



Graduate Leadership Council Constitution

Established and Ratified:
April 30, 2019

Edited:
July 13, 2024

Preamble

We, the Graduate Leadership Council at American University, united in the common perpetuation of these purposes, advance our interests, set forth our duties, and provide for meaningful governance of our institution, do hereby establish the Constitution for the Graduate Leadership Council. The Graduate Leadership Council at American University is a student government association with these purposes: to serve as the primary representative and unified voice of the graduate population to American University's administration, faculty, staff, trustees, alumni and student leaders; to represent the needs of all graduate-level students; and to improve graduate students' academic, social, and professional experiences.

Membership and Jurisdiction

The membership of the Graduate Community shall hereinafter be considered all student activity fee-paying graduate students, whether full-time or part-time, online, PhD, Certificate programs who are registered for academic credit at American University. This membership cannot be revoked for any reason except for the discontinuation of registered graduate status. Membership includes the following six schools: College of Arts and Sciences, Kogod School of Business, School of Communication, School of International Service, School of Public Affairs, and School of Education. The Graduate Leadership Council acts as an autonomous representation of the Graduate Community receiving guidance from the Center for Student Involvement.

Article I: Governance

Section 1: Executive

The Graduate Leadership Council, hereinafter Council, is a democratically functioning organization led by an Executive Board consisting of the following: President, Vice President of Management, Vice President of Finance, Director of Communications, Director of Programming, and Director of Clubs and Campus Relations.

- i. The President shall be responsible for representing the views and concerns of the Graduate Community to the University administration, and for leading efforts to improve student life and resolve student grievances.
- ii. The Vice President of Management shall be the secretary overseeing the internal management and operations, including its finances, property, information technology, communications, publicity, and services.
- iii. The Vice President of Finance shall serve as the comptroller overseeing all debits, credits, revenues to the council and compliance of financial policies.
- iv. The Director of Communication shall be responsible for the communications portfolio including web communications, social media, and print assets.
- v. The Director of Programming shall be responsible for all events, programs, and activities for the entire graduate community including social, personal, and professional development opportunities.
- vi. The Director of Clubs and Campus Relations shall be responsible for overseeing graduate level clubs and organizations and serving as the primary contact for affinity-based programs in the community.

Section 2: Student Council Presidents

The Council will be joined the Presidents of the Graduate Student Councils, hereinafter Student Council, including the College of Arts and Sciences, Graduate Business Association (Kogod School of Business), School of Communication, School of International Service, School of Public Affairs, and School of Education who shall represent the interests of American University's six graduate schools.

Section 3: Constituency Liaisons

The Director of Clubs and Campus Relations may appoint Liaisons with the advice and consent of the Council. The Liaisons serve as representatives from certain constituencies deemed identified as vital components of the Graduate Community. The Liaisons serve at the discretion of the Director of Clubs and Campus Relations.

Article II: Voting Privileges

The President and Vice Presidents shall be entitled to cast one vote each on all Council matters and will represent the interests of the Executive Board. The Student Council Presidents from the College of Arts and Sciences, Kogod School of Business, School of Communication, School of International Service, School of Public Affairs, and School of Education shall be entitled to cast one vote each on all Graduate Leadership Council matters. Each Graduate Leadership Council President will represent the interests of their respective graduate school. The Council shall be composed of nine voting members entitled to cast one vote each on all Council matters. In case of a tie, the Director of Communications will cast the tie-breaking vote. The Director of Communications will not have voting rights outside of the event of a tie.

Section 1: Quorum and Majority

The Council may only conduct business in the presence of a quorum of voting members or their proxies, which shall be defined as the smallest whole number of voting members or their proxies that exceeds fifty percent. During voting, members may choose to abstain from voting. Abstentions are to be counted as present and not-voting and shall not be factored into a majority.

Article III: Elections

Elections for the Council including the Executive Board and Student Council Presidents will occur during the month of March in their academic year. Appointments for Liaisons and other positions will occur after the Council's installation at the start of the Fall semester. The term of office for an incoming Council will commence the final week of the spring semester, during the academic year they are elected, and shall serve until the final week of the spring semester the following year. After the election period, the incoming Council will shadow the outgoing Council for a period no longer than 30 days (about 4 and a half weeks) before taking office. All Student Councils shall hold their elections and begin serving concurrently with the newly elected Executive Board.

Section 1: Eligibility

All Graduate Leadership Council candidates must be registered graduate or PhD students in one of the following schools: the College of Arts in Sciences, the Kogod School of Business, the School of Communications, the School of International Service, the School of Public Affairs, or the School of Education.

Appointment of the Constituent Liaisons will take place at the start of Fall semester. All Graduate Leadership Council candidates must be in good academic and disciplinary standing with American University, as determined by the Graduate Leadership Council's advisor.

Graduate Leadership Council candidates shall not be eligible for office if they have been elected to a position on a Graduate Student Council or to an office of a graduate student club or organization during the academic year that they apply to serve on the Graduate Leadership Council. All candidates must be a part of a fee-paying graduate program at American University.

Section 2: Installation

All outgoing Council and their newly appointed/elected successors will participate in transition meetings. The goal of these meetings is to share institutional knowledge about the Council as an entity with the incoming Council. The outgoing Student Council President shall be responsible for coordinating their own transition meetings.

Section 3: Term in Office

After installation in office, the Council and appointees shall be prohibited from accepting a leadership position on a Student Council, an undergraduate or graduate student club, or another organization at American University during the same academic year without resigning from their position on the Council.

Article IV: Removal from Office

Section 1: Removal of the Executive

The Council shall have the right to remove the President, Vice President of Management, Vice President of Finance, Director of Communications, Director of Programming, and Director of Clubs and Campus Relations by two-thirds vote of the voting members.

Cause for removal from office shall be any action inimical to the Council, improper conduct, failure to perform duties of their office as outlined in governing documents, or any other charge the Council may consider.

Causes for removal may be brought against the President, Vice President of Management, Vice President of Finance, Director of Communications, Director of Programming, Events Coordinator, Director of Clubs and Campus Relations and the Liaisons. Such charges shall be made to the President and Center for Student Involvement in writing and thereby presented to the Council at their next meeting or special session.

If the President, Vice President of Management, Vice President of Finance, Director of Communications, Director of Programming, Director of Clubs and Campus Relations, Liaisons, or appointed individuals are not in good academic or disciplinary standing at any time during their term, they shall be removed from office automatically.

If the President, Vice President, Vice President of Finance, Director of Communications, Director of Programming, Director of Clubs and Campus Relations, Student Council President, Liaisons, or appointed individuals do not serve their full term due to their removal from office, their student support payments shall be prorated to reflect the portion of the term they served.

Section 2: Removal of the Student Council President

If a Student Council President resigns or is removed from office in accordance with their respective Student Council's Bylaws, they shall be automatically removed from serving on the Council as their school's representative. Their successor shall be charged with representing that school on the Graduate Leadership Council. If a Student Council President resigns or is removed from office in accordance with the Council's Bylaws, they shall be automatically removed from serving as President on their Student Council.

Article V: Amendments, Ratification, and Referendum

The Council Constitution and Bylaws serves as the governing document of the organization. Therefore, in the event of a necessary change, there must be agreement amongst most voting members. The purpose behind this amendment is to ensure consistency from one administration to the next.

Each Student Council President shall ensure that their governance documents comply with all the appropriate provisions of the Council's Constitution and Bylaws. The Council's governing documents will supersede all current and past Student Council governing documents if in conflict.

Section 1: Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any member of the Council. All proposed amendments shall be delivered in writing to the President, who shall present them to the Council for consideration at their next meeting. An amendment shall be considered ratified when most voting members approve it.

Section 2: Ratification

For ratification of the Constitution and/or Bylaws, a majority of vote must be obtained in favor of the amended changes. The Constitution and/or Bylaws shall take effect upon its ratification. The ratification of the amended Constitution and/or Bylaws shall relinquish all previous governing documents of the Graduate Leadership Council.

Section 3: Referendum

The Right of Referenda is intended to allow graduate student fee-paying students to propose changes and address issues that affect the entire Graduate Community. In accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws, the Council shall use the Referenda process to collect feedback and measure the support and hear the concerns of the Graduate Community.

Article VI: Bylaws

The Council may adopt Bylaws to provide for additional policies and standard operating procedures not considered by the Constitution. Bylaws may be proposed, amended, or nullified by any Council

member. Adoption of a bylaw or amendment of an existing bylaw will require a majority vote of the Council. Bylaws will be codified once adopted or amended.

The Council shall have the authority to adopt bylaws, as necessary, to govern its organization and structure in a manner consistent with this Constitution and the policies, regulations, and procedures of American University

Article XII: 2022 Clause (Mandated by AU's Student Conduct Code)

Student Organizations cannot investigate potential Student Conduct or Equity Title IX violations.

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