) All positions and committees shall report to the Executive Board.

Article 10. Procedures for Executive Board Meetings.

- (a) The preparation of agendas for Executive Board meetings shall be at the discretion of the Chair.
- (b) For all Executive Board meetings, a valid quorum requires the presence of one more than half the complete membership of the Executive Board.
- (c) A vote is considered carried if it garners a majority of votes.

Part IV. Funds.

Article 11. Annual Budgets.

- (a) The annual budget shall begin on July 1st of each year and end on June 30th.
- (b) The Chair and Co-Chair of the GRO, with the assistance of the Treasurer, shall propose the annual budget to the University.
- (c) Members of the General Council are welcome to submit suggestions for the budget.
- (d) Upon approval by the University, the annual budget shall be disseminated to the General Council at the first General Council meeting.

Article 12. Funding Requests.

- (a) The GRO supports and encourages various types of graduate student events and programs by providing funds. To be eligible for funding from the GRO, the event must:
 - (i) Be cross-departmental.
 - (ii) Be open to all graduate students.
- (b) The GRO General Council shall determine whether to fund events over \$250.
- (c) The Executive Board may fund requests of \$250 or less; in such cases the Executive Board must include in the Executive Board Report notification of this funding.
- (d) At the first meeting of each academic year, the General Council shall decide on the maximum amounts of funding to be given to various groups.
- (e) By a two-thirds vote, the General Council may make exceptions to its funding approval policy.

Article 13. Grants.

- (a) Grant committees appointed by the Executive Board, with representatives from multiple academic disciplines, shall determine which applicants receive funds in accordance with current policies regarding the particular grant in question.
- (b) To be eligible to receive grant money, the applicant must belong to a department whose Departmental Representative or Alternate has attended at least half of the General Council meetings of the previous semester.

Part V. Amendments and Ratification.

Article 14. Amendments.

Section 14.1. Proposal.

- (a) Any General Council member can propose an amendment to the Constitution.
- (b) The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the General Council for ratification.

Section 14.2. Ratification.

If a proposed amendment receives a two-thirds majority of votes of the full General Council, it is considered ratified and shall take effect immediately.

Article 15. Ratification.

This constitution shall be considered in force when ratified by a two-thirds majority of votes of the full General Council.

Ratified on Monday, the twenty-eighth of September, two thousand nine.