

Constitution
Constitution of the
GRADUATE HISTORY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
of York University

Adopted April 9th, 2003.

General

1. This association shall be known as the Graduate History Students' Association (GHSA) of York University.
2. The object of the GHSA shall be the advocacy of the educational and social concerns of its membership.
 - (1) The GHSA shall abide by the standards of student conduct as set out in York University Presidential Regulations.
3. The membership of the GHSA shall consist of all part-time and full-time students duly registered in programmes leading to graduate degrees in History at York University.

Executive

4. The executive of the GHSA shall ordinarily consist of two (2) co-presidents; a vice-president; a treasurer; a secretary; an equity officer and, if applicable, the New Frontiers conference chair.
 - (1) The 2 co-presidents shall have completed successfully the Ph.D. qualifying examinations.
 - (2) At least one member of the executive shall be registered in the Master of Arts programme.
 - (3) The equity officer and at least one of the co-presidents must each be from an equity seeking group, here defined to include women; visibly racialized peoples; lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders; aboriginal peoples; peoples with disabilities; international students; francophones and other non-Anglophones.
5. In general, it shall be the duty of the co-presidents to lead the group and act as the GHSA's public representatives.
 - (1) The co-presidents shall conduct meetings, including:
 - a) executive meetings as required;
 - b) an annual general meeting in September; and
 - c) general membership meetings in January and April, and as required.
6. In general, it shall be the duty of the vice-president to take the place of the co-presidents if one or both is not able to fulfil her or his duties.

7. In general, it shall be the duty of the treasurer to manage the organization's monies, and keep detailed records of the group's financial activities.

- (1) The treasurer shall act as a liaison between the GHSA and the York Graduate Students' Association so as to ensure a smooth transfer of funds to the GHSA.
- (2) The treasurer shall be responsible for any fundraising activities that the membership approves.
- (3) The incoming treasurer shall be elected by the general membership at the end of the winter semester and before the beginning of the new fiscal year.
- (4) In the interest of creating and preserving institutional memory, the treasurer shall be responsible for orienting their successor and ensuring the smooth transition of the organization's portfolio from one year to the next.

8. In general, it shall be the duty of the secretary to record minutes of executive and general membership meetings, and to keep track of the committee requirements of the GHSA.

- (1) The secretary shall circulate publicly the minutes of general membership meetings within two (2) weeks following a meeting.

8.1 In general, it shall be the duty of the equity officer to facilitate and advocate for equity and respect for social and cultural diversity and to work towards an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment within the GHSA executive and membership.

- (1) The equity officer shall coordinate anti-oppression activities for the beginning of the school year.
- (2) The equity officer is a coordinator and resource person for equity information (not grievance officer) and will direct concerned or interested people to the relevant people and services.

9. In general, no member shall hold the same executive position more than once.

Finances

10. All monies accruing to the GHSA shall be held in bank accounts in the name of the Graduate History Students' Association.

- (1) All bank accounts and outgoing cheques shall require the co-signature of two (2) members of the GHSA executive.
- (2) The GHSA shall have no more than three (3) signing officers; preferably two of the co-presidents and the treasurer.

11. The organization's fiscal year shall run from 1 May until 30 April.

- (1) Throughout the fiscal year, the executive, usually represented by the treasurer, shall update the membership on all GHSA financial matters by means of:
 - a) a detailed written report, tabled at the general membership meeting in September, outlining all revenues and expenditures from the previous year;

b) written, up-to-date financial statements in January and April; and oral reports at GHSA executive and general membership meetings, as required.

12. The executive shall ensure that sufficient funds are on hand to fulfil the financial obligations of the GHSA between the semi-annual receipt of funds from the Graduate Students' Association.
13. Any extraordinary expenditure of funds-those which fall outside customary expenses shall be approved by the general membership.

Activities

14. By and with the advice of the general membership, the executive shall plan and organize the functions of the GHSA.

(1) These activities may include, but need not be restricted to the following:

- a) Orientation Day activities;
- b) the Historian's Craft lecture series;
- c) the GHSA book sale; and
- d) end of term parties.

(2) Members resident within reasonable commuting distance of Toronto shall be notified in a timely fashion of all forthcoming events.

15. In general, it shall be the duty of the New Frontiers conference chair(s) to form and lead an organizational committee for the New Frontiers in Graduate History Conference, should the GHSA membership indicate its willingness to host it.

(1) The conference co-chairs shall consist of up to three (3) PhD students, elected in April and entering the second year of their doctoral studies or after in September, and one (1) MA student, elected in September, who will co-ordinate promotions of the conference.

(2) The conference committee shall be responsible for determining all details pertaining to the conference, including dates, locations, themes, registration fees, and so forth.

(3) The conference committee chair shall provide financial and organizational reports concerning the New Frontiers in Graduate History Conference at the general membership meetings in January and April, and as required.

(4) Any extraordinary expenditure of conference funds must be approved by the GHSA membership.

16. The executive shall be responsible for the provision, care, and maintenance of the refrigerator; microwave; coffee urn; office and activity supplies; and any other GHSA property.

Communications

17. The GHSA shall sponsor a journal, entitled *Document*, which shall be published periodically during the school year.

(1) The Journal shall be edited by a maximum of **four (4)** full-time MA and PhD students, who may not and shall not be members of the GHSA executive. At least one editor will be an MA student.

(2) The editors will be free to determine the editorial policy of *Document*.

18. The executive shall ensure that information concerning all forthcoming GHSA events is posted on the GHSA website.

Elections

19. The co-presidents, the equity officer, the treasurer, the editor(s) of *Document*, CUPE unit 1 Stewards and the New Frontiers Conference Chairs shall be nominated from the membership during the general membership meeting at the end of March or April.

20. The other members of the executive shall be nominated from the membership at the annual general meeting in September.

21. In the case that one member of the executive cannot act for an extended period of time, that member shall notify the remaining executive members, who shall then designate one or more members of the GHSA to act in the place of the absent member of the executive.

22. In the event of a request to replace an editor(s) of *Document* and any member of the executive, the GHSA executive must call a meeting. Every effort must be made for all parties involved (i.e. person(s) requesting replacement, all editors of *Document*, all members of the executive) to be present at this meeting, which is a first-step to address the issue(s) in hopes of a solution. If the issue(s) is not resolved, the editor(s) of *Document* and any member of the executive may be replaced by a simple majority vote of those present at a subsequent GHSA meeting, provided that the intention to replace a member of the executive is announced by a petition bearing the signature of 10% (quorum) of the GHSA members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

23. The co-presidents and a volunteer Chief Returning Officer (CRO) shall be responsible for running elections.

(1) The CRO will not seek a position on the incoming executive. They must be approved by the current GHSA executive. In the event the CRO cannot fulfill their duties the co-presidents shall appoint a replacement.

(2) The CRO shall not cast a ballot.

(3) In the event that one of the co-presidents is facing recall, the vice-president or a disinterested executive member shall run the election.

(4) Elections shall be determined by secret ballot using the first-past-the-post system during the week following the nomination meeting.

(5) Voting shall be limited to the first consecutive Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday after the nomination meeting. The times and location will be determined by the co-presidents and posted in the department and on the list-serve.

a) Voting shall be carried out in person during designated voting times.

- b) The location of the polling station must be consistent throughout the duration of the election and be an accessible public space.
- (6) The ballot container shall be constructed in such a way that it can only be opened once.
- (7) The CRO shall tabulate the votes in the presence of the president or co-presidents once the poll has closed on the Thursday. The results shall be announced the Friday morning following poll closure.
- (8) The exact number of votes that each candidate receives shall not be announced, and the ballots shall be destroyed one week after the announcement unless a candidate contests the election. If a position is contested then a recount is done; if there is a tie, then a run-off election is held the following Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

24. Candidates are free to campaign as a slate if they so choose, but their names will appear individually and alphabetically on the ballots, and they shall be elected as individuals.

- (1) Prior to the nomination meeting, candidates may campaign however and by whatever means they choose, provided that the image, reputation, status, and financial circumstances of the GHSA are in no way compromised.
- (2) At the nomination meeting, each candidate will be permitted to give an election speech that shall be no more than five minutes in length. Descriptions of candidates and their interest in the position shall be accessible at the polling station.
 - a) Candidates' speeches will be followed by a question-and-answer session of approximately 5-10 minutes.

25. The decision of the Chief Returning Officer shall be final.

Constitution

27. This constitution will be posted on the GHSA website, and will be printed in the school year's first issue of *Document*.

28. This constitution may be amended by a simple majority vote of a meeting comprised of a quorum of ten per cent (10%) of the general membership, provided that the intention to amend and the proposed amendments are announced in writing to the membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.

Amended April 2004

Amended April 25, 2005

Amended Feb14/Mar 26, 2008