UC Davis Graduate Student Association By-Laws

Revised March 24th, 2015*

Article I. Assembly Meetings

Section 1.01
The Assembly shall meet at least three times an academic quarter to review the actions of the Executive Council and to transact such business as is appropriate.

Section 1.02
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 1.03
The Association shall follow Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised for procedures not outlined in the Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 1.04
The UC Davis Policy and Procedure Manual shall supersede the GSA By-Laws and the GSA Constitution.

Article II. Elections

Section 2.01 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.
(b) The interpretation and enforcement of these codes is the responsibility of the Elections Committee.

Section 2.02 Elections Committee
(a) During the Fall quarter, the Assembly shall elect five Association members to serve on the Elections Committee.
   i. The Elections Committee membership shall be comprised of one Executive Council member and four non-officer Association members.
   ii. Elections Committee members should be from different disciplines representative of the General Assembly.

*Approved 4/1/15 by the General Assembly
(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 on a regular and timely basis.

(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) In the event of a vacancy the Chairperson may appoint a replacement.

(e) Elections Committee members are prohibited from running for an executive office.

(f) The Elections Committee shall verify the eligibility of all candidates, oversee the integrity of all elections, any and all advertising, the layout, counting, and storage of any ballots, and certify all election results.

Section 2.03 Annual Executive Council Elections

(a) Nominations and Candidacy
   i. All candidates for Association Executive Council must be members of the General Membership in good standing, based on the student’s cumulative GPA, at the time of election, and, must maintain membership throughout their term if elected.
   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 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 train with and assist the outgoing Executive Council. Officers-elect shall take office on July 1.

ix. The Elections Committee shall count the votes 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.

(c) Vacancies

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

ii. Nominations shall be open immediately following the vacancy.

iii. Officers-elect shall take office immediately upon a majority vote of the Assembly.

iv. All other procedures follow Section 2.03 a-b.

Section 2.04 Ballot Measures

(a) Examples of Ballot Measures include mandatory fee measures or referenda 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) 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.

(c) Plebiscites
   i. The Assembly may sponsor a referendum if the Assembly wishes to know the opinion of the General Membership about an issue.
   ii. A referendum may be placed on the ballot by a majority vote of the Assembly.
   iii. The Assembly shall approve the referendum wording on the ballot.

(d) Elections
   i. The Elections Committee shall be responsible for conducting any 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 3.01
   (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 12 weeks. The Assembly, by majority vote, may appoint a member to serve as a pro tempore officer without stipend during the leave of absence.
   (c) In the event of an Executive Council Vacancy refer to section 2.03 c

Section 3.02 Chair

The duties of the Chair shall be to:
   (a) Prepare the agenda and conduct meetings of the Assembly and the Executive Council,
   (b) Supervise the routine operations of the Association services,
   (c) Serve as liaison between the Association and University Administrators,
   (d) Serve as a liaison to the Davis community
   (e) Correspond with the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, and Deans concerning the activities and interests of the Association,
(f) 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),

(g) Maintain communication with Student Governments and graduate student organizations on Campus, and

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

Section 3.03 Vice Chair

The duties of the Vice Chair shall be to:

(a) Assist the Chair in serving as liaison between the Association and Administrators of the University,

(b) Serve as a representative on the Graduate Council of the Academic Senate and report to the Assembly as needed,

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

(d) Appoint Association members to joint student government committees to resolve issues of mutual concern,

(e) Assist graduate students with any grievances and be aware of the agencies or individuals in the campus community who can assist students with problems and to appoint an ombuds, if necessary, to help in this role,

(f) 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, in particular by chairing the Award for Excellence in Service to Graduate Students Committee,

(g) Assist the Office of Graduate Studies in coordinating the Graduate Ally Coalition, including recruitment, training, and coordinating support, and

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

Section 3.04 External Chair

The duties of the External Chair shall be to:

(a) Serve as the delegate of the Assembly to organizations for which the assembly maintains membership,

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

(c) Assist the Chair in maintaining relations with student organizations,

(d) Communicate regularly with the President and System-wide administrators of the University,

(e) 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,

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

(g) Attend the UC Davis-City of Davis liaison commission meetings,
(h) Review with the Executive Council and Assembly the items presented and discussed at the
aforementioned meetings
(i) Serve on the External Affairs Committee, and
(j) Oversee the responsibilities of the Assistant External Chair Officer.

Section 3.05 Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer shall be to:

(a) Present to the Assembly a summary of the financial activities of the Association at every meeting,
(b) Prepare the current year’s budget for presentation at the first Assembly Meeting,
(c) Prepare a preliminary budget for the following year to guide the Treasurer-elect, to be presented
   at the May meeting,
(d) Represent the Association in financial dealings with the University and other campus
   organizations,
(e) Represent the Association on the Student Services and Fees Advisory Committee,
(f) Compute annually Association membership for the purposes of determining the number of
   Assembly Representatives for each graduate program committee,
(g) 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,
(h) Hear all grievances that may arise in the administration of the funds and to make
   recommendations to the Executive Council concerning their adjudication,
(i) Review and periodically update the administrative procedures of the funds,
(j) Chair the Travel Awards Committees, and
(k) Convene and chair as necessary the Treasurer’s Advisory Committee.

Section 3.06 Secretary

The duties of the Secretary shall be to:

(a) Keep minutes and record attendance of the Assembly and Executive Council,
(b) Distribute the minutes of Assembly meetings to the Representatives prior to the following
    Assembly meeting,
(c) Make public and readily available all minutes and agendas,
(d) Chair the By-Laws committee,
(e) Serve as custodian and publisher of all Assembly documents, and
(f) Convene and chair as necessary the Secretary’s Advisory Committee.

Section 3.07 Public Relations Officer

The duties of the Public Relations Officer shall be to:

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

(b) Coordinate social, academic, student forum, or other events not already specified,

(c) Promote community service events and projects for the GSA,

(d) Chair the Public Relations and Events Advisory Committee, and

(e) Oversee the responsibilities of the Assistant Public Relations Officer and Coffee-Bagel-Donut Day.

Section 3.08 Campus Organizing Director

The duties of the Campus Organizing Director shall be to:

(a) Organize and lead the annual Interdisciplinary Graduate and Professional Student symposium (IGPS),

(b) Form and chair volunteer committees to assist with the planning and execution of IGPS,

(c) Promote student wellness by organizing events and participating in relevant committees, and

(d) Maintain contact with the local teacher’s assistant union, UAW #2865.

Section 3.09 Other Duties

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

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

(c) An Executive Council member should attend each of the following committees/organizations: the Cal Aggie Alumni Association Board of Directors, Graduate Council of the Academic Senate (in addition to the Vice Chair) and SHIP committee. Any requests for Executive Council representation from newly formed committees or outside organizations should be divided as the Executive Council sees fit.

(d) The Chair and 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.

(f) A majority vote from the Executive Council may add items to the assembly agenda and determine priority of the agenda items.

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 4.01

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 4.02

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

(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 By-Laws.

Section 4.03

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

Article V. Executive Appointed Event/Project Coordinator Positions

Section 5.01 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" (PELP) to continue in a paid position.

(e) Appointments may be terminated by 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 5.02 Responsibilities of all Appointed Event Coordinators

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

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

(c) Appointees are not members of the Executive Council.
Section 5.03

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.

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

(a) 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,

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

(c) Serve as a member of the Public Relations and Events Committee.

Section 5.04

The Assistant External Chair 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.

The duties of the Assistant External Chair Officer shall be to:

(a) Work directly with the External Chair, advocating for graduate student concerns,

(b) Be a member of the External Affairs Committee, and

(c) Serve on committees with or in lieu of the External Chair.

Article VI. Department Fund

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 6.01 Budget

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

(b) 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 6.02 Allocation

(a) One third of the annual Department Fund budget shall be distributed each academic quarter.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

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

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

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.

“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 6.03 Audits

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. Department Fund purchase receipts may be stored in the Association office in a manner to be set by the Association Treasurer.

Section 6.04 Misuse

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. Special Projects and Awards

Section 7.01 Special Projects

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 Treasurer shall report the remaining sum in the Special Projects Fund to the Assembly alongside the application. 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 one thousand dollars.

Section 7.02 Travel Awards

The Graduate Student Association 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.

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) 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.

Section 7.03 Award for Excellence in Service to Graduate Students

This award, to be annually presented to one or two 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.

(a) Graduate Students may make nominations for the Award 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.

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

(c) The Vice Chair will form a selection committee of five graduate students to include at least one representative from each of the primary discipline areas of the University.

(d) 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;

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

   iv. Has not already received the award in the past three years.

(e) 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.

(f) The award will be presented at the annual IGPS awards dinner.