

# Constitution of the Graduate Student Association University of California, Riverside

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## Preamble

*We, the graduate students of the Riverside campus of the University of California, in order to serve the needs, the welfare, and the interests of present and future graduate students at the University of California at Riverside, do establish this constitution.*

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## Article I: Name and Membership

- Section 1. Name: The name of this organization shall be the “Graduate Student Association of the University of California, Riverside (GSAUCR).”
- Section 2. Membership: All registered graduate students at the University of California, Riverside, who have paid the assessment fees are members of this organization.
- Section 3. Mission: The Graduate Student Association exists to advance, through our advocacy and programs, the academic, social, and physical environment of current and future graduate and professional students at the University of California, Riverside.

## Article II: The Graduate Student Council

- Section 1. Definition: The Graduate Student Council (GSC) shall be the legislative and executive body of the GSAUCR, subject to the controls vested in GSAUCR by Article V of this constitution, and the officers of the GSAUCR shall be the Executive Board.
- Section 2. Membership: The GSC shall consist of elected officers and representatives of chartered departmental GSAs. Representatives shall be either elected or appointed by the graduate students from their respective departments or programs. The Executive Board shall consist of the President, Vice President of External Affairs, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Graduate Student Health Insurance Policy Officer, Public Relations Officer, and Finance and Grantwriting Officer and all appointed officers of GSAUCR. Appointed officers are non-voting members of the Executive Board. The elected officers are ineligible to serve as department representatives. Appointed officers, however, may serve as department representatives if their respective departments select them. All members of the GSC shall be voting members in accordance to Robert’s Rules of Order.
- a. Individual departmental representatives must be full-time graduate students in good academic standing within the department which that student is representing. The GSC will allow the graduate advisor in each department to determine whether a student meets the criteria of “full-time status.” Representatives shall be selected by the graduate students in each department at least once each academic year. Alternates may be appointed by any duly-selected representative from the same department. Written notice of an alternate being appointed must be received by the VPAA at least two hours in advance of any Council meeting. If a representative misses two consecutive regular meetings of the Council without sending an alternate, that representative shall be dropped temporarily from membership in the Council, and the Vice President of Academic Affairs will

contact that department's student government with due notice. If for any reason a department has no selected representative, the Council shall exclude that department from the tally for Council membership until such selection is received, for the purpose of quorum.

- b. The number of voting representatives to the GSC from each department shall be based on the following formula: one representative for each department with fifty graduate students or less; two representatives for each department that has more than fifty graduate students.
- c. All members and representatives of the GSC shall be selected without discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, politics, national origin, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, age, citizenship, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, or status as a covered veteran.
- d. Any selected representative of the GSC may be subject to recall by the department from which that representative was selected. Each department's recall process shall parallel its appointment process.

Section 3. Meetings and Bylaws: The GSC shall meet at least once each month during the academic year, and the dates of the meetings will be established by the Executive Board of Officers. Meetings shall abide by the Bylaws of the Council, in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. In the case of a conflict between Robert's Rules of Order and the Bylaws of the GSC, the Bylaws will have authority.

- a. All official meetings of the GSC shall be open to the public, except for Executive Sessions which may be called during a regular meeting for the discussion of student grievance matters, personnel and employee grievance matters, investments, litigation, and other GSC business deemed by the GSC to be sensitive. In the case of a closed Executive Session, a notice describing the matter under discussion in non-specific, generalized terms must be placed for public notice outside of the place of the meeting during the duration of the meeting and a notice of the date and time at which the Executive Session occurred must be placed in the GSC Newsletter along with a non-specific generalized description of the topic under discussion. An official meeting shall be one in which a quorum of the members of the Council are present, except that the provisions of this section shall not apply to social functions, provided that no business of the Council is acted upon.
- b. At least 48-hours public notice shall be given before any special meeting may be held. Public notice shall be construed to mean posting written notice in five public places on campus. This may include publishing a notice in the GSC Newsletter and the campus newspaper in advance of the meeting; the public news and social media shall be contacted if deemed appropriate by the Public Relations Officer in consultation with the GSC Executive Board.
- c. A special meeting of the GSC shall be held within ten days of the presentation of a petition for such meeting made by ten voting representatives of the Council or 50 GSAUCR members.
- d. In the event that any official meeting is willfully interrupted by an individual or group of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting unfeasible or order cannot be restored by the removal of those individuals, the Chair of the GSC may order the meeting room cleared and the meeting will continue in closed session, provided that the representatives of the press and those who were not engaged in the disruption shall be allowed to remain.

- e. The GSC shall not conduct any meeting in a facility that prohibits the admittance of any person on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, politics, national origin, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, age, citizenship, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, or status as a covered veteran.
- f. Official minutes shall be kept by the GSAUCR Secretary noting all actions taken at GSC meetings they shall be considered part of the public record and may be inspected by any member of the GSAUCR.
- g. Bylaws shall be approved by the GSC at least once each academic year and shall include the regulations governing memberships as outlined in Section 2 of this Article, provisions for a quorum in meetings, division of responsibility and stipends among officers, and such other regulations or provisions as may be approved by the members of the Council. In the case of failure of a Council to act upon the Bylaws as provided in this Section, the previous year's Bylaws shall remain in effect until such time as proper action is taken.

Section 4. Powers and Obligations: The members of the GSC shall:

- a. Act as the representatives of the general interest of the graduate student body at the University of California, Riverside;
- b. Act as a liaison between graduate students in their department and the GSAUCR.
- c. Provide for the dissemination of information to graduate students on matters and policies that affect them;
- d. Assist in the resolution of problems pertaining to graduate student affairs;
- e. Be the judge of the qualifications and elections of its members;
- f. Elect officers and have the power to remove officers under the provisions of Article III, Section 18;
- g. Each serve on at least one (1) committee as a GSAUCR representative, and/or one GSAUCR sub-committee. This requirement is waived when all committees are filled;
- h. Assume any other duties necessary to the fulfillment of these powers and obligations.

### Article III: Officers

Section 1. Officers: The elected officers of the GSAUCR shall be the members of the Executive Board, as well as any additional appointed officers specified in the GSAUCR Constitution or in the Bylaws.

Section 2. Elections: Seven officers of the GSAUCR (President, Vice President of External Affairs, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Public Relations Officer, Graduate Student Health Insurance Policy Officer, and Finance and Grantwriting Officer) shall be elected. Elections shall be by secret ballot in an online election. Publicity for the online election will be distributed at least one and one-half weeks prior to the election deadline. Filing for candidacy must be completed at least two weeks before the beginning of the election.

- Section 3 Appointments: The following officer positions shall be advertised as open during the Spring Quarter. When possible, interim appointments shall be made for the summer and confirmed at the first GSC meeting in the Fall Quarter. These officers shall be appointed with the following conditions.
- a. The Conference Travel Grant Coordinator shall be appointed by the incumbent Executive Board in consultation with the incoming Executive Board, subject to confirmation at the first GSC meeting subsequent to the interview and selection process.
  - b. The Academic Affairs Officers, Secretary, and Webmaster shall be appointed by the incoming Executive Board and subject to confirmation at the first GSC meeting subsequent to the interview and selection process.
  - c. Other appointed officers shall be appointed in a manner consistent with the procedures outlined in the appropriate Bylaws.
- Section 4 Terms of Office: The term of office shall be from July 1 to June 30 for the President, Vice President of External Affairs, and the Graduate Student Health Insurance Policy Officer; for all other elected officers the term of office shall be from September 1 to June 30.
- Section 5 Qualifications: Any full-time graduate student in good academic standing during the academic year of the term of office is eligible for office, subject to such additional qualifications as may be established in the bylaws. No qualified graduate student shall be denied candidacy on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, national origin, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy, age, citizenship, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, or status as a covered veteran.
- Section 6 President: The President is the chief presiding officer of the GSA, the Chair of GSC, and has the primary responsibility for administration of the affairs of the GSAUCR and the GSC, except as otherwise provided for in the Bylaws. The President shall:
- a. Act as the representative and chief spokesperson of the Graduate Student Association;
  - b. Fill vacancies for graduate students representatives on campus-wide committees, and establish GSAUCR internal committees to be filled by GSC departmental representatives.
  - c. Hold regular office hours on campus as stipulated in the Bylaws;
  - d. Call regular, Executive Sessions, and special meetings and establish the agendas;
  - e. Call a special meeting within ten days of the presentation of a petition for such a meeting presented by ten voting members of the Council or by fifty GSAUCR members;
  - f. Ensure the proper functioning of the GSAUCR office and its equipment to ensure that the equipment is properly maintained and operated on a self- supporting basis;
  - g. Oversee and manage the GSAUCR budget;
  - h. Delegate such duties to other officers and members of the Council as may be consistent with the Bylaws and the consent of the Council;

- i. Act as one of the two representatives to the Graduate Council of the UCR Academic Senate;
- j. Serve as representative for GSAUCR to the UCR Alumni Association and UCR Board of Trustees;
- k. Hire and supervise career employees of GSAUCR, maintain confidential personnel records, and follow all relevant university regulations;
- l. Perform other such duties as may be contained in the Bylaws.

Section 7.

Vice President of External Affairs: The Vice President of External Affairs is the Vice Chair of GSC and the second ranking officer of GSAUCR, and, under the general direction and supervision of the President, shall:

- a. Conduct meetings of the Council in the absence of the President;
- b. Publicize initiatives, referenda, and recalls initiated according to Article IV of this Constitution with the assistance of the Elections Committee;
- c. Publicize, with the assistance of the Elections Committee, the forthcoming election for officers at least six weeks in advance of the election unless they are a candidate, in which case this duty shall become the responsibility of the highest ranking officer (as determined by the order listed herein) not seeking election; should every officer be seeking election, this duty shall be delegated to persons deemed capable by the GSC;
- d. Hold regular office hours on campus as stipulated in the Bylaws;
- e. Serve as President of the GSAUCR and Chair of the Council in the event of the temporary absence or incapacity of the President. The VPEA shall serve in this capacity until the next regularly scheduled GSC meeting, with the option of renewal by a majority vote of the GSC to continue beyond this time.
- f. Act as GSAUCR's official representative to the University of California Graduate and Professional Council (UCGPC) or its equivalent should one exist, attend all UCGPC meetings; and provide monthly updates to GSC.
- g. Organize GSAUCR representation to UCGPC meetings as deemed appropriate by the GSC, advocacy events, as well as coordinating such representation at conferences with UCGPC and the Associated Students of the University of California, Riverside (ASUCR)(or whatever other organization operates as the official representative of the UCR's undergraduate students);
- h. Report to the GSC on any system-wide, state, or federal legislation that directly impacts the University of California and its graduate student population;
- i. Ensure, in conjunction with the President, the proper functioning of the GSA Conference Travel Grant Committee;
- j. Perform such other duties and responsibilities as shall be delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 8.

Vice President of Internal Affairs: The Vice President of Internal Affairs will, under the general direction and supervision of the President, liaison and interface between GSAUCR, each GSA liaison, and the campus departments affiliated with each liaison.

- a. Coordinate regular meetings with the various offices affiliated with each liaison.

- b. Arrange meetings with staff and administration to advocate for graduate students at UCR.
- c. Meet on a monthly basis with the elected GSA officers to discuss system-wide, state-wide, and campus-wide policies which impact graduate students and the various departments affiliated with each liaison.
- d. Assist in the coordination of GSA responses to graduate student issues, problems, and policies in tandem with the President, the Vice President of External Affairs, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the GSC.
- e. Assist the President and the Vice President of Academic Affairs with filling vacancies for student representatives for Academic Senate committees, campus-wide committees, and GSAUCR standing committees;
- f. Oversee and advise the GSA liaisons in coordination with the President.
- g. Perform such other duties and responsibilities as shall be delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 9.

Vice President of Academic Affairs: The Vice President of Academic Affairs will, under the general direction and supervision of the President, liaison and interface between the GSAUCR and the individual department graduate student associations, and shall:

- a. Coordinate regular meetings with the graduate student associations of the individual departments;
- b. Arrange for meetings with students in those departments which either have no official or active graduate student association in order to foster participation in student government;
- c. Meet on a monthly basis with the Vice President of External Affairs to discuss system-wide and state-wide policies and legislation which impact students;
- d. As possible, assist in the coordination of student response to issues, problems, and policies in tandem with the President, the Vice President of External Affairs, Vice President of Internal Affairs, and the GSC;
- e. Assist the President and Vice President of Internal Affairs with filling vacancies for student representatives for Academic Senate committees, campus-wide committees, and GSAUCR standing committees;
- f. Oversee and advise the Academic Affairs Officers of each college/school;
- g. Act as one of the two representatives to the Graduate Council of the UCR Academic Senate;
- h. Perform such other duties and responsibilities as shall be delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 10.

Public Relations Officer: The Public Relations Officer is responsible for publicizing the business, programs, and events of GSAUCR to all members of the campus population. Furthermore, the Public Relations Officer, under the general direction and supervision of the President, shall:

- a. Create and distribute flyers for all GSAUCR events, oversee maintenance of the

GSAUCR website.

- b. Work closely with the Vice President of External Affairs so as to report regularly on system-wide and state-wide issues that impact the graduate student population;
- c. Assist, upon request of the President and/or the Executive Board, with the issuance of public, campus-wide, system-wide, and state-wide public relations activities;
- d. Create and distribute a regular digital newsletter to be sent out to the graduate student body.
- e. Perform such other duties and responsibilities as shall be delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 11. Graduate Student Health Insurance Policy Officer: The Graduate Student Health Insurance Committee Chairperson will be the GSAUCR's primary representative on issues regarding graduate health insurance policy and the decision-making processes for policies and programs that impact graduate student health care services, and, under the general direction and supervision of the President, shall:

- a. Chair all meetings of the UCR Graduate Student Health Insurance Policy Committee meetings, producing an agenda, seeing that the agenda is sent to all appropriate committee members, the GSAUCR President, to the UCR Vice Chancellor of Student Services, and to the UCR Chancellor;
- b. Assist with research and fact-finding necessary to assess the availability of health insurance policies which will most effectively and most cost-effectively serve the needs of UCR's graduate student population;
- c. Call a General Referendum on the issue of mandatory Graduate Health Insurance and/or of Health Insurance Policy in general, of the entire graduate student population (including any professional degree programs which are generally considered to be graduate programs) should the cost increase per student of the annual policy exceed 19%; and shall organize and oversee any such referendum, assuring that all appropriate voting members are contacted and given appropriate time for return of ballots;
- d. Call a referendum on the issues of the mandatory nature of, or specifics of health insurance policy for graduate students upon being presented with a petition with the signatures of 15% or more of the graduate student population which requests a referendum, and which states the nature of the issue(s) being brought forward clearly and concretely;
- e. Oversee the gathering of information by the GSA regarding quality control and service delivery to graduate students, and work with the Student Health Center to produce a yearly assessment of policies and service which will be made available to the general graduate student population in the form of a report which will be issued at least once yearly;
- f. Coordinate GSAUCR representatives to the Chancellor's Advisory Committees on health-policies;
- g. Hold office hours by appointment with graduate students who have questions or problems with the implementation of health insurance policy as they experience it, and advise students of options regarding resolution of complaints or problems;

- h. Perform such other duties and responsibilities as shall be delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 12. Finance and Grantwriting Officer: The Finance and Grantwriting Officer will serve as the liaison between the GSA President and all other members of the Graduate Student Council with regard to budgetary policy, and under the general direction and supervision of the President, the Finance and Grantwriting Officer shall:

- a. Assist the President in preparation of the yearly budget;
- b. Have bi-monthly meetings with the President, Vice President of External Affairs, and GSAUCR Office Manager to check on the general functioning of the budget line items and expenditures;
- c. Present an overview of the budget and various expenditures at each monthly GSA board and council meeting;
- d. Maintain a separate, working copy of the GSA President's budget;
- e. Maintain a record of past budgets as well as information relevant to these budgets;
- f. Assist all campus committees, standing committees, and ad-hoc committees (or the chosen representative of these committees) that have a line-item in the current budget with fiscal policy;
- g. Provide updated copies of the budget to any member of the Graduate Student Council upon request;
- h. Provide a synopsis of any changes that have been requested concerning budget line-items and/or the amounts allocated to these line items;
- i. Ascertain ways to reduce fixed costs of the GSAUCR;
- j. Perform other such duties and responsibilities as delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 13. Conference Travel Grant Coordinator: The Conference Travel Grant Coordinator, under the general direction and supervision of the President, shall:

- a. Chair all meetings of the Conference Travel Grant Committee;
- b. Serve as a contact person for all Conference Travel Grant Program related questions;
- c. Perform other such duties and responsibilities as delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 14. Secretary: The Secretary, under the general direction and supervision of the President, shall:

- a. Record and maintain minutes of all actions taken at all Graduate Student Council and Executive Board Meetings;
- b. Act as Parliamentarian of the Council, to advise the Council on matters of procedure;

- c. Perform other such duties and responsibilities as delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 15. Webmaster: The Webmaster, under the general supervision of the President, shall:

- a. Update and modify the GSAUCR website under the direction and at the discretion of the Public Relations Officer, other board members, and the Conference Travel Grant Coordinator;
- b. Perform other such duties and responsibilities as delegated to the office by the President and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 16. Academic Affairs Officers: There shall be one Academic Affairs Officer for each college/school, appointed by the incoming Executive Board, and subject to the confirmation of the incoming GSC. The Academic Affairs Officers, under the general direction and supervision of the President and of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, shall:

- a. Assist the Vice President of Academic Affairs in meeting regularly with departmental GSA's in relation to their own college/school;
- b. Meet with the Dean of the college/school they represent to foster communication between the students and the administration;
- c. Serve as non-voting representatives to the Executive Board;
- d. Serve, if possible, on the search committee for the Dean of the college/school the officer represents;
- e. Perform such other duties and responsibilities, as they relate to their respective college/school, as shall be delegated to the office by the President, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and/or the Council, or as are enumerated in the Bylaws.

Section 17. Stipends: The officers shall be paid a monthly stipend as determined by the Council and as stipulated in the Bylaws.

Section 18. Removal from Office: Any elected officer may be removed from office for consistent failure to carry out the duties of that office, for misbehavior in that office, or for failure to meet the qualifications of office. At any regular or special meeting of the Council, a motion for impeachment, including the charges against the officer, may be introduced by any member. If the motion is passed, a committee shall be established by the Council to investigate the charges. The committee shall present its report, including recommendation for or against impeachment at the next regular GSC meeting. Upon establishing quorum and upon subsequent voting by all present representatives, a two-thirds vote for impeachment shall be required for removal.

## Article IV: Referendum

Section 1. Referendum: Both members of the GSC and of the Executive Board shall have the power to initiate referendums by a majority vote of the council; a referendum may also be initiated by means of a petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the registered graduate students. Such a petition shall be presented to the Council, which shall examine the petition. Upon determination that the required number of valid signatures has been obtained, the Council shall call a referendum not earlier than two and not later than four weeks after the filing of the petition, not including any time when school is not in session. The complete text of the referendum shall be disseminated to all graduate students eligible to vote prior the election.

A majority of the votes cast shall be sufficient to pass such legislation.

## Article V: Financial Records and Control

- Section 1. Audit: The university shall have the right, at its own expense, to audit the financial records of this organization.
- Section 2. Accessibility: The financial records of the GSAUCR shall be made available for review by any member of the Association upon request.
- Section 3. No part of the income of the GSAUCR shall be used for the benefit of or be distributed to its members or officers or any other private person, except that the GSAUCR may pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in the furtherance of the exempt purposes for which it was formed.
- Section 4. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this constitution, the GSAUCR shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an Association exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 503 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or the most recent applicable version.
- Section 5. Except as limited by section 1 through 4 of this Article, by Article IX of this constitution, by law, and by UC Regental Policy, control of the financial assets of the GSAUCR shall be vested in the Graduate Student Council.

## Article VI: Amendments

- Section 1. Amendments: An amendment to this constitution shall be proposed either by two-thirds vote of the Council when a quorum is present or by a petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the members of the GSAUCR and presented to the Council. The Council shall call an election not earlier than two and not later than four weeks after the vote of the Council or the filing of a petition, not including anytime when school is not in session. A 10% voter turnout will be required to approve any proposed amendment. A favorable majority vote of those voting shall be necessary for adoption of the amendment. An amendment shall take effect immediately upon adoption, unless otherwise stated in the amendment.

## Article VII: Ratification

- Section 1. Ratification: This constitution shall become effective upon approval of a majority of the graduate students voting in a referendum (in which 10% or more of the graduate student population participates), which is supervised by the Graduate Student Council and approved by the Chancellor of the University of the California, Riverside. This constitution, if ratified, shall supersede the constitution of the Graduate Student Association approved in 1994, as ratified in 2003, amended in 2007, 2016, and 2019, and will take effect on July 1, 2020, except those changes needed to conform with California State Law which shall take effect immediately upon ratification.

## Article VIII: Dissolution

- Section 1. Dissolution: Upon dissolution of the GSAUCR, its assets remaining after the payment of, or provision for the payment of, all debts and liabilities of the GSAUCR, shall be disposed of according to the directions of the Graduate Student Council in office at that time.