

Bylaws of the University of Manitoba Graduate Students' Association

Index Page

ARTICLE I: DEFINITIONS..... 3
ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES 3
ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP 4
ARTICLE IV: ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA 5
ARTICLE V: GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS..... 5
ARTICLE VI: EXTERNAL ORGANIZATION AFFILIATIONS 8

ARTICLE I: DEFINITIONS

1. Unless otherwise specified, the following definitions apply to these Bylaws and all other UMGSA documents:
 - a. 'UMGSA' and 'Association' refers to the University of Manitoba Graduate Students' Association.
 - b. 'Member' means a member of the UMGSA.
 - c. 'Council' means the Council of the UMGSA.
 - d. 'Executive' means any member of the UMGSA Executive.
 - e. 'University' means the University of Manitoba.
 - f. 'HSGSA' means the Health Sciences Graduate Students' Association.

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

1. The UMGSA shall advocate on behalf of graduate students at the University of Manitoba as a whole, and shall act as a platform for educational and social activities.
2. The UMGSA will support and promote University of Manitoba graduate student research endeavours.
3. The UMGSA shall work with internal and external parties to promote the interests of graduate students to the University of Manitoba administration, to all levels of government, and to other organizations on and off campus.
4. The UMGSA shall distribute its resources and services in a way that is equitable across the entire UMGSA membership.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Association

1. All students registered in the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Manitoba, and only those students, shall be members of the Association.
2. Each member of the UMGSA shall be entitled to one vote at General Meetings of the UMGSA.

Membership of Council

3. The UMGSA Council shall consist of the UMGSA Executive, one graduate student from each department of the University with a graduate program, and non-voting members as specified in the UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual.
4. Council members representing departments must be chosen democratically on a regular annual term by their departmental membership.
5. Each council member is entitled to one vote at meetings of the UMGSA Council.
6. Council membership shall be suspended if the councillor has three consecutive absences from UMGSA Council meetings, without submitting regrets or a proxy. The UMGSA Office shall make all reasonable efforts to inform the associated departmental students' association of the suspension, and that the department has the right to choose another councillor for the position.

Membership of the UMGSA Executive

7. Members of the Executive are:
 - a. President
 - b. Vice-President Finance and Administration
 - c. Vice-President Services and Support
 - d. Vice-President Academic (who shall also act as one of the Senators representing Graduate Studies)
 - e. HSGSA President (representing students at the Bannatyne Campus and the Saint Boniface Research Centre)
 - f. Senators (the remaining two Senators representing Graduate Studies).
8. The total number of Senators representing Graduate Studies, including the Vice-President Academic, shall be determined in accordance with the Bylaws of the Senate of the University of Manitoba.
9. Members of the Executive are chosen by annual general election according to the UMGSA Election and Referendum Manual, except for the HSGSA President who is elected according to the HSGSA Elections Policy and Procedure Manual.
10. Any member of the UMGSA may run for any UMGSA Executive position, except the position of HSGSA President, which can only be filled by a member of the HSGSA.
11. An executive who graduates during their term in office is allowed to remain in their position until the end of that term, providing they fulfill their duties specified in the UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual.
12. A member of the UMGSA Executive may be removed from their position by a majority vote of the UMGSA Council in the following cases:
 - a. Conviction for an indictable offence;
 - b. Abuse or misappropriation of finances, resources or private information belonging to the UMGSA;
 - c. Misrepresentation of the UMGSA in legal or public matters;
 - d. Expulsion from the Executive's program or the University;
 - e. Any abuse of a fellow Executive, Council member, or other individual;
 - f. Failure to perform duties essential to their Executive position.

ARTICLE IV: ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA

1. All elections and referenda, and all members participating in an election or referendum, must follow all rules and procedures as specified in the UMGSA Election and Referendum Manual.

ARTICLE V: GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

Faculty Associations

1. The UMGSA recognizes that its members may form Faculty Associations, operating as part of the UMGSA, representing and fulfilling the needs of their constituent members. For a full list of departments participating in a Faculty Association, please refer to the UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual.

Governing Documents

2. The documents governing the UMGSA, in order of precedence, are the following:
 - a. The UMSU Act
 - b. The UMGSA Bylaws
 - c. The UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual
 - d. The UMGSA Election and Referendum Manual
 - e. Robert's Rules of Order.
3. The governing documents of the UMGSA shall take precedence over the governing documents of faculty and departmental graduate students' associations of the University of Manitoba.

Amendment of Documents

4. The Bylaws of the UMGSA may be amended only at a General Meeting of the UMGSA, subject to the following:
 - a. UMGSA members must be informed of any proposed motion to amend the UMGSA Bylaws two weeks prior to the General Meeting.
 - b. A motion to amend the Bylaws requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the General Meeting to pass.
5. Any proposed amendments to the UMGSA Bylaws which affect the HSGSA must be presented in advance and passed by a joint meeting of the UMGSA and HSGSA Bylaws and Policy Committees. No motions altering the relationship between the UMGSA and the HSGSA can be raised from the floor.

General Meetings

6. At least one General Meeting shall be held each financial year between October 1st and January 31st.
7. The Executive and/or the Council shall have the right to call additional General Meetings at their discretion.
8. An additional General Meeting shall be convened upon the written request of twenty-five (25) or more members of the UMGSA.
9. Members of the UMGSA will be informed of a General Meeting at least three weeks in advance, with clearly noted time and location.
10. All documents for the meeting, including the agenda, reports and any proposed motions, must be made available to all members of the UMGSA at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
11. Quorum at a General Meeting shall be one percent (1%) of the membership of the UMGSA. Without quorum, no business can take place and no motions can be passed, other than a motion to reschedule the meeting.
12. All General Meetings will be held in the City of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Executive Responsibilities

13. Duties of the Executive:

- a. The UMGSA Executive shall:
 - i. Be responsible to the Council for the day-to-day workings and emergency decisions required for the UMGSA.
 - ii. Represent the UMGSA both internally and externally, following UMGSA policies on all matters.
 - iii. Report to the Council decisions and activities that affect the general operational policies of the UMGSA.
 - iv. Prepare the annual budget for the UMGSA, which must be presented at the May meeting of Council for approval.
 - v. Respect the financial constraints of the budget as approved by Council.
 - vi. Be responsible for an effective year-end transition process.
 - vii. Post and attend regular office hours.
 - viii. Submit an annual report to Council at the end of their term in office.
- b. The specific duties of each Executive role are specified in the UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual.

Council Responsibilities

14. Duties and Operations of Council:

- a. Council shall have the authority to determine the policy and practices of the UMGSA through their mandate to approve, oppose, or modify the following:
 - i. The annual budget of the UMGSA;
 - ii. Changes to the UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual;
 - iii. Changes to the UMGSA Election and Referendum Manual.
- b. Each councillor of the UMGSA shall:
 - i. Represent the interests of graduate students in their department in Council and committee meetings of the UMGSA.
 - ii. Report to the graduate students of their department on the proceedings of Council and committees of the UMGSA.
 - iii. Select a graduate student from their department to act as a proxy to represent their constituents at Council when they are unable to attend.
 - iv. Serve on at least one committee of the UMGSA, or provide an alternate member from their department to serve on a committee.
 - v. Submit an annual report to the UMGSA Office on their department's activities and expenditures for which the department received a department grant.
- c. Meetings
 - i. Regular meetings of the UMGSA Council will take place once a month at a time and location designated by the Executive and agreed upon by Council. Meetings in June, July, and December are not required, but may be called at the discretion of the Executive. Notice of the meeting must be provided at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Meeting documents must be sent to councillors at least one week prior to the meeting.
 - ii. A special meeting of the Council beyond the scheduled meetings may be called by five (5) voting council members at any time. The notice and purpose of any meeting shall be provided to all members of Council at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
 - iii. All motions to amend the UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual, the UMGSA Election and Referendum Manual, or the UMGSA budget must be provided in writing with all supporting documents at least one week prior to the meeting.

- iv. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the voting members of the Council shall form a quorum for the transaction of business. In the absence of quorum, no business shall be transacted at a meeting of Council, except the adjournment of the meeting to a new date.
- v. Each represented department and each member of the Executive shall be entitled to one vote at Council meetings.
- vi. Each councillor must notify the UMGSA Office at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting if they are not attending. If they are sending a proxy, the UMGSA Office must receive a signed proxy form prior to the Council meeting.

Committees

- 15. Committees of the Association are categorized as either Standing or Ad-Hoc.
 - a. The Standing Committees of the UMGSA are:
 - i. Executive
 - ii. Bylaws and Policy
 - iii. Finance
 - iv. Executive Review
 - v. Awards
 - vi. Services and Support
 - vii. Events
 - viii. Election and Referendum.
- 16. The composition, meeting requirements and goals for all Standing Committees are outlined in the UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual.

Finances

- 17. The UMGSA's financial year shall be May 1st to April 30th of the following year.
- 18. The annual budget of the UMGSA shall be presented and approved by Council prior to June 1st. The Executive shall prepare the budget and provide it for review at least one week prior to the May Council meeting.
- 19. All changes to the UMGSA budget shall be approved by Council by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.
- 20. Funds maintained by the UMGSA include:
 - a. Endowment Fund (Royal Bank of Canada)
 - b. Investment Fund (National Bank Financial)
 - c. External Relations Fund (National Bank Financial).
- 21. Any changes to the managers, configuration or purposes of these funds must be approved by Council.
- 22. The signing authorities on UMGSA accounts are:
 - a. The UMGSA President
 - b. The UMGSA Vice-President Finance and Administration
 - c. The UMGSA Vice-President Services and Support
 - d. The UMGSA Vice-President Academic.
- 23. The UMGSA shall not re-issue stale-dated cheques.
- 24. Any changes to UMGSA Executive honoraria approved by Council shall only take effect in the following financial year and cannot be retroactively payed.

Financial Reporting and Audits

25. The UMGSA Executive shall provide detailed spending reports to the Finance Committee on a monthly basis.
26. The Finance Committee shall provide a summary report of monthly expenses and income at the following Council meeting.
27. A financial audit of the UMGSA shall be conducted on an annual basis by an external accounting agency approved by Council.
28. Regulations and guidelines pertaining to the annual financial audit can be found in the UMGSA Governance and Operations Manual.
29. The Vice-President Finance and Administration shall provide a summary report of the annual financial audit within 60 days of receiving the final report from the selected accounting agency.

Currency

30. All monetary values expressed in the UMGSA governing documents are in Canadian Dollars (CAD).

Fees

31. All members shall pay membership fees to the UMGSA.
32. Any alteration to UMGSA membership fees must be passed via referendum in accordance with the Election and Referendum Manual. If a referendum is successful, newly-approved changes will only come into effect in the following academic year.

ARTICLE VI: EXTERNAL ORGANIZATION AFFILIATIONS

1. The general membership of the UMGSA shall discuss affiliations with external organizations at each General Meeting.
2. The UMGSA is not a member of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), the Canadian Federation of Students - Services (CFS-S), or the Canadian Federation of Students - Manitoba (CFS-MB), herein referred to as CFS/-S/-MB, and in that regard if and when necessary, it shall dispute all statements, claims, indications and suggestions of membership (full or otherwise) in the CFS/-S/-MB.
3. The UMGSA shall continue to collect and hold fees in lieu of CFS/-S/-MB membership in a contingency fund, named the External Relations Fund, until such time that the membership status is officially conceded, in writing, between the legal counsels of the CFS/-S/-MB and the UMGSA, or determined by courts, whichever is sooner.
4. Fees that are collected in lieu of membership in the CFS/-S/-MB may be used toward the reasonable costs associated with the process of defending the position of the UMGSA regarding membership in the CFS/-S/-MB until such time that the membership status is officially conceded, in writing, between the legal counsels of the CFS/-S/-MB and the UMGSA, or determined by courts, whichever is sooner.
5. Once the issue of membership in the CFS/-S/-MB is finally resolved, the UMGSA membership shall determine the use of all remaining fees collected from UMGSA members and held in the External Relations Fund. That determination will take place at the first UMGSA General Meeting following the legal resolution of the membership status of the UMGSA.