



BYLAWS
GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION
RICE UNIVERSITY

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GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION BYLAWS

The Graduate Student Association, hereafter referred to as the Association or the GSA, is an organization established under a constitution, first approved by Rice graduate students in 1969, and most recently amended by graduate student vote in the Spring of 1996. In order to provide efficient operation and to ensure smooth transition during changes of Officers of the Association, the following bylaws are hereby enacted:

BYLAW A: GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

ARTICLE A-1: GENERAL PROCEDURE

Section 1: Membership

The GSA Constitution establishes the Graduate Student Council (the Council), which acts as the legislative branch of the GSA. The Council consists of one representative from each academic program at the university; provided that students in that program elect or designate a student representative to the Council. For all purposes under this Bylaw, all voting and ex officio members of the Council shall be considered Council members.

Section 2: Meetings

The Council shall hold regular monthly meetings, notice of which is given to all graduate students. It shall also hold special meetings whenever requested in writing by a majority of the Executive Committee or by three departmental representatives.

Section 3: Notice of Meetings

Notice of regular Council meetings shall be given five days prior to the meeting date. Special meetings of the Council require only three days' notice. An e-mail message to the GSA Representatives listserv is considered fair notice of a Council meeting

Section 4: Quorum

A quorum of the GSA Council shall consist of eight or more Representatives together with a simple majority of Executive Committee members present at a regular or special meeting about which proper notice was given unless overridden by a specific provision of these bylaws.

Section 5: Form of Council Legislation

Any resolution adopted by the Council shall include the title of the proposal, the date it is introduced in the Council, and the names of the Council member(s) introducing it. It shall also include the date the proposal is adopted by the Council and made publically available on the GSA website and stored in both internal GSA digital storage and with the Woodson Research Center archive.

ARTICLE A-2: ELECTIONS

Section 1: Election Meeting

The Council shall hold its annual election meeting at the regular March Council meeting of each year. At such meeting, the Council shall elect the Executive Committee of the Council. The Parliamentarian of the Council shall chair the election meeting.

Section 2: Candidates for Executive Committee

All candidates for positions on the Executive Committee shall submit an application for the office(s) sought to the Parliamentarian or Vice President of Administration of the Association prior to the election meeting. The Council may accept at the election meeting additional nominations of candidates for office on the Executive Committee. Applications for each office shall be available on the Graduate Student website.

Section 3: Term in Office

The term in office for each elected position and each committee appointment shall commence on April 1 and shall end on the following March 31.

Section 4: Vacancies

Any vacancy in an elective position or on a GSA or university committee shall be filled at a regular or special meeting of the Council.

Section 5: Removal

The Council may remove any executive officer of the GSA through the procedure outlined in Article Eleven of the Association's Constitution. The Council may remove any member of a GSA standing committee by a simple majority vote of the Council, unless another procedure for removal is specified in the bylaw governing the committee. However, no vote on removing officers or committee members shall take place unless notice of the proposed removal was given to graduate students less than 20 but more than 10 days before the removal vote.

Section 6: Voting

All elections and committee appointments shall be decided by a simple majority of votes cast by departmental representatives at the election meeting, with the Parliamentarian of the Council casting a tie breaking vote. A representative may not vote absentee or by proxy.

BY-LAW B: COMMITTEES

ARTICLE B-1: GRADUATE STUDENT POSITIONS ON UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

Section 1: Selection procedure for University Court

The Council shall elect students for positions on the University Court according to the following procedure:

1. The positions available and the deadline for applying for each position shall be announced by the Council and appear on the GSA web pages and be posted to the GSA announcements. Applications for each position shall be available in the Graduate Student Association office.
2. For the University Court positions, after the deadline for a position has passed, the Vice-President of Student Advocacy shall select from the applicants no more than eight nominees for consideration by the Council. The names of the nominees approved by the Council shall be submitted to the University Court.

Section 2: Selection procedure for Honor Council

The Council shall elect students for positions on the Honor Council according to the following procedure:

1. Each Spring, the newly-elected Honor Council President will appoint a graduate student point of contact, who is a graduate student member of the Honor Council OR contact the GSA Parliamentarian (henceforward, POC). This role serves two main functions:
 - 1) The POC acts as a liaison between the officers of the GSA and the Honor Council
 - 2) The POC acts as a recruiter for Honor Council graduate (excluding JSA) vacancies
2. As positions for graduate members become available within the Honor Council, the Honor Council officers shall contact the POC. The POC will then advertise the position through announcements on the GSA website and through the weekly email announcements. The POC will meet with all interested candidates, excluding members of the JSA (interested persons from the JSA will be forwarded to the JSA President by the POC). This meeting will serve to both, interview the candidate, as well as inform the candidate of the responsibilities of the position. At the following GSA Council meeting, the candidates will be introduced to the council by the POC, and the POC shall inform the Honor Council officers of all candidates appointed by the GSA Council.
3. The GSA has allotted **4** of their **14** spots to the JSA. The JSA is free to select their representation as they choose, and the JSA president will forward their selected members to the Honor Council directly.

Section 3: Selection procedure for other university boards and committees

The Council shall recommend students for positions on university boards and committees according to the following procedure:

1. The positions available and the deadline for applying for each position shall be announced by the Council and appear on the GSA website and be posted to the GSA announcements. Applications for each position shall be available on the Graduate Student Association website.
2. After the deadline for a position has passed, the President of the Association shall select from the applicants nominees for consideration by the Council. The names of the nominees approved by the Council shall be submitted to the office of the Provost and the office of the President of the University. The final decision on each position rests with the President of the University.

Section 4: Reports

1. The graduate student members of each university board or committee shall report on the first of each month to the Vice President of Student Advocacy. The Vice President of Student Advocacy shall ensure that these reports are submitted and shall present them to the Council. Each report shall describe the committee's activities and may recommend changes in the committee's authority, duties, or procedures.
2. If a committee has more than one student member, the student members may choose one of their own number to report to the Vice President of Student Advocacy.
3. The student members of each committee are responsible for knowing which actions of the committee should be made public.

ARTICLE B-2: AWARDS COMMITTEE

Section 1: Membership

The Awards Committee shall consist of the Parliamentarian as chair and four members of the association. The Student Center Director or an appointed representative and the Faculty Advisor of the Association are ex officio members of the committee.

Section 2: Graduate Student Association Teaching/Mentoring Award

1. **Definition:** The Graduate Student Association Teaching/Mentoring Award may be presented each year. The recipients are selected because of their demonstrated commitment to graduate education in teaching and mentoring graduate students at Rice University. The award shall consist of a plaque of appropriate design and a purse of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1500).
2. **Eligibility:** Candidates for the award are all faculty members of the university.
3. **Selection:** The committee shall select the recipients of the awards after considering all eligible candidates. The maximum number of awards given in any year is two. However, the committee may not present an award in a given year if no suitable candidates are found.
4. **Expenses:** The expenses incurred by the purchase of the plaques shall be included in the budget of the Council in the fiscal year in which the award is given. The purse of fifteen hundred dollars (\$1500) is funded through the generous support of the President of the University.

Section 3: Graduate Student Association Faculty/Staff Service Award

1. **Definition:** The Graduate Student Association Faculty/Staff Service Award may be presented each year. The recipients are selected in recognition of individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their service to the students at Rice University. The award is a token of appreciation for those who strive to improve the quality of student life for the University's graduate students. The award shall consist of a plaque of appropriate design and a purse of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250).
2. **Eligibility:** Candidates for the award are all faculty and staff members of the university.
3. **Selection:** The committee shall select the recipients of the awards after considering all eligible candidates. The maximum number of awards given in any year is two. However, the committee may not present an award in a given year if no suitable candidates are found.

4. Expenses: The expenses incurred by the purchase of the plaques shall be included in the budget of the Council in the fiscal year in which the award is given. The purse of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) is funded through the generous support of the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Section 4: Graduate Student Association Service Award

1. Definition: The Graduate Student Association Service Award may be presented each year. The recipients, through their contribution of time and effort and their devoted service on behalf of graduate students, have worked to improve graduate student life and to advance the cause of graduate education at Rice. The award shall consist of a plaque of appropriate design and a purse of five hundred dollars (\$500).
2. Eligibility: Candidates for the award are all members of the Graduate Student Association.
3. Selection: The committee shall select the recipients of the awards after considering all eligible candidates. The maximum number of awards given in any year is two. However, the committee may not present an award in a given year if no suitable candidates are found.
4. Expenses: The expenses incurred by the purchase of the plaques and the five hundred dollar (\$500) purse shall be included in the budget of the Council in the fiscal year in which the award is given.

Section 5: The Robert Lowry Patten Award

1. Definition: The Robert Lowry Patten Award may be presented each year. The Award is an attempt to recognize graduate students who may have not otherwise been honored for their service and achievements on behalf of graduate students. The award is named in honor of the highly esteemed GSA faculty advisor, Professor Robert L. Patten, who also served with distinction as the first Master of Graduate House. The award shall consist of a plaque of appropriate design and a purse of four hundred dollars (\$400).
2. Eligibility: Candidates for the award are all members of the Graduate Student Association.
3. Selection: The committee shall work with the budget office to determine the amount of money available to award each year and select the recipients of the awards after considering all eligible candidates. The maximum number of awards given in any year is based on the amount the endowment has yielded for the year. However, the committee may not present an award in a given year if no suitable candidates are found.
4. Expenses: The expenses incurred by the purchase of the plaques shall be included in the budget of the Council in the fiscal year in which the award is given. The purse amount determined by the awards committee and the budget office is funded through an endowment held by Rice University.

Section 6: Friends of Rice Graduate Students Award

1. Definition: The Friends of Rice Graduate Students Award may be presented each year. The recipients are selected in recognition of individuals who have significantly enhanced the lives of graduate students at Rice University. This award is a token of appreciation to honor people within and beyond the Rice community who may not otherwise be recognized for their service to graduate students. The award shall consist of a plaque of appropriate design.

2. Eligibility: Candidates for the award may or may not be members of the Rice community, but they should not be eligible for the other awards.
3. Selection: The committee shall select the recipients of the awards after considering all eligible candidates. There is no maximum number of awards given in a given year. However, the committee may not present an award in a given year if no suitable candidates are found.
4. Expenses: The expenses incurred by the purchase of the plaques shall be included in the budget of the Council in the fiscal year in which the award is given.

Section 7: Graduate Student Association Lifetime Contribution Award

1. Definition: The Graduate Student Association Lifetime Contribution Award may be presented when a Graduate Student Association officer is eligible. The award serves in recognition of individuals who have significantly enhanced the lives of graduate students at Rice University. This award is a token of appreciation to honor people who have served as a Graduate Student Association executive officer. The award shall consist of a plaque of appropriate design.
2. Eligibility: Candidates for the award must have served as a Graduate Student Association executive officer for three or more terms.
3. Selection: The committee shall select the recipients of the awards after considering all eligible candidates. There is no maximum number of awards given in a given year. However, the committee may not present an award in a given year if no suitable candidates are found.
4. Expenses: The expenses incurred by the purchase of the plaques shall be included in the budget of the Council in the fiscal year in which the award is given.
5. The award will not carry financial recognition, but rather a symbolic gift from GSA that shall not exceed \$100 in cost.

ARTICLE B-3: LOAN FUND MANAGEMENT

Section 1: Purpose

The Graduate Wives Club Loan Fund, hereafter referred to as the Loan Fund, is operated as a service to the graduate students of Rice University. In order to provide efficient service and to ensure smooth transition during changes of management, the following bylaws are hereby enacted. The Loan Fund provides short-term loans to current graduate students in financial difficulty.

Section 2: Selection and Replacement of Management

- The Vice President of Finance shall act as Manager of the Loan Fund unless otherwise designated by the President.
- Removal and replacement of the Loan Manager shall be governed by the Procedures stated in the Constitution of the Graduate Student Association vis-à-vis the appointment and removal of officers of the Association.

Section 3: Duties of Management

1. Loan Policy

- The Manager shall approve a loan request to any graduate student of Rice University when said student is in good standing with the University, and when sufficient funds are available in the account of the Loan Fund. The President and Grants Director of the Graduate Student Association shall be empowered to make such loans in the absence of the Manager.
 - No loan may exceed \$500 without discussion with the Accounting Assistant I of the Loans Collections Department of the Controller's Office, or whomever may be in charge of the collection of due loans of the Fund.
 - No loan may exceed \$500 without discussion with the Accounting Assistant I of the Loans Collections Department of the Controller's Office, or whomever may be in charge of the collection of due loans of the Fund.
 - No loan may be made to a person who has not yet repaid a previous loan.
 - A schedule for repayment shall be fixed upon making of a loan. A maximum of three months for complete repayment shall be allowed. Management may reschedule the repayment of a loan when convinced that circumstances warrant such action.
 - Distribution and collection of the loan controlled by Rice University. Penalties on late loans will be assessed in accordance with their protocol.
 - All recipients of loans shall be fully apprised of the possible penalties of late payments at the time they receive a loan.
2. Other Duties
- The Manager shall keep a record of activity of the Loan Fund, these monies being entirely separate from those of the Graduate Student Association and other organizations subsidiary to the Association.
 - The Manager shall faithfully report to the Executive Committee upon the activity and status of the Loan Fund whenever the Board shall request it.
 - The Manager shall attend meetings of the Council, reporting on the Loan Fund's operations, whenever the Council shall request it.
 - The Manager shall provide a complete report of the Loan Fund's operation at the end of each academic year to the Council, when requested. When submitted, a written or electronic copy of this report shall be submitted to the Vice President of Administration of the Association.
 - The Manager shall be in charge of advertising the Loan Fund to the graduate student body when sufficient funds are available in the account of the Loan Fund.

Section 4: Amendments

Amendments to these bylaws shall require the majority approval of the entire Executive Committee and by the Council of the GSA.

ARTICLE B-4: GRADUATE GRANTS COMMITTEE

Section 1: Purpose

The Grants committee will oversee allocation of funds to the Graduate Experience Enhancement Grants and the Graduate Professional Development Grants. The purpose of the Graduate Experience Enhancement Grant is designated to support the continuing efforts to enhance the graduate student experience. The Association will sponsor broad-based educational and cultural

projects proposed and organized by members of the Rice University community. The projects supported by these grants should strive to foster broader recognition and understanding of the graduate student's role in the University. They should also promote greater academic, professional, or cultural integration between the graduate students of different departments, between graduate students and undergraduate students, and between graduate students and members of the administration and faculty. The purpose of the Professional Development grant is to improve and expand the professional development opportunities available to graduate students at Rice. The professional development grant should be used to fund events that directly benefit the graduate student community at Rice. Grants cannot be used on the individual level.

Section 2: Membership of Committee

The Graduate Grants Committee, within Article B-4 referred to as the Committee, shall consist of the Grants Director, and no fewer than 4 but no more than 8 members of the Association. The Grants Director shall act as the chair of the Committee.

Section 3: Applications

1. Eligibility: All Rice graduate students, undergraduate students, faculty, staff, and campus organizations may submit proposals for Graduate Experience Enhancement projects.
2. Application Procedure: Proposals shall be submitted to the Committee in the form of an essay of not more than 500 words and be accompanied by an estimated budget and a proposed project schedule. Deadlines for all grant submission are 12:00AM on the 1st of every month.
3. Late Policy: The Committee and Council have the right to not consider any proposal submitted after the deadline until the following grant's month

Section 4: Approval

1. Committee Review
 - The Committee will review grant proposals and vote on each of them. Grant proposals will be approved with a majority vote by the Committee. In the case of a tie, the proposal will be reviewed by and approved by a majority vote by the GSA Council.
 - All Grants Committee meetings must meet quorum to proceed (50% of Committee members present). If a member cannot attend a Committee meeting, they are required to submit a vote on all grant proposals to the Grants Director within 72 hours of the Committee meeting.
2. Council Input
 - The Grants Director will prepare a packet of the grant proposals to send to the Council at least 72 hours prior to a Grants Committee meeting.
 - Council members are welcome to attend Grants committee meetings and/or electronically contribute feedback on grant proposals via email. All Council input will be taken into account during the Committee's vote.
 - If a grant application is rejected by the Committee, the applicant can appeal this decision to the GSA Council by emailing the Grants Director by the Friday prior to the next Council meeting. The Grants Director will then present the grant proposal at the Council meeting (along with the applicant, if desired), and the

Council will consider the application in the exact form and contents as it was reviewed by the Grants Committee. It can then be approved by a majority vote by the Council.

BY-LAW C: GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

ARTICLE C-1: ESTABLISHMENT

Section 1: Requirements

Any student group may become an affiliate student organization of the Graduate Student Association and shall submit its constitution to the Vice President of Administration, in addition to fulfilling all requirements as dictated by Student Activities' new club approval process. The Council shall consider approving the organization's establishment as an affiliate organization only if:

1. The Parliamentarian has approved the constitution as conforming to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Graduate Student Association, and
2. The organization has submitted to the Graduate Student Association the materials required in Article C-2, Section 4 of this Bylaw.

Section 2: Council Approval

The organization shall become an affiliate organization upon the approval of its establishment by the Council.

ARTICLE C-2: REGULATIONS

Section 1: Anti-Discrimination Policy

No affiliate organization may discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin or sexual orientation.

Section 2: Rice Affiliation

At least one-half of the members of each affiliate organization must be members of the Rice community. The principal officers of each organization must be currently registered graduate students at Rice University.

Section 3: Sponsorship

Each affiliate organization must have a sponsor who is a member of the Rice faculty.

Section 4: Application Materials

Each organization shall submit all required materials, as stipulated by Student Activities, to the Graduate Student Association no later than October 01 of each year.

Section 5: Approval Process

The Vice-President of Administration shall be the key point of contact between graduate organizations and the Graduate Student Association and shall ensure that the organization completes the following steps:

1. Submit forms required by Student Activities. After the group has completed this process, the Vice President of Administration will send their materials to the Parliamentarian for review.
2. Review of constitution for requirements as outlined by Student Activities' new group application process and by Article C-3 Section 1. Any concerns will be addressed by the Parliamentarian with the organization until the Parliamentarian is confident that the constitution meets requirements.
3. Present organizations to Council for approval

The Vice President of Administration shall then notify Student Activities of the Council's decision either to approve or deny the organization official status as a Rice University Club.

ARTICLE C-3: CONSTITUTIONS

Section 1: Requirements

The constitution of each student organization must contain the following information:

1. Name and purpose of the organization;
2. Requirements for membership in the organization;
3. Definition of the officers of the organization and the method for selecting them;
4. Statement of whom has authority to spend money for the organization;
5. Statement of the method for selecting a faculty sponsor;
6. Statement of the method for amending the organization's constitution.
7. Anti-hazing policy
8. Anti-discrimination policy
9. Statement acknowledging GSA as the governing body

Section 2: National Organization Affiliation

If an organization is seeking approval as a chapter of a national organization, then only the constitution or charter of that chapter must meet the requirements of Section 1 of this article.

Section 3: Amendments

Any amendment to or change in an organization's constitution must be submitted to the Vice-President of Administration. If the Vice-President of Administration approves the amendment or change as conforming to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Graduate Student Association, he shall present it to the Council for approval. The amendment or change shall take effect upon its approval by the Council.

ARTICLE C-4: PRIVILEGES

All affiliate organizations shall have the privilege to use the name of Rice University and reserve and use facilities on campus, subject to the regulations of the university.

ARTICLE C-5: DISSOLUTION

Section 1: Notification

An affiliate organization may dissolve itself by notifying the Council.

Section 2: Process

An affiliate organization may be dissolved by a three-fifths vote of the Council either for failure to comply with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Graduate Student Association or the rules of Rice University or upon the recommendation of Student Activities.

Section 3: Remaining Property

Any money or property remaining in the name of an affiliate organization after its dissolution and after the organization's outstanding debts have been paid shall become the property of the Graduate Student Association.

BY-LAW D: FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

ARTICLE D-1: GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION FINANCES

Section 1: Budget

After taking office, the Vice President of Finance shall, in consultation with the President and the outgoing Vice President of Finance, prepare an estimated, itemized budget for appropriating Graduate Student Association funds for the expenses of the next fiscal year. The Vice President of Finance shall present this proposed budget to the Council at the May meeting of the Council. The proposed budget or any part of the proposed budget must be approved by a majority vote of the Council to take effect. Any payment for expenses not specifically provided for in the budget approved by the Council must obtain a majority vote of the Council.

Section 2: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Graduate Student Association shall end on June 30 and the financial books of the Graduate Student Association shall be closed on that date. The Vice President of Finance shall present to the Council at the July meeting a complete financial report for the fiscal year.

Section 3: Reimbursements

All reimbursements paid by the GSA will be subject to GSA and Rice University regulations regarding financial transactions as well as federal, state, and local laws. For any reimbursement to be paid to an awardee by the GSA, the requirements of all such regulations must be met, including submission, to the Vice President of Finance, of documentation such as itemized receipts or invoices. The Vice President of Finance is responsible for providing GSA awardees with the information needed to meet these requirements. If these requirements are not met within 1 month of the date on the receipt or invoice which is to be reimbursed, the Vice President of Finance may deny the reimbursement. If denied, the awardee will not be

reimbursed unless the awardee successfully petitions the Council for an extension at a regular meeting.

a) **Notification of denial of reimbursement**

If a reimbursement is denied, the Vice President of Finance must provide the awardee with proper notification that their reimbursement was denied. The notification must inform the awardee of the reasons for the denial of their reimbursement and of their right to petition the Council for an extension. A copy of this notification must be kept in the GSA records.

b) **Petition for extension**

The awardee who is denied reimbursement must notify the President that they intend to petition for an extension. At the next regular Council meeting, the awardee and the Vice President of Finance may address the Council. The Council, by a majority vote, may grant an extension to the awardee. If granted, the successful awardee will have 1 month from the date of the petition to redress the reasons for denial of reimbursement as recorded in the notification in order to receive a reimbursement. If the extension has expired and the awardee has still not corrected the problems that led to the original denial of reimbursement, then the reimbursement may again be denied, with no opportunity for the awardee to appeal a second time.

ARTICLE D-2: AGENTS, PAMPHLETS, AND ADVERTISEMENTS

Section 1: Agents

No agent or other representative of a commercial enterprise, and no student engaged in a business dealing with or soliciting business from students of the university, shall transact any such business on the grounds of the university unless said agent has obtained the written permission of the Executive Committee.

Section 2: Pamphlet and Blotter Advertisement

No member of the Graduate Student Association shall sell or distribute on the grounds of the university any blotters, pamphlets or other printed material which contains advertising solicited from any business firm unless said member has obtained the written permission of the Council.

ARTICLE D-3: CONTRACTS

No Graduate Student Association organization or any officer or representative thereof shall enter into any contract or agreement which shall commit that organization beyond the term of office of the parties making the contract unless permission has been obtained from the Council or unless provided for under these Bylaws. No student shall obtain, or attempt to obtain, a copyright in his own name for any publication or other enterprise sponsored in whole or in part by the Graduate Student Association or its funds. All contracts should go through the Student Activities review process and be signed by the Student Center Director, per university policy.