

# HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

## THE PREMIER LIFE SKILLS UNIVERSITY

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### Graduate Student Government Association

## CONSTITUTION

### Preamble

We, the graduate students of High Point University, in order to promote community, to embody the principles of democracy, to practice leadership and governance, and to serve the University community, do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution for the Graduate Student Government Association of High Point University.

Article I. Name

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**ARTICLE I: NAME.**

The association shall be called the Graduate Student Government Association (“GSGA”) of High Point University.

**ARTICLE II: PURPOSE.**

The purpose of this organization shall be to promote the ideals of the University; to develop honor; to encourage personal responsibility; to exercise those executive, legislative, and social responsibilities vested in the Graduate Student Government Association; to enhance the quality of graduate campus life and encourage community on campus; to budget and administer resources; to appropriate funds, where deemed appropriate, to graduate campus organizations and other campus activities; and to facilitate open and effective communication among students, faculty, staff and administrators at High Point University.

**ARTICLE III: ORGANIZATION.**

The Graduate Student Government Association shall be composed of the Executive Council (“EC”) and two boards: the Graduate Student Senate and the Graduate Community Affairs Board (“GCAB”).

**ARTICLE IV: POWERS.**

**Section I.** The executive powers of the Graduate Student Government Association shall be vested in the Executive Council (“EC”).

**Section II.** The Graduate Student Senate shall confirm appointments; install and remove, where appropriate, officers; exercise legislative powers; and voice their opinion regarding the funds of the Graduate Student Government Association.

**Section III.** The Graduate Community Affairs Board (“GCAB”) shall encourage graduate community on campus and shall assist the University in assessing and improving the quality of graduate campus life.

**ARTICLE V: REPRESENTATION.**

All graduate students shall be represented and served by the Graduate Student Government Association. All students may attend all regular and called meetings of any board of the Graduate Student Government Association. Although meetings of the Executive Council are closed, any student may request an audience with the Executive Council.

**ARTICLE VI: EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.**

**Section I. Members.** The Executive Council of the Graduate Student Government Association shall be composed of the following members:

***Elected Members.*** The following members of the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Government Association shall be elected by the graduate students of High Point University:

1. President
2. Executive Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

**Duties and Powers of Elected Members.** The members of the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Government Association shall have duties and powers, as indicated:

***President.*** The President shall:

1. Schedule weekly meetings and call special meetings of the Executive Council;
2. Preside over meetings of the Executive Council;
3. Report all activities and decisions of the Executive Council at all meetings of the Graduate Student Senate;
4. Appoint, in collaboration with the elected members of the Executive Council and subject to confirmation by the Graduate Student Senate, all remaining appointed members of the Executive Council;
5. Appoint, in collaboration with the full Executive Council and subject to confirmation by the Graduate Student Senate, all chairs of all standing committees, given committees are formed;
6. Have veto power over bills and resolutions, except that only a veto of a bill or resolution may be overturned by three-fourths override vote of the Graduate Student Senate;
7. Present an Annual Report to the High Point University Administration detailing the activities of the Graduate Student Government Association before leaving office in the Spring;
8. Plan an Executive Council retreat to be held during the summer term or before the start of the fall semester to plan for the year;
9. Meet with the Graduate Student Government Advisor(s) weekly;
10. Ensure that all meetings of the Graduate Student Government Association and its Boards be listed on University calendars;
11. Attend all Student Affairs Committee Meetings.

***Executive Vice President.*** The Executive Vice President shall:

1. Serve as the Speaker of the Graduate Student Senate;

2. Preside over meetings of the Graduate Student Senate;
3. Maintain a history of all legislative action and forward a copy of bills involving the appropriation of funds to the Treasurer of the Graduate Student Government Association, the Office of Student Life, and the High Point University Business Office;
4. Oversee standing committees of the Graduate Student Senate;
5. Appoint, in collaboration with the full Executive Council and subject to confirmation by the Graduate Student Senate, all chairs of all standing committees;
6. Appoint ad hoc committees of the Graduate Student Senate in collaboration with the committee chairs;
7. Enforce Robert's Rules of Order;
8. Serve as a proxy for the President when designated;
9. Assist the President with the planning of Executive Council retreat;
10. Assist the President with the preparation of the Annual Report.

**Secretary.** The Secretary shall:

1. Record all the actions of the Executive Council;
2. Record all the actions of the Graduate Student Senate;
3. Distribute these minutes to the Executive Council following each meeting;
4. File a copy of each successful bill and each successful resolution in the files of the Graduate Student Government Association;
5. Correspond on behalf of the Graduate Student Government Association;
6. Attend all Student Affairs Committee meetings;
7. Assist the President with the preparation of the Annual Report;
8. Review attendance within the Graduate Student Senate;
9. Manage chartering documentation submitted by forming organizations;
10. Document and maintain organization status.

**Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall:

1. Monitor all funds of the Graduate Student Government Association;
2. Keep official records of all receipts and expenditures;
3. Keep a record of all organizations in financial bad standing;
4. Make financial reports at meetings of the Executive Council and Graduate Student Senate;
5. Organize and administer all income-generating activities;
6. Update and administer the Finance & Travel Codes and rules set

- within;
7. Publish any update to Finance & Travel Codes once approved by the Executive Council and present it to the Graduate Student Senate;
  8. Submit all bills which have been either passed by the Graduate Student Senate and approved by both the Graduate Student Government Association President and Advisor(s) or overridden by the Graduate Student Senate to the University Business Office no later than 3 academic business days (business days in which classes are in session) after the bill is passed or overridden;
  9. Coordinate the Budget Defenses at the desired time with the President, Executive Vice President, and Secretary;
  10. Review and approve, in collaboration with appropriate University officials, all contracts entered into by the Graduate Student Government Association, the Executive Council, or the separate Boards;
  11. Keep running tally of GSGA account balances separate from Clarity;
  12. Assist the Executive Vice President in the preparation of Graduate Student Senate bill packet;
  13. Assist the President with the preparation of the Annual Report.

***Appointed Members.*** The following members of the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Government Association will be jointly recommended by the respective outgoing officers and the incoming President of the Graduate Student Government Association and shall be confirmed by both the elected members of the Executive Council and the Graduate Student Senate. Additional positions may be appointed at the discretion of the President of the Graduate Student Government Association:

1. Graduate Student Engagement Chair
2. Service and Philanthropy Chair
3. External Communications Chair
4. Professional Development Chair
5. Finance Chair

***Duties and Powers of Appointed Members.*** The members of the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Government Association shall have duties and powers, as indicated:

***Graduate Student Engagement Chair.*** The Graduate Student Engagement Chair shall:

1. Hold regular meetings with representatives from all graduate programs;
2. Plan and execute at least one engagement event per semester to

- encourage graduate student involvement on campus;
3. Work with organizations to collaborate together, when appropriate, to build connections between graduate programs;
  4. Help graduate students become connected with different organizations.

***Service and Philanthropy Chair.*** The Service and Philanthropy Chair shall:

1. Meet regularly, as deemed necessary, with the Executive Director of the HPU Center for Community Engagement;
2. Hold meetings and workshops on various service and fundraising topics to better educate students on service, volunteerism, fundraising and philanthropy;
3. Make service opportunities and showcases known to the graduate students;
4. Promote local, domestic, and international service opportunities and showcases, with emphasis on opportunities in the city of High Point.

***External Communications Chair.*** The External Communications Chair shall:

1. Promote Graduate Student Government Association events, organization events, and campus events;
2. Manage all Graduate Student Government Association social networking platforms;
3. Meet with the appropriate administrators and campus officials to conduct the planning of any campus graduate student events;
4. Work with the Graduate Student Engagement Chair to encourage students, who are not Senators, to bring their concerns to the Graduate Student Senate.

***Professional Development Chair.*** The Professional Development Chair shall:

1. Develop and coordinate workshops, panels, and events related to career preparation and professional growth for graduate students;
2. Collaborate with faculty, alumni, career services, and external professionals to address a variety of needs and interests of the graduate student community;
3. Facilitate mentorship and networking opportunities between graduate school programs and organizations.

***Finance Chair.*** The Finance Chair shall:

1. Work in conjunction with the Treasurer and Advisor to evaluate

- GSGA budgets and approved bills;
2. Track After Action Report deadlines and amounts, and file requisition forms for funds to return to GSGA;
  3. Assist the Treasurer with the planning, preparation, and execution of any financial responsibilities when necessary;
  4. Work with the GSGA Advisor to update program and organization balances in communication with the University Business Office.

**Additional Duties and Powers.** The members of the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Government shall also have duties and powers, as indicated:

1. Create and manage committees as needed and as directed by the President.
2. Respond to all emails sent to their respective email from faculty, staff, students, or student organizations within a timely manner.

**Installation of Officers.** The elected Executive Officers and appointed Executive Officers of the Graduate Student Government Association shall be installed by the outgoing President after the votes have been tallied by the Executive Vice President, provided there are no appeals. Installations will occur for the Executive Council no later than the next to last Graduate Student Government meeting of the Spring semester unless a position needs to be filled or deemed earlier in agreement with the GSGA Advisor.

**Oath of Office.** Before taking office, each member of the Executive Council shall take the following oath:

(Raise your right hand.) "I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear to uphold the Constitution of the Graduate Student Government Association of High Point University, the University Conduct Code, and the University Honor Code; and I swear to perform, to the best of my abilities the duties and responsibilities of the office which I now assume.

**Terms of Office.** All elected and appointed members of the Executive Council shall serve terms not to exceed one year beginning with their installation and concluding at the next Installation Ceremony.

**Section II. Expectations of the Executive Council.** In addition to the duties of each Executive Council position, the following should also be expected of each Executive Council member:

1. Attend all Executive Council and Graduate Student Senate meetings;
2. Uphold the High Point University Graduate Student Government Association Constitution, University Honor Code, and University Conduct Code;
3. Serve as a positive representative of High Point University;
4. Serve as chairs of ad hoc committees at the discretion of the Graduate Student

Government Association President and Executive Vice President.

**ARTICLE VII. GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION ADVISOR(S).**

A designee(s) appointed by the Vice President of Student Life, or their representative, shall serve as the Advisor(s) to the Graduate Student Government Association.

**Section I. Responsibilities.** Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Attend regularly scheduled Graduate Student Senate and Executive Council meetings;
2. Aiding in training opportunities;
3. Explain University policies and strategic strategies as it relates to Graduate Student Government Association actions;
4. Meet with the Executive Council at the beginning of the year to discuss Advisor(s) expectations;
5. Serve as mentor and professional role model.

**ARTICLE VIII: PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVES.**

**Section I. Representative.** Each graduate program at High Point University shall have one student representative approved by the respective Academic Dean or Program Director/Chair.

**Section II. Expectations of the Representatives.** The following shall be expected of each program representative:

1. Attend all Graduate Student Senate meetings and mandatory meetings called by any member of the Executive Council;
2. Hold regular meetings with officers and/or representatives of chartered Graduate Student Government Association organizations that are related to the graduate program represented;
3. Uphold the High Point University Graduate Student Government Association Constitution, University Honor Code, and University Conduct Code;
4. Serve as a positive representative of High Point University;
5. Serve as a member of ad hoc committees as the discretion of the Graduate Student Government Association Executive Vice President and attend all meetings and events from said committee;
6. Respond to all official communications in a timely manner.

**Section III. Financial.** Program representatives will be allowed to submit bills on behalf of their program but will not be permitted to receive any budget allocations.

## **ARTICLE IX: GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE.**

**Section I. Members.** The Graduate Student Senate shall be composed of:

1. The President of the Graduate Student Government Association;
2. The Executive Vice President who shall serve as the Speaker of the Graduate Student Senate;
3. Graduate Program Representatives;
4. The elected and appointed members of the Executive Council (ex officio);
5. The representatives of all duly chartered and active graduate campus organizations who shall be known as Senators;

**Section II. Expectations of the Members.** The following shall be expected of each representative:

1. Attend all Graduate Student Senate meetings and mandatory meetings called by any member of the Executive Council;
2. Hold regular meetings with organization officers;
3. Uphold the High Point University Graduate Student Government Association Constitution, University Honor Code, and University Conduct Code;
4. Serve as a positive representative of High Point University;
5. Serve as a member of ad hoc committees as the discretion of the Graduate Student Government Association Executive Vice President and attend all meetings and event from said committee;
6. Respond to all official communications in a timely manner.

**Section III. Quorum.**

1. For a vote to be taken and new business held, there must be a minimum of two-thirds of the active chartered organizations, voting program representatives, and voting members of the Executive Council.
2. For a vote to pass the Graduate Student Senate there must be a vote in favor of half present plus one from all voting members.

**Section IV. Meetings.**

1. The Graduate Student Senate shall meet for a total of seven (7) meetings per Fall and Spring semester, which includes one GCAB and one GSGA Refresher;
2. The Graduate Student Senate shall meet for a total of three (3) meetings per Summer semester, with no GCAB;
3. Following their election in the Spring of each year, the Executive Council shall schedule regular meetings of the Graduate Student Senate for the upcoming year and provide a copy to the Vice President of Student Life and GSGA Advisor(s) so that meetings can be listed on the calendar of student activities;
4. Special meetings may be called by the Executive Council of the Graduate Student Senate, as needed, provided notice is distributed to the membership at least 36 hours in advance of called meetings.

**Section V. Voice.** Any student may participate in deliberations of the Graduate Student Senate, except that time limitations may be imposed by the Speaker of the Graduate Student Senate (Executive Vice President of GSGA). Such limitations may be overturned by a two-thirds vote of the Graduate Student Senate. The standing committee chairs are ex officio members of the Graduate Student Senate with voice and with vote. All other members of the Executive Council are ex officio members of the Graduate Student Senate with voice and without vote, except that the Executive Vice President of the Graduate Student Government Association rules in the case of a tie. Bills are voted on by the active organizations in good standing. Active organizations in bad standing may not vote on bills; yet must still be present at meetings to hear new business being held. The active organizations in bad standing do not affect the vote count in determining the action of a bill.

#### **ARTICLE X. GRADUATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS BOARD.**

**Section I. Members.** The Graduate Community Affairs Board shall be composed of:

1. Graduate Student Government Association Executive Council (“EC”);
2. Graduate Student Government Association Advisor(s) as ex-officio member(s);
3. Faculty, staff, and members of the University community can be invited as panelists and members of the Graduate Community Affairs Board at the discretion of the President.

**Section II. Duties and Powers.** The Graduate Community Affairs Board shall:

1. Encourage graduate community on campus and assist the University in assessing and improving the quality of graduate campus life;
2. Recommend and implement, where appropriate, other programs and activities designed to encourage community on campus;
3. Assist the Office of Student Life in assessing campus life, programs, and graduate residential communities;
4. Assist the Office of Information Technology to assess education support services;
5. Actively encourage a campus environment which is inclusive, diverse, and free of bigotry, racism, and sexism;
6. Actively encourage a campus environment free of substance abuse, including both alcohol and other controlled substances;
7. Resolve issues as identified by the President and Executive Council.

**Section III. Actions.**

1. One (1) Graduate Community Affairs Board meeting shall be held per Fall and Spring semesters;
2. Attendance will be taken at all Graduate Community Affairs Board meetings;

3. Attendance will count toward the required six (6) mandatory scheduled meetings of the Graduate Student Senate;
4. Guest speakers representing various campus departments will be invited by the President to present updates and entertain questions by the Graduate Student Senate.

## **ARTICLE XI: PROFESSIONALISM.**

**Section I. Conduct of Meetings.** All meetings will be run according to Robert's Rules of Order. In addition, all organizational representatives ("Senators"), program representatives, standing committee members, and the Executive Council members shall raise their hand and wait until the Speaker of the Graduate Student Senate calls on them. When the Speaker of the Graduate Student Senate calls on them, that person shall state their name and who they are representing;

Furthermore, there shall be no unrelated technology usage or loud outbursts during a meeting. Failure to abide by these rules shall result in removal of the meeting at the discretion of the Speaker of the Graduate Student Senate;

All participating members must have their camera on for the entirety of the meeting if operating in a virtual meeting format;

**Section II. Special Procedures.** The Executive Council and each committee shall develop and publish operational guidelines for recurring activities. Such procedures shall be established and revised by two-thirds vote of the respective body.

**Section III. Dress Code.** All participating members of the Graduate Student Senate, including the Executive Council, Executive Officers, Senators, Program Representatives, all standing committee chairpersons appointed to the separate boards by the Executive Council, the elected representatives of all duly recognized campus organizations who shall be known as Senators, shall comply with the following dress code:

1. Business casual or program professional; anything deemed as inadmissible is up to the discretion of the Speaker of the Graduate Student Senate.

## **ARTICLE XII. DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

**Section I. Prohibited Behavior.** Students, Faculty, and Staff are expected to always uphold a high standard of professional behavior when representing High Point University and their respective programs and organizations. Prohibited behavior of Senators, programs, and organizations includes, but is not limited to:

1. Mistreatment of:
  - a. Advisor(s);
  - b. Other Senators;
  - c. Other programs and organizations;

- d. GSGA Executive Council members;
- e. University faculty and staff.
2. Harassment of any form, including any communication over digital media (i.e., social media, text message, electronic mail, etc.);
3. Other violations of the Guide to Campus Life;
4. Other violations at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

**Section II. Reporting and Evidence.** A violation of Section I shall be reported via the online Disciplinary Violation form within 24-hours of the incident. The report should include a description of the violation and all relevant evidence (i.e., emails, text strings, etc.). The GSGA Advisor(s) has the right to request a statement from the accused Senator or program/organization when necessary.

**Section III. Disciplinary Committee.** The Disciplinary Committee is to be made up of:

1. President;
2. Executive Vice President;
3. GSGA Program Representative not affiliated with the organization or student of concern;
4. GSGA Advisor(s).

**Section IV. Organization Sanctions.** Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the following potential sanctions. Factors taken into consideration of given sanctions include the level of offense and number of offenses.

1. Warning;
2. Loss of voting privileges;
3. Placed in bad standing;
4. Removal of GSGA organization Representative;
5. Removal of organization's Advisor(s);
6. Loss of charter;
7. Creative sanctioning.

**Section V. Program Sanctions.** Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the following potential sanctions. Factors taken into consideration of given sanctions include the level of offense and number of offenses.

1. Warning
2. Placed in bad standing;
3. Removal of GSGA program Representative;
4. Recommended change in program's Advisor(s).

## **ARTICLE XIII: IMPEACHMENT AND REMOVAL.**

**Section I. Cause.** Students may be impeached or otherwise removed from office only for cause:

1. Failure to perform the duties prescribed in the Constitution and operational guidelines of the Graduate Student Government Association;
2. Failure to follow published procedures;
3. Violation of the University Conduct Code;
4. Violation of the University Honor Code.

**Section II. Executive Council.** Members of the Executive Council may be impeached for cause, in which case the following procedures shall apply:

1. The charges shall be investigated by one member of the Executive Council under the leadership of the Graduate Student Government Association Advisor;
2. In the case of a conflict of interest within the Executive Council, the GSGA Advisor, in collaboration with the Vice President of Student Life, shall appoint a chief investigator or chair;
3. Following their investigation, the GSGA Advisor shall advise the Executive Council of the decision;
4. Where impeachment is recommended, the Executive Council, absent the accused, shall establish concurrence or non-concurrence by simple majority vote;
5. With the recommendation of impeachment and regardless of the decision of the Executive Council, a resolution to that effect shall be introduced during a scheduled meeting of the Graduate Student Senate at which time the action of the Executive Council shall be reported;
6. The accused Officer has the right to address the Graduate Student Senate, but not to respond to questions;
7. Ordinarily, following discussion, the vote shall be delayed until the next regular meeting, except that a special meeting may be called provided that at least 48 hours shall have elapsed;
8. Where at least three-fourths of the Senators vote to support impeachment, the Officer shall relinquish the office held.

**Section III. Committee Chairs.** The Executive Council may remove chairs of standing committees, in which case three-fourths of the Senators must concur.

**Section IV. Officers of Organizations.** For reasons of cause, the Executive Council may recommend that organizations initiate impeachment proceedings against officers of the organization, in which case the following guidelines shall apply:

1. The charges shall be investigated by two members of the Executive Council under the leadership of the Graduate Student Government Association Advisor;
2. Following their investigation, the members shall advise the respective organization of their decision.

#### **ARTICLE XIV: GOVERNING DOCUMENTS.**

**Section I. Bylaws.** The Bylaws shall be the official rules and operating procedures of the High Point University Graduate Student Government Association. The Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote (fifty percent present plus one) of the Graduate Student Senate. Amendments may be voted on and ratified during the same meeting at which they are presented and shall become effective immediately. Only specific rules or procedures in the Bylaws may be suspended on the floor of the Graduate Student Senate, and those sections shall be listed in the Bylaws. The Constitution shall not be suspended for any reason.

**Section II. Finance and Travel Codes.** The Finance and Travel Codes shall contain all financial and travel standards of the High Point University Graduate Student Government Association. The Finance and Travel Codes may be amended by a unanimous vote of the Finance Committee (GSGA President, Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Finance Chair).

**Section III. Campaigns and Elections Act.** The Campaigns and Elections Act shall contain all election procedures of the High Point University Graduate Student Government Association. The Campaigns and Elections Act may be amended by a unanimous vote of the Executive Council.

#### **ARTICLE XV: AMENDMENTS.**

**Section I. Proposal to Amend.** An amendment to this constitution may be proposed in two ways:

1. By any member of the Graduate Student Senate with the approval of a majority of the Senators;
2. By a petition which is signed by ten percent of the graduate student body and presented to the Graduate Student Senate.

**Section II. Notification.** Where amendments to the constitution are proposed, the Executive Council shall inform the graduate student body of the proposed amendments via email at least two (2) weeks before the Graduate Student Senate shall hold a referendum on the proposed amendment(s). Responsibility for notification may be assigned to a standing committee of the Graduate Student Senate.

**Section III. Referendum.** An amendment shall be ratified by two-thirds of the Graduate Student Senate voting. Ratified amendments will become effective upon receiving final approval from the University Student Affairs Committee.

**Section IV. Constitutional Reviews.** A constitutional review meeting shall be held at least once during the academic year. The Executive Council reserves the right to form a review of governing documents committee that includes the GSGA President, Executive Vice

President, Treasurer, Secretary, and up to four (4) program representatives.

\*Amended September 17, 2020 by the HPU SGA Student Senate\*

\*Adapted to form a separate GSGA constitution November 30, 2021 by the HPU GSGA Student Senate\*

\*Amended August 8, 2023 by the HPU GSGA Student Senate\*

\*Amended April 2, 2024 by the HPU GSGA Student Senate\*

\*Amended December 2, 2025 by the HPU GSGA Student Senate\*