
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BYLAWS

Revised April 11th, 2008

ARTICLE I. SELECTION OF GSAC MEMBERS

Section A Qualifications, Selection, and Term of Members

- Clause 1 Members must be graduate students enrolled and in good standing at a Western Michigan University campus.
- Clause 2 Members may be self-selected volunteers and/or individuals nominated by their respective colleges or departments. Each department may select up to five (5) graduate students to serve on the GSAC. Nominations will be solicited from all colleges and departments by the GSAC at the end of the Summer semester or the beginning of the Fall semester of each academic year and on an as needed basis through the year in the event of departmental vacancies.
- Clause 4 Members must serve a term of twelve (12) months in duration, beginning September 1st and ending the following August 31st. Terms of members appointed after September 1st shall expire on August 31st.
- Clause 5 No individual will be denied membership due to race, sex, religion, color, height, weight, age, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

Section B Alternate Members

- Clause 1 Alternate members must be graduate students enrolled and in good standing at a Western Michigan University campus.
- Clause 2 Alternate members may be appointed by their respective colleges or departments, the graduate students of their respective colleges or departments, or any GSAC member. Colleges and departments may designate as many alternate members as they see fit.

- Clause 3 Alternate members must serve a term of twelve (12) months in duration, beginning September 1st and ending the following August 31st. Terms of alternate members appointed after September 1st shall expire on August 31st.
- Clause 4 Alternate members will assume all duties and responsibilities of the member for whom they are serving in the event of the member's absence.
- Clause 5 Alternate members succeed the member for whom they are serving in the event of the member's inability to serve in office for the remainder of the term.
- Clause 6 Alternate members may not cast votes at GSAC meetings unless acting on behalf of their sitting members. Alternate members are permitted to serve as voting members when serving on University committees.

ARTICLE II. DUTIES, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

- Section A Members shall regularly attend all meetings of the GSAC and the meetings of any committees or councils to which he or she has been appointed. Members must attend at least two (2) regular meetings of the GSAC during the Fall and Spring semesters in order to remain a member. In the event that a member shall be absent from any of the aforementioned meetings, he or she is responsible for arranging alternate representation.
- Section B Members shall solicit input from their constituents regarding GSAC business and activities and bring the concerns, needs, and wishes of their constituents to the GSAC.
- Section C Members shall disseminate information regarding GSAC business, university-wide events of pertinence to graduate students, and issues that affect graduate students to the students of their departments or programs.
- Section D Members shall ensure that they are familiar with the GSAC Constitution, the GSAC Bylaws, and the GSAC procedures.
- Section E Members shall regularly check and respond to electronic mail (e-mail) pertaining to GSAC business and news.
- Section F Members shall be actively involved on any Councils or Committees to which they are appointed.

ARTICLE III. TERMINATION OF MEMBERS

- Section A If a member is terminated under Article VII of these Bylaws, he or she must immediately relinquish his or her position on any university committees or councils of which he or she is a member and the alternate member for that department shall become replace him or her on these aforementioned committees and councils.
- Section B If the alternate member is unable to replace the terminated member in his or her full duties to the GSAC, the department which the terminated member represented may select a replacement member.
- Section C The replacement member shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the terminated member, with the exception of committee chairpersonships for the remainder of his or her term. Committee chairpersonships shall be determined according to the methods outlined in Article VII of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE IV. SELECTION OF OFFICERS

- Section A Selection of the GSAC Chairperson
- Clause 1 The Selection Committee for the GSAC Chairperson shall consist of the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate College and/or designee, the current GSAC Chairperson, the current GSAC Vice-Chairperson, and at least three (3) members of the GSAC.
- Clause 2 The GSAC Vice-Chairperson will coordinate the search for the Chairperson position. The position will be advertised to all graduate students, after which applications will be obtained and reviewed by the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will then choose at least two (2), but not more than six (6) candidates with whom to conduct interviews. After the interviews have been conducted, the Selection Committee will review the candidates and make a recommendation to the GSAC.
- Clause 3 The GSAC must approve all candidates prior to their taking office through a simple majority vote conducted at a regular meeting of the GSAC.
- Section B Selection of the GSAC Vice-Chairperson
- Clause 1 The Selection Committee for the GSAC Vice-Chairperson shall consist of the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate College and/or designee, the current GSAC Vice-Chairperson, the current GSAC Chairperson, and at least three (3) members of the GSAC.

Clause 2 The GSAC Chairperson will coordinate the search for the Vice-Chairperson position. The position will be advertised to all graduate students, after which applications will be obtained and reviewed by the Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will then choose at least (2), but not more than six (6) candidates with whom to conduct interviews. After the interviews have been conducted, the Selection Committee will review the candidates and make a recommendation to the GSAC.

Clause 3 The GSAC must approve all candidates prior to their taking office through a simple majority vote conducted at a regular meeting of the GSAC.

Section C Selection of the GSAC Treasurer

Clause 1 The GSAC Treasurer shall be selected on a volunteer basis. In the event that more than one (1) individual volunteers for the position, a majority vote will be conducted at the following GSAC meeting to select the individual to fill the position.

ARTICLE V. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

Section A General Duties of the Officers

Clause 1 The officers of the GSAC shall assess the needs and desires of the graduate student community, set goals for the GSAC based upon these needs and desires, and implement specific actions based upon these goals.

Clause 2 The officers of the GSAC shall communicate these aforementioned goals and actions to the graduate student community, University administrators, faculty, and the community at large and make reports to these groups and individuals about progress made toward achieving these goals.

Clause 3 The officers of the GSAC shall provide information, training, materials, and introductions to key individuals to their successors in order to ensure continuity.

Section B Duties of the Chairperson

- Clause 1 The Chairperson shall act as the official spokesperson for the GSAC and maintain final authority on any issues relevant to the GSAC, until these issues can be brought to the attention of the GSAC. If immediate action on an issue is necessary, the Chairperson shall solicit assistance from the Vice-Chairperson and other GSAC members.
- Clause 2 The Chairperson shall be responsible for calling meetings of the GSAC, establishing the agenda for said meetings, and presiding over the meetings of the GSAC. The Chairperson shall vote during such meetings only in the event of a tie.
- Clause 3 The Chairperson shall serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of all committees of the GSAC.
- Clause 4 The Chairperson shall ensure that all University Councils and Committees have graduate student representation. In the event that adequate representation cannot be obtained, the Chairperson shall serve on these Councils and Committees until a replacement representative can be identified.
- Clause 5 The Chairperson shall ensure that the GSAC maintains a relationship and membership with the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students.
- Clause 6 The Chairperson shall ensure that action is taken on all resolutions of the GSAC.
- Clause 7 The Chairperson shall co-manage the GSAC budget, with the assistance of the Vice-Chairperson of the GSAC.
- Clause 8 The Chairperson of the GSAC shall organize events and activities sponsored by the GSAC for the graduate student community.
- Clause 9 The Chairperson shall serve as a liaison for graduate students through the establishment of positive, collaborative relationships with the University administration, the Board of Trustees, graduate departments, student organizations, and members of the graduate student community.

Section C Duties of the Vice-Chairperson

- Clause 1 The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson with his or her aforementioned duties.

- Clause 2 The Vice-Chairperson shall discharge the duties of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence and assume the duties of the Chairperson in the event that the Chairperson vacates office.
- Clause 3 The Vice-Chairperson shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the GSAC website.
- Clause 4 The Vice-Chairperson shall serve as the Chairperson on the Graduate Financial Allocation Committee (GFAC) and on the Web Committee.
- Clause 5 The Vice-Chairperson will serve on at least one (1) University Council.
- Clause 6 The Vice-Chairperson shall serve as the official parliamentarian of the GSAC when Robert's Rules of Order are invoked.
- Clause 7 The Vice-Chairperson shall act as the Secretary of the GSAC meetings.

Section D Duties of the Treasurer

- Clause 1 The Treasurer shall adhere to and work with the GSAC yearly budget.
- Clause 2 The Treasurer shall maintain the financial files of the GSAC.
- Clause 3 The Treasurer shall reconcile the financial file of the GSAC on a monthly basis.
- Clause 4 The Treasurer shall create a detailed monthly report on the spending of the GSAC.

ARTICLE VI. RECALL AND TERMINATION OF MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

- Section A A member officer may be recalled and terminated if he or she has failed to fulfill the duties specified in these Bylaws, has a conflict of interest due to outside employment or an academic commitment, has failed to maintain registered graduate student status, or has violated the standards outlined in the University Policies and Regulations.

- Section B Any member may initiate recall procedures. The procedures are as follows:
- Clause 1 The members of the GFAC shall be presented with a petition citing the reasons for the initiation of the recall procedures and signatures representing one-fourth (1/4) of the members of the GSAC.
 - Clause 2 The individual concerned and the GSAC as a whole shall be notified of the grievances being filed. The individual against whom the grievance has been filed shall have the opportunity to defend him or herself in a written notification provided to all members of the GSAC.
 - Clause 3 Members of the GSAC shall be provided with a notification of a special meeting of the GSAC, to occur no less than ten (10) days after notification of the meeting is provided.
 - Clause 4 A recall election shall be conducted at the aforementioned special meeting of the GSAC. The individual in question shall be given an opportunity to verbally defend him or herself at this meeting.
 - Clause 5 If a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the GSAC present support the recall of the member or officer in question, the office shall then be declared vacant.

Section B In the event that a member or officer resigns or is removed, they shall be excluded from all duties of membership. In the event that an office is declared vacant, the remaining members of the GFAC may appoint an interim replacement until the next general meeting, at which time a replacement will be elected by a simple majority vote to serve any unfinished remainder of that officer's term.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES OF THE GSAC

- Section A General Conduct of Committees of the GSAC
- Clause 1 The committees of the GSAC shall have the right to submit proposals or resolutions to the GSAC for action, but at no time shall a committee act on behalf of the GSAC without the expressed approval of the GSAC. Approval of the GSAC shall be given by a simple majority vote.
 - Clause 2 Proxies shall not be allowed to serve or be present at any GSAC standing or ad hoc committee meetings.
 - Clause 3 All standing and ad hoc committees of the GSAC shall operate in accordance with the procedures set forth in Robert's Rules of Order.

Section B Graduate Financial Allocation Committee (GFAC)

- Clause 1 The purpose of the GFAC shall be to make recommendations regarding the equitable distribution of the portion of the Graduate Student Assessment Fee (GSAF) allocated to the GSAC. The GFAC shall make recommendations about the distribution of these funds to graduate and undergraduate student organizations and programs that enrich the academic, cultural, social, and professional experiences of the graduate student community.
- Clause 2 In the event of an emergency or the resignation or termination of an officer, the GFAC will act as an executive committee and assume the authority to make any necessary decisions in the absence of the Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson.
- Clause 3 The membership of the GFAC shall be composed of the GSAC Chairperson, the GSAC Vice-Chairperson, the GSAC Treasurer, and five (5) GSAC members appointed by the GSAC Chairperson. Individuals shall become a member of the GFAC on a volunteer basis. Members of the GFAC shall be terminated from membership in the event that they fail to attend at least one (1) meeting of the GFAC during each semester.
- Clause 4 The meetings of the GFAC shall occur once a month, except in instances in which there are no proposals submitted during a given month. Extraordinary meetings of the GFAC may be called at the discretion of the GFAC Chairperson.

Section C Public Relations Committee (PRC)

- Clause 1 The purposes of the PRC shall be to maintain a diverse, active, and representational membership within the GSAC, to promote all programs and events established by the GSAC and/or the GFAC that enrich the academic, cultural, social, and professional experiences of the graduate student community, and to raise awareness of the GSAC among the University community.
- Clause 2 The membership of the PRC shall be composed of at least three (3) members of the GSAC and the GSAC Chairperson. The Chairperson of the PRC shall be appointed by the GSAC Chairperson from the PRC membership. The GSAC must approve the Chairperson's appointment by majority vote. Individuals shall become a member of the PRC on a volunteer basis.

Clause 3 The meetings of the PRC shall occur once a month or more frequently at the discretion of the GSAC Chairperson or the PRC Chairperson.

Section D Web Site Committee (WSC)

Clause 1 The purpose of the WSC shall be to maintain the webpage of the GSAC through posting information regularly on the GSAC website and through overseeing any employee who might be retained to maintain the site.

Clause 2 The membership of the WSC shall be at least three (3) members of the GSAC and the GSAC Vice-Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall be the Chairperson of the WSC. Individuals shall become a member of the WSC on a volunteer basis.

Clause 3 The meetings of the WSC shall occur once a month or more frequently at the discretion of the GSAC Vice-Chairperson.

Section E Research and Publication Committee (RPC)

Clause 1 The purpose of the RPC shall be to coordinate the publication of the Hilltop Review and to coordinate with the Research Policies Council and other relevant administrative bodies to plan the Annual Research and Creative Activities Day.

Clause 2 The membership of the RPC shall be at least four (4) members of the GSAC. The Chairperson of the RPC shall be appointed by the GSAC Chairperson from the RPC membership. Individuals shall become a member of the RPC on a volunteer basis.

Clause 3 The meetings of the RPC shall occur once a month or more frequently at the discretion of the RPC Chairperson.

Section G Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

Clause 1 Standing subcommittees shall be ongoing committees designed to perform specific functions identified by the GSAC. These specific functions shall be designated in writing by the Chairperson of the GSAC.

Clause 2 The creation and dissolution of additional standing subcommittees other than those set forth in these Bylaws shall require approval at a meeting of the GSAC by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present, in person or by proxy.

Clause 3 Ad hoc committees shall be temporary committees designed to address special problems identified by the GSAC. The specific problem the ad hoc committee is charged with addressing shall be specified in writing by the Chairperson of the GSAC.

Clause 4 The creation and dissolution of ad hoc committees shall require approval at a meeting of the GSAC by a simple majority vote of those members present, in person or by proxy. It is intended that all ad hoc committees be dissolved upon the completion of their charge.

Section H University Committees

Clause 1 The GSAC shall appoint, from among its membership, representatives to all relevant University Committees and all other organizations requiring graduate student representation. Appointments shall be made on a volunteer basis. In the event that more members desire a position on a University Committee than are available, a majority vote shall occur at a meeting of the GSAC in which individuals are selected to fill the positions.

Clause 2 Representatives to committees external to the GSAC shall be responsible for reporting to the GSAC about the activities and decisions of those committees.

Clause 3 Members of the GSAC can be removed from their role as members on University Committees in the event that they fail to regularly attend meetings of the University Committees or in the event that they fail to consistently report on the activities of said committees during the meetings of the GSAC.

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS AND CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Section A Regular Meetings

Clause 1 It is intended that a regular meeting of the GSAC shall be held each month of the academic year, with no fewer than three (3) meetings held during each of the Fall and Spring semesters and one (1) meeting held during the each of the Summer I and Summer II semesters.

Clause 2 The Chairperson shall send written notice to all members of the time and place of each regular meeting of the GSAC at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting and display announcement of the meeting through other media as deemed appropriate.

Section B Special Meetings

- Clause 1 The Chairperson shall call special meetings of the GSAC when requested by written petition from one-fifth (1/5) of all members of the GSAC, when requested by the members of the GFAC, or as he or she deems necessary.
- Clause 2 The Chairperson shall designate the time and place of any special meeting and shall notify all members of the GSAC at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the time, place, and reason for the special meeting.

Section C Conduct of Meetings

- Clause 1 Meetings of the GSAC shall be chaired by the GSAC Chairperson, the GSAC Vice-Chairperson, or their designee.
- Clause 2 Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

Section D Quorum

- Clause 1 No business shall be voted upon unless the Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson and at least five (5) voting members are present, in person or by proxy.
- Clause 2 Ex Officio members shall be included in the count for total current membership.
- Clause 3 Unfilled membership positions will not be counted in the determination of current membership and quorum.
- Clause 4 A simple majority is defined as the first whole number strictly greater than 50% of those voting members present, in person or by proxy.

Section E Voting

- Clause 1 Each member of the GSAC shall have one (1) vote, with each graduate program having a maximum of five (5) voting members of the GSAC.
- Clause 2 Regular motions presented at a meeting of the GSAC shall require for passage an affirmative vote by a simple majority of those voting members present, in person or by proxy.

- Section F Proxies
- Clause 1 Members of the GSAC who cannot attend all or part of a meeting of the GSAC in person and are unable to send an alternate member are permitted to vote by proxy.
- Clause 2 Proxies shall indicate their presence at a meeting of the GSAC through indicating their proxy status on the sign-in sheet circulated at the beginning of the meeting.
- Clause 3 In order for a proxy to count toward a vote at a meeting of the GSAC, the proxy must indicate their proxy status to the Chairperson no later than the beginning of the meeting at which the vote is to take place.

- Section G Visitors
- Clause 1 Meetings of the GSAC and all other internal committees are open to all graduate students.
- Clause 2 Graduate students or other interested persons wishing to be placed on the agenda at a meeting of the GSAC must briefly specify the nature of the agenda item that they wish to discuss to the Chairperson in writing at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting of the GSAC. In the event that this is not possible, the Chairperson, at his or her discretion, may opt to allow this individual to speak during the Announcements for the Good of the Order portion of the meeting of the GSAC.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

- Section A Any officer or member may propose an amendment to these bylaws.
- Section B The proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Chairperson at least two (2) weeks before it can be considered.
- Section C The Chairperson shall distribute copies of the proposed amendment to the GSAC within one (1) week of its receipt.
- Section D Any amendment to these Bylaws shall require approval at a meeting of the GSAC by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of all voting members present, in person or by proxy.

Section E Any amendment to these Bylaws which receives approval shall become effective immediately following the adjournment of the meeting at which it is adopted, unless the motion to amend specifies a time frame after which the amendment shall take effect.

ARTICLE X. FORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

Section A The GSAC acknowledges the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate College as an independent partner in concern for the welfare of graduate students and graduate education at Western Michigan University.

Section B The Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate College or a designee from the Office of the Graduate College is encouraged to attend meetings of the GSAC in order to maintain a collaborative working relationship with the GSAC and in order to act as an advisor upon the request of the GSAC.

Section C The officers of the GSAC are encouraged to maintain close cordial relationships with the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate College in order to help further the causes championed by the GSAC on behalf of the graduate student body.