



# **Constitution and Bylaws of the University of Guelph Graduate Students' Association**

**APPROVED AT THE GSA AGM 31-03-2021**

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## **1.0 General**

### **1.1 GSA Mission Statement**

To advance the academic goals and professional and personal development of the University of Guelph graduate student body by providing key academic, social, and financial resources. The GSA strives to ensure the accessibility of these resources and to responsibly articulate the interest of graduate students to the appropriate persons and organization(s). The GSA is committed to the pursuit of a system of high quality graduate education.

The objective of the Graduate Students' Association, is to uphold the services of The Grad Student Lounge (also known as, The Fifth: GSA Rooftop Patio and Lounge). The GSA will work with the Grad Student Lounge Manager to develop supports and work to achieve goals of long-term sustainability of our licensed establishment, as graduate student recreational and professional space.

### **1.2 Definitions**

Unless otherwise stated, in these Bylaws the following shall be defined as:

“GSA” means the Graduate Students' Association, the Corporation and Primary Student Organization representing graduate student interests at the University of Guelph;

“Bylaws” means the Constitution and Bylaws, the policy document governing the activities of the GSA;

“Board of Directors” means the governing body of the GSA;

“General Director” means any elected representative on the Board of Directors from a recognized departmental unit at the University, or the Indigenous, international, LGBTQ2SIA+, and Black graduate student population;

“Executive” means the President and CEO, Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and/or Vice President External;

“University” means University of Guelph, including Ridgetown Campus;

“Membership” means graduate student members of the GSA as outlined in Section 2.0; holders of membership shall be herein referred to as “member”;

“Departmental Unit” means any Department or School at the University with a Chair or Director as recognized by the Office of Graduate Studies of the University, as outlined in Appendix 1;

“Appointed Officer” means the Chair, Chief Returning Officer, and Activities

and Communications Coordinator of the GSA;

“Graduate Student” means any student registered in a graduate program at the University;

“email” means the @uoguelph.ca email of the individual(s) to which the specific Bylaw applies;

“Day” means a business day of the GSA Office;

“Website” means the GSA main website found at the URL:  
[www.uoguelph.ca/gsa](http://www.uoguelph.ca/gsa);

“Social media” means any internet-based application where a user can create and share content, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn;

"GSA Employee or Staff" means salaried employees of the GSA Office;

“Constituency” means the student body which elects a General Director or Executive;

“Regular meeting” is defined as the regularly scheduled monthly meetings of the Board of Directors.

### **1.3 Interpretation**

**1.3.1** These Bylaws shall be interpreted in accordance with the following:

- a) the headings in the Bylaws are inserted for reference purposes only, and are not to be considered or taken into account in construing the terms or provisions thereof or to be deemed in any way to clarify, modify, or explain the effect of any such terms or provision;
- b) any references herein to any contractual agreement, regulation or policy shall be construed as a reference thereto as amended or re-enacted from time to time or as a reference to any successor thereto.
- c) any dispute over the interpretation of the Bylaws shall be referred to the Vice President Internal, who shall make a ruling. In all circumstances where the Vice President Internal’s ruling is disputed, the Bylaws Committee shall make the final definitive decision.

### **1.4 Human Rights Statement**

The GSA, as part of the University of Guelph’s community, abides by the University’s Human Rights Policy. The Human Rights Policy at the University of Guelph is committed to maintaining the human dignity of individuals and groups of individuals. The University of Guelph and the GSA are committed to a campus free of discrimination and harassment, and are dedicated to the highest standards of human equality and academic freedom. The

University of Guelph and the GSA will not tolerate any violations of human rights.

Discrimination and harassment based on grounds prohibited by the Ontario Human Rights Code devalue and taint the environment of those covered by the policy. The GSA, as a part of the University of Guelph's community, is also committed to foster an environment that respects the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) under the timeline as provided by the University.

## **1.5 Conflict of Interest**

**1.5.1** No member of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, Appointed Officer, or GSA Employee shall place their own interests before those of the GSA, and shall declare and avoid any conflict(s) of interest and action(s) that would give them the appearance of a personal benefit. No member of the Board of Directors, Appointed Officer, or GSA Employee shall use their position for financial gain.

**1.5.2** Determination that an individual is in a conflict of interest shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors of 20% of constituents which the individual serves. Immediately upon determination of a conflict of interest, the individual found to be in conflict shall remove themselves from all decisions and responsibilities relating to the conflict.

**1.5.3** Determination of a conflict of interest may be appealed to the Bylaws Committee by submitting the Determination of Conflict of Interest form available from the GSA Office Manager. Appeals shall be decided by a majority vote of the members of the Bylaws Committee.

**1.5.4** No GSA Executive may hold an executive position with another student organization whereby they have signing authority and/or are paid a stipend, honourarium or receive some other type of regular financial salary or gain.

## **1.6 Communications**

**1.6.1** All communications between the GSA and the Board of Directors shall first be sent to the GSA Office to be distributed by the GSA Office Manager or approved designate.

**1.6.2** Communications sent through the GSA media include email, letter mail, the website, and social media. All website maintenance shall be the responsibility of the GSA Office Manager; associated tasks can be delegated to the GSA Activities and Communications Coordinator, or the GSA Office Assistant.

**1.6.3** All communications must be approved by the President or designated Executive(s) prior to distribution.

**1.6.4** No request to distribute communication(s) to the Board of Directors may be unreasonably denied. Any individual who has their request to distribute a communication denied may appeal the decision to the Bylaws Committee.

## **1.7 GSA Head Office**

The Head Office of the GSA shall be within the University Centre of the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada and at such place therein as the Executive determine and the lease dictates.

## **1.8 Seal**

The seal, as affixed on the original copy herein, shall be the Corporate Seal of the GSA. The Seal shall be maintained in the GSA Office.

## **2.0 GSA Membership**

### **2.1 Membership Requirements**

The membership of the GSA shall consist of individuals registered in a recognized graduate degree program at the University, as recognized by the Office of Graduate Studies, and have paid the GSA membership fee.

### **2.2 Membership Fee**

**2.2.1** The membership fee for each year, and a breakdown of such fees, will be made available to members on the GSA website.

**2.2.2** The membership fee shall increase annually by an amount in agreement with the Cost of Living Allowance. The membership fee may be amended by majority vote of the membership on an appropriate referendum question conducted under the provisions of the Bylaws.

### **2.3 Rights and Privileges of the GSA Members**

**2.3.1** All GSA members:

- d) have the right to participate in all GSA events, including, but not limited to, meetings of the GSA Board of Directors, Annual General Meeting (AGM), social events, elections, by-elections, and referenda, unless specified otherwise herein
- e) are entitled to all services provided by the GSA, where applicable; and
- f) are entitled to stand for election to, and hold the title of, a General Director for the departmental unit in which they are registered, or an Executive position, in accordance with Sections 5.2 and 6.7 of the Bylaws.

### **2.4 Termination of Membership**

An individual's membership in the GSA shall be valid as long as the individual is registered in a graduate program at the University. An individual's membership in the GSA is automatically terminated at the end of the semester in which they have successfully completed their degree requirements as outlined by the University Registrar, and therefore no longer pay membership fees to the GSA.

### **2.5 Annual General Meeting**

**2.5.1** The GSA shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in March of each year in lieu of a regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting. The date of the meeting will be selected with consideration afforded to religious holidays.

**2.5.2** Notice of AGM, including the date, time, and location, must be given at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.

**2.5.3** The purpose of the AGM shall be:

- a) to receive reports on the activities of the GSA and each Executive for the preceding year;
- b) to vote to accept or reject amendment(s), if any, to the Bylaws as presented by the Vice President Internal and the Bylaws Committee. Amendments to the Bylaws will be presented en masse, barring a motion at the AGM that the amendments be approved individually;
- c) to appoint an independent accounting firm for the coming fiscal year;
- d) to announce the results of the Executive elections and referenda, when applicable, to the GSA membership; and

- e) to conduct any other business for which notice has been given.
- 2.5.4** In addition to general meeting procedures as outlined in section 3.2, the AGM shall be conducted according to the following provisions:
  - g) quorum for the AGM shall be one hundred (100) votes
  - h) all members of the GSA are entitled to vote at the AGM in person or by proxy
  - i) proxy voting shall be according to the following procedures:
    - (i) A proxy holder shall be a member of the GSA;
    - (ii) A signed proxy form, available from the GSA Office Manager, shall be submitted to the Chair prior to voting at the AGM
    - (iii) The signed proxy form can be submitted in person or via email. Email proxies must be received by noon the day of the scheduled AGM
  - j) all decisions shall be decided by a majority vote of the members in attendance and represented by proxy.

### **3.0 The Board of Directors**

#### **3.1 Composition of the Board of Directors**

**3.1.1** The Board of Directors shall be composed of:

- a) the executive, including the following titles:
  - (i) President and CEO;
  - (ii) Vice President Internal;
  - (iii) Vice President Finance; and
  - (iv) Vice President External;
- b) up to two (2) General Directors representing each recognized departmental unit at the University (a list of recognized departmental unites is provided in Appendix 1), up to two (2) International Student Representatives, up to two (2) LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Representatives, up to two (2) Indigenous Student Representatives, and up to two (2) Black Student Representatives;
- c) a non-voting chair.

**3.1.2** All members of the Board of Directors must be members of the GSA.

#### **3.2 Meetings of the Board of Directors**

**3.2.1** Meeting agenda and motions presented for consideration during a meeting must be made available at least three (3) days prior to said meeting. Motions presented for consideration after this deadline or during a meeting (except those related to Petitions, Delegations and Representation [Activities Grant]) must be written and submitted to the Chair and shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote to pass.

- a) Meetings of the GSA shall be held at the University of Guelph. During May of each year, the meeting locations will be determined based on room reservations.
- b) Meetings of the GSA shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order and the Bylaws. Meeting procedures stipulated in these Bylaws shall override any stipulation made in Robert's Rules of Order.
- c) Meetings of the GSA shall be open to all GSA members. Non-members of the Board of Directors shall not be excluded from a meeting except for improper conduct or as provided herein.
- d) Non-members of the Board of Directors may be granted speaking rights by the



- Chair.
- e) Only members of the Board of Directors may be present if a meeting has been moved "in camera." Presence of GSA Appointed Officers and staff may be permitted at the discretion of the Chair.
  - f) Any decision made by the Chair may be overturned by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors.
  - g) Motions at a meeting of the Board of Directors shall be decided by a majority vote unless specified otherwise herein. In the case of a tie, the motion fails.
  - h) At any meeting, unless a poll is demanded, a declaration by the Chair that a motion has been carried, or fails, shall be sufficient for an entry to be made in the minutes. Such an entry shall be considered as proof of a majority decision without the necessity of providing a vote count. A vote count may be requested by any member of the Board of Directors.
  - i) A record of all meetings (minutes) of the Board of Directors or GSA membership shall be made available to all members of the GSA and shall be distributed by the GSA Office Manager. Minutes shall be presented for approval at the subsequent regular meeting of the Board of Directors. Accepted minutes shall be signed by the Chair and President and CEO and archived. Board minutes shall be posted on the website within fourteen (14) days after being approved.
  - j) Notice for a meeting shall be sent according to guidelines set out for said meeting. The statutory declaration that notice has been given pursuant to the Bylaws shall be sufficient and conclusive evidence to the giving of such notice. If an error or omission in giving such notice for a meeting is alleged to have occurred, an appeal can be filed with the GSA Bylaws Committee, which will then rule on the validity of the proceedings and may rule to void the proceedings.

**3.2.2** In addition to the general meeting procedures in Section 3.2.1, regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be conducted according to the following procedures:

- a) Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least once per month. No regularly scheduled meeting shall be required in August or March. The AGM in March shall take place in lieu of a Board of Directors meeting, but no presentations or speakers shall be part of the agenda unless previously approved by the Executive Committee and notice is made available at least seven (7) days prior to said meeting.
- b) The meeting schedule shall be decided upon by the Executive during the annual Executive Committee Transition.
- c) Notice of regular meetings shall be sent via email to the Board of Directors at the beginning of each semester and a reminder of the meetings shall be sent no less than three (3) days prior to the date of the meeting. The meeting notice shall include all materials to be discussed at said meeting, including, but not limited to, the agenda and Executive reports. The meeting schedule shall be included on the GSA website, and on the nomination form for General Directors, and shall be sent to all General Directors upon their successful election to the Board of Directors.
- d) Quorum for regular meetings shall be two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of voting seats of the Board of Directors. Quorum for regular meetings shall be reduced to one-third (1/3) of the total number of voting seats of the Board of

Directors for the period of May 1 to August 31. Voting seats are defined as one (1) per represented department, one (1) International Student Representative, one (1) LGBTQ2SIA+ Student Representative, one (1) Indigenous Student Representative, one (1) Black Student Representative, and one (1) per executive member.

- e) There is a limit of three (3) Activities Grant application reviews, as per Section 9.4, per meeting, with the exception of tabled Activities Grants.

**3.2.3** In addition to the general meeting procedures in Section 3.2.1, special meetings of the Board of Directors shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures (a special meeting is defined as a meeting of the Board of Directors or GSA membership called outside of the regular meeting schedule):

- a) Unless specified otherwise herein, special meetings may be called by:
  - (i) three-quarters (3/4) of the Executive;
  - (ii) one-third (1/3) of the voting seats of the Board of Directors; or
  - (iii) ten percent (10%) of the GSA membership.
- b) Quorum for special meetings shall be one-half (1/2) of the total number of voting seats of the Board of Directors.
- c) Notice of special meetings shall be sent via email to the Board of Directors, and GSA membership where required, not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the date of the meeting. The meeting notice shall include all materials to be discussed at said meeting.

## **4.0 General Directors**

### **4.1 Responsibilities of General Directors**

**4.1.1** The Responsibilities of General Directors shall be:

- a) to attend duly called meetings of the Board of Directors or, if not able to attend, send regrets to the GSA Office Manager at least two (2) hours prior to the meeting;
- b) In the case of in-person meetings, electronic attendance is permitted for one (1) regular meeting per term. A GSA General Director who wishes to attend the GSA Board Meeting electronically is solely responsible for ensuring their attendance is facilitated by another GSA General Director or graduate student designate. The General Director should inform both the GSA Office Manager and the desired facilitator at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting. A GSA General Director who is a proxy holder must attend in person.
- c) to act as a liaison between the GSA and graduate students in the departmental unit which they represent. In the case of the Indigenous, International LGBTQ2SIA+, and Black Graduate Student representative(s), to act as a liaison between the GSA and the graduate student communities they represent. Communication with their departmental unit shall be achieved by, at minimum, monthly newsletters to their constituents outlining graduate student-related campus news, GSA activities and Board Meeting Updates. The Frequency of these newsletters is at the discretion of the Vice- President Internal;
- d) to solicit feedback and opinions from their constituents;
- e) to regularly monitor and respond appropriately to any correspondence that might be distributed by the Executive;

- f) to represent the GSA on at least one (1) GSA Committee and University Committee as assigned by the Vice President Internal;
- g) to attend all meeting(s) of the committee(s) on which they are a GSA representative; to provide a written report on all relevant decisions, issues and activities to the GSA Vice President Internal at least seven (7) days before a meeting of the Board of Directors.
- h) if a General Director is unable to attend a meeting of the committee(s) on which they are assigned, they shall contact the assigned alternate General Director to go in their place; if the alternate is unable to attend, the General Director should contact the Vice President Internal;
- i) to ensure activities of the GSA comply with the GSA Mission Statement; and
- j) to uphold the Human Rights Statement of the GSA and the University Human Rights Policy.
- k) to sign a letter of agreement with the GSA acknowledging these responsibilities. One copy will be given to the General Director, and one copy will be retained by the Vice President Internal.
- l) duties and related items of re-elected General Director does not carry over from the previous term and is at the discretion of the Vice- President Internal.

**4.1.2** No General Director shall present themselves as a representative of the GSA to any individual, committee, or organization without permission from the Executive.

## **4.2 Election of General Directors**

### **4.2.1 General Director Guidelines**

- a) General Director Elections shall occur in September of each year with elected General Directors commencing their term on October 1 of the same year, and terminating their term on September 30 of the following year. A by-election shall be held in January of the following year, if required, to fill any remaining General Director vacancies.
- b) Any General Director positions that are not filled during the by-election shall remain vacant for the remainder of the term. Further by-elections may be held to fill vacancies at the discretion of the Vice President Internal.

### **4.2.2 Nominations and Eligibility**

- a) The nomination period shall commence at the discretion of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO), in consultation with the Vice President Internal. The nomination period shall commence as soon as possible after the University calendar's September Add/Drop deadline and will be at least five (5) days in duration.
- b) Only current members of the GSA as outlined in Section 2.0 are eligible to be nominated for a position as General Director.
- c) Members who have previously been removed from a position on the Board of Directors, as per Section 4.4 or 5.8, are ineligible to seek election to any position on the Board of Directors for a period of one (1) year after their removal.
- d) Nominations for General Director positions shall be submitted by email to the Chief Returning Officer. Candidate nomination statements shall be made available to the GSA membership during the election nomination period.

### **4.2.3 Campaigning**

- a) The campaign period shall immediately follow the nomination period and shall be two (2) days in duration.
- b) The CRO shall review all campaign material, including all material posted on social media, prior to publishing to ensure that they are not libelous or offensive. If any campaign material is published without permission, the CRO can choose to remove that candidate from the campaign
- c) All campaigning must cease, and any campaign materials removed by 4:30 pm EST on the last day of the campaign period. Failure to comply may result in disqualification from the election.
- d) No campaigning shall be permitted during the voting period.

#### **4.2.4 Ballots and Voting**

- a) The voting period shall follow the campaign period and be at least two (2) days in duration.
- b) Each candidate shall be permitted to submit a statement of up to one hundred fifty (150) words in length. The statements will appear on the ballot and must be submitted with the nomination form. The Chief Returning Officer has the discretion to reject any statement found to be libelous or offensive if the candidate refuses to make any changes deemed necessary by the Chief Returning Officer. Statements that exceed the word limit will be cut off after 150 words.
- c) Voting shall be conducted by electronic ballot distributed through the GSA listserv, as created by the University of Guelph Department of Computing and Communication Services.
- d) Ballots shall contain the following information:
  - (i) The position to be filled with a brief description of the position;
  - (ii) Candidate name(s) and statement(s), if provided, presented in alphabetical order according to last name;
  - (iii) A statement indicating the voter may choose up to two (2) of the candidates listed where more than one (1) candidate has applied for the position; and,
  - (iv) Voters shall have the option to decline or to vote for none of the listed candidates, where applicable.
- e) Immediately prior to the commencement of the voting period, the CRO shall cast a paper ballot for each position being contested in the election. This ballot shall be sealed and used in the event of a tie. If no tie exists after the election this ballot shall be destroyed without opening.

#### **4.2.5 Results**

- a) The CRO shall obtain the election results following the voting period. The CRO shall prepare a summary report outlining the name(s) of the successful candidate(s), the total number of votes cast for each candidate, and the total number of votes cast in the election. This report shall be presented to the GSA Office Manager and to the discretion of the Office Manager to be distributed to Executive members.
- b) For all available positions, the candidate(s) with the greatest number of affirmative votes shall be declared the successful candidate(s). In the event of a tie, the seal ballot cast by the CRO pursuant to Bylaw 4.2.4 e) shall be opened

- and used to break the tie.
- c) Successful candidates shall be notified of their election to the Board of Directors via email.
  - d) Re-election of a General Director shall be considered void if, as of the beginning of their term on October 1, said member has failed to fulfill the responsibilities for General Directors as outlined in these Bylaws, for three (3) consecutive months in their previous term. The same rule shall apply for a General Director elected in the by-elections.

#### **4.3 General Director Vacancies**

**4.3.1** A vacant General Director position, however caused, shall be filled in accordance with the election procedures for General Directors (Section 4.2).

**4.3.2** A vacancy shall be determined to exist when a General Director:

- a) resigns from their position;
- b) is no longer a member of the GSA;
- c) is removed from their position as specified in Section 4.4.

#### **4.4 Removal of General Directors**

**4.4.1** A General Director shall be removed from their position if:

- a) they are absent without regrets from any three (3) regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors, including the AGM;
- b) they are absent with or without regrets from any four (4) regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors, including the AGM;
- c) they are absent with or without regrets from three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors, including the AGM; or,
- d) they fail to fulfill their duties as General Directors as outlined in Section 4.1 for three (3) consecutive months.

**4.4.2** A referendum to remove an elected General Director may be requested by submitting a completed the Request to Remove form, available from the GSA Office Manager, with signatures from one of the following groups:

- a) one-fifth (1/5) of the General Director's constituents;
- b) two-thirds (2/3) of voting members of the Board of Directors; or,
- c) three-quarters (3/4) of the Executive.

**4.4.3** Upon receipt of a request to hold a referendum to remove a General Director, the Vice President Internal shall schedule a special meeting of the Board of Directors at which the referendum shall take place. This meeting shall take place no more than ten (10) days following receipt of the request.

**4.4.4** Members of the constituency of the General Director in question are allowed to attend and vote at the special meeting. In the case of in-person meetings, electronic attendance is permitted, but each person physically present at the meeting may only facilitate the electronic attendance of one other person.

**4.4.5** A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of no-confidence of those present and voting is

required to remove the General Director.

**4.4.6** For reasons of grossly inappropriate or criminal behaviour, or violations of the GSA Human Rights Statement or University of Guelph Human Rights Policy, members of the Board of Directors may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors. This action is not a substitution for a grievance against the individual, complaints to the University of Guelph Office of Diversity and Human Rights, or criminal or civil charges, and these options may also be pursued.

## **5.0 The Executive**

Executive members cannot take a paid Executive position with CUPE #3913 during their tenure. Elected GSA Executive have been elected to represent all graduate students, in tandem with the GSA Bylaws that differ from the mandate of CUPE #3913, as a bargaining unit.

### **5.1 General Responsibilities of the Executive and the Purpose of Executive Meetings**

**5.1.1** The general responsibilities of all Executive shall be:

- a) to attend all duly called meetings of the Executive, Board of Directors, and GSA members or, if not able to attend, send regrets to the GSA Office Manager at least two (2) hours prior to the meeting. Electronic attendance is permitted for one (1) regular in-person meeting per term. An Executive who wishes to attend a GSA Board Meeting electronically must inform the GSA via the [gsa@uoguelph.ca](mailto:gsa@uoguelph.ca) email and provide relevant contact information at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting. No more than one (1) Executive member may attend electronically per GSA Board Meeting;
- b) to present, in writing, a report of their official activities to all regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Directors. Executive Board Reports are mandatory and must be submitted seven (7) days prior to a Board Meeting, regardless of academic or personal travel obligations. Electronic attendance is permitted one (1) regular in-person meeting per term. An Executive who wishes to attend a GSA Board Meeting electronically must inform the GSA via the [gsa@uoguelph.ca](mailto:gsa@uoguelph.ca) email and provide relevant contact information at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. No more than one (1) Executive member may attend electronically per GSA Board Meeting [intent: first come first served];
- c) to maintain communication with the GSA membership;
- d) to ensure executive representation at all meetings between student leaders and University administration, where possible;
- e) to meet regularly with the Vice Provost of Student Affairs;
- f) to maintain communication with the Central Student Association (CSA) and, where necessary, other prominent student organizations at the University;
- g) to ensure GSA representation at official functions and public occasions where a graduate presence is required;
- h) to ensure activities of the GSA comply with the GSA Mission Statement;
- i) to be familiar with the Bylaws;
- j) to uphold the Human Rights Statement of the GSA and the University Human Rights Policy;
- k) to develop, implement, and revise policies for the effective performance of the mandated duties of Executive members, individually and collectively; and
- l) to inform and request formal support from the Executive Committee as to any

initiatives undertaken using the GSA name, brand, or identity.

**5.1.2** In the case of a temporary absence of the President and CEO, the Vice President Internal shall fulfill the roles and responsibilities of the President. In the case of the temporary absence of more than one Executive, the remaining Executive shall fulfill the roles in order of the Executive hierarchy: Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and Vice President External.

**5.1.3** Meetings of the Executive shall occur according to the following procedures:

- a) Executive meetings shall be held at least once per month, regardless of whether quorum is reached. Additional meetings can be held at the discretion of the President and CEO;
- b) Executive meetings shall be chaired by the President and CEO;
- c) Quorum for an executive meeting shall be three-quarters (3/4) of the sitting Executive.
- d) Executive meetings may be called by an Executive with no less than forty-eight (48) hours' notice, unless there is agreement by the entire Executive to meet on shorter notice; in circumstances when shorter notice is accepted, all executive members must be in attendance.
- e) Executive members may attend in-person Executive meetings electronically no more than one (1) time per semester. The Executive member who wishes to attend electronically must inform the chair at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting and provide relevant contact information. The chair must ensure arrangements are made to facilitate the Executive members' attendance.

**5.1.4** During the summer semester at the commencement of their term, the Executive are recommended to complete at least one (1) of the following trainings:

- a) safeTALK;
- b) Gender Diversity and Inclusive Practices Training (arranged through the Sexual and Gender Diversity Advisor);
- c) First Aid;
- d) Mental Health First Aid; or,
- e) any other training offered through the University that would be considered a benefit to the GSA and its constituents.

## **5.2 Responsibilities of the President and CEO**

**5.2.1** In addition to the general responsibilities of the Executive outlined in Section 5.1, the President and CEO shall:

- a) be charged with the full responsibility of carrying out the legislation, policies, Bylaws, regulations, and resolutions of the GSA;
- b) in conjunction with the Vice President Internal, regularly consult with University administration in order to communicate the policies and activities of the GSA and obtain information on changes in such institutional policies and activities;
- c) be responsible for the supervision of all employees of the GSA;
- d) ensure the development of long-term goals, priorities, and policies of the GSA;
- e) be responsible for presenting to the Board of Directors a summary of all GSA activities and future goals of the Executive at the beginning of the Fall and

- Winter semesters;
- f) be responsible for all matters pertaining to the maintenance of the Seal, Letters, Patents, Bylaws, and Resolutions of the GSA;
  - g) chair the Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee
  - h) represent the GSA on University committees, including, but not limited to:
    - (i) the Senate (ex-officio seat),
    - (ii) the Admissions and Progress Committee,
    - (iii) The Board of Graduate Studies (BOGS),
    - (iv) The Student Executive Council,
    - (v) University Centre Board, and
    - (vi) Student Leaders and Administration Meetings (SLAM)
  - i) meet regularly with the Assistant Vice President of Graduate Studies;
  - j) assist in the coordination of Grad Student Orientation, in conjunction with Office of Graduate Studies and the Activities and Communications Coordinator;
  - k) in conjunction with the Vice President Finance, conduct annual performance evaluations for all permanent GSA staff positions including, but not limited to, the GSA Office Manager, Grad Student Lounge Manager, and Grad Student Lounge Staff;
  - l) represent the GSA on the University Presidential Advisory Committee (or such committee which serves this purpose at the time);
  - m) possess discretionary, residual powers over matters that are not specifically governed by the Bylaws;
  - n) delegate short-term services on an honorary basis, as required;
  - o) fulfill any other duties as indicated in the Bylaws for the President and CEO; and
  - p) provide a summary report at the end of the term to be used and discussed with the incoming President and CEO during transition.

### **5.3 Responsibilities of the Vice President Internal**

**5.3.1** In addition to the general responsibilities of the Executive outlined in Section 5.1, the Vice President Internal shall;

- a) manage the Board of Directors by:
  - (i) maintaining a complete list of departmental units with representation on the Board of Directors and a list of elected General Directors;
  - (ii) maintaining a complete list of GSA and University committees on which the GSA represents graduate students on;
  - (iii) maintaining a list of GSA Board members that represent the GSA on GSA and University committees, and ensure GSA representation and participation on these committees;
- b) establish and maintain communication with graduate students at the University by:
  - (i) submitting important information to be included in the GSA newsletter to the Activities and Communications Coordinator by the first (1<sup>st</sup>) of each month;
  - (ii) ensuring the information on the GSA Website is up to date in conjunction with the GSA Office Manager;



- c) prepare the Board Meeting Materials Package and distribute to the Board of Directors at least three (3) days prior to the monthly Board Meeting;
- d) chair the GSA Bylaws Committee and vice chair the Board of Directors;
- e) have a working knowledge of the Bylaws and ensure the Bylaws are readily accessible to GSA members;
- f) represent the GSA on University committees, including, but not limited to:
  - (i) Academic Policies and Procedures Committee;
  - (ii) Student Leaders and Administration Meetings (SLAM)
  - (iii) The Student Organization Policy (SOP) Steering Committee, upon review of the SOP every five (5) years;
  - (iv) University Centre Board (alternate)
- g) in conjunction with the President and CEO, maintain communication with the Senate, Board of Graduate Studies, and student bodies with graduate representation for which no established communication channels exist;
- h) facilitate academic dispute resolution meetings with any GSA member; meetings must occur in a private space on campus, or in special circumstances over the phone or internet, if agreed upon by all parties; one additional GSA staff or Executive must be in attendance;
- i) in conjunction with the CSA Vice President Academic, be responsible for the organization of the Memorial Tree Ceremony and shall be responsible for contacting the families of all graduate students to be included in the ceremony to request permission for the student(s) name(s) to appear on the plaque and to invite all family members to attend the ceremony;
- j) in conjunction with the President and CEO, organize a GSA display at University events requiring GSA participation and representation;
- k) fulfill any other duties as indicated in the Bylaws for the Vice- President Internal; and
- l) provide a summary report at the end of the term to be used and discussed with the incoming Vice President Internal during transition.

#### **5.4 Responsibilities of the Vice President Finance**

**5.4.1** In addition to the general responsibilities of the Executive outlined in Section 5.1, the Vice President Finance shall:

- a) supervise all business transactions of the GSA in accordance with the Bylaws, which includes the allocation and approval of funds to be used by the Activities and Communications Coordinator during the term;
- b) adhere to the financial procedures outlined in the Bylaws;
- c) prepare and present:
  - (i) a budget and an annual written financial statement to the Board of Directors for approval at the September board meeting;
  - (ii) a preliminary budget for the following fiscal year which should be presented for discussion at the meeting of the Executive prior to the AGM; and,
  - (iii) a tentative budget completed for approval at the AGM.
- d) keep the Board of Directors fully informed on all financial matters concerning the GSA; this includes a budget update at the January and May meetings of the Board of Directors;

- e) prepare semesterly statements of income, expenses and additional financial statements as requested by the Executive, and present the statements to the Board of Directors;
- f) ensure the keeping of permanent and accurate records of all financial transactions of the GSA and all departments operating and within the purview of the GSA;
- g) chair the Finance Committee;
- h) represent the GSA on University committees, including, but not limited to:
  - (i) the University Student Health and Dental Plan as Co-Chair
  - (ii) Compulsory Fees Committee
  - (iii) the Student Budget Committee
  - (iv) the Late Appeals Committee
  - (v) Compassionate Bursary Committee
  - (vi) University Centre Board
  - (vii) Student Leaders and Administration Meetings (SLAM);
- i) be responsible for assisting the GSA Office Manager with administrative duties associated with the Student Health and Dental Plan;
- j) in conjunction with the President and CEO, perform annual performance evaluations for all permanent staff positions;
- k) provide a summary report at the end of the term to be used and discussed with the incoming Vice President Finance during transition; and
- l) fulfill any other duties as indicated in the Bylaws for the Vice- President Finance.

## **5.5 Responsibilities of the Vice President External**

**5.5.1** In addition to the general responsibilities of the Executive outlined in Section 5.1, the Vice-External shall:

- a) establish and maintain communication with student organizations and associations external to the University including, but not limited to:
  - (i) the Canadian Federation of Students,
  - (ii) the Canadian Federation of Students – Ontario,
  - (iii) the National Graduate Caucus;
- b) establish and maintain communication with local external associations and organizations including, but not limited to:
  - (i) the City of Guelph,
  - (ii) Guelph Transit, and
  - (iii) local media;
- c) represent the GSA on the following committees:
  - (i) the Student Transit Committee as Co-Chair;
  - (ii) Town and Gown;
  - (iii) Homecoming Committee; and
  - (iv) Student Leaders and Administration Meetings (SLAM);
- d) coordinate campaigns and events centered on federal, provincial, and municipal issues affecting students;
- e) attend Guelph City Council meetings where issues pertaining to graduate students are on the agenda;
- f) be familiar with regulations, procedures, and changes in the Ontario

Student Assistance Plan (OSAP), the Canadian Student Loan Plan, and the other funding bodies external to the University including, but not limited to the Tri-Council Scholarships (NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR) and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS);

- g) in the event of a federal, provincial, or municipal election, determine, record, and inform the GSA membership of candidates' stance on issues that affect students. Further, shall encourage the GSA membership to vote in all federal, provincial, and municipal elections, by-elections, and referenda, with such information in mind;
- h) maintain the GSA Guelph Facebook page, according to the GSA Social Media Standard Operating Procedures document;
- i) provide a summary report at the end of the term to be used and discussed with the incoming Vice President External during transition; and
- j) fulfill any other duties as indicated in the Bylaws for the Vice- President External.

## **5.6 Election of the Executive**

### **5.6.1 General Election Guidelines**

- a) All Executive positions must be elected except in the case of a vacancy or removal as per Sections 6.7 and 6.8 of the Bylaws. The CRO shall be responsible for conducting the election of Executive according to the procedures as follows.
- b) The GSA Office Manager shall announce the timeline of the election period, as determined by the CRO, at the meeting of the Board of Directors that immediately precedes the beginning of the election period.
- c) Individuals seeking election to the Executive may not run as a member of the slate. For the purposes of the Bylaws a slate is defined as two or more candidates who have declared their intention to run together for separate positions.
- d) The nomination period shall be one (1) month in duration. In the event that a nomination is not received for the Executive position(s), the CRO can extend the nomination period as long as doing so does not postpone the voting period beyond the Annual General Meeting, where possible.

### **5.6.2 Nominations and Eligibility**

- a) Only current members of the GSA as outlined in Section 2.0 are eligible to seek a nomination for any Executive position.
- b) Members seeking a nomination to an Executive position must be registered, or indicate the intent to register, in graduate studies at the University for the spring, fall and winter semesters of their term.
- c) Members seeking a nomination to an Executive position must have at least six (6) months service as a General Director or Executive at the commencement of their term to be eligible. This requirement is waived if none of the candidates nominated meet the requirement.
- d) Members who have previously been removed from any position on the Board of Directors, as per Section 4.4 or 5.8, are ineligible to seek election to any position on the Board of Directors for a period of one year after their removal. These members must sit on the board for an additional six

- (6) months prior to submitting a nomination for Executive positions.
- e) No GSA member is eligible to run for an executive position if they have held the same elected or appointed executive position for the past three (3) consecutive terms.
- f) Nominations for Executive positions shall be submitted by email to the CRO.

### **5.6.3** Campaigning

- a) The campaign period shall immediately follow the nomination period and shall be of two (2) weeks in duration.
- b) The CRO shall review all campaign materials prior to publishing to ensure that they are not libelous or offensive, including all material posted on social media, prior to publishing. If any campaign material is published without permission, the CRO can choose to remove that candidate from the campaign.
- c) Campaign spending shall be limited to seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per candidate. Campaign materials for which a candidate is charged less than the market value shall be accounted for in the campaign spending limits at fair market value as determined by the CRO.
- d) Campaign expenses shall be reimbursed to the candidate by the GSA upon receipt of a summary of expenses, along with receipts, which shall be submitted to the CRO on the last day of the campaigning period.
- e) All campaigning must cease, and any campaign materials removed by 4:30 pm EST on the last day of the campaign period. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from the election.
- f) No campaigning shall be permitted during the voting period.

### **5.6.4** Ballots and Voting

- a) The voting period shall follow the campaign period and be of at least two (2) days in duration.
- b) Each candidate shall be permitted to submit a statement of up to five hundred (500) words in length to be included on the ballot. Statements must be received at least ten (10) days before the voting period and must be approved for content by the CRO. The CRO has the discretion to reject any statement exceeding the word limit or found to be libelous or offensive if the candidate refuses to make any changes deemed necessary by the CRO. Statements that exceed the word limit will be cut off after 500 words.
- c) Voting shall be conducted by electronic ballot distributed through the GSA listserv, as created by the University of Guelph Department of Computing and Communications Services.
- d) Ballots shall contain the following information:
  - (i) The name(s) of the Executive position(s) to be filled with a brief description of the position;
  - (ii) Candidate name(s) and, if provided, statement(s) presented in alphabetical order according to last name;
  - (iii) Voters shall have the option to decline or to vote for none

of the listed candidates, where applicable.

- e) Immediately prior to the commencement of the voting period, the CRO shall cast a paper ballot for each position being contested in the election. This ballot shall be sealed and used in the event of a tie. If no tie exists after the election this ballot shall be destroyed without opening.

#### **5.6.5 Results**

- a) The CRO shall obtain the election results following the voting period.
- b) For any position, the candidate with the greatest number of affirmative votes shall be declared the successful candidate. In the event of a tie, the sealed ballot cast by the CRO pursuant to Bylaw 5.6.4 (e) shall be opened and used to break the tie.
- c) The CRO shall prepare a summary report outlining the name(s) of the successful candidate(s), the total number of votes cast for each candidate, and the total number of votes cast in the election. This report shall be presented to the candidate(s) and the Board of Directors via email and to the GSA membership at the AGM.

### **5.7 Executive Vacancies**

**5.7.1** A vacancy in an Executive position shall be determined to exist when:

- a) an Executive resigns from their position;
- b) an Executive is removed from their position as specified in Section 5.8;
- c) an Executive assumes the title and responsibilities of a vacant Executive position, as per Section 5.7.3; or
- d) no nominations are received for a position during the Executive elections.

**5.7.2** In the event an Executive position becomes vacant, the President and CEO, in consultation with the remaining Executive, shall delegate key tasks of the vacant position between the remaining Executive.

**5.7.3** The remaining Executive may assume the title and responsibilities of a vacant position, if said position immediately precedes their own position in the Executive hierarchy: President and CEO, Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and Vice President External. This decision must be ratified by the Board of Directors.

**5.7.4** Vacancies in any Executive position(s), anticipated or otherwise and however caused, shall be communicated to the Board of Directors and a call for nominations to the vacant position(s) shall be sent immediately to the GSA membership. The remaining Executive shall be responsible for selecting a suitable candidate for the vacant position(s). Ratification of this decision will be made at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. The newly elected Executive shall begin their duties immediately after ratification with their term expiring on April 30.

### **5.8 Removal of an Executive**

**5.8.1** For reasons of grossly inappropriate or criminal behaviour, or violations of the GSA Human Rights Statement or University of Guelph Human Rights Policy, members of the Executive may be removed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by the Board of Directors. This action is not in substitution for a grievance against the individual, complaints to the University of Guelph Human Rights and Equity Office, or criminal or civil charges, and these options may also be pursued.

**5.8.2** A referendum to remove an Executive may be requested by submitting a completed Request to Remove form, available from the GSA Office Manager with any of the following groups:

- a) one-fifth (1/5) of the membership;
- b) two-thirds (2/3) voting members of the Board of Directors; or
- c) three-quarters (3/4) of the Executive.

**5.8.3** Upon receipt of a request to hold a referendum to remove an Executive, the President and CEO shall schedule a special meeting of the Board of Directors at which the referendum shall take place. This meeting shall take place no more than ten (10) days following receipt of the request. In the event the President and CEO is the position to be removed, the Vice President Internal shall be responsible for scheduling the special meeting.

**5.8.4** In the case of 5.8.2 a), members of the GSA are allowed to attend and vote at the special meeting.

**5.8.5** A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of no-confidence of those present at the special meeting and voting is required to remove the Executive.

#### **5.8.6**

### **5.9 Executive Honoraria**

**5.9.1** The President and CEO shall receive an Honorarium in the amount of eight hundred and seventy-one dollars and 19 cents (\$871.19 ) per month (effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021) for the duration of their term. The honorarium shall increase annually by an amount in agreement with the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA).

**5.9.2** The Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and Vice President External shall each receive an honorarium in the amount of eight hundred and five dollars and thirty five cents (\$805.35) per month (effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021) for the duration of their term. The honoraria shall increase annually by an amount in agreement with the Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA).

**5.9.3** In case of a conflict in honoraria received, it should be immediately reported to GSA executive and GSA office manager.

## **6.0 Appointed Officers**

### **6.1 Chair**

**6.1.1** The responsibilities of the Chair of the GSA Board of Directors shall be:

- a) to preside over all meetings of the Board of Directors and the Annual General Meeting;
- b) to have a working knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order and the GSA Bylaws;
- c) to oversee General Meetings of the GSA according to Robert's Rules of Order and the Bylaws, and in conjunction with the Vice President Internal, enforce the Bylaws at meetings of the GSA;
- d) as it pertains to meetings of the Board of Directors or the Annual General Meeting, to act as an advisor to members of the Board of Directors on issues pertaining to Robert's Rules of Order and the GSA Bylaws; and
- e) to ensure that all routine items of GSA business are discussed by the Board of Directors, or the GSA membership in the case of the Annual General Meeting, and that all agenda items are addressed.

**6.1.2** The Chair may not stand for election or hold an elected seat on the Board of Directors, and may not be a member of any GSA committees while holding the position of

Chair.

**6.1.3** The Chair shall not hold a term of more than three (3) years in duration.

## **6.2 Chief Returning Officer**

**6.2.1** The responsibilities of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) of the GSA shall be:

- a) to, in accordance with all relevant provisions of the GSA Bylaws, preside over all GSA elections, by-elections, and referenda; and
- b) to have a working knowledge of the GSA Bylaws.

**6.2.2** The CRO may not stand for election or hold an elected Executive position while holding the position of CRO.

**6.2.3** The CRO shall not hold a term of more than three (3) years in duration.

## **6.3 Appointment of Chair and CRO**

**6.3.1** Appointed officers must be current members of the GSA, as outlined in Section 2.0.

**6.3.2** The Executive shall be responsible for selecting a suitable candidate for the positions of Chair and CRO according to the following procedure:

- a) vacancies in appointed positions shall be announced to the GSA membership and nominations for suitable candidates sought immediately upon any position becoming vacant.
- b) applications for the vacant position(s) shall be received until a suitable candidate is chosen.
- c) The Chair should have previously served on the Board of Directors for at least six (6) months or have been a past executive member. In extenuating circumstances, preference will be given to candidates with prior chairing or related experience.

**6.3.3** The Vice President Internal shall be responsible for fulfilling the responsibilities of the Chair and/or CRO while the position(s) is/are vacant.

## **6.4 Removal of an Appointed Officer**

**6.4.1** An Appointed Officer may be removed from their position by either:

- a) a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors at a regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors; or
- b) a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote of the Executive.

## **6.5 Appointed Officer of Honoraria**

**6.5.1** The Chair shall receive an honorarium in the amount of Eighty dollars and sixty one cents (\$80.61) per meeting that they are in attendance as Chair, effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

**6.5.2** The CRO shall receive an honorarium in the amount of one hundred and fifty two dollars and 77 cents (\$152.77) for each event in a semester when they hold the position of CRO and are required to oversee a GSA election, by-election, or referendum, effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

**6.5.3** The Activities and Communications Coordinator shall receive an honorarium in the amount of seven hundred and eighty one dollars and 72 cents (\$781.72) per month, effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

**6.5.4** No appointed officer shall be permitted to exceed 10 hours per week.

**6.5.5** In case of a conflict in honoraria received, it should be immediately reported to GSA executive and GSA office manager.

## **7.0 Committees**

### **7.1 General Committee Procedures**

- 7.1.1** GSA standing committees and ad-hoc committees shall be called and chaired by an Executive to be decided on by the GSA Executives as a group. The Executive, as a group, shall be responsible for appointing the chair of any ad hoc committee(s).
- 7.1.2** GSA standing committees should have a minimum of four (4) members in addition to the chair.
- 7.1.3** Quorum for all GSA committees shall be three-fifths (3/5) of the members of said committee.
- 7.1.4** All members of a GSA committee, including the chair, shall be allowed to vote on all motions discussed at meetings of said committee. Motions discussed at committee meetings shall be decided by majority vote of the members present at said meeting. In the case of a tie, the motion fails.
- 7.1.5** Minutes should be recorded for all GSA standing committee meetings, and provided to the Office Manager within seven (7) days of the meeting.
- 7.1.6** Committee vacancies will be filled according to a fair procedure decided upon by the Vice President Internal.
- 7.1.7** No GSA member may be denied membership to any GSA standing committee, where a vacancy exists, except in case of a conflict of interest.
- 7.1.8** The members of a committee may request participation of non-members of the GSA in an advisory role, if necessary. In these circumstances, the same committee reporting procedures must be followed by the non-member.
- 7.1.9** All committees shall record meeting minutes and make regular reports to the Board of Directors.
- 7.1.10** Additional ad hoc committees may be formed, where necessary, by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. No committee may be formed that would, in principle or de facto, remove, replace, restrict, or in any way reduce the power of the Board of Directors or its Executive, as outlined herein.
- 7.1.11** Upon completion of appointed task(s), ad hoc committees shall make a final report to the Board of Directors on their actions and recommendations, and unless otherwise instructed shall then be dissolved.
- 7.1.12** Whether or not an ad hoc committee has fulfilled its mandate, it may be dissolved at any time by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
- 7.1.13** A member of the GSA standing committee(s) may be recalled and replaced after three (3) consecutive absences from meetings of said committee.
- 7.1.14** Recall of a representative may be requested by:
- a) the standing committee to which they have been appointed;
  - b) a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors; or
  - c) a three-quarters (3/4) vote majority of the Executive.
- 7.1.15** GSA Standing Committees include:
- a) Bylaws Committee
  - b) Finance Committee
  - c) Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee
  - d) Volunteer Committee

### **7.2 Bylaws Committee**

- 7.2.1** The mandate of the Bylaws Committee shall be to provide critical examination and



evaluation of the Bylaws and any proposed change(s) to the Bylaws and to ensure the integrity of the Bylaws.

**7.2.2** In addition to the general committee procedures as outlined in Section 7.1, the Bylaws Committee shall:

- a) make recommendations for change(s) to GSA governing policy, if any, at the Annual General Meeting and, where necessary, at meetings of the Board of Directors;
- b) be responsible for reviewing any referendum question(s) referred by the Board of Directors;
- c) be chaired by the Vice President Internal; and
- d) meet at least once prior to the Annual General Meeting, ideally once per Fall and Winter semester.

### **7.3 Finance Committee**

**7.3.1** The mandate of the Finance Committee shall be to oversee the finances of the GSA insofar as how they pertain to advancing the academic goals of graduate students as per the mission statement of the GSA.

**7.3.2** In addition to the General Committee procedures as outlined in Section 7.1, the Finance Committee shall:

- a) assist the Vice President Finance in creating the annual GSA budget, bursaries and awards, and in preparing financial updates. Current terms and conditions of the GSA Grants and Bursaries are maintained by the GSA Office Manager;
- b) be chaired by the Vice President Finance and consist of at least two (2) General Directors; and
- c) meet at least once per month, in Fall and Winter semesters and as needed in accordance with GSA grant application deadlines and to review Honoraria.

**7.3.3** No member of the Finance Committee shall be permitted to attend meetings in which their own application for financial resources is being considered. Except GSA VP Finance (or the executive chairing the Finance Committee in absence of VP Finance) all other executive members may apply for financial resources during their term.

### **7.4 Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee**

**7.4.1** The mandate of the Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee is to develop short- and long-term goals for the Grad Student Lounge to achieve and maintain financial sustainability.

**7.4.2** In addition to the general committee procedures outlined in Section 7.1, the Grad Student Lounge Sustainability Committee shall:

- a) review all financial statements and proposed budgets of the Grad Student Lounge;
- b) develop short- and long-term goals related to Grad Student Lounge Operations;
- c) be chaired by the President and CEO;
- d) have at least three (3) members consisting of Vice President Finance, and two (2) General Directors;
- e) in addition to committee members, have the Grad Student Lounge Manager and the Activities and Communications Coordinator participate

- in a non-voting advisory capacity;
- f) determine quorum by the voting members only; and
- g) meet at least once per month.

## **7.5 Volunteer Committee**

**7.5.1** The mandate of the Volunteer Committee is to develop, plan and execute GSA events that advance the academic, professional or social development of graduate students as per the GSA mission statement.

**7.5.2** In addition to the general committee procedures outlined in Section 7.1, the Volunteer Committee shall:

- a) assist the Activities and Communications Coordinator in creating, planning and running GSA events throughout the semester as well as daily during Fall Orientation Week;
- b) be chaired by the Activities and Communication Coordinator;
- c) have at least five (5) General Directors on the committee;
- d) hold all GSA events at the Grad Student Lounge; and
- e) plan and coordinate all event dates for the semester at beginning of each semester with the Grad Student Lounge Manager.

## **7.6 University Committees**

**7.6.1** University committees are those committees that engage in processes of governance that oversee matters of academia, administration objectives, and matters related to the administration of the University.

**7.6.2** The Vice President Internal shall be responsible for appointment of members of the Board of Directors to University committees as GSA representatives where a graduate or GSA seat has been provided.

**7.6.3** The Executive, as a group, shall be responsible for appointing an Executive(s) to represent the GSA on University Committee(s) requiring Executive membership.

**7.6.4** Duties of appointed GSA representatives on University committees shall be to:

- a) attend all meetings required by their position or, if permitted by the committee, arrange for an alternate representative to attend;
- b) seek input from the Board of Directors on business arising at committee meetings, where required;
- c) inform the Executive of matters requiring urgent attention; and
- d) make regular reports to the Board of Directors as to the proceedings of the University committee to which they are appointed.

**7.6.5** A GSA representative on a University committee may be recalled and replaced if they fail to fulfill the duties of representing the GSA on said committee or after three (3) absences from meetings of said committee. Recall of a representative may be requested by:

- a) the University committee to which they have been appointed;
- b) a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors; or
- c) a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote of the Executive.

**7.6.6** It is the responsibility of the GSA representative to inform the Vice President Internal of committee absences. Any dispute regarding the replacement or removal of the GSA representative from a committee may be reviewed by the Bylaws Committee.

## **8.0 Referenda**

### **8.1 Referendum Questions**

**8.1.1** Any referendum question must consist of a preamble and a clearly stated proposition requiring a “Yes” or “No” answer.

**8.1.2** Any referendum question shall be brought to the Board of Directors for consideration and a referendum shall be held upon approval of the question by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. The Board of Directors may refer any referendum question to the Bylaws Committee for review before final approval.

**8.1.3** No referendum shall be held on the same or similar question(s) within two (2) years of the previous question(s) being asked, except for a referendum required for policy or contractual obligations, pursuant to Section 9.0.

## **8.2 Conducting Referenda**

**8.2.1** Unless deemed otherwise by the Board of Directors, any referendum shall be held in conjunction with the Executive election process and shall therefore follow the same procedures for campaign, voting, ballot distribution, and results as set out in Section 5.6.

**8.2.2** The CRO shall give notice of a referendum to the GSA membership at least fourteen (14) calendar days before the last day to register for a “Yes” or “No” campaign.

**8.2.3** The ballot displaying the question shall have a preamble and a clearly worded proposition that requires a “Yes,” “No,” or “Decline” answer.

**8.2.4** Quorum for a vote on a referendum question shall be ten percent (10%) of the membership of the GSA. The decision of the voting members shall be based on the answer receiving the majority of votes. In the event of a tie, the referendum fails.

## **8.3 Referendum Campaigns**

**8.3.1** “Yes” and/or “No” campaigns shall be conducted according to the following procedures:

- a) all members of the GSA are allowed to conduct a “Yes” or “No” campaign. Any GSA member wishing to conduct either a “Yes” or “No” campaign during any referendum must officially register their campaign with the CRO by 4:30 pm (EST) on the last working day prior to the start of the campaign period for which the referendum is being conducted;
- b) the Board of Directors may officially take a “Yes” or “No” position on any referendum question which must be voted on during a meeting of the Board of Directors;
- c) there shall be only one official “Yes” campaign and one official “No” campaign for each referendum; and
- d) a representative from each of the campaigns shall attend an information session organized and conducted by the CRO immediately following the campaign registration deadline. Failure to attend the information session shall result in the disqualification of official campaign status.

### **8.3.2 Campaign Materials**

- a) each campaign is permitted to submit a statement of up to five hundred (500) words in length to the CRO to be distributed to the GSA membership. The CRO has the authority to refuse to distribute any statement that exceeds the word limit or is determined to be libelous or offensive in nature.
- b) the CRO shall review all campaign materials, including all material posted on social media, prior to publishing to ensure that they are not all libelous or offensive. If any campaign material is published without permission,

- the CRO can choose to remove that position's representation from the campaign.
- c) campaign spending shall be limited to seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per campaign. Campaign materials for which a candidate is charged less than the market value shall be accounted for in the campaign spending limits at fair market value as determined by the CRO.
  - d) campaign expenses shall be reimbursed to the candidate by the GSA upon receipt of a summary of expenses, along with receipts, which shall be submitted to the CRO on the last day of the campaigning period.

#### **8.4 Referendum Results**

**8.4.1** Referendum results shall be determined and reported as per the following procedures:

- a) the CRO shall obtain the referendum results following the voting period.
- b) for any referendum, the answer with the greatest number of votes shall be declared the outcome. In the event of a tie, the referendum fails.
- c) the CRO shall prepare a summary report outlining the results of the referendum and the total number of votes cast for each question. This report shall be presented to the Board of Directors via email and to the GSA membership at the AGM.

### **9.0 Policies and Contractual Agreements**

#### **9.1 Student Organization Policy**

**9.1.1** The GSA is a recognized Primary Student Organization at the University and shall be required to abide by all University policies and procedures, as outlined in the Student Organization Policy.

#### **9.2 Universal Bus Pass**

**9.2.1** The University Bus Pass contract is between the City of Guelph/Guelph Transit and the GSA, and organized through the CSA/GSA Transit Committee.

**9.2.2** The Universal Bus Pass shall be distributed to graduate students by the GSA according to the Universal Bus Pass policy.

#### **9.3 Health and Dental Plan**

**9.3.1** The Health and Dental Plan contract is between an insurance broker and the GSA and is managed by the Student Health and Dental Plan Committee.

**9.3.2** The Health and Dental Plan shall be administered by the Student Benefits Office at the University.

#### **9.4 Petitions, Delegations, and Representation**

**9.4.1** The mandate of the Petitions, Delegations, and Representation (Activities Grant) policy shall be to distribute GSA funds available to organizations and groups hosting events that advance the mission statement of the GSA.

**9.4.2** The GSA shall make funds available for the direct purpose of distribution to organizations and groups seeking funds through the Activities Grant application process.

**9.4.3** The distribution of Activities Grant funds shall be according to the following procedures:

- a) Activities Grant request form, referred to as the Graduate Student

- Association Activities Grant (PDR) Application, shall be available from the GSA Office Manager and on the GSA website;
- b) only requests advancing the mission statement of the GSA shall be considered;
  - c) applications will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis and up to three (3) qualifying applications will be considered per meeting of the Board of Directors (no applications considered during the AGM or during special meetings);
  - d) no organization or group may request GSA funding, through the Activities Grant process, more than once during a fiscal year (May 1 to April 30);
  - e) organizations or groups requesting funding through the Activities Grant process must provide a detailed description of proposed activities, including a detailed budget, and must be for events that have not yet occurred;
  - f) funding request must be submitted to the GSA Office Manager at least ten (10) days before the next meeting of the Board of Directors; and
  - g) Activities Grant presentations shall not exceed five (5) minutes. The Board of Directors shall be permitted to ask questions of the presenter following the presentation, after which any individual present connected with the Activities Grant being discussed shall leave the meeting until a decision has been made.

## **10.0 Financial Procedures**

### **10.1 Signing Authority**

**10.1.1** The President and CEO, Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, GSA Office Manager, and Grad Student Lounge Manager will have authority as bank signing officers for the GSA. All Executives may sign on behalf of the GSA for matters relating to their portfolio.

**10.1.2** The signatures of two (2) signing officers must be present on all financial documents (including, but not limited to, cheques and contracts), one of which must be an Executive. No Executive signature shall be required for Grad Student Lounge operational expenses with a value of less than three hundred dollars (\$300.00).

**10.1.3** No financial documents (including, but not limited to, cheques and contracts) beyond those required for regular business operations may be created or signed without the approval of the President and CEO in consultation with the Vice President Internal and Vice President Finance.

### **10.2 Investments**

**10.2.1** Upon receipt of student fees each semester, bus pass, health and dental plan, and GSA membership fees shall be entered into short term Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs) until the funds must be dispensed according to contractual obligations (bus pass, health plan, dental plan) or required for GSA operations (GSA membership fees).

**10.2.2** Section 10.2.1 is subject to budgetary considerations as may be determined by the Executive.

### **10.3 Savings**

**10.3.1** Budget permitting, five percent (5%) of GSA membership fees received each semester are to be deposited into a savings instrument.

**10.3.2** These funds may be spent only upon approval by the Board of Directors.

**10.3.3** Decisions of the expenditure of such funds must receive two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the members of the Board of Directors in attendance at a duly called meeting of the Board of Directors.

**10.3.4** Such funds are only to be spent on capital expenditures and special initiatives of the GSA.

**10.3.5** Such funds may not be spent to support legal costs of GSA members or initiatives that are not endorsed by the GSA.

## **11.0 Grad Student Lounge and GSA Staff**

### **11.1 Grad Student Lounge, Grad Student Lounge Manager**

**11.1.1** The Grad Student Lounge is owned and operated by the GSA, with the Grad Student Lounge Manager serving as a hired agent working on behalf of the Board of Directors.

**11.1.2** Duties of the Grad Student Lounge Manager are as per the contractual agreement on file in the GSA Office.

**11.1.3** A financial summary shall be presented to the Board of Directors once per term.

**11.1.4** A draft budget shall be presented for information at the Annual General Meeting and a finalized budget shall be presented for approval by the Executive in September.

### **11.2 Activities and Communications Coordinator**

**11.2.1** The Activities and Communications Coordinator shall be hired by the GSA Executive and Staff and work under the direction of the Graduate Student Lounge Manager and guidance of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

**11.2.2** Duties of the Activities and Communications Coordinator are as per the contractual agreement developed by the Executive Committee with input from the GSA Office Manager and Grad Student Lounge Manager. These duties include but are not limited to:

- a) creating and distributing at least one (1) newsletter per month to update graduate students on any GSA or graduate student-related business, and GSA Board Meetings, effective August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020;
- b) sitting on the UC Digital Signage Review Committee, effective August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020;
- c) maintaining Facebook, and Instagram pages for The Fifth according to the GSA Social Media Standard Operating Procedures document; and,
- d) maintaining Facebook, and Twitter pages for the GSA in conjunction with the Vice President External, according to the GSA Social Media Standard Operating Procedures document.

**11.2.3** The Activities and Communications Coordinator must provide updates to:

- a) the Grad Student Lounge Manager every week;
- b) the Executive Committee and Staff at monthly Executive meetings; and
- c) General Directors at monthly meetings of the Board of Directors.

**11.2.4** The Executive shall be responsible for fulfilling the responsibilities of the Activities and Communications Coordinator while the position is vacant.

**11.2.5** The Activities and Communications Coordinator would need approval of President or GSA executives committee for all events sponsored by GSA. In case that a proposed event or activity requires more than \$150 from GSA reserves, then the Activities and Communications Coordinator would require to present the details about the event to the Vice President finance and executives committee. Depending on the requirements of funds, it may require

subsequent approval from the finance committee on discretion of Vice President Finance.

### **11.3 GSA Office Manager**

**11.3.1** The GSA Office Manager shall oversee the operation of the GSA office in accordance with the Bylaws of the GSA.

**11.3.2** The GSA Office Manager shall report directly to the President, followed by the Vice President Internal, Vice President Finance, and Vice President External.

**11.3.3** The GSA Office Manager shall act as a liaison to the Board of Directors, the GSA membership, and the University community.

**11.3.4** Duties of the GSA Office Manager are as per the contractual agreement on file in the GSA Office.

## **12.0 GSA Bylaws and Policy Development**

### **12.1 Amendments**

**12.1.1** Any member of the Board of Directors may recommend amendments to the current Bylaws governing the activities of the GSA at a meeting of the Board of Directors.

**12.1.2** Amendments to the Bylaws can include the addition of Appendices containing pertinent information in relation to any section of the Bylaws.

**12.1.3** Motions presented to the Board of Directors requesting amendment(s) to the Bylaws shall require two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Directors to be implemented.

**12.1.4** Any such recommendations for amendments to the Bylaws may be referred to the Bylaws Committee for further discussion if deemed necessary by the Board of Directors. The Bylaws Committee will present their recommendation(s) at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors.

**12.1.5** The Board of Directors may not decide on matters influencing any graduate student fee, or on pre-existing contractual obligations, and such matters may only be decided by referendum, as per Section 8.0.

**12.1.6** Amendment(s) to the Bylaws adopted by the Board of Directors will be presented for ratification by the GSA membership at the AGM. Voting on all such amendments accruing over the year may be done en masse at the AGM during the Bylaws ratification.