

## Graduate Student Association (GSA) Bylaws

---

### 1 Executive Council

There shall be five Executive Council positions:

#### 1.1.1 *President*

- Chair all GSA meetings (e.g. Graduate Senate, Executive Council)
- Oversee GSA projects and initiatives
- Meet with and maintain strong working relationships with other GSA members
- Act as a spokesperson for the GSA in communicating the decisions and opinions of the GSA to the general membership, to the Graduate School and to all other relevant parties
- Meet with or ensure that GSA has representation with all relevant parties on campus
- Ensure the elections are held in accordance with the bylaws
- Ensure that regularly scheduled GSA meetings are held during the academic year
- Supervise other executive positions
- Work with the Community Liaison to identify and resolve issues facing graduate students

#### 1.1.2 *Vice President*

- Oversee the GSA in the absence of the President
- Coordinate the activities of the GSA ad-hoc committees and ensure that the committee activities are communicated to the President
- Work with the Community Liaison to promote graduate community activities
- Work with the Community Liaison to monitor recurring graduate student issues
- Work with the Community Liaison and Student Life to informally and formally survey graduate students to determine interest in large-scale events
- Chair the Graduate Research Conference and work with the Executive Director and Administrative Coordinator to ensure proper preparation for the conference

#### 1.1.3 *Vice President for External Affairs*

- Oversee the GSA in the absence of the President and Vice President
- Responsible for keeping up-to-date on major issues involving graduate students on a state and national level
- Responsible for maintaining and improving alumni relations
- Serve as the liaison between the Vice President and Alumni Association to help find sponsorship for the Graduate Research Conference
- Serve as GSA's representative on the Alumni Association board to raise the awareness for the need to maintain and improve graduate-alumni relationships

- Work with the Vice President to help prepare graduate student leaders to interact with other community members
- Coordinate with Historian on public relations work
- Monitor the website as produced and maintained by the Administrative Coordinator

#### *1.1.4 Treasurer*

- Responsible for developing and submitting an annual budget, that allocates GSA's money in accordance with its goals, to the Senate for approval at the first GSA Senate meeting of the academic year
- Responsible for authorizing and monitoring all expenditures made by the GSA and for ensuring that GSA spends within budgeted limits, and that funds are allocated to students and groups in accordance with the written policies of the GSA
- Responsible for maintaining the budget, monitoring GSA funds throughout the year, and making reports of spending and financial issues at Senate meetings
- Serve as the chair for any committee dealing with GSA financial matters
- Work with other GSA members and University personnel to make sure GSA's money is used appropriately
- Monitor and help GSA comment on finance policy issues
- Represent the GSA's position at the Fee Forum
- Evaluate major spending decisions
- Work with Vice-President and Community Liaison to help graduate organizations budget and finance their annual activities

#### *1.1.5 Historian*

- Keep an account and determine which programs and organizations are in good standing, as defined by the Bylaws/Constitution
- Keep programs and organizations informed about their standing
- Record minutes and attendance at all GSA Executive Council and Senate meetings
- Research and keep an accurate record of the history of the GSA at UMBC
- Coordinate with the Vice President for External Affairs on public relations work
- Maintain the GSA Showcase

#### *1.2 Elections*

There are mandatory eligibility requirements for UMBC graduate students interested in seeking and holding elected or appointed GSA Executive Board positions. All Executive Board members must have completed at least one academic year (Fall and Spring semesters) as a degree seeking student with a minimum of 12 graduate credits from UMBC before holding office.

If elected, all GSA Executive Board members must:

- Be officially accepted into a UMBC graduate program

- Have a cumulative 3.0 GPA and in good standing with The Graduate School
- Maintain at least a 3.0 semester GPA while in office
- Be free from academic probation and disciplinary suspension (both before and during any period of service)

An Elections Committee, as appointed by the President and consisting of three graduate students not running for election, shall oversee the election process. Nominations can be made by oneself or another currently enrolled graduate student. Nominations must be made no later than two (2) weeks prior to the April Senate meeting.

If a nominee allows her/his name to run for office, then s/he must submit a 200 word (maximum) description of her/his qualifications for the position. This description must be submitted via email to GSA by midnight one week before the April Senate meeting. Candidates must attend the April Senate meeting to present their statement, unless allowed an exception by the Elections Committee in advance. In such cases, the chair of the Elections Committee will read the candidate's statement to the Senate.

Elections will take place at the April Senate meeting of the academic year. Elections are determined by majority vote. The elected Executive Board begins its term on July 1st which is the beginning of the University fiscal year.

### *1.3 Executive Council Awards*

All members of the Executive Council are given an honorarium for carrying out the respective duties of office. The President is awarded \$8,000. The Vice Presidents are each awarded \$6,000. The Treasurer, and Historian are each awarded \$5,000. The awards are disbursed twice during the academic year. The first half of the disbursement is in December, and the second half of the disbursement is in May.

### *1.4 Resignations and Removals*

A member of the Executive Council may withdraw from office before the expiration of the term by submitting a resignation in writing to the Executive Council and the Associate Dean of the Graduate School. The remaining members of the Executive Council may then appoint a replacement to that office. A member of the Executive Council may be removed from office by a vote of 'no confidence' from two-thirds (2/3) of the Senate. Upon a vote of 'no confidence', the Senate shall vote for the replacement to that office.

### *1.5 Term of Office*

The term of office for Executive Council members shall be for one year, beginning on the first of July.

## **2 Office of Graduate Student Life (OGSL)**

The OGSL shall be staffed by students who receive graduate assistantships from the Graduate School. Four full-time assistantships shall be allocated to the OGSL. These positions provide tuition remission up to 10 credits, university health insurance, and a stipend determined by the minimum stipend amount set by the university. Some assistantships require Federal Work Study eligibility and US citizenship/permanent residency. All OGSL staff shall have a working knowledge of the policies of the

Graduate School, GSA and OGSL. They shall attend staff meetings and GSA Senate meetings, and assist with Graduate School and GSA sponsored events.

### *2.1 Executive Director*

- Provide training and guidance to the Executive Council
- Provide training, guidance, and supervision for the OGSL staff
- Liaise between the GSA and the University
- Provide continuity in GSA and the OGSL office during transitions
- Advise, motivate, and assist in the training of elected GSA officers
- Advise, motivate, assist and supervise OGSL work study assistants
- Aid GSA and OGSL staff in achieving goals
- Attend, advise, and assist in various GSA events
- Attend weekly Executive Council meetings, monthly Senate meetings, monthly GPD meetings, and biweekly meetings with the Associate Dean of the Graduate School
- Assist the Vice President in the planning and organizing of the Graduate Research Conference
- Maintain the GSA office by answering phones, ordering office supplies, and managing emails
- Oversee travel and research grants, event planning, room scheduling and food orders
- Oversee GSA spending, manage GSA's P-card and D-card processes, and assist in end of year reconciliation

### *2.2 OGSL Graduate Assistants*

#### *2.2.1 Grants Administrator*

- Oversee the overall operations of travel and research grants, which includes processing and monitoring travel and research grant applications and working fund requests in accordance with University and GSA policy
- Work closely with the Graduate School Fiscal Management Specialist.
- Serve as the liaison between grant applicants and UMBC accounting offices
- Maintain the master grant data base and generate reports on grant distribution
- Update student records as needed
- Assist as needed with filing and disseminating important information

#### *2.2.2 Community Liaison*

- Work directly or in conjunction with other departmental offices to help graduate students resolve conflict
- Intercept problems among the graduate population and work toward solutions with appropriate campus offices
- Liaise for issues such as housing, healthcare, and graduate employee needs
- Represent GSA at University committee meetings
- Develop relationships with faculty, staff, and students

- Assist OGSL and GSA in supporting graduate students
- Work with GSA committees formed to address specific problems facing graduate students
- Educate Graduate Organization leaders on UMBC policies and train Graduate Organization leaders on effective departmental management
- Present updates to Senate for any issues that need their consideration

### *2.2.3 Writing Advisor*

- Provide advice and support for all phases of writing of graduate students' academic work and thesis/dissertation writing
- Advise students on proper grammar, sentence structure, and style
- Serve as the guide to written documents made by the Executive Council, the Senate and the OGSL
- Keep records of appointments so that GSA has an accurate understanding of the assistance supplied in this area
- Conduct a yearly two-hour workshop on writing for UMBC's Promise Success Seminar series

### *2.2.4 Administrative Coordinator*

- Coordinate logistics of all GSA events
- Manage all communication from GSA, including announcements and newsletters
- Assist in the creation of flyers, posters, and invitations
- Coordinate the annual GSA awards process
- Manage and update the GSA webpage
- Assist the Historian in the maintenance of the GSA graduate student showcase
- Provide support as needed for projects and events managed by members of the Executive Council
- Perform miscellaneous office jobs such as copying, supply ordering, creating reports

## **3 Senate**

### *3.1 Responsibilities*

- Attend all GSA Senate meetings
- Serve on ad-hoc committees, as formed and appointed by the President
- Represent concerns and opinions from students of their program or organization
- Report proceedings of the meetings to their departments

### *3.2 Appointments*

Each Graduate Program Director (GPD) will appoint one, up to two, graduate students to represent their respective graduate program. Questions concerning the list of official graduate programs will be referred to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School for resolution in cooperation with the Executive Council.

### *3.3 Term of Office*

The term of office for a senator shall be for one year, beginning on the first of July.

### *3.4 Resignations and Removals*

A member of the Senate may withdraw from office before the expiration of the term by submitting a resignation in writing to the Executive Council and by notifying their GPD.

### *3.5 Ex Officio Members*

The President of UMBC, the Provost, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Vice Provost for Research and the Associate Dean of the Graduate School are non-voting ex officio members of the Senate.

### *3.6 Senate Committees*

Within the UMBC GSA Senate, committees are formed in the senate to perform specific tasks. The committees will also make policy suggestions to both the Executive Council and the Senate. These suggestions should be for the betterment of the GSA as a whole. GSA Senate committees can be formed throughout the year. The chair of the committee will be voted upon within the committee and will be submitted to the Executive Council before the next GSA Senate meeting. The GSA Senate committee is required to:

- Meet at least once per month outside of regular senate meetings
- Submit a written report on committee activity to the Executive Council within one week after each meeting containing a list of attendees and meeting minutes
- Report monthly to the Senate
- Senators and GSO Representatives may serve on a maximum of two committees
- Senators and GSO Representatives may only chair one committee
- Committees are limited to a minimum of 3 members not including ex-officio members. Committees are limited to a maximum of 5 members not including ex-officio members
- Ex-officio members will not receive compensation. Ex-officio members include: Any person whose primary role is an administrator, faculty, staff or GSA Executive Board member

#### *p3.6.1 Committee Member Compensation*

The Committee is eligible to receive the following compensation only after having met the above requirements for four consecutive months and after a one time majority vote by the senate.

Each committee member is eligible to receive compensation only after having participated in at least three committee meetings per semester and a positive review by the committee chair.

Each good standing committee member will choose to receive either: an additional \$125 per academic semester to their yearly travel and research grant limit of \$1000, or a \$125 dining or bookstore card. The Chair of the committee will choose to receive either an additional \$250 per academic semester for their yearly travel and research grant limit of \$1000, or a \$250 dining or bookstore card.

### *P3.6.2 Committee Performance Review*

Committee performance will be evaluated by the executive council and their review will be presented to the Senate during the February Senate meeting. The Senate will then vote to maintain or dissolve the committee.

At any time, a written report may be submitted to the executive council to review a committee's performance and the executive council under dire circumstances withholds the right to stop committee payment or dissolve the committee entirely.

## **4 Organizations**

### *4.1 Creating Organizations*

The GSA encourages graduate students to create graduate organizations. To create an organization a group of graduate students must submit the following:

- A signed letter from a faculty member agreeing to be the organization's advisor
- A student organization registration form with a graduate student executive committee
- An organization constitution
- A list of five active graduate student members
- Approval from The Executive Director, Executive Council, Senate, and Office of Student Life to obtain official recognition

### *4.2 Organization Funding*

Officially recognized graduate organizations that are in good standing may request up to \$1000.00 per year to fund events and programs. The Executive Council considers these requests and reserves the right to deny funding.

### *4.3 Responsibilities*

- At the beginning of each academic year, each organization must submit an updated Student Organization Registration form to remain in good standing
- Each organization must send one (1) graduate representative to each Senate meeting
- At the beginning of each year, each organization must submit a budget in order to be eligible to receive full \$1000 event and program funding

## **5 Good Standing**

To remain in good standing, a graduate program or organization must not miss more than two Senate meetings in an academic year. Failure to comply will result in the loss of grant funding for the upcoming semester. Programs and organizations not in good standing are not eligible to vote at Senate meetings.

## **6 Awards of Recognition**

Annually, GSA recognizes individuals in the UMBC graduate community for outstanding contributions to research, teaching, mentoring, service, and welfare. Award nominations shall open the first Monday of March and close one month later. Award recipients shall be approved by an impartial ad-hoc committee commissioned by the President and are recognized at the Annual Awards Banquet.

#### *6.1 The Jessica Soto-Perez Annual Memorial Award*

- Honors an outstanding graduate student who aids his/her peers in academic and professional pursuits during their time at UMBC
- Receives a \$250 honorarium and a name plate on the showcase plaque

#### *6.2 The Donald Creighton Annual Outstanding Faculty Award*

- Honors an outstanding advisor, mentor, or professor who aids graduate students in their academic and professional pursuits during their time at UMBC
- Receives a \$250 honorarium and a name plate on the showcase plaque

#### *6.3 The Outstanding University Staff Person of the Year*

- Honors an outstanding University staff person who helps further the mission of GSA and advocates for graduate students.
- Receives a \$250 honorarium and a name plate on the showcase plaque.

#### *6.4 The Outstanding Senator of the Year*

- Honors an outstanding Senator who contributes in a meaningful way to the welfare and improvement of the graduate student body through service to GSA and the Graduate Senate.
- Receives a \$250 honorarium and a name plate on the showcase plaque.

### **7 Faculty Advisory Board**

A Faculty Advisory Board will provide advice and guidance of strategy and long-term planning for the organization. The Board shall consist of three full-time, tenure-track or tenured faculty members from each of the University's Colleges. The Associate Dean and Dean of the Graduate School and Emeritus Executive Council members are *Ex-Officio* members of the Board. The Board members shall be nominated by the Executive Council, the Graduate Senate, or the *Ex-Officio* members. The Graduate Senate shall approve each nomination by a majority vote. Board members shall serve for a three (3) year term, renewable by a vote of the Graduate Senate. In the event of a vacancy of a Board member, the GSA President shall appoint a faculty member to serve for the remainder of the term. The presiding officer of the Board is the GSA President. The Board shall advise and guide GSA's governing affairs and strategic plan. The Board shall meet at least three times per calendar year.

### **8 Suspension of Bylaws**

Suspension of the Bylaws may be granted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of a quorum.



## **9 Ratification**

*This Constitution, as revised, of the Graduate Student Association of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County is hereby adopted and ratified by the Graduate Senate by a majority vote on this Second day of November of 2009; as amended on this Second day of April of 2012; as amended on this Fifth day of May 2014; as amended on this first day of December 2014.*