

Brooklyn College Graduate Students' Organization  
Election Act

Adopted in part through the GSO Bylaws in the fall of 1994  
Amended in Spring 2003 SEMESTER

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The name of the organization shall be the Brooklyn College Graduate Student Organization, henceforth referred to as GSO.

The organization derives its authority and functions consistent with the Board of Higher Education By-laws, Article 15.2.

This Election Act is consistent with the guidelines set forth by the City University of New York office of the General Counsel and Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs office, concerning the Student Election Review procedures dated August 01, 1990.

DEFINITIONS:

In reference to elections, for the purpose of this Act and for all other purposes, the term "election" means a general or specific election conducted for the graduate student body of Brooklyn College.

"Candidate" means a graduate student who seeks election to the Executive Board, Executive Council or the University Student Senate as representative for the graduate division whether or not, such a student is elected, and these candidacies will be considered candidacy for the "Student Government Office."

"Student Government Office" means the office of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary of the Executive Board of GSO, the office of Delegate or Alternate to the University Student Senate, and the office of the members to the Student-Faculty disciplinary committee of Brooklyn College.

MEMBERSHIP:

All graduate students registered at Brooklyn College, upon payment of the student activity fee or matriculation fee, shall be eligible for membership in the Graduate Student Organization.

Eligibility for holding office in GSO and Associations:

Only matriculated graduate students, registered at Brooklyn College in a degree program that maintains a 3.0 GPA, shall be eligible to hold office on the Executive Board.

GSO Associations' officers shall be elected and serve according to the terms and guidelines of the charter set forth by the academic area. These guidelines must comply with the guidelines set forth by the City University of New York office of the General Council and the Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs.

Once elected to serve, the officer of either the Association or the Executive Board must complete his/her elected term of office as long as compliance with the academic credit load requirement is met. Officers of the Associations shall be ineligible to hold office on the Executive Board and vice-versa. The Executive Board will decide conflict of interest and questions of ineligibility.

Two people from the same department shall not hold positions of treasurer and president of the Executive Board.

ELECTION PROCEDURES

Pursuant to section 15.2 (d) of the University by-laws, election shall be held in the Spring term of each academic year, no earlier than March 15 and no later than April 30.

The elected officers of the Graduate Student Organization shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer/Business Manager. These officers shall be known as the Executive Board of the Graduate Student Organization.

In order to be eligible to run for office, nominations must be made by two (2) graduate students. The nomination period will run for no less than 10 days and at least 15 days prior to the start of election. The Dean of Students' Activities and/or the

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Dean of Student Life will certify these nominations. After the nominee is notified that he/she will be placed on the ballot for the upcoming election, an acceptance statement from the candidate must be submitted to the GSO's Executive Board at least two (2) days prior to the election.

During election period, voting will be done via on-line electronic voting during times best advertised by the Elections Commissioner.

The election commissioner (s) shall oversee the election process from the time of its inception to the tallying of the votes. In pursuant of these goals, the election results shall be forwarded to the College Wide Election Review Committee (CWERC) for certification, no later than 5 business days after the end of the election. The Executive Board and the student associations may have authority in establishing procedures and a committee for the conduct of student elections, and the establishment of an Election Review Committee (ERC). ERC is intended to provide a mechanism for review of those procedures to insure that the election procedures, the voting and the certification of these results are appropriate. This committee will also insure that an impartial review panel will oversee officers of the perspective student governments running for re-election, or who may have an interest in the outcome. Any student(s) who feels that he/she has been disempowered or adversely affected by a decision of the Election Review Committee may file an appeal with the president of the college.

Candidates for the University Student Senate will assume the position from October through September. In the event a student who has been elected into such a position cannot complete the term of his/her position, due to graduation or work restrictions, or falls outside of the criteria for eligibility, the current Executive Board in governance will hold a special election to assure a continuity of representation of the CUNY-wide University Student Senate. This special election will supersede any election of delegates prior to the time deemed necessary for such implementation. The Dean of Students' Activities and/or the Office of Student Life will conduct the semester-by-semester certification of University Senate Delegates and Alternates. The criterion for eligibility is the maintenance of matriculation in a degree-bearing program, a 3.0 GPA, a consistent and continuous attendance of the senate meetings. Absenteeism at two consecutive senate meetings will result in de-certification of the delegate or alternate and the necessity for a special election.

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

All decisions on matters of policy of the Executive Board shall be reached by plurality. Each officer shall have one vote.

The Executive Board shall have final responsibility for:

- Hiring all personnel in the Executive office and setting up operational guidelines.
- Voting on all disbursements, modifications, transfers, and credits except where authorized in an approved budget of the Graduate Student Organization.
- Certifying all affiliate associations and chapters of the Graduate Student Organization of Brooklyn College.
- Propose review and approve the total operating budget of the Graduate Student Organization for the fiscal year with the approval of the Executive Board.
- Shall have the responsibility of approving Associations' operating budget requests for the year, and special fiscal requests not contained within the Association's budget.
  
- Must approve line transfers that exceed the amounts prescribed by Central Depository.
- The Executive Board, particularly the president, shall take any steps deemed necessary to correct any violations of the Graduate Student Organization, Brooklyn College, or the Brooklyn College Association rules and regulations. This may include freezing of an Association's funds, removing the Association's Executive Board, or any of its members, or imposing a fine or penalty upon that Association.
- Shall have the authority to interpret any by-laws included herewith, or in any other Association's constitution. This "elastic clause" shall make this constitution flexible for future interpretation.

### DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

All elected officers are charged with representing the organization at its public functions and promoting its purposes.

The President shall:

- Perform all administrative duties usually associated with an efficient office and maintain public contact.
- He/she shall supervise the Graduate Student Organization's Executive office; maintain proper functioning of all bills, ordering of proper supplies and preparing all forms and questionnaires.

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- Preside at annual meetings, special meetings and member-at-large meetings of the Executive Board and Executive Council.
- Shall have the tie-breaking or tie-making vote at all meetings, which he/she presides over.
- Enforce the charter of the associations and their policies, procedures, bylaws and mandates established by the Executive Board and the Executive Council.
- Call special meetings of the Executive Council when the situation warrants, or when  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the members of the Executive Council request it.
- Prepare an agenda for the Executive Board and Executive Council meetings with the assistance of the other officers and participants.
- Appoint committee members for University, divisional and college wide committees.
- Co-sign financial documents for processing along with the treasurer.
- Recommend/appoint/re-appoint and hire all staff positions in accordance with the prescribed search guidelines and in concurrence with the Executive Board.

### The Vice-President shall:

- Assist the president in his/her duties and assume any additional duties assigned to him/her by the president or the Executive Board.
- At the request of the president, the vice-president shall assume the duties or responsibilities of any officers unable to fill their term until a special election is held.
- Is a member of every committee established by the Executive Council.

### The Treasurer shall:

- Be responsible for co-signing with the president all expenditures, financial documents, and commitment of the Graduate Student Organization.
- Submit a proposed budget to the Brooklyn College Association after consultation with the Executive Board.
- Co-sign and approve all Associations' budgets with the president of the Graduate Student Organization.
- Submit financial records to Central Depository if requested.
- Keep records of all receipts and expenditures for his/her term of office.
- Collect and present to the Executive Board, all budget requests for certified Associations, chartered clubs, and chapters that are consistent with procedures of the Brooklyn College Association.
  
- Shall be responsible for all financial details of contract purchases of merchandise or equipment, guarantees and other responsibilities congruent with that of a business manager.

### The Secretary shall:

- Be responsible for maintaining all records, files, correspondence, and reports.
- Ensure the maintenance of the lists of all committee members, Executive Council members, and Association officers.
- Ensure the maintenance of address lists of all Brooklyn College graduate students, lists of all faculty members, administrative and faculty/administrative/student committees.
- Take, organize, maintain and provide the minutes of all Graduate Student Organization Executive Board and Executive Council meetings.
- The secretary is the office manager and oversees the office's day-to-day functioning and smooth running.

In addition to the prescribed duties detailed above, all officers shall be conversant in procedures dealing with the disbursement payment of funds for services rendered on behalf of the Graduate Student Organization, or for the purchase of equipment. During the absence of the president or treasurer due to conflicting schedules, personal matters, or any other valid reasons which the Executive Board is made aware of, at the president's or treasurer's request, all officers should be capable of initiating the payment process through the auspices of Central Depository. This should be done providing the president and treasurer have signed all necessary forms previously and that the Executive Board has already approved said payment.

## THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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- Shall consist of the elected officers of the Executive Board, all members from each certified association and any graduate student who sits on a college-wide committee on behalf of the graduate community. Each member of the Executive Council will count as one vote.
- Shall be responsible for review and approval of the Graduate Student Organization's operating budget, and the articulation of policy not expressly reserved to the Executive Council in attendance.
- Quorum shall consist of two officers of the Executive Board and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the certified associations or three members of the Executive Council in attendance.
- The council may elect to hold a meeting in executive session, in accordance with the City University by-laws that would exclude non-official members and/or visitors of the graduate community from attending. A visitor may be permitted to speak on matters before the committee at large with the permission of the president or presiding officer of the Executive Board. A visitor or member who is disruptive during a meeting will be asked to leave.
- Will codify its own operating procedures except where such procedures are inconsistent with the provisions of these by-laws or the by-laws of the City University of New York.
- Each chartered group in the association must prepare a tentative schedule of events, programs and/or plans for the semester at hand and the school year in question. A predominant focus on academic, preprofessional or developmental events and programming should be undertaken. Associations shall not exist with the sole purpose of providing a social outlet for the students of any areas. Though, this may be a smaller part of the mission, the funding allocated in future budget years will be allocated based on these criteria, with each association being required to justify their funding requests to the Executive Board. Associations shall not sponsor departmental events that are the responsibilities of the department, however, they can co-sponsor such events. All expenditures must meet the guidelines set forth in the handbook of the City University of New York. All room reservations, requests for catering, and payment orders must be filled out to reflect the accountably parties. Any problems in processing incurred by any association should be brought to the immediate attention of the allocating body for intervention.
- Each chartered group will maintain a binder in the Graduate Student Organization's Executive office for perusal by the Brooklyn College community at large. This binder will be updated with news, budgeting, election events, and programming pertaining to the chartered group.
- Each chartered group will be responsible for attending the executive council meetings, to date and discuss issues pertinent to the Brooklyn College community at large and to communicate with the Executive Board. Failure to attend or be represented at any or all Executive Council meetings may result in reduced funding for subsequent academic years.
- Each chartered group will be responsible for promoting their events to as broad an audience as possible through the campus media and the Graduate Student Organization's newsletter, so that students outside a particular department or discipline will be aware of all scheduled events.
- Each chartered group will provide the Graduate Student Organization's Executive Board with a detailed cost breakdown and an event summary, which will include event title, date held, number of people in attendance, and a general overview of the event – this should be included in the Graduate Student Organization's newsletter.

The president and treasurer of each Association are personally responsible for any unpaid bills, unauthorized or illegal contract for services or goods. They may face disciplinary action by the college (including prevention of graduation or non-processing of transcript requests) if they neglect their responsibilities. In addition, associations with a history of mismanagement, or improper use of funds may be not receive funds, or reduced funding for subsequent academic years.

### GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

Each degree program area in the graduate division of Brooklyn College is eligible for participation in the graduate student association. The procedures for establishing an association in any given academic area are as follows:

- Fifteen interested graduate students from within any department may petition the GSO's Executive Board for inclusion in the Executive Council. The Executive Board and the Executive Council must approve exceptions to the number of petitioners, and/or the area of charter.

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- A constitution, indicating the specific mission of the group, its constituency, the rules and regulations set forth by the elected officers must be submitted to GSO for approval, then filed with Central Depository along with other necessary documents.
- Each chartered group will be responsible for maintaining its own records and financial documents, as well as filing payment orders with Central Depository. All expenditures must be reconciled with the allocation for that year. All expenses in excess of club's allocation, or any amount forwarded to GSO for collection during or after the fiscal year in question (not discussed by GSO), will be considered mismanagement, and the amount paid by GSO will be deducted from the club's allocation for the next fiscal year, after the notification of this to the budgetary and college officials. Officers of the chartered groups are responsible for officers' training with Central Depository and Student Development. They are also responsible for signing of signature cards and securing a mailbox on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of SUBO.

All budget allocations will be frozen until such time when this pre-requisite and training are arranged. The allocating body as well as the Brooklyn College Association must approve budget modification. All equipments purchased with student activity fees must be made accessible to all students in pursuant to the guidelines set forth in the City University by-laws. All fees collected at functions of this nature must be returned to the general fund account in Central Depository.

### ELECTION OF ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Officers' elections will take place in accordance with their respective constitutions. They may take place between February and May of the spring semester. Results must be forwarded to Central Depository and the Graduate Student Organization's office. A member of the GSO's Executive Board may be requested to witness the election counts. Every member of a particular association must be notified by public notice on the door of the department or association's office, by phone or mail, of the date, time and place of the election. Every member of the graduate community is eligible to vote. An officer may not cede their office to another member; an election must be held. An ad must be placed in the school newspaper and minutes of an election meeting, listing the number of votes cast and process that occurred. All proper forms and signature cards must be filed in Central Depository prior to GSO acknowledging new officers in an official capacity.