

Articles for the Graduate Student Senate  
Of  
The University of Texas at Arlington

Drafted March, 1995  
Amended Spring, 1996  
Amended Spring, 2002  
Amended Spring, 2006  
Amended Fall, 2006

Articles for the Graduate Student Senate  
Of  
The University of Texas at Arlington

The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) is the principal body for the representation of the interests of graduate students throughout the University.

**Purpose**

1. To represent the views and concerns of the graduate students to the University community.
2. To facilitate graduate student communication and interaction.
3. To gather and disseminate information pertinent to graduate students and their respective departments.
4. To ensure representation of graduate student members on departmental, college, and University bodies.

**ARTICLE I: Membership**

- .1 Membership on the GSS shall consist of representatives from Departmental and Interdepartmental and Intercampus Programs, as defined by the Rules Committee each Spring semester. Each of these is hereafter referred to as a 'program.'
- 1.2 There shall be two classes of membership within the Graduate Student Senate; Active Members and Voting Members
- 1.3 Any UTA graduate student may apply to be an Active Member; must be in good standing and be enrolled in or have taken 6 credit hours worth of graduate level courses. There is no limit to the number of Active Members. Active Members serve without vote. Active Members may serve in and/or chair internal and ad-hoc committees. Active Members may be appointed to serve on university-wide committees.
- 1.4 Any Active Member may apply to become a Voting Member after attending two general body meetings in a semester. Voting Members must be UTA graduate students; must be enrolled in or have taken 6 credit hours worth of graduate level courses, and must be in good standing with the university. There is no limit to the number of Voting Members. Voting Members serve with voting privileges; may also delegate their vote to an Active Member. Voting Members may serve in and/or chair internal and ad-hoc committees. Voting Members may be appointed to serve on university-wide committees.

- 1.5 All membership applications are subject to review for qualifications by the officers committee.

## **ARTICLE II: Officers and Committees**

- .1 Election of officers shall take place during the Spring Semester. Officers shall be elected for a term of one year. The Executive Committee may nominate a slate of one or two candidates for each office, and additional nominations will be taken from the floor during the last regular meeting prior to the election. Each Voting Member present shall have one vote in the election. Voting Members may delegate their votes to Active Members. The candidate receiving the largest number of votes shall be declared elected.
- .2 The elected officers of the GSS shall include a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Director of Public Relations. To be eligible for election as an officer, the member must have served as a GSS representative for a semester and have served on at least one (1) committee.
- .3 There shall be three standing committees of the GSS: the rules committee, the academic affairs committee, and the graduate student affairs committee. The duties and responsibilities of the standing committees shall be, but not limited to, the following:
  - Rules: This committee shall interpret the Articles for the Graduate Student Senate of the University of Texas at Arlington and shall decide the final interpretation of any questioned rule or resolution which has already been passed.
  - Academic Affairs: This committee will be responsible for investigating and improving the general welfare of students in the academic sphere.
  - Graduate Student Affairs: This committee will be responsible for investigating and improving the general welfare of students in the non-academic sphere.The Executive Committee may appoint other committees on an ad hoc basis, on their own initiative, or by a majority vote of the GSS
- .4 The officers and chairs of all committees shall constitute the Executive Committee of the GSS. The Executive Committee shall meet in advance of the regular meetings of the GSS to set the agenda. The Executive Committee will make decisions of GSS policy and shall also attend to the financial business of the GSS and the internal management of the GSS such that normal course of business will flow in an orderly manner.
- .5 The President shall exercise the powers and responsibilities of the chief executive officer, preside at all meetings, call special meetings, be chairperson of the Executive Committee, appoint chairpersons of all committees, be responsible for seeing that the GSS is represented at appropriate University, UT System, regional and national organizations, and perform all duties necessary to direct the GSS.

- .6 The Vice President shall, in the absence of the President, assume all responsibilities of the President's office. The Vice President shall serve on the Executive Committee and shall appoint members to the committees, and will be responsible for the progress of all committees. In the event that the President resigns or is incapacitated or is impeached, the Vice President shall become President of the GSS. A special election shall take place no later than one month after the office of President becomes vacant for the purpose of electing a new Vice President. The term of this election shall be the remainder of the regular term of the vacating Vice President.
- .7 The Secretary shall record and preserve the minutes and correspondence of the GSS and its committees. It shall be the Secretary's responsibility to distribute the minutes from the general meeting to all members within two weeks following each meeting. The Secretary shall record attendance and report excessive absences, as defined in Article 4.9, to the Executive Committee.
- .8 The Director of Public Relations shall be responsible for working with the Advisor and the Executive Committee to maintain the GSS financial records, maintaining the GSS web page(s), as well as publicizing GSS as an organization and its events.
- .9 In order to request the removal of a GSS officer, a petition signed by 40% of the voting GSS members shall be forwarded to the Executive Committee which will schedule a vote for removal for the next GSS meeting. The University Advisor will present the concerned officer with a letter of notice one week prior to the vote for removal; this letter will state the reason for the proposed removal and the officer's right to defend his/her position before the GSS. At the next GSS meeting, the petition will be presented, the defense (if any) will be heard, and a vote taken. Removal shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote by those members who are present and eligible to vote.
- .10 The Office of Student Governance and the Graduate School at UTA shall be the sponsors of the GSS.

### **ARTICLE III: Representation of Graduate Student Interests**

- .1 Representatives of the GSS on any University committees will be recommended by the President of GSS. The graduate student representatives on the Faculty Senate, the Graduate Assembly, the University of Texas System Student Advisory Committee (UTSSAC), and the President's Round Table (PRT) will include, if possible, a member of the Executive Committee.

- .2 Persons who are not GSS members, selected as graduate student representatives on the UTA Constituency Councils or the UTA Student Congress may serve during their terms of office as ex-officio non-voting members of the GSS.

#### **ARTICLE IV: Meetings and Procedures**

- 4.1 Regular meetings of the GSS will be held at a time decided by the GSS at the beginning of each academic semester. The Executive Committee will conduct the routine management of GSS affairs during the summer. Special meetings may be called by the president and one other officer.
- Or
- by petition to an officer from ten percent of the current GSS membership.
- Or
- by petition to an officer by five percent of graduate students in good standing.
- The Dean of the Graduate School or the University Advisor to the GSS may also call a special meeting through the President or Secretary.
- 4.2 Robert's Rules of Order (revised) will be accepted as the parliamentary procedure during regular meetings.
- 4.3 The work of the GSS will be carried on through committees whose responsibility will be to examine issues affecting graduate students and to bring any other matters to the Senate for discussion and disposition. Standing committees will meet at times designated by the GSS at the beginning of each academic semester. Additional meetings of committees may be scheduled as necessary to fulfill the purpose of these committees. Proposals for action by the GSS may be originated by any member of the GSS, by any committee of the GSS, or by petition of ten or more graduate students in good standing. All proposals must be filed with the Secretary and reviewed by the Executive Committee; the Executive Committee will decide to present the proposal to the GSS or to delegate the proposal to the appropriate committee for further action or recommendation. If a proposal is delegated to a committee, the committee must report on progress or make recommendations at the next general meeting of the GSS.
- 4.4 A committee or its chair may opt to create subcommittees or ad hoc committees for special purposes. Members of such ad hoc committees will be members or alternates of the GSS, but need not be members of the parent committees.
- 4.5 The Executive Committee is charged with coordinating the work of the committees and with setting the agenda for GSS meetings. These and other preparatory tasks of the Executive Committee will be conducted prior to each regular meeting of the GSS.

- 4.6 The quorum for the conduct of ordinary business will be a majority of the Voting Members of the GSS.
- 4.7 All resolutions coming out of committees to be considered by the GSS will be forwarded to Student Congress to prevent duplication of efforts. A resolution passed by the GSS will follow one of two courses. Those resolutions which address the both graduate and undergraduate concerns will be sent to the Student Congress, which will direct them to the President of the University through the Vice President for Student Affairs. Those resolutions which address only graduate concerns will be sent to the Dean of the Graduate School, who will direct them to the President of the University. When warranted, the GSS may vote to send resolutions to other bodies.
- 4.8 Members of the GSS may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee if they fail to attend three regularly scheduled meetings in one semester (regular GSS, Standing, or ad hoc committees). The GSS will notify the removed member as well as his/her department of this action and request a new alternate be chosen.
- 5.1 GSS fund disbursements must be approved by the officers and the University Advisor. Discrepancies in this area will be appealed to the appropriate Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs.