

Constitution of the Graduate Student Association of the University of Miami

Ratified by the Graduate Student Executive Board and Senate on October 7, 2008.
Last amended April 20th, 2022.

Constitution

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PREAMBLE

We, the graduate students of the University of Miami, in order to provide means for responsible and effective graduate student participation in the planning and conducting of University affairs, establish this constitution of the Graduate Student Association of the University of Miami;

And, whereas, we the graduate students acknowledge the diversity of human experience;

And, whereas, we the graduate students exist to further knowledge within our disciplines by eliminating biases and prejudices;

Be it resolved, that the Graduate Student Association shall adopt as a continuing policy that no individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, age, disability, national and/or ethnic origin, marital status, gender, or sexual orientation.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the organization shall be the Graduate Student Association (GSA) of the University of Miami.

ARTICLE II: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The GSA shall exist as the student government organization representing all students in the University of Miami Graduate School. The GSA shall serve as the liaison between graduate students, individually and collectively, the faculty, the administration, and the alumni of the University of Miami. Further, the GSA shall exist as a forum to support and improve the quality of the environment for graduate students at the University of Miami.

The general functions of the GSA shall be:

- a. To protect and advocate for the civil rights, social welfare, and economic well-being of graduate students by making recommendations regarding University of Miami policies to University administration;
- b. To sponsor and lend its name to community-building, networking, and educational events conducted for the benefit of graduate students;
- c. To expend its funds appropriately for the fulfillment of graduate student needs; and
- d. To facilitate graduate students' access to information regarding the resources and services available to graduate students.

ARTICLE III: RESPONSIBILITY

The GSA shall comply with all University of Miami policies and procedures, including but not limited to those policies set forth in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, the Graduate Student Organization Handbook, IRB, the Hippocratic Oath, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

GSA membership is granted to any degree-seeking student registered for graduate credit with the University of Miami Graduate School who has paid the Graduate Activity Fee.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1: The GSA shall have nine (9) elected officers, which constitute the Executive Board. The elected officers of the GSA shall be the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Parliamentarian, the Public Relations Officer, the Student Life Officer, the Webmaster, and the Operations Officer.

Section 2: The term of office for all elected Officers shall be for the period of one year, commencing May 1. Officers shall remain senators while in office, even if not re-elected by their programs.

Section 3: The Executive Board shall consist of the elected officers of the GSA.

Section 4: No more than two (2) graduate students who are seeking the same degree from the same program at the University of Miami may be elected officers at the same time.

Section 5: The following procedures shall govern all eligibility of officers. All procedures for the nomination and election of officers are outlined in the Bylaws.

- a. The position of President will be limited to any returning GSA Officer continuing their degree during the following academic year at the University of Miami. If no current Officer is interested in running or qualified to run due to not continuing their degree the following academic year at the University of Miami, the office of the president will be open to any Senator in good standing that is continuing their degree during the following academic year. Offices other than the office of the President will be open to:
 - i. Any member of the GSA that will be continuing their degree the following year at the University of Miami.
 - ii. Any incoming graduate student of the University of Miami that provides a letter of acceptance to seek a graduate degree at the University of Miami.
- b. The President and Vice President shall be elected at a regular meeting no later than one (1) week before applications for the student member on the Board of Trustees is due. The remaining seven (7) Officers of the Executive Board shall be elected at a regular meeting no later than the first regular meeting in April of the Graduate Student Senate and before the GSA banquet and scholarship dinner, should one be held.
 - i. The election of the President and Vice President is to take place at a meeting prior to the meeting where the remaining seven (7) officers are elected.
- c. All members of the Senate and the Executive board shall be entitled to vote in the GSA officer elections.

Section 6: Duties of the officers

- a. The duties of the **PRESIDENT** shall be:
 - i. To enforce the GSA Constitution and Bylaws;
 - ii. To serve as the Executive Board chairperson;
 - iii. To preside over Senate meetings;

- iv. To represent the GSA on matters of business with the Graduate School Dean and other University officials;
 - v. To represent the GSA at all official and social occasions or to appoint a representative, as appropriate;
 - vi. To recruit and appoint chairpersons as members of the GSA Committees and serve as an ex officio member on all Committees;
 - vii. To recruit and appoint a GSA member to serve as GSA Representatives on the following University committees:
 - A. Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee
 - B. Board of Trustees Student Affairs Committee
 - C. Department of Wellness and Recreation Advisory Board
 - D. Faculty Senate
 - E. Faculty Senate Library and Information Resources Committee
 - F. Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee
 - G. Graduate Council
 - H. Graduate Council Grievances Committee
 - I. Standing Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
 - J. Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee (GAFAC)
 - K. Student Center Complex Advisory Council
 - L. Get Out The Vote Committee
 - M. Student Government Senate, and
 - N. Any additional group(s) presented to the GSA.
 - viii. To conduct training and orientation for the GSA President-elect;
 - ix. To prepare the GSA annual report at the end of the officer's term;
 - x. To serve as the liaison to the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students;
 - xi. To oversee (or designate a representative to oversee) the election of any GSA Executive Board Officer position which involves the current Parliamentarian as a candidate thereof.
 - xii. To approve in writing and oversee the medium upon which GSA logos and letterheads are used.
 - xiii. To perform such duties as the office shall require.
- b. The duties of the **VICE PRESIDENT** shall be:
- i. To assume the President's duties in the officer's absence;
 - ii. To assist the President in the performance of the officer's duties;
 - iii. To coordinate the departmental or program elections or appointments of the GSA Senators;
 - iv. To recruit senators in the event that a department or program fails to elect or appoint a Senator;
 - v. To initiate actions for the recall of a Senator, Committee Chairperson, Committee member, or Representative when necessary;
 - vi. To assist with graduate student orientation programs;

- vii. To serve as a committee chairperson, as decided by the Executive Board at the start of their terms;
 - viii. To perform the duties of the Parliamentarian in the event that the office is vacant; and
 - ix. To perform such duties as the office shall require.
- c. The duties of the **SECRETARY** shall be:
- i. To record the official minutes at all official GSA meetings;
 - ii. To maintain the official Senate roster and take attendance at all Senate meetings;
 - iii. To supervise the GSA office staff in maintaining directories of graduate students, deans, graduate advisors, graduate faculty, administrative personnel, and support staff;
 - iv. To supervise the office staff in maintaining a file of all official GSA correspondence;
 - v. To notify Senators and graduate advisors of all Senate meetings and other GSA activities; and
 - vi. To perform such duties as the office shall require.
- d. The duties of the **TREASURER** shall be:
- i. To manage the GSA finances;
 - ii. To preside over Senate meetings in the President & Vice-President's absence;
 - iii. To present a monthly fiscal report at each Senate and Executive Board meeting;
 - iv. To maintain current financial records in the GSA office and in a password-protected or encrypted University of Miami drive;
 - v. To coordinate and record all financial transactions with the Graduate School, including approval of all requisitions, disbursements, and maintenance of account ledgers;
 - vi. To serve, or appoint a representative to serve, on the Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee;
 - vii. To coordinate with the Graduate School Budget Director on the processing of paperwork for office staff hiring and payment;
 - viii. To serve as committee chairperson, as decided by the Executive Board at the start of their terms; and
 - ix. To perform such duties as the office shall require.
- e. The duties of the **PARLIAMENTARIAN** shall be:
- i. To advise the President of the constitutionality of all actions by the GSA;
 - ii. To ensure that Senate and Executive Board meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 11th Edition;
 - iii. To keep the GSA Bylaws current;
 - iv. To conduct the annual review of the GSA Constitution and Bylaws and serve as the Constitution Review Committee chairperson;
 - v. To serve on the Committee on Graduate Student Organizations;
 - vi. To oversee the review and approval process that establishes and maintains GSA-recognized Graduate Student Organizations;

- vii. To conduct the annual administrative review of the GSA-recognized Student Organizations;
 - viii. To draft and distribute, as appropriate, all resolutions approved by the Senate;
 - ix. To oversee any elections for GSA Executive Board Officers not involving the current Parliamentarian as a candidate;
 - x. To plan and preside over Spring Retreat at which both in-coming and out-going E-Boards review Constitutional duties with each incoming officer as well as Robert's Rules of Order in order to ensure smooth transition from one E-Board to the next; and
 - xi. To perform such duties as the office shall require.
- f. The duties of the **PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER** shall be:
- i. To manage GSA external communications activities;
 - ii. To produce and distribute of the GSA newsletter;
 - iii. To serve as Graduate Student Alumni Association liaison;
 - iv. To perform such duties as the office shall require.
- g. The duties of the **STUDENT LIFE OFFICER** shall be:
- i. To chair or sit on the Events Committee;
 - ii. To ensure that GSA events fall under one or more of the following categories: community building, educational, professional, or cultural, in compliance with the GSA's mission statement;
 - iii. To submit event proposals for approval to the E-board and Senate;
 - iv. To record and report on the outcome of events to the E-board and Senate; and
 - v. To perform such duties as the office shall require.
- h. The duties of the **WEBMASTER** shall be:
- i. To oversee and maintain the GSA website and email account, in cooperation with the Information Technology Department;
 - ii. To provide office technical support and maintenance; and
 - iii. To perform such duties as the office shall require.
- i. The duties of the **OPERATIONS OFFICER** shall be:
- i. To coordinate and lead all operational and logistical functions of the GSA.
 - ii. To maintain, organize, replenish and clean GSA Lounge in the Shalala Student Center on a regular basis and ensure that all upkeep, usage and physical structures within the lounge are in safe, working condition and order. This includes the GSA copier (toner, copy paper, etc.)
 - iii. To remain in communication with and follow all policies and procedures with the Shalala Student Center.
 - iv. To maintain and organize the GSA Office in the Whitten Student Center on a regular basis and ensure that all upkeep, usage and physical structures within the office are in safe, working condition and order.

- v. To coordinate and work with UM Information Technology to assign and deassign ID card access to the GSA Office for approved GSA executive board members only or other authorized members approved by the GSA executive board.
- vi. To maintain, order and control inventory of basic GSA materials stored in the GSA Office and utilized throughout the academic year for meetings, activities, events and everyday operations of the GSA including, but not limited to, the following:
 - GSA Table Covers
 - GSA Copier (including toner and copy paper)
 - Tables
 - Chairs
 - Computers systems and all needed computer accessories
 - Office Lock Box/Safe
 - Storage Cabinets and keys
 - Utensils (Plates, Forks, Knives, Spoons, Cups, Napkins, etc.)
 - GSA Banners and Flags
- vii. To coordinate and control reservations for all GSA meetings for Senate and Eboard and special committee meetings or events that require meeting space.
- viii. To lead, control, maintain all aspects of food and drink ordering for all GSA Senate meetings and other meetings approved for meals as a part of the meeting.
- ix. To be responsible for managing the ordering, payment, budgeting process, pick-up, delivery and set up and break down of all meals that are a part of GSA meetings and events. If the Operations Officer is unable to attend any events that require meals or food, they must find an appropriate GSA member to handle all the responsibilities of meal and food preparations and follow through in their absence.
- x. To work in collaboration and cooperation with the GSA Student Life Officer and GSA events committee on specific operations and logistics for approved GSA events, activities and programs throughout the year. Special emphasis and assistance should be placed on annual and larger-scale GSA events that required additional operational and logistical priorities.
- xi. To assist the President, Parliamentarian and Secretary when deemed necessary for preparations and follow up on operational and logistical responsibilities involving all GSA meetings and programs.
- xii. To serve on at least one University committee deemed appropriate and assigned by the GSA President.
- xiii. Other duties as assigned by the GSA President.
- j. All officers shall attend every Senate meeting. Two (2) unexcused absences are grounds for impeachment.
- k. All officers shall attend every E-Board meeting. Two (2) unexcused absences are grounds for impeachment.

- l. In the event of an officer's planned absence, the officer must appoint an alternate to attend the Senate or E-Board meeting and carry out the duties of the officer for that meeting.
- m. The GSA officers shall have the right to vote on all matters brought before the Senate.

Section 7: Impeachment of Officers

- a. GSA officers may be impeached for misconduct of malfeasance in office or for not performing duties as outlined in Article IV, Section 6 of the Constitution. Charges must be submitted in writing to the Graduate School Dean by three (3) or more persons who are either officers or senators of the Executive Board or the Senate. The officer being charged shall be notified of the charges within forty-eight (48) hours of them being filed.
- b. All charges shall be made public and investigated by the GSA Ethics Committee under the direction of the Graduate School Dean.
 - i. The Ethics Committee will be created as needed in response to any Officer being charged. The committee will be randomly assigned from the pool of existing GSA Senators. The Graduate School Dean shall have the right to reject any committee members at their discretion and any selected Senator may recuse him or herself only if evidence of a conflict of interest is provided.
 - ii. The Ethics Committee will be dissolved at the conclusion of the impeachment proceedings.
 - iii. The recommendations of the Ethics Committee based on the findings of its investigation shall be presented to the Senate. The Officer in question shall have the opportunity to present a response to recommendations at the Senate meeting prior to the vote. A two thirds vote of the Senate is necessary to remove the officer from office.
- c. The officer may appeal their impeachment at the next Senate meeting. Any request for such an appeal must be submitted in writing to the Graduate School Dean and the Ethics Committee one (1) week prior to the Senate meeting.
- d. A two-thirds vote of the Senate shall be necessary to overturn the impeachment.

Section 8: Duties of the Executive Board

- a. The duties of the Executive Board shall be:
 - i. To create the GSA annual budget;
 - ii. To set the GSA calendar of events;
 - iii. To determine the GSA's annual objectives and coordinate the officers' functions in meeting those objectives;
 - iv. To ensure the decisions of the Senate are carried out; and
 - v. To coordinate management of the GSA office staff and office functions, including presentation of current resources and event information for graduate students.
- b. The Executive Board shall hold at least four (4) meetings per semester to be scheduled by the President. A quorum for Executive Board meetings shall consist

of a minimum of five (5) officers. Special meetings of the Executive Board may be called by the President or by the petition of four

(4) officers. The minutes of each Executive Board meeting shall be presented to the Senators at the next Senate meeting.

- c. Each member of the Executive Board shall have one (1) vote at the Executive Board meetings. A majority vote of those present is necessary to approve any motion. In the event of a tie that cannot be broken by the Executive Board alone, the Advisor(s) to the GSA may be consulted for assistance.
- d. All budget allocations or expenditures in excess of \$200.00 must be approved by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board. All budget allocations in excess of \$1,000.00 must also be approved by the Senate. Proposals for sponsorship of events and allocations of funds in excess of \$1,000.00 must be submitted in writing to the Senate with a detailed budget for approval by the Senate prior to the expenditure.
 - i. When the senate is out of session, the executive board will have the authority to purchase promotional items without senate approval;
- e. The Executive Board has the authority to recall any Senator who fails to attend two (2) Senate meetings without sending a written proxy or alternate representative to those meetings. Recall procedures are defined in the Bylaws.
- f. In the event of a documented dispute over the interpretation of the constitution and/or Bylaws, a majority vote of the Constitutional Review Committee must take place to determine the official interpretation. The submission of clarification shall be presented as an Amendment by the Parliamentarian to be voted on in the Senate, per processes outlined in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI: THE SENATE

Section 1: The legislative authority of the GSA shall be vested in the Senate.

Section 2: The Senate shall consist of one Senator from each department or program of the University of Miami Graduate School.

- a. One non-voting representative from each of the University of Miami Student Government (Undergraduate), Student Bar Association (Law), and/or Student Government (Medicine) shall be selected by the leadership of these entities and welcomed to attend GSA Senate Meetings.
- b. For each of the following student government entities, one GSA representative (for up to a total of three) shall be selected by the GSA President to attend the official meetings of the University of Miami Student Government (Undergraduate), Student Bar Association (Law), and Student Government (Medicine) as a non-voting member.
- c. The Executive Board may add non-voting members or guests at their discretion.

Section 3: Each Senator shall be elected by the graduate students of each respective department or program. In the event an election cannot be held, the Senator shall be appointed by the faculty chairperson of the department or program prior to the first meeting of the fall semester.

Section 4: At-large Senators may be elected to the Senate by a two-thirds approval of the Senate.

Section 5: The term of office for each Senator shall be until the end of the current academic year.

Section 6: If a Senate position is vacated before the end of the term of office, the department or program shall designate a replacement for that position to complete the term. If no designation is made, an additional at-large senator can be elected to fill the vacancy.

Section 7: The duties of each Senator shall be:

To represent their constituents' interests in all GSA matters;

- a. To attend all Senate meetings, or email for attendance within 24 hours and votes;
- b. To participate in at least one GSA Committee or act as a GSA representative to other University boards, senates, councils, or committees;
- c. To inform their constituents of GSA activities and events;
- d. To discuss, draft, and approve GSA resolutions;
- e. To review the monthly Treasurer's report and approve by a majority vote budget allocations or expenditures brought by the Executive Board as required by Article V, Section 6(d) of the Constitution;
- f. To review the GSA Constitution and Bylaws; and
- g. To approve recommendations regarding University of Miami policies

Section 8: A quorum of one-third of the combined total of active GSA Senators (or their alternates) and GSA officers shall be required for any Senate meeting.

- a. An active senator is define as one who has complied with the requirements of Article V Section 8 and Article VI, Section 7.e
- b. Senators who are not active are not eligible to vote at Senate meetings;
- c. Senators who are not active may regain active status by meeting with the executive board and following their recommendations. Executive board recommendations for regaining active status shall be reasonable and participation-based.

Section 9: Each Senator and GSA officer shall have one (1) vote in all matters brought before the Senate. A Senator that is absent may submit a written proxy for a specific vote or send an alternate to serve as a general proxy.

Section 10: The GSA President shall designate an executive board member to preside over Senate meetings.

Section 11: At least four (4) meetings of the Senate shall be scheduled per semester by the Executive Board. The President may call Special Meetings of the Senate, by petition of three (3) officers or by fifteen (15) Senators. All meetings may be held in person, electronically, or in a combined in-person/electronic form at the discretion of the Executive Board .

Section 12: Any Senator, Committee Chair or member, or Executive Board member who exhibits gross misconduct, malfeasance in office, or fails to attend two (2) Senate or committee meetings without sending a written proxy or alternate representative, or has not paid their Graduate Activity Fee may be recalled from office upon written notification by the Executive Board. The Executive Board must vote to recall a member by a majority of present Executive Board members. Senators may appeal a recall action as defined in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

Section 1: The President shall recruit and appoint graduate students to serve as members and chairpersons on the functioning GSA Standing Committees. The Executive Board shall approve all appointments by majority vote.

Section 2: Each Committee chairperson must be an active GSA Senator or Officer. In order to remain an active committee, each of the standing committees shall endeavor to have members representing at least three (3) departments, with no more than one (1) member from the same department (i.e. either Masters or PhD, but not both).

Section 3: All graduate students who accept an appointment to a Committee are expected to carry out the following duties:

- a. All Committee members must attend all meetings of said committee or send an alternate, represent the interest of all graduate students on said committee to the best of their ability, and send reports to their respective Committee Chairperson.
- b. All Committee chairpersons must call and attend all meetings of said committee or send an alternate, represent the interest of graduate students on said committee to the best of his or her ability, send all committee notes to the GSA Secretary within a week following each Committee meeting, and prepare an oral or written Committee report to be presented at the next Senate meeting.
- c. All Committees shall endeavor to meet at least once every 4 weeks between official semester start and end dates (as determined by the Registrar's Office), as called by the chairperson. The chairperson must finalize the meeting date, time, and location after a majority of Committee members express in writing their ability to attend. Notification of the finalized Committee meeting will be communicated to Committee members at least one week prior to the Committee meeting.

Section 4: Any Committee chairperson or member who exhibits gross misconduct, malfeasance, or failure to attend two (2) committee meetings without sending a written proxy or alternative representative may either be removed or replaced with another committee appointment upon written notification by the Executive Board. Committee chairpersons or members may appeal a recall action as defined in the Bylaws.

Section 5: The following shall be the GSA Standing Committees:

- a. Student Wellness Committee
- b. Academic Relations Committee
- c. Events Committee
- d. Committee on Graduate Student Organizations (COGSO)
- e. Social and Civic Engagement Committee

- f. TEDxUMiami Committee
- g. Constitutional Review Committee
- h. Music and Arts Committee

Section 6: The **STUDENT WELLNESS COMMITTEE** shall address mental and physical health of graduate students, together with issues not addressed by other Committees, including but not limited to: housing, parking/commuter issues, health insurance, library concerns, etc.

Section 7: The **ACADEMIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE** shall address issues related to graduate student academics, including but not limited to those that may potentially impact the graduate student teaching and learning experience.

Section 8: The **EVENTS COMMITTEE** shall organize official GSA events, including but not limited to: socials, luncheons, barbecues, Orientation activities, seminars, and information sessions. All proposals for events shall be submitted to the Executive Board and the Senate for approval. Each event must fall under one of these four categories: Community Building, Educational, Professional, or Cultural. The Committee must justify each event by describing how it impacts one or more of these categories.

Section 9: The **COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS** shall review student organizations' constitutions for approval and annually for re-registration and assist the Parliamentarian in addressing graduate student organization concerns. They shall review the GSA Constitution and Bylaws annually and propose revisions to the Senate under the direction of the Parliamentarian.

Section 10: The **SOCIAL AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE** promote engagement of the University of Miami's graduate students with social and civic entities or movements. The committee shall endeavor to create a positive impact in the greater Miami community and beyond.

Section 11: The **JOBS COMMITTEE** shall establish and maintain relations with the Toppel Career Center in order to promote events coordinating career options for graduate students.

Section 12: The **CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE** shall conduct the annual review of the GSA Constitution and Bylaws, and propose amendments to be submitted and approved at Senate.

Section 13: The **MUSIC AND ARTS COMMITTEE** shall promote graduate student engagement with music, arts, and culture within the university and the greater Miami area., The committee will support the creative activities of graduate students through competitions, programs and showcases.

Section 14: **AD-HOC COMMITTEES** may be established by the President for a limited duration to investigate and make recommendations to the Executive Board and the Senate. As with Standing Committees, the President shall recruit and appoint graduate students to serve as members and chairpersons on Ad-hoc Committees. The Executive Board shall approve all appointments of Chairpersons by majority vote.

- a. In the event that the President declares the creation of an Ad-hoc Committee, the President must specify the name of the committee and specify the length of time

the committee shall stand before further review by the Executive Board to determine if the committee has addressed its charge.

- b. At the time specified by the President upon the creation of the Ad-hoc Committee, the Executive Board shall conduct a review of the Committee. The Executive Board shall decide by majority vote whether the Ad-hoc Committee shall be:
- i. granted a specified length of time to continue operation before being called under review again;
 - ii. disbanded; or iii. made into a standing committee by proposing an amendment to the Constitution.

Section 15: The chairpersons and members of the GSA Committees and the Executive Board shall comprise the GSA Cabinet, which will meet upon the President's request.

Section 16: If a committee chairperson or member has committed gross misconduct or malfeasance of office, as documented in accordance with the recall process outlined in the Bylaws, or has not been active in communication or meeting in two months, the committee may be dissolved for the rest of the semester by a majority vote of the Senate. At the start of the next semester, the committee will undergo the review process outlined in the Ad-Hoc committee Article/Section.

ARTICLE VIII: CONSTITUTIONAL AND BYLAW AMENDMENTS

Section 1: The powers to amend the GSA Constitution and Bylaws shall rest with the Senate.

Section 2: Constitutional amendments shall address overall governing structure, duties, and missions of the GSA. Bylaws amendments shall elaborate terms, governing structure, duties, and processes specified in the Constitution. No GSA officer or Senator may offer amendments that create conflict between the Bylaws and the Constitution.

Section 3: Amendments must be sponsored by the Parliamentarian, on behalf of the Constitution Review Committee, or a current Senator not under recall. The Senator must present the proposed amendment in writing to the Parliamentarian at least two (2) weeks prior to the Senate meeting at which action is taken by the Senate.

Section 4: Senators must be given a minimum of one (1) week's notice prior to meetings at which amendments are to be considered.

Section 5: Constitutional amendments shall be adopted immediately upon the affirmative vote of two thirds of the voting members at a Senate meeting and approval of or no action by the Graduate School Dean within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the amendments. Bylaw amendments shall be adopted immediately upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members at a Senate meeting and submitted notification to the Graduate School Dean. After an affirmative vote, the amendment will immediately take effect, but will not be written into the Constitution until the annual Constitutional review. The amendment will not need to be voted on again during the annual vote on changes to the Constitution.

Bylaws of the Graduate Student Association of the University of Miami

Ratified by the Graduate Student Executive Board and Senate on October 7, 2008.
Last amended on March 24th, 2021.

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY OF THE BYLAWS

Section 1: The Bylaws shall elaborate terms, governing structure, duties, and processes specified in the Graduate Student Association Constitution.

Section 2: The Bylaws shall serve as official governing documents of the Graduate Student Association and be recognized as such, only to be superseded by the Constitution.

Section 3: No Graduate Student Association Officer or Senator may offer amendments to the Bylaws that conflict with the Constitution.

ARTICLE II: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1: All candidates for any Graduate Student Association Executive Board office shall declare their candidacy by self-nomination at least one (1) week prior to the predetermined election date and shall submit a 250-word paragraph for distribution to all Senators. Candidates may submit simultaneous letters of intent. Candidacy may also be declared from the floor at elections, however those candidates will not appear on paper ballots.

- a. Paper ballots will be replaced with virtual polling ballots when the Senate meets virtually or in hybrid format
- b. Floor nominations may be made verbally or in writing in the chat function on Zoom

Section 2: During the consideration of a candidate by the Senate, all candidates for the same position shall leave the meeting until the presiding officer, as specified in the Constitution, calls the candidates in for questioning on an individual basis. At this time, the candidate may deliver a presentation of up to five (5)-minutes to the Senate. There will then be a brief five (5)-minute period, during which Senators can question the candidate. After questioning, the candidate shall leave upon the request of the presiding officer for the duration of open debate about the candidates.

Section 3: Only after all candidates for a particular office have been presented to the Senate and made available for questioning shall discussion begin. Candidates will be allowed to enter after the discussion period has ended.

Section 4: Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot. The Parliamentarian, or their designee, shall pass out, collect the ballots, and privately count them when they have all been submitted. In the case where the Senate meets virtually or in hybrid format, the

Parliamentarian, or their designee, will have created polls for the Zoom call prior to the meeting and will adjust these polls in accordance with who is nominated from the floor. Candidates shall be elected by a majority of the filled Senate seats. In the event that no such candidate receives a majority, the Senate shall repeat the procedure with only the two (2) candidates receiving the most votes eligible. If a tie occurs, then the number of candidates allowed will be the minimum number in order for the tie to hold. A blank ballot is considered an abstention.

Section 5: Any elected Senator or current Executive Board member may submit an absentee vote for any election if their request for an absentee ballot is received via e-mail one (1) week prior to the date of the election by the Parliamentarian or their designee. To be counted, the Parliamentarian or their designee must receive all ballots by email fifteen (15) minutes before the meeting in which the live vote will occur. There is no voting by proxy.

Section 6: The voting order of positions other than President and Vice President will be the same as the order of succession, found in Article VI, Section 1 of the GSA Bylaws. Elections for President and Vice President should take place in late February of each Academic Year, followed at the very next meeting by the elections of the remaining officers of the E-Board.

Section 7: If an elected Officer vacates or is recalled from their position before the end of the term of office, the Executive Board shall preside over an election to fill vacated position(s) at the next Senate meeting. The replacement shall serve the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE III: RECALL AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

Section 1: Any Graduate Student Association Senator, Committee chair, or Committee member that is voted to be recalled by the Executive Board, as specified in the Constitution, shall be given a written notice of the recall action and the opportunity to appeal the recall action within two (2) weeks of delivery of the notice.

Section 2: Upon delivery of the recall notice, the Senator, Committee chair, or Committee member in question, shall immediately be recalled and the position held shall be considered vacant.

Section 3: If the recall action is appealed by the Senator, Committee chair, or Committee member in question within two (2) weeks of delivery of the recall notice, the recall action shall be administered as follows:

- A. If the recall was the result of a failure to execute his/her administrative duties as a Senator (i.e. excessive unexcused absences, inability to fulfill Committee obligations, unpaid Graduate Activity Fee, etc.) then the recall and the appeal shall be presented in the next Senate meeting. A three (3)-minute explanation of the recall action may be made prior to the vote by the President or their designee on the Executive Board. The recalled individual will also be allowed three (3) minutes to present any pertinent information regarding the reason for

the appeal. Debate on the recall action will then be open to all members of the voting body. A majority of voting members present is needed to overturn the recall action.

- B. If the recall action is the result of misconduct or malfeasance of the Senator in question, then the Executive Board shall draw up a case presenting the accusation, materials, and witnesses, along with the Senator's appeal, and refer the case to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School will then review the materials as presented, request additional information as needed, and then make a recommendation. The Graduate School will present their decision to the Senate and the recalled individual at the next Senate meeting after notice of appeal is given, where Senators present at the meeting will confirm or reject the Graduate School's recommendation.
- C. Senators recalled for reasons that do not clearly fall within the definitions in Article III, Section 3, Parts a or b, shall refer to the appeal process in part b.

ARTICLE IV: PROCESSION OF GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE MEETINGS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

Section 1: All Graduate Student Senate meetings shall take on the following order:

- Call to Order
- Special Orders
- Orders of the Senate
- Old Business
- New Business
- Open Forum
- Adjournment.

Section 2: A call to order shall be carried out by the presiding officer through verbal acknowledgement of quorum being reached. In the case where quorum has not been reached, the meeting will be postponed until such a time that quorum has been reached.

Section 3: Items that are not normally addressed in the Orders of the Senate are addressed in the Special Orders. Such items include, but are not limited to, guest speakers. Orders of the Senate are open.

Section 4: Executive Board reports, Committee reports, and ratification of minutes are addressed during Orders of the Senate.

Section 5: Items that have been tabled from the previous Senate meeting shall be addressed during Old Business.

Section 6: Items that are newly introduced to the Senate shall be addressed during New Business.

Section 7: General announcements, graduate student event announcements, points of discussion, announcements and other items relating to the Graduate Student Association are mentioned in the Open Forum.

Section 8: Adjournment of a Senate meeting occurs once a motion to adjourn passes during Open Forum.

ARTICLE V: FORMAT AND PROCEDURE FOR VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS

Section 1: Graduate Student Association resolutions must be presented in Senate meetings and sponsored by at least one (1) Officer or Senator.

Section 2: A resolution shall contain

- The number of the resolution stated as “Graduate Student Association 2020/21 Senate Resolution #001”.
- A title in capital letters beginning with, “A RESOLUTION TO”, stating the purpose of the resolution;
- The Sponsor or Sponsors of the resolution;
- A statement or statements beginning with “Whereas,” identifying the reason or reasons why the resolution should be passed by the Senate; and
- A statement or statements beginning with “Be it resolved,” identifying the action the Graduate Student Association should take, recommended or requested actions affecting graduate students that the Graduate School or the University of Miami should take, the opinion the Association should have, or the decision the Graduate Student Association should make.

Section 3: All resolutions shall be submitted to the President and Parliamentarian in writing as early as possible prior to the Senate meeting that the resolutions shall be presented in.

Section 4: Presentation and Voting of Graduate Student Association Resolutions:

- A Sponsor shall summarize in one (1) minute the content of the resolution and explain why the resolution should be passed. The presiding officer may permit more time for content summary and explanation of the resolution if requested by the Sponsor.
- The Senate may question the Sponsor or Sponsors on the content and basis of the resolution and discuss why the resolution should or should not pass based on the merits of the resolution.
- The Senate shall pass, fail, or table the resolution.

Section 5: Process for Offering Amendments to Resolutions:

- When an Officer or Senator offers an amendment to the resolution, the Sponsor may accept the amendment without objection or object to the amendment.

- If an objection is made, the Officer or Senator offering the amendment may move to discuss the amendment. If the motion passes, the Senate shall discuss only that amendment.
- The Senate shall vote to pass or fail the amendment. Once the vote is made, the Senate shall resume discussion on the whole resolution.

Section 6: Unless otherwise mentioned in the Constitution or Bylaws, passage of a resolution shall require a majority of those present and voting. A resolution resulting in a tied vote shall be considered as failed.

Section 7: If a resolution recommends or requests actions by the Graduate School, the Parliamentarian shall transmit the resolution requesting the Graduate School Dean and Senior Vice President of Student Affairs to approve, deny, or take no action on the resolution. The Graduate School Dean and Senior Vice President shall have fifteen (15) calendar days to respond to the transmitted resolution. A lack of response after fifteen (15) calendar days shall indicate that no action has been taken on the resolution. If a resolution recommends or requests actions by the University of Miami, the same course of action shall be taken in addition to referring the resolution to the appropriate entity.

ARTICLE VI. TEMPORARY EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

Section 1: In a prolonged absence or incapacitation of the President and failure of the Vice President to assume the executive duties of the President by absence from the local area, incapacitation, or by cause of vacancy in said office, then the person whose office is highest on the following list, who is in the local area, and who is able to serve shall assume the executive duties of the President for the duration of the President's absence or inability to function.

1. Parliamentarian
2. Treasurer
3. Secretary
4. Public Relations Officer
5. Webmaster
6. Student Life Officer
7. Academic Relations Committee Chairperson
8. Student Wellness Committee Chairperson
9. Committee on Graduate Student Organizations Chairperson
10. Events Committee Chairperson

Section 2: Whenever the offices of President and Vice President shall simultaneously be vacant, the Senate shall convene at the earliest practical time on the call of the highest position listed in Article VI, Section 1 of the Bylaws, who shall chair as the temporary presiding officer. If no position holder in Article VI, Section 1 of the Bylaws is able to chair as the temporary presiding officer, the Senate shall elect a Senator to chair as the temporary presiding officer. Elections for these offices shall be carried out as specified in Article II of the Bylaws, with all other business delayed until said elections are completed.