



GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION

## **Graduate and Professional Student Association Governing Documents**

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## **ELECTION BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of these Bylaws is to define procedures for the annual election of GPSAUCSD officers, special election of GPSAUCSD officers, and the eligibility and guidelines for election of Council representatives by Departments.

### **ARTICLE II: ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

#### *Section I: Date of Election*

Annual election of officers shall occur at the first regularly scheduled Council meeting of the Spring Quarter. Positions are elect-in-training during Spring Quarter; newly elected positions shall take office on July 1.

#### *Section II: Announcement of Annual Election*

All Council representatives and Department graduate coordinators shall be notified of the date, time, and location of the election at least four weeks in advance. A notice containing this information shall also be published in any electronic media generally utilized for graduate and professional student communication. The Election Committee will host a candidate mixer at the time nominations open. GPSAUCSD executives will present on the duties and responsibilities of their respective positions before this event.

#### *Section III: Nomination of Candidates for Elective Offices*

Nominations for elective offices shall be opened and publicized no later than four weeks prior to the election. Candidates for elective office must be nominated by a Council representative, current officer, or may nominate themselves. Nominations must be submitted through the application on the GPSAUCSD website and candidates must accept their nomination prior to the start of the election.

The application shall include which position the candidate is being nominated for, if the person submitting the application is nominating themselves or someone else, and when the election will take place.

Candidates may be nominated for more than a single office, however, once elected to an office their name shall be removed from consideration for any subsequent office.



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Candidates may also seek letters of endorsement from a current GPSA representative or GPSA Executive Committee member. Letters of Endorsement must be submitted to the Elections Committee no later than one week before the election for approval by the Elections Committee. Endorsements may not exceed one page, must be Georgia and at least 12-pt font with at least 1-inch margins on all sides.

GPSA Executive Committee members may not submit letters of endorsement for candidates running for positions they currently occupy.

All letters of endorsement will be made available to the Council prior to the election. Council representatives are responsible for disseminating letters of endorsement approved by the Election Committee to their departments at that time.

Nominations for an elective office shall remain open until immediately prior to the Council entering closed session to vote for that office. Current nomination lists shall be sent to the candidates, council representatives, department graduate coordinators, and published in any electronic media generally used for graduate and professional student communication no later than one week prior to the election.

Notices to candidates shall indicate that nominations shall remain open until the Council vote and must explicitly tell the candidates which position(s) they have been nominated for and what they must do to prepare for the election (i.e. write a statement and accept their nomination if they have not yet done so) no later than one week prior to the election.

#### *Section IV: Campaign Platforms*

Candidates may, but are not required to, provide the Elections Committee with a statement of their campaign platform no later than one working day prior to the election (e.g. if the elections are held on a Monday, campaign platforms must be submitted by the end of the Friday before the elections). Statements may not exceed one page, must be Georgia, at least 12-pt font with at least 1-inch margins on all sides, and include a headshot of the candidate.

These statements will be made available to the Council prior to the election. Council representatives are responsible for disseminating platforms approved by the Election Committee to their departments at that time.

All campaign advertisements must be disseminated to Council representatives as determined by the Election Committee, and candidates are responsible for



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dissemination. The Election Committee shall ensure that candidates are not over- or under-represented by campaign advertisements.

No GPSAUCSD resources or materials may be used for candidate campaigning.

### *Section V: Voting Procedure*

Voting will proceed as follows:

1. Officers will be elected in the following order:
  - a. President
  - b. Vice President of Academic Affairs
  - c. Vice President of Campus Affairs
  - d. Vice President of External Affairs
  - e. Vice President of Financial Affairs
  - f. Vice President of Social Affairs
  - g. Vice President of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Affairs
2. If an elected office has no nominated candidates, the Council may postpone the election for that office until the end of the elections of other offices. If there are still vacant offices, the elections due that office will be automatically postponed until the next regularly scheduled Council meeting.
3. A candidate for office need not be present at the election, but they must accept their nomination either in person at a regularly scheduled Council meeting, or in writing to the Elections Committee.
4. Council members present at the start of elections may leave a written vote submission for any election for which they will be absent for voting.
  - a. This submission must be given to an Election Committee member before leaving, and will be nullified in the event of a successive election for that position.
  - b. While a written submission is active, any proxy for the absent Council member will be invalid, nor may an alternate representative vote in their place.
5. Candidates will be asked to leave the room during the Council vote. Candidates who are also Council representatives shall be permitted to cast votes in writing prior to the vote.
  - a. Members of the Election Committee, if they are Council representatives, may vote in the elections but may not speak for or against any candidate.
6. During voting, the Council session shall be closed to anyone who is not a Council representative or current officer.
7. Officers shall be elected by a secret ballot majority vote of Council representatives present at the election meeting, provided quorum is met. Ballot slips will be counted pre-voting to ensure proper vote counts during each election.



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- a. Positive vote for a candidate will be the candidate's name. If the vote is "None"/"No," this indicates a vote for no candidate and to leave the office open. In the event there are more "No" votes than positive votes, the position will remain open.
- b. Successive votes shall be taken until one candidate receives a majority. In successive votes for positions with three or more eligible candidates, the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be eliminated before the next voting round.
- c. If there are two remaining candidates and neither achieves a majority after one vote, the Elections Committee may decide to return to Council deliberations before the subsequent vote. This process continues until a single candidate achieves majority, or the Elections Committee proposes and Council confirms that the election for that position be postponed. In this case the position will be considered vacant, nominations reopened, and the election proceeds to the next position.
- d. A vote for an abstention or a name who is not a valid candidate shall be added to the vote count as an abstention.
- e. Winning an election requires a simple majority of present voting members, including approved proxy and written submissions. In the event of successive voting rounds when a candidate is removed, written submissions will no longer be counted for its vote or towards the present majority.

### *Section VI: Election Procedure*

Elections will follow the following procedure:

1. Elections shall be run by the Election Committee.
  - a. At least two Election Committee members must be present in order for Elections to proceed, and those members must have been approved by Council at a previous regularly scheduled meeting.
  - b. One member of the Election Committee shall serve as the chair during the entire election procedure. Other members of the Election Committee shall serve as operators of election procedure.
2. Elections shall have the following procedure for each elected officer. Procedures may be altered by the Election Committee up until the meeting agenda is sent to Council, and all times may be extended/shortened by Council during the meeting:
  - a. Final call for nominations, with the reminder that nominations can be submitted anytime up to the vote.
  - b. Election-specific public endorsements may be read aloud for a total of 3 minutes per letter of endorsement.
    - i. No questions will be fielded during this time.



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- ii. All speakers in this session must submit any endorsements to the Elections Committee no later than one week before the election for approval.
- iii. The order of speakers endorsing candidates will be rotated as determined by the Elections Committee to most balance candidate support.
- iv. Candidates may seek as many letters of endorsement as they wish, however a maximum of 3 per candidate may be read aloud during elections.
- c. Each candidate will be allowed 3 minutes to speak on their platform for office.
  - i. During this time no questions will be fielded.
- d. Candidates will then answer questions for a total of 10 minutes.
  - i. Each question and answer will be limited to 1 minute each
  - ii. Questions can be directed to individual candidates or all candidates.
  - iii. Candidates should take turns answering questions such that no candidate answers significantly more questions than the others, and order of candidate response will be rotated by the Election Committee.
  - iv. .
- e. If the position is contested, Council will proceed to deliberate in open session, followed by closed session. If the position is uncontested, Council will proceed directly to closed deliberations. During deliberations:
  - i. Open and closed session debate will be limited to 10 minutes each, with individual speaker times of 1 minute each.
  - ii. Candidates may not participate, except to answer clarifying questions asked by the chair. Discussion time for each candidate will be balanced as reasonably as possible by the chair.
  - iii. GPSAUCSD resources and materials cannot be used to favor one candidate over another.
  - iv. GPSAUCSD executives may not use privileged information to favor one candidate over another but they may speak as an individual.
  - v. To ensure the fairness and openness of the discussion, the Election Committee may propose to return the election process to a specified earlier stage.
    - 1. Upon Council approval, the election process will then continue starting from the specified point and following the procedures in normal sequence.
    - 2. If nominations are closed, then they may be reopened at this time.
- f. Candidates will then each have three minutes for concluding remarks, in reverse order of platform presentation.



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- g. Council will then continue deliberation in closed session during which the candidates will be asked to leave the room.
  - i. Closed debate will be limited to 5 minutes, with each speaker time limited to 30 seconds.
  - ii. Closed session deliberations will be immediately followed by voting done via secret ballot, and ballots counted by the Election Committee.
- h. Candidates will be asked to return to Council.
- i. The Election Committee will immediately inform the GPSAUCSD President of the voting results, whereupon the GPSAUCSD President will announce the winner.
  - i. Vote totals will be added to the meeting minutes and not verbally announced.
3. Ballots, whether physical or digital, shall be kept in a secure location by the Election Committee for 30 days after elections, after which they must be securely destroyed or deleted.
4. Council representatives or candidates may make a motion for a recount prior to approval of the meeting minutes containing the election results at the next Council meeting.
  - a. The motion must be seconded and takes a majority vote to adopt.
  - b. If adopted, the recount will take place immediately and in open session.
  - c. Votes will be recounted by the Election Committee.

### **ARTICLE III: SPECIAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

#### *Section I: Special Election Date*

A special election for any vacant elective office shall be held no later than two regular Council meetings after the position becomes vacant. If a vacancy occurs more than two weeks prior to the next regularly scheduled Council meeting, the President shall have the option to appoint an eligible student on an interim basis until the next regularly scheduled Council meeting, on which a special election for that office shall take place.

#### *Section II: Announcement of Special Elections*

All Council representatives and Department graduate coordinators shall be notified of the date, time, and location of the Special Election meeting at least two weeks in advance.

#### *Section III: Nominations*

Special Election nominations for vacant elective offices shall be open no later than the



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regularly scheduled Council meeting prior to the election. Nominations shall remain open until immediately prior to the Council vote for that office.

#### *Section IV: Voting Procedure*

Voting Procedure shall follow the same format as the annual election procedure outline in Election Bylaws Article II, Sections V and VI.

#### *Section V: Installation, Rights and Responsibilities*

Officers elected by Special Election shall be installed into office immediately following the election. Officers elected by Special Election shall be accorded the full rights and responsibilities due the office including membership on the Executive Committee and a prorated stipend.

### **ARTICLE IV: ELECTION OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES**

#### *Section I: Eligibility*

Candidates for Council representative shall be registered graduate or professional students in good academic standing as defined by the Office of Graduate Studies.

#### *Section II: Eligible Departments*

For the purposes of these Bylaws, the term "Department" shall encompass all officially recognized UCSD academic departments and programs that serve as a primary academic home for graduate or professional students, as defined by UCSD's Registrar Fall Quarter third week enrollment statistics.

#### *Section III: Number of Department Representatives*

The number of representatives on the Council for each Department shall be determined based on UCSD's Registrar Fall Quarter third-week enrollment statistics, as described in the GPSAUCSD Constitution.

#### *Section IV: Department Elections*

Individual Departments shall have autonomy regarding procedures for election of Council representatives. However, the election of representatives must be open to all eligible graduate or professional students in the Department and notification of the election procedure must be distributed to all graduate or professional students in the Department.





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The following list GPSAUCSD's recommended best practices regarding departmental elections:

1. Council representatives should be elected no earlier than 6 months prior to the beginning of their term.
2. Any graduate or professional student enrolled in the Department shall be eligible to vote in the Departmental elections.
3. Nominations should open no later than 2 weeks prior to the election. No later than nominations open, all eligible students within the Department should be notified of the time of the election; their right to nominate candidates, to be nominated, and to vote; and the number of representatives allocated for the Department under the GPSAUCSD Constitution.
4. No later than one week prior to the election, a list of those nominated should be made available to all eligible students within the Department.
5. Each eligible student within the Department may vote for a number of representatives no greater than that allowed by the GPSAUCSD Constitution. Votes may be cast in person, by paper ballot, or by electronic means.
6. Votes may be cast for any eligible student within the Department, whether specifically nominated or not.
7. A candidate may decline nomination or election.
8. Of those who do not decline, the eligible students within the Department having received the most votes at the time of the election shall be elected representatives.

#### **ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

These Bylaws may be amended by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of those present at a regularly scheduled Council meeting after the amendments have been proposed at the previous regular meeting.