

The *Graduate Association of Political Science* of UWO
CONSTITUTION
September 2013

Article 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be The Graduate Association of Political Science of The University of Western Ontario, herein referred to as the GAPS or “the Association”.

Article II: Membership

The GAPS membership shall consist of all full- and part-time Masters and Doctoral students registered in the Department of Political Science at Western University.

Article III: Operating Year

The operating year of the GAPS will commence on October 1 and end on September 30.

Article IV: Purposes

The purposes of the GAPS are:

- (1) To foster a cooperative and collegial environment amongst graduate students, faculty, and staff.
- (2) To promote communication and to disseminate pertinent information amongst graduate students.
- (3) To represent and advocate for the collective interests of graduate students in Political Science.
- (4) To organize academic, social, and professional activities for graduate students in order to promote professional development and student engagement.
- (5) To elect representatives to organizations and decision-making bodies including, but not limited to:
 - (a) The Society of Graduate Students (SOGS).
 - (b) The Teaching Assistant and Postdoctoral Union (TA/PD Union/PSAC Local 610).
 - (c) The Department of Political Science Graduate Committee.

Article V: The Executive

- (1) The GAPS Executive shall consist of the Chair, Treasurer, Events Coordinator, MA Councillor, and PhD Councillor.
- (2) All Executive positions will be filled by direct election from among the Association’s membership.
- (3) All members of the Executive will be elected to a one-year term as outlined in Article III.
- (4) A Member of the association may only hold one (1) position on the Executive in a given operating year.

- (5) An Executive may simultaneously hold positions in other on-campus student organizations that represent the interests of graduate students in Political Science.
- (6) Each member of the Executive will have only one vote at Association meetings.
- (7) For the Executive to conduct business, there must be at least three (3) members of the Executive present at Executive meetings.
- (8) If any position is left vacant on the Executive after an election, the division of responsibilities can be left to the discretion of the members sitting on the Executive.

Article VI: Responsibilities

The following are the responsibilities of each member of the Executive:

- (1) The Chair shall:
 - (a) Call, organize, chair, and set the agenda for all Executive and General Membership meetings.
 - (b) Give notice of all Executive and general membership meetings and distribute meeting agendas by email.
 - (c) As needed, the Chair may establish standing or ad hoc committees consisting of the Association's members in order to carry out the purposes of the GAPS. Membership terms on all committees shall expire at the end of the Association's operating year.
 - (d) Work collaboratively with other members of the Executive in the planning and organization of the Association's activities.
 - (e) Invite the Departments PhD and MA Grad Reps, SOGS Councillors, and union Stewards to all meetings.
- (2) The Treasurer shall:
 - (a) Record votes and minutes of all meetings.
 - (b) Distribute Executive and general membership meeting minutes to all Members of the Association.
 - (c) Work collaboratively with other members of the Executive in the planning and organization of the Association's activities.
 - (d) Oversee the finances of the Association. The Treasurer's financial responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) Assuming signing authority for cheques issued by the Association.
 - (ii) Maintaining complete records of all of the Association's financial dealings.
 - (iii) Providing financial statements to Members at general meetings.
- (3) The Events Coordinator shall:
 - (a) Plan and organize professional development and social activities for the Association's Members.
 - (b) Develop and distribute materials/communications to promote the activities of the GPSA amongst Members and faculty.
 - (c) Work collaboratively with other members of the Executive in the planning and organization of the Association's activities.

- (4) The MA Representative shall:
 - (a) Attend Executive meetings on behalf of the MA student body to represent the interests of MA students within the Executive.
 - (b) Work collaboratively with other members of the Executive in the planning and organization of the Association's activities.
- (5) The PhD Representative shall:
 - (a) Attend Executive meetings on behalf of the PhD student body to represent the interests of PhD students within the Executive.
 - (b) Work collaboratively with other members of the Executive in the planning and organization of the Association's activities.

Article VII: The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)

- (1) The Association's CEO shall not be a member of the Executive, but shall be a non-voting ex-officio of the Association.
- (2) The CEO shall oversee all GAPS elections.
- (3) The position of CEO is open to all members, however, the CEO shall be ineligible to run in any of the elections.
- (4) The CEO is eligible to vote in the elections.
- (5) Nominations for the CEO will be received by the Executive within five (5) days of the incoming graduate student orientation session.
- (6) The members of the Executive will elect the CEO. If only one (1) nomination for the CEO is received by the Executive, that nominee will be awarded the position by acclamation. If more than one (1) nomination is received, the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes will be elected CEO.
- (7) The CEO is responsible for making election ballots, distributing ballots, and counting the votes.
- (8) The CEO shall count the votes in the presence of a scrutineer appointed by each candidate, if each candidate so chooses.
- (9) The CEO shall communicate all election results via email to all Members before the end of the business day following the election.
- (10) The CEO shall destroy all ballots following the election.

Article VIII: Meetings

- (1) There shall be at least two (2) meetings of the Executive during each academic term.
- (2) Quorum for the Executive meetings shall be three (3) members of the Executive.
- (3) At least two (2) general membership meetings shall be held during the Association's operating year, including the Annual General Meeting.
- (4) The Annual General Meeting shall be held during the last fourteen (14) days of September.
- (5) Members shall receive notice of a general membership meeting at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the general meeting.
- (6) Quorum for a general meeting shall be eight (8) members of the Association.

- (7) Minutes from a given meeting must be approved at a subsequent meeting of a similar type.
- (8) All decisions on motions presented at general membership meetings will be by majority vote. Votes on motions will be conducted by a show of hands. A motion may be made to move a vote to take place by secret ballot. If the motion is approved by the majority of Members present, then the vote shall occur by secret ballot during that meeting.
- (9) All amendments to the GAPS Constitution must be presented as motions at a general membership meeting and ratified by two-thirds of the membership present at the meeting.

Article IX: Elections

- (1) The GAPS CEO shall administer elections within the Association.
- (2) All elections shall take place at the Annual General Meeting as outlined in Article VII.
- (3) The nomination period for all elections shall be five (5) days in length and shall be open and available to all members immediately prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- (4) During the nomination period, the nominees may address the Membership in written statements of no more than 100 words, submitted to and disseminated by email by the CEO.
- (5) The Association's election procedures must be made available to all Members when the call for nominations is made.
- (6) Voting for all positions will take place via online voting for a period of three (3) days.
- (7) Only MA students will vote for the MA Graduate Representative and only PhD students will vote for the PhD Graduate Representative that sits on the Department's Graduate Committee.
- (8) If there is only one (1) nomination for a given Executive position, the nominee will be awarded the position by acclamation.
- (10) If there is more than one (1) candidate running for an Executive position, the candidate that obtains the most votes shall occupy the position for which s/he has run.
- (11) If there is an equal number of candidates running for SOGS Council, Union Stewards, and Graduate Representatives, the candidates shall be awarded their positions by acclamation.
- (12) If there are more candidates than the number of positions available for SOGS Councillors, Union Stewards, and Graduate Representatives, the candidates receiving the most votes shall occupy the positions that are available. For example, if there are two seats available for SOGS Councilors, the two candidates receiving the most votes will be awarded those seats.
- (12) If at any time during the operating year a member of the Executive vacates his/her position, a special election will be held as soon as possible to fill that position. The CEO will be called upon to oversee the special election as per the terms and conditions outlined in the duties of the CEO in Articles VII and IX.
- (13) In the event of a tie in any of the elections, the tie will be broken using the random ballot method.

Article X: Conflict of Interest and Censure

- (1) No member may profit or receive any benefit in any dealings or actions taken on behalf of the Association.
- (2) Each member of the Association is obligated to declare a conflict, or potential conflict of interest, as reasonable and appropriate, when carrying out the work of the Association.
- (3) Any Member holding an Executive position shall resign if censured by either the Executive or Membership.
- (4) Censure of a member of the Executive will require a two-thirds majority vote.
- (5) A quorum of ten (10) Members will be required to censure a member of the Executive.
- (6) Any Member so censured shall be eligible to run for office in the following operating year.