

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the graduate community of Wesleyan University, recognizing that the graduate students are an independent entity within the structure of Wesleyan University deserving of adequate and effective representation in appropriate University affairs hereby establish the Graduate Student Association. This association shall operate within the framework of the University to provide said representation to the entire Wesleyan graduate community.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Wesleyan Graduate Student Association, hereinafter referred to as the GSA.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

Every individual paying GSA membership dues and currently pursuing an MA or PhD degree at Wesleyan University shall be considered a member of the GSA.

All close friends and family of GSA members shall be considered as members of the GSA community.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSE

The GSA shall serve, represent, and promote the interests and welfare of the Wesleyan graduate community. It shall encourage community representation and involvement in relevant university decision-making and shall strive to enhance the general quality of life and education for all Wesleyan graduate community members. It shall foster healthy communication between the student body, faculty, administration, trustees, alumni, the local community, and beyond. The GSA shall also sponsor, support, and be responsible for events open to the entire graduate community.

ARTICLE IV – GSA EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

The GSA Executive Board shall be chaired by the GSA President. It shall also consist of the GSA Vice President and Treasurer.

SECTION 2: GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The general powers and responsibilities of the GSA Executive Board shall be to:

1. Represent the graduate community in accordance with the general governance of Wesleyan University.

2. Ensure that the GSA operates within the guidelines set forth by this constitution.
3. Clarify and interpret questions regarding this constitution when necessary.
4. Organize at least one GSA meeting, open to all members of the GSA community, per semester.
5. Communicate the actions and decisions of the GSA to the University community.
6. Make any and all Executive Board decisions by a majority vote.
7. Provide support and guidance to other GSA officers and members.
8. Approve or Disapprove funding requests.
9. Assume any and all powers not enumerated to other GSA positions in times of need.

ARTICLE V – GSA COUNCIL

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

The GSA council shall be chaired by the GSA President. It shall also be composed of the GSA Vice President, GSA Treasurer, GSA Communications Liaison, GSA BA/MA Representative, the graduate student representative to the University's Educational Policy Committee and one representative from each of the following committees:

1. Housing Committee
2. Benefits Committee
3. International Students Committee

SECTION 2: GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The general powers and responsibilities of the GSA Council shall be to:

1. Communicate any and all business of their respective committees.
2. Assist the GSA President in establishing an agenda for general GSA meetings.
3. Make any and all GSA Council decisions by majority vote.

4. Represent the GSA as an organization in a ceremonial capacity.
5. Provide support and guidance to the GSA Executive Board and general members.
6. Vote on changes to this constitution brought forth by the GSA Vice President as outlined in the amendments proceedings.
7. Vote on the removal or non-removal of a GSA officer from his/her position in accordance with the impeachment proceedings set forth by this constitution.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEE OPERATIONS

SECTION 1: COUNCIL COMMITTEES

There shall be three GSA Committees regarded as Council Committees. These Council Committees shall be the:

1. Housing Committee
2. Benefits Committee
3. International Students Committee

Each Council Committee shall have one representative to the GSA Council. This representative must be elected by a majority vote of committee members within a fortnight of the beginning of first semester classes. If no representative to council is elected within the allotted time, the GSA President shall appoint said representative. A council committee representative must be a member of the committee they represent and cannot represent two different committees at the same time. The general responsibilities of a council committee representative shall be to:

1. Attend all GSA Council meetings.
2. Report all relevant committee information to GSA Council.
3. Report all relevant GSA Council information to their respective committee.
4. Represent the needs and views of their respective committees at GSA Council meetings.

SECTION 2: COUNCIL COMMITTEE'S PURPOSE

Each council committee has been established to serve a different purpose to the GSA community. The general purpose of each council committee is detailed below.

Subsection 1: The general purpose of the Housing Committee is to:

1. Hold regular meetings with both Rental Properties and Residential Life.
2. Report general housing issues of the GSA community to both Rental Properties and Residential Life.
3. Accept, organize, and report specific GSA community housing complaints and problems.
4. Act as liaison between the Wesleyan University Housing Administration and the GSA community.

Subsection 2: The general purpose of the Benefits Committee is to:

1. Be familiar with all information regarding GSA community benefits, including issues of stipend, health insurance, and other possible benefits.
2. Disseminate any and all information regarding changes to stipend, health insurance, and other possible benefits.
3. Accept, organize, and report specific GSA community benefit complaints and problems.
4. Meet at least once a month to assess the status of GSA community benefits.

Subsection 3: The general purpose of the International Students Committee is to:

1. Orient incoming international students at the outset of the academic year
2. Organize shopping trips for incoming students at the outset of the academic year.
3. Accept, organize, and report specific problems of international graduate students.

SECTION 3: COUNCIL COMMITTEE CHAIR

Each Council Committee is responsible for electing a chair. The Council Committee's chair is expected to be a member of the committee and must be elected chair by a majority vote of committee members. Chairs are expected to be voted into position within a fortnight of the beginning of first semester classes. If no council committee chair is elected within the allotted time, the GSA President shall appoint said chair.

The general responsibilities of a council committee chair shall be to:

1. Organize regular committee meetings.
2. Delegate responsibilities to committee members.
3. Insure that their committees fulfill their purpose as set forth by this constitution.

SECTION 4: COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

All members of the GSA community can serve on any of the three Council Committees. The term of committee membership is one calendar year. Members of council committees are initially established at the end of each academic year. Time will be allotted at a second semester GSA general meeting for Council Committee membership sign-up. Those interested in joining a council committee at any other time should contact the committee chair whose information can be found on the GSA website.

SECTION 5: NON-COUNCIL COMMITTEES

If necessary, the GSA Executive Board may establish a committee to serve the GSA community. Any such committee will be deemed a Non-Council Committee and will not have a GSA Council representative. For these established committees, the GSA President shall appoint a chair and all members to their positions.

ARTICLE VI – NON-COMMITTEE POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

The general roles and responsibilities for each non-committee GSA position are given as follows:

The GSA President is expected to:

1. Chair GSA Council and GSA general meetings.
2. Establish an agenda for GSA Council and GSA general meetings.
3. Serve as a member of the University's Graduate Council.

4. Appoint the GSA BA/MA Representative and a second representative to the University's Graduate Council.
5. Arbitrate over any and all GSA Committee disputes.
6. Appoint Committee Chairs and Council Representatives if none are chosen in the time allotted by this constitution.
7. Break any and all ties that may occur in both Executive Board and GSA Council votes
8. Fill all vacant GSA positions by appointment

The GSA Vice President is expected to:

1. Assume all powers and responsibilities of GSA President in times when the acting GSA President cannot fulfill his/her designated duties.
2. Insure that the GSA operates within the guidelines established by this constitution.
3. Accept, organize, and report potential changes to this constitution to the Executive Board as outlined in the amendments proceedings.
4. Head all impeachment proceedings in the case that he/she is not under consideration for impeachment.
5. Assist and support the GSA President

The GSA Treasurer is expected to:

1. Maintain an accurate and current account of GSA finances.
2. Accept, organize, and present funding requests to the Executive Board as outlined in this constitution.
3. Offer informed financial advice to the Executive Board members regarding the feasibility and effects of issuing a positive response to particular funding requests.
4. Keep time at GSA general meetings.
5. Sign funding reimbursement forms.
6. Head any impeachment proceedings against the Vice President.

The GSA Communications Liaison is expected to:

1. Record the minutes of all GSA Council and GSA general meetings.
2. Maintain and update the GSA website.

3. Serve as a liaison between the GSA community and the University's Technical Support staff.

The GSA Educational Policy Representative is expected to:

1. Attend all meetings of the University's Educational Policy Committee.
2. Represent the interests and concerns of the GSA community at Educational Policy Committee meetings.
3. Report any and all relevant Educational Policy Committee decisions to the GSA community.

The GSA BA/MA Representative:

1. Communicate the general interests and concerns of the BA/MA community to GSA Council
2. Accept, organize, and report any particular BA/MA student complaint or problem.

The Members of the GSA Judicial Board are each expected to:

1. Review any case in which a graduate student or member of the GSLP have possibly violated the Wesleyan University honor code or Wesleyan University code of non-academic of conduct.
2. Follow any and all protocol for said hearings set forth by Wesleyan University.

ARTICLE VII – GENERAL GSA MEETINGS

The Executive Board shall hold at least one GSA meeting open to all GSA community members per semester. The agenda of this meeting shall be established by the GSA President and announced to the community at least one day prior. The GSA Treasurer shall chair this meeting and keep time. The GSA Communications Liaison shall record minutes at these meetings and post them on the GSA website. There shall always be time, provided for in the meeting's agenda, for general discussion, comments, and questions.

ARTICLE VIII – PROCEDURE FOR FUNDING GSA EVENTS

SECTION 1: ELIGIBILITY

A GSA event is defined to be any event that is open to the entire GSA community. Any member of the GSA may request funding for a GSA event during the academic year.

SECTION 2: REQUESTING FUNDS

Any individual requesting funds for a GSA event must submit a "Funding Request Form." These request forms can be located and submitted online at the GSA website. It is suggested that this form be submitted at least two weeks before the scheduled event.

SECTION 3: ALLOCATING FUNDS

After receiving the funding request electronically, the Treasurer shall inform both the President and Vice President of the request. These three elected officials will then make a decision regarding the request. During this time, any one of the officers may contact the requesting party to obtain information relevant to the event. A decision must be reached and accepted by two of the three officers within one week of receiving the request. The accepted decision will then be communicated to the requesting party by the GSA Treasurer.

A "positive" response is one which grants funding to the event. The GSA officers may decide to grant less funding than originally requested. Even if less money is allocated to the event, it will still be deemed a positive response. A positive response is given under the assumption that all members of the GSA will be contacted and informed of the event within five days of the event. If such contact is not made, the officers have the ability to deny reimbursement.

A "negative" response is one which does not grant any funding to the event. A negative response occurs by default if the officers cannot reach an agreement within one week of receiving the request. In this case, the requesting party is eligible to contact the Treasurer, obtain information regarding the decision process, and re-submit a funding request.

Possible reasons for receiving a negative response include:

1. Failure to meet the eligibility requirements
2. Inappropriate event themes
3. Lack of planning
4. Insufficient GSA funds available

SECTION 4: REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

The GSA member submitting the funding request is the only individual eligible for reimbursement. Also, this individual can only be reimbursed for items that they can show proof of purchase for through receipts that are not to exceed the amount of money granted through the allocation process.

A reimbursement form, which can be found on the GSA website must then be completed, signed by the GSA treasurer, and submitted along with the receipts to the Graduate Studies Office.

Note: The reimbursement form along with the receipts must be turned in no later than a month after the date of the event. Failure to comply can result in no reimbursement.

ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1: SUBMITTING AMENDMENTS

An amendment to this constitution can be submitted by any GSA member at any time throughout the academic year. Any individual wishing to submit an amendment should contact the GSA Vice President with their amendment in written form. This individual should also include adequate justification for proposing such an amendment.

SECTION 2: PROCESSING AMENDMENTS

Upon receiving a proposed amendment, the GSA Vice President shall contact other Executive Board members with all relevant details. The Executive Board has a fortnight to discuss the proposed amendment. During this time, any member of the Executive Board can contact the party proposing the amendment to obtain information relevant to the request. At the end of this week, the GSA Executive Board must decide whether or not to bring this amendment to the GSA council. If the Executive Board passes this amendment to Council, then it will be ratified if at least 2/3 of the Council members vote in its favor. Otherwise, the amendment does not pass, no change to the constitution is made, and the party proposing the amendment can resubmit the amendment in the following semester. If the Executive Board does not pass this amendment to the Council, then this amendment does not pass, no change to the constitution is made, and the party proposing the amendment can resubmit the amendment in the following semester.

ARTICLE X – ELECTIONS

GSA elections are to be held before the end of the second semester each year. The GSA President is to form an Election Committee during the second semester. This committee shall be comprised of appointed GSA Council members and shall exist only to fill the following GSA elected positions: GSA President, GSA Vice President, GSA Treasurer, GSA Executive Liaison, a GSA representative to the University's Educational Policy Committee, and 7 Judicial Board representatives. Although the Election Committee shall draw up their own process to fill positions, the following guidelines are expected to be followed:

1. Any GSA member can run for any elected office.
2. Individuals should be elected by a majority vote through an election open to all GSA members.
3. Every GSA member is entitled to one secret ballot.

ARTICLE XI – IMPEACHMENT

SECTION 1: ELIGIBILITY

Any elected GSA officer can be impeached and removed from office.

SECTION 2: IMPEACHMENT CHARGES

Any GSA member can bring impeachment charges against any elected official at any time during the academic year. To do so, this individual must contact the GSA Vice President, provide the name of the officer they wish to impeach, and include a detailed explanation as to why the named officer should be removed from office.

Provided that the charges brought against the officer are legitimate, the GSA Vice President is to call a special Impeachment GSA Council meeting. Said meeting is to happen no later than a fortnight after the charges have been received by the GSA Vice President. The GSA Vice President is also to inform the impeached officer of the charges standing before him/her. In the case that charges are being brought against the GSA Vice President, the GSA Treasurer shall accept the charges and chair the impeachment proceedings

SECTION 3: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

During the special Impeachment GSA Council meeting, the GSA Vice President is to read to the entire Council the charges being brought against the officer. The officer under investigation shall then have time to respond to the charges. Any Council member is then permitted to question the officer facing removal. Once questioning has been completed, the impeached officer is to leave the meeting where the council is to vote on whether or not the officer is to be removed from office.

The officer shall be removed from office provided at least 2/3 of the Council members present vote in the affirmative.

SECTION 4: APPOINTMENT TO OFFICE

If a GSA official is removed from office, the President is responsible for appointing another GSA member to this office within a fortnight of the original officer's removal.

