



GSG Constitution

Preamble

We, the graduate students at Northeastern University, recognizing our unique needs and challenges as advanced scholars, hereby establish the Graduate Student Government. As members of this academic community, we understand that our contributions to research, academia and scholarship are integral to the university's mission and success.

Our aim is to promote the welfare and interests of all graduate students at Northeastern University, to facilitate communication between graduate students and the administration, and to enhance the academic and social experiences of our members. We seek to foster an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages intellectual inquiry, creativity, and personal growth.

Through our elected representatives, we will advocate for the rights and concerns of graduate students, working collaboratively with the university administration, faculty, and staff to ensure that our voices are heard, and our needs are met. We are committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion within our community, and to advancing the values of academic excellence, ethical conduct, and civic engagement.

We believe that the Graduate Student Government will serve as a valuable resource for graduate students at Northeastern University, providing opportunities for networking, professional development, and social engagement. We invite all graduate students to become involved in our organization, and to help us build a vibrant and dynamic community that supports our collective goals and aspirations.

One Northeastern! Go Huskies!

Constitution

**Graduate Student Government
At Northeastern University**

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Article I – Organization Name

The name of this graduate and professional organization shall be the Northeastern University Graduate Student Government. For this document's purpose, the organization shall be called the GSG (Graduate Student Government). In this document, "graduate schools" will be used interchangeably with "graduate and professional schools" and "graduate students" will be used interchangeably with "graduate and professional school students".

Article II – Vision & Mission

The vision of the Graduate Student Government is to bring together a representative group of students from across the 9 Northeastern's graduate and professional schools who will represent and imbibe the below mentioned statements.

1

Empowering graduate students to succeed: The GSG aims to provide resources, support, and opportunities for graduate students to thrive academically, professionally, and personally.

2

Fostering a strong graduate student community: The GSG aims to create a sense of belonging and connection among graduate students through social events, networking opportunities, and other initiatives.

3

Advocating for graduate student rights and needs: The GSG aims to raise awareness of issues affecting graduate students, such as funding, housing, mental health, and diversity, and to work with the university administration and other stakeholders to address these concerns.

4

Promoting interdisciplinary collaboration: The GSG aims to facilitate communication and collaboration among graduate students from different departments and programs, with the goal of fostering interdisciplinary research and innovation.

Article III – A : Core Values

Advocacy

A commitment to advocating for the needs and interests of graduate students and working to ensure that they have a strong voice on campus.

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Inclusivity

A commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within the graduate student community, and working to eliminate discrimination and bias.

Professionalism

A commitment to upholding high standards of professionalism and ethical behavior and promoting the development of professional skills and competencies among graduate students.

Collaboration

A commitment to fostering a collaborative and supportive environment among graduate students and promoting opportunities for networking and engagement.

Transparency

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A commitment to transparency in decision-making and communication and ensuring that graduate students have access to information and are informed about the activities and initiatives of the graduate student government.

Article III – B : MEMBERSHIP AND STRUCTURE

A. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

1

Members of the GSG must be enrolled as full-time or part-time, graduate students at Northeastern University, in good academic and judicial standing, and be responsible to a recognized Graduate College at Northeastern University. Members of the GSG must also pay the Graduate Activity Fee. The Graduate Activity Fee is agreed upon by appropriate referendum and/or by the senate in conjunction with the Student Activity Business Office as prescribed by the rules of the University.

2

The GSG recognizes the following graduate Colleges at Northeastern University: Arts, Media & Design; D'Amore McKim School of Business; Computer & Information Sciences; Engineering; Bouve College of Health Sciences; Law; Science; and Social Sciences & Humanities, College of Professional Studies.

3

The GSG was established on the basis that it would be the representative group of the entire graduate community at Northeastern University including all of its diverse views and peoples. Hence, the GSG does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, mental or physical ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, creed, religion, personal or political beliefs, nationality, geographic or ethnic orientation, citizenship, class ancestry or status, including but not limited to marital, socioeconomic, and First Nations.

4

Any member has the right to inspect the financial and administrative records of the GSG.

5

The General Membership is represented in the governance of the GSG through the Senate and the Executive Board. 6. The General Membership receives reports from the Executive Board on all aspects of GSG business at scheduled Senate meetings.

B. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The GSG shall be structured as follows:

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Graduate Student Senate (hereafter referred to as the Senate) is the representative body of the Membership that governs the GSG and carries out legislative processes of the GSG. It shall serve as a forum for the communication of graduate student concerns and needs. It shall determine the policies of the GSG and shall receive proposals from the Executive Board for approval and/or implementation. Senate membership is to be determined as follows –

General Senators – Any fee-paying member is eligible to become a General Senator upon completion of the senatorship form as provided by the GSG. Each Graduate College shall be allocated one senator seat for every 75 actively enrolled graduate students. If any Graduate College enrolls fewer than 75 graduate students in total, then that College shall have a minimum of two Senators. General Senators will become inactive once they have failed to be represented at two consecutive in-person meetings, but will be able to become active again upon attending two senate meetings in a row. Senators will participate in GSG initiatives to help reduce the workload of the board members.

Group Senators – Each recognized Graduate Student Group will be allocated one seat per senate meeting. Groups will appoint a member of their executive to represent their interests at GSG Senate throughout the academic year and can send any member from their executive team. Group Senators will become inactive once they have failed to be represented at two consecutive meetings in a row but will be able to become active again upon attending two senate meetings in a row. When a group is inactive, they will not be allowed to vote at Senate meetings.

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Officers of the GSG constitute the Executive Board of the GSG. Officers are elected as outlined in the GSG election procedures code. The Executive Board brings proposals and suggestions before the Senate and serves as the liaison with the University administration on behalf of the GSG. It shall manage and coordinate programs, projects, and activities approved by the Senate. It is the responsibility of the Executive Board to ensure that all business of the GSG be communicated to the Graduate Student Senate and the General Membership through various mechanism including but not limited to college councils when available, social media platforms, and physical forums and other events.

Article IV – A : Authority

The GSG is the official liaison between graduate and professional students and the Northeastern faculty and administration.

The GSG will:

- 1 Be the approval authority for all fund drives initiated by or for any outside organizations related to graduate students;
- 2 Be the approval authority for all petitions or referenda which individuals or organizations wish to circulate among graduate students;
- 3 Distribute funds from the Graduate Activity Fee to eligible graduate students and eligible graduate student organizations.

Article IV – B : THE GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

A. ELIGIBILITY AND TERM

1

Members of the Senate must be currently enrolled as full-time or part-time, graduate students within one of the recognized Graduate Colleges of Northeastern University, in good academic and judicial standing, and be responsible to their respective Colleges. Senators are responsible for maintaining an effective system of two-way communication. Senators shall serve a regular term spanning from September 1 until August 31st. The GSG President, at his or her discretion, may convene a special Senate meeting during the summer term to consider special items of business.

2

Eligible Students may become General Senators by following the process outlined in the GSG By-laws and on the GSG website.

B. COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

1

General Senate seats shall be allocated to the Graduate Colleges on the basis of an enumerated ratio. If any Graduate College enrolls less than 75 graduate students, then that College shall have a minimum of two Senators.

2

Group Senate seats will remain active until a group fails to send their representative to two Senate meetings in a row thus rendering the group inactive. Group Senators representing an inactive group cannot vote at a Senate meeting on any business until they have regained active status by attending 2 Senate meetings in a row.

3

Each General and Group Senator shall be entitled to one vote.

4

In the event of vacancies in the Graduate Student Senate the VP of Marketing and Outreach will make an effort to recruit senators from the colleges and graduate groups that are underrepresented.

5

Senators have the responsibility and duty to communicate the concerns of their constituents to the Senate and Executive Board and report pertinent information to their constituencies, Graduate Colleges, and/or Graduate Student Groups.

C. SENATE MEETINGS

1

The GSG President (or designated officer) shall chair the meetings of the Senate. In the absence of the President, the Executive VP will fulfill this role.

2

The Senate shall meet at least three times per academic semester, both in the fall and the spring, at times to be determined by the current Executive Board. The GSG shall give no less than three days' notice of the time and place where the meetings will take place. Senate meetings shall be advertised on the official GSG website.

3

Special meetings may be called by the GSG President, or by two Executive Board officers, or by five Senators, or by ten graduate students, in order to hear and consider a special item, or items, of business. The party, or parties, calling the special meeting, with the

approval of a majority of the full Executive Board, shall give no less than one week notice to the Senate of the time and place of the special meeting. Special meetings shall be advertised on the official GSG website.

4

In order for a matter to be voted on, there must be quorum. Quorum is defined as one third of the active general senators from the Senate Roster.

5

Each Senator has one vote. Under no circumstances shall proxy votes be allowed. Members of the Executive Board, with the exception of the President, enjoy privileges of a Senator and are, thus, entitled to vote. The President shall be allowed to vote only in the event of a tie.

6

All decisions must be reached by a simple majority of voting Senators present, unless otherwise specified in this document.

7

Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the Senate meeting in all circumstances in which they are applicable and where they are not in conflict with any portion of this Constitution, the corresponding By-laws, or any rules and/or procedures that the Senate may adopt.

D. POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SENATE

1

Represents the voice of the graduate student body.

2

Recommends proposed legislation regarding university life, policies, and concerns of the graduate student body to the University President for his approval or rejection.

3

Approves, modifies, or rejects the budget submitted by the Executive Board.

- 4 Has the power to initiate and conduct referenda.
- 5 Has the power to override a presidential veto by a two-thirds majority vote.
- 6 Approves or rejects the circulation of petitions or referenda by outside individuals or organizations.
- 7 Has the power to impeach an Officer by a three-fourths majority vote. The Senate shall follow the Impeachment Process set forth in the GSG By-laws.
- 8 Authorizes the use of the name of the GSG by any programs for sponsorship purposes.
- 9 Each Senator must sit on at least one Standing Committee or serve one office hour.
- 10 Retains all powers vested in the GSG that are not specifically delegated in the Constitution and By-laws.

E. RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

- 1 If a Senator resigns, the vacancy shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the By-laws.
- 2 A Senator can be removed from their position based on a majority vote within the GSG Executive Cabinet. The removal recommendation must then be affirmed by the Senate.

Article V- Non-Discrimination Policy

The GSG is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all graduate students regardless of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or any other legally protected characteristic.

The GSG prohibits discrimination and harassment in any form, including but not limited to verbal, physical, or written abuse, intimidation, and exclusion. Such conduct is not tolerated and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal from GSG positions or activities.

The GSG recognizes that diversity enriches the educational experience and fosters a community that values and respects the differences among individuals. Therefore, the GSG actively promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of its activities and events.

Any individual who believes that they have been subject to discrimination or harassment by a member of the GSG should report the incident to the GSG executive board or the university's Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity. The GSG will take all necessary steps to investigate the complaint and take appropriate action to address and prevent discrimination and harassment.

The GSG encourages all members to be vigilant and proactive in creating and maintaining an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. All members are expected to uphold this policy and report any suspected violations immediately.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS’ POWERS & RESPONSIBILITIES

A. PRESIDENT

1. Serves as the spokesperson and Chief Executive Officer of the GSG.
2. Sets the agenda and chairs the meetings of the Executive Board and the Senate.
3. Responsible for overseeing the elections process.
4. Oversees all functions of the Executive Vice President, Vice President for Financial Affairs, Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for External Affairs, indirectly responsible for Vice President of Marketing & Outreach, Vice President for Programs & Operations and Vice President of Technology.
5. Reports Executive Board activities and actions to the Senate. Oversees all standing committees as necessary as an ex officio member of each committee.
6. Approves or vetoes legislation with his or her signature within ten days after passage by the Senate.
7. Acts as a liaison between the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the GSG.
8. Represents the GSG and appoints Graduate Representatives to all University committees and Search Committees with a simple majority approval of the Executive Board.
 9. Establishes the GSG’s involvement with university-wide financial planning and priorities in conjunction with the Vice President for Financial Affairs.
10. Reviews and recommends to the Senate all requests for solicitations from outside groups.
11. Analyzes all requests for appeals from graduate students, graduate student organizations and committees in all matters pertaining to GSG’s business.
12. Represents the GSG or appoints a member of the executive to all university boards and committees when necessary.
13. Interprets, updates (when necessary), and maintains the integrity of the GSG Constitution, Co-Chairs the Constitution Review Committee along with the Executive Vice President
14. Responsible for coordinating the annual Budget Priorities Survey (in conjunction with the Executive Vice-President and if warranted with the Vice President Academic Affairs or Vice President Student Affairs.
15. In conjunction with the Executive Vice President, ensures a smooth transition of officers from term to term. This includes facilitating introductions with relevant campus offices.
16. Must perform a minimum of 15 hours of work per week.

B. EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT —

- 1. Assumes the role of the GSG President in his or her absence, or upon resignation or removal.*
- 2. Has the rights and privileges of a Senator.*
- 3. Oversees the critical functions of the Vice President of Marketing & Outreach, the Vice President for Programs & Operations, and the Vice President of Technology.*
- 4. Articulates strategy for increasing and maintaining membership, developing programs that build affinity and support graduate student social interests and solidifies a comprehensive approach to social media/marketing in conjunction with the Vice President of Marketing & Outreach.*
- 5. Fosters partnerships with a variety of university constituents and increases GSG's visibility among graduate students.*
- 6. Assists with major projects as assigned by the President and chairs any committee thus deemed necessary.*
- 7. Responsible for overseeing the Budget Priorities process in conjunction with the President.*
- 8. Oversees the operations of the GSG Office and ensuring the space provides essential services to the graduate student population. Also, the EVP is responsible for hiring, training, supervising, and evaluating the office work study in conjunction with the VP for Financial Affairs.*
- 9. In conjunction with the President oversees the day-to-day record keeping functions of the GSG executive board including but not limited to recording and keeping of minutes, list of active senators, sign in sheets from senate meetings, officer manuals etc.*
- 10. Must perform a minimum of 15 hours of work per week.*

C. VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS —

- 1. Has the rights and privileges of a Senator.*
- 2. Chairs the Student Affairs Committee.*
- 3. Acts as a liaison between the Division of Student Affairs and the GSG in all aspects of Graduate Student Life. This includes but is not limited to: Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR), Career Development, Office of Institutional Diversity, and Inclusion (OIDI), Center for Spirituality, Dialogue and Service (CSDS), Office of Global Services, Housing and Residential Life, Center for Student Involvement, University Health, and Counseling Services (UHCS) and other units reporting to the Division of Student Affairs at Northeastern University.*
- 4. Assists students and student groups in addressing their complaints and grievances in the area of student affairs and services.*
- 5. Coordinate the new graduate student organization recognition process, in conjunction with CSI; serves as a mentor to proposed student organizations and provides support to existing organizations.*

6. *In conjunction with the Vice President for Financial Affairs, facilitate the student group funding process for events when necessary.*
7. *Produces press releases and reports on Student Affairs Committee activity when appropriate.*
8. *Assists the President with the Budget Priorities Survey and presentation at the discretion of the President and Executive Vice President.*
9. *Submits an officer report at the end of each semester (fall and spring) to the GSG President which will be reviewed for officer award distribution.*
10. *Must perform a minimum of ten- twelve hours of work per week.*

D. VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS —

1. *Has the rights and privileges of a Senator.*
2. *Chairs the Academic Affairs Committee.*
3. *Assists students in addressing their complaints and grievances in the Academic Affairs arena.*
4. *Assists Graduate Teaching Assistants and Research Assistants with their complaints and grievances.*
5. *Acts as liaison with respect to all administrative and academic areas that report to the provost including but not limited to Snell Library, Office of the Registrar, Center for Research and Innovation, Office of the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate and Research, as well as the individual colleges, departments, and programs.*
6. *In conjunction with the Executive Vice President and the Vice President of Academic Affairs, oversee the work study student in the GSG Office*
7. *Acts as liaison between the GSG and the Graduate Deans/Directors Council.*
8. *Serves on a variety of planning committees for major programs and initiatives that originate through the provost's area (examples include RISE, NIH Panel, etc.)*
9. *Produces press releases and reports on Academic Affairs Committee activity when appropriate.*
10. *Works on the betterment of services pertaining to the professional development of graduate students including but not limited to fellowships/grants, individual conference funding and support for teaching assistants and research assistants.*
11. *Assists the President with the Budget Priorities Survey and presentation at the discretion of the President and Executive Vice President.*
12. *Submits an officer report at the end of each semester (fall and spring) to the GSG President which will be reviewed for officer award distribution.*
13. *Must perform a minimum of ten-twelve hours a week.*

E. VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCIAL AFFAIRS —

1. *Has the rights and privileges of a Senator.*
2. *Responsible for the formation, management, and the execution of the Budget of the GSG.*
3. *Chairs the Senate Finance Committee in the distribution of Graduate Activity Fee monies.*
4. *Possesses liaison authority in the area of Financial Affairs and works with the Student Activities Business Office.*
5. *Responsible for the Finance By-laws and all administrative duties associated with its execution.*
6. *Reviews possible changes and revisions to the Finance By-laws and Funding Programs as circumstance permits.*
7. *Assists students in the address of their complaints and grievances in the GSG's funding programs and initiatives.*
8. *Produces press releases on Financial Affairs when appropriate.*
9. *In conjunction with the Executive Vice President oversees the work study student in the GSG Office.*
10. *Submits an officer report at the end of each semester (fall and spring) to the GSG President which will be reviewed for officer award distribution.*
11. *Must perform a minimum of ten-twelve hours per week.*

F. VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS —

1. *Has the rights and privileges of a Senator.*
2. *Chairs the Programs Committee.*
3. *Maintain and Document the meetings and events of GSG Responsible for coordinating with the rest of the e-board to plan the annual list of senate meetings, booking rooms for said meetings, and planning food/refreshments for senate meetings.*
4. *Organizes all annual social and multicultural programming of the GSG for the graduate student community including but not limited to welcome events, movie screenings, BBQs, etc.*
5. *Collaborate with E-board on flagship projects and meet the program manager to finalize semester event list*
6. *Submits an officer report at the end of each semester (fall and spring) to the GSG President which will be reviewed for officer award distribution.*
7. *Must perform a minimum of ten-twelve hours a week.*

G. VICE PRESIDENT FOR MARKETING AND OUTREACH —

1. *Has the rights and privileges of a Senator.*
2. *Chairs the Public/Media Relations & Membership Committee.*

3. *Responsible for the keeping and maintaining GSG records, including minutes, attendance, and eligibility records.*
4. *Responsible for all marketing platforms including but not limited to: GSG website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn etc.*
5. *Keeps and maintains the Senate Attendance list and updates Senator status lists.*
6. *Issues official correspondence (eg the GSG Gazette) to the GSG membership on behalf of the Executive Board, and all correspondence to graduate students on behalf of the GSG.*
7. *Acts as a liaison between the GSG and the Graduate Student Groups regarding the marketing of events.*
8. *Works with the GSG President to implement Annual Elections.*
9. *Works with the GSG to market to its constituents.*
10. *Coordinates with the interested individuals and recognized Graduate Groups to fill senatorial seats.*
11. *Submits an officer report at the end of each semester (fall and spring) to the GSG President which will be reviewed for officer award distribution.*
12. *Must perform a minimum of ten-twelve hours a week.*

H. VICE PRESIDENT FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

1. *Has the rights and privileges of a Senator.*
2. *Chairs the External Affairs Committee.*
3. *Builds and maintains a network of graduate students at the Boston campus and at Northeastern University's regional campuses.*
4. *Upholds relationships with the executive boards of other graduate governments/councils and advances NU GSG's academic and legislative objectives.*
5. *Manages GSG's membership with the Massachusetts Graduate Federation and attends meetings.*
6. *Manages GSG's membership with the National Association of Graduate- Professional Students (NAGPS) and represents the GSG in meetings, conferences, and events.*
7. *Represents the GSG at relevant committee meetings that are not attended by the President/Executive Vice President.*
8. *Establishes contact with university media constituents, oversees GSG public relations and advocacy efforts, and publicizes GSG initiatives through various forms of communication on campus.*
9. *Coordinates campus-wide campaigns/referenda initiated by the GSG in conjunction with the GSG President*
10. *Coordinates GSG's involvement in special events on and off campus.*
11. *Represents the interests of NU graduate students to all levels of government and maintains a positive relationship with local, state, and federal government elected officials.*
12. *Submits an officer report at the end of each semester (fall and spring) to the GSG President which will be reviewed for officer award distribution.*
13. *Must perform a minimum of ten-twelve hours a week.*

I. VICE PRESIDENT FOR TECHNOLOGY —

- 1. Has the rights and privileges of a Senator.*
- 2. Chairs the Technology Committee.*
- 3. Maintains current systems such as WordPress and Campus Labs and provides support to host meetings or events virtually.*
- 4. Navigates through data management complexities and develops processes to streamline current workflows such as senator attendance, senator status, etc.*
- 5. Assesses information system issues and offers technical expertise to the GSG and members of the executive board.*
- 6. Creates a short-term and long-term strategic plan for technological advancement within the GSG and oversees the development of innovative technological applications.*
- 7. Provides training to other VPs as required when system changes or upgrades are implemented.*
- 8. Submits an officer report at the end of each semester (fall and spring) to the GSG President which will be reviewed for officer award distribution.*
- 9. Must perform a minimum of ten-twelve hours a week.*

ARTICLE VII – ADVISORS

There shall be two advisors to the GSG, each of whom must be a full-time faculty or staff member. The advisors must be nominated by a Senator and shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the Senate. New Advisors may be selected from the University community at large, provided they meet all criteria as specified above.

ARTICLE VIII – ELECTIONS AND VOTING

Elections for officers of the Executive Board shall take place during the month of April and shall be carried out by the Senate. The GSG President, all Vice-Presidents, and active Senators present are eligible to vote in the elections.

ARTICLE IX – REFERENDA

The GSG has the right to initiate and conduct a referendum among the graduate student population. The GSG has the obligation to share the results with the graduate student population and carry out the directives established as a result of that particular referendum.

ARTICLE X – CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

The Constitution Review Committee chaired by the President will recommend Amendments to the Constitution to the Senate. Membership on the Review Committee may include any member from the executive board and a maximum of two senators. In the case where more than two senators are interested, a snap election may be held at a senate meeting to elect senate representation on the constitution review committee. All amendments shall be ratified by a majority vote of the GSG Senate. Ratification of changes to the Constitution requires a 2/3 majority vote of the Senate. If an amendment passes the Senate, subsequently, the updated Constitution must be submitted to the President of the University or his or her designee for approval and his or her signature before the amendment becomes effective and the documents are considered current.

Constitution is amended and approved by the Graduate Student Government on February 2023