

DEVELOPED

8 June 2016

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GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

PURPOSE

The Graduate Student Advisory Council is comprised of all graduate students in all graduate programs at Texas Tech University and is dedicated to enhancing graduate life and representing graduate students through active advisement of the Dean of the Graduate School and University Administration. The main mission of the GSAC is to enhance and improve the condition of graduate student life and well being through the work of the council itself, its commissions dedicated to specific issues of concern, and through collaboration with the graduate student body, Student Government Association, and other departments and associations.

ARTICLE I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Student Advisory Council, abbreviated as the GSAC.

ARTICLE II: Membership

Section 1: Membership requirements in the Graduate Student Advisory Council will not be affected by ethnicity, gender, color, national origin, sexual orientation or identity, or physical disability. Members in good standing shall be enrolled graduate students at Texas Tech University. Graduate students who have been nominated and elected by their peers during annual elections shall be considered voting members of the GSAC. These council members will have the responsibility to use their voting privileges to help conduct GSAC business at council meetings. Members who are not elected as voting members will have the opportunity to earn enough points (see Article XIII) to become voting council members.

Section 2: There are no semester dues currently required for membership. This amount can be amended, subject to the organization's financial need.

Section 3: Members shall always conduct themselves with good behavior and deportment as a representative of the group. Verbal or physical assaults of fellow members, disruptions of meetings or functions of the organization, or any other behavior that can be regarded as

unacceptable or inappropriate will not be tolerated. Members are strongly encouraged to approach an officer with any concerns or problems regarding a fellow member.

- A. A first offense shall warrant a verbal or written warning from the Executive Board.
- B. A second offense shall warrant a verbal conversation exclusively with the Executive Board in consultation with the faculty advisor. A course of action will be agreed upon in order to prevent further misconduct from the offending member.
- C. A third offense shall result in immediate expulsion from the organization.
- D. The faculty advisor shall have the option to overrule this procedure should he or she deem it necessary.

ARTICLE III: Meetings

Section 1: General meetings shall occur once a month during the academic year, except for May and December, and shall be scheduled prior to the beginning of a semester by the Executive Board. All Texas Tech University graduate students and guests are welcome to attend general meetings, though non-council members may only enter discussion with permission of the presiding officer or during an open forum.

Section 2: Executive Board meetings shall occur once a month, at least two weeks prior to a general meeting, and as needed.

Section 3: Commission Chairs shall meet with their commissions as needed, though commission members should be given at least one week prior notice of such meetings.

ARTICLE IV: Executive Board

The Graduate Student Advisory Council shall be composed of three (3) officers who act as the Executive Board. The three (3) officers shall be: President, Internal Vice President, and External Vice President. Each Executive Board may choose to appoint a Chief of Staff, Judicial Counselor, and/or Financial Counselor as they see fit. Officer elections shall take place annually during the April general meeting.

ARTICLE V: Officer Duties

Section 1: The President shall be the chief executive officer for the organization. He or she will preside over all club meetings. The President shall have all of the following duties and powers:

- A. Establish administrative procedures not otherwise provided for by the Constitution or By-Laws of this organization.
- B. Establish the agenda and direct the proceedings for each meeting of the organization.

- C. Ensure other Executive Officers and Chairs are fulfilling their duties timely and accurately.
- D. Represent the GSAC Internal Vice President and External Vice President in their absence.
- E. Develop relationships with key administrators in the Texas Tech University System, executive members, or other student organizations and community.
- F. Be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Section 2: The Internal Vice President shall have all of the following duties:

- A. Act as President Pro-Tempore in the absence of the President by directing any and all proceedings. In a case where the President's office becomes vacant, the Internal Vice President shall become the President automatically and will assume all powers, duties, and responsibilities associated with that position. The office of the Internal Vice President, then, is vacant and will be filled by a special election called by the President.
- B. Communicate all internal operations of the GSAC, including organization of all internal and special elections.
- C. Represent GSAC President and External Vice President in their absence.
- D. Develop relationships with key administrators in the Texas Tech University System, executive members, or other student organizations and community.
- E. E-mail Outlook meeting invitations for general meetings to council members at least one week prior to general meetings.
- F. Be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Section 3: The External Vice President shall have all of the following duties:

- A. Communicate all external operations of the GSAC, seek information about policies from external organizations that may affect the graduate student body.
- B. Create a close-knit working relationship with the Student Government Association, the City of Lubbock, as well as community and student organizations such as the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce or the Student Bar Association.
- C. Oversee efforts to recruit graduate students from the Texas Tech University main campus, the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, and the Texas Tech University Law School to become active members of the GSAC.

D. Be responsible for maintaining the GSAC social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) and website (<http://gsac.ttu.edu>) or appointing specific GSAC members to assist with these duties.

E. Represent GSAC President and Internal Vice President in their absence.

F. Be an ex-officio member of all committees.

Section 4: The Chief of Staff shall have all of the following duties:

A. Keep accurate minutes of all general and executive meetings. Meeting minutes shall be approved at the beginning of the next general meeting. Once meeting minutes are approved, Chief of Staff shall e-mail them to the appointed webmaster so that he or she can post the minutes on the GSAC website.

B. Actively track attendance of the GSAC members during monthly general meetings.

C. Maintain points system (see Article XIII).

D. Fulfill the responsibilities of absent Executive Board members during meetings.

E. Advise the Executive Board for council management, member planning, and strategic initiatives. Integrate Risk Management across the members and throughout the business of GSAC.

Section 5: The Judicial Counselor shall have all of the following duties:

A. Review the constitution of the GSAC and make recommendations to the GSAC for improvements when necessary.

B. Review proposed amendments to the constitution to ensure they follow goals of the GSAC.

Section 6: The Financial Counselor shall have all of the following duties:

A. Serve as an assistant and advisory role for financial planning and fundraising with the Executive Board.

B. Prepare an annual budget proposal for submission to and approval by the GSAC members.

Section 7: The officers shall decide amongst themselves who shall be the SORC representative, and the decision shall be indicated on the University Policy Agreement. The SORC representative must attend all required SORC representative meetings and report any new

information to fellow officers during monthly executive meetings. If the SORC representative cannot attend a SORC representative meeting for any reason, he or she should make arrangements for another GSAC officer to attend the meeting instead.

ARTICLE VI: Violations and Removal from Office

Section 1: Timelines, attendance, participation, etc. are all key elements to working as a sound Executive Board; thus, a strike system will be implemented. Each officer is permitted two warnings for failing to perform his or her duties as an officer. A third strike will place the officer in violation and result in a month's probation. If said officer shows no improvement after the previous violation, it provides immediate grounds for dismissal from office. A unanimous vote from the Executive Board will be required to remove an officer from office immediately. The officer on whom the vote is being taken shall not be allowed to vote on whether or not he/she remains. An officer may appeal for reinstatement to the general membership, but only a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of the council members present will restore the individual to his/her position. At any time, an officer has the right to resign.

Section 2: GSAC members may remove an officer if the person is not fulfilling his/her duties. A three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of the members present is required to remove the officer. The remaining officers, in collaboration with the faculty advisor, will appoint someone new to the position or redistribute duties, pending the approval of the membership at the next business meeting

Section 3: The Executive Board is required to give a person warning in writing fourteen days (14) prior to the meeting at which the removal will occur.

ARTICLE VII: Powers

Section 1: The absence of a specific power or duty from this Constitution is not necessarily a denial of its existence.

Section 2: A person may not hold more than one officer or chair position at a time.

ARTICLE VIII: Commissions

Section 1: The Graduate Student Advisory Council shall consist of five (5) standing commissions: the Academic and Professional Commission, the Community Outreach Commission, the Distance Education Commission, the Social Commission, and the Student Advocacy and Welfare Commission. Descriptions of each commission can be found on the GSAC website (<http://gsac.ttu.edu>).

Section 2: Council members must belong to at least one commission of their own choosing.

Section 3: Members in a commission should elect amongst themselves a person to chair and lead the commission. The elected chair may choose to appoint an associate chair to assist with leading the commission.

ARTICLE IX: Ad Hoc Commissions

Ad hoc commissions shall be defined and approved by the President and must be seconded by an Executive Board member. The President shall appoint commission members, and ad hoc commissions shall be disbanded by a simple majority of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE X: Elections

Section 1: Elections for officer positions shall be held during the April general meeting of the spring semester. All terms are for one year, beginning at the aforesaid meeting and ending at the same meeting the next calendar year. No one may hold an officer position for more than four consecutive years.

Section 2: The order of elections will be as follows: President, Internal Vice President, and External Vice President.

Section 3: In each election, each candidate will be given five (5) minutes to speak to the members. Candidates may use this time however they see fit, but they may not exceed the five (5) minute time limitation. After candidates have delivered their speeches, they shall leave the room so that ballots can be distributed to voting members. The Executive Board will tally the votes and announce the winners during the general meeting. In the event of a tie, the President shall be the tiebreaker.

ARTICLE XI: Voting

Section 1: A quorum must be present in order to hold a vote during a general meeting. A quorum shall consist of at least one eligible vote above one-half (1/2) of all the GSAC council members. The Chief of Staff shall be in charge of the attendance sheet and shall announce whether or not a quorum is present during a meeting.

Section 2: Only elected council members or members who have earned enough points to become council members may vote. Each council member shall have one vote.

Section 3: The presiding officer may not have a vote, unless it is needed to break a tie.

ARTICLE XII: Constitutional Amendments

Amendments to this constitution must be submitted in writing to the Executive Board at least two weeks (14 days) prior to the general meeting at which the amendment will be considered.

The President is obligated to place the amendment on the agenda for that meeting. The amendment will be considered approved if three fourths (3/4) of the general body (in attendance) vote in favor of the amendment.

ARTICLE XIII: Faculty Advisor

The Executive Board shall select a faculty member to serve as the GSAC advisor. The advisor shall aid in the running of the organization and serve as a liaison between the organization and the school administration. The advisor should be someone with the time and interest to take on the duties of an advisor.

ARTICLE XIV: External Relationships

GSAC is a member of the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students (<http://nagps.org>).

ARTICLE XV: Parliamentary Authority

Section 1: The president or an appointed proxy shall preside over all GSAC meetings, and items listed on the meeting agenda shall dictate the topics and themes of the meeting. A council member who wishes to speak at a meeting should raise his or her hand and wait to be recognized by the president or proxy.

Section 2: The person presiding over a meeting has the right to utilize Robert's Rules of Order, although it is not necessary. If Robert's Rules of Order are used, the person presiding over the meeting should first provide council members a brief explanation of procedures.

Section 3: Guests attending GSAC meetings may address council members during the Open Forum scheduled at the end of all general meetings.

ARTICLE XVI: Points System

Section 1: The purpose of the points system is to encourage an active membership and to serve as a quantitative measure of participation among GSAC members.

Section 2: Elected council members must obtain at least eight (8) points each semester in order to retain council membership.

Section 3: Non-council members who obtain at least fifteen (15) points in a semester may earn the privilege of becoming a council member with voting rights within the GSAC. After a non-council member obtains council membership, he or she should refer to Section 2 of this Article.

Section 4: Any points earned during the Summer I semester shall be added to the preceding spring semester. Any points earned during the Summer II semester shall be added to the upcoming fall semester.

Section 5: The Chief of Staff shall maintain a record of points for council members and aspiring council members. Regardless, individuals should make an effort to keep track of their own points in the case of any discrepancy or variation in tallies.

Section 6: The following activities qualify for points:

- A. GSAC general meeting attendance: 1 point per meeting
- B. Commission work: 2 points per activity
 - a. Meeting (outside of the GSAC general meeting) with commission members regarding commission-related issues and/or events.
 - b. Meeting with an administrator or other individual on behalf of the commission to fulfill a task or goal
- C. Event attendance and participation: 1 point per event
- D. Event organization: 2 points per event
 - a. Planning, preparing, and completing of an event
 - b. Creating flyers and advertisements
 - c. Advertising and promoting events through social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, Tech Announcements, etc.
 - d. Meeting with donors, venue managers/owners, supply distributors, etc.
- E. Participation in Graduate School activities: 1 point per activity
 - a. Commencement ceremony
 - A. Workshops