University of Delaware Graduate Student Government
Bylaws

(Updated: 20 August 2015)

Article I. Membership

Section 1. GSG Members

(a) Membership in the GSG shall be all students enrolled in graduate or professional studies at any campus or satellite campus of The University of Delaware.

Section 2. Members-at-Large

(a) The members-at-large of the GSG are those graduate students wishing to participate fully in the activities of the GSG.

(b) Unlike senators, members-at-large are unable to vote, except when serving as a proxy.

(c) Members-at-large are eligible to serve as committee chairs.

Section 3. Organizational Delegates

(a) Organizational delegate status shall be extended to representatives of University-recognized student organizations whose constituency may not be adequately or formally represented by regular departmental senators.

(b) Organizational delegates must be graduate students.

(c) They shall be appointed for the year by their respective organization.

(d) A delegate cannot represent multiple organizations or both a department and an organization simultaneously.

(e) Unlike senators, organizational delegates are unable to vote.

Section 4. Senators

(a) The senators of the GSG, to be elected following Article IV, Section 3 of these Bylaws, shall consist of one representative per Academic Plan.
(b) The most current official list of Academic Plans as compiled by the Office of Graduate and Professional Education shall be considered binding for the purpose of determining eligibility for Senate membership.

Section 5. Committee Membership

(a) Committees of the GSG, as defined in Article III, are open for all GSG members.

(b) Only members-at-large, senators, and officers may serve as committee chair.

Section 6. Officers

(a) The officers of the GSG, to be selected following Article IV, Section 2, shall consist of the President, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Vice President of Membership, the Recording Secretary, and the Parliamentarian.

Section 7. Active Standing

(a) Each senator and committee chair must meet the active standing requirements as defined in these Bylaws in Article II.

(b) A Senator may request excuse from absence at a public GSG meeting due to exceptional circumstances from the Vice President of Membership in advance of the meeting. Such an excused absence will not count against the Senator’s fulfillment of his/her duties.

1. If a senator, committee chair, or officer does not fulfill the requirements to remain in active standing, then he or she is subject to removal as outlined in Article V.

2. The Membership Officer shall inform senators and members-at-large who do not meet their active standing requirements.

Article II: Structure

Section 1: Meetings

(a) A meeting shall be held once a month beginning in September and ending in May and shall be open to the public.

1. The meeting will be called to order by the President, at which point the Recording Secretary must begin taking minutes.
2. During the Executive Branch portion of the meeting, all GSG members and any visitors are permitted to speak.

3. Senate floor must be opened with a motion. If there is quorum, senate floor is opened. Once the Senate floor is opened, only senators and the Parliamentarian are permitted to speak.


(b) The Executive Council shall meet twice a month in closed meeting sessions.

(c) Each Board shall meet at least once a semester.

(d) Special meetings may be called by any officer.

(e) With the exception of the Senate floor, all other meetings shall be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised Edition at the discretion of the Executive Council.

Section 2. Executive Branch

(a) The duties of each officer of the Executive Council are as follows:

1. The President is responsible for:

   a. Presiding over GSG meetings.

   b. Presiding over Executive Council meetings.

   c. The overall operations of the GSG.

   d. Serving as the primary spokesperson for the graduate student community and representing the community at appropriate functions.

   e. Attending all major GSG programs and functions and assisting in planning GSG programs as needed.

   f. Serving as the main liaison to the Office of Graduate and Professional Education and to the Faculty Advisor.

2. The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall:

   a. Oversee the Internal Affairs Board and all committees that pertain to the internal organization of the GSG including the
Communications, Events, and Social Committees and any suitable ad hoc committees.

b. Serve as an ex-officio member of the aforementioned committees.

c. Serve as the main liaison between these aforementioned committees and the Executive Council. In this manner, he/she shall function as an intermediary and a facilitator for committee work and will ensure that fruitful collaborations across committees occur.

d. Help the President to implement any and all policies, initiatives, and events that he/she undertakes in his/her time as President.

e. Be responsible for running GSG meetings if the President is not in attendance.

3. The Vice President of Student Affairs shall:

a. Oversee the Student Affairs Board and all committees that pertain to the student advocacy focused committees of the GSG including the Diversity, Student Life, and Sustainability Committees and any suitable ad hoc committees.

b. Serve as an ex-officio member of the aforementioned committees.

c. Serve as the main liaison between these aforementioned committees and the Executive Council. In this manner, he/she shall function as an intermediary and a facilitator for committee work and will ensure that fruitful collaborations across committees occur.

d. Help the President to implement any and all policies, initiatives, and events that he/she undertakes in his/her time as President.

e. Be responsible for running GSG meetings if the President and Vice President of Internal Affairs are not in attendance.

4. The Vice President of Membership shall:

a. Be responsible for the maintenance and dissemination of the membership roster of the GSG in accordance with the Bylaws.
b. Grant Senators excuse from absence at public GSG meetings at his/her discretion.

c. Be responsible for tallying votes, collecting proxy forms, and maintaining accurate records of member service.

d. Serve as the main recruitment officer and is tasked with contacting the Academic Plans when a seat has become vacant.

e. Be responsible for running GSG meetings if the President, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, and the Vice President of Student Affairs are not in attendance.

f. Chair the elections committee

5. The Recording Secretary shall:

a. Record minutes at all Public GSG meetings and the Executive Council meetings.

b. Prepare the agenda and subsequent PowerPoint for all Public GSG meetings.

c. Be responsible for running GSG meetings if the President, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the Vice President of Membership are not in attendance.

(b) In addition to the Executive Council, the Executive Branch is made up of the GSG Committees, as outlined in Article III.

Section 3. Legislative Branch

(a) Per Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution, the Senate shall be the legislative body of the GSG.

1. Senate floor shall be run per Article II, Section 1.

(b) Per Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution, the chairperson of the Senate shall be the Parliamentarian.

1. The duties of the Parliamentarian are to ensure the adherence to parliamentary procedure.

2. The Parliamentarian shall be the chair of the Governance Committee.
3. The Parliamentarian shall chair the Senate floor. In the event the Parliamentarian is unable to chair a meeting, the Deputy Parliamentarian shall chair the Senate.

   a. The Executive Committee shall nominate a Senator to be the Deputy Parliamentarian prior to the first meeting.

   b. The Senate shall vote to approve the nominee at the first meeting. In the event the nominee is not approved, nominations will be taken from the floor and an election held immediately.

   c. The sole duty of the Deputy Parliamentarian will be to chair the Senate in the Parliamentarian’s absence. He or she shall be an ex-officio member of the Governance Committee.

4. The Parliamentarian shall review all amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws as well as any legislation brought before the Senate.

5. The Parliamentarian shall be elected in the spring with the rest of the Executive Council.

6. To ensure the unbiased nature of the position, the Parliamentarian will not be a member of the Executive Council, nor can they serve as a senator.

7. The Parliamentarian shall meet monthly with the Executive Council to aid in the planning of the public meeting’s agenda.

(c) Each senator shall have the following duties:

1. To attend all GSG public meetings, or send a proxy in his/her absence.

2. To vote on legislation.

3. To vote for officers to serve on the Executive Council.

4. To disseminate information and recommendations from the GSG to their constituents.

5. To be responsible for soliciting ideas and opinions of their constituencies, and forwarding them to the GSG.

6. To attend any special meeting warranting an emergency assembly of the GSG called by the Executive Board.

7. To serve on at least one standing committee, or one external University committee.
a. The internal and student affairs committees are outlined in Article III.

b. External University committees include, but are not limited to, the Faculty Senate, Graduate Studies Committee, and the Newark City Council.

8. The responsibilities outlined here are considered the requirements for maintaining active standing. Failure to maintain active standing is grounds for removal, as outlined in Article V.

Article III. Committees

Section 1: The Internal Affairs Board

(a) Per Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution, the Internal Affairs Board shall be chaired by the Vice President for Internal Affairs and shall consist of the committee chairs for each of the standing internal committees and any relevant ad hoc committees. The Internal Affairs Board shall meet a minimum of once per semester.

1. The Standing Internal Affairs Committees:

a. The standing internal affairs committees shall be the Communications, Events, and Social Committees.

b. Each standing internal affairs committee shall organize their first meeting within two weeks of the formation of the committee, or within two weeks of the first GSG meeting of the academic year.

c. Each standing internal affairs committee must consist of at least two senators.

d. Each standing internal affairs committee must choose a committee chairperson, as outlined in Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution.

1. This must occur at the first committee meeting of the academic year through secret ballot, and a simple majority among the committee members determines who will serve as chair.

2. Any member-at-large, senator, or officer is eligible for the position of committee chair.
3. Committee members may choose to elect two co-chairs in lieu of a single chair.

2. Standing Internal Committee Chairs:

   a. Shall be appointed as outlined in Article IV, Section 3.

   b. Shall be responsible for calling committee meetings at least once a month during the regular academic semester.

   c. Shall be responsible for scheduling the location of the meeting, unless otherwise advised by the Vice President for Internal Affairs.

   d. Shall be responsible for recording and maintaining meeting minutes and committee member attendance.

   e. Shall remain in close communication with the Vice President for Internal Affairs throughout the academic year.

Section 2: Student Affairs Board

(a) Per Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution, the Student Affairs Board shall be chaired by the Vice President for Student Affairs and shall consist of the committee chairs for each of the standing student affairs committees and any relevant ad hoc committees. The Student Affairs Board shall meet a minimum of once per semester.

1. The Standing Student Affairs Committees:

   a. The standing student affairs committees shall be the Diversity, Sustainability, and Student Life Committees.

   b. Each standing student affairs committee shall organize their first meeting within two weeks of the formation of the committee, or within two weeks of the first GSG meeting of the academic year.

   c. Each standing student affairs committee must consist of at least two senators.

   d. Each standing student affairs committee must choose a committee chairperson, as outlined in Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution.

   1. This must occur at the first committee meeting of the academic year through secret ballot and a simple majority
among the committee members determines who will serve as chair.

2. Any member-at-large, senator, or officer is eligible for the position of committee chair.

3. Committee members may choose to elect two co-chairs.

2. Standing Student Affairs Committee Chairs:

   a. Shall be appointed as outlined in Article IV, Section 3.

   b. Shall be responsible for calling committee meetings at least once a month during the regular academic semester.

   c. Shall be responsible for scheduling the location of the meeting, unless otherwise advised by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

   d. Shall be responsible for recording and maintaining meeting minutes and committee member attendance.

   e. Shall remain in close communication with the Vice President for Student Affairs throughout the academic year.

Section 3: Ad Hoc Committees

(a) Ad hoc committees shall be provisional committees to address topics of the graduate student body that do not fall under the purview of the existing Standing Committees.

1. Upon creation of an ad hoc committee, the charge, deliverables, and time frame of the committee must be declared.

2. The Senate may create an ad hoc committee by a simple majority of present quorum.

3. Ad hoc committees are automatically dissolved at the end of each academic year unless designated to continue by a two-thirds majority vote of senators in active standing.

4. The Senate may dissolve an ad hoc committee before the end of the time frame stated during its creation by a two-thirds majority vote of senators in active standing.

Section 4: External Committees
(a) Nominations, including self-nominations, to serve on Faculty Senate standing committees for the subsequent academic year must be received in writing by the President two weeks prior to the May meeting. Nominees shall be vetted by outgoing and incoming Executive Committees, which shall then present a slate to the Senate for approval in full on Senate Floor at the May meeting. No nominee may serve on more than one Faculty Senate standing committee. If the slate is not approved, then the floor shall be opened for elections from among the original pool of nominees and each position shall be elected individually. Any positions that remain unfilled by the end of the May meeting shall default to the President until another election can be held at the September meeting.

(b) Appointments to fill any vacancies, or any other external committee appointments, standing or ad hoc, shall be made by the President. All interested students are encouraged to discuss their interest in serving on an external committee with the President.

Article IV: Elections and Appointments

Section 1: Elections Committee

(a) The Elections Committee shall be responsible for developing standard elections rules and for coordinating all aspects of elections.

1. The elections rules must be approved by the Senate by the end of the January meeting.

(b) The Elections Committee shall consist of four members. One member shall be the Vice President of Membership, who shall serve as Chair and a nonvoting member of the committee, and three voting members, who may be senators or members at large.

(c) A member of the Elections Committee must recuse him/herself from committee activities pertaining to a particular office so that he/she may stand for election for that office.

Section 2: Officer Elections

(a) Eligibility: Any graduate student is eligible to run for any officer position in which he/she has not already served two terms.

(b) Terms: The term for the offices of President, the Vice President of Internal Affairs, the Vice President of Student Affairs, the Vice President of Membership, the Recording Secretary, and the Parliamentarian shall be one year, with a limit of two terms.
(c) Each member of the Executive Council and all Senators who are in active standing at the time polls open shall vote in officer elections.

(d) Elections Timeline: Nominations are due to the elections committee by the date approved by the current year's committee. A special elections meeting will be held one week after the March meeting, and the online polls will open that evening. Polls will be open for one week, and the victors will be announced to the entire GSG within 24 hours of polls closing. The outgoing and incoming Executive Councils shall run the April meeting together. The incoming Executive Council shall be formally sworn in at the May meeting and will run the May meeting.

(e) Vacancies: A vacancy among these officers shall be filled by the Senate Members by a special election to be held at the Meeting immediately following that at which such vacancy was announced.

1. A newly elected officer may serve as the proxy senator for his or her respective Academic Plan over the course of two meetings of the GSG. Every effort shall be made to fill the senator position with an individual other than the Officer. If no new senator is found after two meetings of the Senate, the Academic Plan shall lose active standing until such time that a senator is found.

2. If, after a replacement senator is designated, an Executive Committee member relinquishes his or her office, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the vacating Executive Committee member does not reclaim voting rights for that Academic Plan, but may continue to serve in the Senate as a member-at-large.

Section 3: Senator Elections

(a) Eligibility: All graduate students who are enrolled with the University and are members of the Academic Plan they wish to represent are eligible to run for a senator position.

(b) Terms: All senator positions run for a term of one academic year.

(c) Elections Timeline: All nominees from each Academic Plan shall be submitted to the elections committee by the March meeting. The online polls shall be open for one week, and the elections committee shall announce to the entire GSG the victors of each Academic Plan.

(d) Unrepresented Programs: In the event that a program is unrepresented after an election, the senator vacancy shall be filled in one of the following ways:
1. Single Candidate: When an individual expresses interest in serving as senator for an unrepresented program, the Vice President of Membership will send an email informing the program that constituents have two weeks to submit additional nominations, including self nominations, for the vacant position. If no other nominations are received during that time, the sole candidate will be appointed by the Vice President of Membership as senator until the next regular senator election. If other nominations are received, the Multiple Candidates procedure applies.

2. Multiple Candidates: When multiple candidates express interest in serving as senator for an unrepresented program, a special election will be scheduled and administered by the Elections Committee under the most recently approved elections rules.

3. Acting Senator: If an individual graduate student expresses interest in serving as senator for an unrepresented program, the Vice President of Membership may appoint him or her as acting senator for at most three meetings prior to a special election. This acting senator will have the ability to vote on legislation presented at these meetings. The Senate has the ability to veto said appointment with a majority vote on the Senate floor; this vote must occur prior to the consideration of any other business. The aforementioned procedures for a special election must be put into effect after this temporary appointment.

Section 4: Committee Chair Elections and Appointments

(a) Committee Chairs shall be elected following the regulations set forth in Article III of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Article V. Removal

Section 1: Officers

(a) If an officer of the Executive Council does not follow their duties outlined in Article II, section 2 of the Bylaws, the GSG shall follow these guidelines for removal:

1. The other members of the Executive Council should notify the officer in writing of the negligent duties.

2. If no compromise can be reached, a formal letter signed by the remaining members of the Executive Council shall indicate a Senate vote for removal.

3. Removal of an officer requires a two-thirds Senate vote
4. After the formal removal of the officer in question, a special election for a new officer should be administered as outlined in Article IV, Section 2 of these Bylaws.

Section 2: Senators

(a) If a senator does not follow their duties outlined in Article II, Section 3 of the Bylaws, the GSG shall follow these guidelines for removal:

1. The membership officer of the Executive Council should notify the senator in writing of the negligent duties.

2. If no compromise can be reached, a formal letter signed by each member of the Executive Council indicating the formal removal of the senator should be provided to the outgoing senator.

3. After the formal removal of the senator in question, the outgoing senator’s Academic Plan should be contacted by the membership officer to select a new senator for that academic program.

Section 3: Committee Chairs

(a) If a Committee Chair or Co-chair does not follow their duties outlined in Article III of the Bylaws, the GSG shall follow these guidelines for removal:

1. The Vice President of Internal Affairs or Vice President of Student Affairs should notify the Committee Chair in writing of the negligent duties.

2. If no compromise can be reached, the Vice President of Internal Affairs or Vice President of Student Affairs should formally contact the Committee Chair in question about their removal as Committee Chair.

3. After the formal removal of the Committee Chair in question, the Committee in question should elect a new Committee Chair as outlined in Article IV, Section 4 of the Bylaws.

4. After the formal removal of the Committee Chair, the former Committee Chair should be contacted by the membership officer to re-evaluate the active standing of the senator or member-at-large.

Section 4: Appeals

(a) Any removal may be brought to the Senate for an appeal.

Article VI. Amendments
Section 1. Voting Requirements

(a) As outlined in Article VI, Section 1 of the Constitution, changes to the Constitution require three-fourths senate vote, and changes to the Bylaws require two-thirds Senate vote.

Section 2. Procedure

(a) Anyone wishing to bring forth an amendment to these documents must submit the bill or resolution to the Parliamentarian two weeks before the meeting. One week before the meeting, the Parliamentarian must send the document to the senators. The document is then eligible for voting at the GSG meeting.

(b) All amendments must be sponsored by a senator. Any non-senator can co-sponsor a bill.

Article VII. Bylaws Suspension

Section 1. Voting Requirements

(a) Any clause of the above Bylaws not in Articles I (Membership) or V (Removal) may be suspended by a 2/3 vote of the Senators present, as long as quorum is met.

Section 2. Procedure

(a) The motion for suspension shall designate a limited time of suspension and specify the reason for the suspension.

(b) All suspensions lapse at the end of each academic year.

Article VIII. Conduct of GSG Meetings

Section 1: Quorum

(a) Quorum is defined to be a simple majority of active Senators.

(b) Senators who have an excused absence from a GSG public meeting are counted as being present at that meeting for the purposes of determining whether quorum is met and determining the number of votes needed to pass legislation.

(c) Quorum must be present at the time the Senate Floor is opened in order to conduct any official GSG business.

Section 2: Voting Procedures
(a) All votes taken shall require an appropriate majority or supermajority of those Senators present, excepting abstentions, to be in favor of the motion.

(b) Senators who are granted an excused absence shall submit their votes for pending legislation to the Membership Officer in advance of the meeting.