

Preamble

We, the graduate and professional students of the University of California, Merced, in order to provide means for responsible and effective shared governance and graduate and professional student participation and representation in the planning and conducting of University affairs, establish this constitution of the Graduate Student Association of the University of California, Merced. Our aims are as follows:

- To provide a forum where matters of concern to graduate and professional students may be discussed.
- To encourage graduate and professional student involvement in the University and civic community.
- To promote the expansion of human knowledge.
- To provide services to the graduate and professional student body and to the general University community.
- To transparently, efficiently, and responsibly utilize student fees to promote the general student welfare of graduate and professional students.
- To act as a liaison between the graduate and professional student community and university administration.
- To cultivate the personal and professional growth of graduate and professional students through culturally, socially, and academically focused programming.
- To foster and promote diversity and inclusion among graduate and professional students.
- To create a safe and healthy campus climate where all members of the Graduate Student Association, but in particular, historically underrepresented students thrive.

Article I: Name and Membership

- A. Name: The name of this organization shall be the "Graduate Student Association of the University of California, Merced," hereafter referred to as the Association.
- B. Membership: All registered graduate and professional students at the University of California, Merced who have paid the graduate and professional student government fees are members of the Association and constitute the General Membership.
 1. The Association may extend honorary membership to members of the broader University community in recognition of support or gratitude.
 2. Honorary members are not part of the General Membership and do not have the privilege of voting or running for office in any Association activity.

Article II: Non-Discrimination Policy

- A. We affirm the University of California, Merced Principles of Community and prohibit discrimination on basis of race, class, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, color, national origin, physical and/or mental disability, age, military status, or any other protected classification, in accordance with applicable University policy, State and Federal laws.

Article III: Organizational Structure

- A. Authority of the Association rests in three bodies: the General Membership, the Delegate Assembly, and the Executive Council.
 - 1. The General Membership, as defined in Article I Section B, elects members of the Executive Council and may amend the Constitution as required in the annual Election.
 - a. By petition of at least ten (10%) of the General Membership, additional special elections or votes may be held on any matter concerning the Association and whose outcome supersedes the authority of both the Delegate Assembly and the Executive Council.
 - 2. The Delegate Assembly
 - a. Membership and Term of Office
 - i. The Delegate Assembly shall be composed of graduate or professional students (Delegates) from each Graduate or Professional Group, selected in accordance with the GSA By-Laws.
 - a. The Delegate(s) will serve a term of one (1) academic year, beginning from appointment and concluding with the end of the following Summer term.
 - ii. In addition, the Delegate Assembly is chaired by the Internal Vice President of the Executive Council, whom may cast a deciding vote in the event of a split vote.
 - iii. The selection authority for Delegates rests with their respective Graduate or Professional Groups as outlined in the By-Laws.
 - b. Responsibilities
 - i. The Delegate Assembly shall be responsible for approving the initial, and subsequent changes to, the annual Association budget as prepared by the Treasurer of the Executive Council.
 - ii. The Delegate Assembly reserves the right to review and veto any actions taken by the Executive Council.
 - iii. The Delegate Assembly may amend the Association's By-Laws by a favorable majority vote (50% + 1).
 - iv. The Delegate Assembly serves as the bridge between each Graduate or Professional Group and the Association. As such, the Delegates shall provide a voice for their constituents in the affairs of these respective graduate or professional groups.
 - v. Delegates of Assembly are expected to
 - a. Perform their duties, as detailed in the By-Laws, in a timely manner,
 - b. Regularly attend meetings, as required in the By-Laws,

- c. Conduct themselves in a professional manner, as required in the By-Laws and by applicable university policy, and
 - d. Maintain good academic and judicial standing throughout their term.
- 3. The Executive Council
 - a. Membership and Term of Office
 - i. The Executive Council shall be composed of nine (9) voting officers: President, Internal Vice President, External Vice President, Academic Affairs Officer, Public Relations Officer, Treasurer, Internal Communications Officer, International Affairs Officer, and a Climate, Diversity, and Equity Officer, in addition to any number of non-voting, ex officio officers appointed from the General Membership by the Council or as permitted within the By-Laws.
 - ii. All Officers will serve for a term of one (1) year beginning July 1st through June 30th and are responsible for training their successor before leaving office, in addition to other duties as specified in the By-Laws.
 - iii. The voting members of the Executive Council shall be elected by a simple majority vote (50% + 1) of the General Membership, as provided for in the By-Laws.
 - b. Responsibilities of the Executive Council
 - i. The Executive Council shall act as the executive officers of the General Membership and the Delegate Assembly, in accordance with procedures and responsibilities as outlined in the By-Laws.
 - ii. The Executive Council shall prepare a budget and agenda to be approved by the Delegate Assembly at their first meeting of the academic year as outlined in the By-Laws.
 - iii. The Executive Council has the primary mission of accomplishing the agenda as approved by the Delegate Assembly and executing recurring actions and events as outlined in the By-Laws, in addition to serving as a first-response to community concerns and desires as they arise.
 - iv. Officers of the Executive Council are expected to
 - a. Perform their duties, as detailed in the By-Laws, in a timely manner,
 - b. Regularly attend meetings, as required in the By-Laws,
 - c. Conduct themselves in a professional manner, as required in the By-Laws and by applicable university policy, and
 - d. Maintain good academic and judicial standing throughout their term.

Article IV: Operating Principles

- A. Meetings of the General Membership
 - 1. Meetings of the General Membership shall occur at least once a semester, and as often as called by petition of at least 10% of the General Membership. The President and Internal Vice President of the Executive Council shall act as Chair and Co-Chair of these meetings, respectively.
 - 2. Parliamentary authority, procedures, and quorum are as specified in the Association's By-Laws.
- B. Meetings of the Delegate Assembly
 - 1. Meetings of the Delegate Assembly shall be called by the Executive Council's Internal Vice President or any Delegate at such times are appropriate to conduct the business of the Delegate Assembly.
 - 2. Such meetings shall occur at least every other month and be advertised and open to the General Membership, except when in closed session as necessary to conduct business.
 - 3. Parliamentary authority, procedures, and quorum are as specified in the Association's By-Laws.
- C. Meetings of the Executive Council
 - 1. Meetings of the Executive Council shall be called by any member of the Council at such times are appropriate to conduct the business of the Executive Council.
 - 2. Such meetings shall occur at least once a month during the Fall and Spring semesters and be advertised and open to the General Membership, except when in closed session as necessary to conduct business.
 - 3. Parliamentary authority, procedures, and quorum are as specified in the Association's By-Laws.

Article V: Amendment

- A. The Association's Constitution may be amended by a vote of the General Membership where at least two-thirds (2/3rds) of the cast votes are in support of the proposed amendments.
 - 1. The General Membership shall have at least two (2) weeks before such a vote to review and comment on the proposed amendments, otherwise such a vote will be null and void.
- B. The Association's By-Laws may be instituted, amended, or repealed by a favorable majority vote (50% + 1) of the Delegate Assembly.
 - 1. The General Membership must be informed at least two (2) weeks before such a vote to review and comment on the proposed amendments otherwise such a vote will be null and void.