

## **Preamble and Mission Statement**

Acting as the voice of all graduate and professional students enrolled at Augusta University, the Graduate Student Government Association shall actively work to improve the quality of life for the student body, along with the university and community as a whole. Believing in the right of self-governance, each graduate or professional student enrolled at Augusta University shall be a non-voting member of the Graduate Student Government Association and be entitled to the rights, privileges, and protections thereof.

## **Article I. Name, Purpose, and Structure**

### **Section I. Name**

- A. The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Student Government Association (GSGA) of Augusta University (AU).

### **Section II. Purpose**

- A. The GSGA shall facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between the graduate and professional students of all colleges of AU.
- B. The GSGA shall serve as a liaison between graduate and professional students, faculty, staff, and the administration to represent student opinions, needs, and interests to the administration; and to disseminate and promote the exchange of information from the administration and faculty to graduate and professional students.
- C. The GSGA shall act to increase the quality of life of student services, academic programs, and the AU environment in order to further enhance the education of AU graduate and professional students.
- D. The GSGA shall support a variety of social, cultural, intellectual, and recreational events to promote fellowship, personal growth, and involvement of AU graduate and professional students.

### **Section III. Structure**

- A. The structure of the GSGA shall be divided into two bodies: The House of Representatives and The Executive Cabinet. The House of Representatives shall consist of a legislature composed of elected graduate or professional students (representing each program) who meet regularly, and The Executive Cabinet shall consist of elected students.

## **Article II. Executive Cabinet**

### **Section I. Purpose**

- A. The Executive Cabinet of the GSGA is the leadership body for the GSGA.
- B. The Executive Cabinet shall have the power of granting and approving revisions to charters for all campus graduate and professional student organizations, funding of those student organizations, and funding for student travel.

### **Section II. Composition**

- A. The Executive Cabinet officers shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Comptroller, Humanitarian, Public Relations, and Undergraduate Liaison
- B. Five Members-at-Large positions are available by presidential appointment as seen fit by the current elected President.
- C. Each Executive Cabinet member shall meet the following requirements:
  - a. Must be a full-time graduate or professional student at Augusta University.
  - b. Must have and maintain a minimum of a 2.5 GPA.
  - c. Must be current full-time student in at least their second semester of their first academic year enrolled in an official AU graduate degree-seeking program, as verified by Jag Trax or equivalent official degree progress verification.
  - d. Must be willing to fulfill all responsibility for the position they are elected for.
- D. Executive Board Position-Specific Requirements:
  - a. President must be a current, elected GSGA representative from an official AU Graduate School program..The President must have previous experience in a previous SGA experience either at Augusta University or elsewhere, or must have previously been a graduate SGA member. The President may only serve a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.

- b. Vice President must be a current, elected GSGA representative from an official AU Graduate School program or a former and/or current member-at-large that was appointed by a former and/or current GSGA President. The Vice-President may only serve a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.
- c. Secretary must be a current, elected GSGA representative from an official AU Graduate School program or a former and/or current member-at-large that was appointed by a former and/or current GSGA President. The Secretary may only serve a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.
- d. Comptroller must be a current, elected GSGA representative from an official AU Graduate School program or a former and/or current member-at-large that was appointed by a former and/or current GSGA President. The Comptroller may only serve a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.
- e. Humanitarian can be a current, elected GSGA representative from an official AU Graduate School program or a former and/or current member-at-large that was appointed by a former and/or current GSGA President. The Humanitarian may only serve a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.
- f. Public Relations Manager must be a current, elected GSGA representative from an official AU Graduate School program or a former and/or current member-at-large that was appointed by a former and/or current GSGA President. The Public Relations Manager may only serve a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.

#### E. Election

- a. Notice of the upcoming elections will be communicated at the January GSGA meeting.
- b. This announcement will also include the dates that candidate applications will be available to apply for Graduate Student Government Association Executive Board positions
- c. This announcement will also include the Undergraduate Liaison position details regarding selection and be advertised to the undergraduate SGA.
- d. The candidate applications will be sent to The House of Representatives for review by February.

- e. At the February meeting, each candidate will be allotted up to 10 minutes to present their campaign after which, the House of Representatives shall vote.
  - f. Results will be sent via email.
  - g. If there are executive board positions that have not been filled via the traditional election process, then the president shall appoint a candidate to fill the position. The Candidate must meet all requirements for the position expressed in the GSGA Bylaws and be approved by a 2/3rd majority in the House during a general meeting. Following approval, the candidate shall assume the position and all responsibilities and duties therein.
    - i. In the event that any of these positions are left unfilled following an election, the President Elect shall appoint a candidate to fill the position. The candidate must meet all requirements for the position expressed in the GSGA Bylaws and approved by a 2/3rd majority in the House. Following approval, the candidate shall assume the position and all responsibilities and duties therein.
  - h. The Undergraduate Liaison position will be appointed by dual agreement between the recently sworn-in Undergraduate and Graduate SGA President.
  - i. All elected positions will be sworn in at the first official meeting after the election and begin their term responsibilities at the April meeting.
  - j. The Undergraduate Liaison position will be appointed and presented to the House of Representatives for confirmation by the April meeting.
- F. Succession if an Executive Cabinet member can no longer fulfill his or her duties.
- a. Notice of elections will be communicated as soon as possible at a GSGA meeting. It will include dates that candidate applications will be due.
  - b. Elections will occur at the next GSGA meeting. Results will be sent via email.

### **Section III. Meetings**

- A. The Executive Cabinets shall meet at least once a month or more as needed.

### **Section IV. Responsibilities**

- A. President

- a. The GSGA President will, among other duties as assigned, attend all House/Senate business meetings, act as the official representative from the GSGA to the administration and faculty, appoint the chairman of all standing and ad hoc committees, serve as a standing member of the Student Activity Fee Committee, and the Mandatory Student Fee Committee, and aid in the orientation of new GSGA Representatives. The President will provide training to the new president and aid in the orientation of the incoming executive board. The President must also assign or delegate other tasks as they arise to members of the cabinet. The stipend for the President is \$2800, paid in four \$700 increments.

B. Vice President

- a. The GSGA Vice President will assume the duties and have the powers of the GSGA President in the absence of the GSGA President, preside at all the meetings, serve as ex officio member of all ad hoc committees and as a resource person for these committees, and serve as a standing member of the Mandatory Student Fee Committee and be responsible for following up with representatives that are not fulfilling their obligation to attend meetings or participate in assigned committees. The Vice President will provide training to the new Vice President and aid in the orientation of the incoming executive board. The stipend for the Vice President is \$2800, paid in four \$700 increments.

C. Secretary

- a. The GSGA Secretary will keep an accurate record of the proceedings and attendance of the monthly GSGA meetings and Executive Council meetings, maintain a list containing pertinent contact information about each voting member, prepare the minutes of the GSGA meetings and make them publicly available, be responsible for maintaining a file of all valuable documents and records, send out notices at least 48 hours ahead of time to all GSGA members listing the time, date, place, and agenda of the next meeting, and work with the Vice President to follow up with those GSGA Representatives not attending meetings. The stipend for the secretary is \$2100, paid in four \$525 increments.

D. Comptroller

- a. The GSGA Comptroller will be the official financial representative of the GSGA yearly budget and serve as the chair of the Budget and Allocations committee, and standing member of the Mandatory Student Fee Committee and Student Activity Fee Committee. The GSGA Comptroller will coordinate with the rest of the committee for funding request approvals submitted for student travel and student organizations. They will work closely with the business specialist to administer the accounts, oversee decisions on allocations, and maintain accurate records of financial transactions made year-to-date, as well as those transactions that are still outstanding, to be presented at each GSGA meeting. The comptroller must present all updated approved or unapproved funding requests, any other expenditures, as well as an up to date budget during their report at each meeting. The comptroller must maintain an accessible public record of an up to date budget in the Box folder. At the end of every academic year, it is the Comptroller's responsibility to follow the proper procedures for the GSGA budget proposal request for the upcoming academic year. The stipend for the Comptroller is \$2800, paid in four \$700 increments.

#### E. Humanitarian

- a. The GSGA Humanitarian will serve as a liaison to service-oriented student organizations, serve as a standing member of the Budget Committee, support the other executive board members as needed, and work to foster school-wide community service and philanthropy projects. The Humanitarian will serve as the chair of the Community Service and Philanthropy Committee. The stipend for the Humanitarian is \$2100, paid in four \$525 increments.

#### F. Public Relations

- a. The GSGA Public Relations Officer will manage all social media accounts and serve as the chair of the Communications Committee. This officer will maintain and post on all GSGA affiliated social media accounts weekly, create advertisements for all GSGA hosted events, and organize and execute promotion of all GSGA hosted events. The Public relations Officer may use members of the Communications Committee to ensure all promotion materials are effectively dispersed. This officer must also serve as historian or appoint a Communications

Committee member in their place to document and record pictures at all GSGA hosted events. These can be used for the promotion of other GSGA events and organization reports in the future. The stipend for the Public Relations Officer is \$2100, paid in four \$525 increments.

#### G. Undergraduate Liaison

- a. The GSGA Undergraduate Liaison will manage all major communication and collaborate with Student Government Association and the Graduate Student Government Association at Augusta University. The GSGA Undergraduate Liaison must attend one GSGA meeting per month and one USGA meeting per month. At every undergraduate meeting, the liaison will communicate all of the updates from the GSGA executive board meetings to which they are explicitly invited. Furthermore, at each GSGA executive board meeting they are invited to, the Liaison will be informed of what to communicate and discuss with the undergraduate SGA at their next meeting. In addition, any undergraduate SGA developments the Liaison determines is pertinent to discuss with the GSGA executive board will be communicated at the same executive board meeting. The position is unpaid and lasts one academic year.
- b. The GSGA Undergraduate Liaison must be a current, elected undergraduate SGA representative and a full-time student enrolled in an official AU undergraduate degree-seeking program. They preferably have prior experience on AU's undergraduate SGA Executive Board.

### **Section V: Impeachment Procedures**

#### A. Representatives

- a. Any GSGA Representative may resign at any point in time with a letter of resignation submitted to the Executive Board and to the appropriate advisor
- b. If there is evidence to suggest that a representative is not fulfilling their duties, then a petition may be written to remove that representative. Any petition must be signed by at least three voting members. Both sides shall have an opportunity to present their respective cases to the Judiciary for a final decision. The representatives shall vote by a secret ballot regarding the impeachment of the accused. A simple majority shall determine the result of the vote. The Executive shall remain in good standing until a final decision is made. The representative shall remain in good standing until a final decision is made.

- c. GSGA Representatives may be removed automatically by the GSGA Vice President without a removal hearing if the attendance policy is violated.
- B. Justices
  - a. Any GSGA Justice may resign at any point in time with a letter of resignation submitted to the Executive Board and to the appropriate advisor.
  - b. If there is evidence to suggest that a representative is not fulfilling their duties, then a petition may be written to remove that representative. Any petition must be signed by at least three voting members. Both sides shall have an opportunity to present their respective cases to the House for a final decision. The representatives shall vote by a secret ballot regarding the impeachment of the accused. A simple majority shall determine the result of the vote. The Justice shall remain in good standing until a final decision is made. The Justice shall remain in good standing until a final decision is made.
  - c. The Chief Justice shall reserve the power to remove any Justice that violates the attendance policy without a removal hearing.
- C. Executive Board
  - a. Executive Board members may resign at any point in time with a letter of resignation submitted to the GSGA Representatives and appropriate advisors.
  - b. If there is evidence to suggest that an Executive Board Member is not fulfilling their constitutional duties then a petition requesting his or her removal must be signed by at least two voting members. Both sides shall have an opportunity to present their respective cases to the Judiciary for a final decision. The representatives shall vote by a secret ballot regarding the impeachment of the accused. A simple majority shall determine the result of the vote. The Executive shall remain in good standing until a final decision is made.

### **Article III. House of Representatives**

#### **Section I. Purpose**

- A. The House of Representatives of the GSGA is the legislative body for the GSGA.
- B. The House of Representatives shall represent all graduate and professional programs and hold the power to vote on legislation, resolutions, and Executive Board appointments.

#### **Section II. Composition**

- A. The House of Representatives will be composed of representatives of each graduate and professional degree program.
- B. There shall be 1 representative for every 50 students in each program.
- C. Each representative shall meet the following requirements:
  - a. Must be a graduate or professional student at Augusta University.



- b. Must have and maintain a 2.5 GPA.
  - c. You must be willing to fulfill all responsibility for the position you are elected for.
- D. Election
- a. The manner of election of each GSGA representative shall be determined by the program they are representing.
- E. House of Representatives Responsibilities
- a. It is the responsibility of every representative to be the liaison for their respective classes, programs, and colleges. Any form of communication that the GSGA sends out to be distributed, must be emailed or distributed to the rest of the student body.
  - b. It is required that each representative attend a retreat, fundraiser, and service project.

### **Section III. Meetings**

#### A. Schedule

- a. Meetings of the GSGA House of Representatives will be held monthly during the first two weeks of each month during the fall and spring semesters excluding December and May.
- b. The schedule of meetings for the academic year shall be published in the designated Box folder and emailed out no later than August 1st of the upcoming academic year.

#### B. Meeting Notice

- a. The agenda for the upcoming meeting, including any attachments, shall be provided to all SGA Senators and Representatives at least 48 hours prior to the meeting by email or some other electronic medium (e.g., dropbox, or posted on a web page, etc.)

#### C. Meeting Agenda

- a. A meeting may only occur if quorum is reached. If quorum is not reached, the meeting may proceed but voting procedures may not occur. If quorum is not met 2 times in a row, voting procedures may occur on impeachment and membership proceedings
- b. The routine order of business for regular meetings of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be:
  - i. Roll Call
  - ii. Establish a Quorum
  - iii. Reports from Executives
  - iv. Reports of Committees
  - v. Old Business
  - vi. New Business
  - vii. Announcements
  - viii. Adjournment
- c. Alternative meeting protocols shall be adopted with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  affirmative vote of those in attendance for special purpose meetings.

#### D. Attendance

- a. Representatives are permitted one unexcused absence per semester. May be excused if appropriate documentation is provided to the Senate Secretary. See item C.
- b. Representatives are permitted one unexcused absence per year.
- c. Documented excused absences can include, but not limited to: Doctor's note, military service, athletic responsibilities, educational fieldwork, etc.
  - i. Excuses must be submitted at least 24 hours ahead of time.
- d. Senators are permitted to attend meetings online *only* if the senator is out of town due to educational fieldwork, military service, etc.
  - i. Those joining online must have an actively working camera that is kept on in order to be marked as present.

#### E. Voting

- a. Only SGA Senators and Representatives present and in good standing as per attendance policies shall be eligible to vote.

- b. Each SGA Senator or Representative shall have one vote
- c. A quorum for regular meetings will be 50% plus one of the current membership.
- d. A simple majority of the current members is required for adoption of all motions, resolutions, bills, or other questions requiring a vote unless otherwise specified in the SGA constitution or bylaws.

#### **Section IV. Responsibilities**

- A. The responsibilities of each cabinet member are outlined below.
- B. House of Representatives
  - C. It is the responsibility of every representative to be the liaison for their respective classes, programs, and colleges. Any form of communication that the GSGA sends out to be distributed, must be emailed or distributed to the rest of the student body.
  - D. It is required that each representative attend a retreat, fundraiser, and service project.
  - E. Failure to fulfill these obligations may result in a loss of voting privileges, any revocation of privileges will be decided by members of the current Executive Board.
- F. House of Representatives Committees
  - a. The composition and duties of the SGA House of Representatives Standing Committees shall be as follows:
    - i. Humanitarian Committee
    - ii. Budget and Allocations Committee

#### **Section V. House Committees**

- A. The duties of the Graduate SGA Committee Chairpersons will be as follows:
  - a. Chairperson will preside over all meetings.
  - b. The GSGA Executive Board will appoint chairpersons for each committee at the beginning of each school year and as needed.
  - c. The Chairperson of each committee will ensure that detailed minutes of all committee proceedings are recorded, including the date, time, names of attendees,

and an accurate summary of discussions and decisions made. The committee minutes will be provided to the GSGA Secretary within one week of the committee meeting.

- B. The Chairperson will report on committee proceedings at monthly meetings of the GSGA House of Representatives.
- C. The Chairperson shall prepare a year-end report detailing all events held and decisions made by the committee during the previous year to file with the GSGA Secretary.
- D. Committee Membership:
  - E. All committee members must be AU graduate or professional students. It is not required that the student be a GSGA Representative to serve on a House of Representatives Committee.
  - F. Each GSGA Representative must participate as a member of one of the GSGA committees, including special purpose and ad hoc committees during each school year.
- G. The duties of the committee members shall be as follows:
  - a. Committee members shall attend all committee meetings.
  - b. Committee members shall be active participants in the committee and shall assist the committee chairperson as requested.
- H. Committee Meetings:
  - a. Committees shall meet at least twice a semester (excluding summer semester) or more often as needed.
- I. Special purpose or ad hoc committees
  - a. Special committees can be established by the GSGA President for special purposes as needed. Their purpose, composition, and duration will be specified by the President with input from the Executive Cabinet and Advisor. The duration of these committees will not extend beyond the current academic year unless specified in the committee charge.

## **Section VI. Funding**

- A. The budget proposal must follow an outline for the upcoming year consisting at minimum of officer stipends, section(s) for organization and research funding, and a section for SGA events and expenses. This outline shall be used as a guide rather than a requirement for the budget. The budget outline will be developed by the Budget and Allocations committee and will be presented no later than the 2nd meeting of the academic year for approval by the House.
  - a. The rest of the proposed budget outline is up to the Comptroller and Executive Board.
  - b. All funding requests must be submitted prior to travel/event date.
  - c. The business specialist has a right to her reimbursement timeline and requirements.
- B. Funding requests will only be accepted for an event or travel occurring in the same academic semester.
- C. Exceptions can be made for travel occurring in the first week of each semester. This will be an Executive Board decision.
- D. The Comptroller has the right to approve “typical” funding requests without the approval of the Executive Board or Budget and Allocations Committee if prior budget details have been set.
  - a. For new and unique funding requests, members of the Budget and Allocations must approve by the deadline given by the Comptroller.
- E. Student Travel
  - a. All students are eligible for student travel to attend or present at a national or international conference.
  - b. The amount awarded should maintain the same for all students depending on the presentation type. The amount awarded for attending, poster, or oral presentations needs to be determined by the Executive Board prior to the semester.
- F. The travel funding requests are not part of a student organization.
  - a. There is a \$600 limit per semester on individual travel requests a student can submit.
  - b. Group travel requests are not permitted.

#### G. Student Organizations

- a. Must be an AU registered organization to receive GSGA funds.
- b. Registered organizations can be reimbursed up to \$600 an academic year and up to \$300 an academic semester.

#### H. Funds will not roll over between semesters.

- a. Registered organizations must submit individual funding requests for each event.
- b. Registered organizations are allowed to team up with other registered organizations to receive funds for the same event. However, each organization must submit an individual funding request for the same event.
- c. Registered organizations must follow all Georgia Regents guidelines for funding requests.

#### I. Journal Publications:

- a. There must be no other department/mentor willing to cover journal submission fees to receive funds.
  - i. Proof of at least two other potential funding sources have been contacted must be sent to the Budget and Allocations committee for review.
- b. GSGA must be notified before journal submission.
- c. Proof of acceptance into the Journal must be provided.
- d. Journal must be accessible to all and does not require a monetary subscription to view.
- e. There must be an acknowledgement of GSGA for funds in the acknowledgement section of the paper
  - i. First author on the publication can be reimbursed up to \$300; second through fifth author can be reimbursed up to \$200

### **Article IV. Judicial Board**

#### **Section I. Purpose**

- A. The GSGA Judicial Board and its Justices provide an impartial evaluation of GSGA Constitution adherence such as funding request approval, Roberts Rules of Order usage in meetings, and paying attention to any changes that have been made to the Undergraduate SGA Constitution in the past semester.

## **Section II. Composition**

- A. There shall be 1 justice for every 250 students enrolled at the AU Graduate School.
  - a. With total justices count being 1 for every 250 students, the Judicial Board must have Justices representing at least three distinct graduate programs.
    - i. This requirement may limit a current GSGA President's candidates when seeking to fill a vacant Justice position.
- B. Each justice shall meet the following requirements:
  - a. Must be a current full-time graduate or professional student at Augusta University.
  - b. Must at least be in at least their second semester of their first academic year enrolled in an official AU graduate degree-seeking program, as verified by Jag Trax or equivalent official degree progress documentation
  - c. Must have and maintain a 2.5 GPA.
  - d. You must be willing to fulfill all responsibility for the Justice position you are appointed for.
- C. Appointment
  - a. GSGA Justices are appointed by a current GSGA President for a term until they complete the graduate degree in which they were enrolled at the time of being appointed.
    - i. GSGA Justices will be confirmed with a simple majority vote among the GSGA House of Representatives.
- D. The longest serving GSGA Justice is known as the Chief Justice and will be the tie-breaker in contentious decisions.
  - a. If there is no longest serving Justice, the current GSGA President will identify the Chief Justice upon confirmation of the entire Judicial Board by the House of Representatives.

## **Section III. Meetings**

- A. The GSGA Justices have the same general meeting attendance requirements as the GSGA House of Representatives.

- B. The GSGA Justices are required to meet with the current Faculty Advisor and the Executive Board once a semester at the last Executive Board meeting of the semester to provide an evaluation of Constitution adherence such as funding request approval, Roberts Rules of Order usage in meetings, and any changes that have been made to the Graduate SGA Constitution in the past semester.

#### **Section IV. Responsibilities**

- A. The GSGA Justices can be removed at any time by the same standards by which an approval for Amendments to the GSGA Constitution are completed, specifically an official petition signed by 5% or more of the student population or 1/3 vote of the House of Representative to propose removal and complete removal through a ¾ majority vote of the House of Representatives.

#### **Article V. Bylaws**

##### **Section I. Composition**

- A. The House of Representatives shall establish a set of rules which shall be known as the Bylaws of the House of Representatives.
- B. The Bylaws shall be a lesser authority than this Constitution and shall establish further guidelines for the body of the GSGA.

##### **Section II. Amendments**

- A. The House of Representatives shall be governed by their Bylaws.
- B. A two-thirds vote of the House of Representatives is needed to amend the Bylaws of the House. The GSGA President may veto any amendment passed by the House. The President may veto a particular amendment only once, and a three-fourths vote of the House shall be necessary to override the veto.

#### **Article VI. Constitution Section I. Ratification**

- A. This Constitution shall become effective upon receiving two-thirds of the vote cast by the House of Representatives and approval of the AU Provost.



- B. Upon ratification, this Constitution, Bylaws, and its associated codes shall supersede all previous governing documents which shall be deemed null and void.
- C. If the Constitution is deemed in need of major and/or multiple revisions, the GSGA President may call for a Constitutional Committee to create a new governing constitution of the AU GSGA. After which the old constitution must be nullified and the new one adopted with at least a three-fourths majority vote by the House of Representatives and approved by the AU Provost. The newly adopted Constitution shall go into effect immediately upon the joint ratification.

## **Section II. Amendments to the Constitution**

- A. Amendments shall be drafted to make deletions and insertions to the Constitution.
- B. Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by a two-thirds vote of the House of Representatives, or by a petition of 5% of the respective Student Body directed to the GSGA President.
- C. Amendments shall become parts of this Constitution upon being reviewed by a Constitutional Review Committee composed of the GSGA Advisor(s) and GSGA President and the Vice President. Upon approval by the committee, the House of Representatives shall vote concerning the proposed amendment and must approve of the amendment with a three-fourths vote. After approval, the amendment must be advertised to the student body for no less than two weeks before taking effect.