

August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023



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EAST TENNESSEE STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL  
STUDENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

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ETSU Student Organization

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We, the members of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA), at East Tennessee State University, united in our commitment to academic excellence, professional growth, and community engagement, do hereby establish this constitution to govern our organization's activities and promote the welfare of our fellow graduate and professional students.

### **Article I: Name and Purpose**

SECTION 1. NAME: This organization shall be known as the Graduate and Professional Student Association (here-after referred to as GPSA).

SECTION 2. PURPOSE: The purpose of this organization shall be:

- a) To improve the quality of graduate and professional education and student experience at ETSU.
- b) To provide representation of the governance structure of ETSU for all students seeking post-baccalaureate degrees at ETSU.
- c) To act as an orientation service agency for incoming ETSU post-baccalaureate students.
- d) To serve as a source for information about research and graduate study.
- e) To provide travel-related funding to graduate and professional students.
- f) To provide support for the student and professional activities of our members when possible, including:
  - a. Becoming involved in institutional governance and development.
  - b. Participating in student-sponsored activities.
  - c. Maximizing their potential as students, educators, and researchers.
- g) To serve all graduate and professional students enrolled in the School of Graduate Studies, and the School of Continuing Studies and Academic Outreach, including the following colleges:
  - (i) Arts and Sciences
  - (ii) Business & Technology
  - (iii) Clinical & Rehabilitative Health Sciences
  - (iv) Clemmer College
  - (v) Medicine
  - (vi) Nursing
  - (vii) Public Health

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## **Article II: Membership**

SECTION 1. ELIGIBILITY: Full membership in the GPSA shall be open to any person currently enrolled in a post-baccalaureate program at ETSU.

SECTION 2. NON-DISCRIMINATION: The GPSA will not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex/gender, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.

### SECTION 3. REMOVAL

(a) A member may be removed from the GPSA by a majority vote of the Executive Council. Votes for member removal shall be called by any council member upon violation of ETSU student conduct and academic integrity.

## **Article III: Dues**

SECTION 1. DUES: Dues shall be set and are subject to change by a majority vote of the Executive Council. Any changes made will take effect at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

## **Article IV: Elections**

SECTION 1. PRIOR NOTICE: Prior notice of any non-emergency election shall be given to the general membership at least one (1) month in advance. This will give all members time to review their options, and the potential nominees.

SECTION 2. NOMINATIONS: All nominations are to be received at least two (2) weeks before the election is to take place. It is acceptable for a person to nominate themselves. A person may be nominated for more than one position. The secretary shall distribute the list of positions and nominees to the general membership at least one (1) week before the election is to take place. This list shall NOT list who nominated the nominees. Nominations can also be expressed at the final general meeting for the given semester.

SECTION 3. NOMINATION FAILURE: Should no person be nominated for a position; nominations will be re-opened at the meeting. If no person is nominated for that position after nominations are re-opened, the Executive Council is hereby empowered to select a person to fill that position.

SECTION 4. ATTENDANCE OF NOMINEES: Nominees do NOT need to attend the meeting for which nominations are to take place to be elected to the position for which they were nominated.

SECTION 5. VOTING: An email outlining the election procedure shall be constructed by the current executive officers, executive council, graduate student worker, and staff advisor. In the situation that the graduate student worker is nominated for an executive position, the given person will NOT be included in the assembly of the election protocol. Voting occurs via email and is sent to eligible members ONLY. The requirements of eligibility include:

- (a) An application received and on file with the graduate student worker
- (b) Membership dues are fulfilled

Members determined eligible are to submit their vote in correspondence to the email generated by the individuals listed above. The response is time-sensitive (120 hours / 5 total days) and is to occur following the last general meeting for the given semester. The email shall contain information from each

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candidate and is limited to one (1) page in length (12 or 14-point font). Each eligible member shall vote only once. Votes will be counted in the presence of the executive officers, executive council, graduate student worker, and staff adviser. A third-party representative not affiliated with the organization will also be in attendance. The winner of the position will be the person receiving the greatest number of votes. No run-off elections shall take place when voting for a position. In the case of a tie, another vote will be selected among the winners of the first vote.

SECTION 6. MID TERM VACATION OF OFFICE: If a person is forced to vacate their position/office the Executive Council may place someone in that position until the next regularly scheduled election.

### **Article V: Executive Council**

SECTION 1. DUTIES: The Executive Council members shall be responsible for:

- (a) Amending the constitution.
- (b) Maintaining adherence to organizational purpose.
- (c) Advocating for the post-baccalaureate student body within the governing bodies at ETSU.
- (d) Filling non-elected positions, and positions that are temporarily empty.
- (e) Supporting social and professional development events for the GPSA.

SECTION 2. COMPOSITION: When possible, the Executive Council of the GPSA shall be comprised of one representative from each college and school of ETSU. Representatives must be a member of the GPSA. The Executive Council will also include the executive officers in its composition.

SECTION 3. ADVISOR: The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies or her/his designee(s) shall serve as advisor(s) to the GPSA and sit on the Executive Council in a non-voting, advisory capacity.

SECTION 4. GRADUATE STUDENT WORKER: The GPSA Tuition Scholar shall also be a member of this committee. He or she shall have the following duties:

- (a) Maintain and make available the official roster.
- (b) Collect membership dues.
- (c) Publish a monthly newsletter.
- (d) Assist the Executive Council and Executive Officers in the rest of their duties.

SECTION 5. ELECTIONS: Elections shall be held following the last meeting of the general membership when an executive position is empty. Executive Council positions are elected positions and will follow the rules laid out in Article IV.

SECTION 6. TERMS OF OFFICE: There shall be no term limit. A person may hold more than one (1) position or office and may sit on multiple committees.

SECTION 7. REMOVAL: Executive Council members may be removed by a majority vote of the other presiding executive council members if he or she is not fulfilling his/her duties. This vote must be initiated by the presiding office of the committee and performed in a meeting. All Executive Council

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members must be notified of the time, date, location, and agenda of this meeting at least one (1) week in advance.

### **Article VI: Executive Officers**

SECTION 1. POSITIONS: The officers of the GPSA shall consist of:

- (a) The President
- (b) The Vice President
- (c) The Secretary
- (d) The Treasurer

SECTION 2. ELECTIONS: Elections shall be held following the last meeting of the general membership when an executive position is unoccupied. Executive Officer positions are elected positions and will follow the rules laid out in Article IV.

SECTION 3. TERMS OF OFFICE: There shall be no term limit. A person may hold more than one position or office and may sit on multiple committees.

SECTION 4. REMOVAL: Officers are members of the Executive Council and may be removed as laid out in Article V, Section 7.

### **Article VII: Officer Duties**

#### SECTION 1. PRESIDENT

- (a) Insure the smooth functioning of the organization.
- (b) Preside over meetings of the general membership.
- (c) Represent the organization in an official capacity.

#### SECTION 2. VICE PRESIDENT

- (a) Substitute for the President if he/she is unavailable.
- (b) Preside over Executive Council meetings.
- (c) Maintain and oversee GPSA membership during summer semester.

#### SECTION 3. SECRETARY

- (a) Take, keep, and distribute minutes of all meetings.
- (b) Maintain the official calendar.
- (c) Schedule social and professional development events for the GPSA.
- (d) Advertise/market/publicize GPSA sponsored events.

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- (e) Notify members of upcoming meetings and events.

SECTION 4. TREASURER

- (a) Keep and make available the official budget.
- (b) Keep and make available all policies and procedures relating to funding applications.
- (c) Interact with ETSU officials in managing all GPSA funds.
- (d) Preside over Budget Committee meetings.

SECITON 5. ALL EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The Executive officers of the GPSA shall work together to support all other members and duties as needed.

**Article VIII: Budget Committee**

SECTION 1. DUTIES: The Budget Committee shall be responsible for:

- a. Creating a yearly budget.
- b. Reviewing funding applications, and determining the amount of money to award to applicants as laid out in Article X
- c. Placing applicants traveling to the same event in touch with each other and helping them to save money where possible.
- d. Handling any emergency funding measures not covered by the yearly budget.
- e. Lay out and follow any extra policies and procedures for awarding funding.
- f. Insuring that the transportation funding request form is up to date.

SECTION 2. COMPOSITION: The Budget Committee shall be composed of at least four (4) general members and the Treasurer. A budget committee member must abstain from voting on their own funding application.

SECTION 3. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS: If a Budget Committee member is unable to attend a meeting, his/her duties and vote may be temporarily assumed by an Executive Council member.

**Article IX: Ad Hoc**

AD HOC COMMITTEES:

The President may form ad hoc committees as the need arises. These committees shall be composed of members chosen by the President.

**Article X: Funding**

SECTION 1. PER APPLICANT MAXIMUM: The maximum award amount that an active member applicant may receive is \$700 if presenting (\$300 if not presenting), \$800 for the Executive Council,

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\$1,000 for Executive Officers. Furthermore, if the applicant is driving, the maximum per mile reimbursement that he or she may receive shall be set by the ETSU Travel Rates Schedule.

SECTION 2. APPLICATION DEADLINE: All applications must be submitted to the GPSA Budget Committee at least one (1) month before the applicant leaves. This provides the committee with sufficient time to review the application, contact the applicant about any issues on application, and coordinate multiple applicants to reduce overall costs.

SECTION 3. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES: GPSA may reimburse the following expenses involved in conference travel if the applicant is presenting. Sufficient justification must be provided as to what the award will cover. If the applicant is NOT presenting, GPSA may reimburse up to \$300 total.

- (a) Transportation
- (b) Registration (receipt required)
- (c) Lodging (3 nights max)

SECTION 4. PARTICIPATION: To receive funding, members must have been a GPSA member in the semester prior to application submission, and have attended at least two (2) events in that semester:

- A GPSA sponsored workshop.
- A GPSA sponsored community service event.
- A GPSA sponsored social event.
- A GPSA general meeting.

Furthermore, the member requesting funds must have completed the participation requirements for the semester in which funds are awarded. The Budget Committee may make exceptions to some of the requirements under certain circumstances.

SECTION 5. CONFERENCE TRAVEL PRESENTATION: Any person who receives funding must give a presentation about either their research or the conference itself. The presentation must be given either in the semester the funding is awarded, or in the semester directly following. Not meeting this requirement will lead to ineligibility for future travel funds.

SECTION 6. OTHER PROCEDURES: The Budget Committee may lay out more policies and procedures governing applications and funding and enforce them as they see fit.

## **Article XI: Meetings and Events**

SECTION 1. GENERAL MEETINGS: The organization shall hold at least two meetings of the general membership per semester in the fall and spring semesters.

SECTION 2. WORKSHOPS: At least three (3) workshops will be provided per semester in the fall and spring semesters. At least two (2) of the workshops each semester will be available to online students. One of the workshops each semester will incorporate presentations by those people who received funding that semester.

SECTION 3. SOCIAL EVENTS: At least one (1) social event will be provided per semester in the fall and spring semesters.

SECTION 4. COMMUNITY SERVICE: At least one (1) community service event will be provided per semester in the fall and spring semesters.

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SECTION 5. SCHEDULING AND NOTIFICATIONS: The Executive Council will be responsible for calling and scheduling all general meetings. The Secretary shall notify the appropriate members at least one (1) week before each meeting takes place.

#### **Article XII: Amendments**

All amendments must be distributed to the general membership at least two (2) weeks before the meeting in which they will be voted on will take place. Amendments must be ratified by a 3/4 vote of all members in attendance.

#### **Article XIII: Legalese**

In the event of dissolution, all Graduate and Professional Student Association funds shall be managed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies or his/her designee. These funds will be applied to any initiatives deemed worthy by the Dean or designee to benefit the graduate students most effectively at ETSU. The GPSA is subject to all policies and procedures of East Tennessee State University and the Tennessee Board of Regents.