The Graduate Student Association of the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies of Drew University

Constitution

Preamble
We, the Graduate Students of the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies of Drew University, in order to contribute to the imaginative growth of the University according to the educational principles upon which it was founded and is sustained; to provide for all Graduate Students opportunities for creative dialogue and mutual association with faculty, administration, and the whole University community; and to safeguard and advance the interests of the Graduate School and all Graduate Students, that they may derive the maximum benefit from their educational programs; do hereby establish among ourselves an Association and adopt the following Constitution.

I. Name: The name of the association shall be the Graduate Student Association of the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies of Drew University. (Thereafter, GSA)

II. Membership: All students enrolled in the Graduate School are members and are entitled to voice, vote, and office in the GSA.

III. All powers reside in the GSA duly assembled, except as delegated by this constitution.

IV. Structure:
The GSA shall carry out its aims and purposes through the following structure:
   A. The Steering Committee (Thereafter, SC)
      1. The Members of the SC shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Student Area Conveners.
      2. Area Seats
         a. Each of the programs actively enrolling students shall be entitled to one seat on the SC.
         b. As of Fall 2015 these are:
            Arts & Letters (MLitt, DLitt)
            Medical Humanities (CMH, MMH, DMH)
            Teaching (MAT)
            Poetry (MFA)
            History & Culture (MA, PhD)
         c. Each program maintaining a population of enrolled students but not actively enrolling new students shall be entitled to one seat on the SC for the duration of time that they maintain such a population. As of 2015 these areas are:
            English (MA, PhD)
            Modern History and Literature (MA, PhD)
            Each additional program shall be entitled to one seat on the SC upon the enrollment of its first class
d. The major areas shall each elect one student to serve on the Steering Committee as Student Convener of their area. This shall be done no later than May 1.
   1) If no student is willing to serve, or if an election cannot be held in the Spring, the Student Convener shall be elected in the Fall.
   2) If the position of Student Convener is held by more than one student, the area shall still be limited to one vote.

3. Duties of the Area Conveners shall be:
   a. to organize academic and social activities for their areas (at least one per semester)
   b. to communicate with the members of their areas by creating and utilizing e-mail distribution lists
   c. to call area meetings at least once per semester (not including the Orientation meeting)
   d. to responsibly utilize area funds in consultation with students in the area
   e. to participate in Orientation and Open House events
   f. to report on area activities to the SC
   g. to send information regarding area events to be included in the daily electronic newsletter (Drew Today) and the Caspersen Facebook page.
   h. to coordinate the election of a successor by May 1
   i. to visit with prospective students as arranged by the Director of Graduate Admissions

4. Duties of the Steering Committee shall be:
   a. to coordinate the activities of the GSA
   b. to further the interests of the GSA in consultation with the membership
   c. to represent the GSA to the faculty and the University
   d. to act as conveners of their respective areas
   e. to carry out all duties assigned to it by the GSA and this constitution.
   f. to make recommendations to the GSA
   g. to keep the GSA informed of the work of its officers and representatives by periodic publication of reports
   h. to recommend a budget to the GSA for its approval
   i. to create and abolish whatever offices, positions, and committees it deems necessary to fulfill its duties
   j. to nominate, for approval by the GSA representatives to faculty and university standing committees
   k. to approve and/or abolish graduate student groups/clubs
B. Officers and Appointed Representatives
   1. The GSA shall elect, from its membership, the following officers, who will act as the Executive Committee:
      a. President
      b. Vice-President
      c. Secretary
      d. Treasurer

   2. Said officers shall live within a 75 mile radius of Drew University or be able to confirm regular presence on campus or in the Madison area (via class attendance, teaching, employment, etc.).

   3. The terms of office shall begin June 1st and end May 30th, or whenever a successor has been duly designated, whichever is later.

   4. The duties of the Officers shall be:
      a. President
         1) to represent the GSA within the University
         2) to preside over GSA meetings
         3) to call and preside over SC meetings
         4) to attend meetings of the University student government leaders and to report on such meetings
         5) to make, when needed, a timely Crisis fund disbursement of an amount agreed upon by the Executive Committee
      b. Vice-President
         1) to assist the President in representing the GSA within the University community by attending meetings in the absence of President
         2) to preside over GSA and SC meetings when the President is unable to do so
         3) to call SC meetings as delegated by the President
         4) to coordinate student representation on GSA, faculty and University standing committees
      c. Secretary
         1) to keep records of all GSA meetings
         2) to distribute minutes of the GSA meetings to the SC, and post such minutes in areas accessible to GSA members.
         3) to distribute other records as delegated by the President
         4) to prepare correspondence for the GSA as requested
         5) to check the GSA e-mail account and Campus Mailbox for correspondence
         6) to maintain the GSA website in consultation with the Executive Committee
      d. Treasurer
         1) to prepare a yearly budget to be presented to the GSA in September
         2) to receive and disburse funds of the GSA in accordance with procedures established by the GSA and Drew University
         3) to make reports at all regular GSA meetings
4) to transfer a reviewed financial statement to the newly elected Executive Committee by June 1
5) to make reports to the SC as requested

5. The Duties of the appointed representatives shall be:
   a. Faculty and University Committee Representatives
      1) to represent the GSA on committees
      2) to report on committees at GSA meetings either in person, through a substitute, or by written report submitted to the Vice-President

V. Elections:

A. The GSA shall hold an annual election in May, for the purpose of electing officers.
   1. Nominations for the offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary are open to any member of the GSA willing to serve. Nominations shall be taken by the outgoing president and announced at least two weeks prior to the election day.
   2. Members are to vote for one person for each elected office.
   3. Ballots shall be distributed, collected and tabulated by a 3-member election committee appointed by the outgoing President.
      a) Votes may also be collected via an internet web form that requires users to log in, and only permits them to log in once, or via direct e-mail to gsa@drew.edu. Drew graduate students are requested to either send a single e-mail vote or post a single internet vote, but are not allowed to vote in both forms. Should it be discovered that a single student voted in more than one form for the same election, all of the student's votes will be invalidated for that ballot.
   4. The secretary shall publish the results in a timely fashion.

B. All vacancies in either the SC or in the GSA offices shall be filled by special election or appointment by the original electing body at the earliest possible opportunity.
   1. In urgent cases, the SC may make a pro tem appointment.
   2. Such pro tem appointments shall terminate upon the election of a replacement.

C. All officers and convener/representatives of the GSA are subject to recall by a 2/3 vote of the GSA at a duly called meeting.

VI. Finances:

A. The GSA shall receive that portion of Graduate Student fees distributed by the University administration to duly constituted student governments.
B. The GSA shall establish an annual budget, with provisions for area activities.
C. The GSA shall make available an updated budget report.
D. The SC shall distribute funds as budgeted.
E. All non-budget items must be approved by the GSA.
F. The GSA fiscal year shall be July 1-June 30.
VII. Meetings:
A. The President shall call a minimum of 4 SC meetings during the regular academic year.
B. The SC members must attend a minimum of one meeting per semester.
C. The SC shall call a minimum of 1 general meeting of the GSA each semester.
D. All general or SC meetings shall have at least one week’s notice given. The call shall include the agenda, time, date and location.
E. The SC may call additional meetings upon petition. The SC may also call additional meetings as it deems necessary.
F. The parliamentary standard for all meetings shall be set by the President in accordance with this constitution.
G. All general meetings of the GSA are open to any member of the University community with voice but no vote. The GSA may call for a closed session at its discretion.
H. At the discretion of the President, an executive session, i.e. closed deliberation by members of the SC, may be called.

VIII. Quorums:
A. GSA: Those members present and voting at any duly called meeting shall constitute a quorum of the GSA.
B. SC: A majority of the duly elected members of the SC shall constitute a quorum.

IX. Amendments:
This Constitution may be amended at a duly called meeting in the following manner:
A. The proposed amendment shall be published to the membership at least 10 days before the meeting.
B. A 2/3 majority of those present and voting is required to amend.
C. The Constitution may also be amended via an e-mail or internet vote during breaks or when calling a meeting to order is otherwise deemed impractical by the GSA Executive Committee. Notification of the proposed amendment shall be sent to the graduate student body 10 days prior to the call to vote. Voting shall be open for seven days after the initial ten day period. This method shall only be employed in special circumstances.

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The Graduate Student Association of the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies of Drew University

By-Laws

I. Stipends
A. Stipends shall be paid to the members of the Steering Committee if their minimum expectations are met. Half of the stipend shall be paid in the Fall and the remaining half in the Spring.
B. If an Area has more than one convener the stipend shall be divided amongst them.
II. The Conference Fund

The Graduate School Association (GSA) of the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies recognizes the importance of academic conference participation for both students and Drew University. However, participation presents students with financial challenges because of the high costs of travel, lodging, and registration fees. The GSA Academic Conference Reimbursement Program has been established to assist students by providing funding for significant portions of these costs. Graduate students eligible for reimbursements shall be limited to students currently enrolled in the Graduate School at the time of application.

Reimbursements shall be made to defray expenses (not otherwise reimbursed) solely incurred by the individual student while attending academic conferences. Expenses incurred by family members or friends during conferences may not be submitted for reimbursement. Documentation of expenses in the form of receipts for transportation, lodging, and meals, as well as formal invitations and/or listing in a conference program must be provided with each application to the GSA. The following procedures define the application and reimbursement process and reflect current Drew University travel policies:

1. All applications shall be made using a standard form. Students can obtain a copy on-line by accessing the GSA website, http://www.drew.edu/graduate/students/gsa/gsa-conference-reimbursement, or by contacting the GSA treasurer.

2. Applications shall be submitted to:
   The Graduate Students Association
   Drew University
   CM 341
   Madison, NJ 07940-0802
   Or by email at gsa@drew.edu

3. Applications can be accepted ONLY when original receipts are provided. A listing of expenses which qualify for reimbursement can be found on the application. In this case, as University Policies are currently written, it shall be noted that conference travel is considered “Drew business” ONLY for the purpose of how reimbursements are administered.

4. For those seeking reimbursement for the use of their personal vehicle, mileage rates published by Drew University shall be used. These rates can be found at: http://www.depts.drew.edu/finance/drewonly/99-2.2-MILEAGE-ALLOWANCE.htm (please call the Accounts Payable Office for current mileage rates as these change annually: 973/408-3328).

5. ALL APPLICATIONS will be processed by the GSA in a timely manner, after being reviewed by the President and Treasurer, or the Vice President or Secretary if the President is not available.

6. Regulations Regarding Grants for Conference Reimbursement:
   A. If presenting at a conference, currently registered students of the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies are permitted to apply for two (2) conference reimbursements per academic year (fall through summer):
      1. Students may request up to $400 reimbursement for their first conference
      2. And up to $400 reimbursement for their second conference.
      3. Individuals presenting internationally, or those who demonstrate significant financial hardship, who have conference-related expenses exceeding $800 may request up to $800, which will exhaust funds for academic year.
      4. Appeals must be received in writing and must provide thorough explanation for request.
      5. Reimbursement for accommodations for conferences within a reasonable commuting distance may not be granted.
      6. Funding amounts are subject to change depending on most current budget.
B. Students must fill out a conference reimbursement application prior to the conference.
C. The GSA maintains the right to consider and ask about the validity of the conference to the student’s course of study.
D. Requests from MAT and MFA students will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as MAT and MFA presentations and/or readings may differ from that of typical conferences.
E. Students receiving conference grants are required to participate in an annual conference symposium at Drew University, where all students will share the work they have presented, annually.
F. If the conference is approved, a Conference Completion Form will be provided and must be submitted with original receipts and one-page reflection upon completion of the conference. Documentation of the presentation/paper is also required. Reimbursement is not guaranteed if completion documents are not received within two weeks of conference completion.
G. The Dean or Associate Dean may authorize expenses which exceed the student’s reimbursement allowance. The Caspersen School Deans’ office administers the Caspersen Fund which can be used to supplement GSA reimbursements. The GSA shall apply, on behalf of the student, for such supplemental funding.

III. Co-Sponsorship of University Events

A. A portion of the Graduate Student Association budget shall be earmarked for co-sponsorship of events with other Drew University Clubs and Organizations. The amount of this budget line-item shall not exceed 33% of the total GSA Budget.
B. The GSA shall only co-sponsor events open to the entire Graduate Student population.
C. Drew University Clubs and Organizations requesting co-sponsorship shall submit a letter of request to the President of the GSA. (Letters submitted via email shall satisfy this requirement.) Request letters shall describe the relevance of the event for the entire Graduate Student community, shall include a detailed budget for the proposed event, shall list the amount requested from other Clubs and Organizations, and shall request a specific dollar amount from the GSA.
D. The transfer of funds for events approved for GSA co-sponsorship shall take place only after the event organizers have sent an email to all graduate students advertising the event and inviting them to participate in it.
E. GSA monies shall not be used to fund the internal activities of other Drew University Clubs and Organizations outside of the Caspersen School. If expenses for the event are lower than budgeted, the money left over from the GSA grant may not be added to the general budget of the event organizers but must be returned to the GSA.

IV. Awards

A. The GSA shall confer three awards at the Dean's Reception each May: the Merrill Skaggs Award for Excellence in Teaching, Dean Pain Community Service Award, and the Lisa Nocks Student Award.

B. Process of selection for the Merrill Skaggs Award for Excellence in Teaching
   1. Each Area shall solicit nominations from the Caspersen student body for the Award.
2. After all Areas have collected their nominations, the Steering Committee will elect one of the nominees as the recipient of the Award.

3. Criteria:
   This award recognizes a Drew University professor who is passionately devoted to his/her disciplines, actively involved in teaching, and able to communicate an enthusiasm for excellence in his/her field. Nominees for this award should be deeply committed to the academic, professional and personal advancement of their students and are recognized as a serious contributors to the enhancement of knowledge in their fields of study.

C. Process of selection for the Dean Pain Community Service Award
   1. a nomination may be made by any Graduate student with a brief explanation of the reasons why the nominee should receive the award.
   2. Criteria:
      The recipient must be a member of the Drew community who encourages and embodies the spirit of community interaction and support among the Drew Graduate Community. The recipient must be present in a way that has shown sensitivity to the mental, emotional, spiritual and physical vitality of the Graduate student community.
   3. A student can sign only one petition.
   4. Information on the award will be distributed via e-mail.
   5. A ballot with all nominations will be prepared for the GSA General meeting where the recipient will be elected.

D. Process of selection for the Lisa Nocks Student Award
   1. The Steering Committee will nominate and elect a recipient for this award.
   2. Criteria:
      The Lisa Nocks Student Award was introduced to celebrate the service of a graduate student to Graduate Student Community in general, and to the GSA in particular. The student must serve in any GSA committee for at least one year and preference will be given to someone who has not been a member of the executive committee within the last year.

V. Amendments:

1. These By-Laws may be amended at a duly called meeting in the following manner:
   A. The proposed amendment shall be published to the membership at least 10 days before the meeting.
   B. A 2/3 majority of those present and voting is required to amend.
2. These By-Laws and its Constitution must be reviewed every other academic year.
3. The next review must be completed by the end of: SPRING 2018

Updated: 10/12/2015
Unanimously Approved at GSA General Meeting: 10/14/15