

## Constitution of the UCSB Graduate Student Association

### Terminology

“GSA member”: any UCSB graduate student; all UCSB graduate students are members of the GSA

“GSA Assembly Member”: an official UCSB Graduate Degree Program representative to the UCSB GSA, who has voting power in the GSA Assembly

“GSA Assembly”: the total of all GSA Assembly Members, including the GSA Co-Presidents and all other GSA Officers

“GSA Assembly Meeting”: the routine meeting of the GSA Assembly, consisting of all available GSA Assembly Members

“GSA Executive Committee”: a standing committee comprised of the GSA Co-Presidents and all other GSA Officers

### Preamble

We, the graduate students of the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), in order to represent the opinions and interests of UCSB graduate students, hereby form a permanent association of graduate students, according to the rules of the University of California, whose constitution is outlined in the following nine articles and their subsequent sections.

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**ARTICLE I: NAME AND MEMBERSHIP**

A. Name

- a. The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Student Association of the University of California, Santa Barbara, hereafter abbreviated and referred to as "UCSB GSA" or "the GSA."

B. Authority and Powers

- a. The GSA derives its authority from the Regents of the University of California through the Chancellor of UCSB, as provided by the Regents of the University of California.

C. UCSB Graduate Student Participation and the GSA as GSA members

- a. All UCSB Graduate Students, as defined by University and UCSB campus regulations, shall be GSA members.
- b. The GSA shall be the officially authorized student government of UCSB Graduate Students and, as such, shall represent the interests of UCSB Graduate Students.
- c. GSA members who hold official appointed or elected positions in the GSA shall do so on a volunteer basis.

**ARTICLE II: GSA ASSEMBLY**

A. GSA Assembly Powers

- a. The governing body of the GSA shall be the GSA Assembly, which shall conduct the business of the GSA.
- b. The GSA Assembly shall be comprised of GSA Assembly Members.
- c. GSA Assembly Members include the following individuals:
  - i. GSA Assembly Members selected by the GSA members of Graduate Degree Programs; and
  - ii. the GSA Co-Presidents External and Internal; and
  - iii. All other GSA Officers; and
  - iv. The Immediate Past GSA Co-Presidents External and Internal.
    1. If still a GSA member, the Immediate Past GSA Co-Presidents External and Internal shall be a GSA Assembly Member for the UC academic year following their co-presidency.
- d. Each GSA Assembly Member shall have one vote.
  - i. The GSA Officer who presides at a GSA Assembly Meeting shall not vote except to break a tie.

B. GSA Assembly Member(s)

- a. The GSA members of each Graduate Degree Program, as defined by the UCSB Graduate Division, shall be entitled to select one GSA Assembly Member for every fifty (50) GSA members in that Graduate Degree Program, or fraction thereof, according to the most recent UC Fall Quarter census prior to the third GSA Assembly Meeting of the academic year.
- b. A Member of the GSA Assembly selected by a Graduate Degree Program shall:
  - i. Represent the GSA members of the Graduate Degree Program at each and every GSA Assembly Meeting; and
  - ii. Inform the GSA members of the Graduate Degree Program of GSA activities; and

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- iii. Serve a one-year term.
  - c. GSA Assembly Members must be present at a GSA Assembly Meeting to cast votes, except in cases, as stated in this Constitution, where the entire GSA Assembly must vote.
  - d. The GSA Assembly, by a two-thirds (66%) vote, and following a presentation to the GSA Assembly regarding the request for removal, may remove a GSA Officer or a GSA Assembly Member selected by a Graduate Degree Program.
    - i. The GSA members of a Graduate Degree Program may also recall their GSA Assembly Member(s) by a two-thirds (66%) vote and following a presentation to the GSA Assembly of the request for removal.
  - e. The GSA Assembly, by a simple majority (50% plus 1) vote, may resolve disputes concerning official Graduate Degree Program representation.
- C. GSA Assembly Meeting(s)
- a. The GSA Assembly shall meet at least three times per academic quarter, excluding Summer Quarter, and the GSA Assembly shall establish a routine time and place for its meetings.
  - b. The GSA Co-Presidents or designee shall be responsible for preparing the agenda for each GSA Assembly Meeting.
  - c. A quorum to conduct business must meet both of the following requirements:
    - i. At least fifteen (15) GSA Assembly Members shall be present; and
    - ii. At least one-half (50%) of the total number of GSA Assembly Members shall be present.
  - d. A Special Meeting of the GSA Assembly shall be called if a quorum of GSA Assembly Members submits a written request and a proposed agenda to the GSA Co-Presidents.
    - i. The GSA Executive Committee may also call a Special Meeting.
    - ii. A Special Meeting shall be held on a weekday and shall be publicized at least three (3) UC business days in advance.
  - e. Any GSA member shall have the right to attend a GSA Assembly Meeting and to address the GSA Assembly.

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### D. GSA Assembly Powers and Interpretations

- a. If a simple majority (50% plus 1) of the GSA members of a Graduate Degree Program object to a GSA Assembly decision, the name of the Graduate Degree Program and the nature of the objection shall be recorded along with the GSA Assembly decision.
- b. The GSA Assembly shall have the power to create GSA ad hoc and standing committees.
  - i. The GSA Co-Presidents shall be ex-officio member of all GSA committees.

### ARTICLE III: GSA OFFICERS

#### A. GSA Executive Committee

- a. There shall be a GSA Executive Committee, which is comprised of all GSA Officers.
- b. The Executive Committee shall be the executive body of the GSA and, as such, shall:
  - i. Conduct official GSA business, on behalf of the GSA Assembly, between each GSA Assembly Meeting, as consistent with established GSA policies;
  - ii. Report routinely to the GSA Assembly;
  - iii. Appoint GSA Committee Representatives, subject to confirmation by the GSA Assembly;
  - iv. Make policy recommendations to the GSA Assembly;
  - v. Administer the assets and liabilities of the GSA and recommend funding allocations, subject to confirmation by the GSA Assembly;
  - vi. Make all decisions regarding GSA employment procedures and GSA employees.

#### B. GSA Officers and Duties

- a. GSA Officers shall represent and promote GSA opinions and positions to other organizations at UCSB and elsewhere.
- b. GSA Officers shall not simultaneously serve as GSA Assembly Members selected by a Graduate Degree Program.
- c. The GSA shall have six (6) elected GSA Officers who shall serve a one-year term, from July 1 through June 30.

The GSA Co-Presidents shall be the chief executive and operating officers of the GSA and the presiding officers of the GSA Assembly.

The Co-Presidents may designate presiding responsibilities to other GSA Officers upon agreement of the Executive Committee.

The Co-Presidents shall be the official representatives and spokespersons for the GSA.



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The GSA Co-President (External) shall be the chief executive and operating officer of the GSA, and the presiding officer of the GSA Assembly and at each GSA Assembly Meeting in coordination with the Co-President (Internal).

The GSA Co-President (External) shall also:

- Represent GSA interests in matters of campus infrastructure and capital planning.

The Co-President Internal shall be the chief executive and operating officer of the GSA, and the presiding officer of the GSA Assembly and at each GSA Assembly Meeting in coordination with the Co-President (External).

The GSA Co-President (Internal) shall also:

- Lead the administration of the internal operations of the GSA.

The GSA Vice President of Budget, Finance, and Committees shall be the chief financial officer of the GSA and shall assist the Co-Presidents in representing GSA interests in the area of campus budget and financial planning.

The GSA Vice President of Budget, Finance, and Committees shall also:

- Prepare an annual budget;
- Present monthly financial reports to the GSA Assembly;
- Keep financial records;
- Maintain an inventory of GSA assets.
- Assist the GSA Co-Presidents in promoting a diverse population of GSA Committee Representatives to UCSB committees

The GSA Vice President of Communications and Events shall be the chief information officer of the GSA and shall serve as public relations officer, archivist and events planner.

The GSA Vice President of Communications and Events shall also:

- Ensure that GSA Assembly Meeting minutes are recorded and published;
- Ensure that copies of the GSA Constitution, Bylaws, and enacted resolutions are available to all GSA members.
- Serve as the primary liaison to campus committees and GSA Committee Representatives.

The GSA Vice President of Graduate Student Affairs shall assist the GSA Co-Presidents in representing GSA interests in matters of UCSB student affairs.

The GSA Vice President of External Affairs shall assist the GSA Co-Presidents in representing UCSB Graduate Student interests beyond

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the UCSB campus and shall serve as the chief delegate of the GSA in external matters.

### C. GSA Officer Elections

- a. Any GSA member who is enrolled at UCSB during the entire term of office shall be eligible to serve as an elected GSA Officer, provided they disclose any conflict of interest that may exist.
- b. Routine elections for GSA Officers shall be held each year during the Spring Quarter.
  - i. The GSA Co-Presidents shall announce the time, place, and manner of routine elections on or before the first day of the Spring Quarter.
  - ii. All GSA members shall have the right to nominate candidates for office and to vote in routine GSA Officer elections.
- c. A Special Election shall be held to fill any vacancy in an elected GSA Officer position.
  - i. Vacancies shall be announced within five (5) UC business days of the vacancy.
  - ii. All special elections shall be publicized at least three (3) business days in advance of the election.

If one of the GSA Co-Presidency officer positions becomes vacant, the Vice President of Budget, Finance, and Committees shall become the Acting Co-President. If not, a Special Election for Co-President shall be held at the next regularly scheduled GSA Assembly Meeting that is more than three (3) business days after the announcement of the vacancy.

If both officer positions of the GSA Co-Presidency become vacant, the GSA Vice President of Budget, Finance, and Committees shall become the Acting President. If the GSA of Budget, Finance, and Committees is unable to assume the duties of Acting President, then the GSA Vice President of Graduate Student Affairs shall become Acting President.

If neither the GSA of Budget, Finance, and Committees nor the GSA Vice President of Graduate Student Affairs is able to assume the duties of Acting President, then a GSA Assembly Special Meeting shall be called to elect the Co-Presidents.

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- iv. If any other elected GSA Officer position becomes vacant, then a Special Election for that GSA Officer position shall take place at the next GSA Assembly Meeting that is more than three (3) business days after the announcement of the vacancy, and, if necessary, at each subsequent GSA Assembly Meeting until the position is filled.
- v. The Executive Committee may appoint a GSA member to serve as an Acting GSA Officer until the position is filled, subject to approval of the GSA Assembly.

### D. Ad hoc and pro tempore Officers

- a. The GSA Assembly, by a two-thirds (66%) vote, may establish ad hoc Officer positions.
  - i. The term of office for an ad hoc Officer position shall not exceed one (1) academic quarter. The GSA Assembly, by a simple majority (50% plus 1) vote, may appoint a GSA member to fill an ad hoc Officer position.
- b. The GSA Assembly, by a two-thirds (66%) vote, may grant a leave of absence to an elected GSA Officer.
  - i. The leave of absence shall not exceed one (1) academic quarter.
  - ii. The GSA Assembly, by a simple majority (50% plus 1) vote, may appoint a GSA member to serve as a pro tempore Officer during the leave of absence.

## ARTICLE IV: GSA FINANCES

### A. Mandatory Membership and Other Mandatory Fee(s)

- a. The GSA may establish mandatory membership fees and other mandatory fees.
  - i. If levied, the Regents of the University of California shall collect fees on behalf of the GSA for transfer to the GSA.
- b. The establishment of a mandatory fee, or a subsequent change in a mandatory fee, shall be consistent with University and UCSB campus regulations, and shall be:
  - i. Discussed at two (2) GSA Assembly Meetings; and
  - ii. Approved for inclusion in the spring election ballot by two-thirds (66%) of the entire GSA Assembly; and

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- iii. Approved by a majority of those voting among the GSA members at large, provided that the number of GSA members casting valid votes in favor of the fee exceeds one-tenth (10%) of the number of all GSA members; and
- iv. At least one-fifth (20%) of all GSA members must cast valid votes on the ballot on which the fee measure appears in order for the results of the vote on the fee measure to be valid.
  - 1. As a clarifying example, if there were 1,000 GSA members, then at least 101 valid votes in favor must be cast, out of a total of at least 200 valid votes cast overall.
- c. All mandatory fee measures must specify the date after which the proposed fee will no longer be assessed.
- d. If the proposed fee will continue indefinitely, then the fee measure language must specify that there is no expiration date for the fee.
- e. If the proposed fee will be subject to renewal, then the fee measure language must specify the interval of time before renewal will occur.

### B. GSA Payments

- a. No part of the net earnings of the GSA shall be paid to individual GSA members, with the following exceptions:
  - i. The GSA Assembly may provide stipends and/or honoraria for GSA Officers, GSA Committee Representatives, and recipients of established GSA awards and grants.
  - ii. The GSA Assembly may provide compensation to GSA members who are also GSA employees.
    - 1. GSA members shall not simultaneously serve as a GSA employee and as a GSA Assembly Member.
- b. The GSA Assembly may provide funds for events and activities that enhance graduate student life at UCSB.

### C. Voluntary Fees

- a. The GSA may establish or modify voluntary fees, as consistent with regulations of the University of California system, the UCSB campus, and the UCSB GSA.

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### D. Dissolution of the GSA

- a. In the event of the dissolution of the GSA, the assets of the GSA shall be transferred to the UCSB Graduate Division for the purpose of providing financial aid to UCSB Graduate Students.

**ARTICLE V: GSA COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

A. GSA Committee Representative Appointments

- a. The GSA shall be the only organization officially authorized to appoint graduate student members to UCSB campus-wide councils, committees, governance boards, and all other UCSB campus-wide, University of California, and external bodies on which UCSB Graduate Students are to be represented.
- b. Such graduate student members shall be called GSA Committee Representatives.
- c. Any GSA member shall be eligible to apply and to be appointed by the GSA Executive Committee to serve as a GSA Committee Representative.
- d. After the GSA Executive Committee appoints them, a GSA Committee Representative shall immediately begin service.
- e. New GSA Committee Representative(s) shall be announced at the next GSA Assembly Meeting following the appointment.
- f. The GSA Assembly, by a two-thirds (66%) vote, and following a presentation to the GSA Assembly of the request for removal, may remove a GSA Committee Representative.

B. GSA Committee Representative Duties

- a. Each GSA Committee Representative shall:
  - i. Attend all meetings of the bodies on which they represent the GSA; and
  - ii. Consult with and report to GSA Officers and the GSA Assembly, as needed; and
  - iii. Inform the bodies on which they serve of positions on relevant issues taken by the GSA.

**ARTICLE VI: GRADUATE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN**

- A. GSA Graduate Student Health Insurance Powers
  - a. The UCSB Graduate Students shall have a University of California or UCSB campus Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan available to them.
  - b. The GSA shall have official representation on any committee overseeing the Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan.
  - c. The GSA shall make recommendations to any such committee in consultation with the GSA Assembly and GSA members.

## ARTICLE VII: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS AND POWERS

### A. GSA Constitutional Amendments

- a. Any GSA member may propose an amendment to this Constitution.
- b. To be ratified, an amendment shall be consistent with University and UCSB campus regulations and shall be:
  - i. Discussed at two (2) GSA Assembly Meetings; and
  - ii. Approved by the following voting measures:
    1. Two-thirds (66%) of the entire GSA Assembly; and
    2. A majority of those voting among the GSA members at large, provided that the number of GSA members casting valid votes in favor of the Constitutional amendment exceeds ten percent (10%) of the number of all GSA members.
    3. At least twenty percent (20%) of all GSA members must cast valid votes on the ballot on which the Constitutional amendment appears in order for the results of the vote on the Constitutional amendment to be valid.
- c. Upon ratification of an amendment, the amended Constitution immediately supersedes this GSA Constitution, which shall be archived and publicly accessible.

### B. GSA Executive Committee Constitutional Interpretations

- a. The Executive Committee, by a two-thirds (66%) vote of its members, may interpret provisions of this Constitution.
- b. The GSA Assembly may override any such interpretation by a two-thirds (66%) vote.

### C. GSA Assembly Constitutional Powers and Interpretations

- a. The GSA Assembly may assume any power not reserved or prohibited by the University of California or UCSB campus regulations, or not prohibited by this Constitution.
- b. This Constitution, and any Bylaw, resolution, or other decision taken pursuant to its authority shall be subject to all federal, state, local, University of California, and UCSB campus statutes and regulations.





**ARTICLE VIII: BYLAWS**

- A. GSA Bylaws Powers and Interpretations
  - a. The GSA Assembly, by a two-thirds (66%) vote, may establish, amend, or repeal Bylaws implementing the provisions of this Constitution.
  - b. Enacted Bylaws shall be valid indefinitely.
  - c. Any Bylaw found to conflict with this Constitution shall immediately and thereafter cease to be valid, and it shall be stricken from the Bylaws.
  - d. All new Bylaws shall be published within five (5) UC business days of enactment.
  - e. The Executive Committee, by a two-thirds (66%) vote of its members, may interpret Bylaws and other acts of the GSA Assembly.
    - i. The GSA Assembly may override any such interpretation by a two-thirds (66%) vote.

**ADDENDUM I: NOTES AND REVISIONS**

- a. This document was previously revised and approved by the UCSB GSA in April 2014.
- b. This document was previously revised and approved by the UCSB GSA in May 2016.
- c. This document was previously revised and approved by the UCSB GSA in May 2020.
- d. This document in its current form was revised and approved by the UCSB GSA in May 2023.