

The Constitution of the Graduate Students' Council of Sociology at UBC

Article I: Name and Purpose

Section 1. Name

The name of the organization shall be "The Graduate Students' Council of Sociology at the University of British Columbia", hereinafter referred to as the GSCS.

Section 2. Purpose

The objectives of the GSCS are:

- (a) to promote the interests of sociology graduate students both individually and collectively; and
- (b) to foster a sense of community among sociology graduate students.

Article II: Membership

Section 1. Eligibility

The membership consists of all full-time and part-time MA and PhD students who have been formally admitted to the Department of Sociology, and Special Students in the Department of Sociology as classified by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Section 2. Classes of Membership

GSCS members are classified into two groups:

- (a) "Active Members" are all members who are currently enrolled at the University of British Columbia. These members have voting privileges.
- (b) "Associate Members" are all members with lapsed registration at the University of British Columbia. These members do not have voting privileges.

Section 3. Admitting and Expelling Members

All eligible students automatically become members of the GSCS immediately upon being formally admitted to the Department of Sociology. Any eligible student who does not wish to be a member of the GSCS must provide a written statement to the GSCS executive in order to annul his/her membership. Membership in the GSCS expires immediately once a student is no longer eligible, that is, once a student is no longer a formal member of the Department of Sociology.

Article III: Membership Dues

The GSCS has no membership dues.

Article IV: Core Executive Members of Council

Section 1. Titles

The Core Executive of the GSCS consists of the following members, who retain their full voting privileges:

- (a) President/Co-Presidents (1 or 2 positions)
- (b) Vice President – Administration
- (c) Vice President – External
- (d) Vice-President – Finance

Section 2. Duties and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Core Executive members are as follows:

- (a) President/Co-Presidents
 - a. The President/Co-presidents are responsible for
 - i. calling and chairing all GSCS meetings;
 - ii. liaising with Head of the Department on behalf of sociology graduate students.
 - iii. attending functions as representatives of sociology graduate students;
 - iv. supporting other GSCS members in their duties and taking on special projects as required;
 - v. mediating all student concerns;
 - vi. working closely with other Council members, Departmental and GSS representatives to ensure that students' concerns are being represented appropriately;
 - vii. facilitating an evaluation of GSCS executives sometime mid-way through their elected term;
 - viii. organizing the annual GSCS elections;
 - ix. mentoring and training the incoming Co-Presidents in the last two months of their term.
 - b. Where possible, one position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS who is a PhD student and one position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS who is an MA student.
- (b) Vice President – Administration
 - a. The Vice President Admin. is responsible for
 - i. recording and disseminating minutes of GSCS meetings;
 - ii. the election process for Chair positions of the GSCS, held at the Fall All General Meeting;
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.
- (c) Vice President – External

- a. The Vice President External is responsible for
 - i. Establishing and maintaining contact with both the Anthropology Graduate Students Association and the Sociology Undergraduate Association.
 - ii. When possible and when invited the VP External will attend meetings for both of these associations, providing information and reporting back to the GSCS.
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS
- (d) Vice President – Finance
- a. The Vice President Finance is responsible for
 - b. Maintaining financial records and ensuring that proper financial followed.
 - c. Co-signing on a financial account at UBC or a Financial Institution of the GSCS choosing.
 - d. Working in conjunction with the Chair of Fundraising in the tracking of funds raised.
 - i. If there is no Chair of Fundraising, then all financial related matters will fall to this position
 - e. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS

Section 3. Selection Procedure

Core Executive members will be selected by election at the GSCS Spring All General Meeting. Active members of the GSCS who wish to present themselves as candidates must declare their intent in writing to the Chair of Elections, during the nomination period commencing the second Monday in March. The nomination period will close on the third Friday in March. The Spring All General Meeting will take place within the last week of March. The Chair of Elections will notify GSCS members of candidates' names via both the GSCS list-serve and the GSCS bulletin board no less than 24 hours after the close of the nomination period. Successful candidates are determined by majority vote of all members who present themselves for voting at the Spring All General Meeting via secret ballot. Active members of the GSCS who are not able to attend the election will be able to vote in advance by contacting the Chair of Elections. In the case where only one candidate presents himself/herself for a given position, he/she will be elected by acclamation.

In the case where a member of the Executive Committee fails to adequately perform his/her duties as defined in Article IV, Section 2, he/she may be impeached when at least 2/3 vote in favor of removing him/her from the GSCS Executive Committee, at either the Fall or Spring All General Meeting, or when a special AGM is called for this purpose.

Any unexpected vacancies, whether due to impeachment or to a member being unable to complete his/her term, will be filled at the next scheduled GSCS meeting. Candidates for vacancies will be invited to announce their candidacy at the meeting and then will be asked to leave the room for voting. Successful candidates are determined by majority vote of all members who attend the meeting. Only members who present themselves at the meeting will be eligible to vote in these cases.

Section 4. Term of Office

All President/Co-Presidents and Vice President members will hold office for twelve months starting the day following the election. All outgoing Core Executive members will assist all incoming Core Executive members for a maximum of two months following the Spring elections.

Article V: Chairs of the GSCS

Section 1. Titles

The Chairs of the GSCS might consist of the following members with the corresponding tasks, which can be modified to fit the needs of the membership each year:

- (a) Chair for Elections
- (b) Chair of Communications
- (c) Chair for Social Events
- (e) Chair for Graduate Students Conference
- (f) Chair for the Mentor Program
- (g) Chair of Fundraising

Note: All Chairs will retain their full voting privileges.

Section 2. Duties and Responsibilities

- (a) Chair for Elections
 - a. The Chair for Elections is responsible for
 - i. Initiating the call for nominations
 - ii. Collecting written nominations and communicating the intent of nominees to the GSCS membership via paper postings and electronic communications.
 - iii. Once the call for nominations is closed the Chair for elections will oversee the designing of a ballot, which will include all the nominees' names and positions they will be running for. These ballots are to be distributed at the Spring All General Meeting.
 - iv. The counting of ballots after voting and declaring a winner in all positions up for election.
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS
- (b) Chair of Communications
 - a. Chair of Communications is responsible for
 - i. maintaining the GSCS board outside of computer lab;

- ii. putting together and distributing a newsletter;
 - iii. maintaining the GSCS website including updating the GSCS executive contact list, downloading the GSCS meeting minutes, etc. in a timely fashion;
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.
- (c) Chair of Social Events
- a. Chair of Social Events is responsible for
 - i. encouraging student participation in departmental events;
 - ii. participating in all departmental events;
 - iii. working with the Graduate Program Coordinator to organize the departmental End of Term Parties/Functions;
 - iv. organizing regular social, sporting or cultural events for graduate students.
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.
- (d) Chair for Graduate Students Conference
- a. Chair for Graduate Students Conference is responsible for:
 - i. Heading a planning committee for the development and facilitation of a graduate students conference. This committee will address the areas of Adjudication, Hospitality, Communication and Design.
 - ii. Liaising with the Department Head with regard to possible funds, room bookings and faculty support for this event.
 - iii. Ensuring that all elements of the conference are proceeding and executed in a timely manner.
 - iv. Encouraging all GSCS members to become involved in the conference planning process and volunteer their time to one of the four major areas outlined in section (i).
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.
- (e) Chair for the Mentor Program
- a. The Chair for the Mentor Program is responsible for:
 - i. organizing and ensuring the successful delivery of the GSCS Mentor Program and working with the graduate secretary to this end.
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.
- (f) Chair of International Students Sub-Committee
- a. The Chair of International Students Sub-Committee is responsible for:
 - i. Meeting with International Students who are GSCS members and ensuring their voice is heard at the GSCS meetings.
 - ii. Providing an opportunity to for new initiatives that will enrich the experience of International Students within the Sociology Department.
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.
- (g) Chair of Fundraising
- a. The Chair of Fundraising is responsible for:

- i. organizing opportunities for raising funds that will be used for GSCS related activities.
 - ii. work in conjunction with the VP. Finance. in the tracking of funds raised.
- b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.

Section 3. Selection Procedure

Chairs of the GSCS will be selected by election at the GSCS Fall All General Meeting. Active members of the GSCS who wish to present themselves as candidates must declare their intent to the GSCS members present at the Fall AGM. Successful candidates are determined by majority vote of all members who present themselves for voting at the Fall AGM. Active members of the GSCS who are not able to attend this meeting will not be able to vote. In the case where only one candidate presents himself/herself for a given position, he/she will be elected by acclamation.

Any unexpected vacancies, whether due to impeachment (See Article IV, section 3) or to a member being unable to complete his/her term, will be filled at the next scheduled GSCS meeting. Candidates for vacancies will be invited to announce their candidacy at the meeting and then will be asked to leave the room for voting. Successful candidates are determined by majority vote of all members who attend the meeting. Only members who present themselves at the meeting will be eligible to vote in these cases.

Section 4. Term of Office

All GSCS members elected to Chair positions will hold their positions from the day following the election until the date of the election at the Fall AGM the following year, except in the case of unexpected vacancies.

Article VI: Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

GSCS members are represented on the following standing committees:

- (a) The Department of Sociology faculty meeting—Departmental Level (1 position)
- (b) The Sociology Graduate Student Committee—Program/Planning (1 position)
- (c) The Graduate Students' Society (1 position and 1 alternate).
- (d) Equity committee (As needed)

Section 2. Ad Hoc Committees

GSCS members will be represented at the Department of Sociology faculty meeting following campus interviews for new hires, which is formed on an ad hoc basis when new faculty members are being selected. GSCS sub-committees may also be formed on an ad hoc basis to focus on

specific initiatives or issues.

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of committee members are as follows:

- (a) Department of Sociology Faculty Meeting
 - a. The Department of Sociology Faculty Meeting Representatives are responsible for
 - i. attending all Departmental committee meetings;
 - ii. eliciting feedback from the sociology graduate student body to take to the Departmental committee;
 - iii. advocating for the concerns of graduate students at Departmental meetings and reporting important information back to GSCS members.

- (b) Sociology Graduate Student Committee Meeting
 - a. The Sociology Graduate Student Committee Representative is responsible for
 - i. attending all SGSC committee meetings;
 - ii. eliciting feedback from the sociology graduate student body to take to the SGSC committee;
 - iii. advocating for the concerns of graduate students at SGSC meetings and reporting important information back to (Council) GSCS members.
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.

- (c) Graduate Students' Society Representatives
 - a. The Graduate Students' Society Representatives are responsible for
 - i. attending all GSS meetings as representatives of sociology graduate students;
 - ii. reporting key points and important information back to sociology graduate students;
 - iii. eliciting feedback from the sociology graduate student body to take to the GSS;
 - iv. subscribing to and monitoring any newsgroups organized by the GSS and reporting important information to GSCS members;
 - v. facilitating necessary meetings between students in the department and members of the GSS executive.
 - b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.

- (d) Equity committee (As needed)
 - a. The Equity committee representative is responsible for
 - i. attending all EC committee meetings;
 - ii. eliciting feedback from the sociology graduate student body to take to the EC committee;
 - iii. advocating for the concerns of graduate students at EC meetings and reporting important information back to (Council) GSCS members;

- iv. to liaise with the department and resources on campus for the graduate student body and the GSCS regarding issues of equity (disability, gender, racialization, sexuality, socio-economic status...etc.)
- b. This position will be filled by an active member of the GSCS.

(e) Ad Hoc Committee Members

- a. Ad Hoc Committee Members are responsible for
 - i. attending all meetings as representatives of sociology graduate students;
 - ii. reporting key points and important information back to sociology graduate students;
 - iii. eliciting feedback from the sociology graduate student body and advocating for the interests of sociology graduate students.
- b. These positions will be filled by active member of the GSCS.

Section 3. Selection

GSCS Committee Representatives for all ongoing committees will be selected through the same procedures and hold the same term of office as Chairs of the GSCS, as outlined in Article IV, Sections 3 and 4.

NOTE: Openings on **ad hoc** committees will be announced at GSCS meetings and interested members will be invited to announce their candidacy. These candidates will be asked to leave the room for voting. Successful candidates are determined by majority vote of all members who attend the meeting. Only members who present themselves at the meeting will be eligible to vote in these cases.

Article VII: Meetings

Section 1. Types of Meetings

There will be two types of GSCS meetings:

- (a) The GSCS All General Meeting will be held twice a year, once in the Fall, no later than the 30th of September, and in the Spring, no later than March 30th. GSCS elections for Core Executive positions will be held at the Spring AGM and all Chair and Committee Reps will be selected at the Fall AGM. GSCS members will be notified of this event no less than two weeks prior to the scheduled date, in order to allow for a maximum number of attendees; and
- (b) GSCS Meetings will be held as required at the discretion of the Co-Presidents, but no less than once everyday two months during the Fall and Winter terms. GSCS members will be notified of these meetings no less than one week prior to the scheduled date.

Section 2. Meeting Procedures

All meetings will be called by the GSCS Co-Presidents, who will also chair the meetings. Members will be notified of these meetings both through the Soci Grad List (list-serve) and by a posting on the GSCS White board in the lounge. An agenda for each meeting will be circulated through the list-serve no less than 24 hours in advance of the meeting. A quorum of 5 members is

required for a meeting to take place.

Section 3. Meeting Minutes

Minutes of all meetings will be made available to all members no more than two weeks after the meeting. Minutes will be both circulated through the GSCS list-serve and posted on the GSCS Blog. All members will have one week to respond the minutes of the meeting; all concerns should be addressed to the GSCS Executive.

Article VIII: Amendments to the Constitution

Section 1. Procedures

All amendments to the GSCS Constitution must be made at the Annual General Meeting or another Extraordinary General Meeting. Proposed amendments will be both circulated through the Soci Grad List (list-serve) and posted on the Blog no less than 48 hours prior to the meeting. All amendments require a vote of 2/3 of those active members present at the meeting.

Article IX: Grievances

Section 1. Addressing Grievances

All grievances must be addressed to either one of the Co-Presidents or to the Vice Present – Administration.

Section 2. Procedures

All grievances will be handled by two members of the Executive. Every grievance brought forward to a member(s) of the Executive shall be dealt with in a confidential and ethical manner. Failure to do so may result in impeachment. In the event that the member of the Executive to whom the grievance is addressed finds himself/herself in a conflict of interest situation, he/she may request that the grievance be handled by another member of the Executive.

APPENDIX (April 2008):

In July 2007, Family Studies became a part of the Department of Sociology. To this end, all Family Studies students are and will be considered full members of the department, including the Graduate Student's Council of Sociology. As full members, Family Studies graduate students are eligible to vote and hold various positions within the GSCS and are encouraged to participate in creating a dynamic departmental community.

Address all correspondence to:

Graduate Student's Council of Sociology
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Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1

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