Article I. Representation

A. The Graduate Student Senate for the University of Massachusetts Amherst (hereinafter referred to as the GSS) shall represent the graduate student body of the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

B. All graduate students who are charged the Senate Tax (hereinafter referred to as fee-paying graduate students) have the right to vote in GSS elections.

C. Constituencies shall be comprised of:

1. Departments or programs as defined by the Graduate School Bulletin.
2. Non-departmental/program associated GSOs.

D. Representation of graduate students to the Senate shall be as follows:

1. Two (2) senators for the first fifty graduate students, and one (1) additional senator for each additional fifty graduate students or fraction thereof in each department or program
2. Election procedures must meet the minimum requirements as outlined in Article II
Section C on election guidelines.

Article II. Senators

A. Senators shall be elected and serve a term of one academic year.

B. Candidates for senators should be fee paying graduate students in each constituency.

C. Election Guidelines:
   1. Senators shall be elected by their respective constituencies, but must follow these minimum guidelines
      a. Elections shall have a minimum one week nomination period, and a minimum one week campaigning period.
      b. The election process must not exceed four weeks.
      c. The winner is determined by simple majority.
      d. Constituencies shall notify the GSS Elections Committee of the election results within 2 working days.

   2. The Elections Committee reserves the right to review the nomination and election procedures of any constituency. If said procedure fails to follow the minimum required guidelines, the Committee may require the constituency to hold a new election that fulfills minimum requirements.
   3. Special elections of senators shall be held to fill vacancies in a timely manner.
   4. Elections shall occur in the Spring semester in conjunction with the officer elections.

D. Rights and Responsibilities:
   1. Bring the concerns, needs, and wishes of their constituents to the GSS and solicit input from graduate students in GSS business and activities.
   2. Regularly attend all meetings of the GSS and meetings of its committees to which they have been appointed, or arrange for alternate representation in the event of their absence.
   3. Disseminate information regarding GSS business, university-wide events, and issues that affect graduate students to the students of their department or program.
   4. Be familiar with the GSS Constitution, Bylaws, and procedures, as well as Robert's
Rules of Order.
5. Have one (1) vote at GSS meetings.
6. Attend a training or presentation or workshop during the academic year on a topic related to Justice Diversity Equity, and Inclusion. The scope of which may include any of the following topics, racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, xenophobia, anti-blackness, and Title IX.

E. Alternate Senators
1. Constituencies may additionally elect one alternate for each Senate seat to which they are entitled, who shall hold all of the privileges normally held by the senator in that senator's absence.
2. The Alternate Senator succeeds the Senator in the event of the Senator's inability to serve in office for the remainder of the Senator's term.
3. An alternate may not cast a vote unless acting on behalf of their sitting Senator.

F. Termination of Senators
1. Any constituency represented in the GSS may recall its representative(s) at any time by simple majority vote of the total number of graduate students within the program; upon which notice shall be given to the GSS within 48 hours. Re-election shall follow the guidelines as specified in the Bylaws Article II, Section C.
2. Senators who miss two consecutive meetings may be notified by the Executive Committee. In order to remain in good standing Senators must:
   a. Respond to notification within 10 working days;
   b. Attend the meeting following notification.
3. Senators who fail to attend a third consecutive meeting may be terminated and be replaced by the alternate senator. If the department does not have an alternate senator, a replacement senator should be elected as per Election Guidelines under GSS Bylaws Article II, Section C.
4. Terminated senators forfeit their positions on all GSS committees.

Article III. Officers

A. Elections
1. Elections shall be held in accordance with the GSS Elections Guidelines.
2. All full time graduate students at UMass Amherst who have paid the Senate Tax for the current semester are eligible to run for GSS Officer positions.
3. Nominations shall begin not more than 4 weeks after the start of the Spring semester, and shall be open for two weeks.

4. Within seventy two (72) hours of the close of the nomination period, the Elections Committee shall publicly announce the qualified nominees as well as the voting procedure, as outlined by the GSS Elections Guidelines.

5. Elections shall begin no less than one week after the candidates are announced publicly to allow for a minimum one week, but maximum two week, campaigning period.

6. There shall be one official open forum for candidate introductions prior to voting, and all candidates statements will be made available on the GSS website.

7. Elections shall be determined by simple majority vote. 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.

8. There shall be at least one regularly scheduled Senate meeting between the close of elections and the end of the academic year.

9. 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.

B. Pro Temp Officer Elections and Replacement

1. In the event of vacancy of the President, the Vice President shall assume the office of the President and rescind their role as Vice President.

2. In the event of vacancy of the Vice President or Treasurer positions, a general election shall be held if the vacancy occurs prior to February 1. If the vacancy occurs between February 1st and April 1st, the Senate shall decide within 14 days by simple majority on the method of a special election: general election, senate vote, or executive committee appointment. If the vacancy occurs on or after April 1st, the Senate shall decide whether or not to fill the vacancy through general election, senate vote, or executive committee appointment.

3. An officer pro temp 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 Senate subsequent to the date of the recall vote.

C. Terms and Payment

1. The term of all officers shall be from June 1 to May 31 of the following year.

2. 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.

3. 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, coordinators could serve 10 hours per week in paid assistantships during the summer. Coordinators may work up to 20 hours per week as needed, and if allowable by budgetary constraints. The Hiring Committee and Finance Committee, by majority vote, must give approval for the summer contract appointments.

   iii. 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.

D. Rights and Responsibilities

1. President: Responsibilities will include but are not limited to:
   a. Serves as chief administrative officer of the GSS.
   b. Supervises GSS coordinators and moderates office meetings.
   c. Maintains regular office hours.
   d. Oversees graduate student representation on committees and commissions within the GSS and the Faculty Senate.
   e. Chairs Senate meetings and general meetings of graduate students.
   f. Serves as liaison with the university administration.
   g. Serves on committees including but not limited to:
      i. Executive Committee as chair
      ii. Hiring Committee as chair
   h. Attends a training or presentation or workshop during the academic year on a topic related to Justice Diversity Equity, and Inclusion. The scope of which may include any of the following topics: racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, xenophobia, anti-blackness, and Title IX.
i. Take detailed notes in meetings.

j. Ensure that coordinators and officers (and occasionally executive members) are involved in the decision-making process and attend meetings with administrators, including the chancellor and vice chancellor of SACL.

2. Vice President: Responsibilities will include but are not limited to:
   a. Serves as President in the absence of the President.
   b. Attends all Executive committee and Senate meetings.
   c. Maintains regular office hours.
   d. Serves on committees including but not limited to:
      i. Childcare Committee as chair
      ii. Election Committee as chair
      iii. Finance Committee as vice-chair
      iv. Executive Committee
      v. Hiring Committee
   e. Attends a training or presentation or workshop during the academic year on a topic related to Justice Diversity Equity, and Inclusion. The scope of which may include any of the following topics: racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, xenophobia, anti-blackness, and Title IX.

i. Take detailed notes in meetings.

3. Treasurer: Responsibilities will include but are not limited to:
   a. Serves as chief financial officer of the Senate.
   b. Manages the Graduate Student Senate Trust Fund in conjunction with the Finance Committee and at the direction of the Senate.
   c. Controls purchasing and expenditure of funds.
   d. Oversees distribution of Line Item and Ad Hoc funding.
   e. Develops the budget with the Finance Committee and the Center for Student Development.
   f. Maintains regular office hours.
   g. Attends all Executive committee and Senate meetings.
   h. Oversees Graduate Student Organizations: registration, re-registration, and other events.
i. Serves on committees including but not limited to:
   i. Finance Committee as chair
   ii. Childcare Committee
   iii. Executive Committee
   iv. Hiring Committee

j. Attends a training or presentation or workshop during the academic year on a topic related to Justice Diversity Equity, and Inclusion. The scope of which may include any of the following topics: racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, xenophobia, anti-blackness, and Title IX.

k. Take detailed notes in meetings.

E. Discipline and Resignation

1. Discipline of Officer:
   a. If the office noticed that an officer is not fulfilling their duties the following:
      i. They must bring the issue (with evidence) up to the Executive Committee.
      ii. If the Executive Committee feels that the evidence is sufficient, they must issue a probation period where the officer must meet the set benchmark established by the Executive Committee.
      iii. If after the probation period, the officer is still not meeting expectations, the Executive Committee must bring the issue to the Senate.
   b. Upon the substantial failure of an officer to perform the duties assigned to that office or the violation of the GSS Code of Conduct, the senate, by simple majority vote, may open a disciplinary or recall procedure by issuing a formal written warning to the offending officer. A motion for opening the disciplinary recall procedure shall be added to the meeting agenda either upon submission of a letter written by the Executive Committee, or a petition signed by no fewer than ten (10) senators in good standing.
   c. If the offending officer fails to correct the mistakes or improve their performance, the Senate may vote to either censure or recall the officer by a two-thirds vote of the Senate in the subsequent meeting. Officers may also be recalled or censured by a simple majority vote in a general meeting.
   d. A censured officer may be recalled by two-thirds (2/3) vote at any subsequent senate or general meeting.
   e. The Discipline or Recall procedure is subject to the just cause provision of the Graduate Employee Organization Contract.

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

**Article IV. Coordinators**

A. The Hiring Committee will hire for the following Coordinator Positions. These positions will be for 20 hours per week in GEO eligible assistantships at the GEO minimum hourly rate for the full academic year, given budgetary resources allow.

i. International Student Coordinator

ii. Diversity Equity and Inclusion Coordinator

iii. Graduate Student Organization Coordinator

**Article V. 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.

1. Committees shall function collectively according to principles of maximum participation of the membership.

2. All committee members shall recuse him/herself from committee actions that may present a conflict of interest.

3. Committees shall keep accurate written minutes of their meetings.

4. The election of senators to standing committees shall be on the agenda of the first Senate meeting of the academic year.

5. The Senate shall have the right to recall its representatives on any Senate committee by two-thirds (2/3) vote.

B. Standing Committees

1. Executive Committee

   a. Membership of the Executive committee shall consist of the President as chair, Vice President, Treasurer and two representatives elected from the senate. 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.

   b. Meetings of the Executive 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.
c. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:

   i. To fulfill those functions required of it under the Constitution and By-Laws.

   ii. To discuss and approve GSS priorities, plans, policies, and actions, and proposing and recommending such to the Senate for approval.

   iii. 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.

   iv. To organize and to execute efficient day-to-day functioning of GSS. 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.

   v. To hire and evaluate coordinators in accordance with the Graduate Student Senate Hiring Policy.

   vi. 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.

   vii. 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).

   viii. In collaboration with the coordinators, should 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 GSS 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.

   ix. The Executive Committee shall collaborate with the coordinators to schedule training(s) for the senate and broader graduate students.

   d. All actions of the Executive 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.
e. The Executive Committee of the Graduate Student Senate ("GSS") is responsible for maintaining the graduate student listserv ("the listserv").

i. Only the following entities may submit content to be published to the listserv: GSS Executive Committee and Staff, Graduate Student Senators, Graduate Student Organizations, the Graduate Employee Organization, University Administrative Units, Academic Colleges and Departments, the Graduate School, and GSS Agencies.

ii. Content submitted for publication to the listserv must be of general relevance to current graduate students at UMass Amherst (e.g. advertising an event at UMass or UMass resources, or sharing a UMass job posting), and must not defame or harass any individuals or entities, be unlawfully discriminatory in nature, or meet the definition of "hate speech".

iii. Content submitted to the listserv will primarily be compiled and disseminated in periodic GSS communications to all Graduate Students, and not sent out as stand-alone communications.

iv. If submitted content is time sensitive, the entity making the submission should make note of that, and the GSS Executive Committee will vote to approve or deny sending the contents a stand-alone communication. Factors to be considered in making this determination include but are not limited to: 1) the reason given for the last-minute submission; 2) the effect of a delay on the underlying purpose of the communication; 3) the workload of the Executive Committee; and 4) the volume of time-sensitive, stand-alone communications requested in a single semester; and 5) the administrative burden of sending the stand-alone communication.

v. Statements in support of or opposed to particular University policies or world events submitted for circulation via the listserv must first be passed by the Senate as a Resolution or Motion.

2. Finance Committee

a. 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.

b. 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 session.

c. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:

   i. 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.

   ii. To review requests for funds submitted by any organization or individual.

   iii. To advise all Graduate Student Organizations (GSO) for funding matters in accordance with the guidelines laid out in the Graduate Student Organization Funding Policy.

   iv. To recommend to the Senate for approval such regulations, policies and documents as shall be considered necessary to the efficient conduct of their charge.

d. The Graduate Student Senate shall reserve the power to investigate evidence or accusations of malfeasance or misconduct by groups, agencies, individuals, or other entities funded by the GSS. 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.

3. Childcare Committee

a. 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. Graduate student members can include coordinators.

b. A quorum for business shall be three members.

c. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:

   i. Create and process applications for childcare funds.

   ii. Determine the allocation of the Childcare fund among applicants according to Childcare Assistance Program Distribution Policy.

   iii. Explore and advocate for child-friendly policies (e.g. lactation

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spaces, child-friendly spaces, childcare support, student parent support, etc.)

4. Elections Committee

a. 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.

b. Candidates running for office may not stand on the elections committee.

c. A quorum for all business shall be a majority of the committee.

d. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
   i. Conducting elections of executive officers according to the Graduate Student Senate Election Guidelines,
   ii. Calling for special elections when needed in accordance with the Graduate Student Senate Election Guidelines.
   iii. Report the results of elections to the Senate.
   iv. Reviewing, if necessary, the senator election procedures of each constituency as stated in these By laws under Article II, Section C.

5. Constitution and Bylaws Committee

a. Membership of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall consist of the President as initial chair with at least two other graduate student members.

b. A quorum for business shall be two members.

c. The committee shall elect its chair after the first meeting is in session.

d. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
   i. Update the GSS bylaws as and when deemed necessary to facilitate transparency and election reforms.
   ii. To present the proposed changes to the bylaws in the Senate meeting for deliberation and vote.

6. Food Security Committee

a. Membership of the Food Security Committee shall consist of the President as initial chair with at least two other graduate student members.

b. A quorum for business shall be two members.

c. The committee shall elect its chair after the first meeting is in session.

d. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
   i. Assessing the food needs of the graduate student community.
ii. Developing policy documents for recommendations to be placed before the University administration to ensure food security for Graduate Students.

7. Diversity, Equity & Inclusivity Committee
   a. Membership of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusivity Committee shall consist of the DEI coordinator as the chair with at least two other graduate student members.
   b. A quorum for business shall be 2 members.
   d. The Committee shall be charged with the following tasks:
      i. Discussing and trying to resolve the relevant issues faced by the Graduate student community.
      ii. Forming a policy document for recommendations to be placed in front of the University management to help resolve the graduate student grievances.

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

C. Ad Hoc Committees
   1. The senate and Executive Committee shall have the power to establish ad hoc committees for specific purposes as the needs of the GSS require. The ad hoc committees shall be responsible for electing their own chairpersons as required.
   2. Ad hoc committee shall exist until fulfillment of the purpose for which it is established or until otherwise dissolved by the Executive Committee.
   3. 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 VI. 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 executive committee and published at least 48 hours in advance.

B. The President shall preside over a regular or general meeting. In absence of the President, or if the agenda includes a motion to recall the President, the Vice President shall preside.

C. Best efforts shall be made to make senate meetings accessible and meet accommodations to ensure equitable and just access to participation and attendance in senate proceedings.

C. Meeting minutes shall be recorded by a member of the GSS office and should be made available within 48 hours to the graduate student body.

D. All meetings shall be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order, unless superseded by these Bylaws.

E. The president shall appoint a parliamentarian to provide advice on conducting the meeting and respond to points of order.

F. 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 President at least 48 hours before the meeting.

G. All motions not on the agenda must be given to the parliamentarian in writing upon presentation.

H. Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution or Bylaws, motions require a simple majority vote to pass.

I. All meetings are open unless the Senate votes to continue the meeting in executive session, as defined by the The Commonwealth of Massachusetts on Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25

**Article VII. Finances**

A. All Trustee and University financial and operational policies and Campus procedures shall govern the financial transactions of the Graduate Student Senate as well as the financial transactions of any person(s), agency, or organization funded in whole or in part by the Graduate Student Senate Trust Fund.

B. The Graduate Student Senate Tax shall be collected each semester by the University.

C. The GSS 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 GSS Tax of over
7.5% shall be in accordance with the constitution.

D. Procedure to approve the GSS budget

1. Before the last scheduled meeting of the Senate in March, the Finance Committee shall compile its final recommendations of the proposed GSS budget and submit it to the Senate for review. The proposed annual GSS budget shall contain a complete breakdown, by account number of recommended allocations.

2. The proposed annual GSS 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.

3. Any modifications to the approved budget in excess of $1000 shall be approved by the Finance Committee and Senate.

E. Graduate Student Organizations shall adhere to the Graduate Student Organization Funding Policy found in the appendix of the bylaws as well as the policies mentioned in Article VI section A.

Article VIII. GSS Code of Conduct

A. No officer, coordinator or senator of the GSS 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 GSS.

B. No officer, coordinator or senator of the GSS shall use or allow the use of any GSS property, facilities, or personnel of any kind for any activity not officially sanctioned by the Constitution of the GSS, the By-laws of the GSS or an Act of the GSS.

C. No person shall corruptly give, offer, or promise to any GSS officer, coordinator or senator any pecuniary or other benefit not authorized by the Constitution of the GSS, the By-laws of the GSS, or by Act of the GSS, 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, coordinator or senator of the GSS shall aid, advise, procure or in any other way directly induce another to act in violation of the Constitution of the GSS, the By-laws of the GSS, or an Act of the GSS.

Article IX. Grievance Procedure

In the event of officer recall/removal or coordinator dismissal the individual shall follow the Graduate Employee Organization guidelines and procedures.
Article X. Amendment Procedures
A. Any voting member of the Graduate Student Senate may propose an amendment to these Bylaws.
   1. 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:
      a. Original article (if applicable)
      b. Proposed amendment
      c. 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 XI. Appendix
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 IX:

A. Graduate Student Organization Funding Policy
B. GSS Elections Guidelines
C. Childcare Distribution Policy