

TITLE III
The Graduate and Professional Student Association Constitution
PREAMBLE

We, the students of the graduate and professional divisions of the Tulane University of Louisiana, in order to develop and further scholastic attainment; to promote understanding among students, faculty, administration and alumni; to coordinate the student activities of the graduate and professional divisions of the University; to foster the traditions of the University; to further professional, social and public service interests; to maintain a professional standard of ethics; to coordinate activities with the undergraduate student government at the University; and in recognition that the unification of the students of the graduate and professional students of the University is necessary to these ends, do establish this Constitution for the Graduate and Professional Student Association of Tulane University.

Article 1
Name & Organization

Section 1. Name

This organization will be known as the Graduate and Professional Student Association of Tulane University, hereinafter referred to as GAPSA.

Section 2. Membership

Every graduate and professional student at Tulane University shall be a member of GAPSA and shall have an equal voice with her or his fellow students.

Section 3. Structures

The government of GAPSA shall consist of an Assembly and an Executive Council.

Article 2
Purpose

GAPSA will be the voice of graduate and professional students on the Uptown and Downtown campuses at Tulane University of Louisiana. GAPSA is designed to accurately represent the concerns and needs of graduate and professional students to the university administration, to facilitate interdisciplinary exchanges, to liaise with the undergraduate student body government, and to provide programming of special interest to graduate and professional students.

Section 1. Structure

The structure is designed to assure that GAPSA is representative of graduate and professional students at Tulane University. In recognition of the time constraints placed on graduate and professional students, the structure is decentralized and meetings are minimized.

Section 2. Definition of Graduate Student

A graduate student is any student enrolled in a graduate or professional program and classified as a graduate or professional student by Tulane University.

Section 3. Member Divisions

- a. The following constituent divisions of the University shall be members of GAPSA and shall send Representatives to the GAPSA Assembly:
 1. School of Continuing Studies
 2. Graduate Business Council
 3. Graduate Studies Student Association

4. Medical School Student Association
 5. Public Health and Tropical Medicine Student Association
 6. Student Bar Association
 7. Student Government Association of the School of Social Work
 8. Biomedical Sciences Student Association
 9. Architecture
- b. Graduate and professional students shall be represented by the constituent division to which their student activity fees are allocated.

Article 3 Assembly

Section 1. Powers

All legislative powers of GAPSAs shall be vested in the GAPSAs Assembly. All powers necessary to student government that are not specifically granted to another person or entity are reserved to the Assembly or its designee.

Section 2. Membership

a. Assembly members:

The GAPSAs Assembly shall have the following voting membership:

1. Elected Senators from the graduate and professional school divisions of the University:
 - i) Each division shall be required to elect to the GAPSAs Assembly one (1) Assembly Representative-at large and one (1) Assembly Representative for every two hundred (200) full-time students or fraction thereof in excess of one-half (1/2), and one for every one thousand (1000) part-time students enrolled in that division.
 - ii) Elected Senators must be currently enrolled at Tulane and registered for classes for the semester they intend to serve on the GAPSAs Assembly.
2. Non-voting members of the Assembly shall consist of the GAPSAs Executive Council; specifically the President, Executive Vice President, Vice President, Finance, Vice President, Communications, Vice President, Uptown and Vice President, Downtown.
3. In the event of a tie, the President shall be accorded the right to vote.

b. Election

1. Assembly Senators shall be elected by their respective constituent divisions according to the procedures of the division.
2. The GAPSAs Assembly may nullify an election by a two-thirds majority vote if it has reason to believe that an election was conducted unfairly or contrary to the constituent division's own procedures.

c. Removal

1. Assembly Senators who repeatedly fail to perform their duties or abuse their office for personal ends may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly.
2. A Representative must be given notice of an intended motion for removal at least four days before the Assembly meeting at which a vote on such removal takes place.
3. Senators may also be removed by the division that elected them, according to the procedures of the division.

Section 3. Assembly Responsibilities & Powers

The powers of the GAPSAs Assembly shall be to establish policy and legislate for GAPSAs, graduate and professional student organizations, and the graduate and professional student body at Tulane University. These powers include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Review and approve the constitutions of all graduate and professional student organizations;
- b. Propose legislation, resolutions, rules, regulations and policies to the Assembly for adoption

thereby;

- c. Serve as a forum for graduate and professional student interaction;
- d. Elect the GAPSA Executive Council;
- e. Approve the GAPSA budget;
- f. Confirm graduate and professional student representatives to University and non-GAPSA bodies and committees;
- g. Propose amendments to the Constitution and bylaws in a judicious manner.

Section 4. Fiscal Powers

The GAPSA Assembly shall have the following fiscal powers:

- a. Accept any funds appropriated for the use of GAPSA by the University, or any other person, group, organization or corporation; and
- b. Allocate appropriate funds for the obligations and expenditures of GAPSA, the student governments of the GAPSA divisions, and approved student organizations,
- c. Funding Requests reviewed by the Finance Committee, as described *infra*, section 5(e)1(d) and (e), shall be eligible for approval by a majority of the voting Assembly (i.e. abstentions or votes of 'present' shall not be considered in determining the majority of the voting Assembly)
 1. Recommendations by the finance committee shall not be binding upon the Assembly
 2. Once introduced as a funding request, modification of such a request by the body through parliamentary procedure shall not be treated as a *de novo* application
 3. Consequently, a modified funding request shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting Assembly for approval
 4. Funding Requests that are not reviewed by the Finance Committee may be approved by the positive vote of 2/3 of the voting Assembly memorialized by recordation.
 5. No appropriation to a constituent division or student organization shall be made unless its constitution has been approved by the Assembly, a proper budget request for funding has been received by the Vice President, Finance and a budget recommendation has been made by the GAPSA Finance Committee or the Vice President, Finance.
- d. Constituent student government divisions are entitled to retain control over any balance, which remains in their constituent budget at the end of the fiscal year.
 1. The balance may be kept in the school's reserve account if one is available. If the division does not have an appropriate account, the funds can be transferred to the GAPSA reserve account. Those unused funds from the prior year must be reallocated to the constituent division by the Vice President, Finance at the beginning of the next fiscal year.
- e. In the spring semester, the Vice President, Finance, acting on behalf of the Finance Committee, shall present an annual budget to the Assembly for approval.
 1. Such budget and all subsequent proposals shall violate neither the provisions set forth in this Constitution, nor the Bylaws for the GAPSA Assembly or Bylaws for the GAPSA Finance Committee.
 2. Such budget shall include an aggregate return to the recognized student government of the GAPSA constituent divisions, an amount not less than eighty percent (80%)
 3. Such budget shall also include a Financial Allocation return to the USG for services that the USG provides which benefit the entire student body, including graduate students.
 - (a) Such Financial Allocation shall be equal to the amount determined per the ASB bylaws.
 - (b) The USG shall be permitted to request additional funds for extraordinary graduate participation in USG organizations. Such requests shall be governed by the ASB Bylaws.
- f. All other fiscal powers and duties not reserved herein are granted to the GAPSA Finance Committee or the Vice President, Finance. The Assembly may define or limit these powers and duties through appropriate bylaws.

Section 5. GAPSA Finance Committee

- a. The GAPSA Finance Committee shall be a standing committee of the GAPSA Assembly.
 - 1. Its purpose shall be to assure that the funds of GAPSA are properly handled for the benefit of all graduate and professional students.
- b. The Vice President, Finance shall serve as the Chair for the GAPSA Finance Committee and shall perform such duties, with regards to the Finance Committee, as provided in Article 4, Section 5 of this Constitution.
- c. Composition of GAPSA Finance Committee
 - 1. The GAPSA Finance Committee shall have the following composition:
 - (a) voting members:
 - (i) Vice President, Finance, who shall serve as chair and vote only in the case of a tie.
 - (ii) Nine Representatives from the GAPSA constituent divisions.
 - a. With no more than one Representative from each division;
 - b. The Vice President, Finance of each division shall serve as GAPSA Finance Committee representative.
 - c. A Non-Representative will be granted voting privileges only if serving as a proxy during the absence of a division's treasurer. The proxy must belong to the same division as the absent treasurer.
 - d. In the event that a division's treasurer also serves as Vice President, Finance, that division shall elect a Finance Committee Representative who shall have full voting privileges.
 - (b) Non-voting members:
 - (i) The Presidents of the constituent divisions of the GAPSA Assembly, or their designee may, at their option, sit on the Finance Committee as non-voting members.
 - (ii) the Associate Director of Student Programs- Administration.
 - (iii) the Vice President for Student Affairs, or his/her representative
- d. Powers and Duties of the Finance Committee
 - 1. The GAPSA Finance Committee shall:
 - (a) In its Bylaws establish restrictions, guidelines and priorities for the allocation and expenditure of funds;
 - (b) Investigate all GAPSA accounts to ensure that there are no violations of such restrictions, guidelines or priorities;
 - (c) Set the rate of the Student Activities Fee as per the ASB Constitution;
 - (d) Hear and research all budget requests for GAPSA funds;
 - (e) Report funding recommendations to the GAPSA assembly
 - (f) Maintain and oversee, through the Director of Student Budgets, all GAPSA accounts; and;
 - (g) Manage the GAPSA Budget Reserve in accordance with Section 6, below.
 - (h) Manage the GAPSA Collaborative Events Fund (CEF) in accordance with Section 7, below.
 - (i) No powers conferred by this section shall be construed as granting the Committee 'veto' power over the opinion of the assembly.
- e. Extraordinary Powers
 - 1. In regard to financial matters, extraordinary powers and duties are vested in the Executive Council under the following circumstances:
 - (a) The matter is of an emergency nature, and
 - (b) It is impractical for the Finance Committee to meet. The Vice President for Student Affairs or her/his representative must certify such circumstances.
- f. Finance Bylaws:
 - 1. The Committee shall establish its procedure and any restrictions, guidelines, or priorities deemed necessary in its Bylaws.
 - 2. Revision of Bylaws shall require previous notice, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by the

Committee, and subsequent notice and a two-thirds majority vote of the GAPSA Assembly.

Section 6. GAPSA Budget Reserve

- a. The value of this fund shall never be less than ten percent (10%) of the estimated value of the GAPSA General Fund Account for the ensuing year.
- b. The purpose of the fund is to:
 1. Underwrite extraordinary activities and capital improvements deemed worthy by the GAPSA Assembly; and
 2. Ensure that the GAPSA General Fund will not be overdrawn as of June 30 of the current governing year; and
 3. Provide relief in the event of unique emergencies.

Section 7. GAPSA Collaborative Events Fund (CEF)

- a. The GAPSA Budget will include a line item toward funding events sponsored by at least two constituent divisions.
- b. The amount of this line item shall not be less than one percent of the total student activity fees.
- c. Funding of such an event mandates financial commitment from all sponsoring parties.

Section 8. Meetings

- a. Quorum for the GAPSA Assembly shall be one-half of the total number of voting Assembly members.
- b. The Assembly shall meet at least 3 times during each the fall and spring semesters.
- c. The GAPSA President shall preside over the Assembly and shall vote only in the case of a tie.
- d. Attendance by Proxy:
 1. In the event that an Assembly Representative is unable to attend a meeting, that member may appoint a proxy by notice to the Vice President, Communications before or during roll call.
 2. A person acting as a proxy shall have full voting rights in that Assembly meeting.
 3. A proxy for an Assembly Representative must be a student from the same division as the absent Representative.
- e. At the request of twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting membership of the Assembly, a meeting of the Full Assembly must be held within 7 days.
- f. Meetings of the GAPSA Assembly shall be open to the public, unless meeting entails matters as provided in Title I, Article 8, Section 6 of the ASB Constitution.
- g. In addition to GAPSA Assembly members, the following persons shall have full speaking privileges at Assembly meetings:
 1. all graduate and professional students;
 2. the President of the ASB; and
 3. Executive members and Senators from the USG.

Section 9. Legislation

- a. No legislation shall become binding unless it is introduced and presented in writing by an Assembly member, read, and passed by a majority vote at a meeting of the Assembly.
- b. All legislation of the Assembly shall be categorized as follows:
 1. Laws: Rule and regulations governing graduate and professional students, graduate and professional student organizations, financial allocations, and the creation of committees or subsidiary organizations. Laws require previous notice and a simple majority vote.
 2. Bylaws: Rules of order and procedures governing the Assembly or its Committees. Such Bylaws may be enacted upon previous notice and a simple majority vote. Subsequent amendments to the Bylaws require previous notice and a two-thirds majority vote.
 3. Decrees: Advisement, ordering or prescribing the method for a GAPSA official, whether

- elected or appointed, to fulfill some duty provided for in this Constitution, Bylaws or Laws of the Assembly. Decrees must be passed by a two-thirds majority vote.
4. Resolutions: Expressions of the sentiment of the Assembly. Resolutions require a simple majority vote.

Section 10. Assembly Senators' Duties and Responsibilities

Each division Assembly Representative to the GAPSA Assembly is obliged to undertake the following duties and responsibilities:

- a. Attend all Assembly meetings;
- b. Obtain an electronic mail address from the university computing services;
- c. Disseminate with due diligence all communications between GAPSA and your division school;
- d. Act as a liaison between your division and GAPSA;
- e. Actively pursue the interests of the Senator's division.

Article 4 Executive Council

Section 1. Composition

The Executive Council of GAPSA shall consist of a President, Executive Vice President, Vice President, Finance, Vice President, Communications, Vice President, Uptown and Vice President, Downtown.

Section 2. President

- a. Powers:
 1. The President shall be the primary representative of GAPSA and the graduate and professional student body.
 2. The President shall have the authority to make and revoke appointments to non-GAPSA bodies and committees with the advice and consent of the Assembly.
 3. All powers and duties of the Executive Council not specifically delegated shall be vested in the President.
- b. Duties:
 1. The President shall:
 - (a) Preside at GAPSA Assembly and Executive Council meetings and prepare the agenda for those meetings;
 - (b) Act as liaison between the graduate and professional student body and the President of the ASB, the undergraduate student governing body, and the University faculty and administration;
 - (c) Enforce the Constitution, laws, decrees, and bylaws of GAPSA;
 - (d) Make appointments where allowed or required;

Section 3. Executive Vice President

The Executive Vice President shall:

- a. Exercise the powers of the President in his or her absence.
- b. Chair the Election & Recruitment Committee;
- c. Coordinate the Assembly election among the divisions of GAPSA;
- d. Conduct the Executive Council election before the end of the spring semester;
- e. Coordinate the operation of the GAPSA Assembly;
- f. Report to the Executive Council and GAPSA Assembly.

Section 4. Vice President, Uptown

- a. The Vice President, Uptown is responsible for serving as the representative and liaison for the

- uptown campus and its graduate organizations;
- b. The Vice President, Uptown shall:
 1. Coordinate events and communications between GAPSA and the uptown campus;
 2. Verify all uptown graduate organization constitutions and recognition forms prior to their appearance before the body;
 3. Coordinate the interaction of the uptown divisions of GAPSA;
 4. Coordinate the representation of uptown graduate students on University committees;
 5. Report to the Executive Council and GAPSA Assembly

Section 5. Vice President, Finance

The Vice President, Finance shall:

- a. Have the power to authorize the payment of GAPSA expenditures as they come due.
- b. Chair the GAPSA Finance Committee;
- c. Oversee the budgets of GAPSA and the constituent divisions;
- d. Work with the University Director of Student Budgets regarding the GAPSA budget and the budgets of the constituent divisions;
- e. Supervise preparation of the annual GAPSA budget;
- f. Distribute funds to constituent division student governments;
- g. Keep strict and accurate records of all GAPSA income and expenditures in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;
- h. Accept all budget requests from GAPSA division student governments and recognized organizations;
- i. Make a regular report to the Executive Council and the GAPSA Assembly regarding the financial posture of GAPSA;
- j. With regard to the operation of the GAPSA Finance Committee, the Vice President, Finance shall:
 1. Officially inform the Vice President for Student Affairs or her/his representative of all actions taken by the GAPSA Finance Committee and, when necessary, approved by the GAPSA Assembly.
 2. Notify all GAPSA divisions and organizations of the restrictions, guidelines, and priorities established by the Committee;
 3. Act as a spokesperson for the Finance Committee to enforce and promote all policies as mandated by the Finance Committee;
 4. Appoint committees as authorized in the Bylaws;
 5. Call meetings of the Finance Committee;
 6. Issue invitations, with the Finance Committee approval, to budget advisors or any other persons to attend Finance Committee meetings, when appropriate.

Section 6. Vice President, Communications

The Vice President, Communications shall:

- a. Maintain GAPSA files available for public inspection, including, but not limited to, the minutes of all Executive Council and GAPSA Assembly meetings, all legislation, laws, bylaws, resolutions, and authorizations of GAPSA;
- b. Prepare and distribute information on GAPSA activities, including press releases and flyers;
- c. Assist the Standing and Ad Hoc Committees, Assembly and Executive Council in the preparation of reports;
- d. Take Minutes at all Executive Council and Assembly meetings;
 1. The Vice President, Communications shall undertake to distribute a copy of the GAPSA Assembly minutes to each voting Assembly Representative, members of the Executive Council, and the President of the Associated Student Body.
- e. Serve as contact person for the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students;

- f. Report to the Executive Council and GAPSA Assembly.
- g. Maintain the GAPSA website

Section 7. Vice President, Downtown

- a. The Vice President, Downtown is responsible for serving as the representative and liaison for the uptown campus and its graduate organizations;
- b. The Vice President, Downtown shall:
 - 1. Coordinate events and communications between GAPSA and the downtown campus;
 - 2. Verify all downtown graduate organization constitutions and recognition forms prior to their appearance before the body;
 - 3. Coordinate the interaction of the downtown divisions of GAPSA;
 - 4. Coordinate the representation of downtown graduate students on University committees;
 - 5. Report to the Executive Council and GAPSA Assembly

Section 8. Powers

- a. The Executive Council is vested with the authority to carry out the day-to-day operations for GAPSA, including:
 - 1. Making administrative decisions;
 - 2. Coordinating the activities of the Assembly and GAPSA member constituent division governments;
 - 3. Reassigning the duties of the members of the Executive Council in order to balance the workload among the Executive Council members.
- b. The Executive Council is vested with the duty and power to act for the GAPSA Assembly and GAPSA Finance Committee in the following circumstances, subject to the review of the Assembly:
 - 1. Between GAPSA Assembly meetings, unless the situation is sufficient to warrant the call of a special meeting of the GAPSA Assembly;
 - 2. In matters of an emergency nature;
 - 3. At times when it is impractical for the GAPSA Assembly to meet.

Section 9. Elections

- a. Executive positions shall be elected by the Assembly. All graduate and professional students who plan to enroll for at least one additional academic year are eligible to run for positions on the Executive Council.
- b. Executive board elections shall be held at the second to last meeting of the spring semester.
 - 1. The Assembly meeting at which the elections are held will be advertised.
- c. The elections will be conducted by the outgoing Executive Vice President, or, if the outgoing Executive Vice President is planning to run for a position, by another person chosen by the Assembly.
 - 1. The Assembly may also appoint election auditors.
- d. Elections for each executive board position will be held in the order in which they are listed in section 1. The Elections chair will call for nominations.
- e. In keeping with the preference that every division be represented on the Executive Council, no more than two students from the same division may be elected to the Executive Council, unless no candidates from any other division runs for that position.
- f. Each nominee may give a brief speech.
- g. Voting shall be by secret ballot.
- h. In the event that no candidate receives a majority, there shall be a run-off between the two candidates with the most votes.
- i. In event of a vacancy in mid-year, the vacancy shall be advertised and a by-election held at the earliest practical Assembly meeting.

- j. Elections will become binding on the last day of the academic semester in which it takes place.
 - 1. The current officer is permitted, but not required, to turn over any or all authority to the newly elected officer at any point after the election.
 - 2. If the position is vacant, the newly elected officer is to assume office immediately.

Section 10. Removal

- a. Executive board members who repeatedly fail to perform their duties or abuse their office for personal ends may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly.
- b. An executive board member must be given notice of the intended removal at least four days before the meeting at which a vote on said removal takes place.
- c. Such removal by the Assembly shall be undertaken in executive session under the rules and procedures provided by Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 11. Meetings

- a. The Executive Council shall meet at least once prior to every general Assembly meeting at a time set by the previous meeting, at the call of the chair, or at the call of two or more executive members.
- b. Quorum is one-half of the existing Executive Council.

Section 12. Voting

- a. The members of the Executive Council shall not vote at any Assembly meeting, with the exception of the President, who may vote in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

**Article 5
Standing Committees**

Section 1. Standing Committees shall address graduate and professional student concerns at the university. Their duties include undertaking the following:

- a. Represent graduate and professional students in their designated area;
- b. Inform the Assembly and Executive Council of their activities on a regular basis;
- c. Research and report on issues when requested to do so by the Assembly or the Executive Council.

Section 2. Standing Committees shall be approved by a simple majority of the Assembly.

- a. Standing Committees shall consist of at least three (3) members;
- b. Each division, at the option of its Assembly Senators, is entitled to seat one member on each standing committee of the GAPSA Assembly.

Section 3. The members of the Standing Committee shall elect the Chair of the Committee.

Section 4. All Standing Committees shall meet at least once per semester or as determined by the Bylaws.

**Article 6
Ad Hoc Committees**

Section 1. Ad Hoc committees may be formed as needed to address specific graduate and professional student concerns. Their duties include undertaking the following:

- a. Represent graduate and professional students on a specific issue;
- b. Inform the Assembly and Executive Council of their activities on a regular basis.

Section 2. Ad Hoc committees shall be approved by a simple majority of the Assembly.

- a. Ad Hoc committees shall consist of at least three (3) members;
- b. Each division, at the option of its Assembly Senators, is entitled to seat one member on each Ad Hoc committee of the GAPSA Assembly.

Section 3. The members of the Ad Hoc Committee shall elect the Chair of the Committee.

Section 4. Once the specific task of an Ad Hoc Committee is completed, the Ad Hoc Committee shall be discharged.

Article 7

Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, as modified and interpreted by the Vice President, Uptown and Vice President, Downtown shall govern GAPSA in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with this Constitution, the Bylaws, and any special rules of order that GAPSA may adopt.

Section 2. Parliamentary rules shall be announced to the body at the outset of each academic year. Any changes or modifications to such rules must be announced at least one (1) week prior to a scheduled GAPSA assembly meeting

Article 8

Bylaws

Section 1.

- a. The GAPSA Assembly shall adopt Bylaws consistent with this Constitution.
- b. The bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the GAPSA Assembly by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.