

# Constitution of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee

Written October 11, 1997<sup>[SEP]</sup> Revised December 28, 1997<sup>[SEP]</sup> Revised April 22, 1998<sup>[SEP]</sup> Adopted 1998; Revised 20 August 2012; Revised 13 April 2015

## Preamble

The Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) of the English Department was founded at Indiana University to act as a liaison organization between graduate students in English at Indiana University, the administration of the English Department, and the administration of Indiana University. This Constitution and the accompanying Bylaws establish the organizational identity for GSAC. The Bylaws authorize GSAC to affiliate for specific purposes with graduate students in English, the English Department, and Indiana University.

## Article I: Name

This organization will be called the Graduate Student Advisory Committee, formerly known as the English Department Graduate Student Organization, and shall hereafter be referred to as GSAC.

## Article II: Organization Statement of Purpose

The Graduate Student Advisory Committee (GSAC) is a committee comprised of graduate students in English, who are elected to the positions by their fellow graduates students in the English Department to serve a two year position, whose aim is to represent graduate students in the following capacities. The organization's primary purpose is to:

1. Advise the Chair of the English Department, the Director of Graduate Studies, and other department heads on matters concerning graduate students and the English Department.
2. Act as a liaison between English Department graduate students, faculty, and administration. To this end, GSAC will hold semi-annual Graduate Student Forums to hear and address the concerns, ideas, grievances, and recommendations of said graduate students, and to communicate these issues to appropriate faculty and administrators.
3. Organize elections for graduate student representation on all departmental committees that require and request graduate student representation.
4. Maintain records of actions both requested and taken involving formal agreements between the English Department and graduate students.
5. Organize and conduct an annual departmental conference for the presentation of graduate and faculty work.
6. Maintain and distribute semi-annually a Departmental Directory, containing relevant professional and contact information for all department graduate students, faculty, and staff.

7. Maintain and distribute annually an orientation packet of relevant departmental and local information to all Incoming Students.
8. Facilitate on-campus visits, and arrange housing for visiting prospective graduate students.
9. Organize various graduate student, faculty, and staff parties, including the Incoming Student luncheon, the New School Year Mixer, Winter Holiday Party, Spring Party, and weekly English Department Happy Hours, as a means to facilitate communication between graduate students, faculty, and staff.

### Article III: Officers

Section 1: There shall be no less than seven officers of GSAC who shall fill the positions of Chair (or Chairs, in the case of Co-Moderators), Treasurer, Secretary, Fundraising Chair, Conference Coordinator, Elections Officer, and Publicity Director. The duties of said officers shall be delineated in Article VIII. The Officers of GSAC shall also include the two (2) graduate student representatives from the Creative Writing Advisory Committee, who shall serve as ex-officio members of the GSAC governing body.

Section 2: The Officers shall be appointed annually by the voting membership of the GSAC member body to serve two year terms.

Section 3: The appointment of officers shall be made by vote of the active voting membership, defined in Article III.

### Article IV: Officer Duties

Section 1: Chair (or Co-Moderators) shall be responsible for the following:

1. Arranging meetings with both the governing body of GSAC and the eligible voting membership.
2. Arranging meetings with both the Chair of the Department and the Director of Graduate Studies on a semester basis.
3. Informing constituents of matters that concern to all graduate students in English.
4. Arranging and implementing agendas for GSAC as a whole.
5. Ensuring that the GSAC governing body, to the best of its abilities, fulfills the items and issues contained within GSAC's "Organization Statement of Purpose."

Section 2: The Treasurer of GSAC shall be responsible for the following:

1. Adhering to all financial rules and regulations as defined by the administration of Indiana University.
2. Maintaining financial records for the organization.
3. Reporting annually the financial gains and losses of the organization.
4. Reimbursing for all organizational costs.
5. Finding creative and effective funding solutions for the organization.
6. Working closely with the student funding offices, and the Fundraising Officer, to maintain accurate financial records.

Section 3: The Secretary of GSAC shall be responsible for the following:

1. Maintaining any and all records of the organization (including e-mail).
2. Updating the Bylaws of the organization as necessary.

3. Working with the Department Directory Chair to maintain accurate records for the Departmental Directory.

4. Maintaining and updating the Incoming Student Orientation Packet, in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Section 4: The Conference Coordinator of GSAC shall be responsible for the following:

1. Organizing the Annual Graduate Student Humanities Conference.

2. Arranging funding for the Conference with the Treasurer, the Department, and the student financial offices of Indiana University.

3. Coordinating other department involvement in the Conference.

4. Soliciting abstracts for the conference, setting the conference topic in conjunction with GSAC, and securing a plenary speaker for the conference.

5. Establishing an Ad Hoc Conference Committee responsible for the organization of the conference.

Section 5: The Elections Officer of GSAC shall be responsible for the following:

1. Soliciting nominations for all graduate student representatives on Departmental committees, and GSAC officers, and conducting elections for said representatives and officers.

2. Maintaining records of all elections for committees and officers.

3. Developing and updating elections procedures.

4. Maintaining, with the GSAC Secretary, the Bylaws of GSAC.

Section 6: The Publicity Director of GSAC shall be responsible for the following:

1. Advertising any and all open GSAC meetings.

2. Distributing, in conjunction with the GSAC Secretary, any and all information concerning graduate education to graduate students in the Department.

3. Coordinating with the Conference Coordinator publicity for the conference.

4. Coordinating with the Elections Officer publicity concerning elections.

## Article V: Membership

Section 1: The eligible voting membership of the GSAC constituency shall consist of all graduate students in English who are enrolled as candidates for the M.F.A., M.A., or Ph.D. in the Department of English, in accordance with and as defined by Indiana University and Indiana University Department of English policy.

Section 2: GSAC allows any interested student to participate in, become a member of, and seek leadership positions in the organization without regard to arbitrary consideration of such characteristics as age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

## Article VI: Meetings

Section 1: The governing body of GSAC shall meet at least monthly, or more often as deemed necessary by the GSAC governing body.

Section 2: GSAC shall hold open forums for all graduate students in English, at least twice a year: one in the Spring semester and one in the Fall semester. GSAC shall advertise these forums at least two (2) weeks in advance and solicit contributions from

its constituency for Forum agendas.

Section 3: GSAC shall meet at least once a semester with the Chair of the Department, and at least once a semester with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Section 4: GSAC shall meet at least once a semester in a joint session with the Faculty Advisory Committee. These meetings may include discussion of any business before the Faculty Advisory Committee, except business involving individual graduate students, and/or specific hiring, promotion, or tenure decisions.

## Article VII: Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

Section 1: GSAC shall, as the need arises, have the power to appoint graduate students in English to Standing and Ad Hoc committees that will report directly to the GSAC governing body. The GSAC governing body shall make the findings of any and all Standing and Ad Hoc committees available to the eligible voting membership.

## Article VIII: Elections

Section 1: GSAC shall conduct elections for graduate student representatives to committees, as defined in Article VI, and Officers, as defined in Article III, in the Spring semester of each year.

Section 2: In the case of resignation of graduate student representatives or Officers, GSAC shall conduct emergency election proceedings. Voting membership shall be given one (1) week to make nominations for said vacancy, and the voting period shall consist of no more than one (1) week.

Section 3: The GSAC Elections Officer shall be responsible for all distributing information concerning elections, nominations, results of elections.

## Article IX: Committees and Appointees

Section 1: GSAC shall elect graduate student representatives to the following committees yearly, with the number of graduate representatives indicated in parentheses below:

1. Graduate Studies: Policy & Curriculum Committee (2)
2. Undergraduate Studies Committee (3)
3. Composition Committee (4)
4. Graduate Admissions and Fellowships Committee (2)
5. Teaching Committee (2)

Section 2: The qualifications to be elected as a graduate student representative are as follows:

1. Graduate student must be a eligible voting member of the GSAC constituency as defined in Article III.
2. Graduate student must be a member in good standing in the Graduate School of Indiana University.
3. Graduate student must have completed at least one semester of course work towards

a degree in the department in order to be eligible.

4. For membership on the Composition and Teaching Committees, graduate student must be an Associate Instructor, in good standing on contract, or have been an Associate Instructor, having completed his/her contract in good standing.

Section 3: GSAC shall require that all representatives elected to committees submit, in writing, a semester report (both Spring and Fall) on the decisions made by their committee that affect graduate student education. These reports shall be distributed by GSAC to all graduate students in English.

Section 4: GSAC shall also, as the need arises, appoint graduate student representatives to Faculty Hire Committees. No less than two (2) graduate students shall be selected for each hire committee. The qualifications for representatives are as follows:

1. Representative must be an advanced graduate student, preferably having already completed course-work and the qualifying exams.
2. Preference shall be given to graduate students whose major area of concentration coincides with that of the tentative faculty hire, whenever possible.
3. Creative Writing Program Faculty Search Hire graduate student representatives shall be appointed from graduate students in the M.F.A. program, and the Creative Writing Advisory Committee shall conduct their own elections, with input from GSAC, but without interference from the GSAC governing body as to the final candidate selection.
4. Representative shall be expected to participate in all interviews at the MLA convention and may not be actively seeking employment at the convention.
5. Representative must be a member in good standing in the department and the Graduate School of Indiana University.

Section 5: GSAC shall also, as the need arises, reserve the power to appoint a member of its constituency to the Department Chair Search Committee. The Appointee shall act as a liaison between graduate students and the Chair Committee. The Appointee shall work in conjunction with the GSAC governing body to canvas the opinions of graduate students on the current state of the Department, issues of graduate concern, and nominations by graduate students for the Chair.

Section 6: The Appointee shall have limited participation in the Chair Committee. The Appointee shall not be involved in Faculty interviews, which shall remain the sole domain of the Chair Search Committee. However, the Appointee, with the governing body of GSAC, shall arrange for open meetings between the Chair Committee, and graduate students to discuss, prior to the recommendation of the Chair Committee to the Dean, possible candidates for the position of Chair of the English Department. The qualifications of the appointee are as follows:

1. Appointee must be an advanced graduate student, preferably one who has completed course work and the qualifying exams.
2. Appointee must arrange open meetings with the Chair Committee and concerned graduate students.
3. Appointee must be a student in good standing with both the Department and the Graduate School at Indiana University.

## Article X: Parliamentary Authority

Section 1: The Parliamentary Authority for GSAC shall be the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

## Article XI: University Clauses

Section 1: Statement of University Compliance: This organization shall comply with all Indiana University regulations and local, state, and federal laws.

Section 2: Anti-Hazing Policy: Hazing is strictly prohibited. Hazing shall be defined as any conduct which subjects another person, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or psychologically, to anything that may endanger, abuse, degrade, or intimidate the person as a condition of association with a group or organization, regardless of the person's consent or lack of consent.

Section 3: Personal Gain Clause: This organization, if raising funds, shall ethically raise and distribute profits from organizational functions to either the organization or to members who provide a service that directly benefits the organization. Individual members may not receive compensation directly from for-profit companies if acting as a representative of a student organization.