

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Graduate Student Advisory Council at
Eastern Illinois University

adopted on April 16, 2013; revised and adopted on February 24th, 2017

ARTICLE I

NAME

Section 1 The name of this student organization shall be the Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC).

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

Section 1 The Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC) serves as the representative body of the graduate student population at Eastern Illinois University and presents graduate student views on issues in a unified manner to the student government, administration, faculty, and staff. GSAC will strengthen the collective voice of graduate students by creating opportunities to build through participation, collaboration, and interaction; promoting cultural and academic diversity; and offering graduate resources. GSAC is committed to providing the best service and opportunities that meet the unique experiences of graduate and professional students.

ARTICLE III

COMPLIANCE

Section 1 GSAC is a “registered” student organization at Eastern Illinois University and agrees to adhere to all local, state & federal regulations, university policies and Student Life Office procedures as set forth in the EIU Registered Student Organization & Advisor Handbook.

Section 2 GSAC may establish Standing Rules to govern administrative and procedural matters (such as time and location of meetings, etc.). Standing Rules shall not conflict with these Constitution & bylaws. Standing Rules may be adopted, amended, or temporarily suspended by a majority vote present at an student organization meeting where a quorum is present (advance notice is not required).

Section 3 The rules contained in the most recent version of *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall be the parliamentary authority for GSAC and shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Membership in GSAC shall be open to those regularly-enrolled Eastern Illinois University students who are in “good standing” with the university

as defined in the current edition of the Eastern Illinois University Graduate Catalog.

Section 2 GSAC shall have “Associated Members” who are non-EIU students or faculty who do not meet the above criteria. “Associated Members” shall have all membership privileges except for the right to vote or hold executive office. By Eastern Illinois University policy, no more than 20 % of the membership shall be individuals who are not EIU students (e.g., community members, students at other colleges, etc.).

Section 3 Eligibility for membership or appointed or elected student officer positions may not be limited on the basis of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, color, age, gender, gender identity, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or disability. The organization shall have no rules or policies that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, color, age, gender, gender identity, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or disability).

Section 4 GSAC will not conspire to engage in hazing, or commit any act that causes or is likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any fellow student or person attending the institution.

Section 5 GSAC voting membership shall consist of at least one student representative from each of Eastern Illinois University’s graduate programs. Two representatives may be selected to GSAC from each program, but only one may vote at meetings.

Section 6 GSAC graduate program representatives are nominated and selected by his/her department chair and/or graduate program coordinator, and GSAC graduate program representatives will be submitted to the Eastern Illinois University Graduate School and/or the GSAC advisor(s), in writing, by each Eastern Illinois University graduate program coordinator and/or department chair. The VP of Member Recruitment and Retention will seek out students in departments that the graduate program coordinator and/or department chair have not selected representative(s). Each graduate program must also designate at least one representative to serve on a GSAC sanctioned committee, which may be the voting representative or a second program representative.

ARTICLE V **EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

Section 1 The Executive Officers of GSAC shall be the President, Vice President Administrative Activities, Vice President Programming, Vice President Public Relations, Vice President of Member Recruitment and Retention, Graduate Student Dean, and the Council on Graduate Studies Student Representative and/or Graduate Advisor.

Section 2 Powers and Duties of Executive Officers:

- a. The President shall serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the organization, shall preside at all meetings of the organization and shall prepare the agenda for meetings. The President shall be the official spokesperson of the organization, representing the policies, views, and opinions of the organization in its relations with the campus and community at large. The President shall appoint all committees and committee chairs. The President shall have such further powers and duties as may be prescribed by the organization.
- b. The Vice President of Administrative Activities shall preside at organization meetings in the absence of the President. In this time, the Vice President shall perform all legal duties assigned by the President. The Vice President of Administrative Activities shall also act as liaison between GSAC and Student Government, maintain and enforce the constitution, maintain membership records, and record all meeting minutes from GSAC meetings.
- c. The Vice President of Programming shall organize and oversee all activities and events of GSAC, seek relevant professional development opportunities for graduate matters, and collaborate with other departments, RSOs, and community groups to organize and execute GSAC events.
- d. The Vice President of Public Relations shall be responsible for creating all print and non-print correspondence for all GSAC events, developing and publishing the bi-semester newsletter, monitor and update social media outlets and website, oversee other special correspondence with external constituents as needed.
- e. The Vice President of Member Recruitment and Retention shall be responsible for recruitment and retention of GSAC members and will work with the Graduate School. It is essential to encourage attendance from all graduate programs, if applicable, as some programs are not represented by on-campus students. Recruitment and retention strategies will be implemented and developed accordingly to strengthen numbers and involvement of GSAC representatives.
- f. The Graduate Student Dean is selected by the Graduate School and is not an elected position by GSAC. The Student Dean shall handle all financial affairs and budgeting of the organization, maintain all necessary accounting records, and prepare monthly financial reports for the membership. Said records shall be maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- g. The Council on Graduate Studies (CGS) Student Representative is selected by the Graduate School and is not an elected position by GSAC. The CGS Student Representative shall serve on Eastern Illinois University's Council on Graduate Studies as a graduate student representative. The CGS Student Representative shall share information from CGS at GSAC meetings, and represent the views of GSAC and graduate students on all graduate school policies pertaining to graduate programs and graduate students as they are discussed and voted upon at CGS meetings. The CGS Student Representative

shall assist in the implementation of all GSAC initiatives concerning academics. This position will not always serve on the GSAC board. This will vary from year to year.

- h. The Graduate Advisor is a Graduate Assistant position selected by the Graduate School and is not an elected position by GSAC. The Graduate Advisor will work as a liaison to GSAC and the Graduate School.

Section 3

Qualifications necessary to hold office in GSAC are as follows:

Student Life Office at Eastern Illinois University RSO policies require that to be “eligible” to hold executive office, candidates must be in good academic, good disciplinary standing, and regularly enrolled students at Eastern Illinois University.

In addition to Student Life Office eligibility requirements, a GSAC member must also be able to hold office for the duration of the specified term and be available to attend Executive Board meetings, General Assembly meetings, and most GSAC programs/events.

Student Life Office at Eastern Illinois University RSO policies require that ALL of the Executive Officers maintain a minimum overall 2.0 cumulative grade point average or higher each term and not be on probation of any kind. The Executive Officers must be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours (9 credit hours for graduate students) each semester while holding an executive office.

No student member may hold more than one office. Any exception for eligibility requirements must be approved in advance by the GSAC Advisor at least one week prior to elections.

ARTICLE VI

SELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1

The President, Vice President Administrative Activities, Vice President Programming, Vice President Public Relations, and Vice President of Member Recruitment and Retention are elected annually. Elections for the Vice Presidents are held at the first General Assembly meeting of each fall semester whereas the Presidential elections are held at the end of each spring semester and both shall take place at a time at which a quorum is present or, at a time that quorum is not met, by electronic ballot. At least one week’s notice shall be provided for any meeting at which an election is to be held.

Section 2

Nominations for Executive Officers shall be made from the floor immediately prior to the election for each office. Members may nominate themselves for an office.

Section 3

The Executive Officers of GSAC shall be nominated and elected in in any order with the exception of the President, which must be completed the spring semester prior to officer term or, in special circumstances, must be

completed before proceeding to any of the Vice President offices.

Section 4 Voting procedures should follow *Robert's Rules of Order* at the discretion of the President.

Section 5 Executive Officers shall assume office immediately and shall serve for the entire academic year, with the exception of the President, who shall assume office upon the end of the spring semester in which the election takes place.

Section 6 Executive Officers may be recalled or removed from office for cause. To initiate a recall election or removal from office, a petition signed by one-third of the total number of voting members must be submitted at a regular meeting and a review for grounds for recall vote or removal from office shall be taken at the next regular meeting. The Executive Officer subject to recall or removal shall be given written notice of the grounds for recall or removal at least 72 hours prior to the meeting at which the recall or removal vote will be held and shall be given an opportunity to provide a verbal or written defense. A two-thirds vote is required to remove an Executive Officer.

Section 7 If the position of President becomes vacant as the result of resignation, ineligibility, or recall, the Vice President of Administrative Activities shall assume the office of President. Additional Executive Board officer positions may become vacant as the result of resignation, ineligibility, or recall. In the case of a vacancy, nominations may be solicited by the Executive Board at the following General Assembly, or when there is an immediate need to fill a position, through online nomination requests. At this meeting or through email, the responsibilities and characteristics summary for each vacant office will be communicated to all members. Recommendations for replacement officers and declaration of interest in those offices may be made by members in Good Standing and collected by the President. In the event that the vacancy is announced at a General Assembly meeting, the membership will hold an election for the vacant position and any vacant positions that may ensue due to a current executive board member switching positions. In the event that the vacancy is announced through email, the Executive Board will conduct an online vote for any and all vacant positions. During an online vote, candidates will provide a platform and it will be distributed electronically to all members. Members will be allowed the opportunity to discuss candidates over an electronic forum (including the GSAC listserv), and the vote will be conducted as outlined in Article IX, Section 3.

Section 8 All executive members will sign the Graduate Student Advisory Council Executive Member Contract. The contract will be signed after assuming GSAC position. The contract states that the graduate student will be responsible for paying \$5 for failing to return the GSAC-issued handbook, which will be enforced by GSAC and the Graduate School. The handbook must be returned at the last GSAC meeting. If an officer is steps down from the position, or upon written notice of removal from the GSAC position, the student has one week to return the handbook to The Graduate School.

ARTICLE VII **MEETINGS**

- Section 1** General Assembly (GA) meetings shall be scheduled monthly during the academic year.
- Section 2** Special meetings may be called by the Advisor, President, or a majority of the Executive Board. All student members must be given a minimum of 24 hour notice prior to the meeting time.
- Section 3** Business cannot be conducted unless a quorum of the student membership is present. A quorum for GSAC is defined as a majority of the voting membership.
- Section 4** In the event that the previously decided voting representative cannot be present for a vote, the second representative of the program shall vote instead. Electronic voting is permitted in the event that either representative cannot be present to vote as long as approval from the President of GSAC has been given.
- Section 5** In order to vote, a student member must not only be in Good Academic Standing with the university, but with the GSAC as well. Each program will be allowed two unexcused absences each semester. Attendance will be kept by the Vice President of Administrative Activities. After the second unexcused absence, GSAC may vote to petition the graduate program advisor/chair to send two new delegates to the council. An excused absence is defined as contacting the GSAC President in writing 48 hours prior to the general assembly meeting.

ARTICLE VII **ADVISOR(S)**

- Section 1** The Graduate School Dean appoints the main advisor to GSAC. GSAC shall collaborate with the Graduate School to appoint any individual(s) employed as a faculty or staff member by Eastern Illinois University to serve as an additional university advisor(s) to GSAC at their discretion. The advisor(s) shall fulfill the responsibilities specified in the EIU Registered Student Organizations & Advisors Handbook. Advisors shall serve on an academic year basis or until their successor has been selected.
- Section 2** GSAC shall establish guidelines and criteria for termination of an EIU Advisor(s).

ARTICLE IX **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

- Section 1** The Executive Board shall consist of the elected and appointed officers, with the advisor(s) serving as non-voting member(s).
- Section 2** The Executive Board shall meet weekly/bi-weekly or as determined during the academic year. Special meetings may be called by the President or a majority of the Executive Board. All student members must be given 24 hour notice of the meeting. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the Executive Board members.

Section 3 The Executive Board shall have general supervision of the affairs of GSAC between meetings and is authorized to take action when action must be taken prior to the next meeting. In the event where a vote must be taken for financial reasons (expenses exceeding what is outlined in Article XI, Section 2) or for elections (as outlined in Article VI, Section 7), an electronic vote may be conducted. In this event, the exact item for vote and all pertinent information for a member to make an informed decision must be delivered, and any discussion or objection to the online vote must be allowed over an electronic forum (such as the GSAC listserv) over the course of 48 hours. After a period of 48 hours, a vote may be called at the discretion of the GSAC President, and the deadline to vote shall be a minimum of 48 hours after the message has been sent. Once the final deadline is reached, any members who did not vote will be marked as “abstaining” from the vote, and the decision will be based off the majority vote of all those who have voted.

Section 4 The Executive Board shall report to the student membership all actions taken between meetings. Except when it is too late to do so (such as when a contract has been executed), any actions taken by the Executive Board may be rescinded or modified by the membership by a majority vote.

ARTICLE X **STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Section 1 GSAC shall establish Standing Committees chaired by executive board members.

Section 2 The President shall have the authority to establish Special Committees as may be necessary from time to time to carry out the work of GSAC.

Section 3 The President shall appoint the chairpersons and members of all Special Committees subject to ratification of the membership.

ARTICLE XI **FINANCES / DUES**

Section 1 The necessary expenses of GSAC shall be met by funding provided by the Graduate School at Eastern Illinois University, graduate student fees, and GSAC fundraising activities.

Section 2 The Executive Board shall propose an annual budget to be voted upon no later than the second regular meeting of the academic year. Any unbudgeted expenditures shall be approved in advance by the membership. When financial decisions must be made between meetings, the Executive Board is authorized to approve expenditures not exceeding \$200.

Section 3 GSAC funds shall not be used to purchase or reimburse student members for alcoholic beverages.

ARTICLE XII DISCIPLINARY PROCEURES OF OFFICERS

- Section 1** An officer may be removed from office by a Conference Team made up of at least one advisor, one member from the Executive Board, and two general members for the following reasons: Failure to fulfill their officer duties as described in their officer responsibilities and characteristics summary, an officer is no longer eligible to hold office as per officer eligibility requirements, or immoral, disruptive, or dishonorable conduct.
- Section 2** The Conference Team shall meet with the officer. The officer shall state their situation. The officer shall be notified, both orally and in writing, of the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting at which their removal from office will be reviewed and of their right to speak on their own behalf to the Conference Team. In lieu of speaking, the member may send a written explanation of their situation. If appropriate, the member may submit a letter of resignation at this time rather than allowing the procedure to continue.
- Section 3** The Conference Team shall meet to discuss the situation and then vote on the removal. The member shall not be present for the discussion and vote. A motion shall be made and seconded to recommend the removal from office of the member and discussion shall be held and noted, including the report of the conference team. The vote shall be taken by secret, written ballot and counted by the advisor. The Conference Team shall report the outcome of the meeting to the Executive Committee.
- Section 4** If officer is removed from office, the advisor will send a written notice to the officer regarding the outcome of the vote.
- Section 5** If the officer is not removed from their office, they are expected to fulfill their duties and responsibilities entrusted to them.
- Section 6** Removed officers have a right to appeal a decision made by the conference team. The removed officer must submit an appeal to an advisor within 72 hours of the decision being communicated to the removed officer. This appeal must specifically outline the reason for appeal of the Conference Team's decision. If the officer fails to appeal the decision within 72 hours, the decision will be made final. If an appeal is made, it will then be heard at the start of the following General Assembly or Special meeting before any other business is conducted. The conference team and the removed officer will have an opportunity to share their findings and if they believe the removal is fair. A two-thirds vote is required to overturn a Conference Team decision.
- Section 7** Officer vacancies due to removal shall be filled by the election vacancy process at the next regular meeting where the vacancy is announced.

ARTICLE XIII AMENDMENTS

Section 1 Proposed amendments to these Constitution & bylaws shall be presented to the student membership, in writing, one meeting prior to the meeting where the amendment(s) will be voted upon.

Section 2 Constitution & Bylaw amendments require approval by two-thirds of the voting members present at a regular meeting. The amendment shall be effective immediately unless otherwise stipulated in the amendment.

Section 3 A copy of any amendments to the GSAC Constitution & bylaws must be submitted to the Student Life Office at Eastern Illinois University within two weeks after adoption.

The Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC) at Eastern Illinois University Constitution & bylaws were adopted on April 16, 2013, and revised and adopted on February 24, 2017.