REVIEW OF THE GOVERNING DOCUMENTS OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION AT THE UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Constitution and By-Laws of the Graduate Student Association were thoroughly examined for any issues that require attention or action from the Executive Board or Assembly. The issues found were grouped into "significant" issues, other issues, best practices, and overall recommendations.

Significant issues included inconsistencies between the Constitution and By-Laws, and within each document regarding the composition of the Judicial Board, and the title of the Multi-Cultural and Affirmative Action/Equity and Inclusion Officer/Chairperson. In addition, there was ambiguity in the membership of the GSA Assembly as well as the openness of Executive Board meetings. Finally, there were typographical errors that should be corrected.

Other issues included the definition and execution of audit power, the composition of the Investigation Committee and Election Committee, the process of filling vacant offices, as well as the operations of the Judicial Board and GSA Assembly.

With the goal of implementing best practices, suggestions were outlined around overly broad statements that might have unintended consequences, the definition of conflicts of interest, the inclusion of stipend amounts in the By-Laws and Constitutional amendment process.

Overall, the documents are comprehensive, and guide the Association well. If an effort is undertaken to correct at least some of the issues outlined in this report there are some stylistic issues that should be considered as well. In general, the Constitution contains too many specifics instead of the overall rules. In contrast, the By-Laws end up repeating what is already stated in the Constitution. There are some overly broad statements that should be reconsidered, and some long blocks of text that should be broken up.
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BACKGROUND
The Graduate Student Organization was established at the University at Albany in 1990, and changed its name in 2013 to the Graduate Student Association. Today, the GSA represents approximately 4,000 graduate students enrolled at the University at Albany, and manages a budget of approximately $200,000 funded solely by fees paid by graduate students. In 2012 a Committee was established to review and recommend for adoption a new set of governing documents (the Constitution and By-Laws). In 2015, this author was contracted as a consultant on parliamentary procedure. Trainings on Robert’s Rules of Order were conducted, and the author was also asked to review the Constitution and By-Laws as a “fresh set of eyes.”

In the interests of full disclosure, while the author is acquainted with some of the members of the Constitutional Committee in 2012-2013, and some of the GSA officers, he has no vested interest in the GSA, its governing documents, or its operations. The review and recommendations contained herein should not be interpreted as legal advice. Instead, they are based on many years of experience with non-profits, committees, councils, associations and boards that each have their own set of governing documents (good and bad) and have had their share of governance issues.

The author of this report served for two years in UAlbany’s undergraduate Student Association Senate, 3 years as Lead Senator for what was the GSO, and two years as University Council Representative. In his last year as Lead Senator the author served as Parliamentarian for the University Senate after the longtime University Registrar and Parliamentarian retired. In addition to committee and council service the author was active with many student groups that had their own set of governing documents and operating procedures. Since then, he has served on the National Advisory Council for Omicron Delta Kappa, including their Governance Committee, and currently serves on the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering Assembly, and the Board of Trustees for the Village of Altamont. He has also been involved with the alumni associations for the University at Albany and the SUNY Polytechnic Institute.
METHODOLOGY
A copy of the most up-to-date Constitution and By-Laws were supplied by the GSA President for review. The documents were carefully studied and issues were grouped into three classes:

1) Substantial issues – These were problems with the governing documents that must be fixed. Typically, they were inconsistencies between the Constitution and By-Laws, or inconsistencies within a document. If these issues are not fixed, then there is confusion within the governing documents.

2) Other issues – There were many issues within the governing documents that warrant consideration for amendment, but are not absolutely required. In many cases, these issues only require the GSA to reflect on the issue, and consider if the organization needs or wants to make a change.

3) Best Practices – There are some changes that could be made to the governing documents along the lines of “best practices”. These are not inconsistencies in the Constitution or By-Laws, or issues at all within the documents. Instead, these are suggestions for the organization to consider in order to protect the GSA from fraud, abuse, or controversy. They are based, then, on empirical observations of what “works” and what “doesn’t work” for non-profits/associations/boards/etc.

In order for the Graduate Student Association to be successful and to continue its work, there must be a set of governing documents that set the Association up for success. These documents should:

- Be consistent with University polices as well as local, state, and federal laws. (Again, this document is not legal advice, and consistency with external policies and laws was not reviewed here.)
- Be consistent between and within the Constitution and By-Laws
- Provide a plan and guidance for all foreseeable scenarios
- Have robust controls for all fiscal matters
- Clearly outline membership, voting rights, elections and appointment of officers
- Contain the appropriate level of detail
SUBSTANTIAL ISSUES

MEMBERSHIP OF THE JUDICIAL BOARD

Article VIII, Section 1 of the GSA Constitution states the Judicial Board should be made up of five members. However, Article V, Section 2 of the GSA By-Laws states three members. Based on this discrepancy, the Constitution is the superior document and the Board should have five members. However, the By-Laws should be updated to correct the number of members. Alternatively, the By-Laws should instead avoid repeating (or attempting to repeat) things that are in the Constitution. Instead, the By-Laws should only include additional details or rules building upon the Constitution. Along the same lines, the Constitution says the Judicial Board is made up of GSA Members, but the By-Laws state GSA Assembly members. This discrepancy is most obvious in Article V Section 2 of the By-Laws when there is apparent confusion about the process for electing three (or five) members.

VOTING MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSEMBLY

Voting membership of the Assembly is outlined in Article VI Section 2 of the Constitution. Department or intra-departmental programs are "selected by endorsement of the GSA members of their Department or Program; ... the form of a signed petition on departmental letterhead by at least three GSA members within their Department or Program." There is no explanation for how the GSA would handle competing petitions. That is, especially in large departments, there could be more than one person who manages to collect three signatures on department letterhead. It might be best to only state that the GSA members within a department shall select their representative. Then, leave the details of HOW a representative is selected to the By-Laws. This would make it easier to amend these procedures as needed. The By-Laws could require a Dean or Department Chair to sign off on the representative, but that might not be ideal. Alternatively, in the case of competing petitions the GSA could recognize the petition with the most signatures submitted by a specific date. In any case, there should be some details in the By-Laws to deal with this issue.

Also within Article VI Section 2 of the Constitution, there is very different language regarding RGSO Assembly representatives and departmental representatives. For RGSO’s: “Each Recognized Graduate Student Organization (RGSO) shall have one voting representative (and alternate) in the Assembly.” But for departments: “Every university department or intra-departmental program with GSA members is entitled to one representative in the Assembly.” Note that the word “voting” is absent from the statement for departmental representatives. Further, for RGOs: “A RGSO with forty (40) or more GSA members shall have
one additional voting representative." But for departmental representatives "Departments or intra-departmental programs with forty (40) or more GSA members within said program shall be allotted one additional Assembly Representative." Again, note that lack of the word "voting" in the description for departmental representatives. Finally, “University departmental and intra-departmental representatives will not be included in the quorum for voting.” All of this suggests that departmental representatives do not have voting rights like RGSO representatives, but it never explicitly says so. The section should be updated to reflect the voting rights of departmental representatives, one way or the other.

**CONSISTENCY OF THE MCAA/EIO/EIC POSITION**

At different points in the Constitution and By-Laws there are references to the Multi-Cultural and Affirmative Action Officer, the Multi-Cultural and Affirmative Action Chairperson, the Equity and Inclusion Officer, and the Equity and Inclusion Chairperson. It would appear that there is only one position, not four. At the very least, the title of the position should be consistent throughout the two documents. In order to be consistent with other E-Board officers that have and chair their respective committees (Grants Committee Chairperson, Programming Chairperson), "Equity and Inclusion Chairperson" is recommended. Similarly, any references to the MCAA or EIC/EIO committee should also be updated to be consistent.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS**

Article III Section 2 of the GSA By-Laws makes it sound like no one is allowed to attend Executive Board meetings unless they are invited:

> Persons other than the six (6) Executive Board members and Assembly Speaker may be invited to attend these meetings at the discretion of the Chair; such persons shall have no authority to make motions or vote at such meetings.

This appears to make these meetings closed to the public, which is probably not intended. Or, if it is intended, it should be reconsidered in the interests of transparency. In either case, the language should be updated to reflect if persons other than the six Executive Board members MUST be invited in order to attend.
TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS

A couple of minor typos were noticed, although this it potentially not an exhaustive list:

RONR – “Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised” is what the abbreviation “RONR” stands for, not “Roberts New Rules of Order”.

The power to sign on behalf of an organization, such as the GSA is referred to as “signatory power(s)”, not “signature power(s)”

Article VIII, Section 2 or the By-Laws states that “Individuals nominated by another member of the GSA must be informed within 42 hours.” It isn’t clear if this is a typo for 48 hours, or if there is some special significance to a notification period of 42 hours.

OTHER ISSUES

AUDIT POWER

Per the Constitution, the GSA Assembly can “call for an audit of GSA records, financial or otherwise”. But this clause doesn’t explain HOW a call is made, or WHO does the auditing. If the Treasurer is suspected of fraud and is the one doing the auditing then the audit is worthless. Further, it ought to be codified in the Constitution that a regular audit MUST be done. Knowing that an audit WILL be done is an effective deterrent against financial impropriety. Alternatively, the signatory process could be spelled out so that every payment is effectively audited. (For example, if the Treasurer signs off on every voucher, but cannot cut the check until 3/5 Executive Board members also sign off on it. In effect, every purchase is audited by the Executive Board.) Furthermore, in Article VII Section 3, the Executive Board is empowered to endorse vouchers only “with a minimum of two legitimate signatures” but those signatures must "include" the President AND the Treasurer. Therefore, all vouchers must be signed by the President and Treasurer. At the very least, this section is confusing, but beyond that this means that the President and Treasurer are not, in reality, able to audit the GSA finances since they are the ones signing the vouchers. The GSA should consider codifying specific, strong audit powers and financial oversight.

INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

As defined in the Constitution (Article VI Section 8 Sub-section B), the Investigation Committee "will be formed" for any impeachment proceeding, and
will include "at least one member of the Judicial Board who shall chair it."
However, the membership of the Committee is not defined anywhere else in the
documents. What is the minimum or maximum number of members? Who
appoints or chooses them? Can anyone be on it? Does the accuser and accused
get to be on it? The details of how an impeachment investigation is conducted
rightfully belong in the By-Laws (see elsewhere in this report on the appropriate
level of detail of each document.) However, due to the current level of detail
contained in the Constitution, perhaps additional details on the Investigation
Committee should be included there as well.

IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

Article VI Section 8 Sub-Section C of the Constitution clearly outlines that a
person is convicted of the impeachment proceedings if 2/3rds of the assembled
GSA Assembly votes in favor. A convicted officer is immediately stripped of their
office. However, it then goes on to say that additional action can be taken, but
doesn’t outline how that action would be taken, what actions could be taken, or
how it could be enforced against a person who is no longer an officer. In
general, there is too much detail about the impeachment proceedings in the
Constitution, but nothing substantial in the By-Laws (Article V Section 7). It
should be the other way around: more detail in the By-Laws and big picture rules
in the Constitution. Specifically, it isn’t clear what else could be done to an
impeached officer besides removing them from office.

CONTINGENCY PLAN/SUCCESSION PLANNING

This section (Article VII Section 7) spells out that the President can appoint
replacement officers subject to confirmation by the Assembly, except for the
Assembly Speaker or the Judicial Board. If the President is, for whatever
reason, no longer able to serve, the VP steps in. The succession (note typo: not
“secession”) is then the Assembly Speaker, Treasurer, and then MCAA Chair
(aka EIC, EIO, etc.) The issue here is that the Assembly Speaker has not ever
been elected by the GSA membership (only the GSA Assembly membership).
The GSA should be aware of this and ensure this is the succession they wish to
have. In contrast, while the GSA membership did not elect the Treasurer or
MCAA Chair as their chief executive, they have at least elected them.

Later in the Constitution (Article IX Section 2), however, are details on holding
special elections for vacant offices. It isn’t clear why special elections would be
held if the President is appointing individuals to vacant offices. If the purpose is
in the case that the President doesn’t wish to appoint someone, or is unable to
find someone the Assembly will confirm, then that should be spelled out.
Otherwise, it appears there are two conflicting ways vacant offices are filled.

**JUDICIAL BOARD**

There is nothing barring an officer of the GSA from serving on the Judicial Board. Article VII Section 1 of the Constitution states that no one may hold more than one "office" in the GSA, or as an officer or Assembly Representative of any RGSO. It could be reasonably argued that the Judicial Board Member is not an "officer" and therefore an Executive Board member could serve on the Judicial Board. Further in Article VIII Section 1 of the Constitution, it is stated that a Judicial Board Member cannot serve as an RGSO or Department Representative to the GSA Assembly but it does not forbid serving as an Executive Board Officer. Assuming the goal is to avoid conflicts of interest, this prohibition should be explicitly spelled out.

The Judicial Review section (Article VIII Section 3) is also missing some details that should at least be outlined in the By-Laws. For example, if a member wanted to petition the Board, what is required of their petition? Where and how do they deliver it? The section also states that the Board "may" convene, but is not required to. Should the Board be required to review every petition? If not, is there an appeals process? Should there be a threshold or certain circumstances where the Board must hear a case?

**ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

The section (Constitution Article IX Section 3) on the Elections Committee is missing some important details about its composition, similar to the lack of details about the Investigation Committee. What is the minimum number of members that must be on the committee? Can it be a committee of one person? What is the maximum number of members? Can anyone who wishes to be on the committee serve, or how are they appointed/confirmed? The By-Laws (Article VIII Section 2) actually create more confusion. None of the above questions are answered in the By-Laws about the composition of the committee, but they do state that the committee would select its chairperson. Further, and somewhat circuitously, the chairperson fills vacancies on the committee! More details about how the committee would be constituted should be included in the By-Laws.
ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

The By-Laws make it sound like the Constitution has scheduled the day and time of the Assembly meetings (Article II Section 3), which is not entirely accurate. The Constitution (Article VI Section 4) only requires meetings to be held at least once a month in the fall and spring semesters - it doesn’t require them to be at 6pm on the first Friday. The complicating factor is the By-Laws wording that the meetings are held on the first Friday at 6pm “when classes are in session.” There could, therefore, be a holiday on a first Friday which would mean according the By-Laws the meeting can’t be held, and then the Assembly isn’t meeting that month in violation of the Constitution. A better structure for the section would be to just state that meetings are typically held on the first Friday of the month as long as classes are in session. The Assembly may set alternate dates and times for the monthly meetings as needed.

MEETING NOTICE RESPONSIBILITY

Article II Section 3 of the GSA By-Laws states that “the date, time, and location, drafts of the agenda, motions, documents, notices, all officer reports, and a draft of the previous meeting’s minutes shall be posted to the GSA Website at least seven days prior to the meeting.” This is an important and commendable clause to include in the By-Laws in the interests in transparency, but there is no indication of who is responsible for these actions. Section 4 in the same Article explicitly charges the Assembly Secretary with updating other information on the GSA website. Whether the responsibility lies with the Secretary, the Speaker, the Vice-President or the President, someone should be vested with the task specifically in order for someone to be held accountable.

BEST PRACTICES

The items below are not considered substantial issues, typographical errors, or even unclear issues with the governing documents. Instead, they are suggestions and potential items of discussion for the leadership of the Graduate Student Association to consider. They are classified more as “best practices” that the GSA might study in order to make the future of the organization stronger.
DENIAL OF RIGHTS

In many areas of the governing documents is the statement, or sentiment that "No member of the GSA shall be denied these rights or otherwise GSA discriminated against for any reason whatsoever." While admirable, this clause is so open ended that it could open the GSA up for unintentional issues. Perhaps there are instances where GSA would bar a member from SOMETHING. If a student was convicted of theft or fraud, should they be allowed to serve as GSA Treasurer? Or perhaps someone has a history and pattern of hateful and controversial speech, should they be allowed to serve as GSA President (the de facto spokesperson for the graduate student body)? Further, what if a GSA Officer is found guilty of theft or fraud against the GSA? Per this clause they STILL cannot be denied ANY rights within the GSA. No GSA rights can be denied “for any reason whatsoever.” With this clause the GSA can't bar anyone from anything, and if they do they are in violation of the Constitution. The more accepted statement that no one should be discriminated against based on "age, race, ethnicity, color..." etc. clearly identifies what CANNOT be used for limiting participation, but does leave the door open to other reasons why a person might be limited in their GSA rights. If, however, the GSA truly believes there is no possible reason (present or future) that any GSA member should ever be limited in ANY participation in GSA activities, then this (and other similar clauses) is fine.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In some areas of the governing documents there appears the statement that "individuals with conflicts of interest are expected to recuse themselves [from] activities in which they have a stake." This, again, is an admirable sentiment but is very open ended and broad. The GSA should consider what defines a "stake" in an activity. Must the individual have a financial interest? Any personal involvement? What about involvement of one's family? Friends? Colleagues? It is very easy to argue almost any graduate student has a "stake" in any activity of the GSA depending on how one defines “stake”.

Similarly, in the Constitution Article VII, Section 2, the Assembly Speaker is required to attend EBoard meetings in an "unbiased manner". This is an overly vague statement to have in the Constitution, which in essence mandates the manner in which someone is to attend a meeting. For example, it would also be inappropriate to state the Speaker must attend in a "professional" or "courteous" manner. What types of bias is this section trying to eliminate or minimize? More detail would help because even the most well intentioned individual isn’t able to completely eliminate any and all bias- no matter what the GSA Constitution says.
AMENDMENT PROCESS

The GSA should consider having a minimum participation threshold for elections, or at least for Constitutional changes. The idea behind requiring a membership wide vote is to make sure the Constitutional changes are acceptable to all members, and not just the governing set. If a Constitutional amendment is proposed, and the election is not promoted widely, it could appear that the change was pushed through in an underhanded way. This threshold might make it difficult to amend the Constitution, but that is exactly the point. The Constitution should include only the most basic principles that would only be changed with widespread and overwhelming support. Even something like requiring the participation of at least 5% of registered graduate students is a start. Otherwise, if sweeping changes to the GSA’s Constitution are approved by 100 voters (out of approximately 4,000 graduate students) that would mean the changes could be approved by a little more than 1% of the GSA membership. (51 yes votes out of 100 voters means the measure passes, but 51 yes votes is barely more than 1% of 4,000 graduate students.)

STIPENDS

The stipends for GSA Officers do not belong in the By-Laws. Instead they can and should be listed in the budget. While the goal was probably to codify the stipends to prevent year-to-year changes it is a bit futile. The GSA Assembly sets the budget, and the GSA Assembly is free to amend the By-Laws at any time. Similarly it is redundant to state that the Assembly can adjust stipends in even years. Since it is in the By-Laws, the Assembly is free to amend any part of the By-Laws whenever it so chooses. In this case, it might actually be better to leave the stipends out of the By-Laws since the budget is only voted on once a year. By leaving the stipends in the By-Laws, in theory, the Assembly could increase or reduce an officer’s stipend mid-year by amending the By-Laws. If it was in the budget a mid-year raise or cut is prevented.

OUTLOOK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall the GSA Constitution and By-Laws are very thorough, outline the desired operation of the Association, and protect it from many types of inappropriate activity. There were, however, a handful of critical issues that must be corrected for the documents to function properly. There are also a number of issues that are not critical, but the GSA should consider fixing. These
issues were outlined in the previous sections. Finally, there are some “best practices” that the GSA could consider to further strengthen and protect the operations of the Association.

The recommendations outlined above are not trivial in nature and will require a significant amount of effort to fix and shepherd through the amendment process. In the course of doing this work there are additional, big pictures, stylistic changes and suggestions that might be considered by the GSA.

First, the GSA Constitution as it is written today is overly specific. The Constitution should contain only the most basic and important aspects of the organization. Robert's Rules suggests it should only contain:

1) The name and object of the society (which could be split into two sections)
2) Qualification of members
3) Officers and their election
4) Meetings of the society (including only what is essential, leaving details to the by-laws)
5) How to amend the constitution

The GSA Constitution contains these 5 (or 6) topics, but seems to have difficulty leaving the details to the By-Laws. As mentioned above, the Constitution should be difficult to amend, and it should not have so much detail. The details should be left to the By-Laws.

The second stylistic point is that the By-Laws seem redundant in many instances. It is unnecessary to repeat in the By-Laws what is stated in the Constitution, and this happens throughout the By-Laws. This could be because if the By-Laws didn’t repeat everything in the Constitution there wouldn’t be more than a page or two of the By-Laws! Therefore, both of these issues could be solved if the details are removed from the Constitution and left to the By-Laws. This would keep the Constitution to the most basic issues and the By-Laws could contain the details without repeating everything in the Constitution.

In the previous section some overly broad statement were identified and the potential issues that could be caused by those statements were outlined. In general, the Constitution and By-Laws should lay out the rules for the operation of the organization. A mission statement, or purpose, should be included but limited. In many cases the GSA documents include very broad statements about how officers should behave, which isn't appropriate. There should not be rules about how individuals think, act or behave. Finally, there is a statement, seemingly out of nowhere, that says "Criminal activity may be subject to legal action." That doesn't belong in the By-Laws of the GSA- it's just stating a fact. Overall, the Constitution and By-Laws should stick to their job of listing the operational rules and regulations of the organization- and not try to legislate how individuals think, act or behave.

The final stylistic recommendation is to bullet the By-Laws as much as possible. There are articles, sections, and sometimes sub-sections in these documents,
but sometimes there end up being long paragraphs about a topic. See By-Laws Article IV Section 1 as an example: the section on the President is 1.5 pages long with no bullets or lists. Having nested lists makes it easier to read, easier to discuss, and easier to amend when needed.
APPENDICES

CONSTITUTION, AS REVIEWED
ARTICLE I: PREAMBLE

The University at Albany Graduate Student Organization (GSO) was voted into existence in the Spring of 1990 to address the needs of the University at Albany graduate students. In 2013, its name was changed to the University at Albany Graduate Student Association (GSA). The documents governing its operation shall be divided into the Constitution which shall contain the core principles of the GSA and the By-Laws which shall contain the particulars by which the principles codified in the Constitution shall be applied.

ARTICLE II: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the University at Albany GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION, hereinafter referred to as the GSA.

ARTICLE III: PURPOSE

Section 1: General Goals: The purpose of the GSA is to identify and protect the rights of graduate students, to advocate their interests and to provide services that enhance the social, academic, professional and cultural environment of the University at Albany.

Section 2: Equity and Inclusion: The GSA affirms its commitment to the principles of equity and inclusion and acknowledges the pervasiveness of inequality in society and in higher education. The GSA considers itself a proactive and progressive organization and is committed to the elimination of discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, color, religion or creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, economic status, veteran status, physical ability or national origin.

ARTICLE IV: ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS

No part of the net earnings of the GSA shall be to the benefit of or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers or other private persons, except where the GSA shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article III, Sections 1 and 2 hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the
GSA shall be the participation or intervention in any political campaign on behalf of any political party or candidate seeking or holding public office (including the publishing or distribution of statements). The Graduate Student Association will conduct its activities in accordance with the policies of the University at Albany and the State University of New York as well as in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

All currently enrolled graduate students of the University at Albany, who have been billed for the GSA activity fee, are members of the GSA. All members of the GSA shall have the right to representation and participation in GSA activities. No member of the GSA shall be denied these rights or otherwise GSA discriminated against for any reason whatsoever.

ARTICLE VI: THE GSA ASSEMBLY

Section 1: Responsibilities: The GSA Assembly shall act as the legislative body of the GSA. It shall be responsible for approving the budget, developing, approving and adopting policy for the GSA, approving GSA related position appointments, and relaying information between the GSA Assembly and its constituents.

Section 2: Representative Membership: Each Recognized Graduate Student Organization (RGSO) shall have one voting representative (and alternate) in the Assembly. A RGSO with forty (40) or more GSA members shall have one additional voting representative. A RGSO may select any of its members to serve as its voting representative(s) to the GSA Assembly, provided that individual is also a member of the GSA.

Every university department or intra-departmental program with GSA members is entitled to one representative in the Assembly. Departments or intra-departmental programs with forty (40) or more GSA members within said program shall be allotted one additional Assembly Representative. Each department or intra-departmental program is also entitled to declare one alternate for each Assembly Representative. Representatives and alternates must be chosen from graduate students enrolled in the department who are members of the GSA.

University departmental and intra-departmental representatives will not be included in the quorum for voting.

Section 3: Assembly Speaker: The GSA Assembly shall elect from its voting membership an Assembly Speaker to serve for that academic year (Fall and Spring). The election of the Assembly Speaker shall take place at the first Assembly meeting of the Fall semester. The Assembly Speaker shall act as the chairperson for Assembly meetings and shall have the power to call a special session of the GSA
Assembly. Additionally, the Assembly Speaker shall be responsible for attending all GSA Assembly meetings and Executive Board meetings. The Assembly Speaker shall not cast a vote at GSA Assembly meetings. The Assembly Speaker shall no longer represent their RGSO at Assembly Meetings; the Assembly Speaker’s RGSO shall appoint a new voting representative to the GSA Assembly. Should the office of Assembly Speaker become vacated or the Assembly Speaker be rendered incapable of his or her duties, a new Assembly Speaker shall be elected at the next Assembly Meeting.

Section 4: Meetings: The GSA Assembly shall conduct regular meetings at least once each month during the Fall and Spring semesters. Meetings shall be publicly announced no less than one week in advance. All meetings shall be open to all members of the GSA. Only RGSO, university department, and intradepartmental program representatives may vote at GSA Assembly meetings. There shall be no votes by proxy. A quorum for conducting official business shall consist of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the recognized RGSO GSA Assembly representatives. The Assembly Speaker shall chair meetings of the GSA Assembly. Should the Assembly Speaker be unable to assume his or her duties, the Vice President shall act as chairperson of the GSA Assembly at that meeting.

Section 5: Parliamentary Procedure: GSA Assembly meetings shall operate along the principles of Roberts Rules of Order.

Section 6: Legislative Committees: The GSA Assembly has the power to create legislative committees for the purpose of gathering and/or processing information for presentation to the GSA Assembly. The Assembly Speaker will hold an ex-officio seat on each legislative committee. Individuals with conflicts of interest are expected to recuse themselves from committee activities in which they have a stake. If allotted funds, the committee chairperson shall have signature power on relevant disbursement forms.

Section 7: Audits: The GSA Assembly has the power to, at any time, call for an audit of the GSA records, financial or otherwise.

Section 8: Impeachment:
The GSA Assembly shall have the power to impeach and remove from office any GSA officeholder, upon conviction of financial impropriety, gross negligence or gross misconduct, while performing duties related to their office.

(a) Impeachment proceedings are initiated upon presentation to the GSA Assembly of a written petition indicating both the accusations and the accused officer. The petition must include the signatures of the accuser, a Judicial Board member, and at least five other GSA members.

(b) A committee known as the Investigation Committee will be formed to investigate the circumstances surrounding the accusations. The members of the committee shall include at least one member of the Judicial Board who shall chair it. The Investigation Committee shall have the power to request documentation and testimony related to the charges from any RGSO, the GSA, its officers, and/or its members. Additionally, the Investigation Committee shall have the right to determine the date and time of the impeachment hearing, not less than two weeks from the date at which the petition was first presented. This hearing shall be announced publicly not less than one week in advance.

(c) The impeachment hearing shall be presided over by the Judicial Board. A quorum of the GSA Assembly must be present to proceed with the hearing which will be open to all members of the GSA. At this
hearing, the Investigation Committee shall present their findings. Further discussion, questioning, and other fact-finding shall be permitted. No person shall be convicted without being granted a fair opportunity to explain and defend his or her position and present contravening evidence. Conviction of the accused shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of GSA Assembly Representatives present. Upon conviction, the accused shall be stripped of their office. The GSA Assembly may order further action to remedy any harm done by financial impropriety, gross negligence or gross misconduct.

ARTICLE VII: EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1: Positions: The Executive Board shall consist of six executive officers: the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Multi-Cultural Affirmative Action Officer, the Programming Committee Chair and the Grants Committee Chair. No member of the Executive Board shall be permitted to hold a second office within the GSA, or to act as an officer or Assembly Representative of a RGSO.

(a) President: The President shall act as Chief Executive Officer of the GSA and as its chief spokesperson and representative. The President shall have the power to appoint GSA members as the Grants Chair, Programming Chair, and to remaining seats on the University Senate consistent with the University Senate's charter. These appointments are subject to approval by the GSA Assembly, but appointees may serve actively until a confirmation vote passes or fails. The President has signature power on all vouchers.

(b) Vice President: The Vice President shall form and chair the RGSO Committee. The RGSO Committee shall be responsible for the reviewing and dispersal of funds related to RGSOs, determining whether RGSOs have met the requirements for continued GSA recognition, and determining whether new RGSO applicants have met the requirements to be recognized. Additionally, the Vice President shall be responsible for calling and chairing the first GSA Assembly Meeting of the academic year, and facilitating the election of an Assembly Speaker at that meeting.

(c) Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer of the GSA. The Treasurer shall report on the financial status of the GSA to the Assembly at each meeting and officers upon request. The Treasurer has signature power on all vouchers.

(d) Equity and Inclusion Officer: The Equity and Inclusion Office (EIO) shall form and chair the Equity and Inclusion Committee. The EIO Chair will advise the Executive Board on ways to proactively ensure that strategic plans, officer agendas, and internal processes address issues of power inequality, as well as diversity and inclusion. The EIO Chair shall serve as an adviser to the GSA President, Lead and GSA Senators on issues of advocacy. The EIO Chair shall serve as a liaison with any campus entity which engages with the issues of multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion.

(e) Grants Chairperson: The Grants Chairperson shall form and chair the Grants Committee. The Grants Committee will be responsible for the reviewing and dispersal of funds related to research and travel grants. No grant application by a non-member of the GSA will be honored.
(f) Programming Chairperson: The Programming Chairperson shall form and chair the Programming Committee. The Programming Committee will be responsible for the reviewing and dispersal of funds related to educational, cultural, and social events being conducted by the GSA as well as insuring that those events are sufficiently advertised to the GSA membership.

Section 2: Executive Board Meetings: The Executive Board shall meet regularly. At each meeting, each officer shall report on their activities since the previous meeting and present for discussion and advisement their proposed agenda for the immediate future. Each officer shall have voting rights at these meetings. The Assembly Speaker shall also be required to attend Executive Board meetings as a nonvoting member to represent the assembly in a non-biased manner.

Section 3: Formal Power: Beyond the powers of their individual offices, the Executive Board may act on other powers bestowed in them by the GSA Assembly. Additionally, the Executive Board may endorse vouchers and payments with a minimum of two legitimate signatures. Legitimate signatures include the signatures of the President, and the Treasurer. All signing parties are responsible for confirming that the expenditure is within the budget approved by the GSA Assembly and the policies governing the GSA.

Section 4: Assembly Meetings: Each officer shall be required to attend and issue a report at each Assembly Meeting. Furthermore, each officer shall have a non-voting seat on the GSA Assembly, but is permitted to make motions and speak on matters.

Section 5: Term of Office: Elected officers shall serve one year beginning June 1. Appointed officers shall serve from their appointment until June 1.

Section 6: Executive Committees: The Executive Board has the power to create executive committees for the purpose of exercising powers granted to the Executive Board by the GSA Constitution, Bylaws, and Assembly. These Committees include but are not limited to the RGSO Committee, the MCAA Committee, the Grants Committee, and the Programming Committee. The President will hold an ex-officio seat on each executive committee. Individuals with conflicts of interest are expected to recuse themselves from committee activities in which they have a stake. If allotted funds, the committee chairperson shall have signature power on relevant disbursement forms.

Section 7: Contingency Plan:

a) The President shall have the authority to appoint an acting replacement to any vacant elected or appointed officer position, with the exception of the Assembly Speaker and Judicial Board members. These appointments must be confirmed by the GSA Assembly.

b) In the event the President is unable to assume his or her duties, the Vice President shall assume the Presidency. Beyond the Vice President, the secession of authority is to the Assembly Speaker, the Treasurer, and finally the MCAA Chairperson. The first responsibility of the new President shall be to appoint an acting replacement to any other vacated offices of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VIII: JUDICIAL BOARD
Section 1: Membership: The GSA Assembly shall elect from the GSA membership five Judicial Board members. No two Judicial Board members may share membership in the same RGSO. The election of the Judicial Board shall take place at the first Assembly meeting of the Fall semester. No Judicial Board member shall serve simultaneously on the Judicial Board and as a RGSO or Department Representative in the GSA Assembly. Should a Judicial Board seat ever become vacated or a Judicial Board member be rendered incapable of his or her duties, a new Judicial Board member shall be elected at the next Assembly Meeting.

Section 2: Term of Office: The Judicial Board shall serve from the date of their election until the adjournment of the first Assembly meeting of the following academic year.

Section 3: Judicial Review: Any member of the GSA, having found contradiction or fault in the rules of the GSA, may petition for Judicial Review. The Judicial Board may convene to interpret the Constitution and Bylaws with authority to pass an immediate ruling on the conflict and recommend to the GSA Assembly amendments of the Constitution and Bylaws to prevent further conflict.

Section 4: Mediation: The Judicial Board shall act as a mediator in any dispute that is brought before them by a GSA member or GSA officer. Any factor which limits the impartiality of a Judicial Board member shall be cause for that member to recuse themselves from the Board. If a compromise cannot be reached, the Judicial Board has the authority to force an action by the GSA or any member to resolve the impasse. Only a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Assembly may override a ruling of the Judicial Board in such instances.

Section 5: Impeachment: The Judicial Board shall preside over impeachment proceedings.

ARTICLE IX: ELECTIONS

Section 1: General Elections: A membership-wide election of the GSA shall be held annually, during the spring semester of the academic year. This shall be called a General Election. The primary purpose of the General Election shall be to elect certain executive officers and representative officers for the following term of office. Additionally, any referendums requiring approval by the GSA membership may be placed on the ballot, including Assembly-approved Constitutional amendments.

Section 2: Special Elections: A membership-wide election of the GSA may be called by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the GSA Assembly. This shall be called a Special Election and will serve to allow the immediate filling of vacant elected offices during the current term and for any referendums requiring approval by the GSA membership may be placed on the ballot, including Assembly-approved Constitutional amendments.

Section 3: Election Committee: The Assembly shall form an Election Committee not less than one month prior to any membership-wide election of the GSA. The Election Committee shall be responsible for coordinating with appropriate organizations within the University at Albany to facilitate the election as well as arranging for campaigning, debates, and other necessities of the election. The Election Committee
will also be responsible for validating election results. The Election Committee shall choose a chair from among its members. Any GSA member running for office must recuse themselves from the Election Committee.

**Section 4: Elected Officers:** The General Election shall serve to elect four members of the GSA Executive Board: the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and MCAA Chairperson. All four elected officers serve one year terms beginning on June 1.

Additionally, the GSA shall elect from its membership a Lead Senator and a University Council Representative. The elections of the Lead Senator and University Council Representative shall take place concurrently with the election of the Executive Board. The terms of office for the Lead Senator and the University Council Representative shall be concurrent with those of the Executive Board.

The Lead Senator shall hold a seat on the University Senate in accordance with the University Senate’s charter and shall be responsible for attending all sessions of the Senate, serving as the chief point of contact for other GSA Senators, and reporting to the GSA Assembly on the deliberations and actions of the University Senate.

The University Council Representative shall hold a seat on the University Council in accordance with the University Council’s bylaws and shall be responsible for attending all meetings of the University Council and reporting to the GSA Assembly on the deliberations and actions of the University Council.

**Section 5: Nominations:** Any member of the GSA has a right to run for elected office. Nominations, including self-nominations, must be submitted to the Election Committee.

**Section 6: Term Limits:** No individual may serve more than two terms in the same elected office or more than three total terms in any elected office.

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**ARTICLE X: AMENDMENT PROCESSES**

**Section 1: Constitution:** The Constitution and any changes shall first be approved by three-quarters (3/4) of the GSA Assembly, then, in a membership-wide election, ratified by two-thirds (2/3) of those GSA members voting.

**Section 2: By-Laws:** The By-Laws and any amendment to them shall be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) of the GSA Assembly.
BY-LAWS, AS REVIEWED
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Preamble

The GSA Constitution, as amended and adopted, presents the essential structure and operation of the GSA as a representative student government. The Bylaws act to elaborate on specific rules and policies of the GSA, but shall never be construed to replace or override the Constitution.

Article I: GSA Members

Section 1: Members: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article V, all currently enrolled graduate students of the University at Albany, who have been billed for the GSA activity fee, are members of the GSA. Membership is maintained by paying the activity fee within the timeframe the University billing office sets. All members of the GSA shall have the right to representation and participation in GSA activities. No member of the GSA shall be denied these rights or otherwise discriminated against for any reason whatsoever.

Section 2: Membership Benefits: GSA members are able to access the following benefits from the GSA. These benefits may be subject to availability.
   (a) GSA members shall have the right to attend and participate in all GSA Assembly meetings as non-voting members.
   (b) GSA members shall have the right to form organizations and apply for GSA recognition as RGSOs. Recognition includes eligibility for GSA funding and participation in GSA Governance and Activities. The rights and responsibilities of RGSOs are further detailed in RGSO guidelines.
   (c) GSA members shall have the right to apply for GSA grant funding, which supports select opportunities for academic accomplishment or encourages professional development.
   (d) GSA members shall have access to all GSA Office, Printing, and Room Rentals benefits.
   (e) GSA members shall have free access to all GSA funded events and activities.

Article II: GSA Assembly

Section 1: Roll of Membership: The Vice President shall be responsible for the generation and maintenance of a roll of membership, consisting of all GSA Assembly Representatives and alternates, pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 2. This roll shall be made available upon request to any member of the GSA and shall be used in the determination of the quorum. RGSO Assembly Representatives shall be selected in a manner compliant with their RGSO Constitution. University Department and Intra-departmental Program Assembly Representatives and Alternates shall be selected by endorsement of the GSA members of their Department or Program; such an endorsement may be submitted at any time and shall take the form of a signed petition on departmental letterhead by at least three GSA members within their Department or Program. University Departments and Intra-Departmental Programs shall be allotted one GSA Assembly Representative and one alternate; RGSOs, Departments, or intra-departmental
programs with forty (40) or more GSA members within said program shall be allotted one additional GSA Assembly Representative, pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 2. Confirmation of RGSO enrollment shall be obtained through the most effective method, as determined by the RGSO committee and as stated in the RGSO guidelines.

Section 2: Rules of Conduct: The GSA Assembly shall conduct its business in adherence with the latest edition of Roberts New Rules of Order (RONR). In such cases where RONR is contradicted by the GSA Constitution, Bylaws, or the resolutions of the GSA Assembly, the Constitution, Bylaws, or resolutions shall take precedence. The first order of business at any meeting shall be the election of an Assembly Speaker and Judicial Board members, should any such positions be vacant. No other business shall be conducted until such time as these positions are filled.

Section 3: Meeting, Scheduling, and Notification: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 4, regular meetings shall be scheduled at 6:00 pm EST on the first Friday of September, October, November, December, February, March, April, and May in which classes are in session. The Executive Board shall arrange for the location of the GSA Assembly meeting at least seven days prior to the GSA Assembly meeting. The GSA Assembly may specifically set alternate dates and times for the routine meetings so long as it is when classes are in session. Emergency meetings may be called at the discretion of the Assembly Speaker, pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 3. In all cases, the meeting’s date, time, and location shall be communicated to all GSA members via the GSA Listserv a minimum of seven days prior to the GSA Assembly meeting. The date, time, and location, drafts of the agenda, motions, documents, notices, all officer reports, and a draft of the previous meeting’s minutes shall be posted to the GSA Website at least seven days prior to the meeting.

Section 4: Assembly Secretary: The GSA Assembly shall select one member of the GSA as Assembly Secretary. The Assembly Secretary’s duties are as follows:
(a) Attend all GSA Assembly meetings
(b) Record the minutes of the meeting. Maintain a physical record of these minutes and arrange to have the minutes uploaded to the GSA website. These minutes shall be noted as unconfirmed until the GSA Assembly officially approves them. The GSA Assembly shall be responsible for amending and approving the minutes at the next regular meeting. All GSA Assembly minutes, once approved, shall be maintained in perpetuity both physically and on the GSA Website and shall be available to any member of the GSA.
(c) Maintain a physical record of all GSA policies and mandates, and Judicial Board rulings for each GSA term and arrange for these to be uploaded to the GSA website in a timely manner.
(d) Maintain a physical record of all GSA governing documents and update these as necessary and replace any outdated governing documents on the website.

Section 5: Confirmation of Appointments:
The President shall present all appointments to the GSA Assembly for approval at the next scheduled GSA Assembly Meeting. At least seven days prior to the GSA Assembly meeting, the
President shall arrange to post to the GSA Website, in the same section as their report, the intention to motion for the approval of the appointee and a biography of the appointee. The GSA Assembly shall raise, debate, and resolve the motion as a matter of new business. The motion shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the GSA Assembly. Should the motion to approve the appointment pass, the appointee shall assume the position of their appointment in full capacity, effective immediately. Should a motion to approve the appointment fail, the appointee shall vacate the acting position, effective immediately, and the President shall be charged with finding a new appointee.

Section 6: Policy: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 1, the GSA Assembly has the power to determine GSA policy. The GSA Assembly may adopt resolutions which set an official opinion of the GSA on an issue, establish rules or otherwise restrict the activity of the GSA and its agents, or authorize the use of GSA resources to an irregular task. Such resolutions, so long as they do not contradict the Constitution, or Bylaws, or other documents adopted by the GSA Assembly shall be considered official policy for the GSA, and all agents and officers of the GSA are expected to act accordingly.

Article III: GSA Executive Board

Section 1: Members of the Executive Board: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VII, Section 1, the Executive Board shall consist of six executive officers- the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Equity and Inclusion Officer, the Grants Chairperson, and the Programming Chairperson- and the Assembly Speaker. The Assembly Speaker shall attend all Executive Board meetings as a nonvoting member and shall represent the GSA Assembly in a non-biased manner pursuant to the Constitution, Article VII, Section 2.

Section 2: Rules of Conduct: The President shall act as the Chair for Executive Board meetings. Persons other than the six (6) Executive Board members and Assembly Speaker may be invited to attend these meetings at the discretion of the Chair; such persons shall have no authority to make motions or vote at such meetings. A quorum shall consist of at least five (5) members of the Executive Board, including the President, and the Assembly Speaker. The Executive Board shall conduct its business in adherence with latest edition of Roberts New Rules of Order (RONR). In such cases where RONR is contradicted by the GSA Constitution, Bylaws, or the resolutions of the GSA Assembly, the Constitution, Bylaws, or resolutions shall take precedence.

Section 3: Meeting, Scheduling, and Notification: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VII, Section 2, the Executive Board shall meet regularly. These meetings shall occur no less than once a month at dates, times, and locations selected by the members of the Executive Board. All Executive Board members shall be notified of the date, time, and location of a meeting no less than seven (7) days prior to that meeting’s occurrence.

Section 4: Formal Log: The Executive Board shall appoint one of its members to keep a formal log of these meetings which shall be kept securely. These records shall be made available to all current and future members of the Executive Board and shall be released to the GSA Assembly
or any agents of the GSA Assembly as necessary for an investigation sanctioned by the GSA Assembly.

Section 5: Strategic Planning: Prior to the first Assembly Meeting of the academic year, the Executive Board shall convene to develop a year-long strategic plan for the operations of the GSA. The strategic plan shall include overall goals for both advocacy, including legislative, programmatic, and organizational; and professional development, including the effective use of GSA resources for RGSO funding, grants, programming, and Equity and Inclusion funding. In addition, each Executive Board member shall submit an agenda for the year with goals specific to their position to be included in the strategic plan.

At least seven days prior to the first Assembly Meeting of the academic year, the strategic plan shall be sent out through the GSA Listserv and posted onto the GSA Website. The President shall present the strategic plan to the Assembly at the first Assembly Meeting of the academic year for Assembly approval. Once approved, the strategic plan shall be adopted as the official policy for the GSA for the following year, pursuant to the Constitution, Section VI, Article 1.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1: The President: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VII, Section 1, Subsection a, the President shall act as Chief Executive Officer of the GSA, and as its chief spokesperson and representative. As Chief Executive Officer, the President shall Chair the Executive Board. As Chair, the President shall chair all Executive Board meetings and shall be responsible for compiling and ensuring the distribution of officer reports to the GSA Assembly. The President shall also remain the durable point of contact for Executive Board members, GSA University Senators and Senate Council Representatives, GSA University Administrative Committee Representatives, and GSA Committee Chairs as it relates to the management of the GSA.

As Chief Executive Officer, the President shall appoint GSA members as the Grants Chairperson and the Programming Chairperson. Under the advisement of the Lead Senator, the President shall also appoint GSA members as Senators to vacant seats on the University Senate and GSA members as Senate Council Representatives. The President shall also appoint GSA members as GSA representatives to University Administrative Committees, as is necessary to further GSA interests. Administrative Committee representatives shall submit committee reports to the President for inclusion in the President’s report at GSA Assembly meetings.

The President shall have the authority to appoint an acting replacement to any vacant elected or appointed officer position, with the exception of the Assembly Speaker and Judicial Board members.

All Senator and Officer appointments are subject to approval by the GSA Assembly and shall be presented to the GSA Assembly at the next meeting for approval; appointees may serve actively until the GSA Assembly confirmation vote passes or fails.
As Chief Executive Officer, the President shall be responsible for the management of all GSA spaces; this explicitly includes the management of all GSA personnel and GSA office spaces. As part of this management, the President shall meet with the Campus Designee of the GSA’s contracted financial agent, the Vice President of Student Success, and any other University agents necessary to the productive management of GSA spaces. The President shall also attend or be apprised of the details of all Office Manager meetings. Finally, the President shall negotiate all GSA approved contracts on behalf of the GSA.

As Chief Executive Officer, the President has signature power on all vouchers and payments, including payroll. All disbursement forms shall be cleared and signed by the President. As a signing party, the President shall be responsible for confirming that the expenditure is within the budget approved by the GSA Assembly and the policies governing the GSA. Criminal activity may be subject to legal action. As Chief Executive Officer, the President shall hold an ex-officio seat on each executive committee.

As chief spokesperson and representative, the President shall have an ex-officio seat on the University Senate. The President shall attend all University Senate Meetings and shall serve on the University Senate’s Executive Committee and the University Senate’s Governance Council. The President may also serve on other Senate committees as is desirable and/or necessary. The President shall provide a report on all University Senate and committee meetings to the Lead Senator for incorporation into the Lead Senator’s official report to the GSA Assembly and shall assist the Lead Senator in maintaining regular communications between all appointed GSA Senators and Senate Council Representatives. The President may delegate University Senate responsibilities to another GSA member who shall be appointed in the President’s stead for the duration of the University Senate term.

As chief spokesperson and representative, the President shall have an ex-officio seat on the SUNY Student Assembly Executive Committee and the University Auxiliary Service Board. The President shall attend all meetings of the SUNY Student Assembly Executive Committee and the University Auxiliary Service Board, and shall include reports of these meetings in the President’s report to the GSA Assembly. The President may also serve on other University Administrative committees as is desirable and/or necessary.

As chief spokesperson and representative of the GSA, the President shall advocate and promote the image and official policy(s) of the GSA. The President shall be informed of all Public Relations and Advocacy events and activities and shall be held responsible for ensuring that they reflect positively on the image of the GSA and do not conflict with official policy(s). The President shall not approve, organize, sponsor, or in any way represent the GSA in an activity or event in which any person is discriminated against based on age, race, ethnicity, color, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, economic status, veteran status, physical ability, or national origin. The President shall also personally represent the GSA and advocate its interests to the University and its affiliates.

Section 2: The Vice President:
Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 4, The Vice President shall be responsible for calling and chairing the first GSA Assembly meeting of the academic year, and facilitating the election of an Assembly Speaker at that meeting. Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 3, in the absence of an Assembly Speaker, the Vice President shall act as chairperson of a GSA Assembly meeting.

The Vice President shall form and chair the RGSO Committee and shall oversee all RGSO Leadership Training events.

The Vice President shall review all RGSO vouchers to ensure they submit all required paperwork.

The Vice President shall work with a webmaster to ensure maintenance of the GSA Website. The Vice President shall maintain and update an ongoing record on the GSA Website of all GSA policies and mandates, and Judicial Board rulings for each GSA term. Pursuant to the Bylaws, Article II, Section 6, the GSA Assembly will vote to continue any GSA policies or mandates from the following term at the first Assembly meeting of the year. The Vice President shall also be responsible for ensuring that legitimate announcements are posted to the GSA listserv. This responsibility may be delegated to GSA personnel.

Section 3: The Treasurer: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VII, Section 1, Subsection C, the Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer of the GSA. This individual is charged with keeping the financial records of the GSA. The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that all expenses are accurate and abide by Board of Trustees and GSA guidelines.

The Treasurer is responsible for maintenance of the financial records and budget control. Specifically, the Treasurer is charged with the following tasks:
   (a) Auditing all lines of funding using GSA monies.
   (b) Verifying the adequacy of expense/reimbursement documentation.
   (c) Verifying expenses are within the guidelines set by the Board of Trustees and GSA.
   (d) Designing and maintaining the GSA budget for the fiscal year.
   (e) Reporting fiscal facts, suggestions, and/or concerns to the GSA Assembly.
   (f) Approving and overseeing GSA office payroll.
   (g) Enforcing all GSA financial guidelines.
   (h) Acting as a liaison to the GSA campus designee and University Auxiliary Services (UAS).
   (i) Identifying errors and/or loopholes in process and policy which hinder/interrupt fiscal processing and/or allocation of GSA funds.
   (j) The Treasurer is charged with reviewing the financial guidelines at the start of each year. Amendments of the financial guidelines are subject to a simple majority vote of the GSA Assembly.

The Treasurer is required to maintain a computerized record of the project budget. Over the duration of the year, the Treasurer is required to monitor expense and income of GSA funds, and take action to ensure that a budgetary shortfall does not occur for the fiscal year.
The GSA financial record must follow a uniform format and the Treasurer shall make the fiscal records available within a reasonable time frame to any GSA member. The Treasurer shall maintain a continuously updated record for the entire fiscal year pertaining to their term. Within this record, an entry should be made in the proper section for every transaction.

The balance will always reflect the most current amount remaining in the GSA account in accordance with the most up to date information available from the fiscal agent.

The Treasurer is charged with ensuring that all Executive Board officials and GSA members observe appropriate fiscal guidelines. Specifically, the Treasurer must ensure that each officer is approving expenses in line with their budget as well as fiscal policy and governing documents. The Treasurer has the right to hold, cancel, and or decline expenses deemed to be outside of Board of Trustees and GSA policy or inadequately documented.

Section 4: Equity and Inclusion Chair: The GSA affirms its commitment to the principles of equity and inclusion and acknowledges the pervasiveness of inequality in society and in higher education. The GSA considers itself a proactive and progressive organization, therefore the Equity and Inclusion Chair is charged with ensuring that the GSA meets this commitment in the following ways:

(a) In order to ensure that the GSA meets its mission statement of upholding the values of diversity, inclusion, and equity, the Equity and Inclusion chair shall hold an ex-officio seat on each executive committee.

(b) The Equity and Inclusion Chair will advise the Executive Board on ways to proactively ensure that strategic plans, officer agendas, and internal processes address issues of power inequality, as well as diversity and inclusion.

(c) The Equity and Inclusion Chair shall be charged with reviewing an Equity and Inclusion Report from each Executive board member and the Lead Senator. The report shall be handed in no later than the final week of each semester. The Equity and Inclusion chair also has the authority to request an interim report throughout the semester should a documented issue arise.

(d) The Equity and Inclusion Chair shall serve as an adviser to the GSA President, Lead and GSA Senators on issues of advocacy.

(e) The Equity and Inclusion Chair shall advise the President regarding all appointments and the hiring and firing of staff.

(f) Upon invitation the Equity and Inclusion Chair shall serve or send a proxy to serve graduate student interests by sitting on the President's Diversity Council and other University committees related to diversity.

(g) The Equity and Inclusion Chair shall seek external opportunities and resources to promote diversity and inclusion, such as reaching out to external networks (i.e., NAGPS, SUNY SA, Community Centers etc.), or funding (i.e., UAS Programming Funds, Diversity and Inclusion Grants, etc.).

(h) The Equity and Inclusion Chair is required to evaluate and monitor Equity and Inclusion/GRGSO events and or projects which adhere to the values stated in the Equity and Inclusion guidelines.

(i) The Equity and Inclusion Chair is charged with reviewing the Equity and Inclusion guidelines at the start of each year. Amendments of the Equity and Inclusion guidelines are subject to a simple majority vote of the GSA Assembly.
Section 5: Grants Committee Chairperson: The Grants Chairperson shall be presented by the President Elect for appointment by the GSA Assembly at the May GSA Assembly meeting; the Grants Chairperson shall assume office the following term. The Grants Chairperson shall form and chair the Grants Committee, which shall be responsible for supporting the tradition of academic accomplishment and encouraging professional development among the GSA members. The Grants Chairperson shall ensure that grant application information is posted online; shall oversee the process of accepting applications, reviewing them, and disbursing the approved funding; and shall ensure that all relevant grant information including application deadlines is disseminated to GSA members. The Grants Chairperson shall also be responsible for researching and reporting graduate funding opportunities available through the University or its affiliates which would help to support graduate funding.

Section 6: Programming Chairperson: The Programming Chairperson shall be presented by the President Elect for appointment by the GSA Assembly at the May GSA Assembly meeting; the Programming Chairperson shall assume office the following year. The Programming Chairperson shall form and chair the Programming Committee which shall be responsible for promoting the GSA to the graduate student body by both planning and organizing social, cultural, professional, and recreational activities for GSA members. The Programming Chairperson shall be responsible for the GSA’s funded events, the fundraising of those events, and helping to build camaraderie and awareness among GSA members. The Programming Chairperson shall oversee at least two GSA social events per semester; shall ensure that events held by the GSA are widely advertised across the campus community; shall investigate, promote, and organize professional opportunities for GSA members; and shall partner with the Equity and Inclusion Chairperson, when appropriate, to create community service opportunities for GSA members. As Chair of the Programming Committee, the Programming Chairperson shall oversee the allocation of jobs for the Committee’s events.

Section 7: Lead Senator, Appointed Senators, and Senate Council Representatives: The Lead Senator shall hold a seat on the University Senate in accordance with the University Senate’s charter and shall be responsible for remaining in compliance with the University Senate requirements as dictated by the Faculty Bylaws and serving as the chief point of contact for other GSA Senators, and submitting an Officer report to the President on the deliberations and actions of the University Senate and the Senate Councils on which the GSA has a representative. The Lead Senator shall attend all meetings of the GSA Assembly in order to report to the GSA Assembly on the deliberations and actions of the University Senate and the Senate Councils on which the GSA has a representative. The Lead Senator shall act as advisor to the President for the appointment of any additional GSA Senators and any Senate Council Representatives. Senators and Senate Council Representatives shall be responsible for attending the meetings of their assigned Senate Council and for attending any required sub-committee meetings; as well as submitting regular reports on the deliberations and actions of their assigned Senate Council to the Lead Senator.

Section 8: University Council Representative: The University Council Representative shall hold a seat on the University Council in accordance with the University Council’s Bylaws and shall be responsible for attending all meetings of the University Council and reporting to the GSA
Assembly on the deliberations and actions of the University Council. The University Council Representative shall make available a copy of any University Council meeting report available on the GSA Website at least seven days prior to the next GSA Assembly meeting.

Section 9: Assembly Speaker: The Assembly Speaker shall be elected from the GSA Assembly voting membership to serve for that academic year. The Assembly Speaker chairs and sets the agenda for GSA Assembly meetings, shall be responsible for attending all GSA Assembly meetings, and shall represent the GSA Assembly as a non-voting member at Executive Board meetings. The Assembly Speaker will prepare a call for each assembly meeting and arrange to post the listerv and website the date, location, and the time of all GSA Assembly Meetings. The speaker is also responsible for working with the Vice President to maintain an accurate roll of all voting members in the assembly and will track attendance at meetings for the purposes of quorum. Emergency GSA Assembly meetings may be called at the discretion of the Assembly Speaker pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 3.

Section 10: Judicial Board Members: The Judicial Board shall be composed of three voting members of the GSA Assembly and shall resolve internal conflicts within either the GSA Constitution or the GSA Bylaws; resolve conflicts between the GSA Constitution and the GSA Bylaws; mediate conflicts between RGSOs, GSA committees, and GSA members; and chair impeachment proceedings.

Section 11: Officer Stipends: The Executive Board shall receive stipends of an annualized amount, to be paid in eight (8) equal installments over the course of the academic year (during the months of September, October, November, December, February, March, April and May).

Those stipends are as follows:
(a) The President shall receive $4500 for the academic year.
(b) The Vice President shall receive $3500 for the academic year.
(c) The Treasurer shall receive $3500 for the academic year.
(d) The Equity and Inclusion Officer shall receive $3000 for the academic year.
(e) The Grants Chairperson shall receive $3000 for the academic year.
(f) The Programming Chairperson shall receive $3000 for the academic year.
(g) The Assembly Speaker shall receive $500 for the academic year.
(h) The Assembly Secretary shall receive $500 for the academic year.
(i) The members of the Judicial Board shall receive $500 each for the academic year.

The Lead Senator, Senators, and University Council Representative shall receive stipends of an annualized amount, to be paid in two (2) equal installments on December 15th and May 15th.

Those stipends are as follows:
(a) The Lead Senator shall receive $1000 for the academic year.
(b) Other Senators shall receive $500 for the academic year.
(c) The University Council Representative shall receive $500 for the academic year.
(d) The Council Representatives who are not Senators shall receive $500 stipend for the academic year.
Each semester, each Executive Board member shall attend at least one Equity and Inclusion event, participate in an approved Equity and Inclusion program, or participate in an Equity and Inclusion approved community service program. The deadline for participation in an Equity and Inclusion Event shall be November 30th in the Fall semester and April 30th in the Spring semester. Failure of an Executive Board member to attend an Equity and Inclusion Event in the Fall semester prior to the November 30th deadline shall result in forfeiture of their December stipend installment. Failure of an Executive Board member to attend an Equity and Inclusion Event in the Spring semester prior to the April 30th deadline shall result in forfeiture of their May stipend installment.

All Officer stipends shall be reviewed by the GSA Assembly in the February meeting of even-numbered years in order to reassess their appropriateness. The GSA Assembly shall choose, at this time, whether to adjust any or all stipend amounts by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

**Section 12: Separation of Powers:** Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VII, Section 1, no member of the Executive Board shall be permitted to hold a second office within the GSA, or to act as an officer or Assembly Representative of a RGSO.

Furthermore, no elected or appointed GSA officer shall be permitted to assume the duties of another elected or appointed GSA officer, except as explicitly provided for in the GSA Constitution and Bylaws. This prohibition explicitly includes vacancies, which shall be filled by the appointment of an acting officer by the President.

The Executive Board shall have the power to veto any GSA Assembly action by a unanimous vote of all six voting members. The Executive Board shall have two weeks after the GSA Assembly takes action to vote and shall communicate to the GSA Assembly any results prior to the next GSA Assembly meeting. The GSA Assembly shall then have the opportunity at the next GSA Assembly meeting to debate and vote to override the veto by a two-thirds (2/3) majority; this ruling shall be considered final.

Finally, no voting Executive Board member shall serve as a voting member of a GSA legislative committee.

**Section 13: Office Hours and Appointments:** All members of the Executive Board shall schedule regular office hours at least two hours per week in order to process disbursement signature requests and to help GSA members and RGSO officers with questions and problems related to that Executive Board member’s duties. The office hours shall be held at least one day per week at the main campus; all office hours must be held at a GSA Office. These hours shall be scheduled at the convenience of that Executive Board member and shall be posted along with that Executive Board member’s contact information on the GSA Website and outside the GSA office. Should a GSA member require an appointment with any Executive Board member or other officer but be unable to attend regular office hours, that officer shall arrange with them an alternative appointment time.

**Section 14: Executive Board and Committee Chair Records:** A binder, physical or electronically linked to the main GSA email account shall be kept by all Executive Board
members and the Chairs of governance related Committees. The binder shall include, but is not be limited to: a complete list of members and their affiliations, attendance for all meetings, all roles taken on for projects and events by each member, and any records of money spent by the chair or their committee members for the fiscal year. Evaluations for both Grants and RGSO Committees shall be kept personally by the chairs, physically or electronically linked to each positions e-mail, to ensure privacy to all parties involved.

Article V: Judicial Board

Section 1: Role of Judicial Board: The Judicial Board shall resolve internal conflicts within either the GSA Constitution or the GSA Bylaws; resolve conflicts between the GSA Constitution and the GSA Bylaws; mediate conflicts between recognized GSA groups and recognized GSA members; and chair impeachment proceedings.

Section 2: Membership: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VIII, Section 1, the Judicial Board shall be composed of three voting members from the GSA Assembly. Judicial Board members shall be elected from the GSA Assembly at the first meeting of each academic year after the election of the Assembly Speaker. The Judicial Board shall serve until the election of a new Judicial Board at the first meeting of the following academic year. Any member of the GSA Assembly may announce their candidacy. If there are more than five candidates, a poll shall be conducted to select the three most favored candidates. Approval of the five most favored candidates shall then be voted on. Approval of a candidate for the Judicial Board shall require a simple majority of the GSA Assembly. Should a Judicial Board member resign, a new member shall be elected by the GSA Assembly at the following GSA Assembly meeting.

Section 3: Judicial Review: Any GSA member may raise an issue of internal conflict within the GSA Constitution or the GSA Bylaws, or conflict between the GSA Constitution and the GSA Bylaws, or conflict between other GSA documents to the Judicial Board. The Judicial Board shall review the issue within fourteen days of its being raised. The Judicial Board shall present its ruling at the GSA Assembly meeting following their fourteen day deliberation period.

Section 4: Mediation between GSA Groups: Any GSA member may raise an issue of conflict between recognized GSA groups, GSA Committees, or GSA members. The Judicial Board shall review the issue within fourteen days of it being raised and offer a resolution to the disputing parties. Disputing parties shall adhere to the resolution as directed by the Judicial Board. Failure to comply with Judicial Board resolutions may result in the loss of funding or impeachment proceedings. Either party may present the case to the GSA Assembly for overruling pursuant to the Constitution, Article VIII, Section 4.

Section 5: A Record of Proceedings: The Judicial Board shall keep a record of all inquiries, proceedings, and decisions, including a record of all evidence collected to that end, and subject to review upon request by a GSA member.
Section 6: RGSO Funding and Officer Stipend Freezes: The Judicial Board shall have the power to mediate disputes, pursuant to the Constitution, Article VIII, Section 4. As part of these powers, The Judicial Board shall have the authority to order a freeze of an officer’s stipend. A member of the GSA shall present to the Judicial Board a written petition indicating the accused officer, the alleged dereliction of duty or other cause, and any evidence. The Judicial Board shall immediately notify the accused officer. The Judicial Board shall investigate the petition within the timeframe provided for Mediation in the Bylaws, Article V, Section 4. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the Judicial Board shall notify the accused of the resolution. The Judicial Board’s vote shall be unanimous to order a freeze of an officer’s stipend. If the Judicial Board orders a freeze in the officer’s stipend, no pay or other compensation will be issued to the Officer for the duration recommended by the Judicial Board, but not extending beyond the beginning of the next semester. Officer stipend freezes may be appealed to the GSA Assembly. Overrule of a stipend freeze shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the GSA Assembly.

Section 7: Impeachment: The Judicial Board shall preside over impeachment hearings, pursuant to the Constitution, Article VIII, Section 5. A signature of a Judicial Board member is necessary in order to petition for the initiation of Impeachment proceedings. A Judicial Board member shall chair the Investigation Committee pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 8, Subsection b.

Section 8: Internal Procedures: The Judicial Board shall adhere to the following rules and procedures:
(a) All Judicial Board rulings shall be determined by a simple majority. The Judicial Board shall internally resolve any ties to arrive at a majority ruling.
(b) Judicial Board members are expected to recuse themselves from mediation proceedings where they have a conflict of interest. If the majority of the Judicial Board should recuse themselves, the Judicial Board shall present the case to the GSA Assembly for resolution. In this event, disputing parties shall adhere to the resolution as directed by the GSA Assembly.
(c) The Equity and Inclusion officer shall have access to all Judicial Board proceedings in order to facilitate oversight duties in accordance with the Constitution, Article VII, Section 1, Subsection d.

Article VI: Recognized Graduate Student Organizations

Section 1: Definition: A Recognized Graduate Student Organization (RGSO) is a graduate-level student group/club with Executive Board membership and Assembly representation consisting entirely of GSA members which is recognized by the GSA as a legitimate organization and eligible for funding and participation in GSA governance and activities.

Section 2: Professional Service: In order for the GSA to meet its responsibilities as a student government, service is required of the GSA membership. In exchange for funding, RGSO members are required to have representation at Assembly meetings, and will be asked to volunteer for committee service. These requirements are outlined in the RGSO guidelines.
Section 3: Monetary Freezes: In the event that an RGSO fails to maintain the agreed upon service requirements, the GSA executive board maintains the right to freeze the RGSO account until that service is rendered. RGSOs maintain the right to appeal this executive decision to the Judicial Board. In the event of an appeal, the freeze will be temporarily lifted until the Judicial Board delivers its ruling. In the event that the judicial board agrees with the executive decision, the freeze will be reinstated, and the RGSO may be subject to additional penalties imposed by the ruling of the Judicial Board.

Article VII: Committees

Section 1: Standing Committees: All standing committees shall be open to all GSA members. All standing committees must operate under guidelines that outline standing operating procedures for the committee, including application processes, membership requirements, and timelines for review of applications. All standing committees shall create a handbook containing all forms and guidelines as required by the subject of their purview. Committees shall immediately implement guidelines where guidelines do not already exist; amendments to existing guidelines shall be implemented the following semester. All guidelines shall be adopted and amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the GSA Assembly. Once created by the assembly, standing committees cannot be dissolved except by a two-thirds majority vote of the GSA Assembly.

Section 2: Grants Committee:

(a) Composition of Grants Committee: The Grants Committee shall consist of the Grants Chairperson and shall have enough members so that each grant application can be reviewed by no less than 3 people. The Grants Committee shall have members from at least two differing RGSOs or Departments.

(b) Charge of Grants Committee: Grant applications and review shall adhere to the following regulations:
   i. The Grants Committee shall complete the review process of all grant applications.
   ii. All procedures of the Grants Committee and any forms or instructions necessary for the application process shall be made available on the GSA Website.
   iii. The Grants Committee may vote by simple majority to recommend an amendment of the Grants Guidelines to the GSA Assembly. The GSA Assembly may approve such Amendments by a two-thirds majority vote.
   iv. At the end of each semester’s review process, the Grants Chairperson shall elicit feedback from the Grants Committee regarding any changes to the grants process they may find appropriate.

Section 3: RGSO Committee:

(a) Composition of RGSO Committee: The RGSO Committee shall consist of the GSA Vice President and shall have enough members so that each RGSO application can be reviewed by no
less than 3 people. The RGSO Committee shall have members from at least two differing RGSO’s or Departments.

(b) **Charge of RGSO Committee:** The RGSO Committee shall complete the review process of all RGSO applications, consider appeals, and have the discretion to reallocate RGSO funds.

   i. The RGSO Committee shall complete the review process of all RGSO funding applications.

   ii. All procedures of the RGSO Committee and any forms or instructions necessary for the application process shall be made available on the GSA Website.

   iii. The RGSO Committee may vote by simple majority to recommend an amendment of the RGSO Guidelines to the GSA Assembly. The GSA Assembly may approve such Amendments by a two-thirds majority vote.

   iv. At the end of each semester’s review process the Vice President shall elicit feedback from the RGSO Committee regarding any changes to the RGSO Committee’s process they may find appropriate.

**Section 4: Programming Committee:**

(a) **Composition of Programming Committee:** The Programming Committee shall consist of the Programming Chairperson and a minimum of two (2) additional GSA members from at least two differing RGSOs or Departments.

(b) **Charge of Programming Committee:** The GSA shall allocate funds for Programming in order to promote the GSA to the graduate student body by both planning and organizing social, cultural, professional, recreational, and developmental events and activities for GSA members; and participating in initiatives to increase and promote the GSA public image. The Programming Committee shall host at least two events per semester.

**Section 5: Equity and Inclusion Committee:**

(a) **Composition of Equity and Inclusion Committee:** The Equity and Inclusion Committee shall consist of the Equity and Inclusion Chairperson and a minimum of two (2) additional GSA members from at least two differing RGSOs or Departments.

(b) **Charge of Equity and Inclusion Committee:** The Equity and Inclusion committee’s primary responsibility shall be to execute the Equity and Inclusion agenda. The committee shall also monitor overall GSA operations, consider, and recommend changes to standard operating procedures or governing documents to ensure compliance with Article IV, Section 4.

**Section 6: The Wages & Benefits Committee**

(a) **Composition of Wages & Benefits Committee:** The Wages & Benefits Committee shall be a legislative committee consisting of no less than 3 people from at least two differing RGSOs or Departments and shall elect a chairperson from within their membership. The Assembly Speaker shall chair the committee until a chairperson is elected.
(b) **Charge of Wages & Benefits Committee**: The Wages & Benefits Committee shall consider the overall working condition and well-being of graduate students. The committee may consider issues pertaining to student labor or employment concerns of any constituent group on campus including but not limited to graduate and teaching assistants, contingent faculty, unfunded students, GSA officers, etc. The Wages & Benefits Committee has the right to develop and pursue an advocacy agenda with the help of the GSA’s officers, representatives, and relevant members of the GSA network.

**Section 7: Rules Committee**

(a) **Composition of Rules Committee**: The Rules Committee shall be a legislative committee consisting of no less than 3 people from at least two differing RGSO’s or Departments and shall elect from within their membership. The Assembly Speaker shall chair the committee until a chairperson is elected.

(b) **Charge of Rules Committee**: The Rules committee shall monitor and evaluate the GSA Constitution, Bylaws, and other guidelines and recommend changes to the GSA Assembly.

**Section 8: Creating Additional Committees**: The GSA Assembly has a right to create any ad hoc committee by a majority vote or a standing committee by a 2/3 vote. Any proposal for an ad hoc or standing committee must include a clear charge for the committee and a description of its composition.

**Article VIII: General and Special Elections**

**Section 1: General Elections**: Pursuant to the Constitution, Article IX, Section 1, there shall be an annual, membership wide election of the GSA, known as a General Election.

**Section 2: General Election**: Before the March GSA Assembly meeting, the Elections Committee shall determine their chairperson who shall serve as the durable point of contact for the Election Committee; shall oversee the announcement and collection of nominations for each elected position; and shall oversee the announcement of candidates for each elected position.

Individuals nominated by another member of the GSA must be informed of the nomination within 42 hours of the nomination. All nominated individuals must be informed of the date of the candidate’s forum held by the election committee at least one week prior to the candidate’s forum itself. Nominations shall include the nominee’s name, email address, departmental affiliation (if any), RGSO affiliation (if any), and the position for which they are being nominated.

The nomination period shall last for at least ten days, after which the Election Committee shall request, at minimum, a brief biography, platform, and a photograph from each nominee. Nominees shall have at least seven days to provide the required documentation. Upon receipt of
the required documentation, the nominees advance to candidacy and the provided documents shall be sent to the Vice President to be uploaded to the GSA Website.

Any GSA member considering standing for a GSA office or accepting a nomination for a GSA office shall be recused from serving on the Election Committee.

The Election Committee Chair shall appoint GSA members as necessary to fill any vacancies on the election committee.

**Section 3: Special Elections:** Pursuant to the Constitution, Article IX, Section 2, a membership-wide election of the GSA may be called by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the GSA Assembly. This shall be called a Special Election and shall allow for the immediate filling of vacant elected offices during the current term, and for the voting of any referendums by the GSA membership, including GSA Assembly-approved Constitutional amendments.

A Special Election shall be scheduled not less than one (1) month from the date on which the GSA Assembly has called for the Special Election. Pursuant to the Constitution, Article IX, Section 3, and the Bylaws, Article X, Section 2, the GSA Assembly shall immediately form a Special Election Committee, with the sole exception to the procedure being that an Elections Committee may be formed at a time other than the regular February GSA Assembly meeting.

All candidates who win a Special Election shall assume their office, effective immediately. Any officer elected in a Special Election shall serve until May 31st, at which time they shall yield their office to the winner of the General Election.

**Article IX: Audit Requirements**

**Section 1: Responsibility:** The President and Treasurer are responsible for auditing the activity of all RGSOs and officers. Any GSA member has the right to request an investigation of the President and Treasurer's oversight. The Judicial Board shall be charged with conducting such investigations, and reporting to the GSA Assembly.

**Section 2: Investigations and Audits:** The Executive Board is responsible for monitoring and controlling the functions of the GSA. The President and Treasurer are specifically charged to act as the monitors of, and internal controls for, the finances of the GSA. The GSA Assembly may, by majority vote, sanction an investigation of a particular function of the GSA and/or an audit of its finances by the Judicial Board.

Upon commencement of an investigation or audit, the Judicial Board shall be empowered to all of the following as is necessary to conduct their investigation:

(a) Obtain the latest copies of the GSA agency account ledger from the University Auxiliary services and schedule a meeting with a member of the UAS staff to help review the document.
(b) Gain full financial access to the My involvement system by the Campus Designee so that they may review all expenditures of the GSA.
(c) Conduct interviews with any officer of the GSA.
(d) Requisition relevant correspondence or other documentation directly related to the subject of the investigation.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Judicial Board shall submit to the GSA Assembly a report of the results of their investigation including, but not limited to:

1. Their best assessment of the events that transpired in the subject of their investigation.
2. Any negligence, malfeasance, or other individual error which affected the subject of their investigation.
3. An assessment of any systemic failures which were observed in due course of the investigation.
4. A non-binding recommendation of action to avoid recurrence of any problems observed during the investigation.

Article X: Communications

Section 1: Email: The GSA shall utilize University email accounts as its primary official means of communication. Officers granted a second officer University email account shall use this account for the purposes of their duties. Emails originating from or directed to non-sanctioned email addresses shall not be considered official communications within the GSA. The Vice President shall be responsible for ensuring that legitimate announcements are disseminated via the GSA Listserv or the GSA Notices Listserv. Messages composed at the direction of the GSA Assembly, Judicial Board, or Election Committee may not be delayed or compiled into a combined announcement.

Section 2: GSA Website: The GSA shall maintain a website on the University at Albany’s domain. The Vice President shall be responsible for arranging the continuous updating of the GSA Website with events, announcements and any changes to forms or documents as they occur.

Section 3: Unofficial Forms of Communications: Social media pages, office postings, direct conversations, phone calls, text messaging, and other forms of communication not described in previous sections are not official forms of communication.

Article XI: Standard Operating Procedures

Section 1: Standard Operating Procedures: Any document beyond the Bylaws and Constitution which affect the standard operating procedures of the GSA such as the RGSO guidelines, MCAA guidelines, Financial Guidelines, and Grants Guidelines, and handbooks, shall be subject to a majority vote of the Assembly and should be considered official GSA policy. In the case of conflict, the Bylaws take precedence over guidelines. All standard operating procedures, once adopted by the assembly will remain in force in perpetuity.