Graduate Student Association

University at Albany/SUNY, Campus Center West B92, Albany New York, 12222

Bylaws

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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, and have shown intent to pay 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 and Printing.
(e) GSA members shall have access to all GSA funded events and activities.
(f) GSA members shall have free access to all RGSO events and activities (unless an exception is given by the RGSO committee).

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
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. The forty (40) or more signatures must be unique if the group is seeking both additional representation in RGSO, Departmental, and/or Intra-Departmental in the GSA Assembly. 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 on the first Friday of September, October, November, December, February, March, April, and May in which classes are in session. The Assembly Speaker shall arrange for the location of the GSA Assembly meeting at least seven (7) 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 (7) 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 (7) days prior to the meeting.

Section 4: Assembly Secretary: The GSA Assembly Speaker 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 (7) 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 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 (6) executive officers- the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, the Equity and Inclusion Chair, 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, Judicial Board, 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 (7) 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. 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 contracts 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 or their designees shall attend all Conferences of the SUNY Student Assembly as a voting delegates (UAlbany Graduate Students have 2 voting delegates) 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,
Section 2: The Vice President:
Pursuant to the Constitution, Article VI, Section 4, 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 payments 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.

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) Overseeing GSA office payroll payments.
(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 member of the GSA Assembly. 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 Senator, University Senators, and Council Representatives 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/RGSO 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, or confirmed by the GSA Assembly at the September 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, or confirmed by the GSA Assembly at the September 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 Senate meetings, 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, except in extenuating circumstances. Any graduate student currently serving as a senate and/or council representative may continue their appointments until they are unable to do so or at the discretion of the president. New or replacement representatives will be chosen from a pool of applicants obtained by a call for applications which shall be open for no less than five (5) days.

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 (7) 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 the following academic year during the last Assembly meeting of the 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 to an email list and website the date, location, and the time of all GSA Assembly Meetings. The speaker is also responsible for, arranging the room reservation, and 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 five (5) members of the GSA membership 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, after each Assembly meeting (during the months of September, October, November, December, February, March, April and May). These payments are for prior work done (e.g. the October payment is for work done during September).

Those stipends are as follows:
(a) The President shall receive $8500 for the academic year.
(b) The Vice President shall receive $5500 for the academic year.
(c) The Treasurer shall receive $5500 for the academic year.
(d) The Equity and Inclusion Officer shall receive $5500 for the academic year.
(e) The Grants Chairperson shall receive $5000 for the academic year.
(f) The Programming Chairperson shall receive $5000 for the academic year.
(g) The Assembly Speaker shall receive $1100 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 $2500 for the academic year.
(b) University Senators shall receive $500 for the academic year.
(c) The University Council Representative shall receive $1000 for the academic year.
(d) The Council Representatives 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. The Equity and Inclusion Chair is responsible for publicizing approved equity and inclusion programs to the Executive Board throughout the year.

All officer stipends shall be reviewed by the GSA Assembly in the February meeting of even-numbered years in order to reassess their appropriateness; however, stipends may be raised by the GSA Assembly at any time. To adjust any or all stipend amounts requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the GSA Assembly.

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 of an RGSO, or an Assembly Representative, or a member of the Judicial Board.

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 five (5) voting members from the GSA Assembly. Judicial Board members shall be elected from the GSA Assembly at the first meeting of each academic year. 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 may announce their candidacy. If there are more than five candidates, a poll shall be conducted to select the five (5) 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 (14) days of its being raised. The Judicial Board shall present its ruling at the GSA Assembly meeting following their fourteen-day (14) 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 (14) 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 the Judicial Board Chair 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.
**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 serve on committees. 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 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 three (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 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 three (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 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 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 three (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.

**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 (10) 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 (7) 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, or delegated GSA Personnel 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.

Section 4: Write-in Candidates: All ballots will include a write-in option for GSA members to fill in and vote for during both general and special elections for elected officers. Write-in candidates who do not achieve a threshold of 25 write-ins of the voting GSA members will not be allowed to assume office. In this case pursuant to Article VII, Section 7, subsection (a) of the Constitution, the President Elect shall appoint an acting officer to the position to be confirmed by two-thirds (2/3) majority at the last Assembly meeting of the year. Upon confirmation, the officer becomes the officer elect. In the event this confirmation shall fail, an elections committee shall form to oversee a special election to take place in September of the following academic year.

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 or delegated GSA Personnel, 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, EI 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.

Section 2: Student Activity Fee: The GSA Assembly is responsible for deciding the amount of the student activity fee within the guidelines set by the SUNY Student Activity Fee. Changing the fee requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.