CONSTITUTION

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ARTICLE I: NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

The name of the organization shall be the Western Michigan University Graduate Student Association, hereafter referred to as the GSA.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

Section A  The GSA shall serve as the representative organization for graduate students at Western Michigan University and shall strive to promote excellence in graduate education and improve all aspects of graduate student life at Western Michigan University.

Section B  The GSA Executive Board and the GSA Senate shall act as a liaison between the graduate student body and the administrative bodies of Western Michigan University and through this role, facilitate policy reform pertaining to the needs of graduate students.

Section C  The GSA Executive Board and Graduate Financial Allocation Committee (GFAC) shall allocate financial resources as approved by the GSA student body for program, services, and events that enrich the academic, professional, cultural, and social experiences of the graduate student community.

Section D  The GSA shall facilitate communication between graduate students and the administration, faculty, undergraduate students, and University community as a whole.

Section E  The GSA shall represent Western Michigan University in the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students.

Section F  Graduate Student Association will comply with all Student Activities and Leadership Programs (SALP) and University policies, procedures, and practices and all local, state, and federal laws.

ARTICLE III: CONSTITUENCY

The GSA shall represent all graduate students at Western Michigan University, defined as all individuals enrolled in full-time or part-time graduate studies at any Western Michigan University campus.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Section A  The members of the GSA shall consist of students seeking a graduate degree at Western Michigan University enrolled full-time or part-time.

Clause 1  No student shall be denied membership in the GSA on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, Veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, height, weight, marital status or protected disability.

ARTICLE V: THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Section A  Officers

Clause 1  The officers of the GSA shall be the President, the Vice-President, Parliamentarian, Director of Legislative Affairs, Director and Editor of The Hilltop Review, Director of Public Relations, Director of Events and planning, Director of Professional Development,
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Director of Outreach and Director of Administration.

Clause 2  The President, Vice-President, and the Director and Editor of the Hilltop Review of the GSA shall be elected biannually and as such, shall serve terms of two (2) years in duration. Whereas the rest of the executive board officials shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Clause 3  The tenure of the President and Vice-president shall encompass the periods from Summer I to the completion of the spring semester for two consecutive years. Whereas, the tenure of all other Executive Board members shall encompass the periods from fall to the completion of the spring semester for the time they have been elected.

Clause 4  During their term in office, the officers of the GSA must be full-time, registered graduate students at least during the Fall and Spring semesters.

Clause 5  The officers of the GSA shall perform such duties as are specified in Article IV of the Bylaws.

Clause 6  The officers of the GSA may be recalled according to the provisions set forth in Article V of the Bylaws.

Section B  Committees of the GSA

Clause 1  The standing sub-committees of the GSA shall include the Graduate Financial Allocation Committee (GFAC), Event Committee (EC), The Hilltop Review Editorial Board (THREB), and the Constitutional Committee whose duties and purposes are described in Article IX of the Bylaws. Additional Ad-Hoc may be included for the necessary sustainability of the GSA.

Clause 2  The creation and elimination of additional GSA standing subcommittees shall require approval at a GSA meeting by a simple majority vote of the GSA senate as set forth in Article IX, Section F, Clause 2 of the Bylaws.

Clause 3  The Vice-President for Student Affairs (or designee) shall serve as advisor of the GSA.

ARTICLE VI: THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section A  Composition of the Senate

Clause 1  The GSA Senate shall be comprised of Graduate and Mixed Registered Student Organizations (RSOs), The GSA E-Board and The Graduate College Ambassadors who represent academic colleges and other areas. These three body of representatives are required to attend the monthly GSA meetings.

Clause 2  Members shall have voting rights through their RSO senators, and College representatives Senators, who are duly registered through GSA.

Clause 3  In the case of Mixed RSOs, at least one (1) graduate member shall represent the RSO at the monthly GSA meetings.
Section B  Powers and Duties of Senators and the Senate

Clause 1  Each Senator shall fulfill the following duties:

a) The GSA Senate shall have exclusive voting rights over all decisions except for those affecting students’ fees, in which the entire GSA body shall have voting rights.

b) Serve as a voting member at GSA general meetings.

c) Attend GSA general meetings subject to the Senate Bylaws.

d) Formulate, debate, and enact legislation proposed by Senators.

e) Override a Presidential veto with a two-thirds vote within ten working days of the veto.

f) Propose Amendments to the Constitution and bylaws to improve GSA service to WMU students.

g) Establish Ad-hoc Committees as necessary.

h) Submit a formal request for interpretation of any portion of the Constitution or Bylaws to The Executive Board.

i) Take action deemed necessary and proper to accomplish the goals and purpose of the GSA.

j) The current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised where they are neither inapplicable nor inconsistent with the Constitution or Bylaws, shall be the parliamentary procedure used by the Senate.

ARTICLE VII: SELECTION COMMITTEE

Section A  Election of Two (2) Year Appointments

Clause 1  The GSA will make an announcement for vacant position(s) by January 1st of each year and applications for the vacant positions shall be submitted by the end of the month.

Clause 2  The search committee formed under the direction of the President and Vice-president will review applications and carry out election procedures.

Clause 3  When the position of GSA President is vacant, the Vice-president shall coordinate all the electoral procedures and vice versa. In the case of the Director and Editor of the Hilltop Review, the President and the Vice-president shall coordinate the electoral procedures.

Clause 4  The search committee shall consist of the President and Vice-president, the Dean of the Graduate College or designee, the Vice-President for Student Affairs or designee, the Parliamentarian (without voting right), and at least (3) voting members of GSA.

Clause 5  The search committee will recommend at least one (1) candidate for the nomination of the vacant position(s) to the general body, when applicable.

Clause 6  Candidates will make a ten (10) minute presentation to the general body at the next GSA
meeting.

Clause 7  A closed-door voting procedure, directed by the President or Vice-president will be conducted by the general body, in which a simple majority vote of the GSA Senate shall be needed to pass.

Section B  Election of One (1) Year Appointments

Clause 1  The GSA will make an announcement for vacant position(s) by February 15th of each year and applications for vacant positions shall be submitted by the end of the month.

Clause 2  The selection committee, formed under the direction of the President and Vice-president will review applications and carry out election procedures

Clause 3  The selection committee shall consist of the Vice-President for Student Affairs or designee, the President and Vice-president and at least (3) voting members of GSA.

Clause 4  The selection committee shall recommend at least one (1) candidate for the nomination of the vacant position(s) to the general body, when applicable.

Clause 5  Candidates shall make a five (5) minute presentation to the general body during the next GSA meeting.

Clause 6  A closed-door voting procedure shall be conducted by the general body, directed by the President or Vice-president, in which a simple majority vote shall be needed to pass.

Section C  Appointment of the Parliamentarian

Clause 1  The Parliamentarian will be appointed by the President and the Vice-President, with the approval by the Executive Board.

Clause 2  The Parliamentarian shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Clause 3  The position of the Parliamentarian can be recalled and terminated at any time (see Bylaws; Article VIII).

Section D  Appointment of the Director of Legislative Affairs

Clause 1  The Director of Legislative Affairs will be appointed by the President and the Vice-President, with the approval of the Executive Board.

Clause 2  The Director of Legislative Affairs shall serve a term of one (1) year.

Clause 3  The position of the Director of Legislative Affairs can be recalled and terminated at any time (see Bylaws; Article V).

Section E  Re-election of Two (2) Year Appointments

Clause 1  The President, Vice-President, and Director and Editor of the Hilltop Review seeking re-election must go through the regular application process described by this Constitution and Bylaws
Clause 2  The President, Vice-President, and Hilltop Review Editor shall be eligible to serve two (2) consecutive terms, for a total of four (4) years of service.

ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS

Section A  Efforts should be made to ensure that a regular GSA meeting shall be held each month of the academic semester, but no less than three (3) meetings shall be held each semester during the Fall and Spring terms and no less than one (1) meeting shall be held each session during the Summer I and Summer II terms; These meetings shall be scheduled by the GSA President.

Section B  Emergency or special meetings may be called by the President, the Vice- President, the Dean of the Graduate College, or upon the written request of ten or more members. Members must be given at least forty-eight (48) hours’ notice regarding any emergency or special meetings that are called.

Section C  Meeting agendas shall be distributed to the members of the GSA via e-mail seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

Section D  The GSA Executive Board shall meet monthly during the academic year; Fall and Spring semesters.

ARTICLE IX: BUDGET OF THE GSA

Section A  Review of the Budget

Clause 1  The Executive Board shall review the finances of the GSA by March and present a financial report and a current budget for the academic year by the April meeting of the GSA.

Clause 2  The newly elected Executive Board shall review the current budget, propose a new budget for the new fiscal year (July 1), and shall present the newly proposed budget to the general body for a vote on the adoption or denial of the budget.

Clause 3  All funding request, including RSO events and special awards and/or events shall be sent to the GFAC.

Section B  University Compliance

Clause 1  The GSA shall not have an off-campus account.

Clause 2  The GSA shall follow and be subjected to all University policies, procedures, and practices regarding student organization accounts and finances.

ARTICLE X: BYLAWS

Bylaws that accompany this Constitution shall be adopted at a GSA meeting by a simple majority vote of the GSA Senate.
ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

Section A  Any amendments to this Constitution, GFAC Guidelines or the GSA Bylaws must follow the procedures described under the Article XI of the GSA Bylaws

ARTICLE XII: RATIFICATION

Section A  The Constitution shall be distributed to the membership of the GSA at the same time as the next monthly meeting agenda before it can be considered for adoption.

Section B  The ratification of this Constitution shall require approval at a regular meeting of the GSA by a simple majority vote of the GSA Senate.

Section C  This Constitution shall become effective upon ratification. All officers and members of the GSA shall remain in office after ratification, until their respective terms have been completed.