



## Bylaws

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2020

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# Article I. Finances

## Section 1. Budget

- A. A budget for the entire fiscal year is to be completed by the Vice President of Administration and Finance and approved by the Executive Committee no later than August 31 of the preceding fiscal year (each new fiscal year begins September 1).
- B. All expenditures not outlined in the budget shall require approval by at least three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the Executive Committee.

## Section 2. Signatory

The President and Vice Presidents each shall have full signature authority on all financial instruments of the Council.

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# Article II. Nominations, Elections and Appointments of Executive Committee

## Section 1. Executive Committee Nominations

- A. All candidates for the Executive Committee shall meet the following qualifications for serving on the GSC Executive Committee:
  - a. Be at least a part time graduate student at The University of North Texas (UNT) in good academic standing (minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 as per UNT Graduate Catalog).
  - b. Provide proof of good academic standing in the form of an official or unofficial transcript from either the Registrar's office or [my.unt.edu](http://my.unt.edu)
- B. Nominations shall be made by any graduate student at the University via a self-nomination process.
- C. Call for open nominations shall be announced to the graduate student body via mass e-mail no later than the first full week of April, with the exception of the Parliamentarian position, which should follow Section 3 and 4 of this Article.
- D. Members of the Executive Committee include President, Vice President of Administration and Finance, Vice President of Communications and Marketing, Vice President of Programming and Outreach, and Parliamentarian.

## Section 2. Executive Committee Elections

- A. Nominees shall be elected by their graduate student peers in an open election held the last week of March preceding their term, as per the GSC constitution.
- B. In order to be elected, the candidate must receive a majority of votes.
  - a. In cases when only one candidate is running for a position, the candidate must receive a simple majority of votes (50 percent plus 1).
- C. If a candidate is not elected for a particular position, he/she may still be considered for a director position.
- D. If there are no nominations for a given Executive Committee position:
  - a. The sitting Executive Committee shall issue a call for nominees to the entire graduate student body no later than two (2) weeks following elections.

- b. Nominees will undergo the same vetting process associated with filing for candidacy, and those who are eligible per the guidelines of GSC's governing documents will be placed on a ballot for a vote by the graduate student body to follow the same guidelines, rules, policies, criteria for winning, etc. prescribed for the overall Executive Committee election process.
- c. The position must be filled by no later than the end of the first month of the new Executive Committee's term.

### **Section 3. Parliamentarian**

The Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Graduate Student Council President and confirmed by a majority vote of the Graduate Student Council Senate.

- A. Be at least a part time graduate student at UNT in good academic standing (minimum CGPA of 3.0 as per UNT Graduate Catalog).
- B. Provide proof of good academic standing in the form of an official or unofficial transcript from either the Registrar's office or my.unt.edu.

### **Section 4. Director Appointments**

- A. All elected Executive Committee members, except the President, shall appoint a Director or Directors no later than the end of the first month of their term.
  - B. The VP of Administration and Finance shall appoint a Director of Administration.
  - C. The VP of Communications and Marketing shall appoint a Director of Communications and a Director of Marketing.
  - D. The VP of Programming and Outreach shall appoint a Director of Programming, a Director of Internal Relations, and a Director of External Relations.
  - E. The Parliamentarian shall appoint a Director of Legislative Affairs.
  - F. All Directors shall be confirmed by the President no later than one week following their appointment by their respective VPs.
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# Article III. Duties & Responsibilities of GSC Leadership

## Section 1: Executive Committee

- A. President
  - a. Coordinates all activities of the organization.
  - b. Presides over the GSC Senate
  - c. Liaison to the University community
  - d. Appoints GSC Directors
  - e. Calls regular and special meetings.
  - f. Appoints GSC representatives to external committees as requested.
  - g. Presents annual budget request for Student Service Fee Committee
- B. Vice President, Administration and Finance
  - a. Assumes duties of president, when necessary
  - b. Manages overall organization, including planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, and budgeting internal affairs.
  - c. Manages GSC budget and resource allocation processes and maintains accurate account of all organizational funds.
  - d. Is responsible for preparing an annual budget request for Student Service Fee Committee hearings.
  - e. Maintains records of all Executive Committee meetings, including taking minutes, preparing minutes in electronic format, and saving minutes in proper location.
  - f. Reports directly to GSC President
- C. Vice President, Programming and Outreach
  - a. Coordinates professional development and social activities.
  - b. Coordinates programming partnerships with other University entities
  - c. Manages and identifies new community outreach and service opportunities for GSC constituents.
  - d. Reports directly to GSC President
- D. Vice President, Communications and Marketing
  - a. Is responsible for all GSC print, electronic communications, and website.
  - b. Is responsible for marketing GSC initiatives to relevant target audiences.
  - c. Reports directly to GSC President
- E. Parliamentarian
  - a. Appointed by the GSC President and confirmed by a majority vote of the Graduate Student Council Senate.
  - b. Assists the GSC President with Senate meetings in accordance with developing the Senate meeting agenda, taking minutes, keeping time, and ensuring that Robert's Rules of Order are followed.
  - c. Assists Senators with the drafting of bills and resolutions.
  - d. Reports directly to GSC President
- F. Ex-Officio
  - a. Immediate past President of GSC serves as non-voting member on the Executive Committee.
  - b. Is responsible for providing guidance and support for the GSC Executive Committee.
  - c. Is responsible for seeking out and staying in contact with past GSC Executive Committee alums.
  - d. Reports directly to GSC President
- G. Director of Administration
  - a. Assists with the management of the organization, including planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, and budgeting internal affairs.
  - b. Reports directly to the Vice President of Administration and Finance

- H. Director of Communications
  - a. Assists with designing and maintaining GSC communications and technology.
  - b. Reports directly to the Vice President of Communications and Marketing
- I. Director of Marketing
  - a. Assists with designing and implementing GSC marketing initiatives.
  - b. Reports directly to the Vice President of Communications and Marketing
- J. Director of Programming
  - a. Assists with organizing and executing GSC social events.
  - b. Reports directly to the Vice President of Programming and Outreach
- K. Director of Internal Relations
  - a. Responsible for fostering relationships with parties within the university including but not limited to student organizations that serve graduate students, Student Government Association (SGA), and faculty and administration.
  - b. Reports directly to the Vice President of Programming and Outreach
- L. Director of External Relations
  - a. Responsible for fostering relationships with outside parties including but not limited to graduate student governments at other universities, local businesses, and elected officials.
  - b. Reports directly to the Vice President of Programming and Outreach
- M. Director of Legislative Affairs
  - a. Responsible for staying abreast of UNT policies as well as state and federal laws, and for providing the legal framework for GSC initiatives and for meetings with administration.
  - b. Help establish the priorities for programming at Legislative Action Day events and for discussions with elected officials.
  - c. Reports directly to the Parliamentarian.

## Section 2: Executive Participation in Standing Committees

- A. Non-Director Executive Committee members are required to serve on one Senate Standing Committee as a non-voting member.
- B. Directors may request appointment to Senate Standing Committees as a voting member.

## Section 3: Evaluation of Executive Board and Directors

- A. The executive board and director evaluations shall be completed as specified in the Constitution, including timing and reporting responsibilities. The Senate shall provide input through a survey platform (open and available for seven calendar days) to be managed and reported by the Chair of the Performance and Oversight Committee.
- B. The Executive Board is responsible for setting the timing of evaluations, which shall be once per semester unless performance ratings dictate additional review.
- C. The Executive Board reserves the right to schedule additional evaluations for executives and directors not meeting performance standards (defined as scoring 2 or below) as specified in the evaluation form.
- D. The evaluation form shall be composed of ratings based on the duties and responsibilities of each position as specified in the Constitution and By-Laws.
- E. Ratings shall be on a five-point scale as specified below:
  - a. 5 – Much Above Expectations, in which the officer meets and consistently exceeds expectations for that given duty.
  - b. 4 – Above Expectations, in which the officer meets and sometimes exceeds expectations for that given duty.
  - c. 3 – Meets Expectations, in which the officer meets minimum expectations for the given duty.
  - d. 2 – Below Expectations, in which the officer sometimes fails to meet minimum expectations for the given duty.
  - e. 1 – Much Below Expectations, in which the officer consistently fails to meet minimum expectations for the given duty.
- F. The form shall be completed for each officer by the individuals specified in the Constitution.

- G. After the forms are completed, the evaluated officer will meet with his/her evaluators face-to-face to discuss the ratings and determine a performance plan, if necessary.
  - H. If an executive or director does not meet performance standards (defined as scoring 2 or below) as specified in the evaluation form, the subsequent performance review (to be held no later than 20 days from the date of the first review) will be assigned to the Performance and Oversight Committee, in collaboration with the Executive Board.
  - I. Each evaluation form must be signed and dated by the evaluatee and the evaluator(s) involved at the time of the face-to-face evaluation meeting.
  - J. Refusal to sign an evaluation form shall result in automatic escalation of the evaluation to the current GSC faculty advisor.
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## **Article IV. Term Limits (Effective Fall 2015)**

### **Section 1. Executive Committee Term Limits**

Executive Committee members can only serve on the Board a total of two (2) consecutive terms. Term limits do not apply to GSC Directors.

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## **Article V. Rules on the GSC Senate**

### **Section 1. Composition of the Senate & Senator Appointment**

- A. The GSC Senate shall consist of 55 Senators representing each of the graduate programs at the University of North Texas.
- B. GSC Senators must meet the qualifications outlined in the GSC Constitution.
- C. Calls for Senate appointments are to be sent out twice a year.
  - a. The appointment of a Senator representing a graduate program must be approved via email or in writing by either the Graduate Advisor or the Department Chair.

### **Section 2: Duties and Responsibilities of Senators**

- A. Provide an official channel of communication between the Graduate Student Council and the Department or College represented by the Senator.
- B. Represent graduate students in their academic Department or College by communicating issues relevant to and advocating for those students.
- C. Attend all scheduled meetings of the Graduate Student Council Senate.
- D. Serve on at least one external committee representing the graduate student perspective of university life.
- E. Chair or serve on at least one GSC Standing Committee.
- F. Expected to spend an average of at least 1 hour per week in the GSC office to be available for constituents and the larger graduate student body.



### Section 3: Senate Standing Committees

- A. The Standing Committees of the Senate are Governance, Performance Oversight and Monitoring, External Relations, and Planning & Program Development.
  - a. Governance Committee
    - i. Chaired by the Parliamentarian and consists of the chairs of the other standing committees and the GSC President. Responsible for the effective functioning of the Senate, including:
    - ii. Coordinating the functioning of the Senate and its standing committees, setting Senator performance standards, and monitoring performance of the Senate as a whole and of individual Senators
    - iii. Recommending revisions to the By-Laws of the GSC
    - iv. Assisting with the recruitment of qualified candidates to fill vacant Senate seats.
    - v. Developing and overseeing execution of a formal Senate member capacity building program, including elements such as orientation of new members, continuing education and training, and mentoring program pairing new with senior Senate members.
  - b. Performance Oversight & Monitoring Committee
    - i. Chaired by a Senator and consists of VP of Administration and Finance and Senators assigned to this committee by the Parliamentarian.
    - ii. Responsible for overseeing programmatic and financial performance and the updating of operational policies and systems, including such tasks as:
      - 1. Assisting with the identification of key elements of a GSC programmatic and financial reporting process, including the content, format, and frequency of GSC performance reports to Senate, and overseeing implementation of the process
      - 2. Reviewing performance reports in committee meetings and reporting performance to the Senate at its regular meeting
      - 3. Monitoring performance of university policy and programs in relation to graduate education and the goals and vision of GSC, and making recommendations to the Senate about issues that merit attention
      - 4. Helping prepare an overall assessment of the year's fiscal and program performance report, to be presented to the Student Service Fee Committee and at the last Senate meeting of the year.
  - c. External Relations Committee
    - i. Chaired by a Senator and consists of VP of Communications and Marketing and Senators assigned to this committee by the Parliamentarian.
    - ii. Responsible for maintaining effective communication and working relationships with the community in general and key stakeholders such as graduate students, graduate student serving organizations, graduate programs or Departments, university administration, legislative representatives, and other critical organizations in the Denton community. Key tasks include:
      - 1. Ensuring that the organization's desired image is regularly updated.
      - 2. Overseeing the development and implementation of strategies for image building, marketing, and public relations, and for maintaining close, positive relationships with key stakeholders
      - 3. Recommending to the Senate positions on legislative issues affecting graduate education
      - 4. Coordinating Senator/Executive/Director speaking in appropriate forums on behalf of the organization
      - 5. Fashioning strategies and plans intended to enhance internal and external communication.
      - 6. Fashioning strategies and plans to promote non-Senator volunteer involvement in organizational planning, program development, and operations.
      - 7. Monitoring volunteer involvement, identifying opportunities for improvement, and ensuring that such opportunities are taken into consideration in the planning process.

- d. Planning & Program Development Committee
  - i. Chaired by a Senator and consists of VP of Programming and Outreach and Senators assigned to this committee by the Parliamentarian.
  - ii. Responsible for the effective Senator involvement in the broad functional areas of planning and program development, including:
    - 1. Identifying issues important to improving graduate education, assisting with the design and implementation of GSC Programming and Outreach efforts to meet these needs, and ensuring that the Senators participate fully and proactively in the process.
    - 2. Overseeing preparation for and hosting any Senator-Executive team strategy work sessions
    - 3. Recommending to the Senate floor the strategic issues that the organization's detailed strategic planning should focus on
    - 4. Reviewing and recommending to the Senate such critical planning products as updated values, vision, operational planning activities, and other strategic and policy-level products that merit Senate attention.
- B. The assignment of Senators to the Standing Committees shall be made by the Parliamentarian in consultation with the President and members of the Senate.
- C. The President, in consultation with the Parliamentarian, reserves the right to appoint other non-voting graduate students and/or GSC Officers, including Directors, to serve on GSC Standing Committees.
- D. The right to cast votes in Standing Committees is reserved to Senators and appointed Directors only.

## Section 4: Ad Hoc Committees

- A. The Senate shall be empowered to create Ad Hoc Committees to consider specific issues and/or pieces of legislation.
- B. Ad Hoc Committees shall exist until the resolution of their purpose, or the end of the academic year, whichever comes first.
- C. The President, in consultation with the Parliamentarian, reserves the right to appoint other non-voting graduate students, undergraduate students, faculty, staff, and/or GSC Officers, including Directors, to serve on GSC Ad Hoc Committees.
- D. The right to cast votes in Ad Hoc Committees is reserved to Senators and Directors only.

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## Article VI: Rules on Legislation

### Section 1: Submission

- A. Legislation in the form of Resolutions or Bills may be submitted to the GSC Senate by the GSC President, any seated Senator, or by any member of the Graduate Student Body, provided a seated Senator sponsors the legislation.
- B. Legislation shall be given a number designation based on the semester in which it is filed and the order in which it is received. For example, Bill F2014-1 would be the first bill submitted in the Fall Semester of 2014, and likewise for Spring (S2014-1).

## Section 2: Deadlines, Readings, and Referral

- A. The Parliamentarian must receive legislation at least one week before the Senate meeting at which it is to be read.
- B. The Parliamentarian will send the final agenda to all Senators and members of the Executive Committee by no later than seventy-two (72) hours before the meeting via e-mail. The agenda will also be posted on the GSC website by the VP of Communications and Marketing or designee by no later than seventy-two (72) hours before the Senate meeting.
- C. Legislation shall be read aloud on the Senate Floor at least once in its entirety if such is desired and shall be referred to the appropriate Senate Standing Committee as determined by the Parliamentarian.
- D. Legislation may be considered by the Senate following the first reading if the Parliamentarian, in consultation with the GSC President, grants Emergency Status.
- E. Emergency Status may be granted by the Parliamentarian in consultation with the GSC President or by a simple two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate quorum.
- F. The Senate quorum constitutes a simple majority (50 percent plus 1) of Senate membership.
- G. In the event that quorum is not established during the Senate meeting at which a time sensitive piece of legislation is proposed, after consultation with the GSC President and Parliamentarian, legislation may be addressed through absentee voting. Absentee voting will follow the following procedure:
  - a. The exact language of the legislation will be sent to Senators by e-mail.
  - b. The Parliamentarian will design a discussion forum for Senators to debate the item. Debate will open when Senators are given access to the forum and close after five full days.
  - c. After the debate period, the Senate will be invited to vote electronically. The voting period will last for 48 hours.
  - d. Absentee voting does not fulfill attendance requirements nor qualify as a response for non-attendance.

## Section 3: Committee Decisions

- A. A Senate Standing Committee to which legislation is referred may amend the legislation by a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of Senate quorum or with the approval of the author/sponsor.
- B. A Senate Standing Committee may vote to refer the legislation favorably or unfavorably to the whole GSC Senate.
- C. A Senate Standing Committee may unanimously vote to cease consideration of the legislation.
- D. Any committee action shall be duly noted in the minutes of the committee.
- E. Only sitting Senators and appointed Directors have voting power within the committee.

## Section 4: GSC Senate Actions

- A. If a piece of legislation is referred to the whole GSC Senate by a committee, the Senate may amend, deny, or grant passage of the legislation according to Robert's Rules of Order following a second reading of the legislation, a presentation from the author/sponsor, and a short period of discussion if such is so desired.
- B. All legislation to be considered by the whole GSC Senate shall be decided upon by Voice vote. The record of each such vote shall be kept in the minutes of the meeting at which the vote was taken and shall also be kept with the legislation in question.

## Section 5: GSC Executive Actions

- A. Following passage of legislation, the Executive Committee must undertake any actions prescribed by the legislation.
- B. Failure to abide by the provisions of Item A constitutes neglect of duty, which may be grounds for the removal of members of the Executive Branch.
- C. Veto procedure
  - a. President reserves the right to veto legislation.
  - b. President must notify the Senate of the veto at the next Senate meeting.
  - c. At this same meeting, the Senate has the power to override the presidential veto.

## Section 6: Student Body Referenda

Ballot referenda for any legal purpose that affects the entire student body at UNT must follow the process outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Graduate Student Council (GSC) and the Student Government Association (SGA).

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# Article VII. Meetings

## Section 1. Call

The Executive Committee shall convene at the request of the President, two members of the Executive Committee, 3 directors, or the GSC faculty/administrative advisor.

## Section 2. Executive Committee Meeting Provisions

- A. The President, Vice President of Administration and Finance, Vice President of Communications and Marketing, Vice President of Programming and Outreach and Parliamentarian must meet at least once per week.
- B. Directors are required to attend at least one Executive Committee meeting per month.
- C. The President, Vice President of Administration and Finance, Vice President of Communications and Marketing, Vice President of Programming and Outreach and Parliamentarian shall have the right to vote when his/her vote affects the outcome.
- D. Directors shall be nonvoting members of the Executive Committee.
- E. A majority vote at a meeting of the Executive Committee shall determine the outcome of any matter, unless otherwise specified.
- F. A copy of the minutes from each meeting shall be sent or uploaded no later than two days following the meeting by the Vice President of Administration and Finance.
- G. All meetings shall have a corresponding agenda unless otherwise decided upon.
- H. Any party in attendance at the meeting shall be allowed the opportunity to provide items they wish to have on the meeting agenda.
- I. The meeting agenda shall be posted 72 hours in advance of the meeting by the VP of Communications or their designee on the GSC website. The Open Meetings Act 2-hour exception for posting an Emergency meeting shall also be considered sufficient when deemed necessary by the GSC Advisor.

## Section 3. Senate Meetings

- A. Meetings of the GSC Senate will be held on the second Monday of every month that the university is open, beginning at 5:30 pm.
- B. Parliamentarian is responsible for set up of GSC monthly Senate meetings, including:

- a. Drafting and distributing copies of the agenda and other necessary documents to the Senators
  - b. Scheduling Senate meetings
- C. Parliamentarian is to follow the Robert's Rules of Order in Senate meetings.
- D. Parliamentarian is to communicate the schedule of Senate meetings to the Senate and Executive Committee no later than 2 weeks after his/her election and appointment.
- E. All members of the Senate must meet at least once per month during the regular academic year.
- F. Senate meetings are public and open to the UNT community.
  - a. Only Senators are allowed to vote on bills, resolutions, and other legislation.
  - b. Outside visitors must sign in and must be recognized by either a Senator or Parliamentarian to speak
  - c. Anyone wishing to be present at the Senate meeting must contact the Parliamentarian at least two weeks prior to being added to the agenda, unless in cases deemed by GSC Executive Committee and Parliamentarian as emergency.
- G. All members of the Senate shall have the right to vote.
- H. The parliamentarian shall have the right to vote only when his/her vote affects the outcome.
- I. A vote of Senate quorum, as defined in Article V Section 2 Subsection F of these By-Laws, at a meeting of the Senate shall determine the outcome of any matter, unless otherwise specified.
- J. A copy of the minutes from each meeting shall be sent out to Senators for review no later than two weeks following the meeting.
- K. A consent agenda will be prepared for the Senate and sent out no later than a week before the next meeting.
  - a. GSC members are required to read the consent agenda and identify items for discussion prior to the next Senate meeting.
  - b. Items within the consent agenda may include: the minutes from the previous meeting, financial reports, the agenda for the current meeting and other routine items.
  - c. Any member of the Graduate Student Council may remove an item from the consent agenda for discussion.
  - d. After all items for discussion have been removed, the consent agenda may be approved by general consent, without a motion to do so by the body of the Senate.
  - e. After approval, the items removed from the consent agenda will be discussed, modified, and approved in order.
- L. Senate meeting minutes shall be made public within 2 days after approval.
- M. All meetings shall have a corresponding agenda.
  - a. Senators must submit agenda items no later than one week before the Senate meeting. These items must be submitted to the Parliamentarian in writing via email.
  - b. Parliamentarian will send final agenda to all Senators and members of the Executive Committee by no later than 72 hours before the meeting via e-mail. The agenda will also be posted on the GSC website by the VP of Communications and Marketing or designee by no later than 72 hours before the Senate meeting.
  - c. In the event of emergent situations, agenda items can be added with exception to the stipulation in subsection J.(a) with the consent of the Parliamentarian and President.

### Section 3: Committee Meetings

- A. Fifty percent plus one of any committee's membership constitutes a quorum.
- B. If a Senator has not attended two consecutive committee meetings the Senator may be removed at the discretion of the GSC President after the Senator is contacted about his/her absences and the result is either 1) non-response within one week from notice of second absence or 2) an indication that the Senator will not be able to fulfill their duties.
- C. Committee membership will be activated and count toward establishing quorum once the Senator or Director has attended at least one meeting of the internal committee to which they have been assigned.
- D. The Parliamentarian will facilitate the selection of a time, date, and location for the first meeting

- of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees.
- E. The order of business for the first meeting is as follows: (indented a,b,c's)
    - a. The first order of business in the first committee meeting is to select a Committee Chair.
    - b. The second order of business in the first committee meeting is to select a secretary.
    - c. The third order of business is to decide upon a regular meeting time.
  - F. The Committee Chair will be responsible for the following:
    - a. reserving a room for committee meetings
    - b. announcing the time, date, and location of upcoming meetings to fellow committee members
    - c. making committee reports to the Senate.
  - G. The committee secretary is to keep a record of all business in the form of minutes on file with the Parliamentarian, as well as the Vice President of Administration and Finance.
  - H. The Senate Committees must meet at least once a month to consider legislation and other concerns in committee and as often as is necessary to conduct GSC related business.
  - I. The size of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees will be determined by the Parliamentarian in consultation with the GSC President.
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## **Article VIII. Removal of GSC Leadership**

### **Section 1. Removal or Resignation of Executive Committee Members**

- A. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Senate shall have the right to remove any member of the Executive Committee for malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance. In such instances, the GSC Advisor shall make the final decision.
- B. Any member of the Executive Committee shall have the right to impeach, with formal allegations, another member of the Executive Committee for malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance.
- C. A two-thirds majority of the Senate shall have the right to remove a member of the Executive Committee within a one-week calendar period from the date of impeachment. The Executive Committee shall immediately make known the outcome of the vote and the allegations to the graduate student body.
- D. Removal or resignation of a member of the Executive Committee or a director shall not entitle said person to financial restitution. All property of GSC shall be returned upon removal or resignation.
- E. The President and/or Executive Committee, on removal or resignation of an Executive Committee member, shall nominate within 14 days a qualified person to serve in the position on an interim basis, subject to approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Senate.
- F. Any removed member of the Executive Committee shall have the right to appeal his/her removal to the Supreme Court within one full calendar week of the Senate vote for removal. The Supreme Court shall convene within one full calendar week to determine whether the removal was justified and may reverse the decision if the evidence for impeachment was not sufficient to warrant removal. The decision of the appeal shall be formally drafted by the Chief Justice and disseminated to the graduate student body.

### **Section 2: Removal or Resignation of Senators**

- A. If a Senator has not attended two consecutive meetings of the Senate, the Senator may be removed at the discretion of the GSC President after the Senator is contacted about his/her absences and the result is either 1) non-response within one week from notice of second absence or 2) an indication that the Senator will not be able to fulfill their duties.
- B. Senators are subject to the same recall procedures outlined in Article IV, Section 3 of the GSC Constitution.

- C. If a senator is removed or resigns from their appointed position, a new appointment for that position may be made by the Chair or designee of the represented department.

## Article IX. Compensation

### Section 1. Executive Committee Compensation

- A. The Executive Committee shall receive a salary as per the Student Service Fee Committee allocations to GSC.
  - B. The President, Executive Committee, and Parliamentarian shall be compensated for no more than 29 hours per week, according to student work policies set forth by UNT Human Resources circa Fall 2018. The specific number of hours worked by each officer and their compensation rates shall be coordinated by the Executives at the beginning of their term, June 1<sup>st</sup>, each year.
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## Article X. By-Laws

### Section 1. Changes to the By-Laws

- A. Any proposed changes to the Graduate Student Council By-Laws must be stated in the form of Striking Out, Inserting, or Striking Out and Inserting.
  - B. All insertions must be stated verbatim and in quotation marks in the body of any proposal.
  - C. Any changes to these By-Laws must be approved by a simple two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate.
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## Article XI: Election Code

### Section 1: General Provisions

- A. This section shall apply to all aspects of the electoral process for the Graduate Student Council (GSC) of University of North Texas at Denton with special provisions for Senator Elections. Candidates for any election, opponents/proponents for any referenda on the ballot (“Referendum Parties”), and members of the Election Board shall be responsible for the regulations provided herein. Ignorance of these regulations shall not be an acceptable defense in response to any violation in any election, either by the candidates or Referendum Parties themselves or by individuals campaigning on behalf of a candidate or Referendum Party.
- B. These regulations are subject to interpretation only by the Election Board, interpretation of which is subject to review only by the GSC Supreme Court. Additionally, any liberties of interpretation given specifically to the Election Commissioner are subject to review by the GSC Supreme Court. No other member of GSC or the Election Board is authorized to provide interpretations of the Election Code.
- C. Candidates and Referendum Parties may contact the Election Commissioner for the purpose of consultation pertaining to the election. The Election Commissioner shall be contacted via UNT e-mail, and the Election Commissioner will make reasonable attempts to respond to queries within two (2) business days.



- D. The Election Code is intended to provide for the fairness, equitability, and efficiency of all GSC elections with respect to candidates, Referendum Parties, and voters. In the absence of established guidelines, rulings concerning elections should be made with this principle in mind.

## Section 2: Election Board

- A. The Election Board shall consist of six members and an Election Commissioner appointed by the GSC President. The Election Board must be vetted through an application process.
- B. The role of the Election Commissioner will be to serve as a liaison between the Election Board and other entities on campus. The Election Commissioner shall oversee Election Board meetings, represent the Election Board in any public situation, draft the final election report, and only vote in an Election Board decision in the event of a tie.
- C. The Election Board shall have the power to rule on matters pertaining to Elections, including but not limited to interpretations and violations of the Election Code, questions of candidate eligibility not covered in these Bylaws, candidate and Referendum Party complaints and concerns, questions of referendum eligibility, filing dates and deadlines, and the certification of any election results.
- D. Appointees must be approved by the GSC Senate at the second Senate meeting of the fall semester and must be present to be confirmed, unless the appointee has class during this time, as verified by the GSC Advisor.
- E. Election Board members must meet the executive committee eligibility requirements as stated in these Bylaws. No member of the Election Board shall be an active member of any branch of GSC while serving on the Election Board.
- F. In case of a vacancy in the Election Board, the GSC President must immediately appoint a replacement. This replacement must be present at the next GSC Senate meeting to be confirmed, unless the appointee has class during this time, as verified by the GSC Advisor.
- G. All Election Board meetings will be open only to Election Board members and the GSC Advisor. The Board shall keep written minutes of all meetings, including hearings. Quorum for all Board meetings, including election certification meetings, shall be defined as three Board members plus the Election Commissioner.
- H. Election Board members and Commissioner shall maintain the right to vote on all GSC elections.
- I. Election Board members and Commissioner may be removed from office by a simple two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the GSC Senate.
- J. In the event that an Election Board is not created with sufficient time to oversee Executive Elections, then the GSC Governance Committee (comprised of the Chairs of the Performance Oversight & Monitoring Committee, External Relations Committee, Planning & Program Development Committee and the Parliamentarian and the GSC President), shall assume the role of the Election Board, excluding any members who are running for Executive Office.

## Section 3: Election Calendar

- A. The Election Board shall present a list of Official GSC Restricted Zones and an Election Calendar to the GSC Senate. The calendar shall include dates for filing periods, mandatory meetings, referenda deadlines, campaigning, general elections, run-off elections, and release of the final election report.
- B. Dates for Special Elections shall be established by an act of the GSC Senate or ballot referendum at least three (3) full academic weeks before the week of the election proposed by the legislation.



## Section 4: Rules on Candidacy for Executive Officers

- A. To be eligible for candidacy, an individual must meet active member eligibility requirements as stated in the GSC Constitution. An individual must meet these requirements prior to the beginning of campaigning. These requirements shall only be confirmed by the GSC Advisor.
- B. An individual must file for candidacy via the designated application. At the close of the application, the Election Commissioner will notify applicants, by email, of their eligibility for candidacy.
- C. Each candidate must attend an Election Code meeting hosted by the Election Commissioner; attendance at all mandatory meetings is required for election eligibility.
- D. Only in the event that a position is running unopposed shall a write-in candidate be allowed.
  - a. After the application closes, write-in candidates may file a Voluntary Compliance notice with the Election Board. This notice shall bind write-in candidates to election regulations and subject the candidate to disciplinary action in accordance with said regulations. This notice shall also allow such a write-in candidate to participate in forums, debates, election guides, or other events or activities deemed appropriate by the Election Commissioner. Write-in candidates shall not be able to participate in such activities without such a notice. The required content of the notice shall be determined by the Commissioner. A write-in candidate shall never be placed on an official ballot by means of this notice.
  - b. If elected, write-in candidates shall be accepted provided they meet the active member eligibility requirements as stated in the GSC Constitution and Article II, Section 1A of these Bylaws. These requirements will be confirmed by the GSC Advisor.
  - c. Upon release of the final election report, elected write-in candidates must submit the following to the Election Commissioner within two (2) business days:
    - i. A Statement of intent to serve in the elected position.
    - ii. An expense report, if required by that position.
  - d. If a write-in candidate fails to submit these documents or exceeds the campaign expenditure limit for the position in which they are elected, then they shall be disqualified.
- E. Any candidate may withdraw his/her name from the ballot any time prior to 5 p.m. on the business day before the election by submitting written notification to the Election Commissioner. The Election Commissioner shall verify said notification and provide notice to the GSC Advisor.

## Section 5: Rules on Campaigns

### Subsection 1: General Campaign Rules

- A. Candidates and Referendum Parties shall take reasonable measures to ensure that every individual campaigning on behalf of or volunteering for the candidate/Referendum Party is aware of campaign regulations and guidelines. Candidates/Referendum Parties may be liable for the campaign infractions of their campaigners and volunteers even if the candidate/Referendum Party did not specifically direct the offending action.
- B. Candidates and Referendum Parties may only begin publicizing their campaigns after the Election Code meetings have been held and, on the date, set forth on the Election Calendar. If candidates or Referendum Parties are found actively campaigning in any way before the above dates, it is grounds for disqualification.

- C. Candidates and Referendum Parties shall abide by all University policy, which supersedes Election Board mandates and Election Code regulations.
- D. Candidates and Referendum Parties shall not damage any University property and shall be responsible for any damage caused by said candidate's/Referendum Party's campaign materials.
- E. Candidates and Referendum Parties shall not unduly disrupt the normal activities of the University.
- F. Candidates and Referendum Parties shall assume responsibility for the accuracy and truthfulness of their statements and campaign materials.
- G. No University, State, or public funds may be used by Candidates or Referendum Parties. This includes the utilization of university employee work time (i.e., university position of Teaching Fellow, Research Assistant, Teaching Assistant, Graduate Student Assistant, etc.). No Candidate or Referendum Party may solicit campaign assistance from a university employee during the employee's work hours.
- H. The Election Commissioner and Election Board members have the right to solicit the names of all members of a campaign from the affiliated candidate or Referendum Party.
- I. All posters and signs must be placed in accordance with university policy and may not exceed 18x24 inches. All campaign materials must follow university policy.
- J. No more than twenty ground signs may be placed on campus, but other promotional items are not limited in quantity. Promotional items must be approved by the Election Board.
- K. Each candidate and Referendum Party shall be responsible for the removal of their campaign materials from public areas and buildings by Monday following the final election report. Failure of Candidates and Referendum Parties to remove their materials may result in a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

#### Subsection 2: Rules on Campaigns

- A. Executive committee candidates may spend up to \$300 USD on their campaign.
  - a. An additional \$100 USD may be spent in the event of a run-off election.
- B. A typed expense report must be filed with the Election Board at the close of polling. These reports must include itemized receipts of all purchases made pertaining to the candidate team's campaign.

#### Subsection 3: Rules on Election Board-Sponsored Campaigns

- A. In the interest of increasing graduate student engagement and voter turnout, the Election Board may produce campaign materials or host campaign events.
- B. Such materials or events shall not endorse any one candidate or item on the ballot, but shall give unbiased information about the election, candidates, and referenda.
- C. Such events and materials may include, but are not limited to, debates, town halls, forums, and election guides.

#### Subsection 4: Rules on Special Buildings and Areas

- A. *GSC Office*  
No campaigning may take place within the GSC Office. Any materials that are campaign related may not be stored or left in the GSC office/space.
- B. *Campus Housing*  
All campaigning and campaign material in or on the property of UNT Housing requires the expressed consent of the Director of UNT Housing & Residence Life or designee and must abide by UNT Housing policies. Door-to-door campaigning shall not be permitted under any circumstances.
- C. *UNT Libraries*  
No campaigning may take place inside of any UNT Library, or within fifty feet of its front doors.
- D. *Restricted Zones*  
Candidates and Referendum Parties shall not campaign or display in any manner campaign material within fifty (50) feet of Restricted Zones. Restricted Zones will be defined by the Election Board and presented with the Election Calendar each semester.

## Section 6: Ballot Referenda

- A. Ballot referenda for any legal purpose such as amending the GSC constitution and/or securing the official opinion of graduate students on an important matter may be proposed by a two thirds (2/3) absolute majority vote of the GSC Senate or by a verifiable petition of 5% of the members of the graduate Student Body.
  - a. All proposed referenda must be submitted at least seven (7) weeks prior to the end of the semester in Fall and at least two (2) weeks prior to Campaign Week opening in Spring.
  - b. Any action proposing a ballot referendum must specify whether the issue shall be considered in the immediately following general election or in a special election called for that purpose and must state the requirements for the passage of any such referendum.
  - c. Meeting the requirements for the proposal of referenda shall be considered sufficient grounds and merit for the calling of such an election.
  - d. No petition may call for the re-vote of a student election without evidence of gross violations of election regulations as stated in Article VI of these Bylaws. The validity of a petition for a re-vote will be determined by the Election Board or the GSC Supreme Court.
- B. For referendum items affecting the entire student body, referendum processes shall be governed by the most current Memorandum of Understanding with the Student Government Association.

## Section 7: Rules on Elections for Executive Officers

- A. General Elections:
  - a. The Fall General Election shall exist for the election of referenda by the Graduate Student Body and to fill vacant Executive positions, if necessary.
  - b. The Spring General Election shall exist for the election of President and Vice-Presidents and any referenda by the graduate student body.
- B. Polls must be open for a minimum of three (3) school days in any election.
- C. Elections shall be held solely via GSC's voting platform.
- D. At the close of polling, the Election Commissioner will create a final election report. The report shall be certified by the signatures of the Election Commissioner, every member of the Election Board present at the election certification meeting, and the GSC Advisor. The final election report shall be considered official 24 hours after being certified. The report shall include:
  - a. The total number of votes cast for each candidate.
  - b. The total number of consenting and dissenting votes in any referenda and whether they passed or failed.
  - c. Any written rulings issued by the Election Commissioner.
  - d. The minutes of any Election Board hearings.
  - e. Information about any election irregularities or problems reported to date; and
  - f. Any other appropriate information deemed necessary by the Election Commissioner.
- E. Unofficial results shall not be released to any party, under any conditions.
- F. In the event that no Presidential, Vice-Presidential, and/or Senatorial candidate receives a simple majority of votes, a run-off election will be held.
- G. Candidates in a run-off election will be given at least 72 hours to campaign.

## Section 8: Special Provisions for Senator Elections & Succession

- A. Pursuant to Article XI, Section 6.2 of the GSC Constitution, graduate students can elect a Senator representing their academic college. Each academic college is entitled to a determined number of seats based on the graduate student population of the University of North Texas and the graduate population of each college of the university.

### Section 8.1 The election of Senators

- A. The Chair or Graduate Advisor of every academic department in the University that has graduate students shall notify the Graduate Student Council of their elected or appointed senator. Each eligible department is entitled to a minimum of one seat in the Graduate Student Council Senate.
- B. Senatorial selection, either by election or appointment, should be completed in the spring term of an academic year. The selected senator's term shall begin June the 1<sup>st</sup> and the term will encompass the Fall and Spring semesters after they are elected or appointed and will end at the close of the following Spring semester.
- C. In the event all the seats allotted to an academic college are not filled after the election, the Dean of the college, or their designee, may make selections from the population of the college to serve in the GSC Senate for the election year.
- D. In the event an elected Senator vacates their seat after the start of the Fall semester, the appointment process to fill the vacated position shall be the same as the one described in subsection C.

## Section 9: Rules on Oversight

### Subsection 1: Election Commissioner Rulings

- A. Any candidate or Referendum Party in a GSC election wishing for clarification may request a ruling on any part of the Election Code by submitting a request in writing to the Election Commissioner.
- B. The Election Commissioner shall honor all requests within two business days and post rulings on the GSC web page and distribute them to all candidates by e-mail.
- C. The Election Commissioner's ruling shall be considered binding until overturned by the GSC Supreme Court.
- D. The Election Commissioner shall not make any ruling beyond interpretation of the Election Code.

### Subsection 2: Election Code Violations

- A. Failure to comply with the regulations of the Election Code may result in disciplinary action being taken by the Election Board. Any alleged Election Code violation is subject to a hearing by the Election Board. Furthermore, if the Election Code violation is also a university policy violation, this may result in disciplinary action being taken by the Dean of Students office and/or the Toulouse Graduate School.
- B. All complaints regarding violations of election regulations shall be submitted in writing to the Election Board within 24 hours of the close of polling. Complaints shall include details of the presumed violation, such as date, time, and name(s) of involved individuals. Evidence shall be provided when appropriate.
- C. Upon receiving a complaint, the Election Board shall have 72 hours to conduct a hearing. Each involved party will be given a reasonable amount of time to state their case, during which period any Election Board Member may ask questions.
- D. After hearing all applicable evidence, the Election Board will deliberate on a ruling of candidacy. A majority vote of Election Board Members present, assuming quorum is met, is required to render any decision. The Election Commissioner may vote only in the event of a tie. Any decision of the Election Board shall be made public immediately.

- E. Should a hearing be unable to be scheduled before the release of the final election report, the election results affected by the complaint will be withheld until after the Election Board ruling. All other election results shall be published according to the approved Election Calendar.

## **Article XII: Rules on the Judicial Branch**

### **Section 1: Supreme Court Hearings**

- A. A case may be submitted to the GSC Supreme Court by any member of GSC. Members of the GSC include all graduate students.
- B. To submit a case, a case brief must be submitted to the GSC President. If the President is unavailable, then the brief must be submitted to the GSC Vice President of Administration and Finance or GSC Advisor. The brief must include what party the case is against, the issue to be decided, a detailed explanation of the case, any relevant background information, a list of witnesses, and any evidence to be presented.
- C. Each party must be notified by the Chief Justice of the set hearing date and time a minimum of two business days prior to the hearing.
- D. Upon notification, the court will have one week to begin hearings. Hearings must be held between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. and may not conflict with a previously scheduled GSC meeting.
- E. Each party and the Advocate General, if applicable, will be given a reasonable amount of time to state their case while in the hearing, during which period any Justice may interrupt to ask questions.
- F. After hearing all germane evidence, the Justices shall retire to deliberate on their verdict. A majority vote of the seven (7) justices is required to render any verdict or Court Order.
- G. Any decision of the court must be made public within twenty-four hours of that decision being reached.
- H. No Justice may speak on the merits of a case until a final decision is made public. All procedures of the Supreme Court must be made clear to all parties by all reasonable attempts prior to the delivery of testimony in any case.
- I. A formal presentation of the vote count of the Supreme Court must be presented to both parties immediately after the Justices have rendered their decision.

### **Section 2: Appeals**

- A. Procedural Appeals may be filed with the GSC Senate within one week of a Supreme Court Decision.
- B. The GSC Senate, in consultation with the Advocate General, may rule by passage of legislation that correct procedure was not followed and declare a mistrial.
- C. Substantive appeals based on the merit of a case must be filed directly to the Supreme Court within one week of a Supreme Court Decision.
- D. Each party shall be granted one appeal in which they may submit any added information or argument that may have changed the outcome of their case.
- E. Any appeals must be presented to the pertinent parties in writing.

### **Section 3: Non-Hearing Meetings**

- A. The Supreme Court shall convene at least once per month outside of case hearings to discuss any pertinent business as well as remain current on GSC happenings.
- B. The Supreme Court shall elect one Justice (not the Chief Justice) to serve as Secretary of the Supreme Court, who shall keep minutes of each non-hearing meeting.
- C. Non-Hearing Meetings shall be closed-door meetings, and minutes of these meetings shall not be

made public.

- D. During these meetings, the Supreme Court shall review any legislation passed at the latest Senate meeting to ensure consistency with GSC governing documents (i.e., the Constitution and By-Laws).
- E. In the event of consistency, the Chief Justice shall notify the Parliamentarian and President that legislation is cleared.
- F. In the event of inconsistency, the Supreme Court shall make recommendation(s) to the Senate for amendments to the legislation to address the inconsistency and shall make such recommendations in formal writing authored by the Chief Justice and submitted to the Parliamentarian and the President.