

# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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## ***THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL OF***

***NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND APPLIED SCIENCE (Rev. 022615)***

### **Preamble**

*As engaged graduate students of North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science, we proffer this Constitution to establish a new form of governance to represent the diverse interests of the graduate students at North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science (NDSU), with representation entirely consisting of graduate students that shall herewith be named the Graduate Student Council.*

### **Purpose of the Constitution**

*This Constitution is to establish the Graduate Student Council of North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science and will continue to serve as its primary governance document, along with accompanied bylaws and Amendments.*

## **Article I**

### **Name and Purpose**

#### **Section 1: Name:**

The name of the body shall be the Graduate Student Council of North Dakota State University of Agriculture and Applied Science, hereinafter referred to as the Graduate Student Council.

#### **Section 2: Purpose of the Graduate Student Council shall be to:**

- A. Serve as the voice of the graduate student body of NDSU.
- B. Represent the graduate student body of NDSU, in all future academic and non-academic matters that impacts the graduate student body in a significant manner.
- C. Work together with academic and non-academic employees of NDSU, towards improving and maintaining the graduate student body academic and non-academic experiences at NDSU.

## **Article II**

### **Membership, Meetings and Voting**

#### **Section 1: Eligibility of Membership:**

All registered graduate students that wish to participate in the Graduate Student Council may participate as regular voting members of the Graduate Student Council.

#### **Section 2: Termination of Membership of the Graduate Student Council:**

The executive committee of the Graduate Student Council reserves the right to terminate the membership of a regular voting member of the Graduate Student Council, if:

# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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- A. He or she engages in a violation of University Policy AND/OR Organizational Guidelines AND/OR;
- B. He or she ceases to be a full standing graduate student of NDSU AND/OR;
- C. Termination of him/her is requested by the membership, through a petition signed by at least 50% of the voting members.

## **Section 3: Reinstatement of Membership of the Graduate Student Council:**

Any member that has his/her membership revoked, may appeal and plead their case within two weeks of the revocation, by general meeting of the Graduate Student Council, only if:

- A. Membership was revoked due to absenteeism AND/OR;
- B. Membership was revoked due to graduate student status AND/OR;
- C. Membership was terminated due to a submitted petition.

Members whose membership status is revoked due to gross misconduct will not be eligible to have their membership status reinstated through the appeal process.

Membership reinstatement is subject to calling a special meeting by the council president and a full vote by the attending voting members of the Graduate Student Council.

## **Section 5: Meetings:**

- A. The Graduate Student Council will have two formal meeting per month during the Fall and Spring semesters that will occur on a date and time agreed upon by at least two-thirds of the voting membership of the Graduate Student Council AND;
- B. The Executive Committee and other internal committees may conduct meetings by notifying its internal membership AND;
- C. Additional meetings, schedule changes, and cancellations must be approved at least two weeks in advance of the appointed meeting time with either an in-person vote or electronic vote of two-thirds of the membership that expressed interest in attending meetings of the Graduate Student Council.
- D. Quorum for the meeting will be defined as all present voting members.

## **Section 6: Voting:**

- A. Any member of the Graduate Student Council may vote either by self or through proxy at duly convened meetings of the Graduate Student Council, should the need arise for a vote.
- B. Amendments to the Constitution and other governing principles of the Graduate Student Council requires a vote of two-thirds of the voting members attending the meeting.
- C. Meetings that are convened for the purpose of making changes to the governing document(s) or other governing principles shall be announced to the entire membership of the Graduate Student Council either in-person or via electronic means, at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- D. All voting shall be accomplished within general meetings of the Graduate Student Council. Voting by email in special circumstances shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## **Article III**

# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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## Officers of the Graduate Student Council

### Section 1: The Officers of the Graduate Student Council shall be:

- A. President
- B. President Elect
- C. Treasurer
- D. Scribe

### Section 2: Qualifications for eligibility for holding an office of the Graduate Student Council:

- A. Candidate must be a voting member of the Graduate Student Council AND;
- B. Candidate must have attended at least three prior general meetings of the Graduate Student Council AND;
- C. Candidate must be a full standing graduate student of NDSU.

### Section 3: Nominations:

- A. Any member of the Graduate Student Council may nominate themselves or other members as eligible candidates for any vacant officer position of the Graduate Student Council AND;
- B. Nominations shall be re-opened for each vacant position, on the day of the election AND;
- C. All nominations for officer roles of the Graduate Student Council must be made at least two weeks before official elections.

### Section 4: Elections:

- A. The officers of the Graduate Student Council shall receive a tenure of one year from the date of election AND;
- B. There shall be no restrictions placed on the number of times an elected member may re-run for election; with the exception of;
  - i. The President of the Graduate Student Council AND;
  - ii. The President-Elect of the Graduate Student Council.
  - iii. The terms of President and President-Elect shall be defined as one year each.
- C. Election to office shall be by a simple majority vote of the:
  - i. Voting members attending the election day meeting AND;
  - ii. Eligible members that choose to vote by proxy (subject to prior authorization).

### Section 5: Duties of the Officers:

- A. The President of the Graduate Student Council shall be its principle executive officer and shall be responsible for the following:
  - i. Preside at all meetings of the organization AND;
  - ii. Coordinate with the Scribe of the Graduate Student Council in preparing meeting agenda AND;
  - iii. Call special meetings of the organization AND;
  - iv. Approve all activities coordinated by other officers and/or members AND;
  - v. Appoint internal and external committee chairs without objection AND;

# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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- vi. Give final approval for the annual budget AND;
  - vii. Be the final approving authority on committee or officer use of university allocated resources including university appropriated funds AND;
  - viii. Represent the Graduate Student Council in all matters of the University and State as needed AND;
  - ix. Act as a liaison between the Graduate Student Council, NDSU Student Government, and the university officials AND;
  - x. Perform other duties and responsibilities as required.
- B. The President-Elect shall have the following duties and responsibilities:
- i. Temporarily assume duties and responsibilities of the President in case the President is on leave of absence AND;
  - ii. Coordinate all of the speakers for monthly meetings AND;
  - iii. Coordinate with all committee chairs AND;
  - iv. Serve as the Congress of Student Organizations (CSO) delegate AND;
  - v. Coordinate with the Scribe of the Graduate Student Council in maintaining proper meeting minutes AND;
  - vi. Coordinate with the Treasurer of the Graduate Student Council in keeping track of expenditures and deposits of funds.
- C. The Scribe of the Graduate Student Council shall have the following duties and responsibilities:
- i. Keep a record of all members of the organization AND;
  - ii. Keep a record of all activities of the organization AND;
  - iii. Keep a record of all minutes of the organization AND;
  - iv. Maintain a record of all internal committee proceedings and special committee requests AND;
  - v. Coordinate with the Public Relations and Outreach Chair for posting and distribution of information pertaining to the Graduate Student Council AND;
  - vi. Notify all members of meetings, via email, poster etc. AND;
  - vii. Prepare and file any report required by the University or professional affiliation AND;
  - viii. Perform other duties as assigned by the President.
- D. The Treasurer of the Graduate Student Council shall be appointed the chair of the Governance and Finance Commission of the Graduate Student Council and shall have the following duties and responsibilities:
- i. Keep all financial records for the organization and its committees AND;
  - ii. Prepare annual budget and all budget requests for funds AND;
  - iii. Maintain the master budget and special budget requests approved by the President AND;
  - iv. Prepare and submit financial reports to the members during general meetings AND;
  - v. Become familiar with the University accounting procedures and policies AND;
  - vi. Coordinate with the President in approving special funding requests AND;
  - vii. Coordinate any necessary fundraising along with the Scribe.

## Section 6: Vacancy of an Office:

- A. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President before the expiration of a full term, the President-Elect shall assume the duties of the President until a special election can be held.

# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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- a. The President Elect shall call elections for electing a suitable candidate for the office of President-Elect.
- B. In the event of a vacancy in an office other than the President before the expiration of a full term, a special election shall be called by the President within one month to fill the vacancy.

## **Section 7: Removal of an Officer:**

- A. Grounds for removal of an officer prior to the completion of a full term include:
  - a. Violation of University Policy AND/OR;
  - b. Failure to perform the duties of the office as set forth in the Constitution and bylaws of the organization AND/OR;
  - c. Extended absenteeism without prior approval.
- B. An officer other than the President of the Graduate Student Council may be removed by the following process, before the completion of a full term:
  - a. A properly worded and formatted petition to remove the officer in question must be submitted to the President of the Graduate Student Council, with the signatures of at least two-thirds of the average of the prior three consecutive general meetings held by the Graduate Student Council AND;
  - b. The grounds for removal are to be presented to the voting membership of the Graduate Student Council by the President at a regular or special meeting of the organization AND;
  - c. The officer in question shall be provided a reasonable opportunity to present a defense either in person or in writing.
- C. The President of the Graduate Student Council may be removed from office by the following process, prior to completion of a full term:
  - a. A properly worded and formatted petition to vacate the office of the President of the Graduate Student Council, must be submitted to the Scribe of the Graduate Student Council, with signatures of the average of the prior three consecutive general meetings held by the Graduate Student Council AND;
  - b. Be approved by the executive committee (excluding the President and the President Elect) with a majority vote AND;
  - c. The grounds for removal are to be clearly stated and presented to the voting membership of the Graduate Student Council by the Scribe at a regular or special meeting or the organization AND;
  - d. The individual in question shall be provided a reasonable opportunity to present a defense either in person or in writing.

## **Section 8: Appeal of Removal of Officers:**

- A. An officer may appeal his/her removal within two weeks of the vote for removal by requesting a special appeal meeting of the organization AND;
- B. The President, or the President-Elect (if the President is the officer being removed), shall notify all voting members of the Graduate Student Council within 15 business days after the appeal request is received.

## **Article IV**

# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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## Advisor

### Section 1: The role of the Advisor:

The Advisor shall be the Dean of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies or an individual appointed by the Dean of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies of NDSU and shall have the following duties and responsibilities;

- A. The advisor shall assist officers and members in accomplishing the purpose of the organization.
- B. The advisor shall regularly review the financial record for the organization and forward mailings to the appropriate officer(s).
- C. The advisor shall serve as a resource or consultant to the organization.

## Article V

### Internal Committees

#### Section 1: The Executive Committees:

**The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers listed in Article III, Section 1, and the chairs or co-chairs of the committees listed in Article V, Section 2.**

#### Section 2: Default Committees:

The Graduate Student Council shall have the following internal committees by default. Each committee shall have its own chair or co-chairs duly appointed by the President of the Graduate Student Council:

- A. Governance and Finance Committee AND;
  - a. The Governance and Finance Committee shall support and manage the budgetary planning and financial infrastructure of the Graduate Student Council and its committees, by reviewing and adjusting the fiscal policy of the Graduate Student Council, to maximize the utilization of the available budget, while ensuring compliance with established NDSU policies and guidelines for financial management of student run organizations. The Governance and Finance Committee shall also review and update all official Graduate Student Council documentation.
- B. Strategic Planning Committee AND;
  - a. The Strategic Planning Committee shall address issues related to the graduate student population at NDSU. The committee shall serve the graduate student population through open discussion and dialogue about any concerns that arise throughout graduate school tenure at NDSU, such as student health insurance and management of student activity fees.
- C. Programming and Professional Development Committee AND;
  - a. The Programming and Professional Development Committee shall develop programs and carry out event planning and logistics related to programming. Events shall include both

# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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social functions to provide connection and support amongst graduate students, as well as professional development opportunities for students to enhance learning and networking engagements.

D. Public Relations and Outreach Committee AND;

- a. The Public Relations and Outreach Committee shall increase communication amongst graduate students across the NDSU community through social and university media for the purposes of advertising, marketing, events coordination, and promoting workshops/forums.

E. Research Forums Committee AND;

- a. This committee shall be responsible for coordinating research forums and similar activities sponsored by the GSC. This includes, but is not limited to, the weekly brown bag research discussions informal, annual NDSU Research Forum and research presentation opportunities.

F. Awards and Recognition Committee:

- a. This committee shall be responsible for coordinating and presenting awards given by the GSC. This includes, but is not limited to, the Graduate Student Teaching Excellence award, best research award, and nominations of Graduate School's awards.

## **Section 3: Authority to Establish Committees:**

- A. The Executive Committee of the Graduate Student Council shall have the power to establish, re-name, and dissolve default internal committees and appoint committee chairs for default internal committees AND;
- B. Default Internal Committee Chairs shall have the power to establish, re-name, and dissolve sub-committees at their discretion AND;
- C. Special Internal Committees may be formed by the Executive Committee of the Graduate Student Council to address changing needs or special projects.

## **Article VI**

### **Financial Structure and Financial Responsibilities**

#### **Section 1: Graduate School and University Account:**

- A. The President, Treasurer, and advisor will always remain on the account AND;
- B. All appropriate funds must be expended and requested in accordance with the Governance and Finance Committee Guidelines, the policies of the NDSU Graduate School, and all university financial policies AND;
- C. All unappropriated funds must be maintained in an account at a financial institution approved by a majority of the voting members of the Graduate Student Council AND;
- D. Checks drawn on the organization's unappropriated funds account must be signed by the Treasurer and approved by the President.

#### **Section 2: Financial Responsibilities:**

- A. The President of the Graduate Student Council shall be the final authority on the allocation of funds and resources of the Graduate Student Council AND;

# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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- B. Requests to the Graduate School and/or the University Business Office for appropriated funds shall be made by the President of the Graduate Student Council AND;
- C. The Treasurer shall be responsible for coordinating with the President and adhering to university financial guidelines for student organization budgeting and preparing budget request per those guidelines AND;
- D. The Scribe, along with the Treasurer, will maintain a master file of annual budget requests and approved budgets, which shall remain with the organization to provide continuity from one administration to the next.



# NDSU GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

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## ARTICLE VII BYLAWS

### Section 1: Provision for Bylaws:

- A. The Graduate Student Council may approve specific bylaws for the operations of the Graduate Student Council that is not addressed by this Constitution AND;
- B. No bylaw shall be adopted that contradicts any provisions of the Constitution.

### Section 2: Vote Required:

- A. The Graduate Student Council may adopt, amend or rescind any bylaw by a two-thirds vote of the current voting membership of the Graduate Student Council AND;
- B. Any proposed bylaw must be publicized to the members at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which it is to be voted upon.

## ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

### Section 1: Ratification:

- A. A proposed amendment to this Constitution shall be presented to the voting members of the Graduate Student Council, at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote shall be held AND;
- B. Ratification of an amendment to this Constitution shall require a vote equivalent to the average of the prior three consecutive general meetings held by the Graduate Student Council.

### Section 2: Ratification Date and Signatures

#### Ratification Date

**Signatures: President of the Graduate Student Council and Advisor of the Graduate Student Council**