UC Davis Graduate Student Association By-Laws

Revised June 1, 2011*

Article I  Assembly Meetings

Section 1.1

The Assembly shall meet at least three times a quarter to review the actions of the Executive Council and to transact such business as is appropriate.

Section 1.2

Notice of all Assembly meetings shall be given at least five working days in advance to the Representatives, Graduate student community, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Section 1.3

The Association shall follow Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised for procedures not outlined in the Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 1.4

The UC Davis Policy and Procedure Manual shall supersede the GSA Bylaws and the GSA Constitution.

Article II  Elections

Section 2.1  Elections Code

(a) These codes set forth the procedures to be followed for the annual election of Association Officers and any referendum addressed to all UC Davis graduate students.

* Approved by the Assembly June 1, 2011
(b) The interpretation and enforcement of these codes is the responsibility of the Elections Committee.

Section 2.2 Elections Committee

(a) During the Fall quarter, the Assembly shall elect four Association members to serve on an Elections Committee. The Elections Committee membership shall include one Executive Council member and three Association members. Elections Committee members shall not run for office. Elections Committee members shall be from different disciplines.

(b) The Elections Committee shall designate one of the Committee members to serve as Elections Committee Chairperson. The Chairperson shall call meetings of the Elections Committee as needed to organize elections. The Chairperson shall be responsible for notifying the Executive Council and the Assembly of all activities of the Elections Committee.

(c) A member of the Elections Committee may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly if not fulfilling the duties of the Elections Committee.

(d) The Elections Committee shall verify the eligibility of all candidates, oversee the integrity of all elections, the printing of all advertising and ballots, the counting and storage of ballots, and shall certify all election results. The Elections Committee will specify the general layout of the election ballot.

Section 2.3 Annual Executive Council Elections

(a) Nominations and Candidacy

i. All candidates for Association Executive Council must be members of the General Membership at the time of election and, if elected, must maintain membership throughout their term.

ii. The Assembly shall open nominations no later than the first meeting of the Spring Quarter.

iii. All elections shall be publicized at least one month prior to the Assembly Meeting at which elections take place.

iv. All Association Members have the right to nominate candidates for officer positions. Members may nominate themselves as candidates for Executive Council positions. Members may be nominated for multiple officer positions, but may not serve in more than one officer position.

v. Nominations must be accepted verbally at an Assembly meeting or in writing to the Elections Committee in order to be placed on the ballot.
vi. All candidates nominated for office shall present a statement of position to both the Elections Committee and the Assembly prior to the election.

(b) Election

i. The Elections Committee shall be responsible for conducting Executive Council Elections during regularly scheduled Assembly meetings, starting in May.

ii. Only registered Representatives or their registered Alternates will be allowed to vote in elections.

iii. Members of the Executive Council and the Elections Committee are not eligible to vote in elections.

iv. Candidates for an Executive Council position shall leave the Assembly meeting room during discussion and voting for that position.

v. Voting shall be by a show of hands unless a motion is passed requesting either roll-call or a ballot vote. The Elections Committee must be prepared to hold the election by ballot vote.

vi. Officers shall be elected by a simple majority vote.

vii. If any office remains vacant after the first election, then elections shall be continued at subsequent meetings until all offices are filled.

viii. Officers-elect shall take office on July 1. Duties as officers-elect shall include assisting the current Executive Council.

ix. The Elections Committee shall count the ballots and certify the election results.

x. If an election is disputed, the Elections Committee shall resolve the dispute and give a full report to the Assembly. The Assembly may overturn an Elections Committee decision by a two-thirds majority vote.

xi. Any graduate student in good standing, based on the student’s cumulative GPA, shall be able to run for the Executive Council.

Section 2.4 Executive Council Vacancies

(a) The Chair may appoint a temporary replacement until the Assembly elects a replacement.

(b) Nominations shall be open at the meeting following the vacancy.
(c) Officers-elect shall take office immediately upon a majority vote of the Assembly.

(d) All other procedures follow Section 2.3.

Section 2.5  Ballot Measures

(a) Examples of Ballot Measures include mandatory fee measures or plebiscites that the Assembly puts on a ballot for an election by the General Membership. Any Association member, except a member of the Elections Committee, may author a proposal for a ballot measure and may bring the proposal to the Assembly at any meeting.

(b) Members of the Elections Committee shall be eligible to vote on Ballot Measures.

(c) Mandatory Fee Measures

i. A fee measure is a ballot measure that, if approved, would require Association Members to pay a fee, usually on a quarterly basis. Fee measures must be in compliance with University Policy regarding campus-based fees. (Section 80, “Policy on Compulsory Campus-Based Student Fees”, in the Presidential Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations, and Students; and Section 280-15, “Campus-Based Student Fees”, in the UCD Policy and Procedure Manual).

ii. Before any proposed fee measure may be submitted to the General Membership for a vote, the proposal must be discussed at two Assembly meetings and approved by a simple majority vote of the Assembly.

iii. Once a proposed fee measure is approved by the Assembly, a consultation period shall commence whereby the Offices of Graduate Studies and of the Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs, shall be given the opportunity to review and comment on the measure, in compliance with UCD Policy, before submission to the General Membership for consideration.

iv. In consultation with Student Affairs, the Elections Committee shall review the language for fee measures and approve the election process not less than ten business days before the start of the election. The Committee shall also compose a Voter’s Guide with the election dates, voting method, ballot wording, and an unbiased, factual analysis of each measure. The Voter’s Guide will be distributed to Association Members no less than seven business days before the start of the election.

v. As stated in UCD Policy, the required minimum voting pool is established when 20% of all Association Members cast valid votes on the particular measure. A majority of those who vote on a particular measure must vote in favor of the measure for it to pass.
(d) Plebiscites

i. The Assembly may sponsor a Plebiscite if the Assembly wishes to know the opinion of the General Membership about an issue.

ii. A Plebiscite may be placed on the ballot by a majority vote of the Assembly.

iii. The Assembly shall approve the plebiscite wording on the ballot.

(e) Elections

i. The Elections Committee shall be responsible for conducting a ballot measure election.

ii. The election shall extend no less than four and no more than twelve calendar days after the chosen start of the election.

iii. Access to the ballot shall be restricted to Association Members. All reasonable steps shall be taken to ensure the security and integrity of the balloting process. If, in the opinion of the Elections Committee, the security and/or integrity of the balloting process have been compromised, the Committee may void the election.

iv. The Elections Committee shall certify and announce the election results within three calendar days following the end of the election. The Elections Committee shall inform the Student Affairs office of fee election results and, as required by UCD Policy, ask for approval of any fees.

v. If an election is disputed, the Elections Committee shall resolve the dispute and make a full report to the Assembly. The Assembly may overturn an Elections Committee decision by a two-thirds majority vote.

Article III Executive Council

Section 3.1

(a) Elected members of the Executive Council are required to maintain their enrolled or Filing Fee status or an approved "Planned Education Leave Program" (PELP) to continue in a paid position.

(b) The Assembly, by a two-thirds vote, may grant a leave of absence to an elected officer. The leave of absence shall not exceed one academic quarter. The Assembly, by majority vote, may appoint a member to serve as a pro-tempoire Office without stipend during the leave of absence.
Section 3.2 Chair

The duties of the Chair shall be:

(a) To prepare the agenda and to conduct meetings of the Assembly and the Executive Council,

(b) To supervise the routine operations of the Association services,

(c) To serve as liaison between the Association and Administrators of the University,

(d) To represent the Association on the Administrative Committee of the Graduate Council (the Chair should discuss the business of the committee with the Executive Council regularly),

(e) To correspond with the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, and Deans concerning the activities of the Association,

(f) To serve on the Cal Aggie Alumni Association Board of Directors,

(g) To serve as a liaison to the Davis community, and

(h) To convene and chair as necessary the Hiring and Screening Committee and the Chair’s Advisory Committee.

Section 3.3 Vice Chair

The duties of the Vice Chair shall be:

(a) To correspond regularly with the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, and Deans of the Davis campus on issues of interest to the Association membership,

(b) To assist the Chair in serving as a liaison between the Association, Deans, and Administrators of the University,

(c) To serve as a representative on the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate and report to the Assembly as needed,

(d) To actively solicit and nominate graduate students for campus and System-wide committees on which graduate students are invited to serve,

(e) To appoint Association members to joint student government committees to resolve issues of mutual concern,
(f) To assist graduate students with the grievances and be aware of the agencies or individuals in the campus community who can assist students with problems and to appoint an ombudsman, if necessary, to help in this role,

(g) To oversee recognition of excellence, service, and achievement of students, staff, faculty, or administration who work diligently to advance the status of graduate students throughout UC Davis. Chair the Award for Excellence in Service to Graduate Students Committee.

(h) To convene and chair as necessary the Vice Chair’s Advisory Committee.

(i) To assist the Office of Graduate Studies in coordinating the Graduate Ally Coalition, including recruitment, training, and coordinating support.

Section 3.4  External Chair

The duties of the External Chair shall be:

(a) To serve as the delegate of the Assembly to organizations for which the Assembly maintains membership,

(b) To bring graduate-professional student concerns to local and national legislative bodies,

(c) To communicate regularly with the President and System-wide administrators of the University,

(d) To attend, when requested by the Assembly, the meeting of the Regents and when necessary, to prepare testimony for the meetings on issues important to the Association,

(e) To attend, when requested by the Assembly, conferences related to higher education policy and meetings of the University of California Student Association,

(f) To review with the Executive Council and Assembly the items presented at the meetings of groups which the Assembly are members of,

(g) To attend the UC Davis-City of Davis liaison commission meetings whenever possible and,

(h) To be a member of the External Affairs Committee.

Section 3.5  Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer shall be:
To present to the Assembly a summary of the financial activities of the Association at every meeting,

To prepare the current year's budget for presentation at the first Assembly Meeting,

To prepare a preliminary budget for the following year to guide the Treasurer-elect, to be presented at the May meeting,

To represent the Association in financial dealings with the University and other campus organizations,

To represent the Association on the Student Services and Fees Advisory Committee,

To compute annually Association membership for the purposes of determining the number of Assembly Representatives for each graduate program committee,

To supervise the administration of the Association funds according to the By-Laws and procedures established by the Association and in conjunction with the Accounting Office,

To hear all grievances that may arise in the administration of the funds and to make recommendations to the Executive Council concerning their adjudication,

To review and periodically update the administrative procedures of the funds,

To chair the Travel Awards Committees, and

To convene and chair as necessary the Treasurer’s Advisory Committee.

Section 3.6  Secretary

The duties of the Secretary shall be:

To keep minutes and record attendance of the Assembly and Executive Council,

To distribute the minutes of Assembly meetings to the Representatives prior to the following Assembly meeting,

To make public all minutes and agendas,

To convene and chair as necessary the Secretary’s Advisory Committee,

To serve as a member of the bylaws committee, and
(f) To serve as a custodian and publisher of all Assembly documents.

Section 3.7 Public Relations Officer

The duties of the Public Relations Officer shall be:

(a) To inform the graduate student community of issues which may affect them and of activities in which they may wish to participate,

(b) To coordinate any social, academic, student forum or other events not already specified, and

(c) To chair the Public Relations and Events Advisory Committee.

(d) Responsible for oversight of the duties of the Coffee-Bagel-Donut Day Coordinator and the Assistant Public Relations Officer.

Section 3.8 Campus Organizing Director

The duties of the Campus Organizing Director shall be:

(a) To maintain communication with Student Governments and graduate student organizations on Campus,

(b) To promote community service events and projects for the GSA,

(c) To help educate graduate students on System-wide, state, and federal issues of interest to graduate students,

(d) To assist the External Chair in preparation for meetings with external student associations, the Regents, the Office of the President, and other system wide bodies,

(e) To assist the Public Relations officer with coordination of on-campus events and to coordinate off-campus events, such as those run through Outdoor Adventures,

(f) To assist campus departments with recruitment and retention efforts, and

(g) To chair the External Affairs Committee, and to co-chair the Public Relations and Events Committee.

(h) Maintain contact with the local teacher’s assistant union, UAW #2865
Section 3.9 Other Duties

(a) Officers shall serve as members of the Executive Council.

(b) Members of the Executive Council shall attend Assembly meetings.

(c) The duties of one Executive Council Officer, in addition to the Vice Chair, shall also include serving as a graduate representative to the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate.

(d) The Chair or the Treasurer shall have discretion to disburse Association funds in amounts no larger than one hundred dollars at one time, nor larger than two hundred dollars per academic quarter without further consultation with the Executive Council or the Assembly, provided that the expenditures are made in accordance with the guidelines of the Association annual budget. Any expenditure made in accordance with the provision of the By-Law shall be reported to the Executive Council.

(e) Members of the Executive Council will provide direction to office staff.

Section 3.10 Hiring and Terminating

The hiring and terminating decisions of the Association are the responsibility of the Executive Council. The screening and interviewing of applicants shall be handled by a Hiring and Screening Committee, composed of the Association Chair and two other Assembly members appointed by the Executive Council. This committee shall recommend a candidate to the Executive Council after reviewing applications and interviewing the most qualified applicants. The Executive Council shall evaluate the recommendation and make the final decision on whom the Association shall hire. The initiation of the termination process of an employee of the Association shall be started by the Chair only after two-thirds of the Executive Council agrees to such action. Before such action is taken, the employee shall be given written notice of the impending initiation of the termination process.

Article IV Committees

Section 4.1

The Association shall actively seek to staff committees from among the entire graduate student body by making specific information about each committee available and by providing a forum that will facilitate recruitment. Acceptable committees include recognized Association, campus, or System-wide committees, as approved by the Executive Council. Committee members should report all relevant issues discussed to the Assembly.

Section 4.2
The Standing Committees of the Assembly shall be: Chair’s Advisory, External Affairs, Vice Chair’s Advisory, Treasurer’s Advisory, Secretary’s Advisory, Public Relations, Award for Excellence in Service to Graduate Students, Travel Awards, Bylaws, and Elections.

(a) The members of each committee shall assist the committee chair in performing the committee’s duties.

(b) The size of each committee shall be determined by the Executive Council, based on the needs of the committee chair, unless specified in these Bylaws.

Section 4.3

Other internal committees may be appointed by the Chair or a vote of the Assembly.

Article V Executive Appointed Event/Project Coordinator Positions

Section 5.1 Appointment, term of office, and conditions of termination

(a) Appointments shall be made by the Executive Council.

(b) Appointments with an associated stipend must be confirmed by a majority vote of the Assembly.

(c) All appointments shall last no longer than one year, and shall end no later than June 30th.

(d) Appointees are required to maintain their enrolled status or an approved "Planned Education Leave Program" (PELP) to continue in a paid appointment.

(e) Appointments may be terminated via a majority vote of the Executive Council with confirmation by the General Assembly if, upon review, appointee(s) is/are not performing their designated duties in a timely manner. The termination notification is to be coordinated with and prepared by the Student Affairs Vice Chancellor’s Office.

Section 5.2 Responsibilities of all Appointed Event Coordinators

(a) To work with Office Coordinator to obtain supplies and reservations necessary to organize the assigned event, and

(b) To inform the graduate student and campus community of the event.

(c) Appointees are not members of the Executive Council.
Section 5.3

The duties of the Assistant Public Relations Officer (PRO) shall be:

(a) To coordinate the activities related to the Association Coffee-Bagel-Donut Day including obtaining necessary supplies and coordinating any on campus departments that are involved in the event, and

(b) To work directly with the Public Relations Officer to plan and host Association events, and

(c) To be a member of the Public Relations and Events Committee.

(d) The Assistant PRO will be paid a “by-agreement” fixed monthly rate (the amount to be determined by the GA-approved budget line item for any given year) for nine months (October through June) for his/her services.

Article VI Department Fund

Section 6.1

The Department Fund is established to promote cultural and professional activities for all students within graduate degree programs and to encourage participation in the Assembly.

Section 6.2

The annual Department Fund budget shall be at least four dollars and fifty cents times the total Association membership.

Section 6.3

Association membership and Total Association membership shall be derived from the same enrollment figures used to allocate representatives as outlined in the Association Constitution, Article IV, Section B.

Section 6.4

One third of the annual Department Fund budget shall be distributed each quarter.

Section 6.5
(a) The students within a graduate degree program will become eligible for an allotment from the fund for a given quarter if the program has properly registered representatives with the Association, and has sent one of those representatives to at least one Assembly meeting.

(b) At the direction of the Treasurer, representatives must register each year after the Treasurer calculates the number of seats allotted each graduate program in the assembly.

Section 6.6
Changes in official representation for the purposes of Department Fund allotments must conform to registration procedures established in the Association Constitution.

Section 6.7
Department Fund allocations shall occur automatically at the end of each quarter. There shall be no additional application process beyond that described in these By-Laws.

Section 6.8
Department Fund allotments shall consist of two components 1. An Attendance Award and 2. A “Remainder” award.

Section 6.9
Attendance awards shall be $10 for each “rep-attendance.” A “rep-attendance” is defined as a single, registered representative attending a single Assembly meeting. The number of Assembly meetings per quarter counting towards Department Funds shall not exceed the minimum number of Assembly meetings per quarter dictated in these By-laws.

Section 6.10
“Remainder” awards in each quarter shall be the product of each qualifying group’s Association members and a dollar amount set by the Treasurer such that the entire quarter’s Department Fund is distributed.

Section 6.11
All expenditures from Department Fund allotments must conform to University policy governing the use of University funds, U.C. Davis Policy and Procedure Manual, Section 330. Receipts for purchases using Department Fund allotments must be retained by the graduate student group for five years and are subject to audit by the Treasury Committee as necessary to investigate cases of alleged misappropriation.
Fund purchase receipts may be stored in the Association office in a manner to be set by the Association Treasurer.

Section 6.12

Cases of alleged misappropriation of allocated funds must be submitted in writing to the Treasury Committee. The Committee may, after consulting with all parties involved, recommend to the Assembly that the organization be suspended from Fund participation for no longer than one year. All final decisions concerning the suspension of an organization are left to the discretion of the Assembly.

Article VII Travel Awards

Section 7.1

The Association Graduate Student Travel Awards shall be granted biannually, in order to assist Association members with travel, lodging, registration fees, and other expenses associated with the attending of professional development meetings or presenting research at scientific or educational conferences.

Section 7.2

The applicant must be a current member of the Association. Recipients of concurrent grants from the Office of Graduate Studies are ineligible for Association Travel Awards.

Section 7.3

Travel Award recipients shall be selected by the Travel Awards Committee of the Association, and the awards shall be administered by the Association office coordinator.

Section 7.4

The Travel Awards Committee shall consist of the Treasurer and at least four other graduate students. The Travel Awards Committee should include at least one representative from each of the primary discipline areas of the University.

Article VIII Special Projects

Section 8.1

Applications for the allocation of the Graduate Student Association funds for special projects shall first be reviewed by the Executive Council for recommendations before they are put on the floor of the assembly.
The General Assembly will have final voting authority over the allocation of these funds. If the project is of program concern, the applicant shall pursue matching funds from his or her department and/or provide a letter of support from the Graduate Advisor. In no case may an Association grant exceed two thousand dollars.

**Article IX  Award for Excellence in Service to Graduate Students**

**Section 9.1**

This award, to be annually presented to one or more members of the UC Davis staff, faculty, or administration, will include a plaque and a gift, approximately $250.00 in value, to be chosen by the Vice Chair in consultation with the recipient’s nominator.

**Section 9.2**

The nomination form will be made available online and/or in hard copy by January of every year.

**Section 9.3**

Graduate Students may make nominations for the “Award for Excellence in Service to Graduate Students” by submitting a completed nomination form and supporting documents to the Association Office by the deadline. The deadline will be early in March and will be set each year by the Vice Chair.

**Section 9.4**

The Vice Chair will form a selection committee of five Association representatives from across the disciplines to select no more than two Award recipients.

**Section 9.5**

The selection committee shall use the following criteria to select award recipients:

i. Promotes and supports both graduate students’ academic achievement and personal wellbeing;

ii. Provides support that reaches a broad audience and has a significant impact on individual students; and

iii. Contributes in ways that are above and beyond the scope and duties of the nominee’s position.

**Section 9.6**
The Vice Chair will present the name(s) of the recommended award recipients to the Assembly. The Assembly shall confirm the selection by a majority vote.

**Section 9.7**

The award will be presented at the June meeting or another Association function.