



SUFFOLK  
UNIVERSITY  
BOSTON

GRADUATE STUDENT  
ASSOCIATION

Constitution of the Graduate  
Student Association at Suffolk  
University

AMENDED

September 12th, 2016

This document shall serve as a guide for the organization and provide clarity to the rules that govern it

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The organization established under this constitution shall be known as the Graduate Student Association (GSA) of Suffolk University.

## **ARTICLE II – AUTHORITY AND OBJECTIVES**

The GSA shall represent all graduate students of the colleges in their relations with Suffolk University; promote social, diplomatic, and cultural activities for graduate students; create and maintain a liaison between the graduate students and the Deans of the colleges and through the Deans maintain close contact with all activities of the colleges.

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

General membership of the GSA is available to:

- A. All graduate students of the colleges, including those in joint programs with the Law School.
- B. Have attended at least two meetings throughout the semester, which shall be referred to as “members in good standing,” or active members.
- C. Students who serve Executive Board positions in other graduate student groups, under the GSA.

Active members of G.S.A may attend all meetings, serve on committees, speak when recognized by the President, and may vote for Executive Board members at the annual elections. Interest in membership can be channeled either through a member of the Executive Board of the Association or through the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement (SLI).

Inactive members, or members that do not satisfy active status, are ineligible for the following benefits: Voting privileges, and Executive Board positions. Exceptions are made at the discretion of the Executive Board and shall be handled on a case-by-case basis.

## **ARTICLE IV – EXECUTIVE BOARD**

A. The Executive Board of the Graduate Student Association shall consist of not more than fifteen members. These members will deal with all basic policy decisions and planning. The officers and members of the Executive Board in conjunction with the regular body of the GSA will administer the implementation of projects. All Executive Board members must be degree candidates in good academic standing.

- B. All decisions of the Executive Board shall require a majority vote of those members present. One more than half of the membership shall constitute a quorum.
- C. Only Executive Board members shall have the right to vote during regular business meetings.
- D. Elected Executive Board members shall assume their duties at the last Graduate Student Association meeting of the year and serve for a one-year term.
- E. Termination of office shall be determined by the status of member activity (e.g., whether the officer has an active or inactive member status), and shall be handled by the Executive Board on a case-by-case basis.

## **ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE BOARD**

The officers of the GSA shall be the officers of the Executive Board. They will include a President, a Vice-President, a Treasurer, a Recording and Corresponding Secretary, and a Public Relations Chair. Additional officers may include an Event Coordinator, and a Community Chair.

- A. The officers shall be elected from the members of the GSA Executive Board who are to remain as a graduate student in the colleges for at least their term of office.
- B. Elected officers shall assume their duties at the final GSA meeting of the spring and serve for a one-year term.

## **ARTICLE VI – ELECTIONS**

An annual internal election will be held for the purpose of electing Executive Board members of the GSA. A plurality of the Executive Board members of the Association is required for the election of each candidate.

- A. The President shall establish the official date of the spring elections so long as the annual elections are held at the last meeting of the spring semester. The Executive Board shall also have the authority to call special elections and conduct referendums at any time during the academic year.
- B. The GSA Executive Board and its committee shall be responsible for administering the elections. All ballots cast shall be counted and verified by the members of the organization.
- C. All Executive Board members shall be elected by the membership. The officers will be elected by secret ballot. All Graduate Students will be notified of this election meeting through general publication and/or personal announcements.
- D. A vote comprised of active members and the Executive Board members will be required to fill the available positions on the Executive Board.
- E. The plurality in vote shall be determined as a 50% + 1 of voting members.

## **ARTICLE VII – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

### The President

#### A. The President shall:

1. Call and preside at all meetings as chairperson.
2. Open the meeting at the prescribed time and call the members to order.
3. Announce business before the meeting in the prescribed order.
4. Recognize members entitled to the floor.
5. State and put to a vote all questions properly moved, and announce the results.
6. Protect the meeting from dilatory or frivolous motions by refusing to recognize them.
7. Make decisions on all questions of order and parliamentary inquiries, unless the decisions are put before the meeting for a vote.
8. Appoint or dissolve committees or designate individuals for specific duties in relation to projects, activities or concerns of the GSA, subject to acceptance of committee appointment by the nominee.
9. Represent GSA at any on-campus meeting (i.e., Board of Trustees' meetings, meetings with Student Affairs, meetings with the Deans of the colleges).

### The Vice President

#### B. The Vice President shall:

1. Assist the President in all duties of GSA.
2. Assume the duties of the President in his/her absence.
3. Be a member of ex-officio of all standing committees.
4. Prepare and present a progress report of all committees other than standing committees at each meeting.
5. In case of resignation, death, or severe illness by the President, the Vice-President becomes President for the unexpired term.
6. Represent GSA at any on-campus meeting (i.e., Board of Trustees' meetings, meetings with Student Affairs, meetings with the Deans of the colleges) in the absence of the President.
7. Be in charge of recruitment, recognition and retention initiatives.

### Secretary

#### C. The Secretary shall:

1. Keep a register of roll of the Board members.
2. Maintain a list of all committees and its members.
3. Endorse all committee reports, date of reception, and what action was taken.
4. Maintain a file of minutes and committee reports.

5. Maintain a list of policy motions.
6. Maintain a book with the Constitution, By Laws, and Rules of Order.
7. Open records (other than financial) to inspection to any constituent by a written request.
8. Distribute copies of the minutes to the membership by 48 hours after the meeting occurs.
9. Record minutes of the meeting, which should contain at length the following:
  - a. Kind of meeting – regular, special.
  - b. Name of the meeting.
  - c. Date and place of the meeting.
  - d. Names of those in attendance.
  - e. Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were approved and/or corrected.
  - f. All main motions (except if withdrawn).
  - g. The hours of the meeting – start/adjournment.
  - h. The maker and seconder of the motion.
  - i. Record the vote on each motion as to aye, nay, and abstentions.
  - j. Signature of Secretary.
10. Maintain an up-to-date mailing list of all GSA members, including phone numbers.
11. Handle all correspondence as directed by the Board and maintain a record of all correspondence.
12. Notify members of meeting dates.
13. Circulate reports as directed.

#### The Treasurer

##### D. The Treasurer shall:

1. Hold the deposited funds and pay bills via checks signed by the Treasurer and Director of Student Activities.
2. Report income/expenditures at all meetings including an Annual Report.
3. Receive and maintain all financial records in compliance with Student Activities Office.
4. Prepare and submit a budget assisted by the Executive Board for approval by the assembly.
5. Notify person(s) or institution(s) of any outstanding monies owed to the organization.
6. Keep a personal record of dates and names of person receiving checks, not to be included in the Treasurer's Report; only income/expenditures/balance should be reported.
7. The financial records shall be open for inspection to constituency upon written notice to the Treasurer and the President.

## The Public Relations Chair

### E. The Public Relations Chair shall:

1. Provide flyers, posters, postcards and notices to the graduate student population.
2. Maintain Graduate Student ListServ (Campus Cruiser).
3. Send Information to Webmaster to Update GSA Web page.
4. Create brochures and programs for events such as Networking Socials, Coffee Tables, Spring Awards, etc.
5. Handle all GSA social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.).

### The Event Coordinator shall:

1. Take charge of all logistics for an event, including: Transportation (if applicable), food orders, decorations, contract negotiations, etc.
2. Engage in outreach to different venues in order to maintain relationships between these and the GSA.
3. Maintain communication with SLI and other on-campus authorities to receive approval for events.
4. Work along the Public Relations Chair to coordinate effective marketing strategies for events.
5. Engage in outreach with the Event Coordinators of other graduate student groups in order to identify collaboration opportunities.

### The Community Chair shall:

1. Engage in outreach to identify different volunteer/community involvement opportunities for GSA members.
2. Maintain communication with different volunteer/community involvement institutions on and off-campus.
3. Coordinate communications with graduate students to make decisions related to volunteer/community involvement opportunities.
4. Coordinate at least 4 community service events per year.

## **ARTICLE VIII – VACANCIES**

Should any Executive Board seat become vacant, the members of the Executive Board may appoint a replacement from the general membership.

## **ARTICLE IX – MEETINGS**

A. REGULAR MEETINGS; The Executive Board shall hold regular meetings every two weeks during the regular school year or as directed by the President.

B. SPECIAL MEETINGS; Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE X – ATTENDANCE**

Given that all Executive Board positions are considered on-site positions, Executive Board members must attend at least one meeting per month, if more than one meeting is held. No Executive Board member should miss more than two consecutive meetings. Failure to attend two consecutive meetings may result in the loss of office. The Secretary should notify such loss of office. Standard provisions will then be taken to fill the vacancy. In special circumstances, the absence of any individual member may be excused by a majority vote of the Executive Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Such excused absences shall be noted in the records of the Secretary.

## **BY-LAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY**

### **ARTICLE I – AUTHORITY AND OBJECTIVES**

1. The term "membership" as indicated in Article III of the Constitution of the Graduate Student Association shall be the following: "A student shall be defined as one who is listed by the Registrar of the Colleges according to the rules and regulations of the University, but in instances where a student has completed his/her course requirements, he/she may continue as a member of GSA Board until the next formal graduation, or until new elections of the new Board members in April, whichever comes first."

2. All ballots should contain the names of all candidate who have applied. Those who have served as GSA Board members and are seeking reelection shall be so designated on the ballot.

3. All ballots will be collected and counted by the GSA and results will be given at the meeting and published on the GSA website.

All committees shall be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Executive Board.

1. All committee reports shall be in writing and presented at the regular and special Executive Board meetings.

2. All social functions which will be handled by an appointed committee shall be reported to the Executive Board explaining in detail items of cost, expenses, income, and profit, if any, within sixty days of the aforementioned functions.

## **ARTICLE II – AMENDMENTS**

Any member wishing to amend this constitution shall, at an Executive Board meeting, state their intentions to the Executive Board, which shall then take the necessary steps to assure that the proposed amendment is brought before the entire membership. The Executive Board and the committee, if formed, will be represented to the Association members at the time they receive their ballots. This constitution may be amended only by a two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting.

## **ARTICLE III. – SPECIAL PROVISIONS**

A. A resume of Parliamentary Law as amended by the United States Association of Evening Students shall be used in resolving questions of parliamentary procedure.

B. The majority of funds to support this organization shall be supplied by a student activity fee imposed on all evening and/or part-time students of the colleges. The fee shall be amended as necessary to meet the objectives of the Association, subject to final approval of the Board of Trustees of the University.  
**Graduate Student Association's Responsibilities**

### **Graduate Student Groups**

The Suffolk University Graduate Student Association is the representative body for all graduate students at Suffolk University within the College of Arts and Sciences and the Sawyer School of Management. The Graduate Student Association has evolved from the rich history of the Evening Division Student Association (EDSA), which has made significant contributions to the Suffolk University. EDSA was the first evening organization in the country to publish its own paper.

Times have changed, as has the landscape of Suffolk University. Its student profiles and academic programs have changed to reflect this evolution. The shift from EDSA to GSA was another step in the recognition of the changing nature of our student body. With Suffolk University's undergraduate population more closely resembling the traditional campus community and the increase offerings of graduate programs, including Ph.D. programs in Clinical Psychology and Economics as well as a Master of Fine Arts providing a more complex picture of our graduate student population, not currently represented within the EDSA structure.

Increasingly there is a need to have an organization to better meet the needs of our graduate students. GSA's mission includes, but is not limited to:

- Sponsoring social/networking events,



- Promote and support career and professional development opportunities,
- Support research and academic pursuits that enrich the intellectual life of the University, and
- Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of graduate students.

**Program Specific Associations:**

Whereas GSA is designed to program for the entire graduate population, and serves as the umbrella group for other organizations, there are several program specific associations with the mission of programming specifically for and by students within those programs. Currently, ten program specific associations exist: Ascend, Association of Latino Professionals for America (ALPFA), Chinese Student & Scholars Association (CSSA), Crime and Justice Graduate Student Association, Future Healthcare Leaders Association (FHLA), Interior Design Council (IDC), Master of Public Administration Student Association (MPASA), National Association of Women MBAs (NAWMBA), Suffolk University Graduate Business Association (SUGBA).

**Funding:**

A considerable amount of time and resources have been invested in programs and events sponsored by GSA during the past several years. With the support of both colleges and the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement, the existing graduate groups have offered the graduate population a tremendous increase in programming. Each graduate student on the Boston campus pays a \$26 fee per semester, consistent with the fees paid by graduate students under the old EDSA model.

**Fee Distribution:**

Activities Fees are distributed based on a written budget proposal from each Suffolk University Graduate Student Group. For all students (full or part time) the full \$26 is awarded to the Graduate Student Association. Upon each submission of a written budget proposal from a Graduate Student Group the Graduate Student Association Executive Board members will conduct an unbiased review process and vote on the requested budget amount based on the provide proposal criteria and the total available funds for the academic semester.

Updated: September 12, 2016