

Case Western Reserve University Graduate Council of Arts and Sciences: Official Constitution

ARTICLE I. ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Council of Arts and Sciences, hereby referred to as GCAS.

Section 2. Purpose

With the purpose of facilitating a unified representational voice for all graduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences at Case Western Reserve University, GCAS hereby aims:

1. To provide a platform that will help identify and advocate for the needs and concerns unique to graduate students and graduate student organizations in the College of Arts and Sciences.
2. To thus provide sustained support for current and prospective graduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences, both socially and professionally.
3. To serve as a resource for individual departments within the College of Arts and Sciences in addressing the needs of their graduate students.
4. To facilitate representation of graduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences to the larger Graduate Student Council (GSC).
5. To educate graduate students about ongoing social and professional events and issues.
6. To encourage graduate student participation in student government and the formation of new graduate student organizations within the College of Arts and Sciences.
7. To promote fellowship among the graduate students of the College of Arts and Sciences through social events and moral support.

Section 3. Affiliations

This organization is not affiliated with any local, state or national group.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Requirements for Membership

A. General membership:

General membership is open to any College of Arts and Sciences graduate student enrolled at least half-time, including students in on-line and integrated programs.

General members are invited to attend assemblies, but they may not vote.

B. Voting Membership:

Voting membership is held by the following: The five (5) elected executive board members (See Article IV), the twenty-two (22) departmental senators, and the six (6) elected GSC representatives. No individual can hold more than one voting position.

Section 2. Qualifications for Holding Office

To be eligible to hold an Executive Board position (See Article IV, Officers), a student must fulfill requirements for membership, must be enrolled in a program leading towards a degree, and must (at the time of election) be able to serve a full one (1) year term.

ARTICLE III. NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Membership in this organization shall be without regard to race, religion, age, color, sex, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, veteran's status, political belief, or affiliation. While this Council exists to promote the graduate students of the College of Arts and Sciences at Case Western Reserve University, participation is open to the wider campus body and interested members of the community.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. Elected Executives of the Executive Board

The elected executives of this organization will be:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Information Officer
4. Secretary
5. Treasurer

These elected executives will comprise the “Executive Board” of GCAS.

Section 2. Other Positions

Voting Membership of this organization also consists of the following:

A. Departmental Senators

a. Elections

- i. Each of the twenty-two (22) departments in the College of Arts and Sciences that offers a graduate program is able to send one (1) senator to GCAS general assemblies.
- ii. Individual departments are responsible for appointing their own senator or alternate senator(s).
- iii. Senators and alternates must meet the requirements for voting membership of this organization as outlined in Article II.1.B.

b. Responsibilities

- i. Senators shall serve a term twelve (12) months in duration, beginning June 1st and ending the following May 31st.
- ii. Senators shall raise the concerns, needs, and wishes of their constituents before the GCAS general body.
- iii. Senators shall regularly attend GCAS general assembly meetings and the meetings of any committees or task forces to which they have been appointed.
- iv. Senators shall vote on behalf of their constituents whenever a vote is requested by the GCAS general assembly.
- v. Senators shall maintain communication with the GCAS information officer in order to ensure effective communication between GCAS and their departments.
- vi. Senators shall disseminate electronic communication distributed by the GCAS information officer.

B. GSC Representatives

a. Elections

- i. The College of Arts and Sciences is to send representatives to sit on the GSC assembly as enumerated by the representational model denoted by the GSC bylaws.
- ii. Election of the GSC representatives will be facilitated by this organization (see Section 3. Elections, below).
- iii. GSC representatives will represent the humanities, social, and physical sciences equally (see Section 3. Elections, below). These divisions are

open to review, but must be settled and approved by the general assembly at least one month prior to elections.

- iv. GSC representatives *may not* hold an additional voting position in this organization (e.g. they may not also be an executive board member or department senator).

b. Responsibilities

- i. Each representative must attend a minimum of one GCAS general assembly each semester.
- ii. A minimum of two representatives must be in attendance at each GCAS general assembly.
- iii. All representatives must attend meetings of the GSC general body.
- iv. Representatives shall raise the concerns, needs, and wishes of their constituents before the GSC general body.
- v. During GCAS general assembly, representatives will report on all GSC activities that affect the College of Arts of Sciences.

Section 3. Elections

A. Election of Executive Board

- a. The annual election for the five (5) executive board position listed above will take place in a GCAS general assembly meeting between April 1st and May 15th every year.
- b. The executive board of GCAS will then be voted on/elected by the voting membership of GCAS (see Article II, Section 1, B. Voting Membership).
- c. Elections will be determined by a plurality vote of GCAS members with voting rights.

B. Election of GSC Representatives

- a. The elections for GSC representatives will take place prior to GCAS executive board elections.
- b. GSC representatives will be elected by the general membership (see Article II, Section 1, A. General Membership).
- c. To ensure fair distribution of representation across academic disciplines, the executive board of GCAS will facilitate the election of GSC representatives by checking membership requirements and encouraging participation across departments.
- d. Sitting executive board members interested in running for a GSC representative position must abstain from voting or facilitating meetings to determine final results.

- e. The executive board will conduct the vote, tabulate results, and make data available to general members upon request.
- f. In the event that a GSC representative position is vacant, the president will organize an election within one month (exclusive of the summer and other breaks). In the interim, the president may attend GSC meetings as a fully voting representative, or delegate another GCAS member to do so for any and all vacancies.

Section 4. General Duties of Executives

- A. All GCAS executives shall be responsible for the following:
 - a. Setting GCAS goals and implementing specific actions based on the directives of the GCAS and Executive Board.
 - b. Upholding these directives, goals, and actions during interactions with the graduate student body, University administrators, faculty, and the community at large.
 - c. Making reports to the Executive Board and GCAS on progress made toward achieving these directives. A year-end summary report shall be presented to the GCAS, and a written report shall be filed in the GCAS records.
 - d. Briefing their successors about their duties and responsibilities in order to ensure continuity.
- B. Duties of the GCAS President
 - a. The general role of the President shall be to act as the official spokesperson for the GCAS.
 - b. Specific duties of the President shall be to:
 - i. Call, establish the agenda for, and preside over meetings of the GCAS and Executive Board, voting only in the event of a tie.
 - ii. Serve as a non-voting, ex officio member of the Executive Board, unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws.
 - iii. Facilitate the GCAS Executive Board review of GSC representatives.
 - iv. Serve on, or appoint a designee to, the CAS Graduate Studies Committee and any unfilled CAS committee calling for graduate student representation.
 - v. Maintain final authority on issues until they can be brought to the attention of the Executive Board or GCAS. When immediate action is necessary, the President shall solicit assistance from the other officers.
 - vi. Ensure that action is taken on resolutions of the GCAS.

- C. Duties of the GCAS Vice-President

- a. The general role of the Vice-President shall be to oversee graduate student representation on university committees and to assist the President in his/her duties.
- b. Specific duties of the Vice-President shall be to:
 - i. Discharge the duties of the President in the President's absence and assume the duties of the President in the event that the President vacates office.
 - ii. Oversee development and management of taskforces and committees.
 - iii. Serve on, or appoint a designee to, the Committee on Educational Programs in CAS.
 - iv. Serve as the official parliamentarian of the GCAS when Robert's Rules of Order are invoked.

D. Duties of the Information Officer

- a. General duties of the Information Officer shall be to facilitate internal GCAS correspondence, as well as with organizations outside the GCAS.
- b. Specific duties of the Information Officer shall be to:
 - i. Advertise meetings and operations of the GCAS to the larger CAS body.
 - ii. Maintain all electronic GCAS archives in conjunction with the secretary.
 - iii. Distribute announcements and information to Voting Members.
 - iv. Maintain the GCAS website, any GCAS publications, and any social media accounts.
 - v. Post meeting reports and other relevant GCAS information on the GCAS website.
 - vi. Create, maintain and utilize all graduate student email lists in compliance with the College of Arts and Sciences contract.

E. Duties of the GCAS Secretary

- a. General duties of the Secretary shall be to maintain accurate records of business conducted by the GCAS.
- b. Specific duties of the Secretary shall be to:
 - i. Arrange for meeting facilities.
 - ii. Maintain current GCAS membership lists and attendance records at regular meetings.
 - iii. Distribute regular GCAS and Executive Board meeting minutes at general assembly meetings.
 - iv. Collect proxy and meeting votes and distribute votetallies.
 - v. Distribute GCAS meeting agendas and other relevant meeting materials.
 - vi. Compose GCAS meeting minutes, event information, forms,

contacts, resolutions, and any document created and distributed by GCAS

- vii. Send the documents listed above to the information officer.
- viii. Distribute announcements and other information to GCAS members and the Executive Board.

F. Duties of the GCAS Treasurer

- a. General duties of the Treasurer shall be to administer the GCAS budget.
- b. Specific duties of the Treasurer shall be to:
 - i. Maintain the GCAS' financial records and provide a written report on the GCAS' financial status to the GCAS Executive Board once per month at Executive Board meetings, and to the Council at the beginning and end of each semester during General Assembly meetings.
 - ii. Identify funding sources for supporting GCAS interests.
 - iii. Apply for and manage funding from the graduate student governing body
 - iv. Post financial reports each semester on the GCAS website with the assistance of the Information Officer.
 - v. Arrange for the disbursement of GCAS funds.
 - vi. Ensure that funds are not encumbered, in any budget category or overall, beyond that which was approved by the GCAS.
 - vii. Strictly adhere to standard operating procedures in the management of all GCAS finances and with all GCAS financial and accounting documents.
 - viii. Order food and other meeting supplies requiring financial approval for all GCAS meetings.

Section 5: Termination of GCAS Executives

- A. An officer may be terminated if s/he has:
 - a. Failed to fulfill the duties specified in Section 4.
 - b. A conflict of interest due to outside employment or academic commitment.
 - c. Failed to maintain registered status.
 - d. Violated the standards outlined in the University Policies and Regulations.
- B. Any declaration of termination requires a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of executive board.
- C. The concerned officer may appeal the Executive Board's declaration to the GCAS. The declaration shall be upheld by a simple majority of all GCAS

members.

- D. The interim replacement for a terminated officer shall be appointed by the Executive Board (see Section 7, “Vacancy of an Office).
- E. The executive in question must abstain from all termination votes.

Section 6. Terms of Appointment

The term of appointment shall be 12 months, beginning June 1st and ending May 31st.

Section 7. Vacancy of an Office

In the event of a vacancy in an office other than the President before the expiration of a full term, a special election shall be called by the President within two weeks to fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE V. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Section 1. Meetings

- A. GCAS General Assembly Meetings
 - a. GCAS will meet monthly
 - b. GCAS meetings will take place one (1) week, or no more than two (2) weeks, prior to the monthly GSC meetings whenever possible
- B. GCAS Executive Board meetings
 - a. The GCAS Executive Board will meet monthly
 - b. The GCAS Executive Board meetings will take place one (1) week, or no more than two (2) weeks, prior to GCAS general assembly meetings

ARTICLE VI. BYLAWS

Section 1. Provision for Bylaws

- A. The organization may approve bylaws for the specific operation of the organization.
- B. No bylaw shall be adopted that is contrary to the provisions of this constitution.

Section 2. Voting Requirements for Bylaws

- A. The organization may adopt, amend, or rescind any bylaw by a simple majority vote of the voting membership.
- B. Any proposed bylaw must be publicized to the members at least one week prior

to the meeting at which it is going to be voted upon.

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS

- A. Any proposed amendment to this constitution shall be presented to the members at least one month prior to the vote for its ratification.
- B. Ratification or removal of an amendment to this constitution shall require a simple majority vote of the voting members.

Amendment 1:

To be added as line f under article IV, section 3, Part B:

“In the event that a GSC representative position is vacant, the president will organize an election within one month (exclusive of the summer and other breaks). In the interim, the president may attend GSC meetings as a fully voting representative, or delegate another GCAS member to do so for any and all vacancies.”

- Ratified November 29, 2017

MEMO

Section 1: Election of First Year GCAS Executive Officers

- A. First Election Spring 2015
 - a. Election of Executive Board
 - i. The first election held will be for the five (5) executive board position listed above.
 - ii. For the spring of 2015, the current standing CAS senators to the existing Graduate Student Senate (GSS) will vote (one vote per senator) to elect the five executive board positions listed above.
 - iii. Elections will be determined by simple majority.
 - b. Election of GSC Representatives
 - i. The second election, to be held in spring 2015 upon finalization of the GSC constitution and call for elections, will be for the six (6) GSC representatives from the College of Arts and Sciences.
 - ii. GSC representatives will be voted on by all general members (see Article II, Section 1, A. General Membership).

- iii. The newly elected executive board of GCAS will facilitate election of GSC representatives to ensure fair distribution of representation across arts and sciences.

Section 2. Election Timelines

- A. Elections in Spring 2015 will take place:
 - a. GCAS Executive Board in March 2015
 - b. GSC Representatives in April 2015
- B. Elections in all subsequent years will take place:
 - a. GSC Representatives in late April for appointment beginning June 1st.
 - b. GCAS Executive Board in early May for appointment beginning June 1st.

Section 3. Review Process

In order to facilitate a thoughtful and smooth transition from a student organization to a governmental body, GCAS will undergo a review process in late February/early March of 2016, before the election.

- A. In order to begin the work of the organization in a timely manner, GCAS will adhere to the following timeline for the Spring of 2015:
 - a. January - March 2015 – Petition GSS for organizational recognition
 - b. March 2015 – Executive board elections (see Article IV, Section 3. Elections)
 - c. March 2015 – Launch Party to spread news and interest throughout the College of Arts and Sciences
 - d. March - April 2015 – Contact individual departments about senatorial representation. Assist with the appointment of departmental senators.
 - e. April 2015 – GSC Representative Elections
 - f. June 1, 2015 – Term of appointment officially starts