

CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

PREAMBLE

The Graduate Student Organization, (GSO), representing the graduate student body of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, is hereby created in order to render assistance to graduate students in their pursuit of academic achievement and excellence.

The Graduate Student Organization, (GSO) shall not be a separate governing or disciplinary entity over the graduate student body. It is a representative organization and shall strive to maintain open communication between the administration and the student body. It shall inform the administration of the special needs of the graduate students and inform the student body of administration policies and decisions.

In matters relevant to the entire student body, the GSO shall coordinate its efforts through the Graduate School Senators elected to the Student Government Association (SGA) by the graduate school student body.

This organization will adhere to all policies and regulations of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and the University of Louisiana System. Activities that result in undue physical stress or any subtle or covert technique that will impair, make captive, or destroy an individual's freedom or thought will not be tolerated. Furthermore, this organization will adhere to all policies and regulations set forth by the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, University of Louisiana System, and State Legislature regarding hazing. The policy regarding Hazing can be found here:

<https://studentaffairs.louisiana.edu/sites/studentaffairs/files/UL%20Lafayette%20Hazing%20Policy%20-%20with%20Act%20443%20updates%20-%20OpRvw%202019%2008%2016v2.pdf>

ARTICLE ONE - MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Every student enrolled in the graduate school is considered a member of the Graduate Student Organization. Membership shall not be denied on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual identity, or disability. Organization dues have been voted into place by the entire graduate student body and are paid by each graduate student in fees assessed upon enrollment.

ARTICLE TWO – LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The GSO shall function under a formal proxy Council, composed of representatives from each academic department having a graduate program. Each representative shall be a graduate student chosen by a majority of the graduate students in that academic department.

All legislative powers of the GSO shall be vested in this Council. Each representative on the Council shall exercise one vote on legislative matters.

Matters requiring a vote of the Council shall be considered approved or rejected by a simple majority vote of the membership present, with the President of the Council voting in the event of a tie.

The Council shall have the right to override any veto exercised by the Council President. Said veto may be overridden only by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Council members present.

ARTICLE THREE – EXECUTIVE BRANCH

All executive powers of the GSO shall be vested in the Executive Branch of the Council, which shall be composed as follows:

- A. *President* is elected by a majority vote of the Council membership.
- B. *Vice President* is elected by a majority vote of the Council membership and will fulfill the duties of the President in the event of absence or resignation.
- C. *Secretary-Treasurer* is elected by a majority vote of the Council membership.

The Executive Branch shall be charged with the following responsibilities:

- A. Orderly conduct of all meetings of the Council
- B. Exercising guidelines set forth in the Bylaws
- C. Proper disposition of legislative matters
- D. Upholding the terms of the Constitution

Executive officers of the Council shall not hold more than one executive position within the Council at any one time. These officers may be recalled for reasons of misconduct with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council membership (See Bylaws). Any vacant position shall be filled by a majority vote of the Council membership.

Graduate School Senators (SGA) shall not be considered part of the Executive Branch of the Council, unless they hold an elective office within the Council.

Executive officers shall retain their positions as representatives of their departments and exercise the same voting power. The graduate students in the department of the President shall select another representative to replace the President. The President may exercise a vote in the event of a tie vote by the Council.

The President of the Council shall have veto power over legislative matters enacted by the Legislative Branch. This Executive veto power shall be overridden only by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Council membership.

The GSO shall have the right to create and fill any other executive offices that may be considered necessary, according to the appropriate Bylaws.

All powers not directly treated in this Constitution shall be treated and governed under the Organization's Bylaws

ARTICLE FOUR - MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

The Council of the Graduate Student Organization shall conduct at least one general business meeting per month during the Fall and Spring semesters. Provisions shall be made to address any Summer semester business by the Council.

The President may call a special meeting when he/she deems it necessary or when requested to do so by at least one third (1/3) of the Council membership.

All meetings under the auspices of the GSO shall be conducted under conventional use of order. Meetings are open to all interested graduate students and observers.

All fund raising activities shall be carried out in accordance with the rules and policies of the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership.

ARTICLE FIVE - RESERVE CLAUSE

The GSO Council reserves all powers not specifically detailed within this Constitution. Rules governing the procedures for enactment shall lie within the purview of the GSO Bylaws. The Bylaws shall remain in effect until amended or changed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council membership.

ARTICLE SIX - BYLAWS

The Graduate Student Council shall have the right to enact Bylaws for the governance of the Council and Organization. Said Bylaws shall be enacted by a 2/3 vote of the Council membership and shall be amended only by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council membership.

All powers not directly treated in this Constitution, shall be treated and governed under the Organization's Bylaws.

ARTICLE SEVEN - CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

The GSO Constitution may be amended upon proposal approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Council membership and by a simple majority of the graduate student body in regular or special election. Any major amendments shall be submitted to the UL Lafayette Organizations Committee for final approval.

Updated March 21, 2015, by Jane Heels, GSO President
Updated July 13, 2016, by Sarah Gawronski, GSO President
Updated November 11, 2019 by Rex Jones, GSO Secretary