Graduate Student Government
University of Massachusetts Amherst

General Bylaws

These Bylaws, together with the GSG Constitution, serve as the governing framework for the Graduate Student Government (GSG) of the University of Massachusetts Amherst. They outline the structure, responsibilities, and procedures that guide the organization in its representation and service to the graduate student body.

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Article I. Representation

A. The Graduate Student Government (hereinafter referred to as the GSG) shall represent the graduate student body of the University of Massachusetts Amherst (hereinafter referred to as UMass Amherst) as outlined in the GSG Constitution.
B. The GSG shall represent constituencies from departments and programs as defined by the Graduate School Bulletin as well as non-departmental program-associated Graduate Student Organizations.
C. Representation of graduate students to the Senate shall be as follows:
    a. One (1) senator for departments with a graduate student population of 1-199 students.
    b. One (1) additional senator for departments with a graduate student population ranging from 200 to 499 students.
    c. One (1) additional senator for departments with a graduate student population of 500 or more.
D. All graduate students who are charged the Graduate Student Government Fee (hereinafter referred to as fee-paying graduate students) have the right to vote in GSG elections.
E. Election procedures must meet the minimum requirements as outlined in Article V Elections.
F. The GSG shall be composed of a Legislative Branch, an executive branch, and a judicial branch.
    a. The Legislative Branch shall be composed of the Senate, whose members are elected Senators. The Speaker and Associate Speaker shall serve as the presiding officers of the Senate.
    b. The Executive Branch shall be composed of the President, Vice President, and Treasurer.
    c. The Judicial Branch shall be composed of five (5) justices appointed by the GSG President and confirmed by a majority vote of the Senate membership in attendance at a scheduled meeting. Of these five justices, two (2) justices are to be elected as Chief Justice and Associate Chief Justice.

Article II. Legislative

A. The Legislative Branch of the Graduate Student Government shall consist of the Senate, the Speaker, and Associate Speaker.
B. The Senate
    a. Senators shall have a term of one academic year. This shall be defined as spanning from the commencement of the Fall Semester in September to the conclusion of the Spring Semester in May.
    b. The first meeting of the Senate will be managed by the President.
    c. Candidates for senators must be fee-paying graduate students.
        i. Senators shall be elected to represent their respective departments according

to the procedures in Article V Elections.

d. Rights and Responsibilities of Every Senator
    i. Bring the concerns, needs, and wishes of their constituents to the GSG and actively solicit input from graduate students on GSG Senate business and emergency meetings.
    ii. Regularly attend all meetings of the GSG and its appointed committees.
    iii. Disseminate information regarding GSG business, university-wide events, and issues affecting graduate students to their department or program.
    iv. Be familiar with the GSG Constitution, Bylaws, and procedures, as well as Robert's Rules of Order.
    v. Have one (1) vote at GSG meetings.
    vi. Serve on at least two (2) committees or councils: one must be an internal GSG Standing or Ad Hoc Committee, and the other must be an external committee governed by the Faculty Council.

C. The Speaker of the Senate
    a. The Senate shall elect a Speaker of the Senate from among its voting membership.
    b. The Speaker shall serve as the chief presiding officer, clerk, and parliamentarian of the Senate.
    c. The Speaker must be a sworn-in Senator in good standing.
    d. The Speaker shall receive compensation in the form of a Graduate Assistantship (subject to GEO contract) or a Non-Working Fellowship (issued as a one-time payment per semester) subject to the GSG budget
    e. As the chief presiding officer of the Senate, the Speaker shall hold the following duties:
        i. Appoint all Standing and ad hoc Committees of the Senate in consultation with the President, subject to a majority vote of the Senate members in attendance at a scheduled meeting.
        ii. Chair all Senate meetings and serve as an ex-officio member of all Standing and ad hoc Committees.
        iii. Act as the official spokesperson of the Senate.
        iv. The Speaker may call an emergency meeting of the Senate in response to urgent and extraordinary circumstances that impact governance, student welfare, or institutional operations. The Speaker shall consult with the President before calling such a meeting unless an immediate and pressing situation—such as a crisis affecting the Senate's ability to function or a time-sensitive decision—requires action without prior consultation. In such cases, the Speaker shall notify the President at the earliest possible opportunity, which shall be no later than **three (3) business days** after the meeting has been called. A crisis affecting the Senate's ability to function includes, but is not limited to, the following circumstances:
            1. The inability to reach a quorum for a critical vote that impacts governance or student welfare.
            2. The resignation, removal, or incapacitation of key Senate officers requiring immediate succession decisions.

3. Institutional decisions by the university that materially impact the graduate student body and require urgent Senate action.
4. Threats to student safety, financial stability of GSG operations, or legal compliance matters requiring immediate deliberation.
5. Any unforeseen event that prevents the Senate from executing its legislative responsibilities within the required timeframe.

v. Ensure Senate business is conducted in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Acts of the GSG.
vi. Forward the minutes of every Senate meeting to the President, GSG Steering Committee, and the university administration for transparency and institutional record-keeping.
vii. Provide oversight for Senate elections and appointments, ensuring fairness and adherence to these Bylaws.
viii. Work with the Elections Committee to resolve disputes related to elections.
ix. Ensure that resolutions, bills, and proposals are properly drafted and presented for a vote, and notify the President of passed resolutions that require executive action.
x. Sign or certify resolutions passed by the Senate.
xi. Address concerns related to misconduct, absenteeism, or dereliction of duty.
xii. Organize orientation and training sessions for newly elected Senators.
xiii. Provide guidance on Robert's Rules of Order, parliamentary procedure, and legislative drafting.

f. Election & Oversight of the Speaker of the Senate:
   i. The President shall oversee the election of the Speaker, ensuring a fair and transparent process in accordance with the GSG Constitution and Bylaws.
   ii. The election shall take place at the first regularly scheduled Senate meeting of the academic year or at the next meeting following a vacancy.
   iii. The election shall be conducted via secret ballot, and the candidate receiving a majority vote of the Senate members present shall be declared the Speaker.
g. Oath of Office & Swearing-In Procedures:
   i. The President shall swear in the Speaker upon election.
   ii. The Speaker shall swear in all newly elected Senators at the beginning of each term.
   iii. The oath of office shall affirm the Speaker's and Senators' commitment to upholding the GSG Constitution, Bylaws, and the interests of graduate students.
h. Vacancy:
   vii. If the office of Speaker becomes vacant, a new Speaker shall be elected at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting, unless otherwise provided in the General Bylaws of the GSG.

D. The Associate Speaker of the Senate
   a. The Senate shall elect an Associate Speaker from among its voting membership to

serve as the chief historian and chief coordination officer of the Senate.

b. The Associate Speaker must be a sworn-in Senator in good standing.
c. The Associate Speaker shall assume the duties of the Speaker in their absence and assist in coordinating Senate operations.
d. The Associate Speaker shall receive monetary compensation, the amount of which shall be determined by the GSG Budget and approved through the Senate Finance Committee.
e. Vacancy in the Office of Associate Speaker:
    i. A new Associate Speaker shall be elected at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting, unless otherwise provided in the General Bylaws of the GSG.
    ii. Until the position is filled, the Speaker shall assume or delegate the Associate Speaker's duties.
f. As the chief historian and chief coordination officer of the Senate, the Associate Speaker shall hold the following duties:
    i. Serve as an ex-officio member of all Standing and ad hoc Committees.
    ii. Record and maintain the minutes of all Senate meetings. The minutes must include:
        1. Exact vote counts during roll-call votes.
        2. Notes on all announcements and reports.
        3. A record of all vacancies regarding Senate seats.
        4. All reports or presentations made during the Senate that can be disseminated.
    iii. Maintain accurate attendance records for Senate meetings.
    iv. Handle Senate correspondence and ensure that official communications are properly archived.
    v. Oversee the permanent records of the Senate, ensuring historical continuity and accessibility.
    vi. Act as a neutral mediator when conflicts arise between Senators or committees.
    vii. Work with the Judicial Branch to resolve internal disputes.

E. Termination of Senators
    a. Recall by Constituency
        i. Any constituency represented in the GSG may petition the GSG President to initiate a recall vote for their sitting senator.
        ii. The petition may be submitted in writing or electronically via email.
        iii. It must be signed by either:
            1. 20 current students in the constituency, or
            2. 25% of currently enrolled students in the program (rounded up to the nearest whole number),

            whichever number is smaller.

        iv. For the purpose of this petition, a valid signature includes the student's name, UMass NetID, and SPIRE ID.

v. Upon receipt of the petition, the President shall promptly contact the appropriate constituency administrator (e.g., Graduate Program Director) to verify the authenticity of the signatures and confirm whether the petition meets the required threshold.
vi. If the petition is validated, the President shall refer it to the Vice President to conduct a recall vote as soon as practicable.
    1. The Vice President shall ensure that a secret ballot is created and distributed to all students in the affected constituency.
    2. The ballot shall consist of a single yes/no question on whether to recall the senator in question.
    3. The Vice President must ensure that students are given adequate notice of the recall election via a department-wide email.
    4. The ballot shall remain open for one week.
vii. The recall vote is considered successful if it is approved by a simple majority of votes cast.
viii. If the recall is successful the senator is immediately removed from office and forfeits all committee assignments and associated roles within the GSG.
ix. A replacement election shall be conducted in accordance with Bylaws Article V.

b. Attendance & Good Standing
    i. Senators who miss two (2) consecutive Senate meetings may receive a formal notification from the Steering Committee regarding their attendance status.
    ii. To remain in good standing, a Senator must:
        1. Acknowledge receipt of the notification within five (5) working days.
        2. Attend the next scheduled Senate meeting following notification.
c. Grounds for Termination
    i. A Senator who fails to attend a third (3rd) consecutive meeting may be subject to automatic termination from their position.
    ii. The constituency must elect a replacement Senator in accordance with the Election Guidelines under GSG Bylaws Article V.
    iii. Terminated Senators immediately forfeit their position on all GSG committees and any associated roles within the organization.
    iv. The Steering Committee shall notify committee chairs of any Senator's removal to ensure procedural compliance.

Article III. Officers

A. The Officers of the Graduate Student Government are the President, Vice President and Treasurer (hereafter "the Officers")
B. The Officers shall be elected in accordance with Article V of these Bylaws.

C. Officer Vacancies and Replacement
    a. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice President shall assume the office of the President and resign their role as Vice President.
    b. In the case of a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President will have the authority, with confirmation by the Senate, to appoint a graduate student to the Vice Presidency.
        i. The President shall submit their nominated individual to the Senate where the nominee will be considered confirmed upon a majority vote of the Senate. This vote shall take place at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting, or within one (1) calendar week, from the announcement of the nomination.
        ii. The Senate shall have two opportunities to ratify the Vice President replacement candidate. Should the Senate not approve the replacement on the first vote, another special meeting shall be scheduled within one week and another vote shall be held on a different candidate submitted by the President.
        iii. Should the Senate not approve the replacement at the second vote, the President shall appoint an "Acting Vice President" without the approval of the Senate. No Acting Vice President shall serve more than thirty (30) days from the date of their appointment. The President shall continue to nominate additional candidates for Vice President during the duration of the Acting Vice President's term. The term of the Acting Vice President will expire immediately upon confirmation of a Vice President by the Senate.
        iv. Should the term of the Acting Vice President expire before the confirmation of a full Vice President, the Acting Vice President shall be considered confirmed as Vice President by non-action of the Senate.
        v. In the case of a vacancy of the Treasurer, the following shall be followed:
            1. The Steering Committee shall open an application to replace the Treasurer to the graduate student population. The Steering Committee shall establish the criteria and publicize it to the Senate and the graduate student body.
            2. The Steering Committee shall open applications for a minimum of one (1) week. Should members of the Steering Committee apply for the Treasurer position, those members shall recuse themselves from business related to the Treasurer replacement.
            3. Should the Steering Committee be an even number of

individuals during this process, the Senate shall appoint one member of the Senate to serve on the Steering Committee and vote until a new Treasurer has been chosen. They shall only vote on matters regarding the replacement of the Treasurer and shall not count towards quorum for any other business.

4. The Steering Committee shall nominate a candidate for Treasurer to the Senate via a majority vote of the Committee. The Senate shall appoint a candidate to the position via a majority vote of the body. This vote shall take place at the next regularly scheduled Senate meeting, or within one (1) calendar week, from the announcement of the nomination.

vi. Any individual who assumes the role of an Officer shall be entitled to the appropriate proportion of the salary allocated for the post. A recalled officer shall not receive any payment from the Graduate Student Government subsequent to the date of the recall vote.

D. Terms and Payment
   a. The term of all officers shall be from June 1 to May 31 of the following year.
   b. The officers shall serve in full-time-equivalent assistantships for the academic year and shall receive a stipend equal to the minimum hourly rate of full-time-equivalent graduate employees as determined by the Graduate School Assistantship Office.
   c. All officers shall serve 10 hours per week in paid assistantships during the summer at the minimum GEO hourly rate. Officers may work up to 20 hours per week as needed, and if allowable by budgetary constraints.
      i. Specific compensation and benefits accruing to graduate assistantships are informed by the collective bargaining agreement ("Contract") with the Graduate Employees Organization ("GEO") in force during the appointment period. All Graduate Assistants should review this agreement carefully for detailed explanations of compensation and benefits that may apply.
      ii. If budgetary resources allow, staff members may serve 10 hours per week in paid assistantships during the summer. Staff members may work up to 20 hours per week as needed, and if allowable by budgetary constraints.

E. Rights and Responsibilities
   a. President
      i. Responsibilities will include but are not limited to:
         1. Serves as chief administrative officer of the GSG.
         2. Supervises GSG staff members and moderates office meetings.
         3. Oversees graduate student representation on committees and commissions within the GSG and the Faculty Senate.
         4. Serves as liaison with the university administration.

5. Serves on committees including but not limited to:
    a. Steering Committee as chair
    b. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee as initial chair
6. Takes detailed notes in meetings.
7. Ensures that officers and staff members are involved in the decision-making process and attend meetings with administrators, including the chancellor and Vice Chancellor of SACL

b. Vice President
    i. Responsibilities will include but are not limited to:
        1. Serves as President in the absence of the President.
        2. Attends all Steering Committee and Senate meetings.
        3. Serves on committees including but not limited to:
            a. Childcare Committee as chair
            b. Elections Committee as chair
            c. Finance Committee as vice-chair
            d. Steering Committee
        4. Takes detailed notes in meetings.

c. Treasurer
    i. Responsibilities will include but are not limited to:
        1. Serves as chief financial officer of the GSG.
        2. Manages the Graduate Student Government Trust Fund in conjunction with the Finance Committee and at the direction of the Senate.
        3. Provides a report in writing to be attached to the agenda of each regular Senate meeting, detailing all GSG funds committed or disbursed since the last regular Senate meeting
        4. Controls purchasing and expenditure of funds.
        5. Oversees distribution of Line Item and ad hoc funding.
        6. Develops the budget with the Finance Committee and the Office of Student Affairs and Campus Life (SACL).
        7. Attends all Steering Committee and Senate meetings.
        8. Oversees Graduate Student Organizations: registration, re-registration, and other events.
        9. Serves on committees including but not limited to:
            a. Finance Committee as chair
            b. Childcare Committee
            c. Steering Committee
        10. Takes detailed notes in meetings.

F. Discipline and Resignation
    a. Employment-Related Nonperformance
        i. The President, on their own initiative, may file a complaint with the Office of Student Affairs and Campus Life (SACL) regarding the nonfulfillment of duties by a GSG officer, where such duties are stipulated by the graduate assistantship contract, GSG Constitution, or GSG Bylaws.
        ii. As the administrative body responsible for the employment of GSG officers, SACL shall handle such complaints in accordance with applicable University procedures, including but not limited to performance improvement plans (PIPs) and just cause standards, as required under the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) Collective Bargaining Agreement.
        iii. Filing a complaint with SACL does not preclude internal GSG proceedings and may occur concurrently or independently of Senate actions.
    b. Internal Investigation by the Senate
        i. The GSG Senate may, by a simple majority vote, initiate an internal investigation into the failure of any officer to fulfill their duties.
        ii. Upon such vote, the Senate shall appoint an Ad Hoc Committee to investigate the complaint and report its findings.
        iii. The Ad Hoc Committee may, at its discretion, refer the matter to SACL if it believes employment-related intervention is warranted.
    c. Senate Disciplinary Procedure
        i. Notwithstanding any action or inaction by SACL, the Senate may proceed with disciplinary or recall proceedings.
        ii. A motion to initiate such proceedings must be added to the meeting agenda by either:
            1. A letter from the Steering Committee, or
            2. A petition signed by no fewer than ten (10) senators in good standing.
        iii. The motion must include a written statement of charges and be approved by a simple majority vote of the Senate.
        iv. Upon passage, the officer in question shall receive a formal written warning and may be placed on internal GSG probation with a clear performance benchmark.
            1. The Senate motion must specify either the Steering Committee or a special purpose Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the internal probation proceeding.
            2. The probation period must have a specified termination period at which point the overseeing committee shall issue a formal written report to the Senate.
        v. If the officer fails to meet the established benchmark, the Senate may, by two-thirds (2/3) vote at a subsequent meeting, vote to censure or recall the officer.
        vi. Alternatively, any general meeting of the graduate student body may censure or recall an officer by a simple majority vote.

d. Just Cause
    i. All disciplinary or recall actions are subject to the "just cause" provisions of the GEO Collective Bargaining Agreement and University policy. Where applicable, officers must be afforded due process, including notice of allegations and a reasonable opportunity to respond.

G. The President shall receive the resignations of other officers. The President shall resign to the Vice President.

Article IV. GSG Staff

A. The Steering Committee may employ graduate students to assist with the operations of the GSG. These positions will each require a commitment of 20 hours per week and will be compensated at a graduate assistantship rate. The number of staff positions will be subject to the GSG budget.
B. Staff positions may include but are not limited to:
    a. Chief of Staff
    b. Secretary of International Student Affairs
    c. Secretary of Diversity, Equity, Inclusivity, and Justice (DEIJ)
    d. Secretary of Student Affairs and Campus Life
    e. Secretary of Academic Affairs and University Relations
    f. Secretary of Media and Communications.
C. The specific roles and responsibilities of each staff position will be clearly defined and differentiated by the Steering Committee to ensure that all essential functions within the organization are effectively covered. The Steering Committee shall conduct regular reviews of these roles to identify and respond to changing organizational needs.
D. In response to these changing needs, identified through feedback, performance metrics, and strategic objectives, the Steering Committee retains the right to modify existing staff roles, introduce new positions, or eliminate currently existing positions. These decisions will be made using a transparent process that includes consultation with stakeholders and a majority vote within the Steering Committee.
E. Should these changes impact existing role holders, a plan will be in place to support those affected, potentially including re-employment or temporary employment options, notice periods, and training for new responsibilities.
F. Discipline
    a. Employment-Related Nonperformance
        i. The President, on their own initiative, may file a complaint with the Office of Student Affairs and Campus Life (SACL) regarding the nonfulfillment of duties by a GSG staff member, where such duties are stipulated by the graduate assistantship contract, GSG Constitution, or GSG Bylaws.

ii. As the administrative body responsible for the employment of GSG staff, SACL shall handle such complaints in accordance with applicable University procedures, including but not limited to performance improvement plans (PIPs) and just cause standards, as required under the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) Collective Bargaining Agreement.
iii. Filing a complaint with SACL does not preclude internal GSG proceedings and may occur concurrently or independently of Senate actions.

b. Internal Investigation by the Senate
   i. The GSG Senate may, by a simple majority vote, initiate an internal investigation into the failure of any staff member to fulfill their duties.
   ii. Upon such vote, the Senate shall appoint an Ad Hoc Committee to investigate the complaint and report its findings.
   iii. The Ad Hoc Committee may, at its discretion, refer the matter to SACL if it believes employment-related intervention is warranted.
c. Senate Disciplinary Procedure
   i. Notwithstanding any action or inaction by SACL, the Senate may proceed with disciplinary or recall proceedings.
   ii. A motion to initiate such proceedings must be added to the meeting agenda by either:
      1. A letter from the Steering Committee, or
      2. A petition signed by no fewer than ten (10) senators in good standing.
   iii. The motion must include a written statement of charges and be approved by a simple majority vote of the Senate.
   iv. Upon passage, the staff member in question shall receive a formal written warning and may be placed on internal GSG probation with a clear performance benchmark
   v. The Senate motion must specify either the Steering Committee or a special purpose Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the internal probation proceeding
   vi. The probation period must have a specified termination period at which point the overseeing committee shall issue a formal written report to the Senate
d. If the staff member fails to meet the established benchmark, the Senate may, by two-thirds (2/3) vote at a subsequent meeting, vote to dismiss the staff member
e. All disciplinary or recall actions are subject to the "just cause" provisions of the GEO Collective Bargaining Agreement and University policy. Where applicable, officers must be afforded due process, including notice of allegations and a reasonable opportunity to respond.

Article V. Elections

A. Election of GSG Officers
   a. Elections shall be held in accordance with the GSG Elections Guidelines and overseen by the

Elections Committee.

b. All fee-paying graduate students shall be eligible for all GSG Officer positions. The Officer positions shall include the Treasurer and a joint Presidential/Vice Presidential ticket.
c. Nominations shall begin no more than six (6) weeks after the start of the Spring semester, and shall be open for at least one (1) week.
d. No graduate student may receive nominations for multiple GSG Officer positions. Candidates who receive multiple nominations must identify their preferred position to the Elections Committee before the nomination period closes. Failure to identify their preferred position will result in having their name stricken from the ballot for all positions for which they were nominated.
e. The Elections Committee shall host a minimum of one (1), but no more than three (3), in-person and on-campus candidate information sessions after the end of the nomination period. The sessions shall provide candidates with information about the GSG, Officer responsibilities, the elections process, the Officer election guidelines, and an Agreement of Understanding that they must sign.
f. To be a qualified nominee for GSG Office, a candidate shall attend at least one in-person information session. They shall sign and return an "Agreement of Understanding" to the Elections Committee. Candidates shall indicate which position they are registering for and shall indicate their running mate (if applicable).
    i. Candidates for the ticket of President/Vice President must both fill, sign, and submit an Agreement of Understanding to become a qualified ticket.
    ii. The Agreement of Understanding shall, but is not limited to, confirm that the signed nominee(s) have read, understood, and agreed to abide by the General Bylaws and elections guidelines of the GSG. No person or ticket shall be placed on the ballot without having a valid, signed, Agreement of Understanding.
g. Within seventy-two (72) hours of the last candidate information session, the Elections Committee shall publicly announce the (i) the qualified nominees, and (ii) the campaigning and voting procedure, as outlined by the GSG Elections Guidelines. Any candidate without a signed Agreement of Understanding at the time of the Elections Committee's announcement will be considered unqualified and will not be placed on the ballot.
h. The campaign period shall be at least seven (7) calendar days. The campaign period shall commence only after the Elections Committee makes its public announcement of the list of qualified nominees to the graduate student body.
i. There shall be one official open forum for candidate introductions prior to voting, and all the candidates' statements will be made available on the GSG website.
    i. This open forum shall occur on the day before the first day of the voting period. This forum shall be video-recorded by the Elections Committee and posted on the GSG website. The Elections Committee shall include a link to this recording in all subsequent correspondence (including emails) concerning the ongoing election to the

graduate student body.

j. Elections shall be determined by a plurality where the candidate or ticket with the most number of votes shall win the election. A minimum of 5% of fee-paying graduate students must vote in order for the election to be valid. In the event of less than 5% vote, the election shall be rerun with a new nomination period.
k. If two elections have not reached the 5% vote threshold, and there is not enough time in the spring semester to hold another election, the Senate may appoint interim officers to hold the office until elections can be held in the fall.
l. There shall be at least one regularly scheduled Senate meeting between the close of elections and the end of the academic year.

B. Election of GSG Senators
   a. Regular Senate Elections shall occur in the Spring semester in conjunction with the officer general elections.
   b. During the Regular Election period, the Elections Committee will not accept requests to conduct internal departmental elections. The Elections Committee shall oversee all Regular Senate Elections as a unified process.
   c. Senators shall be elected to represent their respective departments and must follow these minimum guidelines:
      i. Elections shall have a minimum of one (1) week of nomination period and a minimum of one (1) week of campaign period.
      ii. The election process must not exceed five (5) weeks in total.
      iii. The winner is determined by a simple plurality vote (the candidate receiving the highest number of votes wins).
   d. Special Elections for GSG Senators
      i. The Elections Committee may conduct special elections to fill Senate seats that are vacant outside of the regular election period
      ii. Special elections must be conducted in accordance with the timeline specified in Article V, Section B(c)(i-ii).
      iii. In the absence of a seated Elections Committee, the Vice President may conduct special elections
   e. Departmental Internal Elections for GSG Senators
      i. Departments that remain with vacant Senate seats after the regular election period may conduct independent internal elections for the election of senators with the approval of the GSG Elections Committee.
      ii. Initiating an Internal Election
         1. Any graduate student of an academic department with one or more vacant Senate seats may initiate a request for an internal election by contacting the Elections Committee or, if unavailable, the GSG President.
         2. The Elections Committee will delegate a single departmental representative

with responsibility for conducting an internal election.

3. In the event of multiple requests for the same department, preference will be given to students representing the departmental graduate student organization (GSO) to act as the departmental representative. If no GSO representative has initiated a request, the Elections Committee will deal with the first graduate student who contacted the Elections Committee.

iii. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

1. The departmental representative must obtain an MOU from the GSG Elections Committee chair or, if unavailable, the GSG President before announcing an internal election.
2. The MOU must affirm the departmental representative's agreement to comply with all GSG Bylaws and Election Guidelines.

iv. Election Conduct

1. Internal elections must follow the timeline specified in Article V, Section B(c)(i-ii).
2. The departmental representative must maintain records of all communications related to the nomination period, campaign period, and voting process.
3. Elections must be announced via email to all eligible department members.
4. All election-related emails must include the GSG Elections email address and instructions to contact the committee regarding any concerns about election integrity or fairness.

v. Election Review & Approval

1. Before announcing election results, the departmental representative must submit all election documentation to the GSG Elections Committee for final review and approval.
2. The Elections Committee must wait at least seven (7) calendar days before formally recognizing the election results. If complaints are received, the committee may defer approval to conduct an independent review.
3. Once the committee verifies compliance with Article V, Section B(c)(i-ii), it will notify the departmental representative of the acceptance of election results. At that time, the representative shall announce the results within their department, and the elected senators shall assume office immediately.

vi. Election Violations & Consequences

1. If any violations of Article V, Section B(e)(iv) occur, the Elections Committee will notify the departmental representative that the election has been voided.
2. The committee will provide a written explanation for the rejection of the election results.

Article VI. Committees

A. The Senate shall have the power to establish and/or appoint standing and Ad Hoc Committees to the Senate as are deemed necessary for the successful conduct of its business.
    a. Committees shall function collectively according to principles of maximum participation of the membership.
    b. All committee members shall recuse themselves from committee actions that may present a conflict of interest.
    c. Committees shall keep accurate written minutes of their meetings.
    d. The election of senators to standing committees shall be on the agenda of the first Senate meeting of the academic year.
    e. The Senate shall have the right to recall its representatives on any Senate committee by two-thirds (2/3) vote.
B. Standing Committees
    a. Steering Committee
        i. Membership of the Steering Committee shall consist of:
            1. The President as chair
            2. The Speaker as vice-chair
            3. The Vice President
            4. The Treasurer
            5. The Chief Justice
            6. Two representatives elected from the Senate.
        ii. The senators shall be elected to seats on the Committee at a regular or special meeting of the Senate by simple majority vote. Such elections must have been previously included as agenda items for those meetings.
        iii. Meetings of the Steering Committee shall be called by the President as required for the conduct of necessary business. A quorum for all business shall be three members of the Committee. Meetings shall be open to all who wish to attend except during closed sessions.
        iv. Any initiative or action of the GSG Executive Branch other than those required for the day-to-day operations of the GSG must be presented to the committee for approval.
            1. Any member of the committee may request any proposed action or initiative be put to a vote before the committee.
            2. The committee may take no action without a majority vote of the members.
            3. The President may veto any proposed action or initiative
        v. All actions of the Steering Committee shall be strictly subject to review and

amendment or repeal by a regular or special meeting of the Senate, or by a general meeting of graduate students.

vi. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
    1. To fulfill those functions required of it under the Constitution and Bylaws.
    2. To discuss and approve GSG priorities, plans, policies, and actions, and proposing and recommending such to the Senate for approval.
    3. To review motions submitted for inclusion on the agenda of a regular or special meeting of the Senate. No such motion submitted may be omitted from the agenda.
    4. To organize and to execute efficient day-to-day functioning of GSG. Such duties may include but are not limited to purchase of necessary materials, maintenance of files and archives, disbursement of wages and issuance of Senate documents.
    5. To hire and evaluate staff members
    6. To ensure an accurate and current record of income and expenditure of Senate funds, which shall be open to inspection by any graduate student during advertised office hours.
    7. To act in full, on behalf of the Senate, in such areas and for such terms as the Senate may determine (e.g., Intersession, Summer Vacation).
    8. To create and present to the Senate twice-annual reports on academic year goals, priorities, and accomplishments.
        a. The first report and presentation should be created and shared with the Senate within six weeks of the first day of classes during the fall semester. This report should, at minimum, detail the GSG leadership's academic year goals and priorities.
        b. The second report and presentation of the academic year should take place within six weeks of the last day of classes during the spring semester. This report should, at minimum, detail academic year accomplishments, including an assessment of, and plan for, ongoing and future priorities.
    9. The Steering Committee shall schedule training(s) for the Senate and broader graduate students.

b. Finance Committee
    i. Membership of the Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer as chair, the Vice President as vice chair, and three elected Senators in good standing. The senators shall be elected to seats on the Committee at the regular or special meeting of the Senate in September of each year, or whenever vacancies arise, and shall serve until the close of the academic year. Such elections must have been previously

included as agenda items for those meetings.

ii. Committee meetings shall be called as required for the conduct of necessary business. A quorum for all business shall be three members. Meetings shall be open to all who wish to attend except during closed sessions.

iii. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
    1. To propose an annual budget for the following academic year to the Senate for approval. The Finance Committee may approve revisions to the annual budget at any time during the year. Revisions to the budget must then be presented to, and approved by the Senate, before they can be implemented.
    2. To review requests for funds submitted by any organization or individual.
    3. To advise all Graduate Student Organizations (GSO) for funding matters in accordance with the guidelines laid out in the Graduate Student Organization Funding Policy.
    4. To recommend to the Senate for approval such regulations, policies and documents as shall be considered necessary to the efficient conduct of their charge.

iv. The Graduate Student Government shall reserve the power to investigate evidence or accusations of malfeasance or misconduct by groups, agencies, individuals, or other entities funded by the GSG. This may result in the suspension of payments or assignments of money to said group until the accusations are investigated and their credence established. This investigation is to be carried out by an Ad Hoc Committee convened for that purpose. If such accusations are found to be true no further funding will be forthcoming until such time as the Senate is satisfied that it will be well spent. The Senate also reserves the right to demand the return of misspent funds.

c. Childcare Committee

i. Membership of the Childcare Committee shall consist of the Vice President as chair, the Treasurer as vice chair, and three graduate students appointed by the Vice President.

ii. A quorum for business shall be three members.

iii. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
    1. Explore and advocate for child-friendly policies
    2. Ensure that the needs and viewpoints of graduate student parents are represented within GSG

d. Elections Committee

i. Membership shall consist of a minimum of five members. If there are more than five members, then the committee must be composed of an odd number of members. The chair of the committee will be internally elected by the Elections

Committee.

ii. Candidates running for office may not stand on the Elections Committee.
iii. A quorum for all business shall be a majority of the committee.
iv. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
    1. Conducting elections of executive officers according to the Graduate Student Government Election Guidelines,
    2. Calling for special elections when needed in accordance with the Graduate Student Government Election Guidelines.
    3. Report the results of elections to the Senate.
    4. Reviewing, if necessary, the senator election procedures of each constituency as stated in these Bylaws under Article V

e. Constitution and Bylaws Committee
    i. Membership of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall consist of the President as initial chair with at least two other graduate student members.
    ii. A quorum for business shall be two members.
    iii. The committee shall elect its chair after the first meeting is in session.
    iv. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
        1. Recommend changes to the GSG Bylaws
        2. To present the proposed changes to the Bylaws in the Senate meeting for deliberation and vote.

f. Food Security Committee
    i. Membership of the Food Security Committee shall consist of the President as initial chair with at least two other graduate student members.
    ii. A quorum for business shall be two members.
    iii. The committee shall elect its chair after the first meeting is in session.
    iv. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
        1. Assessing the food needs of the graduate student community.
        2. Developing policy documents for recommendations to be placed before the university administration to ensure food security for Graduate Students.

g. Diversity, Equity & Inclusivity Committee
    i. Membership of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusivity Committee shall consist of the Secretary of DEIJ as the chair with at least two other graduate student members.
    ii. A quorum for business shall be 2 members.
    iii. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
        1. Discussing and trying to resolve the relevant issues faced by the Graduate student community.
        2. Forming a policy document for recommendations to be placed in front

of the University management to help resolve the graduate student grievances.

h. International Student Committee
    i. Membership of the International Student Committee shall consist of the Secretary of International Student Affairs as the chair with at least two other graduate student members.
    ii. A quorum for business shall be 2 members.
    iii. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
        1. Discussing and trying to resolve the relevant issues being faced by the international graduate student community.
        2. Forming a policy document for recommendations to be placed in front of the University management to help resolve the graduate student grievances.

i. ad hoc Committees
    i. The Senate and Steering Committee shall have the power to establish Ad Hoc Committees for specific purposes as the needs of the GSG require. The Ad Hoc Committees shall be responsible for electing their own chairpersons as required.
    ii. Ad hoc committee shall exist until fulfillment of the purpose for which it is established or until otherwise dissolved by the Steering Committee. No Ad Hoc Committee shall continue beyond the current Senate term.
    iii. An Ad Hoc Committee may become a standing committee upon the passage of an Amendment to these Bylaws, as outlined in the constitution, establishing it as such.

Article VII. Meetings

A. All regular Senate meeting dates shall be set by the end of the first two weeks of each semester. Meeting times and locations shall be determined by the Steering Committee and published at least 48 hours in advance.
B. The Speaker shall preside over a regular or general meeting. In the absence of the Speaker, or if the agenda includes a motion to recall the Speaker, the Associate Speaker shall preside.
C. Best efforts shall be made to make Senate meetings accessible and meet accommodation needs to ensure equitable and just access to participation and attendance in Senate proceedings.
D. Meeting minutes shall be recorded by a member of the GSG office and should be made available within 48 hours to the graduate student body.
E. All meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, unless superseded by these Bylaws.

F. The Speaker shall appoint a parliamentarian to provide advice on conducting the meeting and respond to points of order.
G. Meeting agendas shall be prepared in accordance with the Constitution. For motions to be included on the agenda they shall be made available to the Speaker at least 48 hours before the meeting.
H. All motions not on the agenda must be given to the parliamentarian in writing upon presentation.
I. Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution or Bylaws, motions require a simple majority vote to pass.
J. All meetings are open unless the Senate votes to continue the meeting in executive session, as defined by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25

Article VIII. Finances

A. All Trustee and University financial and operational policies and Campus procedures shall govern the financial transactions of the Graduate Student Government as well as the financial transactions of any person(s), agency, or organization funded in whole or in part by the Graduate Student Government Trust Fund.
B. The Graduate Student Government Senate Tax shall be collected each semester by the University.
C. The GSG shall procure revenue primarily through the Senate Tax levied upon all eligible graduate students, as defined by the Constitution. A recommended increase in the Senate Tax of 7.5% and below shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Senate membership in attendance at a scheduled meeting. An increase in the Senate Tax of over 7.5% shall be in accordance with the constitution.
D. Procedure to approve the GSG budget
    a. Before the last scheduled meeting of the Senate in March, the Finance Committee shall compile its final recommendations of the proposed GSG budget and submit it to the Senate for review. The proposed annual GSG budget shall contain a complete breakdown, by account number of recommended allocations.
    b. The proposed annual GSG budget shall be placed on the agenda for a scheduled Senate meeting in March, and upon a majority vote of the Senate membership in attendance shall be adopted by the Senate.
    c. Any modifications to the approved budget in excess of $1000 shall be approved by the Finance Committee and Senate.
    d. Graduate Student Organizations shall adhere to the Graduate Student Organization Funding Policy found in the appendix of the Bylaws

Article IX. GSG Code of Conduct

A. No officer, staff member or senator of the GSG shall participate in any private business or professional activity, or have any direct or indirect financial interest which would place said officer or agent in a position where there is a conflict between that private interest and the best interests of the GSG.
B. No officer, staff member or senator of the GSG shall use or allow the use of any GSG property, facilities, or personnel of any kind for any activity not officially sanctioned by the Constitution of the GSG, the Bylaws of the GSG or an Act of the GSG.
C. No person shall corruptly give, offer, or promise to any GSG officer, staff member or senator any pecuniary or other benefit not authorized by the Constitution of the GSG, the Bylaws of the GSG, or by Act of the GSG, for the past, present, or future performance or non-performance of an act which the person believes to have been, or the officer or agent represents as having been, within the official capacity of the officer or agent.
D. No officer, staff member or senator of the GSG shall aid, advise, procure or in any other way directly induce another to act in violation of the Constitution of the GSG, the Bylaws of the GSG, or an Act of the GSG.

Article X. Grievance Procedure

In the event of officer recall/removal or staff member dismissal the individual shall follow the Graduate Employee Organization guidelines and procedures.

Article XI. Amendment Procedures

A. Any voting member of the GSG Senate may propose an amendment to these Bylaws.
    a. The proposal for an amendment shall be submitted to the President at least two weeks before the meeting where it will be considered. Amendment proposals shall include:
        i. Original article (if applicable)
        ii. Proposed amendment
        iii. Reason for proposed amendment
B. The proposed amendments shall have been presented at one previous meeting of the body concerned; and
C. The final vote on all Bylaw amendments shall be determined by a two-thirds (2/3) majority.

Article XII. Referendum

A. There shall be two primary types of referenda:
    a. Action - An Action Referendum, if approved, shall become an Act of the GSG, shall not be subject to presidential veto, and when such an action is intended as a formal recommendation from the GSG, as a governance body, it shall be submitted in accordance with the procedures prescribed in Trustee Document T73-098, as amended.
    b. Advisory - An Advisory Referendum shall only be a measure of public sentiment.
B. All referenda shall be clearly labeled and understood by the GSG membership to be either an Action or Advisory Referendum.
C. Referenda shall be initiated by any one of the following:
    a. The Senate, via a majority vote.
    b. The GSG President
    c. The signatures, on a petition, of not less than five percent (5%) of the GSG membership.
D. Initiation of a referendum shall warrant for an election wherein the referendum may, but is not limited to, be a special election where no other business shall exist. Upon initiation, a referendum shall be given to the graduate student population within thirty (30) calendar days via, and subject to the rules of, the corresponding election type.

Article XIII. Appendix

A. The Senate shall additionally treat the following documents as Senate Bylaws, and when amending these documents shall follow strictly the amendment procedures of the Bylaws as proposed in Article XI:
    a. Graduate Student Organization Funding Policy
    b. GSG Elections Guidelines

Appendix A: GSO Funding Policy

The Graduate Student Government (hereby referred to as "GSG") will attempt to provide funding to each eligible Graduate Student Organization ("GSO") that applies for funding. GSOs, however, should not solely rely on GSG funding and should make every attempt to secure funds through multiple avenues. All GSO financial accounts, including Revenue Fundraising Accounts, must adhere to the GSG Funding Policies outlined in this appendix, as well as University policies.

I. Definitions

A. Graduate Student Organization (GSO): A student group formally recognized by GSG.
B. Fiscal Year (FY): July 1st through June 30th of the following year.
C. Finance Committee (FC): see the GSG Bylaws Article VI for composition and functioning of the GSG Finance Committee.
D. Line Item Funding: a main source of funding for a GSO's operating budget for one fiscal year (FY) which is not restricted to specific aspects of the funded GSO's program.
E. Ad hoc Funding: Ad hoc Funding is intended to assist in the GSO's operating budget by providing monetary support for specific events, initiatives, and programs throughout the FY. To this end, Ad hoc Funding supplements Line Item Funding or provides extra monetary aid for GSOs.
F. Student Engagement and Leadership (SEL): division of Student Activities and Campus Life (SACL) which supports student involvement and activities, including but not limited to account management and fund transfers.
G. Revenue Fundraising Accounts (fundraising accounts or FAs): are accounts open to all GSOs in good standing. The purpose of FAs is to provide GSOs the flexibility to raise and use funds in accordance with SEL and University policies on fundraising.
H. Over Expenditure: An over expenditure occurs when a GSO spends beyond the approved amount of Line Item and/or Ad hoc Funding approved by GSG.
I. Good Standing: A GSO is considered in good standing when they meet the eligibility requirements outlined in section II below.

II. Recognition

A. GSG may recognize any graduate student group that satisfies the following conditions:
    1. The group's purpose or mission does not substantially duplicate that of an existing GSO.
    2. The group's purpose or mission is lawful and complies with University policies and the Code of Student Conduct.
B. Recognition by GSG is governed by strict viewpoint neutrality. No group may be denied recognition on the basis of its political or religious views.
C. To seek recognition, prospective GSOs must complete an official application provided by GSG. The application must include:
    1. A clear statement of purpose

2. Names and NetIDs of the initial officers
3. A copy of the group's Bylaws
4. The Bylaws must, at a minimum, include:
    a) Defined officer roles
    b) Fair and open procedures for officer elections
    c) A recurring timeline for annual elections
    d) The definition and rights of GSO members
    e) A procedure for amending the Bylaws

D. The GSG Treasurer will review applications and provide an initial response within one week of submission. The Treasurer may:
1. Grant immediate recognition and refer the group to the SEL for activation, or
2. Identify curable deficiencies in the application and communicate with the applicants regarding potential remedies. The Treasurer will continue to review updates to the application until it is accepted or rejected.
3. If the Treasurer determines that an application should be rejected, they must inform the applicants of the reason and provide an opportunity for a written response. The Treasurer must then present the application and any applicant responses to the GSG Steering Committee for a final decision. Applicants will be notified in writing of the Committee's decision, which may be appealed to the GSG Supreme Court.

III. Activation

A. A recognized GSO must also be considered active by SEL in order to access University resources including room reservations, event approvals, ticketing, travel requests, and purchase requests.
B. To become active, recognized GSOs must complete the activation procedures established by SEL, including all required training modules.

IV. Eligibility: Line Item and Ad hoc Funding is only available to GSOs that are recognized by the GSG, considered active by SEL and GSG, and do not have a deficit. GSOs must meet eligibility requirements when applying for and using GSG allocated funding.

V. Funding Types and Restriction of Use

A. **Line Item Funding**
1. **Summary:** A Line Item budget must be submitted by the GSO for every FY. The receipt of Line Item funds for one FY does not guarantee a GSO funding for the next or any other FY.
2. **Restrictions of Use:** Line Item Funds are not restricted to specific aspects of the funded GSO's program or mission. However, use of Line Item Funding must also follow the rules and legal restrictions set by the University and policies for state funds.

VI. Ad hoc Funding

A. **Summary:** Ad hoc funds are meant to supplement a GSO's Line Item Funding in a FY.
B. **Restrictions of Use:** GSOs may apply for up to $1,000 of Ad hoc Funding as many times as needed throughout the FY, but only once per event, initiative, or program. Submitting multiple

applications of Ad hoc Funding for the same event will be denied. Use of Ad hoc Funding is restricted to the specific event, initiative, or program that the funds were intended to support and must also follow the rules and legal restrictions set by the University and policies for state funds.

VII. Application and Review Procedures

A. Line Item Funding

1. Before February 1st, the GSG, in conjunction with SEL, shall make Line Item Funding application forms available. GSG will advertise the availability of Line Item Funding at least two weeks before the application deadline.
2. After the completed applications have been received, the FC shall review all Line Item Funding requests. If needed, the FC will communicate with representatives from each GSO to discuss their funding requests. By majority vote, the FC will determine each GSO's Line Item Funding allocation. The Senate voting procedures will follow item D article VIII in the GSG Bylaws.
3. Line Item Funding, if granted, will be for the following FY.

B. Ad hoc Funding

1. All GSOs requesting Ad hoc Funding from the GSG must submit a funding proposal for review by the FC. Proposals should include the following:
    a) The name, email address, and phone number of the person submitting the GSO's Ad hoc Funding request.
    b) The name, email address, and phone number of the GSO member with signature responsibility (SR), if different from applicant.
    c) The specific amount of Ad hoc funds requested.
    d) A brief explanation of the nature and purpose of the requesting GSO with specific attention to graduate student participation.
    e) A brief explanation of the event, initiative, or program for which the Ad hoc funds are requested.
    f) The specific amount of Ad hoc funds requested.
    g) An itemized budget for the proposed event, initiative, or program detailing:
        (1) anticipated expenses,
        (2) all committed and requested
        (3) funding sources and amounts, and
        (4) estimates of any funds to be raised by the event, initiative, or program.
2. After the completed application has been received, the FC shall review the Ad hoc Funding request. If needed, the FC will communicate with a representative from the GSO to discuss their funding request. By majority vote, the FC will determine if the Ad hoc Funding request will be funded, and in what amount. The contact person from the GSO will be informed through email of the FC's decision within two business days of the vote.
3. At the next Senate meeting, the Treasurer – with support from the Finance Committee – will give a brief report to the Senate on all Ad hoc Funding requests submitted since the last Senate report, including:

a) which GSOs have applied,
b) what events, initiatives, or programs were the focus of the funding request(s),
c) which application(s) were funded, and
d) in what amount(s).

4. If the amount of Ad hoc funding that has been distributed to GSOs within an FY is within $501 or equal to the amount of total possible Ad hoc Funding approved in the GSG FY Line Item Budget, then the Treasurer should consider proposing an amendment to the GSG FY Line Item Budget to increase the amount of available Ad hoc Funding. See the GSG Constitution and Bylaws for more information about the process of amending a Senate approved GSG FY Line Item Budget.

VIII. Distribution and Use

A. Any approved Line Item Funds are only usable during their approved FY and cannot be carried over to the following FY. Any unused portion of Line Item Funding at the end of the FY will be re-appropriated to GSG.
B. All access to and transfer of funds are completed by staff within the SEL office.
C. Line Item or Ad hoc Funding should be spent by the last day of the FY. If this date falls on a weekend or holiday, then the previous Friday becomes the deadline. GSOs should account for time needed to access the funds through speed-type, purchase order, and travel/pro card. Further restrictions will be set by SEL and/or University policy.

IX. Revenue Fundraising

A. FAs are created by and within the restrictions of University policies. The Treasurer and representatives within SEL are responsible for providing guidance to GSOs regarding the creation and proper functioning of FAs.
B. Oversight and regulations on FAs:
    1. Unlike Line Item and Ad hoc Funds, these accounts' funds will roll over from year-to-year
    2. All FAs pay an administrative overhead charge as determined every year by the University. GSOs should take into consideration the administrative overhead charge when determining their FA budgets.
    3. FAs should be used for all fundraising activities. All GSOs connected to the University are forbidden to open financial accounts of any kind outside the University.
C. Please refer to SEL for further policies regarding FAs.

X. Over Expenditure Procedures

A. The Treasurer will be responsible for tracking all financial transactions by funded GSOs. If the Treasurer notices a GSO has overspent it will be the responsibility of the Treasurer to notify the FC and the GSO in question.
B. Upon notification of over-spending, the GSO in question will have two weeks to collect all necessary expenditure receipts and send a representative to meet with the FC to review the expenditures. Failure to meet with the FC within two weeks of the over spending notification will result in sanctions as determined by FC majority vote.

C. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, an account freeze over GSO funds or a ban on applying for Ad hoc Funding. See below for sanction guidelines.
D. If it is concluded that the GSO overspent their funds, the GSO will have 60 days or until the end of the FY, whichever is sooner, to pay in full the overspent amount to GSG. If the GSO fails to pay the total amount overspent, it will be subject to one or more of the following sanctions as determined by the FC:
    1. Appropriation of the necessary funds from GSO FAs to balance delinquent GSO Line Item and Ad hoc funds.
    2. Immediate loss of additional Line Item and Ad hoc funding for the current FY.
    3. Immediate loss of Line Item or Ad hoc funding for the upcoming FY.
    4. Immediate loss of GSO status.
    5. Members of the GSO will lose their right to fundraise and/or use any funds in their fundraising accounts up to the end of the current FY.
    6. Members of the GSO will lose their right to fundraise and/or will not be allowed to use any funds in their fundraising accounts up in the next FY.

Appendix B: GSG Election Guidelines

These Election Guidelines apply to all candidates for GSG Officer positions and GSG Senate seats. Graduate Student Organizations (GSOs) must comply with the sections regarding the endorsement of candidates. GSG Members (meaning all UMA Graduate Students including candidates and GSOs) are entitled to unrestricted freedom of speech. These guidelines shall not be construed to restrict the freedom of expression of any graduate student, but only to regulate the time, place and manner of certain election-related activities. For the purposes of these guidelines, misrepresentation will refer to intentional deception or to communication that is likely to result in misunderstanding by an average graduate student possessing common sense.

The members of the Elections Committee, in accepting a nomination to the committee, agree to all the rights, duties, and responsibilities of the position as outlined in the GSG Constitution and Bylaws.

I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

A. Compliance:

1. All candidates/prospective nominees for GSG Officer positions shall attend at least one of the candidate information sessions hosted by the Elections Committee once the nomination period begins. If the candidate(s) fail to attend, their nomination will be canceled.
2. Each prospective nominee shall receive an email of these guidelines and shall attend an in-person information session, hosted by the Elections Committee, and sign an "Agreement of Understanding". Signing the agreement shall certify that they have read the guidelines; promised to abide by them; agreed to immediately report any violations to the Elections Committee; and agreed to notify and try to correct any supporter upon learning of an actual or potential deviation.
3. No person shall be a candidate/qualified nominee until they have read, agreed, physically signed, and submitted the Agreement of Understanding to uphold these guidelines. When candidates or their supporters are unclear about whether an intended campaign action is permitted, they shall seek the opinion of the Elections Committee before action. The Elections Committee shall respond with a ruling (within 48 hours) concerning the proper interpretation of the guidelines and inform all candidates in order to maintain a level playing field.
4. The Student Legal Services Office shall train the Elections Committee on the procedures of an election and be considered an ex-officio member of the Elections Committee.

B. Endorsements

1. **GSG Officers, Staff Members and Senators**
    a) Current GSG Officers, Staff Members and Senators may endorse

candidates subject to the following rules:

(1) The endorsement may not be represented by a candidate or the endorser as an official endorsement by GSG or the GSG Senate as a body

(2) The endorser is strictly forbidden from using any resources available to them in their official capacity to help a candidate

(3) The endorser must recuse themselves from all election related matters

b) Violations of this section shall be referred by the Elections Committee to the GSG Senate

2. **Graduate Student Organizations**
    a) GSOs may endorse candidates only upon approval by the general membership of the GSO
    b) Prior to making an endorsement, the GSO must:
        (1) Communicate a time and place of the general membership meeting for the purpose of approving an endorsement to all GSO members
        (2) Keep a record of minutes and roll call votes of those present at the meeting. The meeting will be governed by the GSO's regular Bylaws regarding quorum and voting procedures.
        (3) Provide records of communications with members, meeting attendance and the results of votes cast to the GSG Elections Committee
    c) GSOs may not appropriate any funds for the purpose of helping a candidate
    d) The Elections Committee is empowered to sanction GSOs for violating this section, including the forfeiture of all GSG funds for the current fiscal period and revocation of GSO status
3. **GSO Officers:** GSO Officers or E-board members may endorse candidates in their personal capacity, including use of their official title, as long as the endorsement is not represented as being made by their GSO as a body
4. **Candidates:** Candidates may endorse other candidates without restriction, including distributing joint campaign materials
5. **Violations**
    a) Misrepresenting or falsely claiming an endorsement will be regarded by the Elections Committee as a serious conduct violation
    b) Candidates may be sanctioned for receiving endorsements which violate this section. Upon reasonable suspicion that a candidate instigated or solicited an endorsement which violates section I. B, the Elections Committee may apply sanctions.

C. Guidelines for Candidate Communications

1. **E-mail:**
    a) There are no limits on the number of campaign messages sent by e-mail during the official campaigning period. E-mail used for campaign purposes must comply with the intent of the guidelines with regard to content.
    b) Use of mass email communication is prohibited outside the campaigning period (close of "nomination period" to end of "voting period"). All other forms of campaigning are not restricted. This rule is intended to protect the reputation of GSG.
    c) Candidates are to refrain from spamming, meaning frequent, repetitive messages to the same or overlapping listservs.
    d) The use of e-mail listservs is allowed and subject to approval by the owner of the listserv. The GSG Elections Committee cannot enforce rules regarding access to non-GSG listservs, but the Committee should communicate with academic departments in advance of elections to advocate for clear policies and equal treatment of all GSG candidates.
    e) All GSG controlled listservs, emails, or any other physical or digital resource shall never be used by or for any candidate to solicit votes or distribute support to any candidate.
2. **GSG Website:** GSG shall post information about all candidates (the photos, biographies, and statements) and on the election itself (campaign guidelines, voting information, etc) on its website. Candidates are encouraged to take full advantage of communicating with members through statements to be published by the GSG. Candidates are reminded that most forms of communications are in the public domain. Therefore, in all discussions and communications, a professional tone will reflect positively on the GSG and on the candidate.
3. **Social media:** Social Media content must adhere to the candidate code of conduct. No candidate may use the logo of the GSG or speak in the capacity of an official officer of the GSG in any social media content. Candidates are reminded that social media content is in the public domain and a professional tone will reflect positively on the GSG and on the candidate. Any violations of the code of conduct on social media shall be subject to disciplinary action based on Article IV B. Violations of Bylaws or Guidelines of these Elections Guidelines.
4. **Campaign Flyers and Signs**
    a) Flyers and signs shall only be placed in authorized posting places based on individual building policies (example: student bulletin boards). Each candidate is responsible for the removal and disposal of all signs. No campaign materials are to be affixed to bus kiosks, trees, telephone poles, or lamp posts.

b) Candidates shall not tamper with or deface the signs of any other candidate. Offenses of this nature are considered serious and may result in disqualification as a candidate in the election.

II. VOTING AND BALLOT COUNTING

A. Voting: Voting procedures for the election shall be stated on the GSG website prior to the beginning of the election. Voting shall occur through online ballots and administered by the Elections Committee.

B. The Count: Ballots shall be counted electronically, and the results reported to the Elections Committee.

C. Tie Vote

1. In the event of a tie vote for an office in a general election, the following procedure shall be used to fill the position.

a) The election report shall be submitted to the Senate. Once the report has been submitted, a special run-off election shall be held for the general voter population within two weeks of the end of the voting period. This procedure shall continue to follow the Election Guidelines.

b) Should the run-off election be tied; the current Senate shall be called into an emergency meeting and follow the procedure for the Senate Run-Off election.

2. Procedure for Senate Run-Off Election:

a) All officer candidates involved in the tie shall be the only candidates in the run-off election.

b) Each candidate may give a "reminder" speech limited to five minutes in length. A friendly reminder shall be given once one minute is remaining.

c) All current senators present at the meeting shall be eligible to vote in the run-off election.

d) The voting shall be by secret ballot, counted and verified, at least twice, by the designated authorities.

e) The Chair of the Elections Committee shall preside over the runoff election and announce the verified results.

f) The count shall happen during the meeting and be approved by the Senate.

g) Should the Senate vote be a tie, the outcome shall be determined by the flip of a U.S. quarter-dollar coin, conducted in the presence of all attendees.

D. **The Election Report**

1. Upon receipt of the results, the person receiving a plurality of the votes cast shall be declared the winner(s), pending ratification by the GSG Senate. The Chair of the Elections Committee shall send an informal notification to all the candidates in the

election telling them of the election results, as soon as possible following the end of the voting period.

2. The Elections committee shall provide a 24-hour grace period from the time the candidates are informed of the election results for candidates to raise complaints of any irregularities in the election. Irregularities may include but are not limited:
    a) Eligible voters not being able to access ballots
    b) Incorrect candidate listings for Senate districts
    c) Eligible voters not receiving any official election emails
    d) Violations of Election Guidelines not previously adjudicated
3. Candidates are not limited to raising complaints within the 24-hour grace period and may do so at any time during the election. Complaints received after the grace period has expired will not be included in the official Election Report and must be addressed to the GSG Senate.
4. Available remedies to voting irregularities include vote recount, nullification of election results or referral to the Senate.
5. The Elections Committee shall promptly adjudicate any complaints raised by the candidates.
6. After the end of the recount grace period, the Elections Committee shall promptly submit to the Steering Committee the Election Report, which shall appear as a Special Order on the agenda of the next scheduled Senate meeting, and shall include the information prescribed herein:
    a) The complete numerical tabulation of the results.
    b) Any formal complaints made to the Elections Committee and the act taken thereupon.
    c) The signatures of the members of the Elections Committee.
7. Should a Senate meeting not be scheduled or called for a period of fourteen (14) calendar days the Elections Committee shall be empowered to call a special meeting of the Senate where the only business shall be the ratification of the Elections Report. The Chair of the Elections Committee shall be the Chair of the Senate for this special meeting.
8. If the Senate shall have failed to ratify a General or Special Election within 30 days of said Election, the Elections Committee shall consider the result ratified by non-action of the Senate.

III. CANDIDATE CODE OF CONDUCT

A. All candidates must abide by the following code of conduct:

1. Candidates shall not pay anyone to campaign on their behalf and/or vote for them.
2. No candidate shall wrongfully represent any campaign material as being the material of any other candidate or the official communications of GSG. The Elections Committee will have the power to thoroughly investigate the actions

to assure against any deceitful actions against any candidate.

3. No candidate shall violate the University Code of Student Conduct; for more information please see https://www.umass.edu/dean-students/student-conduct/code-of-conduct
4. No candidate shall corruptly give, offer or promise to any GSG member any pecuniary or other benefit not authorized by the Campaign Guidelines, Candidate Code of Conduct, which is intended to influence the vote(s) of voters.
5. No candidate shall be physically present nor shall influence GSG voters' choice when he/she is voting online. Candidates shall not harass, linger near, or intimidate voters in any way when asking them to vote or provide them with devices for voting unless asked for by the voter themselves.
6. Under no circumstances should a candidate attempt to use any GSG physical or digital resources. This includes, but is not limited to, GSG office space, printer, paper or Facebook Groups.
7. Candidates may have their own campaign staff and may have people campaign with them; however, they are to be considered extensions of that candidate and candidates will be held responsible for the actions of those they have campaigning on their behalf.

IV. ADDITIONAL RULINGS

A. DUTIES OF THE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

1. The GSG Elections Committee is charged with formulating the elections guidelines and elections related content within the Bylaws. Campaigning and election issues that are not explicitly covered within these documents are within the purview of the GSG Elections Committee to decide.
2. All communications of the Elections Committee shall only occur through the GSG media and all emails shall only occur through the official GSG Elections Committee email address. Should any member of the Elections Committee receive or conduct business relevant to the Elections Committee, they shall include or forward the business to the Elections Committee email.
3. Violations of this policy will be first met with a warning by the designated authorities in the Bylaws and result in removal from the Elections Committee if it continues.
4. Should the Elections Committee change the Elections Guidelines in any way, the Elections Guidelines shall follow the bylaw amendment procedure. The Elections Guidelines will not be altered once the nominations period has begun until after the voting period ends.
5. The Elections Committee shall host at least 3 in-person & on campus information sessions to explain the Bylaws, elections guidelines, and responsibilities of each office to all the candidates in the election(s), as described in the Bylaws.

6. The Elections Committee shall create an "Agreement of Understanding" that all candidates shall read, sign, and physically return to the Elections Committee to signify their understanding of the current interpretations of Bylaws, guidelines, and the ramifications of violations.
7. Agreements of Understanding shall be physically available at all of the information sessions, in accordance with procedures described in the Bylaws.

B. VIOLATIONS OF BYLAWS OR GUIDELINES

1. The Elections Committee may, upon a majority vote of its membership in attendance at a meeting, and up to (30) calendar days following an election, take any of the actions prescribed herein for violations of the GSG Elections Guidelines:
    a) *Order to cease* - A written statement to a candidate ordering the cessation of any activity which is in violation of the Guidelines, or their candidacy shall be suspended or invalidated.
    b) *Suspension* - A written statement to a candidate ordering the suspension of all campaigning for a prescribed period of calendar time.
    c) *Invalidation* - A written statement to a candidate declaring their candidacy to be invalid and stricken from the ballot (if before the election). After the election, a candidate may still be invalidated.
    d) *Nullification* - A public announcement to the GSG membership declaring an Election nullified and calling a Special Election to re-cast the ballot.