

Sociology Graduate Students Association Constitution

Preamble and Mission Statement

The group exists at the University of Alberta for the purpose of promoting its mission and goals and providing students with the opportunity for involvement, leadership, service, and professional experience.

ARTICLE I: Name and Purpose

I.I Name

The Student Group has a name, under which it is officially registered with Student Group Services (SGS). It will hereinafter be referred to as “the Group”.

I.II Compliance

The Group operates at the University of Alberta, subject to University of Alberta and Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) policies and procedures. The Group will also comply with all local, provincial, and federal laws and procedures.

I.III Mission and Goals

The Group operates for the purpose of achieving its goals and realizing its mission at the University of Alberta.

The goals of the Group shall be:

- i. to represent its members, ii. to develop, design, and organize programs that promote the interest of members, iii. to liaise with Graduate Students’ Association and other student bodies, iv. to provide leadership and focus to group members, v. to provide recreation and fellowship to group members, vi. to provide a meeting place for the consideration and discussion of questions affecting the interests of members, vii. to disseminate information, viii. to provide a peer support group for members, ix. to promote and protect the interest of the membership.

ARTICLE II: Membership and Eligibility

II.I Membership Membership in the Group is automatic for all current graduate students registered in Sociology at the University of Alberta. Members of the Group are eligible to participate in meetings, run for positions, and vote in elections.

- i. General Members: a General Member is defined as any student who is registered as a graduate student in the department. General Members are able to vote on all group matters.
- ii. Executive Members: an Executive Member is defined as any member who is elected to an executive position or who is appointed to temporarily assume the duties of a vacant executive position, while that individual is in that role. Executive Members are able to vote on all group matters.

II.II Membership Dues

The Group will not charge for membership status.

ARTICLE III: Elections

III.I Eligibility

- i. In order to be eligible to run and hold office as an Executive Member, an individual must be a General Member of the group who will not be graduating before the end of their term.
- ii. In order to be eligible to vote in an election, an individual must be a General or Executive Member of the Group.

III.II Elections of Executive Members

General elections are held in April annually. The GSA will be responsible for calling for nominations and running an online election. The GSA will provide candidates and voting members with information on the elections and all associated procedures. The Group will set policy on campaigning.

III.III Nomination and Election Procedures

i. Nomination and Election procedure will follow the GSA's regular process for external bodies, which is to send out two (2) calls for nominations in advance of an election. If only one (1) nomination is received at the close of the second call for nominations, that person will be declared elected. If more than one (1) nomination is received, the GSA will arrange an online election for all graduate students in the department. ii. All eligible members will be given the opportunity to vote by secret ballot. The voting instructions will be determined by the GSA and communicated via email to all Members on the deadline to receive nominations. iii. Candidates will be declared elected by receiving a simple majority vote of all who voted. Results will be communicated by the GSA via email to all Members. iv. The term of office for Executive Members begins the day election results are announced and ends after the next election, when new representatives are announced.

III.IV Appeals and By-Elections

i. A candidate or General Member may appeal election results within seven (7) calendar days of the announcement of results. Appeals should be made to the Executive Committee in place prior to the disputed election. ii. Should an executive position not be filled or become vacant, the Executive Committee shall, with 2/3 of the Executive Committee Members in support (using normal rounding), appoint a member to that position. If the Executive Committee is comprised only of the four (4) positions noted by title in Article IV.I, Executive Committee, a 3/4 majority is required.

ARTICLE IV: Executive Committee

IV.I Executive Committee

The Executive Committee will be comprised of: President, Treasurer, Events Co-ordinator, the GSA Councillor, and the Department Liaison.

IV.II Duties of Executive Committee Members

i. The President will set strategic direction for the Group and is the Chair of the Executive Committee. The President acts as the main point of contact for all external organizations, possesses signing authority on the group bank account, approves group expenses, and is the primary media contact. The President is responsible for organizing all of the Group's meeting times and dates, and to give members reasonable notice for all meetings (see Article VII.I). The President must also complete annual training with SGS as part of the registration

requirement as outlined in the UAPPOL Student Group Procedure. The President will be responsible for completing the Group's registration process with SGS by the end of the month following their election month.

ii. The Treasurer is responsible for creating and presenting group budgets. The Treasurer will possess signing authority on the group's bank account, and will be responsible for handling group funds, making regular cash deposits, and approving expenses. The Treasurer will curate the group's financial records in compliance with Article VI. The Treasurer will also be responsible for keeping minutes of all Group meetings and disseminating the meeting's minutes to members. The Treasurer must also complete annual training with SGS as part of the registration requirement as outlined in the UAPPOL Student Group Procedure.

iii. The Events Co-ordinator is responsible for establishing and maintaining contact with external organizations, partners, and affiliates. The Events Co-ordinator is responsible for updating and managing the Group's website, social media, and other communications. The Events Co-ordinator will be responsible for keeping up to date on University of Alberta risk management policy and receiving approval for all group events. The Events Co-ordinator must also complete annual training with SGS as part of the registration requirement as outlined in the UAPPOL Student Group Procedure.

iv. The GSA Councillor is responsible for attending all GSA Council meetings. The GSA Councillor is responsible for ensuring an alternate attends GSA Council meetings if the GSA Councillor is unable to attend. The GSA Councillor is responsible for reporting GSA Council action and decisions to the Group. The GSA Councillor is responsible for liaising between the GSA Council and the Group.

v. The Department Liaison is responsible for establishing and maintaining contact with the Group's members, with particular attention to incoming members. The Department Liaison should make themselves available to members of the Group to discuss any questions, concerns, or conflicts as they arise in the graduate programme or through graduate assistantship (GA) responsibilities. The Department Liaison is responsible for answering questions from members in a timely manner regarding the graduate programme or GA and, if necessary, setting a meeting time to discuss the matter in person. The Department Liaison is responsible for liaising between the members and the Department, and may be responsible for advocating for the interests of members with the Department or Graduate Chair if necessary.

vi. Additional elected representatives may be added to the Executive Committee as necessary at the discretion of the Group. Additional duties may include but are not limited to keeping track of current membership, liaising with GSA in regard to elections, transition of new executives, and providing additional support to executives when necessary.

IV.III Expulsion and Impeachment

i. If an Executive Member fails to fulfill the duties of their position, any General or Executive Member may petition the Executive Committee for their impeachment. The President or Treasurer is responsible for presenting the evidence to the Group's membership at a Special Meeting. The Executive Member complained about will have a chance to respond. An impeachment vote requires a 2/3 majority (using normal rounding) of those voting.

ARTICLE V: Committees

V.I Committees

The Executive Committee may form additional committees as required.

ARTICLE VI: Finances

VI.I Fiscal Timelines

i. The Group's fiscal year runs from March 1 to February 28. ii. The Treasurer will make deposits regularly or when an amount greater than \$500 has accumulated in the cash box. iii. Bank statements, receipts, grant reports, and other financial documents are to be kept in a secure location for six (6) years before being shredded.

VI.II Budgets

The Treasurer is responsible for creating and presenting the upcoming fiscal year's budget to the Executive Committee. Upon Executive Committee approval (constituted by a 2/3 majority (using normal rounding), or, if the Executive Committee is comprised only of the four (4) positions noted by title in Article IV.I, Executive Committee, a 3/4 majority is required), the proposed budget will be distributed to the General Membership electronically. This communication shall determine whether Members wish to vote on the budget electronically or hold a Special Meeting.

If at least 15% of the General Membership requests a Special Meeting, it must be held after giving seven (7) calendar days notice to the Membership. The quorum for the Special Meeting shall be 40% of the General Membership. If quorum is not reached there will be an automatic

electronic vote. At the Special Meeting, the proposed budget must receive a 2/3 majority (using normal rounding) in order to be approved.

If the electronic voting method is chosen, the proposed budget must receive a 2/3 majority (using normal rounding) of all who voted in order to be approved. The GSA can run an electronic vote if the Group so requests.

The GSA is willing to assist with budget issues wherever it can.

VI.III Expenses and Reimbursement

i. The Treasurer and President must approve all expenses under the Group's name prior to any funds changing hands. ii. Members may be reimbursed for approved expenses by cheque as long as their reimbursement requests are made, with original receipts, within fourteen (14) calendar days of the transaction.

ARTICLE VII: Meetings

VII.I Meetings

i. All meetings will run in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order ii. Executive Committee Meetings will normally be held monthly. General Members may attend as observers. The President will disseminate a Notice of Meeting directly to General Members five (5) calendar days prior to the meeting date. Quorum for Executive Committee Meetings is 2/3 of the Executive Members (using normal rounding). If the Executive Committee is comprised only of the four (4) positions noted by title in Article IV.I, Executive Committee, a 3/4 majority is required.

VII.II Annual General Meeting

i. The Annual General Meeting will be held in April of every year. All members will be notified in writing seven (7) calendar days prior. The quorum for the Annual General Meeting shall be 40% of the General Membership. If quorum is not reached and any voting on items is required, there will be an automatic electronic vote. Items voted on at the Annual General Meeting must receive a 2/3 majority (using normal rounding) in order to be approved.

VII.III Special

Meetings

Special Meetings may be called for impeachment, dissolution, and budget review. Amendments to the Constitution require a Special Meeting to be called, except for amendments required by SGS, as stated below. A Notice of Special Meeting will be directly communicated to General Members five (5) calendar days prior to the meeting date.

ARTICLE VIII: Amendments to the Constitution

Any General or Executive Member can propose amendments to the Constitution by submitting a request to the President for a Special Meeting to consider those amendments. Voting will take place at the Special Meeting and 3/4 of the members present must vote in favour of the amendment for it to be passed.

Constitutional Amendments required by SGS can be approved during Executive Committee Meetings. These amendments require a 2/3 majority vote from the Executive Committee. If the Executive Committee is comprised only of the four (4) positions noted by title in Article IV.I, Executive Committee, a 3/4 majority is required.

ARTICLE IX: Dissolution

IX.I

Dissolution

The group may be dissolved by a 2/3 majority vote at a Special Meeting convened for the purpose of which ninety (90) days notice must have been given in writing to all members. The group is automatically dissolved upon membership dropping below ten (10) members. Upon dissolution, the Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring that any remaining financial resources are donated to a registered charity and the bank account is closed down. Any resources or Group assets will be donated to a registered charity where appropriate. The Group's resources or assets will not be distributed to individual members.