GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE BYLAWS
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

ARTICLE I
MISSION

Section 1. Consistent with the Mission of the University of Tennessee, the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) serves those that have chosen to continue their education for purposes of extending the boundaries of human knowledge and improving the lives of people in the state of Tennessee, the nation, and the world.

Section 2. The GSS shall represent the student body in all matters relating to the concerns of graduate and advanced professional students, hereinafter referred to as graduate students. The GSS shall participate in the establishment of policies and regulations relating to graduate programs, in consultation with and subject to the final approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, the Chancellor of the Knoxville campus, the President, and the Board of Trustees of the University of Tennessee. The GSS shall also make recommendations to appropriate decision-making officers in matters concerning graduate and advanced professional students.

Section 3. With the exception voting rights on matters before the GSS, all members of the graduate student body shall have full rights of participation in GSS affairs and committee membership and full eligibility for any post for which they meet the qualifications.

ARTICLE II
LEGISLATIVE POWER

Section 1. The legislative power of the Graduate Student Senate shall be vested in the representatives. The representative body shall consist of representatives from each graduate and advanced professional program of study at the University of Tennessee. The Senate Chair shall serve as the presiding officer and shall have the right to vote in the representative body in the event of a tie. In the absence of the Chair, the President or Vice President shall serve as the presiding officer and shall have the right to vote in the representative body in the event of a tie.

Section 2. The students and/or administrators, in their own programs, shall select these representatives either in the spring or at the beginning of the fall, depending upon the nature of the particular graduate programs. The selection of the GSS representatives should coincide with the programs' graduate student organization elections, where applicable. If an election in a particular program of study is deemed necessary by that program, the GSS shall assist with the selection of a representative by administering an election. The dean or department head of the program shall submit the name of the selected individual to the Graduate Student Senate.

Section 3. In some instances, it may be logical to have one representative represent more than one program of study. In addition, the organization of the programs of study at the University of Tennessee changes periodically. For this reason, the GSS shall develop a list of representative seats (using the Graduate Catalog) for the following year prior to the annual GSS elections.

Section 4. The GSS representative shall have the power and duties:

A. To attend each GSS meeting or to designate a proxy to attend in their absence.
B. To actively and accurately represent the viewpoints of their program of study in all matters before the GSS and to conduct meetings of graduate students in their college, department, or school to solicit their views and concerns.
C. To inform their constituents of issues, activities, bills and amendments brought to the GSS through use of any one of the following methods: e-mail contact, web page, list server, personal meetings, newsletters, telephone contact, and/or group discussions. Each delegate is required to make contact with their constituents so as to inform them that he or she is their representative.
D. To maintain an active e-mail account for the purposes of receiving and sending information, as well as providing GSS with a fast, convenient way to communicate with representatives.

Section 5. The legislative body of the GSS shall have the power:
A. To pass resolutions that shall represent the official position of the GSS.
B. To approve all or part of the findings and recommendations of any committee before such recommendation shall become the official position of the GSS.
C. To approve all proposed appropriations of funds before expenditures can be made.
D. To remove from office, in accordance with Article VI of these Bylaws, any officer, committee member, or chairperson who fails to fulfill their duties as outlined in Article II and III of these Bylaws.

Section 6 There shall be four permanent Committees in the Graduate Student Senate that are hereby charged with carrying out duties outlined in Section 8 of this Article. The purpose of the Committees will be to provide a collaborative effort to investigate, develop, plan, and advocate for graduate student concerns, programming, and issues as they arise. The GSS will elect representatives to serve as the Committee Chairs by no later than the second meeting of the fall semester. Each committee must have one chairperson, and will consist of a subset of members of the general GSS body of representatives, with the exception of the Graduate Student Senate Advisory Committee to which non-voting members may be appointed. Additionally ad-hoc committees may be created by the GSS or outlined in bylaws.

Section 7. Each representative will be required to serve on one internal committee and one administrative committee, and will be responsible for notifying the President of their preferences no later than the first meeting of the fall semester. It will then be the responsibility of the President to form the committees and moderate the election of chairpersons. In the event that representatives are unable to identify a committee chairperson, the President shall appoint a chairperson or chairpersons for the committee.

Section 8. This section outlines the descriptions and responsibilities of each GSS Committee.

A. Permanent Committees:
    a. Executive Committee:
        i. Per the GPSA Constitution, the Executive committee is comprised of executive officers including the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Technology Officer, Senate Chair, & Chairs from all committees.
        ii. Additionally, chairs of internal committees shall serve on the Executive committee in order to report on committee activities.

iii. The Executive Committee's responsibilities are outlined in Article 4.1.g of the GPSA constitution.
iv. The President shall serve as the chair of the Executive committee. The Vice-President shall serve as the chair in the absence of the President.
v. Additionally, the Executive Committee may act for the Graduate Student Senate when there is no time for a regular or special session, as deemed necessary by the GSS President, and report such actions, which are subject to approval by the Senate, at the next scheduled Senate session.
vi. The Executive Committee may formulate, set, and enact the Graduate Student Senate's agenda, as well as discuss and seek out subjects deemed appropriate for future consideration at GSS sessions.
vii. Members of the Executive Committee will inform and update the full Committee on any actions, meetings, decisions, or other duties performed or acted upon in an individual capacity, on behalf of the GSS or Executive Committee, at the next session, or electronically, as the circumstances so require.

b. Judiciary Committee
   i. Per the GPSA Constitution, the Judiciary Committee shall be comprised of 4 senators, appointed by the President, name Justices. Three justices shall serve as the "primary members" while the fourth serves as an alternate. .
   ii. The responsibilities of the Judiciary Committee are outlined in Article 4.2 of the GPSA Constitution.
c. Finance Committee
   i. Per the GPSA Constitution, the Finance Committee shall be chaired by the GSS Treasurer, appointed by the GSS President.
   ii. Any GSS Senator may serve as a members of the Finance Committee.
   iii. The duties and responsibilities of the Finance Committee are outlined in Article 4.3 of the GPSA Constitution.
   iv. Additionally the Finance committee shall oversee the Annual Fundraiser. A subcommittee specific to the fundraiser may be established to facilitate planning and public relations duties prior to the event. Funds raised by the Fundraiser shall be used to benefit a campus organization or institution, as agreed upon by the committee and the GSS.
d. Legislative Steering Committee
   i. Per the GPSA Constitution, the Legislative Steering Committee chair shall be nominated from the floor, and confirmed with a two-thirds vote of the GSS.
   ii. Any GSS Senator may serve on the Legislative Steering Committee.
   iii. The duties and responsibilities of the Legislative Steering Committee are outlined in the GPSA Constitution Article 4.4.
   iv. Additionally, the Committee will be responsible for setting both short-term and long-terms goals for the Graduate Student Senate by identifying matters of concern to be addressed by the GSS for the current and following academic years.
   v. The Committee will be responsible for reviewing the Constitution and Bylaws and recommending any changes deemed necessary for consideration
e. Committee on Equity and Diversity:
   i. The purpose of this committee shall be to identify, evaluate, and advocate issues pertinent to the graduate student experience in matters related to

workplace issues and satisfaction, financial matters that relate to graduate study, matters that promote diversity and inclusivity, and issues of equity.

ii. The Committee shall discuss and develop legislation to bring before the GSS for discussion, debate, and voting. A majority vote of the Committee is needed for legislation to emerge from the Committee to the GSS body. The President or Vice President shall serve as the presiding officer and shall have the right to vote in the representative body in the event of a tie.

B. Ad-hoc Committees

a. Committee on Programming & Events:

i. The purpose of this Committee shall be to promote the GSS, and increase its transparency and its ability to communicate with graduate students.

ii. The Committee is charged with hosting no less than one graduate student social event per academic semester except during the summer semester.

iii. The Committee is charged with hosting an annual Town Hall, which will facilitate communication between graduate students and administrators.

iv. The Committee will assist in recruiting departmental representatives for unfilled GSS positions.

v. The Committee will distribute information concerning the GSS. Information may include, but is not limited to, flyers, posters, online events calendars, social media, emails, and weekly and/or monthly newsletters.

b. Committee on the Travel Awards:

i. The purpose of this Committee shall be to sustain, evaluate, and administer the GSS Travel Award funds three times per academic year. The mission of the Travel Awards is to advance the interests of graduate and professional students and promote research by easing the student's financial burden of travel.

ii. The Committee will participate in the travel fund application deliberation process to be led by the GSS President and/or Vice President and the Chair.

iii. The Committee will be responsible for evaluating issues in allocating awards and catering the evaluation process to best represent the most fair and equitable process possible.

iv. Members of the Travel Award Committee shall be voting members in the GSS.

c. Graduate Student Senate Advisory Committee:

i. The purpose of this Committee is to serve graduate students by providing a voice for non-voting members through the development of legislation, organization of events, and/or engagement in other activities that either do not fall under the purview existing committees, as directed by the GSS President.

ii. The Committee will be chaired by a duly-elected, voting member of GSS; however, its membership shall consist of any nonvoting graduate and professional students willing to serve.

Section 9. The Committees shall meet to discuss committee matters at least once per month outside of the regularly scheduled GSS meetings. Committees may meet more if necessary, to complete their duties listed in Section 8. The Committee Chair, or their designated proxy, shall provide a verbal report at the following GSS meeting. Written reports are encouraged and may be posted to the GSS website. The Committee Chair, or a designated proxy, will also be responsible for drafting and

presenting formal resolutions or bills to the GSS. Drafts of resolutions and bills will be due no later than 3 days prior to the meeting of the full body of GSS representatives. The Committee may choose to elect co-chairpersons.

Section 10: If the Committee Chair is not fulfilling their responsibilities, a simple majority vote by the Committee membership will result in the removal of this representative from the chair position. The Committee will be responsible for nominating candidates, which will be elected by a simple majority at the following GSS general meeting by the representatives. Any Chair voted out of their position may file for an appeal with the President and other Committee Chairs who will deliberate over the appeal and determine whether or not the removal will stand. In the event of a tie, the decision to remove the Chair will be overturned.

ARTICLE III
OFFICERS

Section 1. The GSS shall have two elected officers, the President and Vice-President, elected each spring during the annual Graduate Student Senate election for a term of one year, and four appointed officers, the Secretary, Treasurer, Technology Officer, and Senate Chair, appointed in accordance with these Bylaws.

Section 2. The President shall have the powers and duties:

A. To be the chief executive officer and ensure that the affairs of the GSS are carried out in accordance with the GPSA Constitution and GSS Bylaws.

B. To be the official representative of the GSS and, in this regard, to have responsibility for presenting the resolutions of the GSS to appropriate organizations and persons when so directed by the GSS.

C. To call GSS meetings, preside in absence of the chair, and vote only in the case of a tie when serving as presiding officer.

D. To establish and abolish such committees and officials as may be necessary, subject to the approval of the GSS.

E. To appoint representative and official proxies to all external organizations on which the GSS has representation, subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the GSS representatives. The President or Vice President shall serve as the presiding officer and shall have the right to vote in the representative body in the event of a tie.

F. To temporarily assume the powers and duties of the Vice President in the event of the Vice President's resignation or removal.

G. To notify officers, committee members, and other appointed officials of their appointments and the responsibility of their appointment.

H. To serve as a representative of all graduate and professional students on the Graduate Council.

I. To serve as a member of the GSS executive committee.

Section 3. The Vice President shall have the power and duties:

A. To act as the President or Chair in the President or Chair's absence, or at their request.

B. To assume the office of the President in the event of the President's resignation or removal.

C. To serve as the President's proxy on the Graduate Council.

D. To serve as a member of the GSS Executive Committee.

E. To vote as a member of the representative body when not acting as a presiding officer.

Section 4. The Secretary shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the GSS, and shall have the powers and duties:

A. To keep a record of all proceedings of the GSS.

B. To have on hand at every meeting a copy of the GPSA Constitution, GSS Bylaws, any special rules of order, and minutes, with any amendments to those documents properly recorded.

C. To make the minutes and records available to GSS members and officers upon request.

D. To maintain an accurate listing of officers, representatives, and representatives to external bodies.

E. To call the meeting to order and act as presiding officer in the absence of the President, Vice-President, and Senate Chair, and to choose an acting Secretary who will temporarily assume their powers and duties of the Secretary for the remainder of the meeting.

F. To provide a copy of these Bylaws to all newly elected representatives and officers and upon request by any member of any graduate department, school or college.

G. To serve as a member of the Executive committee.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the GSS, and shall have the powers and duties:

A. To work on matters pertaining to the approval and allocation of GSS funds, including the development of the GSS budget proposal.

B. To present budget allocations to the Graduate Student Senate.

C. To approve or deny any funding requests from members of the Graduate Student Senate, in conjunction with the President.

D. To maintain and organize all receipts and request forms.

E. To be responsible for presenting regular Treasurer reports to the GSS Executive Committee and the Graduate Student Senate on the current status of the GSS budget.

F. To serve as a member of the GSS Executive Committee.

Section 6. The Technology Officer shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the GSS, and shall have the powers and duties:

A. To maintain the GSS website and other online media in collaboration with the President, Vice-President and Chair of the Committee on Programs & Events.

B. To coordinate and assist with the use of any electronic equipment, software, or service used in regular or special meetings, including presentations, audiovisual equipment and/or recording devices, voting devices, and any other related duty, as directed by the GSS President.

C. To serve as a member of the GSS Executive Committee.

Section 7. The Senate Chair shall be appointed by the president and confirmed by the GSS, and shall have the powers and duties:

A. To serve as presiding officer of the Graduate Student Senate and vote only in the case of a tie.

B. To establish the agenda for GSS meetings, in coordination with the Executive Committee.

C. To have the responsibility of inviting prominent administration and community leaders to update the Student Senate on activities in their respective offices.

D. To serve as a member of the GSS Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV
VETO

Section 1. The President will have the power to veto resolutions passed by the representatives of the Graduate Student Senate. Vetoes must be ordered within three days after a resolution is passed through the Graduate Student Senate. The President has the responsibility to notify the representatives of the veto no later than one week prior to the following meeting. If the President fails to provide proper notification, the veto will become null and void.

Section 2. In the event of a veto by the President, the GSS can override the President's veto by a two-thirds majority upon the establishment of quorum at the Senate session immediately following the veto.

Section 3. If the vetoed resolution would affect business occurring between or occurring on the date of the Senate Session, the president has the responsibility to notify representatives of the veto at least 48 hours prior. If proper notification is not communicated, the veto becomes null and void.

Section 4. In the event of a veto impacting business prior to or on the next Senate Session, the GSS representatives can override the veto by a two-thirds majority vote by the subcommittee chairs.

ARTICLE V
APPOINTMENTS

Section 1. The President shall appoint representatives to the Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, and other external organizations as requested, subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the GSS representatives except where such positions are reserved to GSS officers.

A. These external representatives shall have the powers and duties:

a. To serve on the respective external organization in the interests of the graduate student body.

b. To report the actions of the respective organizations.

B. Appointments of the Secretary, Treasurer, Technology Officer, Senate Chair and representatives to external organizations shall be restricted to voting members of the GSS as defined in Article II of these Bylaws. However, if no voting member is willing to serve as the Secretary or external representative, the position may be opened to any graduate student at the meeting following the one at which the appointment was to have taken place.

C. Any voting member or the President may make nominations for these positions. All appointments shall be made by a majority vote, with a secret ballot election to be held if more persons are nominated than there are positions to be filled.

ARTICLE VI
MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular meetings of the GSS shall be held at least three times during the semester except during summer sessions. The number of regular meetings during the summer shall be determined by the GSS.

Section 2. A regular meeting is a meeting whose date and time were set by the GSS and for which notice was sent to the voting membership at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting.

Section 3. Special meetings shall be held to consider problems requiring immediate attention, and may be called by the President or by any three voting members. At least 48 hours notice must be given to the voting membership of any special meeting.

Section 4. A quorum as defined by the GPSA Constitution at any meeting is defined as one-half of the voting positions currently filled, present or in person, or by proxy. If a program's appointed representative is unable to attend meetings due to scheduling conflicts they can appoint a permanent proxy.

Section 5. In order for a motion to be officially considered as passed by the GSS, the following procedures must be followed:

A. The motion must be presented at a regular or special GSS meeting.
B. A quorum must be present.
C. The motion must be proposed by a voting member and seconded by a voting member.
D. Only voting members of the GSS may vote.
E. A majority of those casting a vote must favor the motion. A simple majority (greater than fifty percent) applies unless otherwise stated.
F. Each vote must be cast by the voting member or proxy either in person or through an online collection form.

Section 6. The voting procedure on motions before the GSS shall be by voice, show of hands, roll call, or secret ballot. The following rules shall apply:

A. Secret ballot voting shall be used in all elections if requested by any GSS member.
B. When considering a motion, the presiding officer shall decide on what type of voting to use. A roll call vote must be taken whenever it is requested by one voting member and seconded by another voting member.
C. The presiding officer or their designated assistants shall tally the votes.
D. On a roll call vote, the representative's name shall be called and the representatives shall vote by voice. A record shall be kept of all roll call votes and be included in the minutes.

Section 7. All voting members shall be required to attend or appoint a proxy to attend each regular meeting not held during a summer session. No current officer or representative may be appointed as proxy, nor may a person be appointed proxy for more than one representative at any given time, nor may a person be appointed as proxy without their consent. Any representative appointing a proxy must inform the presiding officer or secretary in writing of their proxy. "In writing" means by letter prior to roll call at the meeting or by e-mail at least one hour prior to the meeting. The proxy must follow any voting instructions that have been given.

Section 8. A General Assembly of the graduate student body may be called by the executive committee, by a majority of the elected representatives, or by a written petition signed by at least fifty graduate students. The graduate student body must be given at least one week's notice of a General Assembly through an advertisement in the *Daily Beacon* and through communication with the deans and department heads of the graduate and advanced professional programs of study. At a

General Assembly, all graduate students present shall have the rights of voting members, and the General Assembly shall have the full power of the GSS legislative body.

ARTICLE VII
REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT

Section 1. Any elected officer or appointee may be removed from office by the GSS for failure to fulfill their duties and responsibilities as defined in Article III.

Section 2. An elected officer may be removed by a two-thirds vote at two successive regular meetings of the GSS (excluding summer sessions), provided a quorum is met, following the meeting at which a motion for removal is introduced.

Section 3. Any appointee may be removed by a two-thirds vote at any meeting (excluding summer sessions), provided a quorum is met.

Section 4. Representatives from a department may be replaced by act of the Executive Committee of the Graduate Student Senate, in cooperation with the governing body (or equivalent) of the department represented for failure to attend or appoint a proxy to attend two regular meetings (excluding summer sessions). Removal may be appealed to the Executive Committee of Graduate Student Senate within seven (7) days of the date the notice of removal is delivered.

Section 5. All persons removed from office may appeal their removal to the Judicial Branch within seven (7) days of the date the notice of removal is mailed.

Section 6. If a representative position becomes vacant, the process specified in Section 2 of Article II shall be followed in order to attempt to fill that vacancy.

Section 7. If the Office of the President becomes vacant, then the Vice President shall succeed to the presidency and accept all responsibilities therein. If the Office of the Vice President becomes vacant, then the GSS shall elect a replacement.

Section 8. If the Office of the President and that of Vice President become simultaneously vacant, or if the graduate student body elects neither a president nor a vice president at the annual student body election, then the Executive Committee shall call a General Assembly, as described in Section 8 of Article VI, in order to elect a president and vice president.

ARTICLE VIII
ELECTIONS

Section 1. The elected representatives shall be elected in the spring and under the Election Rules and Procedures. The Graduate Student Senate may, by a majority vote, recommend changes in the election proceedings.

Section 2. The Graduate and Professional Student body shall elect a President and a Vice-President.

Section 3. Per the GPSA Constitution, Senators representing academic programs and colleges shall be selected based on their colleges or programs procedures.

ARTICLE IX
CONSTITUTION

Section 1. The constitutional rights and the role of the GSS are outlined in the Graduate and Professional Student Association Constitution.

Section 2. The Constitution of the GPSA supersedes the authority of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE X
BYLAWS

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended by the approval of two-thirds of the voting members present at a regular meeting of the GSS (excluding summer sessions) following the meeting at which the proposed amendment is introduced, provided a quorum is met.

Section 2. These Bylaws may be suspended for a specified purpose by the approval of two-thirds of the voting members present at a meeting, provided that (1) a quorum is present (2) the suspension does not violate the GPSA Constitution, and (3) the members were sent proper notice of the suspension.