**The Constitution of the Graduate-Professional
Student Body of the University of Arkansas**

**Preamble:**

We form this association of the Graduate-Professional students of the University of Arkansas to advocate for our collective welfare, to manage and distribute student fee monies, to represent our common interests, and to speak with one voice the opinions of our members. In doing so, the Graduate Professional Student Congress seeks to improve the lives, careers, and research of all Graduate-Professional students at the University of Arkansas.

**Diversity Commitment:**

In order to enhance educational diversity, the GPSC seeks to include and integrate individuals from varied backgrounds and with varied characteristics such as those defined by race, ethnicity, national origin, age, gender, socioeconomic background, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and intellectual perspective. Therefore, the GPSC is committed to aiding and providing representation for all students regardless of race, age, gender, religion, national origin, marital or parental status, disability, veteran status or sexual orientation

Table of Contents:

[Article I: Definitions 1](#_Toc26826701)

[Article II: Composition of the GPSC 2](#_Toc26826702)

[Section 1: The Executive Branch 2](#_Toc26826703)

[Section 2: The Legislative Branch 2](#_Toc26826704)

[Section 3: Department Student Organizations (DSOs) 2](#_Toc26826705)

[Section 4: Supremacy 2](#_Toc26826706)

[Section 5: The Judicial Branch 3](#_Toc26826707)

[Article III: Graduate-Professional Student Rights Within the GPSC 3](#_Toc26826708)

[Article IV: Department Student Organizations (DSOs) 3](#_Toc26826709)

[Section 1: Purpose 3](#_Toc26826710)

[Section 2: Admission to the GPSC 4](#_Toc26826711)

[Section 3: Rights and Powers 4](#_Toc26826712)

[Section 4: Responsibilities 4](#_Toc26826713)

[Article V: The Legislative Branch 4](#_Toc26826714)

[Section 1: The GPSC Assembly 4](#_Toc26826715)

[Section 2: Powers of the GPSC Assembly 5](#_Toc26826716)

[Section 3: GPSC Representative Responsibilities and Powers 5](#_Toc26826717)

[Article VI: The Executive Branch 6](#_Toc26826718)

[Section 1: Executive Authority 6](#_Toc26826719)

[Section 2: Duties and Powers of the President 6](#_Toc26826720)

[Section 3: Duties and Powers of the Vice-President 6](#_Toc26826721)

[Section 4: Duties and Powers of the Treasurer 6](#_Toc26826722)

[Section 5: Duties and Powers of the Secretary 7](#_Toc26826723)

[Section 6: Order of Succession 7](#_Toc26826724)

[Article VII: Finances 7](#_Toc26826725)

[Section 1: Student Fees 7](#_Toc26826726)

[Section 2: GPSC Funding 7](#_Toc26826727)

[Article VIII: Referendum 7](#_Toc26826728)

[Section 1: Initiative Petition Procedures 7](#_Toc26826729)

[Article IX: Amendments 8](#_Toc26826730)

[Section 1: Proposal of Amendments 8](#_Toc26826731)

[Section 2: Ratification of Amendments 8](#_Toc26826732)

[Section 3: Enactment of Amendments 8](#_Toc26826733)

[Article X: The Judicial Branch 8](#_Toc26826734)

[Section 1: Duties and Powers of the Judicial Branch, Generally 8](#_Toc26826735)

[Section 2: Duties and Powers of the Chief Justice 8](#_Toc26826736)

[Section 3: Duties and Powers of the Ethics Chair 9](#_Toc26826737)

[Section 4: Duties and Powers of the Parliamentarian 9](#_Toc26826738)

[Revision History 9](#_Toc26826739)

# Article I: Definitions

Terms used in this Constitution, unless otherwise stated, shall be defined as follows:

Graduate-Professional students: students who have earned a baccalaureate degree, and have been accepted for graduate level study, and are enrolled in a master's degree program; students enrolled in a program leading to one of the named graduate certificates or degrees; students enrolled in doctoral programs in a research area; other doctoral students; and students enrolled in professional practice doctoral programs (e.g., JD, DNP).

The Graduate-Professional Student Body: all graduate and professional students at the University of Arkansas.

GPSC Assembly (“Assembly”): the legislative body of the Graduate Professional Student Congress.

Supreme Constitution: the Associated Students Supreme Constitution (“ASSC”) is the document that governs both student governments at the University of Arkansas, which are the Graduate Professional Student Congress (“GPSC”) and the Associated Student Government (“ASG”).

Legislative measure: any official document detailing an action to be taken or an opinion to be expressed by the Assembly. A motion made by a member of the Assembly shall not constitute a legislative measure.

Memorandum of Understanding: an agreement signed between the GPSC and another entity that governs relations between the two, but which may not conflict with this Constitution.

GPSC Code: the rules and regulations of the GPSC beyond those found in the ASSC Supreme Constitution and the GPSC Constitution, created and altered by GPSC legislation.

Standing Rules: rules that govern meetings of the GPSC. Any unit of the GPSC may create its own standing rules.

Department: An academic unit of the University of Arkansas devoted to a particular field of graduate or professional study as defined by the University and is recognized by the GPSC.

Department Student Organization (“DSO”): an organization created by Graduate-Professional students for representation within the GPSC Assembly and eligibility for GPSC funding.

Good Standing when their DSO has attained all requirements mandated by this Constitution and the GPSC code.

Registered Student Organization (“RSO”): an organization recognized as an RSO by the Office of Student Affairs.

Simple Majority: greater than fifty percent of all eligible voters present.

Super Majority: greater than two-thirds of all eligible voters present.

# Article II: Composition of the GPSC

## Section 1: The Executive Branch

a) The Executive Branch shall be composed of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, selected via annual at-large secret ballot elections in which every Graduate-Professional student is eligible;

b) The Executive Branch shall be led by the President;

c) The President shall appoint members of an Executive Cabinet, with approval from the Legislative Branch, to serve the needs of the Graduate-Professional student body;

d) All other powers and responsibilities of the Executive Branch are enumerated in Article VI of this Constitution.

## Section 2: The Legislative Branch

a) The GPSC Assembly shall hold all legislative powers of the GPSC;

b) The GPSC Assembly shall be composed of three at-large representatives from each college, as well as at least one representing each DSO elected via secret ballot elections;

c) The GPSC Assembly shall be led by a President Pro Tempore, selected by a Simple Majority of the Assembly;

d) The Assembly shall elect a Parliamentarian by a Simple Majority of the Assembly;

e) The Assembly shall elect any other special Assembly offices, as deemed fit by the Assembly, by a Simple Majority of the Assembly;

f) All other powers and responsibilities of the Legislative Branch are enumerated in Article V of this Constitution.

## Section 3: Department Student Organizations (DSOs)

a) Graduate-Professional students may organize with colleagues in their Department to form a Department Student Organization to gain Departmental representation in the GPSC and to be eligible for GPSC funding;

b) The GPSC Assembly shall approve applications from DSOs by a Simple Majority;

c) A Graduate-Professional student may only be a member of one DSO;

d) DSOs are responsible for remaining in Good Standing, which is required for any Graduate-Professional student to receive funding from the GPSC;

e) All other powers and responsibilities of DSOs are enumerated in Article IV of this Constitution.

## Section 4: Supremacy

a) This Constitution, subordinate documents, and any amendments made to either must comply with relevant federal, state, and local laws.

b) This Constitution respects the supremacy clause in the Supreme Constitution. Nothing in this document shall conflict with any provisions made within the Supreme Constitution. If such an amendment is made, it should be immediately considered null and void.

c) This Constitution is supreme in all respects to the GPSC Code and any standing rules adopted by GPSC member branches.

d) If for any reason the Supreme Constitution is removed, destroyed, or otherwise abandoned, this Constitution shall become the supreme governing authority of the GPSC.

## Section 5: The Judicial Branch

a) The Judicial Branch shall be composed of a Chief Justice, Ethics Chair,

and Parliamentarian.

b) The Judicial Branch shall be led by the Chief Justice.

c) The Chief Justice shall be selected via annual at-large secret ballot elections in which every Graduate-Professional student is eligible

d) The Ethics Chair shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Assembly.

e) The Parliamentarian shall be selected according to Article II, Section 2.

f) All other powers and responsibilities of the Judicial Branch are enumerated in Article XI of this Constitution.

# Article III: Graduate-Professional Student Rights Within the GPSC

a) All Graduate-Professional students are entitled to the following rights in the GPSC:

a. The right to vote in GPSC elections;

b. The right to run for any GPSC office without interference from the faculty and staff of their degree program;

c. The right to run for any GPSC office without interference from their Department Student Organization (DSO);

d. The right to vote in DSO elections;

e. The right to attend GPSC Assembly meetings;

f. The right to address the GPSC Assembly during a period of public comment;

g. The right of access to current and accurate agendas, minutes, legislation, and budgets of the GPSC.

# Article IV: Department Student Organizations (DSOs)

## Section 1: Purpose

a) To serve as the Department level of representation and support for Graduate- Professional students;

b) To empower Graduate-Professional students to enact positive change within their Departments;

c) To encourage Graduate-Professional students to organize professional development opportunities, social events, and host conferences within their Departments;

d) To educate Graduate-Professional students in shared governance on the Departmental level.

## Section 2: Admission to the GPSC

a) Graduate-Professional students shall organize amongst their peers enrolled in the same Department to form DSOs, without interference from the faculty or staff of their degree program;

b) DSO Applications shall be completed as described in the GPSC Code by a student enrolled in the DSO’s Department;

c) DSOs must have a democratic and representative nature, but the exact form and function of DSOs are entirely up to the students that form them;

d) The GPSC Assembly shall formally recognize official DSOs by a Simple Majority vote;

## Section 3: Rights and Powers

a) DSOs shall have the power to object to any Assembly decision by a Simple Majority vote of the total Graduate-Professional students in a Department, after which the name of the Department and the nature of the objection shall be recorded along with the GPSC Assembly decision;

b) DSOs shall have the power to produce and send reports to the Assembly to be publicly displayed on the GPSC website;

c) A DSO may appoint an Assembly representative in the event of a Departmental representative vacancy;

d) DSOs shall have the power to remove their Departmental representative prior to the end of their term by a Super Majority of the total Graduate-Professional students enrolled in a degree program;

a. If a Departmental representative vacates or is removed from their office, the Secretary shall notify the representative’s DSO, which will select a new representative in the manner it deems proper.

## Section 4: Responsibilities

a) DSOs are responsible for remaining in Good Standing, including providing an updated copy of their Constitution each year, and by completing all additional requirements as determined by the GPSC code;

b) DSOs are responsible for submitting to the GPSC Vice President by the first Assembly meeting of the Fall semester a list of all Graduate-Professional students in their Department and their email addresses;

a. Individual Graduate-Professional students may choose to opt-out of GPSC email address lists at any point during a school year, in effect until the end of that school year;

c) DSOs shall be responsible for advertising elections, but may not prevent any individual from submitting their candidacy to the GPSC.

# Article V: The Legislative Branch

## Section 1: The GPSC Assembly

a) The President Pro Tempore, or their designee, shall preside over meetings of the Assembly and be responsible for preparing the agenda for each Assembly meeting;

b) The Assembly shall meet at least once a month in person during the fall and spring semesters, and once during the summer;

c) All Assembly meetings must be open to the public;

d) No official business may be conducted unless a meeting achieves the quorum requirements found in the GPSC code;

e) A special Assembly meeting of the Assembly shall be called if a quorum of representatives submit a written request and a proposed agenda to the President;

f) The GPSC Executive Committee may also call a special Assembly meeting by a majority vote;

Special Meetings shall be held on a weekday, shall be publicized, and shall have an agenda posted on the GPSC website at least three (3) business days in advance.

## Section 2: Powers of the GPSC Assembly

a) Pass legislation by a Simple Majority;

b) To propose an amendment to this Constitution by a Super Majority;

c) Allocate funds;

d) Elect special officers as necessary;

e) Elect College Caucus Chairs;

f) Issue subpoenas;

g) Confirm presidential appointments by a Simple Majority;

h) Override vetoes of the GPSC President by a Super Majority;

i) Remove any GPSC representative or officer by a Super Majority;

j) To resolve disputes within DSOs by a Simple Majority;

k) Form ad-hoc committees:

a. Committees shall meet as required by GPSC legislation to serve the stated purpose of the committee, or to meet the needs of Graduate- Professional students;

b. The GPSC President or their designee shall be an ex-officio member of all GPSC committees, unless a committee is formed to investigate the GPSC President.

## Section 3: GPSC Representative Responsibilities and Powers

a) Responsibilities:

a. Represent their constituents at Assembly meetings;

b. Inform their constituents of GPSC activities and initiatives;

c. Serve a one-year term;

d. Serve on at least one ad-hoc committee;

e. Conduct themselves in an ethical manner, following all state laws, university policies, and the regulations of the GPSC.

b) Powers:

a. Draft and sponsor legislation;

b. Vote when present at Assembly meetings and committee meetings;

c. Hold speaking privileges during all official GPSC meetings;

d. Represent their constituents in meetings with administrators, faculty, staff, and government officials;

e. Elect special Assembly officers;

f. Serve on ad-hoc committees.

# Article VI: The Executive Branch

## Section 1: Executive Authority

a) All executive powers and those powers not specifically granted herein to other branches of the GPSC shall be vested in the President of the Graduate Student Body, who shall be assisted by the Vice President, and such other administrative officers as the President shall appoint to effectively carry out the business of the GPSC;

b) The President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary shall be elected to serve a one-year term of office, beginning on spring dead day, by a Simple Majority of the Graduate Student Body.

## Section 2: Duties and Powers of the President

The President shall:

a) Administer and enforce all decisions of the GPSC;

b) Appoint qualified students to executive offices with approval of the Assembly;

c) Appoint qualified students to vacant GPSC offices with approval of the Assembly;

d) If an at-large representative vacates or is removed from their office, the President may appoint a replacement, subject to approval of the Assembly.

e) Sign or veto legislative measures requiring presidential approval within ten business days of passage. No action by the President within ten business days shall constitute the President’s approval of the measure. The GPSC Code shall delineate exactly which legislative measures require presidential approval;

f) Address the Assembly at least once per semester and on other occasions by invitation or subpoena issued by the Assembly. The President must provide a report to the Assembly detailing the business of any committee of which the President or their designee is a member.

## Section 3: Duties and Powers of the Vice-President

The Vice President shall:

a) Assume the duties and powers of the President upon the President’s request or removal;

b) Break tie votes in the GPSC Assembly;

c) Maintain a roll of all DSOs;

d) Receive DSO member lists and email addresses

e) Assess and report on the standing of all DSOs, as required by this Constitution and the GPSC Code;

f) Inform DSOs of their standing;

g) If a departmental representative vacates or is removed from their office, the Vice President shall notify the representative’s DSO, which will select a new representative in the manner it deems proper.

h) Manage the creation and delivery of an End of the Year Report accessible to the public.

## Section 4: Duties and Powers of the Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

a) Oversee the full budget;

b) Deliver periodic reports to the President and the Assembly;

c) Ensure that all spending and allocation of student fee money complies with relevant laws in the GPSC Constitution and code.

## Section 5: Duties and Powers of the Secretary

The Secretary shall:

a) Act as the primary point of communication between Executive and Legislative branches, as well as between GPSC and the rest of the University;

b) Be responsible for compiling and making available all GPSC meeting minutes;

c) Maintain records and update digital copies of GPSC records

d) Maintain the GPSC website of all members and positions

e) Advertise GPSC events and related news on GPSC social media outlets and other University wide newsletters

f) Coordinate elections and all referendums, in conjunction with the OSA

## Section 6: Order of Succession

In the event that the President resigns, is removed, or is otherwise unable to fulfill their Constitutional duties, the order of succession shall be as follows:

a) Vice-President;

b) President Pro Tempore of the GPSC Assembly.

# Article VII: Finances

## Section 1: Student Fees

a) The Graduate-Professional Student Activity Fee shall be $2.64 per credit hour;

b) The GPSC each semester shall make a payment to the Programs Allocation Board (PAB) equivalent to $0.76 per Graduate-Professional student credit hour;

a. The payment to PAB, found in Article VI, Section 1(b), must be approved by a Simple Majority of the Graduate-Professional student body every three years.

## Section 2: GPSC Funding

a) For any student to be eligible for GPSC funding, the following must be satisfied:

a. Their name and email address must be provided to the GPSC by their DSO on a yearly basis;

b. Their Department must have an elected or appointed Departmental representative to the Assembly;

c. Their Department must be in Good Standing by fulfilling all requirements stated in this Constitution and in the GPSC Code.

# Article VIII: Referendum

## Section 1: Initiative Petition Procedures

The Graduate Student Body shall have the right to enact or repeal any legislation by referendum, upon written request containing the signatures totaling thirty-three percent (33%) of the votes cast in the previous election. The GPSC shall have the right and duty to promulgate regulations governing referendum.

# Article IX: Amendments

## Section 1: Proposal of Amendments

a) Amendments to the GPSC Constitution may be proposed by legislative measure or by referendum as outlined in Article VIII;

b) A constitutional amendment proposed via legislative measure must pass with a super majority in the GPSC Assembly.

## Section 2: Ratification of Amendments

a) Once proposed, the amendment shall subject to a vote by the student body at the next scheduled GPSC election. The ballot must include the full text of the amendment and clearly show what changes will be made. If the amendment was proposed via legislative measure, the final text of the legislative measure shall also be included on the ballot.

b) The Graduate Student Body must vote in favor of ratification by a simple majority plus one of votes cast.

## Section 3: Enactment of Amendments

Constitutional amendments shall become effective immediately upon passage.

# Article X: The Judicial Branch

## Section 1: Duties and Powers of the Judicial Branch, Generally

a)The Judicial Branch shall have the power to issue official

interpretations of GPSC documents, including the GPSC Constitution, Code, and other legislative measures.

b)The Judicial Branch shall issue official interpretations of GPSC documents only when requested by one or more Graduate-Professional students.

c)The Judicial Branch shall issue official interpretations of GPSC documents only if at least two of the three members agree on the interpretation.

d)The Executive and Legislative Branches shall be bound to the official interpretations of GPSC documents issued by the Judicial Branch.

## Section 2: Duties and Powers of the Chief Justice

The Chief Justice shall:

a)Accept requests for official interpretations of GPSC documents.

b)Inform the Ethics Chair and Parliamentarian of the requests for official interpretations.

c)Schedule and preside over meetings of the Judicial Branch.

d)Vote on official interpretations of GPSC documents.

e)Issue and report the official interpretations of GPSC documents as appropriate.

## Section 3: Duties and Powers of the Ethics Chair

The Ethics Chair shall:

a)Vote on official interpretations of GPSC documents.

b)Accept reports of violations of the Code of Conduct.

c)Assemble an Ethics Board to evaluate the reports of violation.

d)Issue and report any form of punishment for violations of the Code of Conduct as determined by the Ethics Board.

## Section 4: Duties and Powers of the Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian shall:

a)Vote on official interpretations of GPSC documents.

b)Perform duties as assigned as a member of the Legislative Branch, as well.

# Revision History

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