

# The Constitution of the Council of Graduate Students

## Article I - Name

**Section I.1:** The name of this organization is the Council of Graduate Students, hereinafter also referred to as the "the Council" or "CGS."

## Article II - Mission

**Section II.1:** The Council is the representative body for all students enrolled in graduate programs at The Ohio State University, hereinafter also referred to as "graduate students" or the "graduate student body."

**Section II.2:** The Council of Graduate Students promotes and provides academic, administrative, and social programs for the university community in general and for graduate students in particular.

**Section II.3:** The Council provides a forum in which the graduate student body may present, discuss, and set upon issues related to its role in the academic and non-academic aspects of the university community.

**Section II.4:** The Council shall represent The Ohio State University graduate student body at the national level in a manner as determined by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Delegate body. The President or his/her designee will be the primary representative of the Council at the national level and shall keep the Council informed of all such activities. (Amended 6/27/14, 1415SU005)

## Article III - Authority and powers

**Section III.1:** The authority for the establishment of the Council of Graduate Students is derived from the consent of the graduate student body.

**Section III.2:** The Council is recognized by The Ohio State University and the Graduate School as the only organization representing all graduate students at The Ohio State University.

**Section III.3:** On all matters brought before personnel, committees, or agencies of The Ohio State University involving the interest of graduate students, the Council or its appointed representative(s) have the power to sit as an advisory agent on behalf of graduate students.

**Section III.4:** The Council has the power to plan and implement programs in accordance with its mission.

**Section III.5:** The Council has the primary authority to allocate and distribute funds from the treasury of the Council and has the power to collect fees or voluntary contributions approved by The Ohio State Board of Trustees on all students enrolled in the Graduate School.

**Section III.6:** The Council judges the elections, returns, and qualifications of its own members and determines its own rules of procedure.

#### **Article IV - Membership and Eligibility**

**Section IV.1:** A person is eligible to hold any Council position, elected or appointed, if and only if that person meets the qualifications for graduate student status in good standing as defined by that person's program of study and the graduate school.

**Section IV.2:** The Council of Graduate Students is composed of delegates chosen by the graduate students of the unit of representation or by any other such means as Council shall enact and publish.

**Section IV.3:** No student shall be denied membership in this organization on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, political views, veteran status, sexual orientation, disability, or gender identity. (Amended 4/18/14, 1314SP013)

#### **Article V - Elections and officers**

**Section V.1:** The Council of Graduate Students shall elect annually from the graduate student body the following Executive Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

**Section V.2:** If applicable, once a person becomes an executive officer of the Council, that person will resign as a delegate when the term of office begins.

##### **Section V.3: President**

V.3.A. The President presides over all meetings of the Council and is responsible for implementing all decisions of the Council.

V.3.B. The President selects the time and place of all regular and special meetings of the Council. The President shall inform each delegate 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.

V.3.C. The President has primary responsibility for managing the office associate and for ensuring Council compliance with Council, University, State, and Federal fiscal and personnel policies.

V.3.D. The President shall also serve as a liaison between CGS and the Graduate School, the University administration, and the Ohio State Board of Trustees.

V.3.E. The president serves, externally, as an ex officio member of the University Senate and its Steering Committee. The President, or designee serves, externally, on the Council of Student Affairs.

V.3.F. The President shall fulfill other duties as directed by the Council and the Executive Committee.

#### **Section V.4: Vice President**

V.4.A. The Vice President coordinates the Edward F. Hayes Graduate Research Forum and represents the Council of Graduate Students in the planning of orientation and welcome week-related activities and events.

V.4.B. In the absence of the President, or if the President is temporarily unable to fulfill his or her duties, the Vice President shall serve in the President's place.

V.4.C. The Vice President chairs the Organization and Elections Committee and is responsible for ensuring that all delegate and committee positions are filled.

V.4.D. The Vice President is responsible for ensuring that CGS committee and member records are properly maintained.

V.4.E. The Vice President shall serve as a liaison between CGS and other student organizations.

V.4.F. The Vice President serves, externally, on the Council on Student Affairs and the Welcome Week Steering Committee. The Vice President, or designee, serves, externally, on the Council on Student Affairs.

V.4.G. In the absence of the President, the Vice President presides over meetings of the Council.

V.4.H. The Vice President shall fulfill other duties as directed by the Council, the Executive Committee, and the President.

#### **Section V.5: Secretary**

V.5.A. The Secretary is responsible for keeping the minutes of the meetings of the Council and its Executive Committee, for maintaining records, and for conducting correspondence.

V.5.B. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining attendance records and determining quorum (see Article VIII, Sec. 2) at Council meetings.

V.5.C. In the absence of the President and Vice President, the Secretary presides over meetings of the Council.

V.5.D. The Secretary shall fulfill other duties as directed by the Council, the Executive Committee, and the President.

V.5.E. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining a record of all legislation that has been passed throughout the academic year, and that this record is formally passed to the next incumbent Executive Board.

V.5.F. The Secretary shall be responsible for ensuring that all governing documents (Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules) are updated at the end of every semester of all legislative amendments. (Amended 2/14/14, 1314SP010)

### **Section V.6: Treasurer**

V.6.A. The Treasurer handles all the finances of the Council and keeps an accurate record of its financial status at all times.

V.6.B. The Treasurer serves as an ex officio voting member of the Council on Student Affairs and its Allocations subcommittee and is responsible for overseeing the Council's Edward J. Ray Travel Award for Scholarship and Service. The Treasurer, or designee, serves as an ex officio voting member of the Council on Student Affairs and its Allocations subcommittee.

V.6.C. In the absence of the President, Vice President, and Secretary, the Treasurer presides over the meetings of the Council.

V.6.D. The Treasurer shall fulfill other duties as directed by the Council.

**Section V.7:** The Council has the authority to remove an Executive Officer only through the following procedure:

V.7.A. The written motion for such an action, bearing the signatures of at least ten certified Council delegates, or an affidavit of a two thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee, must be submitted at a regular meeting of the Council. (Approved 4/18/14 1314SP015)

V.7.B. The officer shall be given the opportunity to respond to the motion at a hearing with the Organization and Elections Committee.

V.7.C. The Organization and Elections Committee will thereupon conduct an investigation into the allegations against the officer and present its findings at the next Council meeting.

V.7.D. Following this presentation, the motion will be voted upon. A two-thirds vote of the Council is required to effect the removal.

### **Section V.8: Vacancy**

V.8.A. In the event the presidency falls vacant, the Vice President shall have the option of becoming the President. In this instance, the Council shall elect a new Vice President. The Vice President shall also have the option of refusing the office of the presidency, in which case the Vice President shall serve as President *pro tempore* until such time as the Council is able to elect a new

President. Subsequent to the election of the President, the President *pro tempore* shall reassume the office and duties of Vice President.

V.8.B. In the event of a vacancy in any other Executive Officer position, an election to complete the current term will be held no later than the second 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 Council shall enact. An interim officer may be appointed by the President to hold office until such time as an election can be held.

## **Article VI - Committees**

**Section VI.1:** The Executive Committee conducts the business of the Council between meetings and prepares the agenda for regularly-scheduled meetings.

**Section VI.2:** The Organization and Elections committee oversees all business relating to membership credentials, external representation, and elections procedures.

**Section VI.3:** The Edward J. Ray Travel Award for Scholarship and Service Committee sets eligibility and application guidelines for the Award and determines its recipients.

**Section VI.4:** The Council may create such standing or ad hoc committees as it deems necessary.

## **Article VII - Meetings**

**Section VII.1:** There will be at least four regular meetings of the Council of Graduate Students during each semester and summer term. Over the summer, the Executive team may cancel up to two meetings if need be.

**Section VII.2:** Special meetings shall be called at the discretion of the President, at the request of the Executive Committee, or upon the written request of ten or more delegates.

**Section VII.3:** All meetings of the Council are presided over by an executive officer, who shall have the ability to vote in the case of a tie.

## **Article VIII - Quorum and Voting**

**Section VIII.1:** At all meetings of the Council of Graduate Students, except those held in summer term, one-fifth the number of certified delegates and executive committee members shall constitute a quorum. At the summer term meetings of CGS, one-fifth of the number of certified delegates and executive committee members who indicate summer residency in the Columbus area at the last meeting of Spring semester shall constitute a quorum.

**Section VIII.2:** Each delegate in attendance shall have one vote that may only be cast in person. In the event of an absence, a delegate's designated certified alternate may attend and shall be entitled to the same general powers and privileges in the Council as the delegate, including voting.

**Section VIII.3:** Voting members of the Executive Committee who are not Executive Officers shall have full voting and speaking privileges at Council meetings. Such Executive Committee members may not designate alternates to vote on their behalf at Council meetings. An Executive Committee member who is also a delegate may not vote twice.

**Section VIII.4:** Every voting member and Executive Officer will signify attendance at a meeting by a procedure supervised by the Secretary and approved by the Council. This procedure may differ for summer term. It must be documented and available upon request.

## **Article IX - Parliamentary Authority**

**Section IX.1:** The current edition of "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised" governs the procedures of all meetings of the Council except where conflicting with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Council of Graduate Students.

**Section IX.2:** The chair of the Council meeting shall be responsible for interpreting all relevant aspects of the CGS Constitution, Bylaws, and rules of order. Decisions of the chair may be appealed to the full Council. The Council's ruling is final.

**Section IX.3:** The President may appoint a parliamentarian to advise on the details in Section IX.2 and other relevant matters.

## **Article X - Bylaws**

**Section X.1:** Any proposed amendment to the Bylaws must be sent to all delegates one week prior to a regular meeting of the Council of Graduate Students. At the regular meeting of the Council, the proposed amendment to the Bylaws may be approved by a simple majority vote.

**Section X.2:** These Bylaws shall be appended to this Constitution and be made available upon request. (Approved 4/18/14, 1314SP012)

## **Article XI- Standing Rules**

**Section XI.1:** The Council may establish additional standing rules by a simple majority vote. Such rules shall be appended to the Bylaws and be available upon request.

## **Article XII - Amendments**

**Section XII.1:** Any proposed amendment to this Constitution must be presented in writing either with the signatures of ten delegates or at the initiative of the Executive Committee at a regular meeting of the Council of Graduate Students.

**Section XII.2:** A copy of the proposed amendment must be sent to all delegates at least one week before the regular meeting that follows the meeting at which the amendment was proposed.

**Section XII.3:** An affirmative vote of two-thirds at a regular meeting following the meeting at which the amendment was proposed will be sufficient to adopt the amendment.

## **Article XIII - Code of Ethics and Values**

(This code is based on the work of the Santa Clara University's Associated Student Government and the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics) (Approved 4/18/14, 1314SP014)

### **Preamble**

The Council of Graduate Students of Ohio State University (CGS), hereinafter referred to as CGS and the Organization, is the official body representing graduate students' diverse issues, concerns, and needs at 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. To these ends, CGS has adopted this Code of Ethics and Values (hereinafter referred to as our Code) to (1) live out the mission espoused in our Constitution; (2) and establish basic standards of ethical behavior for academic and professional life. A CGS representative is defined as any member of CGS acting in any capacity for the organization, including: Officers, Committee Chairs, Committee Members, Senators, Delegates, and appointed members. Every CGS representative is a signatory to the Code, which symbolizes a united pledge to abide by the Code's spirit and principles. The ten values enumerated in this Code represent ten equally-significant guiding ideals of the Organization, and delegates hold themselves and each other accountable for adherence.

### **Behavioral Standards and Values**

#### **1. As a CGS Representative, I value *Honesty*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I express my genuine opinion on issues even if my view is unpopular.
- b. I only make promises that I genuinely believe I can keep.
- c. I disclose my affiliations with any organization or with any friends or groups that have substantial business with CGS.
- d. I abstain or recuse myself from the decision-making process in all situations when I believe that I cannot exercise impartial judgment.

#### **2. As a CGS Representative, I value *Fairness*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I seek out diverse ideas/opinions and reserve judgment until I have all of the relevant information.

- b. I treat all viewpoints with respect, even if I do not personally agree with them.
- c. I only take credit for work that I have done and acknowledge everyone who assists me in accomplishing tasks.
- d. I observe the established procedures detailed in the Constitution and Bylaws and demonstrate transparency in my decision-making process.

**3. As a CGS Representative, I value *Flexibility*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I am willing to re-evaluate a prior decision in light of unforeseen circumstances in order to uphold the fundamental mission of CGS.
- b. I adapt my communication style to the situation, and to accommodate the concerns of persons involved.

**4. As a CGS Representative, I value *Responsibility*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I seek to maintain personal integrity and the integrity of the organization.
- b. I can clearly articulate how my decision will advance the Organization's core values.
- c. I use CGS materials and resources solely for CGS-related activities.
- d. I take ownership for the decisions I make or fail to make, the actions I take or fail to take, and the consequences that result.
- e. I protect confidential information that has been entrusted to me.

**5. As a CGS Representative, I value *Communication*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I clearly convey messages and relay necessary information to fellow delegates as soon as possible.
- b. I ask clarifying questions if I disagree or do not understand.
- c. I actively seek feedback from a diverse range of students and promote the mission and goals of the Organization.
- d. I only act on behalf of CGS or OSU when I am authorized specifically to do so.

**6. As a CGS Representative, I value *Responsiveness*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I am available to all students and fellow delegates and keep them informed on CGS projects and events.
- b. I am ready to respond in a direct and respectful manner to issues that implicate the well-being, justice, and unity of our community.

**7. As a CGS Representative, I value *Cooperation*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I seek to work with others and divide responsibilities on tasks.
- b. I encourage new ideas and share all relevant information with others.



- c. I strive to reach a consensus that best serves the OSU community.

**8. As a CGS Representative, I value *Commitment*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I continue to pursue worthy goals, regardless of their difficulty.
- b. I have a clear set of objectives, a general time-frame for accomplishment, and am willing to see difficult projects through to their completion.
- c. I make every effort to recommend potential services when I am unable to fulfill a request.

**9. As a CGS Representative, I value *Professionalism*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I prepare for meetings by reading the necessary materials and arriving on-time.
- b. I make guests at meetings feel welcome, and devote my full attention to their presentations.
- c. I speak respectfully, without profanity or sarcasm.
- d. I approach directly those persons with whom I have a conflict or disagreement.

**10. As a CGS Representative, I value *Service*. In practice, this value looks like:**

- a. I make a concerted effort to assist my peers in any capacity.
- b. I focus on the needs of the greater student body, with consideration for my own position as a student within that body.
- c. I understand my role as a CGS Representative as service to the values articulated in our Constitution.

*(as revised, 1 May 2014, and amended, 21 March 2014)*