

Resolution # 71-12

**The Graduate and Professional Student Association
(GPSA)
The Pennsylvania State University**



of the 71st Assembly
February 23rd, 2022

Be it decided by the Assembly of Elected Delegates,

Reorganization of the GPSA Executive Branch
(Decided: [Y / N / A])

1 **Nature of the Situation:**

2
3 The Graduate and Professional Student Association's executive component lacks depth and
4 flexibility in its current structure. To expand the executive branch's capacity and reach, a
5 reorganization is necessary.

6
7 **Recommended Course of Action:**

8
9 It is proposed that the GPSA adopt the following amendments to the GPSA Constitution:

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11 **ARTICLE V – STRUCTURE**

12
13 SECTION A.

14 There shall be three **entities branches** within the GPSA that will serve as distinct functions
15 cooperatively to fulfill GPSA's mission and execute the GPSA's authority:

16 1. An Assembly of Delegates from the academic colleges and the graduate and professional
17 student body at-large to decide business.

18 2. An Executive **Board Branch** to execute business, provide counsel, and represent the positions
19 of the Assembly to stakeholders and the administration.

20 3. A Judiciary to adjudicate disputes on matters of rule, equity, and Constitutional law within the
21 GPSA.

1
2 SECTION B.

3 No member of an ~~entity-branch~~ may be a voting member concurrently of another ~~entity branch~~.
4 No ~~entity branch~~ may establish, amend, or rescind the rules of another entity except through
5 explicit mechanisms defined in this Constitution.
6

7 **ARTICLE VI – THE ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES**

8
9 SECTION B.

10 The Assembly of Delegates shall have the power to:

- 11 1. Determine the opinion and pass resolutions of the GPSA, and as such, the graduate and
- 12 professional student body;
- 13 2. Regulate the expenditures of the GPSA and its Executive ~~Board; Branch;~~
- 14 ...

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16 **ARTICLE VII – EXECUTIVE BRANCH OFFICERS**

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18 There shall be five executive officers: President, Vice President, ~~Executive Director of Finance,~~
19 ~~Executive Director of Communications, and Executive Director of External Affairs Treasurer,~~
20 ~~and Secretary.~~ Specific duties of these officers shall be defined in the Bylaws.
21

22 SECTION A. Powers and Responsibilities

23 All fundamental executory authority is hereby vested in the Executive ~~Board Branch~~.
24

25 The Executive ~~Board Branch~~ shall have the power to:

- 26
27 1. Carry out the will of the Assembly as prescribed by legislation approved by the
- 28 Assembly and within the President's discretion;
- 29
30 2. Conduct the day-to-day affairs of the GPSA;
- 31
32 3. Represent the GPSA to the University and its entities; and
- 33
34 4. Provide services to students in the name of the GPSA in conjunction with legislation
- 35 approved by the Assembly.
- 36
37 5. Accept and execute any authority not attributable to any other entity;
- 38
39 6. Approve appointments by the President of the GPSA; and
- 40
41 7. Remove any person from office elected or appointed to any position in the GPSA.

42
43 SECTION B. Eligibility

44 Executive Officers must be currently enrolled graduate or professional students at the time of their
45 election ~~or appointment~~ and throughout the term of office. Executive Officers must fulfill their
46 duties during summer sessions.
47

48 SECTION C. Powers and Responsibility of the President

- 49 1. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the GPSA.

2. The President shall preside over the Executive ~~Board~~ Branch meetings, and as such oversee the organization and execution of the mission and vision of the GPSA and Executive Branch.
3. The President shall be the primary spokesperson of the graduate and professional student body at The Pennsylvania State University and represent graduate and professional students to university units and advisory boards unless otherwise delegated.
4. The President shall have the authority to submit legislation to the Assembly of Delegates on behalf of the Executive ~~Board~~ Branch.

SECTION D. Powers and Responsibility of the Vice President

1. The Vice President shall assume the Presidency in the event of a vacancy.
2. The Vice President shall fulfill the role of the President if the President is unable or unwilling to fulfill the requirements of the Office by voluntary decision, distance or absence from the University, or state of incapacity.
3. The Vice President is responsible for chairing Assembly meetings of the GPSA.
4. The Vice President shall also act as the President's Chief of Staff by overseeing the day-to-day work of the Executive Branch's departments to ensure effectiveness collaboration.

SECTION E. ~~Powers and Responsibility of the Secretary~~ Department of Communications

The Department of Communications shall be a permanent Department in the Executive Branch. Its Executive Director shall be the GPSA's secretary. The ~~Secretary~~ Executive Director of Communications, ~~along with~~ supported by the staff of the Department of Communications, shall be responsible for:

1. ~~the managing of~~ the GPSA office and distribution of materials from the office.
2. ~~The Secretary or their designee shall~~ maintaining the GPSA's official communications,
3. publishing a regular newsletter to showcase the work of the GPSA and to highlight opportunities to get engaged;
4. administering formal communications to the graduate and professional student body,
5. facilitating essential communications with the three ~~bodies~~ branches of the GPSA,
6. recording and publicizing special presentations (with permission of those recorded), and
7. taking and publicizing minutes for all Assembly and Executive ~~board~~ Branch meetings.

SECTION F. ~~Powers and Responsibility of the Treasurer~~ Department of Finance

The Department of Finance shall be a permanent Department in the Executive Branch. Its Executive Director shall be the GPSA's treasurer. The Department of Finance does not have the authority to use GPSA finances unless directed by Assembly legislation or through procedures defined in this Constitution or Bylaws.

The ~~Treasurer~~ Executive Director of Finance, ~~along with~~ supported by the staff of the Department of Finance, shall be responsible for:

1. ~~managing of~~ GPSA's ~~finances and preparation of appropriate budget reports~~ Manage all income and expenditures with the Associated Student Activities (ASA) office in line with the decisions of the GPSA,
2. regulating, maintaining, and keeping account of all tangible assets purchased through funds of the GPSA, and
3. preparing all of the GPSA's financial budgets, documents, and presentations.

1 SECTION G. Department of External Affairs

2 The Department of External Affairs shall be a permanent Department in the Executive Branch.
3 The Executive Director of External Affairs, ~~along with~~ supported by the staff of the Department
4 of External Affairs, shall be responsible for:

- 5 1. developing and establishing relationships with stakeholders and units at the
6 Pennsylvania State University that service or impact graduate and professional
7 students,
- 8 2. ~~assisting the Student Engagement Committee with hosting~~ partnering with GPSA
9 delegates to host tabling events and other opportunities to increase the graduate and
10 professional student body's awareness of the GPSA,
- 11 3. overseeing all outreach efforts and maintaining a list of organizations and contacts
12 which may be useful for GPSA collaborative projects in the future,
- 13 4. managing GPSA liaison efforts and assisting where directed by the Vice President, and
- 14 5. ~~coordinating the release of a regular newsletter with the Department of~~
15 ~~Communications to showcase the work of the GPSA and highlight opportunities to get~~
16 ~~engaged.~~ contributing to the regular newsletter housed by the Department of
17 Communications.

18
19 SECTION G-H. Vacancies of Elected Offices

20 In cases of a vacancy for ~~any Executive Officer~~ Vice President or either Faculty Senator, the
21 President shall nominate a new eligible graduate or professional student within two (2)
22 Assembly meetings of the vacancy. The nominee shall be confirmed by a majority of the
23 Assembly.

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25 SECTION H.I Line of Succession

26 In the case of a vacancy of the Presidency, the line of succession shall be as follows:

- 27 1. Vice President
- 28 2. Speaker of the Assembly

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32 In the case of simultaneous vacancies in the office of the Vice President and the Speaker of the
33 Assembly, the Assembly shall appoint a Delegate to serve as President *Pro Tempore* at the first
34 scheduled meeting following the vacancy. The President *Pro Tempore* shall continue to serve
35 until they are confirmed by a 2/3 vote of the Assembly, or until another suitable candidate is
36 selected and confirmed by a 2/3 vote.

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39 **ARTICLE VIII – EXECUTIVE BOARD BRANCH**

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41 The following shall be considered members of the Executive ~~Board~~ Branch:

- 42 1. President
- 43 2. Vice President
- 44 3. ~~Secretary~~ Executive Director of Communications
- 45 4. ~~Treasurer~~ Executive Director of Finance
- 46 5. Executive Director of External Affairs
- 47 6. University GPSA Faculty Senator
- 48 7. Graduate School Student Faculty Senator*
- 49 8. Chair of the Graduate Council Student Caucus*
- 50 9. Chief Justice*
- 51

1 10. Speaker of the Assembly*

2 11. Advisor*

3
4 **Non-voting member*

5
6 SECTION A. Meetings

7 The President or their designee in the President's absence shall preside over the Executive
8 ~~Board~~ Branch. Meetings shall be held at the discretion of the President except during academic
9 recesses. The President has the sole discretion to call Executive ~~Board~~ Branch meetings. All
10 Executive ~~Board~~ Branch meetings shall be publicized and open to the public unless a majority
11 of present members vote to move the meeting into closed executive session.

12
13 SECTION B. Voting

14 The President, Vice President, ~~Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Director of Communications,~~
15 ~~Executive Director of Finance, and Executive Director of External Affairs~~ and the University GPSA
16 Faculty Senator shall be considered voting members of the Executive ~~Board~~ Branch. Quorum
17 shall be 2/3 of the voting members. A simple majority carries the vote. The presiding officer of the
18 Executive Board shall only vote in the event of a tie.

19
20 SECTION C. Powers and Duties

21 The Executive ~~Board~~ Branch is tasked with carrying out the will of the Assembly, as established
22 by approved and perfected legislation. The Executive ~~Board~~ Branch shall have the power to
23 conduct business in the interest of the GPSA that does not conflict with the will of the Assembly
24 and which does not require specific action by the Assembly otherwise defined in this
25 Constitution or Bylaws. Any action must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the
26 Executive ~~Board~~ Branch. The Executive ~~Board~~ Branch does not have the authority to authorize
27 GPSA expenditures unless approved by the Assembly or otherwise prescribed by this
28 Constitution or Bylaws.

29
30 SECTION D. Advisor

31 The GPSA must, at all times, retain an advisor who is a full-time faculty, staff, or administrator at
32 The Pennsylvania State University. The Vice President of Student Affairs shall nominate an
33 advisor, who must be approved by a majority of the Assembly.

34
35 SECTION E. University Faculty Senators

36 The University Faculty Senators shall attend all meetings of the University Faculty Senate and
37 assigned committees. The University Faculty Senator representing the GPSA (GPSA Faculty
38 Senator) shall be bound by the legislative authority of the GPSA and be a voting member of the
39 GPSA Executive ~~board~~ Branch. The University Faculty Senator representing only the graduate
40 student body (Graduate School Student Faculty Senator) shall not be bound by the legislative
41 authority of the GPSA nor be a voting member of the Executive ~~board~~ Branch.

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43 SECTION F. Executive Director Selection Process

44 All Departments shall be headed by an Executive Director appointed by the President through
45 annual public applications located on the GPSA website. The application must be open for at
46 least five academic days. For each position, if fewer than three applicants have applied, all must
47 be interviewed. If more than three applicants apply, ~~the President, the Vice President, and the~~
48 ~~Steering Committee shall be required to interview~~ at least three applicants should be
49 interviewed. The Steering Committee shall conduct the interviews and shall select the new
50 Executive Directors by the end of the spring semester. ~~and nominate two candidates to the~~
51 ~~President. The President will then nominate the candidate of their choosing to undergo~~

1 ~~approval by the General Assembly. The President can sit in on interviews as desired. All~~
2 ~~Executive Directors must be full-time graduate or professional students at University Park. All~~
3 ~~appointments must be approved by the General Assembly by the last meeting of the spring~~
4 ~~semester.~~

5
6 SECTION G. Department Directors and Staff

7 The Vice President or the Executive Directors may establish staff positions within the Executive
8 Branch's departments with the approval of the President. Once established, these positions
9 must be filled by public application. The application must be open for at least five academic
10 days. If more than three applicants apply, the corresponding Executive Director shall be
11 required to interview at least three applicants. The corresponding Executive Director will then
12 nominate the candidate of their choosing to undergo approval by the Executive Branch by a
13 simple majority vote. These positions may be dissolved by the President. All officers and staff
14 members are bound by the discipline and removal process as outlined in this Constitution and
15 the bylaws. Department staff only have voting privileges in department meetings.

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18 **ARTICLE XIV – ELECTIONS**

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20 SECTION C.

21 The President, Vice President, ~~Secretary, Treasurer~~, and University Park Allocation Committee
22 representatives shall be elected by the graduate and professional student body by single
23 transferable voting using the Wright system with a minimum of three votes required for the
24 election of any candidate. The Graduate School Student Faculty Senator representing only the
25 graduate student body and Graduate Council Student Caucus Delegates shall be elected by the
26 graduate student body by single transferable voting using the Wright system with a minimum of
27 three votes required for the election of any candidate. The GPSA Faculty Senator representing
28 the GPSA shall be filled by presidential appointment and approved by a majority vote of the
29 Assembly.

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31 **ARTICLE XV – FINANCES**

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33 SECTION C.

34 The ~~Treasurer~~ ~~Executive Director of Finance~~ and President shall have the ability to authorize
35 small expenses for office supplies, approved events, and other miscellaneous items that do not
36 contradict the authority or the spirit of Assembly policy. These unlegislated expenses must be
37 reported to the Assembly at the immediate following meeting and may be rejected by a vote of
38 the Executive ~~board~~ Branch or Assembly. All efforts will be made to cancel rejected expenses
39 that have not been fully processed. If an expense was rejected but already fully processed from
40 the ASA account, the expense will stand, and the authorizing officer may be subject to removal
41 or censure.

42
43 SECTION D.

44 The budget of the GPSA is governed by provisions in this Constitution and the Bylaws. A
45 GPSA
46 Audit Committee shall be formed which will include: one (1) member each from: the Executive
47 ~~board~~ Branch (except the ~~Treasurer~~ ~~Executive Director of Finance~~ or President), the Assembly
48 of Delegates, and the Judiciary. The seats shall be filled by presidential appointment.

49
Respectfully submitted,

- 1 **Schonn Franklin**
- 2 President, The Graduate and Professional Student Association

President _____ Affirm Veto

The Graduate and Professional Student Association