PREAMBLE

The Council of Graduate Students at The Ohio State University (CGS) is the official body representing all graduate students’ diverse issues, concerns, and needs at The Ohio State University. We involve students in a productive partnership in governance of the University, promote the internal welfare and unity of the student community, further the goals of our University, and respond to the challenges of our society. The statement of purpose for CGS is “to effectively advocate and program to ensure that The Ohio State University graduate student experience is the best it can be”.

ARTICLE 1: NAME

Section 1.1 The name of this organization is the Council of Graduate Students, also referred to as the “the Council” or “CGS”.

ARTICLE 2: MISSION

Section 2.1 The Council represents all students enrolled in graduate programs across all six campuses at The Ohio State University, referred to here as “graduate students” or “the graduate student body.”

Section 2.2 The Council provides an accessible forum in which the graduate student body may present and discuss issues that pertain to the academic and non-academic success and experience of graduate students and their role within the University community.

Section 2.3 The Council advocates in University spaces on behalf of all graduate students with attention to the diverse experiences of students across age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military/veteran status, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, and other protected statuses.

Section 2.4 The Council supports delegate representatives from systemically oppressed groups and uplifts their perspectives in an effort to ensure the actions of the organization and the University adequately support graduate students of all backgrounds.

Section 2.5 The Council promotes and provides accessible academic, administrative, and social programs to support graduate students specifically and the University community in general.

Section 2.6 The Council represents the graduate student body at all venues determined by the Executive Board in consultation with the delegate body. The President or their designee is the primary representative of the Council and must keep the Council informed.
ARTICLE 3: AUTHORITY AND POWERS

Section 3.1 The authority for the establishment of the Council is derived from the consent of the graduate student body.

Section 3.2 The Council is recognized by The Ohio State University as the official organization representing all graduate students at The Ohio State University, thereafter, also referred to as “the University.”

Section 3.3 In all matters brought to bodies of The Ohio State University that interest graduate students, the Council or its representatives have the power to advise those bodies on behalf of graduate students.

Section 3.4 The Council has the power to plan and implement programs and make policy recommendations to the University in accordance with the mission of the Council.

Section 3.5 The Council has the primary authority to allocate and distribute funds from the Treasury of the Council.

Section 3.6 The Council oversees the elections and qualifications of its members and determines its own rules of procedure, as stated in its governing documents.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP AND ELIGIBILITY

Section 4.1 All graduate students at The Ohio State University are eligible to hold any Council position, elected or appointed, provided they maintain status in good standing as defined by that person’s respective program of study.

Section 4.2 No student will be denied membership in this organization on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military/veteran status, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or other protected status.

Section 4.3 All members of the Council must abide by the Council’s governing documents.

Section 4.4 The Council is composed of a delegate body elected by graduate students and an Executive Board made up of Executive Officers, appointed officers, and committee chairs (as outlined in Article 10).

Section 4.5 All delegates and committee chairs are voting members and have full voting and speaking privileges at meetings. All Officers (elected and appointed) have speaking rights at meetings but do not hold voting rights.

Section 4.6 Delegates who are appointed to committee chair positions and do not also hold elected officer positions may retain their delegate seats. All Officers, elected or appointed, must resign their delegate seats when their term begins (as outlined in Article 8).
ARTICLE 5: QUORUM AND VOTING

Section 5.1 At all meetings of the Council, except those held in summer term, half of the total number of voting members (as outlined in Article 4, Section 5) will constitute the minimum number of members needed for an official vote, (that is, a quorum). At the final regular meeting of spring semester, a poll must be conducted to determine the total number of voting members who will be available to attend meetings over the summer. For all summer term meetings, half of the total number of voting members available to meet during summer term will constitute a quorum.

Section 5.2 Each voting member (as outlined in Article 4, Section 5) in attendance has only one vote. A committee chair who is also a delegate may not vote twice.

Section 5.3 In the event of an absence, a delegate's designated alternate may attend and will be entitled to the same powers and privileges as the delegate, including voting. Voting members of the Executive Board may not designate alternates to vote on their behalf unless they also hold a delegate seat.

Section 5.4 If quorum is not reached at a meeting of the Council, no votes may be held. The Council may still discuss issues and attend to other agenda items. If a quorum is lost during a meeting, all legislation and scheduled votes will be automatically tabled until the next regular meeting.

Section 5.5 A two-thirds majority vote is defined as an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of all voting members in attendance. A simple majority vote is defined as an affirmative vote of at least half of all voting members in attendance.

ARTICLE 6: MEETINGS

Section 6.1 There must be at least four regular meetings of the Council during both autumn and spring semesters. During the summer term, the Council must hold at least 2 regular meetings. Every meeting must provide a mechanism for full hybrid participation and offer that opportunity publicly.

Section 6.2 Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the President, at the request of the Executive Board, or upon the written request of ten or more delegates. The special meeting must be held within nine days of such a request, provided that the University is in session on the ninth day. Otherwise, it must be held within three days of the start of the next session.

Section 6.3 All meetings of the Council are presided over by an executive officer, who will be recognized as the Chair.

Section 6.4 Every voting member and Officer will signify attendance at a meeting by a procedure supervised by the Secretary. Attendance must be documented, and records made available upon request.
ARTICLE 7: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 7.1 The current edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised” governs the procedures of all meetings of the Council. In cases where these rules conflict with the Council’s governing documents, the governing documents will take precedence.

Section 7.2 The Chair of the meeting is responsible for interpreting all relevant aspects of the Council’s governing documents and rules of order. Decisions of the Chair may be appealed to the full Council and overturned by a simple majority vote. The Council’s ruling is final.

Section 7.3 The Chair is responsible for assisting members with proper usage of rules during meetings as necessary. Unfamiliarity with the formalities of the Council must not be a barrier to full participation in meetings of CGS.

Section 7.4 The President must appoint a Parliamentarian to advise on the details in Section 7.2 and other relevant matters (as outlined in Article 8.3.F).

ARTICLE 8: ELECTIONS AND OFFICERS

Section 8.1 The Council of Graduate Students will elect annually from the graduate student body the following Executive Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 8.2 If a current delegate becomes an executive officer of the Council, they must resign their delegate seat when the term of office begins.

Section 8.3 President

8.3.A The President will preside over all meetings of the Council as the Chair.

8.3.B The President will select the time and place of all regular and special meetings of the Council. All meeting locations must be ADA accessible and hybrid capable. The President must inform the graduate student body in writing of the time and place chosen for each regular meeting of a semester by no later than the tenth day of that semester.

8.3.C The President will serve as a liaison between CGS and the Graduate School, the University administration, and The Ohio State University Board of Trustees.

8.3.D The President will be responsible for ensuring the Council’s compliance with all fiscal and personnel policies of the Council, University, state, and federal government.

8.3.E The President will serve as an ex officio member of the University Senate and its Steering Committee.

8.3.F The President will appoint a Parliamentarian and has the power to appoint a Chief of Staff if they so choose. These appointments will be subject to approval by simple majority vote by the Executive Committee.

8.3.G The President will be responsible for implementing and enacting all decisions of the Council and will fulfill other duties as directed by the consensus of the Council and the Executive Committee.
Section 8.4  Vice President

8.4.A  The Vice President is responsible for overseeing and maintaining records of appointments to all University committees, Senate committees, and shared governance committees on which the Council has representation, as well as to all internal CGS committees.

8.4.B  The Vice President will coordinate the Edward F. Hayes Graduate Research Forum, which showcases the innovative and exemplary research being conducted by Ohio State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars across graduate degree programs and research topics.

8.4.C  The Vice President will recruit delegate candidates, review delegate eligibility, oversee delegate elections, and maintain records of all delegate seats. During recruitment, Vice President must contact staff members in every program to ensure that all graduate students are aware of membership opportunities within the Council.

8.4.D  The Vice President will oversee and serve as Chair during all elections.

8.4.E  In the absence of the President, the Vice President will preside over meetings of the Council.

8.4.F  The Vice President will fulfill other duties necessary for operation of the Council as directed by the consensus of the Council and the Executive Committee.

Section 8.5  Treasurer

8.5.A  The Treasurer will handle all finances of the Council and maintain an accurate record of its financial status.

8.5.B  The Treasurer, in consultation with the President and Vice President, will be responsible for creating an annual budget for the Council.

8.5.C  The Treasurer will oversee the Edward J. Ray Travel Award for Scholarship and Service, which honors substantial commitment to service and helps graduate students to pursue their scholarly goals across the globe by financially aiding them when attending distant conferences and presentations.

8.5.D  The Treasurer will have the power to appoint a Deputy Treasurer. This appointment is subject to approval by simple majority vote by the Executive Board.

8.5.E  In the absence of the President and Vice President, the Treasurer will preside over meetings of the Council.

8.5.F  The Treasurer will fulfill other duties necessary for maintaining the operation of the Council as directed by the Council and the Executive Committee, as needed and able.
Section 8.6 Secretary

8.6.A The Secretary will be responsible for writing and publicly publishing minutes of all meetings of the Council and the Executive Committee, for maintaining records of legislation, and for communicating announcements and information to the delegate body. All minutes and legislation must be publicly published with one week of approval by a simple majority vote by the Council.

8.6.B The Secretary will be responsible for maintaining attendance records and determining quorum at Council meetings as declared in Article 5, Section 1 of this Constitution.

8.6.C The Secretary will oversee the Career Development Award, which encourages graduate students to prepare for placement into their chosen field and provides an opportunity to defray associated costs.

8.6.D The Secretary will be responsible for ensuring that the Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules are updated at the end of every semester to reflect all passed legislative amendments.

8.6.E The Secretary will have the power to appoint a Deputy Secretary. This appointment is subject to approval by simple majority vote by the Executive Board.

8.6.F If the Secretary is absent from a meeting, their duties will be assumed by the Deputy Secretary, if appointed, Chief of Staff, if appointed, or the Treasurer, in that order.

8.6.G In the absence of the President, Vice President, and Treasurer, the Secretary will preside over meetings of the Council.

8.6.H The Secretary will fulfill other duties as directed by the Council, the Executive Committee, and the President.
Section 8.7  Executive Officer Removal

8.7.A  Executive officers holding an appointed position may be removed at the initiative of the position who appointed them, or by two Executive Board members. This removal is subject to a majority vote of the Executive Board.

8.7.B  The Council has the authority to remove any Executive Officer for violation of the Council’s governing documents through the following procedure:

8.7.B.i  A written motion requesting an investigation of an Executive Officer for such violations must be presented at a regular meeting of the Council. This motion must bear the signatures of at least ten delegates or at least two-thirds of the Executive Committee.

8.7.B.ii  The officer must be given the opportunity to respond to the motion. If the motion is approved by a simple majority vote, a committee will be convened to conduct an investigation into the allegations against the officer and present its findings at the next regular Council meeting. This membership and chairship of this committee will be subject to approval by a simple majority vote by the council.

8.7.B.iii  Following this presentation, a two-thirds vote of the Council is required to approve the removal of the officer, effective immediately.
Section 8.8  Vacancy

8.8.A  A vacancy will be declared if an elected officer is removed or is unable to fulfill their duties as outlined in this Constitution for a period of time exceeding 3 weeks. In the event of a temporary absence of less than 3 weeks, the remainder of the executive officer team must ensure that the duties of the absent officer are carried out.

8.8.B  In the event the presidency falls vacant, the Vice President will have the option of becoming the President. In this instance, a new Vice President will be elected or appointed following the procedures outlined in 8.8.D. The Vice President will also have the option of refusing the office of the presidency, in which case the Vice President must serve as President pro tempore until the Council is able to elect a new President. This election must be held no later than the second regular meeting of the Council following the occurrence of the vacancy.

8.8.C  In the event that the positions of President and Vice President simultaneously become vacant, the Secretary will serve as President pro tempore. In the case that the position of Secretary is also vacant, then the Treasurer will serve as President pro tempore. In either case, the Council must elect a new President no later than the second regular meeting of the Council.

8.8.D  In the event that the position of Vice President, Treasurer, or Secretary becomes vacant, an election to complete the current term will be held no later than the second regular meeting of the Council following the occurrence of the vacancy. Election procedures will be in accordance with the current provisions of this Constitution and any Bylaws the Council enacts. An interim officer may be appointed by the President to hold office until such time as an election can be held. This interim officer is subject to approval by simple majority vote by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 9: COMMITTEES

Section 9.1  All standing committees are led by chairs, who are appointed by the President and approved by the Executive Board with simple majority vote.

Section 9.2  The Council may create such standing or ad-hoc committees as it deems necessary. Ad-hoc committees are designed to be temporary, single-issue committees. When they are created, they should have a specified start and end date that would require approval by simple majority vote from the body to extend.
ARTICLE 10: EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 10.1 Membership of the Executive Board will be determined as follows:

10.1.A All four executive officers and all chairs of standing committees are voting members.

10.1.B The President chairs the Executive Board.

10.1.C One graduate student representative each from any University and Senate committees may be appointed by the President as voting members.

10.2.D Emeritus officers, the Parliamentarian, the Chief of Staff, the Deputy Treasurer, ad-hoc committee chairs, and the student members of The Ohio State University Board of Trustees may participate in meetings of the Executive Board as ex-officio, non-voting members.

10.3.E During summer term, the Executive Board will consist of those individuals who were members during the spring semester of the previous academic year, the newly elected officers, and all new committee chairs as they are appointed.

Section 10.2 Duties and Powers

10.2.A The Executive Board conducts the business of the Council between regular meetings and recommends actions to be taken by the Council.

10.2.B All actions taken by the Executive Board must be reported to the Council at its next delegate body meeting, and meeting minutes must be publicly distributed. The Executive Board must bring before the Council any matter coming within its knowledge that needs the consideration or action of the Council.

10.2.C A quorum for Executive Board meetings will consist of at least 50% of all active voting members of the Executive Board.

10.2.D The Executive Board approves the agenda for each Council meeting by simple majority vote.

10.2.E The Executive Board approves all officer and committee chair appointments by a simple majority vote. These appointments must be announced at the next regular meeting of the Council.

10.2.F The Executive Board may not take any actions that would directly conflict with a previous directive of the full Council. Other restrictions on the actions of the Executive Board may be imposed by the Council.

10.2.G The Executive Board will build and maintain relationships with sister student governments, with primary responsibility delegated to the President, Vice President, and Chief of Staff, if appointed.

10.2.H Members of the Executive Board must not release official statements on behalf of the Council without approval by simple majority vote from the delegate body. The Executive Board may utilize electronic voting outside of regular meetings for this purpose.
ARTICLE 11: OTHER GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

Section 11.1 The Council must establish and maintain Bylaws, a Code of Ethics and Values, and Standing Rules. These governing documents must be appended to this Constitution and be made available upon request.

Section 11.2 Any proposed amendment to the Bylaws must be sent to all delegates one week prior to a regular meeting of the Council. At the regular meeting of the Council, the proposed amendment to the Bylaws may be approved by a simple majority vote.

Section 11.3 Any proposed amendment to the Code of Ethics and Values must be sent to all delegates one week prior to a regular meeting of the Council. At the regular meeting of the Council, the proposed amendment to the Code of Ethics and Values may be approved by a simple majority vote.

Section 11.4 The Council may establish or amend additional standing rules by a simple majority vote.

ARTICLE 12: AMENDMENTS

Section 12.1 Any proposed amendment to this Constitution must be presented in writing at a regular meeting of the Council either with the signatures of ten delegates or at the initiative of the Executive Committee. A copy of the proposed amendment must be sent to all delegates within five business days of the meeting at which the amendment was presented.

Section 12.2 An affirmative two-thirds vote at a regular meeting following the meeting at which the amendment was proposed will be sufficient to adopt the amendment.