

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE OF MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

Adopted 4/12/2023

PREAMBLE

We, the members of this organization, do ordain this Constitution of the Graduate Student Senate of Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri, as the Constitution for the members of the Graduate Student Senate, in accordance with the rules and regulations of Missouri State University, the laws of the state of Missouri, and the laws of the United States of America.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization is the Graduate Student Senate of Missouri State University.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Graduate Student Senate shall be:

Section 1. To represent and advocate the interests of the graduate students of Missouri State University to the Dean of the Graduate College, the Graduate Council, the faculty, any others within the University whose actions or positions may affect the interests of the graduate students in the Graduate College, and any others outside of the University making decisions or taking positions that affect graduate students in their role as graduate students.

Section 2. To provide a channel of communication between graduate students and other members of the Missouri State University community.

Section 3. To encourage and facilitate interdisciplinary academic activities, graduate student organizations within each program, and inter-program social activities for graduate students.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

The Senate shall be composed of currently enrolled graduate students as determined by the Graduate College. The student must be in good standing as described in the University Bulletin of Missouri State University under Student Rights and Responsibilities. The Graduate Student Senate does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, or veteran status in employment or in any program or activity sponsored by Missouri State University. It is also the policy of the Graduate Student Senate not to discriminate on the basis of political affiliation or beliefs, marital or parental states, participation in constitutionally protected activities, and/or sexual orientation.

Senators are allowed two missed meetings each semester. The Director of Communication shall make record of those who miss more than their allotted two meetings and notify the member of their suspension as a Senator. The suspension shall be for the next academic semester. If a Senator contacts the Director of Communication and the President within a day's notice of their inability to make the meeting, it shall not count towards their allotted two missed days.

The Graduate Student Senate shall strive to represent the interests of all the disciplines within the Graduate College. It is the responsibility of the executive officers to notify the graduate coordinators and department heads of disciplines not represented after the first meeting of the Fall and Spring semesters.

ARTICLE IV: GRADUATE STUDENT SENATORS

Selection of Senators - Senators for the upcoming academic year shall be selected at the end of the spring semester through appointment by cabinet. Each college will be allowed a minimum of one and a maximum of three senators with a total maximum of twelve senator positions within the GSS. A special election may be held at any other point in the year to fill any vacancies at the discretion of the President and the executive officers.

Term of Office - Senators shall begin their term of service at the first regular meeting. Each Senator shall serve on the Senate until the next academic year selects new Senators. The senators shall be able to opt into a second term with the approval of cabinet members following their first term. The cabinet shall offer the senators an opportunity to opt into a second term prior to the spring cabinet elections.

Powers and Duties -Senators shall represent the interests of the graduate students in their program to the Senate. Senators shall communicate interests, concerns, and program activities to the Senate. Senators shall communicate interests, concerns, services, and activities of the Senate to students in their respective program by distributing Senate minutes and other information. Senators may choose to initiate Senate acts and vote on Senate initiatives. Senators shall be willing to chair and are expected to serve on any committees formed by the executive officers.

ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Section 1. Election of Officers -The Graduate Student Senate shall elect the following executive officers from the graduate student body: President, Vice-President, and Directors of Communication, Programming, and Finance. Elections shall be held at the end of the spring semester. Candidates that run but are not elected to an office may run for another office.

Section 2. Term of Office -The term of office begins at the end of the spring semester and ends when the next cabinet members are elected.

Section 3. Powers and Duties of the President-The President shall convene meetings of the Senate and set the agenda. The President shall act as the chair or presiding officer at Senate meetings. The President shall act as the official representative of the Senate to outside entities. The President shall regularly report the recent interests, concerns, and activities of the Senate to the Dean of the Graduate College. It is the responsibility for the President to nominate and/or appoint individuals as circumstantially necessary. The President shall be a non-voting member of the Senate and shall vote only in the case of a tie.

Section 4. Powers and Duties of the Vice President -The Vice President shall exercise the duties and powers of the President whenever the President is absent. The Vice Presidents shall serve the remainder of the President's term if the President resigns, is recalled, or is no longer able to serve. The Vice President shall preside over the Directors, ensuring that all reports are received and relayed to the President for necessary action.

Section 5. Powers and Duties of the Director of Communication -The Director of Communication shall take minutes at Senate meetings. The Director of Communication shall maintain current membership and contact information lists and shall distribute announcements, notes, and minutes to members of the Senate. The Director of Communication shall oversee maintenance of the GSS website.

Section 6. Powers and Duties of the Director of Programming -The Director of Programming will maintain lists of committee membership and coordinate with the Vice President and committee chairs to schedule events. The Vice President of Programming will serve as the liaison between the GSS and Conference Services. The Director of Programming will work with the Director of Communication to update the News and events sections of the GSS website.

Section 7. Powers and Duties of the Director of Finance -The Director of Finance manages the Senate budget. The Director of Finance is responsible for keeping record of expenditures and communicating with the rest of the officers about finances.

Section 8. Resignation -In the event of incapacity to complete duties, an officer will be required to submit a letter/statement of formal resignation.

Section 9. Replacement -In the event that the President shall no longer occupy the office, then the Vice President shall immediately assume said position. In the event that the Vice President shall no longer occupy the office, the President shall open the floor for nominations to fill the vacancy. After taking necessary steps to secure a forum for candidates to be reviewed, the President shall make a recommendation. The floor will open for discussion and a vote shall take place. After a simple majority is secured, that individual will become the new Vice President. In the event that both the President and Vice-President no longer occupy office at the same time, a special election will be called by the advisor. Candidates shall submit their names for consideration. At a time designated by the body, a vote shall take place, whereby the simple majority of votes dictate the winner. The process may be continued until a replacement is selected.

Section 10. Recall- An officer may be removed from office for any violation in the code of conduct or any university policies. A three-fourths vote of executive members and senators is required to remove an officer.

ARTICLE VI: OTHER POSITIONS

Section 1. Faculty Senate GSS Representative-The Senate shall appoint a graduate student to represent the interests of the Graduate Student Senate as a non-voting delegate to the Faculty Senate.

Section 2. SOFAC Representative-The Senate shall appoint a graduate student to represent the interests of the Graduate Student Senate to the Student Organization Funding Allocation Council (SOFAC).

Section 3. SGA Representative- The senate shall appoint a graduate student to represent the interests of the Graduate Student Senate to the Student Government Association

Section 4. Membership Requirements and Election -The Faculty Senate Representative and the SOFAC Representative shall be open to any graduate Senator. They need only submit their name for consideration. The election of the Faculty Senate Representative and the SOFAC Representative shall be held during the August meeting, which should be held prior to the start of Fall classes. A simple majority is defined as greater than half of the total number of voting members in attendance. Nominations are

taken from the floor and must be seconded. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes, a run-off election will be held between the two candidates who received the highest number of votes in the previous tally for that position. Candidates that run but are not elected to an office may run for another office.

Section 5. Committees -The President shall create, staff, and disband such committees as needed to conduct Senate business efficiently. Committee membership shall be open to all graduate Senators. They need only submit their name for consideration. Committees shall be construed as Ad-Hoc in nature unless otherwise stated up the committee's creation.

Section 6. Committee Chairs -Committee chairs shall be decided by the Committee members. Responsibilities include holding regular meetings, advancing the will of the Senate, and executing any other duties established for committee chairs. Article V Section 10 shall apply to chairs.

Section 7. Other Appointed Officers -Other officers may be appointed by and serve at the discretion of the Senate President upon confirmation by simple majority of serving Senators.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Senate shall be held every month or as deemed necessary by the President. These meetings shall be scheduled in advance by the President in conjunction with the Director of Communication.

Special meetings will be called as deemed necessary by the President with reasonable notice to the membership. All functions of regular meetings may occur.

Regular and annual meetings shall be open to the general public unless a motion is made to transition to a closed meeting to discuss internal affairs or senator conduct. Audience members wishing to be recognized to discuss matters with the Senate will be vested with the opportunity after official business is conducted and the Chair recognizes the audience member.

ARTICLE VIII: LEGISLATION

Bills and resolutions may be introduced by any member of the Senate. A co-sponsor must accompany the legislation.

ARTICLE IX: RELATIONSHIP TO THE GRADUATE COUNCIL

The Senate President will function as the student liaison to the Graduate Council. In the case that the President is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, the Vice President or designee should attend or make provisions for a suitable replacement in accordance with eligibility requirements outlined in Article III, Sec. 1. The liaison will be a non-voting member of the Graduate Council.

The liaison will meet with the Dean of the Graduate College before the fall semester begins each school year to coordinate the issues to be considered that year by the Graduate Council and the Senate.

The liaison shall forward Senate initiatives affecting Graduate Council affairs to the Dean of the Graduate College for possible inclusion on the agenda of the Graduate Council or other appropriate body.

ARTICLE X: PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

All procedural matters not specified shall be resolved in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, unless the rules are suspended with a second to the motion and adopted by the Senate by a simple majority.

ARTICLE XI: RATIFICATION

This constitution shall be fully ratified once approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the membership, after its submission to and approval by the Office of Student Engagement, and after its submission to and approval by the Student Government Association. Upon ratification, this Constitution shall supersede and replace all previous constitutions of this student organization.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

A proposition for amendment to the Graduate Student Senate Constitution may be proposed by any voting member of the Senate.

Passed amendments will be in effect immediately unless otherwise specified. A two-thirds vote is required to change elements of the Constitution.

ARTICLE XIII: EMPOWERMENT

This constitution will take effect after it is accepted by both the Office of Student Engagement and the Student Government Association of Missouri State University, and after a two-thirds majority vote is accepted by the members of GSS.