



## Graduate Student Association Constitution

Grand Valley State University  
(Revisions as of April 16th, 2025)

- I. **NAME: Graduate Student Association (GSA)**
- II. **MISSION & PURPOSE:**
  - A. **MISSION:** The Graduate Student Association (GSA) promotes interdisciplinary communication and collaboration to enhance the holistic graduate student experience at Grand Valley State University (GVSU). By fostering the development of a graduate student community at GVSU, graduate students will develop academically, intellectually, professionally, and socially.
  - B. **PURPOSE:** The GSA operates as a resource and advocate for the graduate student population. The GSA strives to: Help graduate students access university resources, sponsor academic, cultural, community service, and professional development events, serve as a voice for graduate student needs, and provide networking and social opportunities with fellow students, graduate faculty, university staff, and community members.
  - C. **AFFILIATION:** The GSA is a registered graduate student organization with the Office of Student Life at GVSU. The GSA Funding Board is a service provided by the GSA Finance Officer, Vice President, and Admin Officer on behalf of the Graduate School. Its purpose is to provide funding for GVSU graduate students, Registered Graduate Student Organizations (Grad RSOs), and GSA Members to attend professional development events.
- III. **RULES ON MEMBERSHIP:**
  - A. **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP:** The GSA serves all graduate students but recognizes membership as those formally registered on the Laker Link GSA group.
  - B. **NON-DISCRIMINATION:** It is the policy of GVSU and the GSA that no person shall be discriminated against on the basis of age, color, disability, familial status, height, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight.
- IV. **EXECUTIVE BOARD: The GSA Executive Board (E-Board) positions consist of:**
  - A. President
  - B. Vice President
  - C. Finance Officer
  - D. Administrative Officers
  - E. Communication Officer

**V. EXECUTIVE BOARD QUALIFICATIONS: Students seeking to run for or carry out the duties of an E-Board position must:**

- A. Be admitted and enrolled full-time in a graduate program at GVSU. Maintain good academic standing at all times.
- B. Not serve as an officer on any other graduate student organization E-Board while serving on the E-Board.
- C. Commit to the full term or the remainder of the term as defined in Article VII.
- D. Students receiving a graduate assistantship may serve on the E-Board.

**VI. EXECUTIVE BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

**A. President**

1. Represent the GSA and graduate student community whenever necessary.
2. Preside over all meetings of the GSA.
3. Oversee the creation of the E-Board meeting agenda in collaboration with the Admin Officer.
4. Delegate event planning duties to the E-Board in collaboration with the Vice President.
5. Delegate the Student Senate Graduate Student Representative role to an elected E-Board member.
6. Represent graduate students at campus meetings, which include but are not limited to Student Senate meetings, Graduate Council meetings, Academic Senate, Graduate Faculty meetings, and Executive Committee of Senate meetings.
7. Attendance at Ignite/ Reignite meetings, periodic updates of the Laker Link E-Board roles, and re-registration of the GSA on the Laker Link during the Summer semester, in collaboration with the Admin Officer and Vice President, will maintain the GSA's Registered Student Organization status with the Office of Student Life.

**B. Vice President**

1. Be perpetually prepared to assume all of the responsibilities of the President in the event of their absence, incapacity, resignation, or removal.
2. Support the efforts of the Finance Officer as requested. Help coordinate the GSA budget through communication with relevant parties on the specific costs.
3. The Vice President may be responsible for organizing and overseeing a non-voting assembly of voluntary graduate student representatives known as the Graduate Chamber. Potential alternatives to enhance engagement could include increasing the transparency of E-Board meetings and fostering greater participation from the broader graduate student population.
4. Work with the President in delegation and organization of event planning duties.
5. Read, understand, and interpret the GSA Constitution and Funding Board Bylaws. When necessary, work with faculty advisors to update these documents.
6. Document the goals of E-Board members for the organization during the Summer semester. At the conclusion of the Fall semester, conduct an evaluation of the E-Board members' performance.
7. Organize the onboarding process for the incoming E-Board regarding their roles and responsibilities for the Summer semester.

**C. Finance Officer**

1. Administer, on behalf of the Graduate School, the GSA & Funding Board financial account and budgets through detailed record keeping, and consistent, comprehensive communications with the Funding Board, E-Board, Faculty Advisors, and Graduate School.
2. Delegate finance tasks to the Vice President when appropriate.
3. Represent the GSA Funding Board through meetings with the Graduate School, Faculty Advisors, Office of Student Life, and any relevant Grad RSOs.
4. Maintain financial compliance with the Office of Student Life and Graduate School policies.
5. Read, interpret, and apply the GSA Funding Board Bylaws. Work with faculty advisors to update Bylaws documents when necessary.
6. Preside as chairperson over the Funding Board operations and meetings in collaboration with the Graduate School, Administrative Officer, Vice President, and all Grad RSO Representatives/ Finance Officers.
7. Review funding requests from Grad RSOs.
8. Prepare, share, and administer the agenda for Funding Board meetings.
9. Schedule, invite, and send reminders to Funding Board members about the Funding Board meetings.
10. Ensure the Admin Officer tracks attendance of the Funding Board meetings via the meeting minutes. Ensure meeting minutes are sent to the Funding Board members and posted to the GSA website.
11. In collaboration with the Communication Officer, update GSA webpages with up-to-date information on scheduled Funding Board meetings and processes.

**D. Administrative Officers**

The Administrative Officers role is held by first-year and second-year graduate students.

1. Attend all Funding Board meetings to record and manage the meeting minutes, in collaboration with the Finance Officer.
2. Coordinate logistics for all E-Board meetings and meetings including the Faculty Advisors. This requires scheduling, reserving physical spaces, creating virtual calls, and updating digital calendars.
3. Record E-Board meeting notes digitally and share the next steps with relevant parties.
4. Create the E-Board agenda in collaboration with the President.
5. Manage the GSA Google Drive.
6. Update Faculty Advisors after each E-Board meeting with summary notes of what was discussed, accomplished, and being worked on.
7. Generally, oversee the Laker Links membership and use it in collaboration with the E-Board.

**E. Communication Officer**

1. Oversee the marketing, graphics, public image, and joint public communications for the E-Board and GSA.
2. Manage the GSA social media by making posts, increasing followers, sharing graduate-related content, following GVSU accounts to share events, speakers, workshops, and promoting to the graduate community.

3. Coordinate with E-Board and Faculty Advisors to promote GSA events and practical, relevant information, and create monthly newsletters, Laker Link event posts, and GVSU public calendar posts.
4. Maintain the GSA website and Laker Link pages by updating information to be accurate and current, in collaboration with Faculty Advisors and E-Board.

#### **VII. ELECTIONS & ROLE ACQUISITIONS**

- A. E-Board elections are held virtually in the first half of the Winter semester. The newly elected E-Board will begin a transition orientation process with their assigned E-Board member until full power is transferred at the conclusion of the Winter semester.
- B. A full term on the E-Board is a 14-month commitment beginning March 1st and continuing through April 30th of the following year.
- C. In the event of resignations, impeachments, or attrition of any E-Board role, the President may, with the approval of the faculty advisor(s), invite new E-Board candidates to an interview process to fill the relevant positions and responsibilities.
- D. The Administrative Officer role will be left available for a first-year graduate student to fill and work jointly with the senior Administrative Officer to understand the GSA's functions and carry on its operations to the successive E-Board.

#### **VIII. ADVISORS**

- A. The advisor(s) of the GSA shall be appointed by the Graduate School.
- B. The advisor(s) term of appointment shall be indefinite from the time of appointment unless removed by a majority vote of the e-board or resignation.
- C. The advisor(s) must be a faculty or staff member of GVSU.
- D. Responsibilities:
  1. Advise the E-board on matters related to the GSA's operation. This includes (but is not limited to) budgets, events, official documents, and GSA funding boards.
  2. Function as a liaison between the GSA and the Graduate School at GVSU.
  3. Attend E-board meetings and other GSA-organized events.

#### **IX. IMPEACHMENT FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

- A. A request for impeachment of an E-Board member may be made by any member of the E-Board.
- B. Grounds for impeachment include, but are not limited to:
  1. A paucity of participation or fulfillment of duties and responsibilities.
  2. Inauspicious, threatening, or lurid behavior as it pertains to the E-Board, faculty mentors, or any other person associated with GSA or GVSU.
  3. Any behavior not in keeping with the GVSU student code of conduct.
- C. The process for impeaching an E-Board member is as follows:
  1. If two E-Board members believe that any officer should be removed from office, they shall jointly submit their charges, including their signatures, to the President and faculty advisors. If the President is the officer under scrutiny, the submission must be made to the Vice President and faculty advisors.
  2. Upon receipt of the charges, a hearing will be convened. This hearing will include all current E-Board members and current Faculty Advisors. During the hearing, the charges will be presented, and the officer in question will have the opportunity to respond.

3. After the hearing, a vote will be held among all current E-Board members, with the exception of the officer facing impeachment. For the impeachment to be approved, a three-fifths majority of the eligible voting members (calculated without including the impeached member) must vote in favor.
4. Should the impeached officer wish to contest the outcome, they may appeal the decision to the Vice Provost of the Graduate School. The Dean's ruling on the matter shall be final.

#### **X. FUNDING BOARD MEETINGS**

- A. The Funding Board is primarily governed by the [GSA Funding Bylaws](#).
- B. The purpose of the Funding Board is to disperse its allotted Student Life funds between all Grad RSOs.
- C. The chairperson of the Funding Board is the GSA Finance Officer. If unavailable, a member of the E-Board can fill in.
- D. Graduate Funding Board meetings are attended by at least one student representative from each Grad RSO.
- E. Graduate Funding Board meetings are attended by at least one faculty advisor.
- F. The Finance Officer, along with a Faculty Advisor, will ensure that all Graduate RSOs and applicants adhere to the funding guidelines outlined in the [GSA Funding Bylaws](#).

#### **XI. EVENTS: Responsibility for organizing, hosting, and coordinating events is to be determined before the start of semesters. Each E-Board member is expected to be the primary responsible party for at least one event and coordinate effectively with the E-Board and relevant stakeholders.**

- A. **Welcome Dinner:** In the early part of the Fall and Winter semesters, a welcome dinner or picnic is held, inviting the graduate community to meet the GSA E-Board and Faculty Advisors while enjoying food together. This event is crucial for communicating what the GSA does, introducing the E-Board, sharing usernames for social media pages, and outlining upcoming events.
- B. **Outings:** Each semester should include at least one event encouraging graduate students to leave campus and participate in an activity with the GSA in Downtown GR. Previous examples of such events are a hockey game and ice skating.
- C. **Professional Development:** Each year, the GSA should organize an event to professionally develop graduate students in partnership with GVSU's institutional partners. Previous examples of such events include resume workshops, Q&A panels with successful graduates, LinkedIn profile development, and guest speakers
- D. **Professional Photo Headshots:** Each semester, professional photographers are hired to take headshot photos of graduates. This event should be broadly advertised and hosted on the Health, Pew, and Allendale campuses.
- E. **Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation Week.** Held on April 7-11, a series of events and outreach to recognize the contributions of graduate and professional students. This event involves heavy collaboration with the Graduate School administration.
- F. Any other events may be organized as long as they align with the mission and purpose of the GSA.

#### **XII. AMENDMENTS:**

- A. Proposed amendments shall be made available to GSA members for input.
- B. Proposed constitutional amendments must be approved with an E-Board vote.

C. In the event of a tie, the GSA President's vote will serve as the tiebreaker.

**XIII. DISSOLUTION: Should the GSA cease to exist, all monies remaining in the non-Student Life Fee accounts shall be donated to The Graduate School to be used toward any program that directly affects graduate students.**