

Constitution for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences Graduate Student Association

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be formally known as the University of Wisconsin Madison Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences Graduate Student Association, but will be called informally the Graduate Student Association, herein referred to as the GSA.

Article II. Objectives

1. Facilitate dialogue between graduate students and the Faculty, Staff, University, and other outside organizations.
2. Initiate and foster constructive development within the Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences Department, herein referred to as AOS, and the University that benefits the graduate student body.
3. Promote the voice and ideas of the graduate student body in all aspects of the AOS Department, and, where necessary, in the University.
4. Pursue opportunities of service including outreach.
5. Hold general meetings to further promote these objectives.

Article III. Membership

Membership is free, automatic, and exclusive to all AOS and affiliated graduate students. However, students may remove themselves from membership by notifying the Facilitator. Undergraduate AMS officers are allowed to attend closed meetings, but may not vote.

Article IV. Duties of Officers

1. The elected officers of the GSA, shall be the Facilitator, two (2) Faculty Liaisons, the Treasurer, and the Secretary.
2. Each officer of the GSA must be a member of the GSA with no expectation to graduate during his/her elected term.
3. The officers must hold a joint meeting of incoming and outgoing officers following the election of new officers before the end of the spring semester in order to acquaint the new officers with their duties.
4. Officers shall introduce the GSA to first year graduate students through department orientation procedures.
5. The duties of the Facilitator shall be:
 - a. Serve as chair and make arrangements for general meetings.
 - b. Disseminate pertinent information to the membership that he/she receives while serving as Facilitator.
 - c. Authorize expenditures in conformance with this constitution.
 - d. Aid and oversee the actions of the other officers as necessary.
 - e. Make an effort to ensure proper representation is provided at department, college, or University functions on short notice.
 - f. This position is not intended to be a decision-making or executive position.
 - g. Perform the duties of Ombudsman, as follows:
 - i. Anonymously hear grievances that a GSA member may have with regards to academic (with regard to classes, seminars, or research) issues that may arise.
 - ii. Propose a course of resolution and/or assist the student in communicating the issues to the appropriate person(s).
 - iii. If necessary, anonymously discuss the situation with an academic official.
 - iv. Keep an anonymous and detailed record of the situation, action taken, and resolution/outcome for historical reference of on-going issues.
 - v. Periodically work with the appropriate parties to improve the academic environment of the graduate student body and ensure integrity of the academic process.
6. The duties of the Faculty Liaisons shall be:
 - a. Attend all Faculty meetings in order to represent the ideas and agenda of the graduate student body.

- b. Report items of interest from Faculty meetings to the GSA.
 - c. Notify the Facilitator of inability to attend a Faculty meeting at least three (3) days before the scheduled meeting.
7. The duties of the Treasurer shall be:
- a. Authorize expenditures in conformance with this constitution.
8. The duties of the Secretary shall be:
- a. Take meeting minutes, at meetings where quorum is obtained, including a record of every motion successfully introduced, a summary of the motion and attached text, important points from the discussion, and whether the motion was approved.
 - b. Promptly, update the GSA website with both minutes and committee membership.

Article V. Committees

1. Committees can be created for addressing issues of the GSA at any time.
2. A committee shall consist of at least three (3) members of the GSA.
3. When a committee is formed, members of the committee must immediately select a committee head.
 - a. The responsibility of committee heads will be to report to the full GSA and Facilitator the activities, concerns, and/or business of the committee.
4. A committee cannot make any binding decisions.
5. A committee is not intended to represent the GSA as a whole.
6. Committees shall be reformed after officer elections each year.

Article VI. Annual Teaching Award

1. The GSA should vote to give an annual teaching award between weeks five (5) and ten (10) of the spring semester, before the departmental award ceremony.
2. All faculty members who taught a graduate course, level 500 or above, or a seminar since the end of the previous academic year, will be automatically nominated for the award.

3. Notification that voting for the teaching award will occur will be disseminated to the membership at least one (1) week before the voting.
4. Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot.
5. Each GSA member present may vote for zero, one, two or three of the candidates.
6. The top three candidate(s) who receive yes votes from at least two-thirds (2/3) of the present members will receive an award.

Article VII. Procedures

1. General Student Meetings
 - a. Meetings of the membership shall be held in a location accessible to the membership at least once a month.
 - b. The dates of future meetings shall be determined when necessary by the Facilitator. Announcement of the future time, locations, and agenda of a meeting shall be e-mailed to the members at least three (3) days in advance.
 - c. Quorum is defined as two-thirds (2/3) of the membership in attendance at the first meeting of the year.
 - d. General meetings, where binding decisions may be made and voted on occur as long as the following are maintained:
 - i. A quorum of the GSA is present at the meeting.
 - ii. The meetings complies with all rules governing GSA meetings as specified in the Constitution and by-laws.
 - e. GSA meetings, or portions thereof, may be open or closed to non-members.
2. Election of Officers
 - a. Elections for officers shall be conducted at a general meeting.
 - b. Elections shall be conducted in the spring semester, for the following academic year.
 - c. All, and only, GSA members are eligible to:
 - i. One vote for Facilitator.
 - ii. One vote for Treasurer.
 - iii. One vote for Secretary.
 - iv. Two votes (one for each) for Faculty Liasons.
 - d. An officer is elected if a majority vote is achieved.

- e. If no candidate achieves majority, then a run-off between the top two (2) candidates shall immediately occur.
 - f. The duties of offices left unfilled after the election, or anytime during the term, may be delegated to the elected officers as seen proper by the Facilitator, until those offices may be filled at a future regular meeting.
3. Recall of Officer
- a. Any GSA member can initiate a recall procedure.
 - b. To initiate, a member must create a petition stating the reasons for recall which must be signed by one-fourth (1/4) of the membership.
 - c. If petition is completed, the member must present the petition at the next general meeting.
 - d. A special meeting must occur within one to three (1-3) weeks of the academic calendar after a petition is presented.
 - e. During the special meeting:
 - i. The accuser shall present his/her complaint.
 - ii. The accused shall present his/her defense.
 - iii. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of GSA members present at the meeting is needed for recall. The vote shall be conducted by secret ballot.
 - iv. The Treasurer will preside over the meeting if the Facilitator is the accused.
 - v. If the accused is found guilty and removed, the office shall be filled as in Article VII section 2 subsection f, immediately.
 - vi. If the accused is acquitted, he/she shall resume his/her post.
4. Resignation of Officer
- a. An officer may relinquish his/her position at any time.
 - b. This is done by submitting a resignation letter to the Facilitator. If the Facilitator wishes to resign, he/she may submit a letter of resignation to the Treasurer.
 - c. The vacant office will be filled in accordance to Article VII section 2 subsection f.

Article VIII. Expenditures

- 1. The GSA will maintain a bank account at UW Credit Union.
- 2. There will be three signers: the Facilitator, the Treasurer, and one other.

- a. Suggested third signers include: the graduate chair, the department chair, the department administrator, the financial specialist, or another member of the department who will has a long term position.
3. Two signers will be required to sign all checks.
4. The allocation of funds must be approved by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority of graduate students present at the time of meeting, unless other external constraints are placed on the monies by the source.

Article IX. Constitution Ratification and Amendments

1. Amendments may be made to the Constitution at any time, pending the following conditions being met:
 - a. Ratification of amendments must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the membership present at a general meeting.
 - b. At least one (1) week before the meeting, the full text of the pending amendment(s) shall be distributed to the whole graduate student body through the agenda for the next general meeting.
 - c. Voting shall be conducted by secret ballot.
2. Anything not outlined in this Constitution may be expounded upon in the by-laws.
3. By-laws may be amended by a simple majority at a GSA meeting.