



BY-LAWS

Article I. GSA Membership Withdrawal

- Section 1. Any graduate student wishing to resign from membership in the GSA must petition to do so. This petition must be addressed to the Secretary and approved by the Graduate Senate.
- Section 2. The GSA need not make special mention of those graduate students who are not members when issuing proclamations under its name.

Article II. Powers and Duties of Executive Council Members

- Section 1. The Executive Council shall, by majority approval:
 - A. create ad hoc or temporary committees as necessary.
 - B. nominate standing committee Chairpersons at the first Executive Council meeting of the new term, for approval by the Graduate Senate.
 - C. nominate representatives to university committees and organizations, as required, for approval by the Graduate Senate.
- Section 2. The Executive Council may hire or fire such personnel as it seems necessary for the normal execution of Executive Council responsibilities. The Executive Council shall be responsible for job description(s) of salaried personnel, such description(s) to be kept on file in the GSA office.
- Section 3. In the absence of the Treasurer, the President shall be responsible for the disbursement of funds using the same procedure as required of the Treasurer.
- Section 4. The President and the Treasurer shall be bonded.
- Section 5. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee and other committees the Executive Council deems necessary in a given year.

Article III. Duties and Committees

- Section 1. The Executive Council and the Senate may form committees as deemed necessary to address any issues or concerns of graduate students. These committees may include but are not limited to the following:
 - Athletics Committee
 - Budget and Finance Committee
 - Community Service Committee
 - Constitution/Bylaws Committee
 - Event/Social Committee
 - Nominations and Elections Committee
- Section 2. The GSA Committee Chairs shall keep the Graduate Senate informed of their activities.



Graduate Student Association
The URI Graduate Student Senate

- Section 3. GSA Committee Chairs shall set their annual meeting schedules; however, the Budget and Finance Committee, the Nominations and Elections Committee, and the Constitution/Bylaws Committee must meet at least once per semester. The Constitution/Bylaws Committee must review both the Constitution and the Bylaws each semester to consider potential amendments and make recommendations to GSA.

Article IV. Financial Procedures

- Section 1. The Budget and Finance Committee shall prepare a budget for each new term of office. This budget may be revised by the Graduate Senate and shall be voted on at the Senate's second meeting of the Fall semester. The budget may be revised after approval, provided that any revision takes into account all previous commitments.
- Section 2. Standing committee Chairpersons, in consultation with their respective committees, may commit funds from their appropriate budget entries. Before such funds are committed, the Treasurer must be informed in writing.
- Section 3. Allocations, not greater than \$1,000.00, may be made by majority agreement of the Executive Council during those times of the year when the Graduate Senate does not meet. Should the allocation be made to an Executive Council member for any reason, it must be approved by the Senate, with the exception of remunerations.
- Section 4. The Graduate Student Association will not lend money to a student under any circumstances.

Article V. Election and Voting Procedures

- Section 1. Officers, Graduate Council, Academic Appeals Board, and Faculty Advisors:
 - A. The Nominations/Election Chair shall announce the opening of nominations for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four At-Large Representatives. After results of elections, the President shall appoint two student members to the Academic Appeals Board, with two alternates. The Executive Council/Graduate Senate will nominate and elect 1 or 2 faculty advisors per academic year. Nominations may be made from the floor or submitted in writing to the Secretary, and will be taken until voting at the last Senate meeting in the Spring semester. The role of Past President will be filled for the next academic year if that individual is a currently enrolled student interested in serving. If there is no interest, this role will be filled by the next Executive Officer in the chain, per Article VI, Section 2 of the Constitution,



Graduate Student Association
The URI Graduate Student Senate

- B. who is interested and currently enrolled. Students may not accept nominations for more than one office.
 - C. Nominations will take place during the final Senate meeting of the Spring semester on the Kingston campus or via online meeting. Voting will continue for 24 hours to allow members from the Narragansett and Providence campuses to cast absentee ballots in either paper or electronic format. All absentee ballots must include the voter's name, department and contact information. In the event that a candidate for a position has no opponent, voting will be completed at the final Senate meeting in the Spring.
 - D. Absentee ballots may be furnished in advance on request, but must be returned to the GSA office within five days.
 - E. A plurality of votes cast for a position shall be a necessary and sufficient condition for election.
 - F. Any faculty member, or an administrator who is an elected faculty member's designee and is also approved by the Graduate Senate, may hold the position of Faculty Advisor. All other offices are open to any member of the GSA.
- Section 2. Department Representatives:
 - A. Department Representatives to the Graduate Senate shall be chosen within each graduate department by the graduate students within that department.
 - B. For every 20 graduate students (full-time or a fraction thereof), a graduate department may elect one or more department representatives, chosen within the department. In the event that a department with several concentrations/disciplines has more than 20 students and enough interested representatives, each discipline may elect its own representative. For example, if the Electrical, Computer, Biomedical department has 60+ students, one representative may be elected from each discipline regardless of how many students are within each concentration/discipline.
 - C. A concentration/discipline must be recognized by the Graduate School within the department. The type of degree conferred will not be considered a separate designation (MS and PhD programs in the same department will not have separate representatives).
 - D. The number of graduate students in each department shall be determined annually, based on current information available from the registrar's office.
 - E. The Division of Cooperative Extension shall be considered as a single department.
 - F. Departmental representative proxies may be designated by the elected Representative.



Graduate Student Association
The URI Graduate Student Senate

- G. In the absence of departmental selection, vacant Department Representative positions shall be appointed.
- Section 3. Committee Chairpersons and requested graduate student representatives to university committees and organizations shall be approved by majority vote of the Graduate Senate.
 - Section 4. The terms of office for all GSA Officers and Graduate Senate members shall run for one year, beginning July 1st and ending June 30th.

Article VI. Meeting Procedures

- Section 1. All meetings of the Graduate Senate shall be run according to the parliamentary procedure outlined in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. The Graduate Senate may elect a parliamentarian, who shall be a non-voting member.
- Section 2. A quorum at any Graduate Senate meeting shall be 1/3 of the Graduate Senate's voting members. All members of the Graduate Senate shall be notified at least two weeks in advance of all meetings.
- Section 3. Any member of the GSA may attend a Graduate Senate meeting. Such members are denied voting privileges, except as noted in the Constitution, Article IX, Section 1, and in the By-Laws, Article VII, Section 2. Further, such members are accorded speaking privileges by invitation of the Chairperson only.
- Section 4. University organizations may be represented at Grad Senate meetings under the constraints of GSA Constitution Article III, Section 3.
- Section 5. The following motions may be voted on at the same meeting that they are introduced:
 - A. Recall
 - B. Amendment of the Constitution or of By-Laws
- Section 6. Senate Meeting Guidelines.
 - A. Graduate Senate meeting is not to exceed 90 minutes duration. All matters on the floor at the end of the 90 minutes are to be considered tabled until the next meeting.
 - B. Debate on any one motion shall be limited to 5 minutes; debate limit may be extended at the end of the 5 minutes by a 1/3 vote of members in attendance.
 - C. Committee reports will be limited to 3 minutes and can be extended in the same manner as described above for debate on motions.
 - D. Running time for meeting length and debate shall be kept by the Chairperson of the Graduate Senate meeting.
- Section 7. A quorum at Executive Council meetings shall be three voting members, proxies not to be permitted.



Graduate Student Association
The URI Graduate Student Senate

Article VII. Resignation, Recall, and Succession

- Section 1. Any Executive Council Officer or standing committee Chairperson wishing to resign must do so in writing to the President. Any Graduate Senator wishing to resign must do so in writing to the Vice President, stating the effective date of his/her resignation.
- Section 2. Any GSA officer or committee chairperson may be removed from office by a 2/3 vote of other GSA Officers and/or Senate members attending a GSA meeting. The person involved shall have two weeks prior notification of a recall vote.
- Section 3. The Vice-President shall become President should that office be vacated. Other vacant offices, including faculty advisor, shall be filled by a majority election of the Executive Council. Acting and unfilled officer roles may be appointed by the President (Executive Council) or Vice President (Graduate Senators).
- Section 4. The organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding sections of any future federal tax code.
- Section 5. Upon the dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or a state or local government, for a public purpose.

Version History

Date Editor

April 25, 2023, K. Liu

August 12, 2024, E. Mensah