

Constitution of the North Dakota State University Graduate Student Association

Originally ratified on 10/29/2008

Preamble

We, the graduate students of North Dakota State University, do hereby establish this constitution in order to secure and protect the rights of graduate students at North Dakota State University, and in doing so establish an association charged with serving and representing all graduate students at North Dakota State University.

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section 1

Name: The name of the organization established by this constitution shall be "North Dakota State University Graduate Student Association." The word "the" may be added in front of North, when applicable, to read "the North Dakota State University Graduate Student Association" (herein referred to as "GSA"). This organization may also be referred to as the Graduate Student Association.

Section 2

Purpose:

2.1 The GSA shall be the association at North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science (herein referred to as "NDSU") that will secure and protect the rights of graduate students.

2.2 The GSA shall be the representative voice of graduate students at NDSU. To accomplish this the GSA shall formulate policies, advise the Dean of the Graduate School, the University Senate, and the President of the University on the graduate student's viewpoint concerning all matters affecting graduate student life.

2.3 The GSA shall act to improve the quality of education and social experiences for graduate students at NDSU.

Article II. Membership

Section 1

Non-Discrimination Statement: the North Dakota State University Graduate Student Association is fully committed to equal opportunity in employment decisions and educational programs and activities in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, and including appropriate affirmative efforts, for all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap, age, Vietnam Era Veterans status, or sexual orientation.

Section 2

All enrolled graduate students of NDSU are hereby members of the GSA and are granted all the rights and privileges established by this constitution.

Article III. The Executive Committee

Section 1

Terms for the Executive Committee shall be set at one year. Members may hold an office more than once if elected or appointed.

The executive committee of this association shall consist of:

- a. President
- b. Vice President
- c. Secretary
- d. Treasurer
- e. Executive Council
- f. Committee Chairs

Section 2

Duties of the Officers:

A. **The President** shall be the principal executive officer and shall have the following duties:

1. Preside at all meetings of the association.
2. Call special meetings of the association.
3. Schedule all meetings, events, and other activities of the association, and to obtain appropriate facilities for these activities.
4. Prepare and file any report required by any university entity.
5. Appoint committee chairs.
6. Perform other duties as specified by the bylaws.

B. **The Vice President** shall assume the duties of the President in the event of absence of the President. In addition, the Vice President shall have the following duties:

1. Assume the duties of the President (until a special election can be held) in the event of a vacancy in the office.
2. Serve as an ex-officio member of the Standing Committees of the association.
3. Plan the officer's orientation and association retreats.
4. Serve in other roles, as prescribed by the President and GSA.

C. **The Secretary** shall have the following duties:

1. Keep a record of all members of the association.

2. Keep a record of all activities of the association.
3. Keep and distribute minutes of each meeting of the association.
4. Notify all members of meetings.

D. **The Treasurer** shall have the following duties:

1. Keep all financial records of the association.
2. Prepare and submit financial reports to the members.
3. Prepare the annual budget and all budget requests for funds.
4. Become familiar with university accounting procedures and policies.

E. **The Executive Council** consists of a group of people whose purpose is to ensure the continuity of the GSA, directly assist the GSA in reaching its goals, and serve in an advisory role. Because the GSA is a student organization the non-graduate student members of the executive council shall have no vote relating to affairs of the GSA; the Executive Council is to serve in an advisory capacity. The Executive Council shall also have the following duties:

1. Provide direct counsel to the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and committee chairs where appropriate and warranted.
2. Provide logistical and technological support and provide direction to the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and committee chairs.
3. The Executive Council shall have other duties as is prescribed by the President and GSA.
4. The Executive Council shall formulate plans of action to protect graduate student rights and privileges upon which all graduate students may vote in order that they may be implemented.

- F. Committee Chairs** as established in Article IV shall be members of the executive committee. The committee chairs shall preside over their respective committee's meetings and will ensure that the committees are working towards their respective goals, as established in Article IV and by the GSA.

Section 3

Vacancy of an Office:

- A. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President before the expiration of a full term, the Vice President shall assume the duties of the President until a special election can be held.
- B. In the event of a vacancy in an office other than the President before the expiration of a full term, a special election shall be called by the President within two weeks to fill the vacancy.

Section 4

Removal of Elected Officers

- a. Grounds for removal of an elected officer include:
 - 1. Non-enrollment
 - 2. Violation of University Policy
 - 3. Failure to perform the duties of the office as set forth in the constitution and bylaws of the association.
 - 4. Failure to uphold the provision of this constitution
 - 5. Gross negligence that puts the association, university, or other members at undue risk.
 - 6. A vote of "no confidence" by the other members of the GSA Executive Council.
- b. An elected officer may be removed by the following process:

1. A petition to remove the officer in question must be submitted to another officer. When such a petition is received, the officer (whom received the petition) shall call a meeting of the association to decide upon removal.
2. The grounds for removal are to be presented by the officer in charge at a regular or special meeting of the association.
3. The officer in question shall be provided an opportunity to present a defense either in person or in writing.
4. Three-quarters of the voting members present must vote in favor of removing the officer, for said removal to take place.

Section 5

Appeal of Removal of Elected Officers:

- A. An officer may appeal his/her removal within two weeks of the vote for removal by requesting a special appeal meeting of the association. The President, or Vice President, if the President is the officer being removed, shall notify all members of this meeting which is not to occur for at least one week and not more than one month after the appeal request is received.
- B. The decision to uphold the vote for removal shall require a three-quarters vote of the voting members present at the meeting.

Article IV: Standing and *Ad Hoc* Committees

Section 1

Standing Committees

Standing committees are established to assist the GSA in working towards its goals and ensuring its purposes are being met. Each standing committee will have a chair who is a member of the executive committee. The following committees are established by this constitution:

A. Student Affairs

The Student Affairs Committee shall deal with issues relating to academic, university, financial, social, and other affairs that directly affect graduate student's lives.

B. Programming

The Programming Committee is responsible for coordinating academic, professional, and social events. The Programming Committee will work with other committees and entities to ensure the success of programming.

C. Publication and Publicity

The Publication and Publicity Committee is responsible for the publication of the GSA's newsletter and the development of other publications including guides. The committee will promote the GSA and any GSA sponsored events.

D. Prospective and New Students

The Prospective and New Students Committee shall be the direct link between the GSA and prospective and new students. The committee shall work with other University entities in development and implementation of a new graduate student welcome and orientation.

E. Website

The Website Committee will ensure that the GSA's website is up-to-date. The committee will assist others in ensuring that all GSA publications and other resources are available on the GSA's website. Additionally, the committee will moderate the GSA message board to promote organizational communication. The committee will ensure that all GSA events are listed and up-to-date on the website.

Section 2

Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc Committees shall be established as needed at the discretion of the GSA.

Article V: Amendments to the Constitution

Section 1

Amendments to the Constitution

The following is the process and provisions for modification of the Constitution of the North Dakota State University Graduate Student Association:

- a. Any voting member may propose amendments to this constitution.
- b. Amendments must be brought in writing to the executive committee at least 7 days before they are to be voted on at a meeting of the GSA.
- c. Amendments approved by the majority of the GSA's total present voting membership shall be placed on the ballot of the next general elections.
- d. Amendments to this constitution must be approved by majority vote of the GSA during general elections.

Article VI: Bylaws

The GSA may adopt bylaws, which keep with this constitution, to further the GSA's purpose. Bylaws shall be adopted or modified by a 2/3 affirmative vote by the members of the GSA present at a special meeting called to adopt the bylaws. Such a meeting must be announced at least two weeks in advance.