

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION

University of Houston GPSA Constitution

PREAMBLE

For the purposes deemed wise and good, hereinafter set forth, this organization is hereby established submitting itself to be by, and dedicating itself to uphold the mission of the Graduate and Professional Students Association (GPSA) to: develop, sustain, and expand a member network that connects graduate and professional students across the University of Houston to facilitate the sharing of information, resources, and best practices, empower our members to successfully serve their constituents, and amplify graduate students' voices.

ARTICLE I – NAME

Section 1 – The name of this organization shall be the Graduate and Professional Student Association at the University of Houston.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

Section 1 – It shall be the primary purpose(s) of this organization to:

- A. Serve as a channel for graduate and professional students to voice concerns, resolve difficulties, and provide feedback on issues that directly affect graduate student life at the University of Houston;
- B. Promote social, diplomatic, and cultural activities for graduate and professional students;
- C. Facilitate and foster a sense of community among graduate students.

Section 2 – Additional purposes shall include but are not limited to:

- A. Fostering excellence in master's and doctoral research as well as enhancing the impact of graduate groups and students
- B. Advocating changes deemed necessary by graduate students
- C. Fostering inter-departmental cooperation and exchange
- D. Encouraging unity among the graduate and professional students as a whole
- E. Improving the academic environment for graduate students through sponsored events
- F. Providing social events and networking opportunities for graduate and professional students

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Membership shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Section 2 – Regular membership shall consist of graduate and professional students of the University of Houston who have agreed to uphold this Constitution and to participate fully in the activities of this organization.

A. Regular members shall have the right to vote.

Section 3 – Special membership shall consist of those persons who have not fulfilled the requirements of Article III, Section 1 or 2. (Note: Special members might consist of alumni or members of the community).

A. Special members shall not have the right to vote.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1 – All officers shall serve for one academic year (August through May), but may be reelected for a subsequent term. Officers shall not be on academic or university probation at the time of their election and throughout their terms of office. The officers of this organization shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and shall collectively be referred to as the Executive Board.

Section 2 – The responsibilities of the President shall be as follows:

- A. To preside at meetings of this organization;
- B. To serve as the representative of this organization to University Administration, the Student Government Association, and other organizations;
- C. To execute the orders of this organization, subject to the approval of the membership;
- D. To appoint chairpersons and members of all committees, subject to the approval of the membership;
- E. To delegate Presidential responsibilities when deemed appropriate, subject to the approval of the membership;
- F. To have signature authority on all checks issued by this organization;
- G. To inform succeeding officers of their responsibilities to this organization, University Administration, the Student Government Association, and other organizations;
- H. To perform other such duties as the membership or Constitution may specify.

Section 3 – The responsibilities of the Vice-President shall be as follows:

- A. To assist the President in his/her duties;
- B. To preside at meetings of this organization in the absence of the President;
- C. To establish, administer, and enforce an attendance policy, subject to the approval of the membership;
- D. To assume the office of President in his/her absence, vacancy, resignation, or dismissal;

- E. To perform other such duties as the membership or Constitution may specify.

Section 4 – The responsibilities of the Secretary shall be as follows:

- A. To prepare agendas and to record minutes of meetings of this organization;
- B. To handle all correspondence of this organization not under the preview of the President;
- C. To pick up all mail received at the Center for Student Involvement at least once a week, in addition to any other location at which mail for this organization may be delivered;
- D. To maintain an accurate list of the membership of this organization;
- E. To update and maintain all files of this organization;
- F. To assume the office of Vice-President in his/her absence, vacancy, resignation, or dismissal;
- G. To perform other such duties as the membership or Constitution may specify.

Section 5 – The responsibilities of the Treasurer shall be as follows:

- A. To keep accurate records of the financial status and transactions of this organization.
- B. To receive and disburse all monies of this organization;
- C. To have signature authority on all checks issued by this organization;
- D. To hold personal responsibility for all organization funds in his/her possession;
- E. To represent this organization when requesting funds from the Activities Funding Board;
- F. To assume the office of Secretary in his/her absence, vacancy, resignation, or dismissal;
- G. To perform other such duties as the membership or Constitution may specify.

ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS

Section 1 – Candidates for any office of this organization must be Regular Members (or Regular Voting Members), thus being graduate and professional students of the University of Houston.

Section 2 – Candidates for any office of this organization shall be nominated by the voting membership or shall nominate themselves.

Section 3 – Election of officers shall take place at a meeting of this organization called for that purpose to occur within the last thirty days of the Spring semester, with term of office lasting one year.

Section 4 – Election of officers shall be by a majority vote.

Section 5 – In case of a tie, the Current President shall cast the deciding vote.

Section 6 – If there is only one candidate applying for an office, that candidate shall take office by default.

Section 7 – Officers may be re-elected without limitation.

ARTICLE VI – REMOVAL

Section 1 – Any officer may be removed by a three-fourths vote of the membership, following the notification of the officer in question. Such notification shall be provided in writing no less than seven days prior to the vote. The vote shall be conducted according to Election procedures outlined in Article V.

Section 2 – In case of a tie, the Faculty/Staff Advisor shall cast the deciding vote.

Section 3 – A vacancy of any office shall be filled by Presidential appointment, subject to the approval of the membership.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

Section 1 – Meetings of this organization shall be no less than once a month during the Fall and Spring semesters, the general day and hour to be set by the voting membership at the first meeting of the Fall semester.

Section 2 – Special meetings shall be called at the discretion of the President upon the request of any five voting members of this organization.

Section 3 – The President shall have the authority to modify the meeting calendar as benefits majority of the schedules of voting members of this organization.

ARTICLE VIII – RULES OF PROCEDURE

Section 1 – This organization shall use Robert's Rules of Order, current edition, as its authority on parliamentary procedure.

Section 2 – Quorum

- A. One more than half the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.
- B. No business shall be conducted without the presence of a quorum.

Section 3 – Business shall be decided by majority vote.

Section 4 – All references to voting or approval of the membership of this organization refers to voting membership except where specified.

ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS

Section 1 – One or more voting members of this organization may author an amendment to this Constitution.

Section 2 – The amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Board for review and recommendation concerning legality, punctuation, placement, and word order.

Section 3 – The Executive Board shall present the amendment at the next meeting of this organization, a copy of the amendment being given to each voting membership (refers to voting member) of this organization. This shall constitute a first reading.

Section 4 – At the next meeting following the acceptance of an amendment, updated copies of this Constitution shall be given to each voting member.

Non-discrimination clause:

As a Registered Student Organization at the University of Houston we adhere to the University of Houston's Non-Discrimination Policy. The University of Houston is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity institution. The university provides equal treatment and opportunity to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status except where such distinction is required by law. Additionally, the System prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Anti-hazing clause:

This organization will not initiate, participate in, or be witness to any act that inflicts or intends to inflict physical or mental harm or discomfort or which may demean, disgrace, or degrade any person, regardless of location, intent, or consent of participant(s).

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 2018 (month/year)