

# Constitution of The Graduate Representative Organization



## **Preamble**

We, the graduate students of Johns Hopkins University's Zanvyl Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS) and Whiting School of Engineering (WSE), hereafter referred to as "the Homewood Divisions," in order to promote graduate student interests, both academic and social, within the University environment and in order to represent graduate students before the faculty and administration of Johns Hopkins University, do hereby adopt this constitution for the Graduate Representative Organization (GRO). Any issue that influences and/or affects any portion or the whole of the graduate student body of the Homewood Divisions shall be considered within the purview of the GRO.

## **Part I. General Provisions**

### **Article I.1. Name**

The full name of this organization shall be "The Graduate Representative Organization of the Johns Hopkins University Schools of Arts & Sciences and Engineering". The shortened name of this organization shall be "The Graduate Representative Organization." The official abbreviation for the organization shall be "GRO".

### **Article I.2. Purpose**

The GRO shall provide a means through which graduate students express views and work to implement policies on issues affecting their interests and welfare. To this end, the GRO shall:

1. Solicit, for use in all of its functions and considerations, the opinions of all Homewood graduate students through representation, outreach, and the proper operation of its bodies.
2. Provide means whereby graduate students can discuss, formulate, and implement policies on any and all issues affecting their welfare.
3. Represent and advocate the interests of graduate students to the University administration, the University at large, and the greater Baltimore community.

4. Facilitate communication between and association among graduate students as well as within the University and greater Baltimore community.
5. Provide a sense of community for graduate students and their families through the organization of social functions and through the support of groups that organize events.
6. Support graduate students in need of assistance.

## **Article I.3. Membership**

### **Section I.3.1. Members of the GRO**

All registered graduate students, part-time and full-time, in the Homewood Divisions of The Johns Hopkins University are members of the GRO.

### **Section I.3.2. Departmental Representation**

All current graduate departments and programs of the Homewood Divisions have the right to voting representation in the GRO.

## **Article I.4. By-laws**

### **Section I.4.1. Scope**

Additional rules governing membership, the election of Executive Board members, the conduct and voting procedures of General Council and Executive Board meetings, and other business of the GRO are contained within the GRO's By-laws. The GRO By-laws are considered an extension of the GRO Constitution.

### **Section I.4.2. Amendments**

The General Council may amend the By-laws with a two-thirds majority vote of active members, provided that sufficient notice of the vote was provided. Further policies governing the amendment of the By-laws are contained within the By-laws.

### **Section I.4.3. Review**

The GRO By-laws shall be reviewed on an annual basis and revised by the General Council to ensure that the governance of the GRO fits current best practices and the needs of the GRO.

## **Article I.5. Administrative Advisors**

To assist in ensuring proper governance of the GRO, provide enhanced contact with the full University administration, and aid in the GRO's institutional memory, the GRO will be advised by the Assistant Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Academic Affairs (WSE), the Director for Graduate Academic Affairs (KSAS), and the Executive Director of Student Engagement, or equivalent positions. The Co-Chairs shall have regular meetings with these advisors throughout each academic year.

## **Part II. The General Council**

## **Article II.1. Purpose, Composition, and Meetings of the General Council**

### **Section II.1.1. Purpose of the General Council**

The GRO General Council shall be responsible for determining all GRO policies, designating representatives to all relevant university committees, monitoring the implementation of all GRO decisions, and advocating on behalf of Graduate Students.

### **Section II.1.2. Composition of the General Council**

The GRO General Council shall consist of the following members, where no individual may serve in more than one capacity:

#### **II.1.2.(a) Departmental and program representatives.**

**II.1.2.(a).(i)** The current list of departments and programs which may appoint representatives can be found in the GRO By-laws. A department or program which is not listed there may petition the GRO to create such a position to be approved by a majority vote of the General Council.

**I.1.1.(a).(i)** Each eligible department may elect or delegate two representatives. Each department may only cast a single vote in the General Council. It is at the discretion of each department's representatives to determine whether that vote is made mutually by both representatives or singly by only one.

**II.1.2.(a).(ii)** At least two weeks before the beginning of each Fall semester, the Executive Board shall contact each department and program eligible for representation to request the selection of the Representative(s) and to inform them of the date, time, and location of the first General Council meeting of that academic year.

**II.1.2.(a).(ii).(A)** The means by which Representative(s) are selected is at the discretion of each department or program, but proposed guidelines are provided in the GRO By-laws.

#### **II.1.2.(b) GRO Executive Board Members.**

### **Section II.1.3. General Council Meetings**

**II.1.3.(a)** All GRO members (IE all graduate students of the Homewood Divisions) may attend GRO General Council meetings. Likewise, all GRO members may request, in a manner pursuant to the GRO By-laws, that items be placed on the agenda of a General Council meeting.

**II.1.3.(b)** The policies governing the frequency, quorum, agenda, and rules of order for General Council meetings can be found in the GRO By-laws.

## **Part III. The Executive Board**

### **Article III.1. Purpose, Composition, and Meetings of the Executive Board**

#### **Section III.1.1. Purpose of the Executive Board**

The Executive Board of the GRO shall be responsible for implementing all policy decisions of

the General Council and for maintaining relations with the University administration on behalf of the GRO.

### **Section III.1.2. Composition of the Executive Board**

**III.1.2.(a)** The GRO Executive Board shall consist of officers duly elected by the Departmental Representatives on an annual basis.

**III.1.2.(a).(i)** Only graduate students of the Homewood Divisions are eligible for election to the GRO Executive Board.

**III.1.2.(b)** The GRO Executive Board shall comprise permanent and fixed positions, which are re-elected annually, and temporary positions whose purpose and scope shall be determined each year prior to elections.

**III.1.2.(b).(i)** The permanent and fixed positions of the GRO Executive Board shall be contained within the GRO By-laws. These are sub-divided into the permanent positions (Co-Chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer), which require amendment of the constitution and by-laws to remove and fixed positions which only require amendment of the by-laws to remove.

**III.1.2.(c)** The number of positions on the Executive Board cannot at any point in time exceed one half the number of departments and programs eligible for representation on the General Council per **II.1.2.(a)**.

### **Section III.1.3. Executive Board Meetings**

**III.1.3.(a)** The policies governing the frequency, quorum, agenda, and rules of order for Executive Board meetings can be found in the GRO By-laws.

**III.1.3.(b)** Unlike GRO General Council meetings, GRO Executive Board meetings may only be attended by GRO Executive Board members except under circumstances outlined in the GRO By-laws.

### **Section III.1.4. Election of Executive Board Members**

**III.1.4.(a)** GRO Executive Board members shall be elected on an annual basis at the end of each academic year to serve a term commencing at the beginning of the summer.

**III.1.4.(b)** The election procedures, including those for special elections, can be found in the GRO By-laws.

## **Part IV. Amendments and Ratification**

### **Article IV.1. Amendments**

#### **Section IV.1.1. Proposing Amendments**

**IV.1.1.(a)** Any General Council member can propose an amendment to the Constitution.

**IV.1.1.(b)** All proposed amendments shall be submitted to the General Council for consideration and ratification.

**IV.1.1.(c)** The General Council shall be given, at a minimum, seven days' notice before a constitutional amendment is to be considered for ratification. This notice shall include both the purpose of the amendment and the proposed text of the amendment.

### **Section IV.1.2. Ratification of Amendments**

**IV.1.2.(a)** The General Council shall vote on constitutional amendments only during regularly scheduled meetings of the General Council.

**IV.1.2.(b)** An amendment shall be considered ratified if it receives a two-thirds majority vote of active members of the General Council, where the active membership is comprised of the departmental representatives duly appointed by their respective departments and programs and the executive board members duly elected by the General Council.

**IV.1.2.(c)** Once an amendment is ratified, it shall take effect immediately.

### **Article IV.2. Ratification**

This Constitution shall be considered ratified, thereby replacing any and all prior constitutions of the GRO, when approved by a two-thirds majority of votes of the active membership of the General Council per **IV.1.2.(b)**.

**This constitution was formally ratified on the thirtieth of March, 2020, by a vote of the GRO General Council, thereby replacing all previous constitutions of the GRO.**