Resolution # 71-14

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

of the 71st Assembly
March 23rd, 2022

Be it decided by the Assembly of Elected Delegates,

Amending the Duties of the Assembly in the By-Laws
Adding efforts towards outreach to delegate duties
(Decided: [ Y / N / A ])

Nature of the Situation:

It is crucial that every member of the assembly of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) is equally responsible for engaging with their constituents. This ensures that information about the GPSA and important resources for graduate and professional students are disseminated among the student body, and that responsibilities are distributed equally among GPSA delegates.

Every fall semester, the GPSA attempts to have representatives speak at the Graduate School Orientation, International Student Orientation, and various individual department orientations. However, as it stands, there is a lack of structure with regards to how orientation responsibilities are assigned within the assembly. In the past few years, the Speaker of the Assembly has been in-charge of reaching out to the various graduate programs at Penn State, scheduling times for GPSA delegates to speak at departmental orientations, and soliciting volunteers from the assembly to speak at orientations. However, Speakers of the Assembly in the past have reported that this results in a considerable amount of work on one individual, particularly when there is a lack of volunteers within the assembly, and if the Speaker has academic or personal commitments during the week of orientation.

Further, it is important that the graduate and professional student body is aware of the various open positions within the GPSA during election cycles. Active outreach efforts during election cycles ensure diversity among nominees and competitive elections. However, the governing
documents of the GPSA do not outline if, and how, delegates are responsible for engaging with their constituents to raise awareness about the GPSA and the work it does for the graduate and professional student body.

**Recommended Course of Action:**

The Graduate and Professional Student Association proposes an amendment to the by-laws of the GPSA to incorporate outreach efforts into the duties of all delegates. More specifically, this resolution proposes the following changes, indicated in bold, to Article II (Duties of the Assembly) of the GPSA by-laws:

**ARTICLE II - DUTIES OF THE ASSEMBLY**

A. The Assembly shall be responsible for establishing the direction of the organization and speaking on behalf of the graduate and professional student body.

B. All delegates are required to work with staff from graduate and professional programs in their respective colleges to have a GPSA representative present at department orientations. Delegates are required to speak at the orientations within their college. Volunteers may be solicited from the Assembly if delegates from a specific college are unavailable. The Members of the Executive Branch may provide assistance as and when needed. The Speaker of the Assembly shall coordinate the efforts of the Assembly during orientations, and will prepare the necessary materials, including but not limited to, GPSA merchandise, presentations, and any printed material.

C. Delegates are required to work with staff from graduate and professional programs in their respective colleges to solicit nominees for open positions within the GPSA during election cycles.

D. Delegates are required to attend all Assembly meetings. Delegates are also required to join and participate in at least one GPSA standing or ad hoc committee. Delegates are also required to disseminate information about GPSA activities among their constituents.

E. Graduate Council Student Caucus Delegates shall work to establish general policies and procedures pertaining to graduate programs and research within the University. Graduate Council Student Caucus Delegates shall in a timely fashion report back on issues that come up within the Graduate Council to the Assembly and Executive Board of the GPSA.

F. The Speaker shall be responsible for distributing and setting the Assembly agenda, monitoring all standing and ad hoc committees, and representing the properly legislated voice of the Assembly to the University, among all other defined duties assigned in these Bylaws and the Constitution.

Respectfully submitted,

**Sandeep Krishnakumar**

Speaker of the Assembly
Delegate, College of Engineering

President ___________________________________________    Affirm    Veto

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The Graduate and Professional Student Association