



COUNCIL OF GRADUATE STUDENTS CONSTITUTION

This version of the CGS Constitution was adopted in November 2023 by at least a two-thirds majority vote.

PREAMBLE

The Council of Graduate Students at The Ohio State University (also referred to in these governing documents as “OSU”, “Ohio State”, and “the University”) is the official governing body representing all graduate students at The Ohio State University.

In order to accurately and best represent the needs of our colleagues and constituents, we work to involve as many students as possible in the shared governance process of The Ohio State University. Through the use of the shared governance model, advocacy, and programming, CGS seeks to promote the physical, mental, educational, professional, and social health and welfare of the graduate student community.

CGS’s statement of purpose is, “to effectively advocate and program to ensure that The Ohio State University graduate student experience is the best that it can be”.

ARTICLE 1: NAME

Section 1.1 The name of this organization is the Council of Graduate Students, also referred to in these governing documents 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, extension sites, and distance learning programs at The Ohio State University, referred to hereafter 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 all aspects of the success and experience of graduate students and their role within the University community.

Section 2.3 The Council advocates on behalf of all Ohio State graduate students with attention to the diverse experiences and identities 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 any other protected statuses before any and all relevant parties.

Section 2.4 The Council supports its members from systemically oppressed groups and uplifts their perspectives in an effort to ensure the actions of the Council and the University adequately support graduate students of all identities and experiences.

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

Section 2.6 The Council, via its designees, represents the graduate student body at all venues determined by the Executive Board in consultation with the Delegate body. The Council's designees must keep the Council informed of pertinent information from their assigned venues.

ARTICLE 3: AUTHORITY AND POWERS

Section 3.1 The authority for the establishment of the Council is derived from the consent of the Ohio State 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 University.

Section 3.3 In all matters brought to bodies of The Ohio State University that interest graduate students, the Council or its designated representatives have the power to advise those University 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 and the aforementioned authority derived from the consent of the Ohio State graduate student body.

Section 3.5 The Council has the primary authority to allocate and distribute funds from the Treasury of the Council, so long as this distribution is in line with Council, University, Local, State, and Federal policy, guideline, and law (*for more on the specific procedures surrounding the financials of the Council, please see the CGS Financial Procedures addendum to the CGS Combined Bylaws and Standing Rules*).

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

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP AND ELIGIBILITY

Section 4.1 All graduate students enrolled 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 and as defined by The Ohio State University Graduate School.

Section 4.2 No student will be denied membership in the Council 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 any other protected status.

Section 4.3 All members of the Council must abide by all of the Council's governing documents, and all members agree to do so implicitly by choosing to serve as a member of the Council in any capacity.

Section 4.4 The Council is composed of a Delegate body elected by graduate students (*as outlined throughout Article 2 of the CGS Bylaws & Standing Rules*), Senators elected by voting members of the Council (*as outlined throughout Article 6 of the CGS Bylaws and Standing Rules*) and an Executive Board made up of Elected Executive Officers (*as outlined throughout Article 8 of the CGS Constitution*), Presidential Appointees (*as outlined throughout Article 10 of the CGS Constitution*), and CGS internal Committee Chairs (*as outlined throughout Article 10 of the CGS Constitution*).

Section 4.5 All Delegates and Committee Chairs are voting members of the Council and have full voting and speaking privileges at CGS General Body meetings. Elected Executive Officers, Presidential Appointees, and Senators have speaking rights at General Body meetings but do not hold voting rights (this stands across legislation, motions, elections, and all other voting contexts).

Section 4.6 Delegates who are appointed to Committee Chair positions may retain their Delegate seats during their term of service as a Committee Chair. Elected Executive Officers and Presidential Appointees must resign their Delegate seats when their term as an Officer/Appointee begins (*as outlined in Article 8 of the CGS Constitution*).

ARTICLE 5: QUORUM, MAJORITIES, 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 of the CGS Bylaws & Standing Rules*) 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 and intend to regularly attend Council meetings over the Summer. For all Summer term meetings, half of the total number of voting members available to meet regularly during Summer term will constitute a quorum.

Section 5.2 Each voting member (*as outlined in Article 4, Section 4.5 of the CGS Constitution*) 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. (That is, a Committee Chair who is not also a Delegate may not send an alternate in their place to vote.)

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 a vote of at least two-thirds of all voting members in attendance.

Section 5.6 A simple majority vote is defined as a vote of at least half of all voting members in attendance plus one (i.e., $n + 1$).

ARTICLE 6: REGULAR AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

Section 6.1 There must be at least four regular meetings of the Council during both Fall 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 (with a simple majority vote of approval from the Executive Board), at the request of the Executive Board (via a simple majority vote), or upon presentation of a written request of ten or more Delegates to the President and/or Executive Board. The requested special meeting must be held within nine days of such a request/vote, 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 University session.

Section 6.3 All meetings of the Council will be presided over by an Elected Executive Officer, who will be recognized as the chair. (*See Article 8 of the CGS Constitution for further detail on meeting chair duties and chain of succession.*)

Section 6.4 Every Delegate, Senator, and Executive Board member will signify attendance at a meeting by a procedure supervised by the Secretary (with assistance in this process from the Vice President, if requested). Attendance must be documented for

the Council's records, and specific records must be made available upon reasonable request (at the discretion of the Secretary, with input from other Elected Executive Officers).

ARTICLE 7: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 7.1 The most recent 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 Council's governing documents will take precedence. In cases where there is conflicting procedure or information between governing documents, the following order of precedence takes place: CGS Constitution > CGS Bylaws & Standing Rules > CGS Governing Document Addendums

Section 7.2 The Chair of the meeting (with the counsel of the parliamentarian) 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 by any member of the Council (voting or non-voting) and overturned by a simple majority vote. The Council's ruling (i.e., the outcome of the aforementioned vote) is final.

Section 7.3 The Chair and Parliamentarian are jointly 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.

ARTICLE 8: ELECTED EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & THEIR DUTIES

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

Section 8.2 If a current Delegate becomes an Elected Executive Officer of the Council, they must resign their Delegate seat when the term of office for their elected position begins.

Section 8.3 President

8.3.A The President will preside over all General Body and Executive Board 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 serve as an ex-officio member of the University Senate and its Steering Committee.

8.3.E The President must appoint a Parliamentarian. This appointment will be subject to approval by simple majority vote by the Executive Board. The parliamentarian may be removed at the initiative of the President, or by two Executive Board members. This removal is subject to a majority vote of the Executive Board.

8.3.F The President may appoint a Chief of Staff if they so choose. This appointment will be subject to approval by simple majority vote by the Executive Board. The Chief of Staff may be removed at the initiative of the President, or by two Executive Board members. This removal is subject to a majority vote of the Executive Board.

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 board, as needed and able.

Section 8.4 Vice President

8.4.A The Vice President is responsible for overseeing and maintaining the 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. These records must be regularly updated and uploaded to the CGS Student Live archives for proper record keeping.

8.4.B The Vice President will Chair the Edward F. Hayes Advanced Research Forum Organizing Committee, which showcases the innovative and exemplary research being conducted by Ohio State graduate students and postdoctoral scholars.

8.4.C The Vice President will recruit Delegate candidates, review Delegate eligibility, oversee Delegate elections, and maintain records of all Delegate seats. These records must be regularly updated and uploaded to the CGS Student Life archives for proper record keeping. During recruitment, Vice President must contact staff 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 (except in those cases where the Vice President is running for re-election, for further details on procedures in these cases, please see Article 3, Section 3.3.E of the CGS Bylaws and Standing Rules).

8.4.E The Vice President, in cooperation with additional relevant officers, will regularly upload meeting minutes, meeting packets, legislation, budgets, reports, and agendas and additional appropriate documentation to the CGS website, so that the documents are publicly accessible.

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

8.4.G The Vice President will fulfill other duties necessary for maintaining the operation of the Council as directed by the Council and the Executive Board, as needed and able

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. These duties include ensuring CGS's compliance with all fiscal policies of the Council, the University, the State of Ohio, and Federally (as applicable in each of these realms).

8.5.B The Treasurer will be responsible for creating an annual budget for the Council, and will seek input from the President and vice President in the process of doing so.

8.5.C The Treasurer will be responsible for updating the *CGS Financial Guidelines Bylaws Addendum* in order to keep it in line with Council, University, State, and Federal policy. It will be checked and updated yearly, on the same cycle as the creation of the annual CGS budget.

8.5.D The Treasurer will have the first right of refusal to oversee and chair 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.E 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. (*Further details on this appointment can be found in Article 3, Section 3.4.C of the CGS Bylaws & Standing Rules.*) The Deputy Treasurer may be removed at the initiative of the Treasurer, or by two Executive Board members. This removal is subject to a majority vote of the Executive Board.

8.5.F In the absence of the President and Vice President, the Treasurer will

preside over meetings of the Council.

8.5.G The Treasurer will fulfil other duties necessary for maintaining the operation of the Council as directed by the Council and the Executive Board, as needed and able.

Section 8.6 Secretary

8.6.A The Secretary will be responsible for writing and (in cooperation with the Vice President) publicly publishing minutes of all meetings of the Council and the Executive Board, for (in cooperation with the Vice President) maintaining records of legislation, and for communicating announcements and information to the Delegate body. All minutes and legislation must be publicly published within one week of approval by the Council via the methods indicated throughout the *CGS Combined Bylaws and Standing Rules*

8.6.B The Secretary will be responsible for ensuring that the Constitution, Combined Bylaws and Standing rules, and Code of Ethics & Values are updated at the end of every Academic Year to reflect any and all amendments made during that time.

8.6.C The Secretary will have first right of refusal to oversee and chair 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, Combined Bylaws and Standing Rules, and Code of Ethics & Values are updated at the end of every Academic Year to reflect any and all amendments made during that time.

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. (*Further details on this appointment can be found in 3.4.D of the CGS Bylaws & Standing Rules.*) The Deputy Secretary may be removed at the initiative of the Secretary, or by two Executive Board members. This removal is subject to a majority vote of 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. If none of these persons are available, the Secretary will work with the rest of the Executive Board to identify an alternate note taker.

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 other duties necessary for

maintaining the operation of the Council as directed by the Council and the Executive Board, as needed and able.

Section 8.7 Removal of Elected Executive Officers

8.7.A The council has the authority to remove any Elected Executive Officers for violation of the Council's governing documents through the following procedure:

8.7.A.i A written motion requesting an investigation of an Elected 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 Board.

8.7.A.ii The Elected Executive Officer must be given the opportunity to respond to the written motion after its presentation at the regular meeting when it is presented. If, after the Officer's response, the motion for an investigation is approved by a simple majority vote, a committee will be convened to conduct an investigation into the allegations against the Elected Executive Officer and present its findings at the next regular Council meeting. The membership and chair of this committee will be subject to approval by a simple majority vote by the Council.

8.7.A.iii Following the presentation of investigative findings at a regular meeting of the Council (as stated above), a two-thirds majority vote of the Council is required to approve the removal of the Elected Executive Officer. This removal will be effective immediately after the two-thirds majority vote is secured.

Section 8.8 Elected Executive Officer Vacancies

8.8.A A vacancy will be declared if an Elected Executive Officer is removed or is unable to fulfill their duties as outlined in the CGS 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 Elected 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 following the procedures outlined in Section 8.8.D of the CGS Constitution. 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 Treasurer will serve as President pro tempore. In the case that the position of Treasurer is also vacant, then the Secretary 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 following the occurrence of the vacancy.

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 Board.

ARTICLE 9: COMMITTEES

Section 9.1 All standing committees are led by Committee Chairs, who are appointed by the President and approved by the current (at the time of the President's nomination) members of the Executive Board by simple majority vote.

Section 9.2 The Council may create 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 Council to extend.

ARTICLE 10: THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 10.1 Membership of the Executive Board is enumerated as follows:

10.1.A All four Elected Executive Officers and all Chairs of standing committees are voting members of the Executive board. Elected Officers are not voting members in any matters or contexts beyond that of the Executive Board. Officers holding chairships of ad hoc or standing committees do not have voting rights in non-Executive Board (i.e., regular or special Council) meetings as non-Officer chairs do.

10.1.B The President chairs the Executive Board.

10.1.C One graduate student representative each from any University and/or University Senate committees may be appointed by the President as voting members, with the approval of the Executive Board via a simple majority vote.

10.1.D Emeritus officers, the Parliamentarian, the Chief of Staff, the Deputy Treasurer, the Deputy Secretary, 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.

10.1.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 Executive Board 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 available. 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 half of all active voting members of the Executive Board (*as defined by Article 10, Section 10.1 of the CGS Constitution*).

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 Presidential appointments 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 parallel student Governments (e.g., the Undergraduate Student Government, the Interprofessional Student Council), 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 a *Combined Bylaws and Standing Rules*, a *Financial Guidelines and Procedures*, and a *Code of Ethics and Values*. These governing documents must be appended to this Constitution and be made available upon request, in addition to being publicly posted on the CGS website.

Section 11.2 Any proposed amendment to the *CGS Combined Bylaws and Standing Rules* must be sent to all voting CGS members with an accompanying Act one week prior to a regular meeting of the Council, within the meeting packet. At the regular meeting of the Council following the presentation of the proposed amendments, the proposed amendment to the Bylaws may be approved via a simple majority vote.

Section 11.3 Any proposed amendment to the *CGS Financial Guidelines and Procedures* must be sent to all voting CGS members with an accompanying Act one week prior to a regular meeting of the Council, within the meeting packet. At the regular meeting of the Council following the presentation of the proposed amendments, the proposed amendment to the *CGS Financial Guidelines and Procedures* may be approved via a simple majority vote.

Section 11.4 Any proposed amendment to the *CGS Code of Ethics and Values* must be sent to all voting CGS members with an accompanying Act one week prior to a regular meeting of the Council. At the regular meeting of the Council following the presentation of the proposed amendments, the proposed amendment to the *Code of Ethics and Values* may be approved via a simple majority vote

ARTICLE 12: CONSTITUTIONAL 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 Board via an authored Act. A copy of the proposed amendment must be sent to all voting CGS members within five business days of the meeting at which the amendment was presented.

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