

# GSA Constitution

The Graduate Student Association exists in accordance with the mission of Xavier University to support the development and growth of graduate students as persons fully constituted as active members of the University community, deserving to share in its life and governance. Realizing the special needs and talents of graduate students, the GSA exists to act as an advocate and to serve as a conduit to serve the needs of graduate students and to provide assistance to the University administration as it seeks to realize the University's mission. To this end this constitution is adopted.

## **Article 1: Name**

The official name of the organization shall be the "Xavier University Graduate Student Association," but the organization is also referred to as the "Graduate Student Association" or "GSA."

## **Article 2: Purpose**

The Graduate Student Association will act as an advocacy group for individual and collective concerns relating to issues affecting graduate students at the University.

The GSA will foster community, encourage interaction among all graduate students, and host inter-program networking events.

The GSA will seek equitable representation and involvement from all graduate students.

The GSA will attempt to provide support not elsewhere available to enhance the educational and professional development of graduate students.

## **Article 3: Implementation of Purpose**

### **3.1 Communication**

GSA will inform graduate students of University and GSA functions. GSA's objective is to provide regular opportunities for networking through general assembly and informal gatherings. GSA will use multimodal communication to graduate student population via newsletter, newswire, XU portal, email, and GSA website

### **3.2 Advocacy**

Provide group of persons to serve on University committees as representatives of graduate students. Create and maintain an advocacy committee to address concerns brought to the GSA by General Assembly (GA) representatives and graduate students to University faculty, staff, and administration

### **3.3 Equity**

Solicit department volunteers to reflect department constituency

### **3.4 Support**

Provide support and advocacy to enhance the education and professional development of all graduate students in Graduate programs.

## **Article 4. Membership and Representation to the GSA**

### **4.1 Membership**

The membership shall be open to all full and part time graduate and professional students currently enrolled at Xavier University. No further requirements may be imposed. No dues, nor any other membership fee, shall be collected. Likewise, all general meetings are open to the entire graduate population and students not serving as departmental representatives are nonetheless encouraged to attend.

### **4.2 Representation to the GSA**

Each graduate program is entitled to appoint one representative and one alternate to serve the GSA. Academic departments and programs (including interdisciplinary programs) are asked to provide a representative to the GSA. While the GSA encourages divisional autonomy in regulation of their representation, if a department is not being represented at the monthly meetings, the GSA will contact that particular department and ask that a new representative be selected or appointed.

Each graduate program is entitled to one vote; the graduate program representative carries this vote. In the event of the representative's absence, the alternate is entitled to cast the vote.

Representatives and alternates must be graduate students in good standing registered for the current semester and enrolled in the graduate program that they will represent.

All registered full-time and part-time graduate students of the university are considered nonvoting members, entitled to information and participation at meetings.

Members of the Executive Board may act as (their) program alternate, but not as the program representative (i.e. voting member).

Committee representatives are a voluntary position available to all graduate students.

Notification of committees seeking graduate student representation will be communicated at the General Assembly meetings. Committee Representatives are responsible for attending meetings outside of the GSA, including but not limited to, the Commencement Committee, the Board of Graduate Studies, the Diversity and Equity Committee, Disability Advisory Board, the Student Government Association, and the Bookstore Committee. They are expected to attend the monthly meetings of these groups, represent the interests of graduate students to these groups, and report on the committee meetings at GSA General Assemble meetings.

### **4.3 Departmental Representative Responsibilities**

Representatives selected to serve their particular departmental constituency must attend ALL regularly scheduled GSA General Assembly meetings over the course of their term. If for some reason a representative cannot attend, then an alternate program representative should be sent in her/his place. Representatives are responsible for forwarding and distributing all announcements and information disseminated by the GSA to all graduate students in the representative's home department or program. It is the program representative's responsibility to coordinate communication with his/her respective program using the best modality and frequency for majority of students in program. Also, program representatives are encouraged to incorporate information about GSA into previously existing intra-departmental communications (ie. Program newsletters, program meetings, etc.).

## **Article 5. Board Positions, Duties**

### **5.1 Executive Board**

The executive board shall consist of five officers, which are the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Social Events Chair. Each officer must be a graduate student in good academic standing and be able to serve the full term of their appointment (one academic year).

### **5.2 Election of Executive Board**

Elections for Executive Board positions will be held in the Spring Semester of the academic year. Nominations will be solicited via email in early April and collected by the President until the Friday prior to the scheduled election. Voting will then take place beginning the Monday of the third week in April and conclude the Friday of that same week. The newly elected executive board will take office at the end of the current academic year such that they will be in office over the summer and will be responsible for meeting to organize for the meetings beginning in the Fall semester of the following academic year. The last GSA general meeting will be a time of transition in which the current executive board will mentor the newly elected board in their roles and responsibilities. At this meeting, all GSA specific documents and account information will be shared with the newly elected board. The responsibilities of the current executive board will end at the conclusion of the Spring semester of the current academic year. It is expected that the newly elected executive board will communicate over the summer months to prepare for the upcoming year.

Persons wishing to run for office may either self-nominate or receive nomination from another graduate student, faculty, or staff. Applicants will be required to submit a brief nomination statement to include qualifications, skills, and prior experience that qualifies them for the position. Applicants for the president position must also submit a vision statement for GSA. Applicants may apply for multiple positions; although, they may hold only one position on the executive board. As soon as the nominations have been closed, the current President will compile submitted nominations statements and make them available to all graduate students for voting via email and posting on the graduate student website. A plurality of graduate student

votes will determine the outcome of the election for each Executive Board position. In the event of a tie, the faculty advisor will serve as the tie-breaking vote.

### **5.3 Duties**

Each Executive Board member shall have specific duties during the term of office. Those duties will be assigned at the third GSA executive board meeting.

**President:** The President is the executive officer and she/he acts as the spokesperson to the administration of the University. The President coordinates and oversees all other officers' activities. The President is a liaison between the University Community and GSA. The President reports to the executive board and the GSA body. The President is also responsible for overseeing all day-to-day financial transactions and cosigning on transactions. The President is also responsible for consulting on the budget at the beginning of each school year with the Executive Board.

**Vice-President:** The Vice-President fills in for the President whenever needed, confers with the President on all matters that involve the Graduate School and the University administration including serving as the liaison between the GSA and all graduate students, serving on university councils or committees. The Vice-President will preside over GSA meetings and fulfill presidential duties in the event of the president's absence. The Vice President advocates and responds to the needs of all graduate students.

**Secretary:** The Secretary will maintain a current membership and committee list and keep the minutes of the meetings. The Secretary will also gather all information from outside sources and distribute to pertinent board members. The Secretary is responsible for all clerical work (typing letters, copies, coordinate mailings, etc.), as well as composing and submitting press releases.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer is responsible for conducting all day-to-day financial transactions, including keeping detailed records of these transactions and reporting the financial state of the GSA to the Executive Board and the GSA General Assembly. The Treasurer is also responsible for developing a budget at the beginning of each school year with the Executive Board.

**Social Events Chair:** The Social Events Chair is responsible for all major social and community events, including our flagship event called the "GSA Charity Ball." She/he oversees all GSA programming and is responsible for managing a Social Events Committee. This position focuses on internal relations and builds membership engagement throughout the academic year.

## **Article 6. Meetings**

### **6.1 Executive Board Meetings**

Executive Board Meetings of the GSA will be held as called by the Executive Officers and held on schedule as approved by the Executive Board at the beginning of each academic year.

## **6.2 General Meetings**

Meetings are held at times and places determined by the Executive Committee. Reasonable attempts are made to hold meetings convenient to all General Assembly members. Every attempt is made to hold meetings to one hour.

Voting members are notified of meetings at least one week in advance.

Meetings are open to both voting and nonvoting members. Nonvoting members are encouraged to participate in discussion. Both voting members and alternates may attend meetings and participate in discussion; however, only one vote per department may be cast. Motions must carry by a majority of voting members present.

## **6.3 Voting Procedure for General Meetings**

A plurality of departmental representative votes will determine the outcome of any matter put before the GSA at the monthly meetings. This likewise pertains to new business and items that need to be acted on in a timely manner. Though the general meetings are open to the entire graduate student body, only department representatives will take part in roll call votes concerning matters of GSA interest and involvement.

## **Article 7: Faculty Advisor**

The faculty advisor of the Graduate Student Association will be selected by the office of graduate affairs from available graduate faculty.

## **Article 8: Amendments to the Constitution.**

1. Amendments may be proposed to the Executive Committee by any voting member
2. Amendments must be presented at the next meeting of the General Assembly.
3. Amendments must be voted on at the second meeting, after at least 30- days notice to the General Assembly.
4. Amendments must pass by a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly.

## **Article 9: Ratification**

Ratification of this Constitution must be by affirmative vote of two- thirds of the departmental voting members present.

(Last revision September 2018)



