

CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

May 2024

***Preamble:** We, the graduate and professional students at the University of Alabama, in order to preserve and defend the rights and privileges of student self-governance, to guarantee the inclusion and consideration of graduate and professional students in university decisions, to facilitate avenues for support towards building a generative and inclusive community, and to serve the common interests of all graduate and professional students, do hereby establish the Constitution of the Graduate Student Association.*

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Student Association of The University of Alabama, hereinafter referred to as the Graduate Student Association or GSA.

Article II. Purpose

The Graduate Student Association is a representative body consisting of at least one representative from each graduate department of the University. Its purpose is to represent the graduate students on all matters pertaining to their general welfare as graduate students; to coordinate academic, social, and other activities significant to the graduate community; and to serve as a means by which graduate students' opinions may be ascertained and communicated to the University administration and other groups or individuals.

Article III. Relationship with the University of Alabama

The GSA is a student organization of The University of Alabama and shall comply with the conditions prescribed by the University for student organizations. The GSA shall be advised by one or more faculty or staff member(s) of the University, who shall be permitted to, but not required to, attend all GSA meetings, including meetings of constituent bodies established under this Constitution, and sub-groups thereof.

Article IV. Statement of Non-Discrimination

The GSA condemns discrimination or harassment based on race, color, class, national origin, immigrant status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, parental status, pregnancy, age, physical or mental disability, veteran status, and/or political views. Membership in the GSA shall be open to all graduate and professional students and shall not be restricted based on any of these categories.

Article V. Membership

Section V.1 Eligibility

- (a) Students enrolled in the Graduate School at The University of Alabama, are represented and supported by the Graduate Student Association (GSA). These students are eligible to become members of the GSA governing body.
- (b) Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) students at the University are represented and supported by the GSA and are eligible to become members of the Executive Council and/or the House of Delegates following conferral of a Bachelor's degree.

Section V.2 Voting

Members of this organization shall be entitled to vote in GSA elections and on referenda.

Article VI. Meetings and Town Halls

Section VI.1 Schedule

The GSA shall hold regular meetings and town halls during the fall and spring semesters that are publicly advertised and open to all graduate and professional students.

- (a) Regular meetings including the Executive Council and House of Delegates shall be held at least four times during the fall and spring semesters at a regular meeting time to be determined by the Executive Council and House of Delegates.
- (b) Town halls shall be held at least twice per semester at a regular time to be determined the Executive Council and administration of the Graduate School.

Section VI.2 Quorum and Majority Rules for Voting

The quorum for GSA meetings for each academic year shall be set at two-thirds of those delegates whose names have been officially submitted to the Executive Vice President and three-fourths of Executive Council officers.

Article VII. Legislative Branch

Section VII.1 Legislative Power

All legislative powers of the GSA shall be vested in the House of Delegates, hereinafter referred to as the House.

Section VII.2 Composition

The House shall be composed of graduate student delegates from each school or college who represent programs recognized by the Graduate School. Only degree-seeking students who are enrolled in programs officially recognized by the Graduate School shall be eligible to serve as voting members of the House of Delegates.

- (a) College enrollment shall determine the number of delegates representing each college, with a requirement of the Executive Vice President to review these allotments every 3-years, as enrollment numbers are updated through the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

Section VII.3 Eligibility

Eligibility requirements of all candidates intending to serve as a Delegate must be met before seeking a nomination for candidacy.

- (a) Candidates for the House must be in good academic and disciplinary standing with The University of Alabama and must remain in this status during their term unless there are mitigating circumstances in which the student can request a review for an exemption by the Dean of Students who shall assign appropriate sanctions in addition to whatever requirements are already in place by the Office of Student Conduct.
- (b) Membership shall not be restricted based on race, ethnicity, country of origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, genetic information, religion, creed, veteran status, criminal record, or political affiliation.

Section VII.4 Vacancies in the House of Delegates

Vacancies in the House shall be filled using the following procedure:

- (a) The vacant Delegate seat shall be filled by nomination from the college or school where the vacancy occurred within ten days of notification of the Executive Vice President according to the election and appointment procedures listed in Article XI for regular appointment to the House of Delegates.
- (b) Shall the vacant Delegate seat not be filled by nomination from the college or school where the vacancy occurred in the allotted time, the Executive Vice President may fill the vacancy from eligible candidates from other colleges and schools.

Section VII.5 Terms of Delegates

Members of the House of Delegates shall serve one-year terms beginning in July of the nominating year and ending in June of the following year.

Section VII.6 Officers of the House of Delegates

Officers of the House of Delegates shall include the Speaker of the House and the Secretary.

- (a) The Executive Vice President shall preside over the House prior to the election of the Speaker of the House by the members of the House of Delegates.
 - (i) The Executive Vice President shall have no vote except to break a tie.
 - (ii) The Executive Vice President shall serve as the ceremonial leader of the House.
- (b) The Speaker of the House shall preside over the House immediately upon their election.
 - (i) The Speaker of the House shall be elected from within the membership of the House by a majority of the Delegates.
 - (ii) The House may hold a new election for Speaker of the House if three-fifths of the Delegates support a motion of no confidence in the Speaker's leadership or following a vacancy in the office.
- (c) The Speaker of the House shall coordinate with the Executive Vice President to oversee the nomination and selection of the two (2) winners of the Outstanding Graduate Student Award.
- (d) The Secretary of the House shall maintain a record of all proceedings of the House and attendance of its members, make records of House proceedings available to the Executive Council and graduate and professional students within four full class days of House meetings, receive petitions regarding the impeachment and removal of any officer of the GSA, and prepare legislation for Delegates to review.
 - (i) The Secretary of the House shall be elected from within the membership of the House by a majority of the Delegates.
 - (ii) The House may hold a new election for Secretary if three-fifths of the Delegates support a motion of no confidence in the Secretary's ability to perform their duties or following a vacancy in the office.

Section VII.7 Duties of the Delegates

Delegates are expected to serve as conduits of information between the GSA and students in their respective departments. Delegates shall:

- (a) Attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the House unless excused.
- (b) Serve on at least one committee.
- (c) Make themselves accessible and accountable to their constituents.

Section VII.8 Powers and Duties of the House of Delegates

Legislative power vested in the House of Delegates shall include:

- (a) Developing and passing legislation on behalf of graduate students of The University of Alabama.
- (b) All legislation of the House shall be categorized as follows:
 - (i) Bills: Rules, regulations, procedures, or amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws for the purposes of enacting policy under the jurisdiction of the GSA.
 - (ii) Resolutions: Expressions of sentiments of the House which are not subject to a presidential veto.
- (c) Electing officers of the House, setting the day and time for meetings of the House, and establishing and enforcing an attendance policy for members of the House.
- (d) Establishing legislative committees as needed and maintaining permanent committees as outlined in Article IX.
- (e) Holding special sessions of the House.
 - (i) The House shall hold special sessions when deemed necessary by a two-thirds vote of Delegates or when deemed necessary by the GSA President and Executive Vice President.
- (f) Participating in the impeachment and removal process as outlined in Article XI, Section 4.
- (g) Section VII. 8 (a) All Graduate Student Association delegates with more than four unexcused absences in one academic calendar year from House of Delegates meetings or their respective committee meetings will be removed from office.

(i) A Delegate who must be absent from a GSA House of Delegates meeting or their respective committee meetings for any reason must notify the Executive Vice President of the Graduate Student Association and their committee chairperson in writing at least twenty-four hours before the convening of the next GSA Delegates meeting and their respective committee meeting.

(ii) If the reason for the Delegate's absence is due to their being present at an event representing the University of Alabama or the Graduate School Association in an official capacity (e.g., fellowship events, conferences, awards banquets) or when acting in an official GTA or GRA capacity shall be deemed an excused absence.

(iii) If the reason for the Delegate's absence is any other reason, it shall be deemed an unexcused absence. The Executive Vice President of the Graduate Student Association shall hold the authority to determine whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

(iv) A Delegate shall resign if any conflict causes him or her to be unable to attend regular meetings of the GSA.

(v) A proxy is a member of the Graduate Student Body who represents a delegate in their absence. A GSA Delegate may not represent another Delegate as their proxy. A proxy may only represent one delegate at a time. You must notify the GSA Executive Vice President of the name and contact information of your proxy at least twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled GSA Delegate Meeting. A proxy may vote on proposed legislation but may not speak unless voted on by the remaining delegates.

Section VII.9 Presentation and Passage of Legislation

Two-thirds of the House's members shall constitute a quorum to conduct business.

Article VIII. Executive Branch

Section VIII.1 Executive Power

All executive powers of the GSA shall be vested in the Executive Council

Section VIII.2 Composition

The Executive Council shall be composed of the appointed offices of President, Executive Vice President, Vice President of Financial Affairs, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Engagement, Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Vice President of Operations, and Vice President of Public Relations.

Section VIII.3 Eligibility

Eligibility requirements of all candidates intending to serve as a member of the Executive Council must be met before seeking a nomination for candidacy.

- (a) Members of the Executive Council shall be appointed from graduate and professional students at The University of Alabama.
- (b) Candidates for the Executive Council must be in good academic and disciplinary standing with The University of Alabama and must remain in this status during their term unless there are mitigating circumstances in which the student can request a review for an exemption by the Dean of Students who shall assign appropriate sanctions in addition to whatever requirements are already in place by the Office of Student Conduct.
 - (i) Graduate students seeking nomination for Executive Office must have earned at least 9 credit hours from The University of Alabama.
 - (ii) Candidates for President must have completed at least two semesters by the conclusion of the academic year during which they seek an appointment.
- (c) Membership shall not be restricted based on race, ethnicity, country of origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, genetic information, religion, creed, veteran status, criminal record, or political affiliation.

Section VIII.4 Vacancies on the Executive Council

In the case of any vacancies which may occur in the executive branch of the GSA, the Executive Council shall nominate a qualified candidate to fill the vacancy. Nominations shall be approved by a majority vote, fifty percent plus one, of the House and by the Nominating Committee. The following procedure shall be used for appointment:

- (a) The call for nominations shall be made available to all graduate students at least 10 full class days before the qualifications review process is to begin.
- (b) The qualifications review for executive officers shall be held by the Executive Council and the Speaker of the House.
- (c) First-round interviews of qualified candidates must be held by the GSA President, Executive Vice President, and Speaker of the House.
- (d) The nomination of at least one candidate shall be made and presented to the House for approval within 5 full class days of the qualifications review and first interview process.
- (e) Final nominees shall be interviewed and appointed by the Nominating Committee.
- (f) In the absence of the President and Executive Vice President, the line of succession shall be Vice President of Operations, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Financial Affairs, Vice President of Student Engagement, Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Vice President of Public Relations, and Speaker of the House.

Section VIII.5 Terms of Officers

Officers on the Executive Council shall serve a term of one year as defined below:

- (a) The GSA President and Executive Vice President shall serve a one-year term from May 1 to April 30.
- (b) All other officers of the Executive Council shall serve an academic-year term from August 1 to April 30.

Section VIII.6 Duties of the Executive Council

Officers are expected to serve the needs of and advocate for the interests of graduate and professional students at The University of Alabama. The Executive Council shall:

- (a) Enforce this Constitution and any rules which may be established pursuant to this Constitution.
- (b) Nominate the replacements for any vacancies that may occur on the Executive Council within 5 class days of House notification.
- (c) Establish a strong working relationship with the Graduate School administration.
- (d) Serve as Graduate School Ambassadors.
- (e) Acquire a quorum of its membership, three-fourths, before conducting business.
- (f) Participate in transition meetings to instruct incoming officers in all matters pertaining to the Executive Council.

Section VIII.7 Duties of the President

The President exemplifies the mission of the GSA and actively represents the GSA in a multitude of forums and environments whenever necessary. The President shall:

- (a) Lead the GSA in achieving the objectives of this Constitution.
- (b) Serve as chairperson of the Executive Council.
- (c) Notify the House, in writing, of any vacancies that may occur on the Executive Council within 5 full class days of receiving notice of such vacancy. If the House by its adjournment prevents such notice, the notice shall be given at the first meeting of the House after its adjournment.

- (d) Sit on the Graduate Council.
- (e) Lead the selection and appointment process for the Graduate Student Association's Representative on University Standing Committees.
- (f) Call special sessions of the House when deemed necessary.
- (g) Serve as a member or an ex-officio member of all executive committees.
- (h) Serve as an ex-officio member of legislative committees as assigned by the Executive Vice President.
- (i) Deliver the "State of the Graduate School Address" each semester during the first Town Hall of the semester.
- (j) Serve as the chief liaison between the GSA and organizations internal and external to The University of Alabama.
- (k) Serve as the chief liaison between the Executive Council and Graduate School administrators.
- (l) Preside over all regular meetings of the GSA.
- (m) Preside over all meetings and set the agenda for the Executive Council.
- (n) Instruct the incoming GSA President on all matters pertaining to the office of President before leaving office.

Section VIII.8 Duties of the Executive Vice President

The Executive Vice President shall propose and execute policies of the GSA in areas of student concerns such as issues in the Alabama Legislature, Tuscaloosa City Council, other colleges and universities, and other projects, programs, and initiatives related to student concerns. In carrying out the duties of this office the Executive Vice President shall:

- (a) Assist the President in performing their duties when necessary.
- (b) Assume the office of President if the office becomes vacant for any reason until the matter is resolved by reinstatement or appointment of a new candidate; or if the President requests the Executive Vice President to serve in the President's absence.
- (c) Preside over the House prior to the election of the Speaker of the House by the members of the House of Delegates.

- (d) Preside over meetings of the House for ceremonies of the GSA through status as an ex-officio member of the House.
- (e) Assign Delegates to standing and ad hoc committees.
- (f) Cast a vote in the case of a tie in the House.
- (g) Serve as the liaison between the House of Delegates and Executive Council.
- (h) Coordinate with the Elections Commissioner to oversee the nomination and selection of the two (2) winners of the Outstanding Graduate Student Award.
- (i) Propose and execute policies of the GSA that promote healthy relations between graduate students and faculty.
- (j) Perform other duties as assigned by the President.
- (k) Instruct the incoming Executive Vice President on all matters pertaining to the office of the Executive Vice President before leaving office.

Section VIII.9 Duties of the Vice President of Financial Affairs

The Vice President of Financial Affairs shall propose and execute policies of the GSA in areas of financial management. In carrying out the duties of this office the Vice President of Fiscal Affairs shall:

- (a) Develop and maintain an operating budget for GSA affairs.
- (b) Coordinate with the Associate Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs, Director of Programming, Vice President of Student Life, and Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement to appropriate funds for budget requests.
- (c) Oversee all financial transactions of the Graduate Student Association. Collect and disburse funds of the GSA using accounting standards that are accepted and practiced by The University of Alabama System and keep a permanent record that is available to any student of The University of Alabama.
- (d) Render an account of current finances to the House quarterly and upon request.
- (e) Compile and post on the GSA website a financial statement of all GSA operations before to town hall meetings each semester.
- (f) Maintain consistent communication with the GSA President.

- (g) Serve as an ex-officio member of legislative committees as assigned by the Executive Vice President.
- (h) Perform other such duties as the President and Executive Council may assign.
- (i) Present records to the incoming GSA President and Vice President for Financial Affairs at the end of each administration.
- (j) Instruct the incoming Vice President of Financial Affairs on all matters pertaining to the office of Vice President of Financial Affairs before leaving office.

Section VIII.10 Duties of the Vice President of Academic Affairs

The Vice President of Academic Affairs shall propose and execute the policies of the GSA in areas such as academic programs, instructional support, registration, advising, and other projects, programs, and initiatives related to academic affairs. In carrying out the duties of this office the Vice President of Academic Affairs shall:

- (a) Establish appropriate offices and committees to consider matters in relation to graduate academic affairs at The University of Alabama.
- (b) Maintain consistent communication with the GSA President, Associate Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs, and Director of Programming.
- (c) Develop programs and manage academic support and success initiatives for the graduate and professional student body.
- (d) Investigate University and Graduate School policies that pertain to the academic and professional development of graduate students.
- (e) Serve as the liaison between the GSA and offices at The University of Alabama that pertain to graduate and professional student academic affairs.
- (f) Serve as the GSA representative on university academic-related committees or designate another representative if they are unable to do so.
- (g) Serve as an ex-officio member of legislative committees as assigned by the Executive Vice President.
- (h) Perform other such duties as the President and Executive Council may assign.
- (i) Instruct the incoming Vice President of Academic Affairs on all matters pertaining to the office of Vice President of Academic Affairs before leaving office.

Section VIII.11 Duties of the Vice President of Student Engagement

The Vice President of Student Engagement shall propose and execute policies of the GSA in areas such as social policies, recreation and entertainment, athletic events, spirit events, special campus events, professional development, and other projects, programs, and initiatives related to graduate student engagement. In carrying out the duties of this office, the Vice President of Student Engagement shall:

- (a) Establish appropriate offices and committees to consider matters in relation to graduate student engagement at The University of Alabama.
- (b) Maintain consistent communication with the GSA President, Assistant Vice President of Student Engagement, and Director of Programming.
- (c) Plan and execute social and professional development events for graduate students as well as special projects that pertain to undergraduate students.
- (d) Serve as the liaison between the GSA and other graduate student organizations and university organizations at The University of Alabama, creating and developing a working relationship with said organizations.
 - (i) The Vice President of Student Engagement shall facilitate joint programming with other graduate students and university organizations.
 - (ii) The Vice President of Student Engagement shall be responsible for the coordination and response to requests from student groups to co-host events.
- (e) Compile and post on the GSA website a calendar of events to be held each semester no later than the second Wednesday of each semester.
- (f) Collaborate with the Vice President of Fiscal Affairs to keep detailed, accurate, up-to-date records of expenditures incurred from social and professional development activities.
- (g) Serve as an ex-officio member of legislative committees as assigned by the Executive Vice President.
- (h) Perform other such duties as the President and Executive Council may assign.
- (i) Instruct the incoming Vice President of Student Engagement on all matters pertaining to the office of Vice President of Student Engagement before leaving office.

Section VIII.12 Duties of the Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion shall propose and execute the policies of the GSA ensuring the inclusivity of all graduate and professional students regardless of gender identity or expression, ability, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, language, religious beliefs, or any backgrounds, while simultaneously serving as the GSA's liaison to students of cultural, racial, or ethnic minority; international graduate and professional students; LGBTQIA+ graduate and professional students; graduate and professional students with disabilities; graduate and professional distance learners; and graduate and professional students who may feel underrepresented or marginalized at any point in their time on campus. In carrying out the duties of this office the Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion shall:

- (a) Develop programs that promote a diverse, multicultural, equitable, ethical, and inclusive campus.
- (b) Review the planning of GSA meetings, events, and communications to ensure fairness and accessibility for and representation of the graduate and professional student body.
- (c) Serve as the liaison between the GSA and the Intercultural Diversity Center, the Women and Gender Resource Center, and other such offices at The University of Alabama that pertain to promoting a diverse, multicultural, equitable, ethical, and inclusive campus for graduate and professional students.
- (d) Serve as the GSA representative on university diversity-related committees, or designate another representative if they are unable to do so.
- (e) Serve as an ex-officio member of legislative committees as assigned by the Executive Vice President.
- (f) Perform other such duties as the President and Executive Council may assign.
- (g) Instruct the incoming Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion on all matters pertaining to the office of Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion before leaving office.

Section VIII.13 Duties of the Vice President of Operations

The Vice President of Operations shall:

- (a) Serve as the chief administrative officer of the Executive Council.
- (b) Manage all internal communications of the GSA.
- (c) Maintain a permanent record of all executive business.

- (d) Keep records of all Executive Council meetings and make these records available to graduate and professional students within four full class days after the meetings. The records of the meetings shall indicate all Executive Council members present at the meetings.
- (e) Keep and make available a permanent record of this Constitution, Bylaws, and the structure of all GSA offices and take responsibility for distributing them to all newly appointed officers of the GSA.
- (f) Make available the “State of the Graduate School Address” each semester.
- (g) Assist the Vice Presidents of the GSA in the execution of projects, programs, and initiatives at the discretion of the GSA President.
- (h) Serve as an ex-officio member of legislative committees as assigned by the Executive Vice President.
- (i) Perform other duties as assigned by the President.
- (j) Instruct the incoming Vice President of Operations on all matters pertaining to the office of Vice President of Operations before leaving office.

Section VIII.14 Duties of the Vice President of Public Relations

The Vice President of Public Relations shall serve as the chief information officer, overseeing the flow of information from GSA to the public. In carrying out the duties of this office, the Vice President of Public Relations shall:

- (a) Update and maintain the official GSA website, social media sites, and the Source.
- (b) Manage all external communication of the GSA.
- (c) Develop marketing strategies to increase graduate and professional student engagement with the GSA.
- (d) Direct public relations campaigns to promote upcoming activities and events held by the GSA.
- (e) Engage with individual graduate organizations and assist them with their promotions through GSA outlets.
- (f) Serve as an ex-officio member of legislative committees as assigned by the Executive Vice President.

- (g) Perform other such duties as the President and Executive Council may assign.
- (h) Instruct the incoming Vice President of Public Relations on all matters pertaining to the office of Vice President of Public Relations before leaving office.

Section VIII.15 Duties of the Elections Commissioner

The elections commissioner shall serve as the liaison for Graduate Student Association Executive Council elections and the selection of the members of the House of Delegates. In carrying out the duties of this office, the Elections Commissioner shall:

- (a) Follow the Elections Manual of the Graduate Student Association for Executive Council elections held each spring.
- (b) Oversee the selection of the members of the House of Delegates in the summer before each academic year.
- (c) Recommend changes to the Elections Manual before each election process.
- (d) Oversee special elections throughout the academic year, as outlined in the Elections Manual.
- (e) Coordinate with the Executive Vice President to oversee the nomination and selection of the two (2) winners of the Outstanding Graduate Student Award.
- (f) Perform other such duties as the President and Executive Council may assign.
- (g) Instruct the incoming Elections Commissioner on all matters pertaining to the office of Elections Commissioner before leaving office.

Article IX. Committees

Section IX.1 Standing Committees

To address ongoing and recurring matters important to graduate and professional students' interests, the GSA will constitute six standing committees focused on matters including, but not limited to: health and wellness, professional development, diversity and inclusion, student experience, advocacy, and academic development. These standing committees include:

- (a) Health and Wellness Committee

- (i) The Health and Wellness Committee shall promote healthy lifestyle choices by providing information, connection to resources, education, social support, and by advocating for the physical and mental health needs of graduate students.
- (b) Professional Development Committee
 - (i) The Professional Development Committee shall provide professional development opportunities and connect graduate and professional students to career-oriented resources and information.
- (c) Student Experience Committee
 - (i) The Student Experience Committee provide meaningful programming for graduate and professional students at the University in order to facilitate intentional social enrichment and make connections across all graduate departments.
- (d) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
 - (i) The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee shall foster an inclusive, safe, and supporting environment for the graduate community of the University and advocacy on behalf of all graduate and professional students regardless of identity on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, or ability.
- (e) Graduate Student Advocacy Committee
 - (i) The Graduate Student Advocacy Committee shall identify and research graduate and professional student needs and advocate on behalf of graduate and professional students.
- (f) Academic Development Committee
 - (i) The Academic Development Committee provide academic development opportunities and connect graduate and professional students to academic-oriented resources and information.

Section IX.2 Committee Membership

All GSA Delegates will be assigned to at least one standing committee by the second Council meeting of the fall semester. The Executive Vice President is charged to recruit and appoint interested department representatives to serve as committee chairs for standing committees. If two representatives agree to share responsibilities for a committee, the Executive Vice President may appoint them as co-chairs. Committee chairs are responsible for recruiting committee members to assist their efforts and for reporting their activities at the GSA meetings. While only GSA representatives may serve as committee chairs, any graduate or professional student is eligible for non-voting membership on these committees.

Section IX.3 Special Committees

The President may, at any time, form special committees to address issues and concerns facing graduate and professional students as they arise. The President is empowered to recruit and nominate department representatives to serve as members and chairs for these special committees. In addition, a new Special Committee may form if a Standing Committee or preexisting Special Committee introduces an agenda item to form an additional Special Committee at a GSA Council meeting that is then voted through by other GSA Council members.

Article X. Advisor

The advisor of the Graduate Student Association shall be the Associate Dean of Graduate Academic Affairs. Responsibilities shall be those assigned by The University of Alabama's Graduate School and The University of Alabama Student Handbook.

Article XI. Elections and Appointments

Section XI.1 Executive Council Elections

- (a) Members of the Executive Council shall be decided by popular election of the entire graduate student body.
- (b) The Graduate Student Association shall follow all rules and procedures contained within the Elections Manual for the election of the Graduate Student Association Executive Council.

Section XI.2 Appointment of Delegates

- (a) Members of the House shall be elected or appointed by Department Chairs or Directors of Graduate Studies from graduate and professional students at The University of Alabama.
 - (i) The call for nominations for Delegates shall begin no later than June 15.
- (b) Delegates shall be appointed by July 1.

Section XI.3 Removal of Officers and Delegates

- (a) All elected and appointed position holders of the GSA shall be subject to removal from office for any one or more of the following reasons:

- (i) Incompetence, malfeasance, or misfeasance in office;
- (ii) Willful violation of any express provision of this Constitution;
- (iii) Abandonment of office;
- (iv) Failure, for any other cause, to perform the duties of office;
- (v) Failure to adhere to or committing egregious violations the Code of Student Conduct; or
- (vi) Failure to maintain academic standing at a level consistent with the minimum GPA required of candidates for the position in questions.

Section XI.4 Impeachment and Removal of Executive Council Officers

The procedure for removal of Executive Council Officers shall be as follows:

- (a) Initial proceedings
 - (i) Any graduate or professional student wishing to remove any appointed position holder of the GSA shall file a petition for impeachment and removal with the Secretary of the House of Delegates setting forth in writing one or more of the grounds found in Subsection A of this article that the stated position holder within GSA has violated.
 - (ii) This petition must include signatures of fifty additional graduate and professional students wishing to remove the stated position holder within GSA. All signatures on the petition must be confirmed as graduate and professional students at The University of Alabama.
- (b) Preliminary investigation
 - (i) Upon filing of a petition with the Secretary of the House of Delegates, a panel composed of the Speaker of the House, President, and Executive Vice President shall review the claim or claims stated in the petition for impeachment and removal.
 - 1) If a petition for impeachment and removal has been filed against the President or Executive Vice President, the officeholder shall be ineligible from serving on the panel.
 - 2) If a petition for impeachment and removal has been filed against the President or Executive Vice President, they shall both be ineligible from serving on the panel.

- 3) In the event the President or Executive Vice President is ineligible or recuses themselves from serving on the panel, the Executive Council will vote on a representative from the executive branch to serve on the panel.
 - 4) In the event that the Speaker of the House is ineligible or recuses themselves from the panel, the House of Delegates will vote on a representative from the legislative branch to serve on the panel.
- (ii) The panel shall make a decision no later than ten full class days after receiving the petition for impeachment and removal from the Secretary of the House of Delegates.
- 1) If the panel finds that the claims stated in the petition for impeachment and removal meet the grounds for removal found in this Constitution, then they shall vote to send the petition for impeachment and removal to the House of Delegates for a formal impeachment hearing by the body of the House of Delegates.
 - a) The President or the designate of the panel shall notify all accused position holders and the filer of the petition for impeachment and removal of the dates, times, and procedure for the House impeachment and removal procedure.
 - 2) The House shall consider the claims for impeachment and removal during two, consecutive regularly scheduled meetings.
 - a) In the first meeting following the release of the panel's decision, the House shall formally hear the claims for impeachment and removal through a presentation of the facts and evidence. The accused position holder or holders, the filer of the petition, and any necessary witnesses shall appear before the House to answer questions.
 - b) In the second meeting following the release of the panel's decision, the House must vote to impeach and remove the accused position holder or holders from their office.
 - i) A three-fifths majority of the full membership of the House must vote to impeach and remove in order for the position holder or holders to be removed from office; however, the House must have quorum to hold proceedings.
 - ii) If the House lacks quorum, then the House shall stand in recess until quorum is reached. Immediately upon reaching quorum, the House must vote on the impeachment and removal of the accused position holder or holders.
 - 3) If three-fifths of the full membership of the House votes to impeach and removed the accused position holder from office, then the accused position holder or holders shall immediately lose their GSA office and all the rights and privileges afforded to that office.

Section XI.5 Impeachment and Removal of Members of the House of Delegates

The procedure for removal of members of the House of Delegates shall be as follows:

- (a) Initial proceedings
 - (i) Any graduate or professional student wishing to remove any appointed position holder of the GSA shall file a petition for impeachment and removal with the Secretary of the House of Delegates setting forth in writing one or more of the grounds found in Subsection A of this article that the stated position holder within GSA has violated.
 - 1) In the event that the petition for impeachment and removal is to be filed against the Secretary of the House of Delegates, the petition for impeachment and removal shall be filed with the Executive Vice President.
 - (ii) This petition must include signatures of fifty additional graduate and professional students wishing to remove the stated position holder within GSA. All signatures on the petition must be confirmed as graduate and professional students at The University of Alabama.
- (b) Preliminary investigation
 - (i) Upon filing of a petition with the Secretary of the House of Delegates, a panel composed of the Speaker of the House, President, and Executive Vice President shall review the claim or claims stated in the petition for impeachment and removal.
 - 1) If a petition for impeachment and removal has been filed against the Speaker of the House they shall be ineligible from serving on the panel.
 - 2) In the event the President or Executive Vice President is recuses themselves from serving on the panel, the Executive Council will vote on a representative from the executive branch to serve on the panel.
 - 3) In the event that the Speaker of the House is ineligible or recuses themselves from the panel, the House of Delegates will vote on a representative from the legislative branch to serve on the panel.
 - (ii) The panel shall make a decision no later than ten full class days after receiving the petition for impeachment and removal from the Secretary of the House of Delegates.

- 1) If the panel finds that the claims stated in the petition for impeachment and removal meet the grounds for removal found in this Constitution, then they shall vote to send the petition for impeachment and removal to the House of Delegates for a formal impeachment hearing by the body of the House of Delegates.
 - a) The President or the designate of the panel shall notify all accused position holders and the filer of the petition for impeachment and removal of the dates, times, and procedure for the House impeachment and removal procedure.
- 2) The House shall consider the claims for impeachment and removal during two, consecutive regularly scheduled meetings.
 - a) In the first meeting following the release of the panel's decision, the House shall formally hear the claims for impeachment and removal through a presentation of the facts and evidence. The accused position holder or holders, the filer of the petition, and any necessary witnesses shall appear before the House to answer questions.
 - b) In the second meeting following the release of the panel's decision, the House must vote to impeach and remove the accused position holder or holders from their office.
 - i) A three-fifths majority of the full membership of the House must vote to impeach and remove in order for the position holder or holders to be removed from office; however, the House must have quorum to hold proceedings.
 - a. A Delegate who is accused in the petition for impeachment and removal shall not vote in the House impeachment and removal process.
 - ii) If the House lacks quorum, then the House shall stand in recess until quorum is reached. Immediately upon reaching quorum, the House must vote on the impeachment and removal of the accused position holder or holders.
- 3) If three-fifths of the full membership of the House votes to impeach and removed the accused position holder from office, then the accused position holder or holders shall immediately lose their GSA office and all the rights and privileges afforded to that office.

Article XII. Budget

The operational budget and Executive Council stipends of the Graduate Student Association shall be administered through the Graduate School of the University of Alabama.

Article XIII. Amendments & Bylaws

Section XIII.1 Amendments

Amendments to the Constitution of the Graduate Student Association must be proposed at a regularly scheduled meeting or a meeting of the House of Delegates and cannot be voted on until the next regularly scheduled meeting. An amendment shall then be passed if approved by three-fourths of the House of Delegates and subsequent approval of three-fourths of the graduate and professional student body at the University of Alabama that participates in a referendum.

Section XIII.2 Bylaws

Bylaws may be approved by a majority vote at any meeting.

Ratification

This Constitution shall become effective on August 29, 2022, pending three-fourths approval of the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Association.

- (a) The Constitution must be reviewed every three years by the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Association. Subsequent ratifications will require approval of three-fourths of the Graduate Student Association Executive Council, followed by three-fourths of the House of Delegates, and subsequent approval of three-fourths of the graduate and professional student body at the University of Alabama that participates in a referendum.

Last Revised: August 29, 2022