

**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**  
**University of Vermont**

**CONSTITUTION**



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**

## Article I – Name of Organization

**Section A** The name of this organization is the Graduate Student Senate of the University of Vermont.

## Article II - Purpose

**Section A** It is the purpose of the Graduate Student Senate to cultivate both the academic and nonacademic activities of the graduate student body and enhance all aspects of graduate school life at the University of Vermont. The Graduate Student Senate shall consider any matter that directly influences or affects the graduate student body as a valid item for its interest and deliberation. The Graduate Student Senate shall provide services that will directly address the needs of individual students.

**Section B** The Graduate Student Senate will perform the following duties: act as a liaison between the University of Vermont’s administration, faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students; encourage graduate students’ involvement in Graduate Student Senate activities and University functions; facilitate and encourage educational, professional, and research activities of graduate students; disseminate information regarding graduate activities to graduate students, administration, faculty, staff, and the campus community as a whole; represent graduate student interests to the University community, the State of Vermont, and national organizations.

## Article III - Responsibility

**Section A** The Graduate Student Senate shall make every effort to send representatives to the Board of Trustees, Graduate College Executive Committee, Faculty Senate, the Graduate Faculty, and to any other Board, Committee, or Organization where graduate student representation is necessary, useful, or requested.

**Section B** A member of the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Senate shall report the concerns and interests of graduate students to the University of Vermont through the Dean of the Graduate College, with recommendations for implementing changes necessary.

**Section C** The Graduate Student Senate shall be responsible for making recommendations to the Graduate College for its annual operating funds as it deems proper to benefit the graduate students and the University as a whole in accordance with the Graduate Student Senate Bylaws and this Constitution.

**Section D** The Graduate Student Senate shall pass resolutions and bills on subjects of interest to the graduate student body and deliver these resolutions through channels outlined in Article III, Section A.

**Section E** The Graduate Student Senate shall assist with outreach activities in coordination with the Graduate College, including Graduate Student Orientation, Research Day, Professional Training, Mini-Grant Reviews, and social events.

**Article IV - Membership**

**Section A** The members of the Graduate Student Senate shall consist of elected Senators from each graduate program at the University of Vermont. Specific nomination procedures and duties of the Senators are set forth in the Graduate Student Senate Bylaws.

**Section B** The Graduate Student Senate shall strive to have representation from all graduate programs offered by the University of Vermont and recognized by the Graduate College.

**Article V – Senate Meetings**

**Section A** There shall be at least four (4) Senate meetings per semester, excluding the summer break. The President may call a special meeting at any time.

**Section B** The four (4) regularly scheduled Senate meetings shall be ordinarily open to the public. The Senate may hold additional meetings that may, or may not, be open to the public. Only Senators may vote in Senate meetings. The Vice President shall vote in the case of a tie and serve as tiebreaker.

**Article VI - Administration**

**Section A** Executive Council

Clause 1 The standing members of the Executive Council shall consist of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Communications Director.

Clause 2 The standing members of the Executive Council shall be elected annually by the graduate student body as set forth in the Bylaws.

Clause 3 The standing members of the Executive Council may appoint up to two (2) Members-At-Large to the Executive Council as specified in the Bylaws.

Clause 4 During their tenure in office, the Executive Council members must be registered with the University of Vermont Graduate College as full time or part time graduate students for the Fall and Spring semesters.

Clause 5 The Executive Council shall be responsible for completing all duties as specified in the Bylaws.

**Section B** Committees of the Senate

Clause 1 The standing committees of the Senate shall be specified and defined in the Graduate Student Senate Bylaws.

Clause 2        The creation and elimination of ad hoc committees shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate. Ad hoc committees shall serve for twelve (12) months, after which the Senate must vote to continue the committee.

**Article VII - Bylaws**

**Section A**        Bylaws conforming to this Constitution shall be adopted at the ratification of this Constitution.

**Article VIII – Amendments to the Constitution**

**Section A**        Amendments to this Constitution or to the Bylaws may be proposed by any Senator or Executive Council member as a Resolution at a regularly scheduled Senate meeting. The Resolution shall be made available to the graduate student body for consideration for a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting. The Resolution shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate for approval.

**Article IX - Referendum**

**Section A**        The graduate student body has the right to request by petition a referendum vote on any action passed by the Graduate Student Senate. A referendum petition must be submitted in writing to the President within thirty (30) academic days after the passage of the action in question and must be signed by a minimum of five percent (5%) of the graduate student body. In the case of a referendum petition filed in response to an action taken during the final Senate meeting of the academic year, the referendum petition must be submitted a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the first Senate meeting of the new academic year.

**Section B**        The Senate may hold a referendum vote on an action for which a vote of the graduate student body is deemed necessary by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.

**Section C**        The referendum shall take place within thirty (30) academic days after the filing of the referendum petition or vote of the Senate. The Executive Council shall determine the means by which a referendum is announced and the votes collected and counted. The announcement of the referendum shall be widely posted and made available to the entire graduate student body. The passage of the referendum shall require a majority vote of all votes cast.

**Article X – Operating Funds**

**Section A**        The Executive Council shall present a proposed operating budget for the upcoming academic year to the Senate by the final Senate meeting of the preceding academic year. Changes to the proposed budget may be submitted to the Senate for approval at any point during the year.

**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**  
**University of Vermont**

**BYLAWS**



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
**GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE**

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## Article I - Senators

### **Section A Eligibility and Nominations**

- Clause 1 A program is defined as a graduate degree of study as recognized by the Graduate College of the University of Vermont. Only programs recognized by the Graduate College are eligible for representation in the Graduate Student Senate.
- Clause 2 Each program is permitted a maximum of three (3) Senators.
- Clause 3 Senators must be either full-time or part-time graduate students enrolled at the University of Vermont and maintain good academic standing while holding office.
- Clause 4 The nomination of Senators shall be the responsibility of the graduate students enrolled in or the coordinator of the program seeking representation. Graduate students seeking to represent their program may self nominate. Nominations must be written and submitted via email to the Graduate Student Senate.
- Clause 5 Annual nominations shall take place in April for the following academic year. The Vice President shall send a written "Call For Senators" notification to all graduate students a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the deadline for nominations. .
- Clause 6 If three (3) or fewer nominees are submitted, the nominees will be confirmed without holding elections.
- Clause 7 In the event that more than three (3) nominees are submitted, it shall be the responsibility of the graduate students enrolled in or the coordinator of the program to confirm the three (3) graduate students selected for representation.
- Clause 8 Vacancies remaining after annual nominations and confirmations or due to Senator resignations can be filled at any time during the academic year. Nominees may self nominate for these vacancies. Confirmation in this manner shall require a unanimous vote of the Executive Council.

### **Section B Senator Duties**

- Clause 1 Senators should strive to serve on at least one committee, group, or organization where graduate student representation is necessary, useful, or requested.
- Clause 2 Senators shall oversee the activities and actions of the Executive Council.
- Clause 3 Senators shall inform the graduate students and other interested parties of the program they represent of the actions and plans of the Graduate Student Senate.
- Clause 4 Senators shall hold office until the end of the academic year during which they were confirmed or appointed.

Clause 5 Senators must attend Senate meetings regularly. If a Senator misses two (2) consecutive meetings, their absence is no longer considered when determining quorum, and they may be removed from office as outlined in Article I, Section C.

Clause 6 Senators that are unable to attend a Senate meeting may designate a proxy member to attend with all rights and privileges delegated to the Senator. Proxy representation must be designated in writing to the Vice-President before the scheduled meeting.

Clause 7 Senators shall abide by all University of Vermont policies and by all local, state, and federal laws at Graduate Student Senate events.

**Section C Removal from Office**

Clause 1 Senators with two (2) consecutive absences from Senate meetings may be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the Executive Council.

Clause 2 For violations of Article I, Section B, Senators may be also be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate. Any Senator or Executive Council member may initiate impeachment proceedings by petitioning the President in writing with a description of the violation. Discussion of impeachment charges and voting by the Senate shall occur at the regularly scheduled Senate meeting immediately following the petition to the President.

**Article II - Executive Council Elections**

**Section A Eligibility**

Clause 1 Executive Council members must fulfill all eligibility requirements of Senators as described in Article I, Section A.

**Section B Elections**

Clause 1 An outgoing member of the current Executive Council not running for re-election in the following academic year will serve as Chair of the Election Committee and organize nominations and elections for the following academic year's Executive Council with the assistance of appointed Senators as needed. If every member of the Executive Council is running for re-election, a Senator will be chosen to serve as Chair by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate. The Chair of the Election Committee shall not be a candidate for any Graduate Student Senate office for the following academic year.

Clause 2 The Chair of the Election Committee shall only vote in case of a tie and will serve as tiebreaker for election of Executive Council positions.

Clause 3 The elections for all Executive Council positions for the academic year shall take place in April of the preceding Spring semester. The Chair of the Election

Committee shall send a written advertisement of elections and call for candidates to all graduate students by April 1st.

- Clause 4 The deadline for nominations shall be a minimum of one (1) week prior to elections. Nominations must be submitted via email to the Graduate Student Senate.
- Clause 5 Each candidate must be a full time or part time graduate student for the entire academic year during which they would hold office.
- Clause 6 Each candidate (opposed or unopposed) shall submit a statement of purpose for the position for which they are campaigning. Statements of purpose should explain the candidate's abilities, ideas, and experience for the position and shall be posted online to the Graduate Student Senate website. Additionally, the Chair of the Election Committee shall distribute statements of purpose for all candidates as well as the opening and closing dates and times for the election period to the graduate student community one (1) week prior to the election date.
- Clause 7 The Chair of the Election Committee shall organize a voting process that is anonymous and accessible to all graduate students. The voting process must open on a Monday and close the following Wednesday after a forty-eight (48) hour election period.
- Clause 8 Elections will be determined by a simple majority count.
- Clause 9 Election results will be posted by the Chair of the Election Committee on the Graduate Student Senate website and shall also be distributed by the Chair of the Election Committee to the graduate college list serve no later than one (1) week after the election period closes. Along with the outcome of the collection, voter participation data collected during the election shall also be released, including i) number and proportion of votes that each candidate received and ii) number and proportion of graduate students that voted in the election overall.
- Clause 10 The newly elected officers shall take office on the day of commencement.

### **Article III - Executive Council Duties**

#### **Section A Executive Council as a Whole**

- Clause 1 The Graduate Student Senate Executive Council shall consist of the following five (5) offices: (i) President, (ii) Vice President, (iii) Secretary, (iv) Treasurer, and (v) Communications Director.

- Clause 2 The President may nominate up to two (2) Members-At-Large to the Executive Council. The Members-At-Large must be approved by the Senate with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- Clause 3 The Executive Council shall adhere to procedures of the Constitution and Bylaws.
- Clause 4 The Executive Council shall meet weekly or as deemed necessary by the President.
- Clause 5 The Executive Council members shall be equally responsible for planning and implementing all events and meetings of the GSS.

**Section B Duties of the President**

- Clause 1 The President shall be responsible for overseeing that the functions of the Graduate Student Senate and the Executive Council are carried out in a manner prescribed in the Constitution and Bylaws as well as deemed appropriate by the Graduate Student Senate.
- Clause 2 The President shall act as liaison between University of Vermont administrators and the Graduate Student Senate.
- Clause 3 The President shall represent the graduate students on the Graduate College Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees Executive Committee.
- Clause 4 The President shall represent the graduate students or appoint graduate student representatives for all other committees requiring or requesting representation.
- Clause 5 The President shall meet with the Dean of the Graduate College and the President of the University on a regular basis.
- Clause 6 The President shall not vote during Senate meetings but may advise the Senate as needed.
- Clause 7 The President shall preside over meetings of the Executive Council.

**Section C Duties of the Vice President**

- Clause 1 The Vice President shall act in the capacity of the President in any meeting or event where the President is unable to attend or participate.
- Clause 2 The Vice President shall preside over Senate meetings and set the agenda with the assistance of the Executive Council.
- Clause 3 The Vice President shall only vote at Senate meetings in case of a tie and will serve as tiebreaker.

Clause 4 The Vice President shall maintain the current list of Senators as well as all records of Senate meeting attendance. The Vice President shall inform the Executive Council of Senators violating the absence policy.

Clause 5 The Vice President is responsible for organizing the Graduate Student Orientation that occurs annually at the beginning of the fall semester with assistance from the Graduate College and the Executive Council.

**Section D Duties of the Treasurer**

Clause 1 The Treasurer shall maintain all financial records of the Graduate Student Senate and shall be responsible for all financial planning and operations. The Treasurer shall make all financial information available to the Executive Council and Senate upon request.

Clause 2 The Treasurer shall serve as Chair of the Finance Committee and Mini-Grant Committee.

Clause 3 The Treasurer is responsible for the purchasing card linked to the Graduate Student Senate chart string.

Clause 4 The Treasurer is responsible for all purchases and allocations of funds made by the Graduate Student Senate. The Treasurer is responsible for keeping records of all receipts and proofs of purchase.

Clause 5 The Treasurer is responsible for reporting all expenses to the Administrative and Business Service Center before the deadline for journal reallocations every month.

Clause 6 At the end of the fall and spring semesters, the Treasurer shall submit a detailed report to the Senate reporting all funds spent on social, professional development, outreach, and training activities.

Clause 7 The Treasurer shall present a proposed budget for the following academic year at the final Senate meeting. The budget shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.

**Section E Duties of the Communications Director**

Clause 1 The Communications Director shall be responsible for all communications to and from graduate students from the Graduate Student Senate.

Clause 2 The Communications Director shall monitor the Graduate Student Senate email account. Email communication shall be forwarded to the appropriate Executive Council member as needed.

Clause 3 The Communications Director shall send a weekly email summarizing upcoming events and news of the Graduate Student Senate to all graduate students using the

Graduate Student Senate email account. Notices may include press releases, advertisements for events, grant funding activities, professional development, outreach, and/or training courses offered.

Clause 4 The Communications Director shall maintain the social media accounts of the Graduate Student Senate and be responsible for posting and uploading appropriate content as needed.

**Section F Duties of the Secretary**

Clause 1 The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining all records of the Graduate Student Senate that are not required of the Treasurer.

Clause 2 The Secretary shall keep good and true minutes of the meetings of the Graduate Student Senate. The minutes shall be typed and submitted to the Senate at the following Senate meeting. Minutes approved by the Senate shall be made available to all graduate students within one (1) week of the meeting at which they were approved. The minutes shall also include a copy of all materials handed out at the Senate meeting.

Clause 3 The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining the Graduate Student Senate website.

**Section G Member-At-Large**

Clause 1 The Member-At-Large (MAL) shall be responsible for the duty which was given to them as identified by the President and approved by the Senate as outlined in Bylaws Article III Section A Clause 2.

Clause 2 The MAL is a non-voting member of the Executive Council, yet retains the right to vote in Senate if the MAL is an elected Senator. Being appointed a MAL does not grant the right to vote in Senate.

Clause 3 The MAL is not required to attend all Executive Council meetings, yet must be present at said meetings when requested by the Executive Council

**Section H Removal from Office**

Clause 1 A member of the Executive Council may be removed from office by the following procedure:

(1) Upon receipt of a petition for removal of an officer signed by twenty-five percent (25%) of the Senate, a special Senate meeting shall be called within two regularly scheduled meetings to hear the charges. The Senate shall designate a special chair by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote to preside at this meeting.

- (2) The Executive Committee member whose removal is sought shall not participate in any Graduate Student Senate function between the receipt of the petition for removal and the hearing of the charges before the Senate, which shall be a period no longer than six (6) weeks.
- (3) A three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the Senate shall be required to remove the Executive Council member from office.
- (4) Following the removal of any Executive Committee member, a successor will be chosen immediately under the designated procedure for succession.

Clause 2 Any member of the Graduate Student Senate may start a petition to remove a Senator. Senators may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate, provided that notice of the impending removal has been placed upon the agenda of the meeting and circulated to all program representatives. The Senator facing removal shall be allowed an opportunity to defend themselves before a full meeting of the Senate.

Clause 3 A Senator or member of the Executive Council may resign by submitting a written resignation to the Executive Council.

#### **Article IV - Use of Graduate Student Fees**

##### **Section A Executive Council Scholarships**

Clause 1 Each member of the Executive Council shall receive a service scholarship for each Fall and Spring semester in which they hold office. The President and Vice President shall receive \$1000, and the Treasurer, Secretary, and Communications Director shall receive \$750. The scholarships will be allocated at the end of each semester of service in accordance with the University of Vermont Payments to Students Policy. If a member of the Executive Council resigns or is removed from office, the balance of the scholarship shall be forfeited effective immediately upon their resignation.

Clause 2 For the strict use for administrative business (meetings of the Board of Trustees, Graduate College, etc.), a parking pass for the academic year may be allocated through Transportation and Parking services to the President and Vice President.

##### **Section B Graduate Student Senate Events**

Clause 1 The Executive Council may use the funds from graduate student fees as determined by the yearly budget to host Graduate Student Senate events.

Clause 2 The Executive Council will have discretion over purchases or allocations of less than \$500. For purchases exceeding \$500, a two-thirds (2/3) majority approval must be sought from the Senate.

##### **Section C Funding Affiliated Groups**

Clause 1 Funds may be provided to recognized University organizations to fund events and activities provided they are open to or hosted by graduate students.

Clause 2 To obtain access to funds, a member of the Executive Board of the affiliated group must sign the recognition contract, and the group must be in good standing with the Senate. A representative of the group must also complete the GSS Funding Request form and abide to all regulations stated on said form.

### **Article V - Standing Committees**

#### **Section A Finance Committee**

Clause 1 A Finance Committee shall be established at the beginning of each Fall semester and be comprised of two (2) Senators and the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall serve as Chair of the Finance Committee.

Clause 2 The Finance Committee shall be responsible for providing guidance to the Executive Council and Senate on budgetary spending.

Clause 3 The Finance Committee shall review all applications for Mini Grants and make recommendations of funding to the Graduate College.

#### **Section B Student Affairs Committee**

Clause 1 A Student Affairs Committee shall be established at the beginning of each Fall semester and shall be comprised of two (2) Senators and the President. The President shall serve as Chair of the Student Affairs Committee.

Clause 2 The Student Affairs Committee shall be responsible for documenting and providing guidance for grievances and concerns affecting graduate students that are submitted to the Graduate Student Senate.

### **Article VI – Ad hoc Committees**

#### **Section A Formation of the Committee**

Clause 1 An ad hoc committee may be formed as outlines in the Constitution Article VI Section B Clause 2.

Clause 2 An ad hoc committee must internally nominate and vote on a committee Chair. The Chair is responsible for overseeing committee activities and reporting the activities of the committee to the Senate.

Clause 3 An ad hoc committee may be transitioned to a standing committee following a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.

#### **Section B Membership**

- Clause 1 A Senator may join or leave a committee by notifying the Chair of the Committee.
- Clause 2 A non-Senator graduate student may serve on a committee by notifying the Chair. The Chair may decide to set a maximum number of non-Senator members on a case-by-case basis.
- Clause 3 If a Senator misses 3 meetings without notifying the Chair of the Committee, they are removed from that Committee. A Senator removed in this way may not rejoin the Committee for the remainder of the academic year.

**Section C Chair of the Committee**

- Clause 1 The Chair of the Committee is nominated and voted on by the Committee as outlined in Bylaws Article V Section C Clause 2.
- Clause 2 The Chair is responsible for organizing Committee meetings, as well as monitoring the progress and activity of the Committee. They are also responsible for keeping attendance of the Committee, as well as ensuring that committee minutes are sent to the GSS Vice President in a timely manner.
- Clause 3 If a Committee Chair is not fulfilling their duties, the Committee may vote to remove the Chair. A unanimous vote of the Committee is required to remove the Chair. If a Chair is removed, there are two possible resolutions. If the Committee has a Vice Chair, the Vice Chair assumes the role of Committee Chair. If the Committee does not have a Vice Chair, the Executive Council representative will serve as acting Chair until a new Chair is elected.

**Section D Vice Chair**

- Clause 1 A Committee can elect a Vice Chair as needed, following the same voting method decided on for electing the Chair.
- Clause 2 The duties of the Vice Chair are flexible, and consist of aiding the Chair as needed.
- Clause 3 If the Chair cannot be present for a meeting, the Vice Chair assumes the responsibilities of the Chair for that meeting.

**Section E Structure of the Committee**

- Clause 1 The nature of ad hoc Committees requires varied structure for each Committee. As such, only loose structure is discussed here as a guideline.
- Clause 2 A Committee is required to meet a minimum of 6 times in the academic year.
- Clause 3 To resolve disagreements within the Committee, the problem is presented to the Senate for deliberation. The resolution is decided by the Senate with a majority vote.

Clause 4 Once per semester, Committees are encouraged to advertise a meeting in the GSS Newsletter. This meeting will be open to all graduate students.

## **Article VII - Graduate Student Club Recognition**

### **Section A Eligibility**

Clause 1 The graduate student club must be an official student organization recognized by the University of Vermont.

Clause 2 The graduate student club membership must be comprised of at least seventy-five percent (75%) graduate students.

Clause 3 The graduate student club must provide a mission statement and/or constitution to be presented to the Senate.

Clause 4 A group may apply for recognition in the Fall semester from the first day of the Fall semester to September 30<sup>th</sup>, and in the Spring semester from February 1<sup>st</sup> to February 28<sup>th</sup>. Club renewal occurs at the start of the academic year regardless of the semester in which the club is founded.

### **Section B Recognition and Representation Requirements**

Clause 1 If the graduate student club only has members from one graduate program, the Senator of that program may represent the club at Senate meetings. If the program does not have a Senator, the club must nominate a graduate student to represent the program and club.

Clause 2 If the graduate student club spans multiple programs, a representative may attend Senate meetings to represent the club.

Clause 3 Recognition and approval of a graduate student club requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.

Clause 4 Recognition of graduate student clubs expires at the end of the academic year in which it was granted. Graduate student clubs may re-apply for recognition in the following year by providing an updated list of current members. Renewal of recognition requires unanimous approval of the Executive Council. Renewal may also be granted by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.

### **Section C Benefits of Recognition**

Clause 1 Recognized graduate student clubs may request funding from the Graduate Student Senate. Approval of requests up to \$500 is at the discretion of the Executive Council. Approval of requests exceeding \$500 requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.

Clause 2 Recognized graduate student clubs may request the Graduate Student Senate book rooms or other venues on campus for club events. If the graduate student club has a separate chartstring from the Graduate Student Senate, the club must provide the chartstring for the booking request.

### **Article VIII - Succession**

#### **Section A Executive Council Resignation**

Clause 1 In the event of a resignation of an Executive Council member, the President shall appoint a candidate, subject to the eligibility guidelines in Article IV of the Constitution. The candidate shall be confirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate. If the candidate is not confirmed, the process begins anew under the same guidelines until a candidate is confirmed.

Clause 2 If the resignation happens during the summer, the President shall appoint an interim Executive Council member to fulfill the responsibilities of the position until the first meeting of the Fall semester. At this point, the candidate is subject to the confirmation procedures of Clause 1.

Clause 3 If the President resigns, the Vice President immediately assumes the role of President and then appoints a candidate for Vice President as described above.

## **Section B Senator Resignation**

Clause 1 If a Senator resigns, then the Executive Council shall appoint a new Senator in the same manner as vacancies described in Article I, Section A, Clause 7.

## **Article IX - Discussion Protocol**

The Graduate Student Senate shall use “Robert’s Rules of Order” as a guide to parliamentary procedure for orderly discussion at meetings. The intent of any discussion should be to reach a solution and promote open debate by all members of a group.

## **Section A Terms of Parliamentary Procedure**

Clause 1 Order. Actions are to be performed at certain times during meetings. Actions allowed are “in order,” and those that are not allowed are “out of order.”

Clause 2 Quorum. A quorum is the number of Senators that need to be present at Senate meetings sufficient to pass official business. Quorum shall be one third (1/3) of the Senate. Senators in violation of the absence policy shall not be counted when determining quorum. The Treasurer, Secretary, and Communications Director shall be counted when determining quorum.

Clause 3 Motion. A motion is a suggestion to the Senate to take a specific action. Any member of the GSS may propose a motion. Only one motion can be considered at a time. To be discussed, a motion must be seconded.

Clause 4 Second. Motions proposed by a Senator to the Senate require that at least one other Senator supports consideration of the action. The second is made verbally after a motion is proposed.

Clause 5 Floor. Any person who has been granted the floor by the Vice President has the right to speak without being interrupted. The person with the floor may entertain questions asked by others without yielding the floor. The Vice President always determines who has the floor. One must have the floor to make a motion, but not to second one.

Clause 6 Bill. A bill is a detailed statement of action that defines a specific course of action for the Senate or the Graduate Student Senate as a whole. The bill may contain many “whereas” clauses that outline the reasons for the action and one of more “enacted” clauses that outline the course of action to be taken. Any Senator or Executive Council member may write and/or sponsor a bill. Authors of bills are expected to read or paraphrase the bill and answer questions concerning its content or purpose to the Senate.

Clause 7 Resolution. A resolution is a detailed statement of sentiment that expresses the opinion, support, or opposition of the Graduate Student Senate. The resolution may contain many “whereas” clauses that outline the reasons and one or more “resolved” clauses that outline the course of action to be taken. Any Senator or Executive Council member may write and/or sponsor a resolution. Authors of resolutions are expected to read or paraphrase the bill and answer questions concerning its content or purpose to the Senate.

## **Section B Order of Business for Senate Meetings**

Clause 1 Call to Order. The Vice President calls the meeting to order. Parliamentary procedure begins.

Clause 2 Approval of Minutes. The Vice President shall ask if anyone is opposed to approval of the minutes of the previous Senate meeting as written. If no one objects, the minutes are approved by a vote of General Consent. If objection exists, a motion can be made to amend the minutes.

Clause 3 Presidents Remark’s. The President may address the Senate and make any pertinent announcements regarding the meeting. Questions may be directed to the President, but any discussion at this point is out of order.

Clause 4 Reports from Executive Council Members and Committee Representatives. Executive Council Members and Committee Representatives in turn may briefly announce any current business of their respective position. Questions may be directed to the speaker, but any discussion at this point is out of order.

Clause 5 Old Business. Any business from the last meeting that was unresolved can be addressed at this point.

Clause 6 New Business. Here the Senate may consider motions for new business. The agenda shall list any scheduled bills or resolutions to be treated separately in the order they are listed. After any scheduled New Business, the Vice President shall call for additional new business. After a motion is read or paraphrased aloud and seconded, the Vice President opens the floor for debate. Any person present may request the floor to discuss the motion at hand. The person holding the floor shall be decided by the Vice President.

Clause 7      General Announcements. Here any Senator or guest can request the floor to make general announcements or inquiries. Questions can be addressed to the speaker, but debate ended with New Business and any new issues must wait until Old Business is discussed at the next Senate meeting.

Clause 8      Adjourn. The Vice President shall announce the meeting adjourned. A motion may be made if there are any objections to adjourning.

**Section C      Making Motions**

Clause 1      An Executive Council member or Senator must obtain the floor in order to make a motion.

Clause 2      Motions must be receive a verbal second in order to be considered. The Vice President shall call for a second if needed. If no second is obtained, the motion is no longer considered for discussion.

Clause 3      The Vice President shall repeat the motion if a second is obtained and open the floor for discussion of the motion at hand.

Clause 4      During discussion, one of the following motions can be called:

(1) Call the Question. The Vice President or person granted the floor may call the question to end the discussion. After a verbal second to call the question is made, the Senate votes whether to call the question. A vote of General Consent or a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is required to call the question. If the call carries, a vote can be made on the original motion at hand. If the call fails to carry, discussion continues.

(2) Table the Motion. If an Executive Council member or a Senator wishes the motion to be set aside to conduct further business, a motion can be made to table the motion at hand. A vote of General Consent or a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is required to table the motion. If the motion to table carries, the discussion, bill, or resolution can be reintroduced later as Old Business.

(3) Amend the Motion. If an Executive Council member or Senator wishes the main motion to be carried in a modified form, a “friendly amendment” can be suggested and accepted by the author and/or sponsor of the main motion. Otherwise, a motion must be made to amend the original motion at hand.

(4) Refer to Committee. If an Executive Council member or a Senator judges that the motion should be further investigated before being considered by the Senate, a motion to refer to committee may be made. A vote of General Consent or a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is required to refer the motion to committee. If the motion to refer to committee passes, the business is sent to the appropriate standing committee or an ad hoc committee may be established, which shall be determined by the President.

Clause 5 If discussion ceases, the Vice President shall ask for any further discussion. If so, discussion continues. If not, the Vice President shall initiate a vote on the motion.

**Section D Voting**

Passage of motions, bills, resolutions, or other business shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate, unless otherwise specified by the Graduate Student Senate Constitution. The Vice President shall decide on the voting method to be used upon initiation of a vote during Senate meetings. The Vice President shall announce the result of a vote when completed. The four (4) voting methods that shall be used are vote by (i) show of hands, (ii) general consent, (iii) roll call, and (iv) secret ballot.

Clause 1 Show of Hands. The Vice President asks the voting representatives to show by their hand in turn if in favor, opposed, or in abstention. Votes are counted and verified by the Secretary.

Clause 2 General Consent. If a motion is not likely to be opposed, the President may ask for any objection before stating that the motion carries. The membership shows agreement by their silence. If any member with voting privileges objects, a different voting method shall be used.

Clause 3 Roll Call. If a record of each voter is desired, each voter verbally answers the vote when called by the Secretary. Individual votes by persons with voting privileges shall be recorded in the minutes.

Clause 4 Secret Ballot. If voting secrecy is desired, voters shall write their vote on a piece of paper to be collected and tallied by the Secretary. Individual votes shall remain anonymous.