Constitution of the Purdue Graduate Student Government West Lafayette, Indiana

Preamble

We the graduate students of Purdue University, West Lafayette, do recognize and embrace our role and responsibility as a self-governing body within the framework of the university community, and thus declare ourselves the Purdue Graduate Student Government. This organization shall act to represent graduate student interests and concerns at the university; develop and disseminate ideas to improve the academic, social, and professional welfare of graduate students; and voice the graduate student perspective to the university community. In order to better define the purpose and function of our government, we do establish this Constitution.

Article I
Names and Definitions

Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Purdue Graduate Student Government, hereafter referred to as “PGSG”.

Section 2: Definitions

The following are common definitions:

A) The home institution of this organization, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana, shall hereafter be referred to as Purdue University.
B) “Graduate Student” shall refer to all those enrolled full or part time in the Purdue University Graduate School, Krannert Professional Program, or Veterinary Program.
C) The word “department” will hereafter refer to a department, veterinary program, Krannert professional program, or graduate interdisciplinary program at Purdue University.
D) Except where expressly redefined, a quorum shall be defined as the presence of a majority of the voting members of the relevant body.
E) A majority vote shall be defined as one-half (1/2) of the voting members present plus one (1) vote being in accord.
F) A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote shall be defined as two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present being in accord.
Section 3: Purpose and Mission Statement

The PGSG represents the graduate student body of Purdue University. The mission of the PGSG is to:

A) To identify and address academic, social, and professional concerns of Purdue Graduate Students.
B) To act as a liaison with Purdue University administration, faculty, and student government bodies.
C) To promote communication and interaction among Purdue graduate students.

Section 4: Membership

A) All individuals listed on the Registrar’s rolls as full-time or part-time graduate students, Krannert professional students, or veterinary students of Purdue University shall be members of PGSG.
B) Membership in PGSG or any subset thereof shall comply with the Purdue University Non-Discriminatory Policy.
C) This policy states that membership and participation are free from discrimination based on race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, genetic information, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran.

Section 5: Structure

The governing structure of the PGSG shall be vested in two (2) branches: Legislative, consisting of the Senate and the Committees, and Executive, consisting of the Executive Officers. Judicial Authority shall be divided among the branches, as outlined in this Constitution.

Section 6: Parliamentary Authority

The parliamentary authority of the PGSG shall be the current version of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised. Any modifications to Robert’s Rules of Order as deemed necessary shall be expressly defined in the governing documents of this organization.

Article II

Legislative Branch

Section 1: Legislative Powers

Legislative powers of the PGSG shall be vested in the Purdue Graduate Student Senate, hereafter referred to as “PGSS”, and its committees.

Section 2: Eligibility

A) Membership in the PGSS is open to all members of the PGSG.
B) Any member who no longer fulfills the requirements for membership in the PGSG shall immediately be removed from membership in the PGSS and forfeit all the duties and privileges thereof.

Section 3: Composition

A) Departmental Representation

1) There shall be one (1) senate seat for each department.
2) There shall be one (1) alternate for each filled departmental seat.
3) No person shall concurrently hold more than one (1) seat in the PGSS.
4) All departmental representatives holding a senate seat shall be hereafter referred to as Senators. All representatives holding an alternate position shall be hereafter referred to as Alternates.

B) Non-voting Seats in the PGSS

1) Two (2) seats may be held by a representative of the Graduate School Administration.
2) One (1) seat may be held by each regional campus with at least one (1) recognized graduate program.
3) One (1) seat may be held by a representative of the University Faculty Senate.
4) One (1) seat may be held by a representative of the Purdue Student Government (PSG).

C) Executive Membership

1) The President, Vice-President of External Affairs, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and Chairs of the standing committees, except where said Chair is a Senator, shall serve as non-voting, ex-officio members of the Senate.
2) The Vice-President of Internal Affairs shall serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Senate except where granted voting privileges as Chair of Senate, as detailed in this Constitution.
3) Chairs of standing committees who are Senators shall retain their role as a Senator, including all the duties and powers thereof.

Section 4: Selection and Term of Office

A) Selection of Senators and Alternates

1) Each individual department shall, after informing their constituents, elect or appoint a graduate student to serve as Senator in the PGSS.
2) Each individual department shall elect or appoint a graduate student to serve as Alternate for their respective Senator in the PGSS.

B) Non-voting Seats shall be filled as each represented party sees fit, with selection procedures and terms of appointment determined internally to each respective party.

C) Newly selected Senators and Alternates shall be installed into their office by announcement of the Chair of the Senate during the opening of the first meeting of the PGSS following the Senator or Alternate’s selection.
D) Senators and Alternates shall serve from the time of their installation until the following May 1st. In the event that a Senator was installed after January 1st, that Senator may automatically extend his or her term to include the following academic year by providing written notice to the Secretary and Vice President for Internal Affairs. If the seat is not filled by the end of the term, it shall be declared vacant. Announcement of newly vacated seats shall be made by the Chair of the Senate during the opening of the first meeting of the PGSS during which that seat is vacant.

E) Senators and Alternates may be reelected for so long as they are eligible to be a member of the PGSG.

Section 5: Leadership

A) The Vice-President of Internal Affairs shall serve as Chair of the Senate and shall preside over all meetings of the PGSS in accordance with the Parliamentary Authority defined in this Constitution. The Chair shall have one (1) vote on all business before the Senate, which may be cast only in the event that his/her vote would affect the outcome of that vote. Unless expressly asked or able to cast a vote, the Chair shall remain neutral and impartial to all business before the Senate.

B) The Secretary of the PGSG shall serve as the Recorder of the Senate and shall prepare minutes of all meetings of the PGSS, which shall be made available to all members of the PGSG.

C) Chairmen of Committees shall be selected from among their committee members, excepting where otherwise prescribed by this Constitution or the PGSG Bylaws. Committee Chairmen shall conduct regular meetings of their committee, and shall report their progress and findings to the PGSS.

D) A President Pro-Tempore of the Senate shall be elected from among the Senators by a majority vote of the Senate and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board; if executive approval is denied, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate may overrule the executive decision. The President Pro-Tempore shall preside over meetings of the PGSS in the absence of the Chair and shall inherit all duties and privileges thereof for the duration of the Chair’s absence.

E) A Clerk of the Senate shall be elected from among the Senators by a majority vote of the Senate and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board; if executive approval is denied, a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Senate may overrule the executive decision. The Clerk shall record in the absence of the Recorder and shall inherit all duties and privileges thereof for the duration of the Recorder’s absence.

Section 6: Duties and Powers of the Senate

In accordance with this Constitution, the PGSS shall:

A) Conduct business only when a quorum is present;
B) Be the legislative representative of the PGSG;
C) Be the voice of the graduate student body and act in its best interests;
D) Enforce the PGSG Constitution;
E) Enact Bylaws by a majority vote, which shall further define the internal, structural, or procedural policies of the PGSS;
F) Enact rules and regulations, outlined in the Bylaws, necessary for the proper administration of elections of Executive Officers of the PGSG;
G) Enact bills and resolutions;
   1) A bill is defined as legislation detailing a procedural or structural change to the PGSG or any subset thereof and upon approval shall become a statute. Statutes shall function as the laws of the PGSG, to be subordinate to the laws outlined in this Constitution.
   2) A resolution is defined as legislation detailing an item upon which action must be taken or which shows the will of the PGSG.
H) Have the power to remove from office any member of the Executive Board or PGSS, in accordance with the procedures outlined in this Constitution and detailed in the Bylaws;
I) Have the power to create and dissolve committees by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, excepting the Executive Board, which is established by this Constitution and may not be dissolved except by Constitutional amendment;
J) Confirm or reject by a majority vote appointments made by the Executive Board;
K) Approve by a majority vote the annual budget, either as presented or as amended, when presented by the Executive Board.

Section 7: Duties and Powers of Senators

In accordance with this Constitution, all Senators shall:

A) Support the duties and powers of the PGSS;
B) Attend all PGSS meetings or be represented by an Alternate;
C) Attend the annual Senate Workshop;
D) Inform his/her constituents of the PGSG proceedings;
E) Promote PGSG events and initiatives in his/her department;
F) Communicate the concerns and issues of his/her constituents to the PGSS;
G) Actively participate in at least one (1) PGSG committee;
H) Have full rights and privileges of speaking, voting, and proposing motions and legislation at all meetings of the PGSS;
I) Have the power to cast one (1) vote in all business of the PGSS;

Section 8: Duties and Powers of Alternates

In accordance with this Constitution, all Alternates shall:

A) Serve in the capacity of Senator only when the Senator is unable to attend a PGSS meeting;
B) When serving in the place of a Senator, have all the duties and privileges of a Senator, including the right to vote, for the duration of that meeting;
C) Vote “by direction”, when instructed to do so by the sitting Senator. The Alternate may choose to vote differently than directed, without penalty, but must inform the Senator as to the reasons for his/her vote.

Section 9: Duties and Powers of Non-Voting Members

In accordance with this Constitution, all Non-Voting Members shall:

A) Have full rights and privileges of speaking at all meetings of the PGSS, including the proposal of motions;
B) Not have the power to vote on any motion or legislative action under consideration by the Senate.

Section 10: Expulsion and Vacancies of Senators and Alternates

A) In the event that a Senator or Alternate is found to have exhibited malfeasance or misfeasance, he/she may be considered for expulsion by the PGSS. The accused shall receive written notice of the charges within a reasonable timeframe and shall have opportunity to be heard before the Senate.
B) Removal proceedings shall be conducted as a motion of the Senate, consistent with the established procedures of the Bylaws. A majority vote shall be sufficient to pass the motion.
C) In the event that a motion to remove is passed, the Senator or Alternate shall immediately vacate all offices held within the PGSG.
D) In the event that a senate seat is vacated, either by expulsion or other circumstance, the Alternate shall fill the vacated seat until such time as a replacement is appointed or elected from the represented department.
E) In the event that an Alternate seat is vacated, either by expulsion or other circumstance, the seat shall remain vacant until such time as a replacement is appointed or elected from the represented department.
F) A Senator may also be expelled automatically on grounds of attendance according to the established procedures of the Bylaws.
G) An Executive Officer may also be expelled automatically on grounds of attendance according to the established procedures of the Bylaws.

Section 11: Meetings

A) The first meeting of the PGSS in the fall and spring semesters shall be held during the third week of each semester.
B) The PGSS shall convene for at least one (1) meeting during each month of the fall and spring semesters, except where University holidays would require otherwise. Exact meeting dates for each semester shall be determined by the Executive Board prior to the first meeting of PGSS of that semester. The schedule of meetings shall take into account all holidays, secular and religious, and be distributed to all members of the PGSS.
C) In the event of extremely time sensitive business, special sessions of the PGSS may be called at the discretion of the President and the Chair of the Senate and shall be scheduled in a manner that allows Senators no less than forty-eight (48) hours notice in advance of the meeting.

D) Senators may not be penalized for failure to attend a special session of the PGSS.

E) Meetings of the PGSS shall be open to the public and to all PGSG members. However, a motion may be made to move into a closed session, open only to PGSS members, PGSG Executive Board members, and PGSG advisors. Closing a meeting shall require a majority vote of the Senate.

Article III

Executive Branch

Section 1: Composition

A) The Executive Branch of the PGSG shall consist of the Executive Officers of PGSG.

B) The Executive Officers shall be defined as:

1) The President, who must be duly elected from among the PGSG members in accordance with the rules and regulations of election established by the Senate.

2) The Vice-President of External Affairs, who must be duly elected from among the PGSG members in accordance with the rules and regulations of election established by the Senate.

3) The Vice-President of Internal Affairs, who must be duly elected from among the PGSG members in accordance with the rules and regulations of election established by the Senate.

4) The Secretary, who must be duly elected from among the PGSG members in accordance with the rules and regulations of election established by the Senate.

5) The Treasurer, who must be duly elected from among the PGSG members in accordance with the rules and regulations of election established by the Senate.

6) The Parliamentarian, who must be appointed by the President from among the PGSG members and confirmed by a majority vote of the Senate.

7) The Webmaster, who must be appointed by the President from among the PGSG members and confirmed by a majority vote of the Senate.

C) The Executive Officers and one (1) representative from each standing and ad hoc committee of the PGSG shall constitute the Executive Board, with all members having full voting privileges except the Parliamentarian and Webmaster, which shall be non-voting members.

Section 2: Election and Eligibility

A) General Elections for President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be held at a meeting no later than the first week in April and be conducted according to the rules and regulations for elections established by the PGSS.
B) Any member of PGSG who has served on a committee during the current academic year shall be eligible to run for office.

C) Any current officer may seek reelection so long as they are eligible to remain a member of PGSG, with the exception of the office of President, which is limited to two (2) terms.

D) Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Senate. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes, the two (2) candidates receiving the largest pluralities will immediately participate in a run-off election, which shall be determined by a majority vote.

E) The offices of Parliamentarian and Webmaster shall be appointed by the President before the first PGSS meeting following his/her election and must be approved by the Senate by a majority vote. If an appointment is rejected, the President must produce a suitable replacement candidate before the next meeting of the PGSS and the new candidate must be similarly approved by the Senate. Any member of PGSG is eligible to be appointed as Parliamentarian or Webmaster.

F) Any Senator or Alternate elected or appointed as an Executive Officer, immediately upon assuming their new office, vacates his/her Senate seat and all the duties and privileges thereof. The seat may then be filled in accordance with the rules and regulations for the selection of new Senators and Alternates.

Section 3: Duties and Powers of the President

In accordance with this Constitution, the President shall:

A) Represent the PGSG at official functions and meetings as required;
B) Attend all meetings of the PGSS and the Executive Board;
C) Preside over all meetings of the Executive Board;
D) Organize the agenda of all Executive Board meetings;
E) Be a non-voting, ex-officio member of all boards, councils, committees, and commissions of the PGSG;
F) Oversee the execution of the statutes and resolutions adopted by the Senate;
G) Provide information and recommendations to the Senate regarding matters of student welfare and University policy;
H) With the assistance of the Executive Board and the approval of the Senate, make appointments to University Faculty Senate committees or University Boards;
I) With the approval of the Senate, make appointments to the positions of Parliamentarian and Webmaster.

Section 4: Duties and Powers of the Vice-President of External Affairs

In accordance with this Constitution, the Vice-President of External Affairs shall:

A) Advise and assist the President in his/her duties;
B) Attend all meetings of the PGSS and the Executive Board;
C) Under the direction of the President, represent the interests of PGSG and the Purdue graduate community before all local and state government entities;
D) Advise and assist the President in his/her dealings with the Board of Trustees;
E) Be a non-voting, ex-officio member of all boards, councils, committees, and commissions of the PGSG;
F) Oversee and receive reports from delegates to University Faculty committees and University Boards;
G) With the assistance of any relevant committees, seek out opportunities for charitable, educational, and service oriented engagement with the broader community.

Section 5: Duties and Powers of the Vice-President of Internal Affairs

In accordance with this Constitution, the Vice-President of Internal Affairs shall:

A) Advise and assist the President in his/her duties;
B) Attend all meetings of the PGSS and the Executive Board;
C) Preside over all meetings of the PGSS;
D) Organize and preside over the annual Senate Workshop;
E) Organize the agenda for all PGSS meetings;
F) Provide the Secretary with all materials to be distributed at each PGSS meeting;
G) Oversee the appointment of Senators to PGSG committees;
H) Be a non-voting, ex-officio member of all boards, councils, committees, and commissions of the PGSG;
I) Oversee and receive reports from the Committee Chairs of all PGSG committees.

Section 6: Combination of the Vice-Presidency

In the event that, at the time of the General Election, the Senate deems it appropriate to combine the offices of Vice-President of Internal and External Affairs into a single office, it may do so by a majority vote, to be held before the staging of the election. When combined, the Vice-President shall assume all duties of both offices, including Chairmanship of the Senate. The office may also be combined under extenuating circumstances, as defined elsewhere in this document.

Section 7: Duties and Powers of the Secretary

In accordance with this Constitution, the Secretary shall:

A) Record minutes of all PGSS and Executive Board meetings;
B) Attend all meetings of the PGSS and Executive Board;
C) Maintain an archive of all correspondence and minutes;
D) Prepare and organize all handouts for distribution at meetings;
E) Assist the Vice-President of Internal Affairs in organizing the annual Senate Workshop;
F) Complete and deliver all necessary documentation to the appropriate offices.

Section 8: Duties and Powers of the Treasurer

In accordance with this Constitution, the Treasurer shall:
A) Oversee the annual budget process;
B) Provide a budget report at each PGSS meeting;
C) Attend all meetings of the PGSS and Executive Board;
D) Keep records of accounts;
E) Deposit and disburse all funds of the PGSG, as directed by the PGSG annual budget;
F) Make expenditures in a manner approved by the Purdue University Business Office for Student Organizations;
G) Advise the PGSS on all fundraising and monetary issues.
H) With the assistance of any relevant committees, ensure the timely review and distribution of any and all grant and grantlike awards administered by PGSG.

Section 9: Duties and Powers of the Parliamentarian

In accordance with this Constitution, the Parliamentarian shall:

A) Ensure that the Constitution, Bylaws, and Parliamentary Authority are adhered to in all meetings of the PGSS;
B) With the assistance of any relevant committees, oversee the maintenance of all PGSG governing documents;
C) Assist the Vice-President of Internal Affairs in organizing the annual Senate Workshop;
D) Attend all meetings of the PGSS and Executive Board as a non-voting member.

Section 10: Duties and Powers of the Webmaster

In accordance with this Constitution and under the direction of the President and the Executive Board, the Webmaster shall:

A) Maintain and update the PGSG website;
B) Attend all meetings of the Executive Board as a non-voting member.
C) With the assistance of any relevant committees, assist in promoting and publicizing PGSG and its events.

Section 11: Duties and Powers of the Executive Board

In accordance with this Constitution, the Executive Board shall:

A) Under the direction of the Treasurer, initiate the annual budgetary process, as detailed in the Bylaws;
B) Oversee the general operations of the PGSG and ensure compliance with the Mission Statement of the PGSG;
C) Assist the President in making various appointments, as outlined in the Duties and Powers of the President.
D) Meet at least once per month, no later than seven (7) days prior to a regularly scheduled PGSS meeting.
Section 12: Expulsion and Vacancies of Executive Officers

A) In the event that an Executive Officer is found to have exhibited malfeasance or misfeasance, he/she may be considered for expulsion by the PGSS. The accused shall receive written notice of the charges within a reasonable timeframe and shall have opportunity to be heard before the Senate.

B) Removal proceedings shall be conducted as a motion of the Senate, consistent with the established procedures of the Bylaws. A majority vote shall be sufficient to pass the motion.

C) In the event that a motion to remove fails, the same Executive Officer may not be considered for expulsion again during the same or the next successive meeting of the PGSS.

D) In the event that a motion to remove is passed, the Executive Officer is immediately removed from the position. A special election to fill the position must be held no later than two (2) PGSS meetings after the seat has been vacated.

E) In the event of that the office of President is vacated, either due to expulsion or other circumstance, the Vice-President of External Affairs shall assume the duties and responsibilities of the President until a special election can be held to replace the outgoing President. In the event that either Vice-Presidency is vacated, the remaining Vice-President shall assume the duties of both offices. Should both Vice-Presidencies be vacated, the duties shall be assumed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. In the event of vacancies at the other Executive Offices, the duties of the Secretary shall be assumed by the Clerk of the Senate and the Treasurer by the Chairman of a PGSG Standing Committee. These assumptions of duty shall be temporary until such time as a special election can be held to replace the outgoing officer. If vacated, the position of Parliamentarian or Webmaster shall remain empty until a replacement appointment is approved.

Article IV
Judicial Procedures

Section 1: Resolution of Disputes

All internal disputes shall be heard by the Executive Board and decided by a majority vote of its membership. Any appeals of the decision of the Executive Board and any disputes directly involving the Executive Board shall be decided by legislative action of the Senate.

Section 2: Purdue Student Supreme Court

Two (2) positions on the Purdue Student Supreme Court are reserved for graduate students. These positions shall be filled as one (1) year terms by appointment by the President, with the advice of the Executive Board and the majority vote approval of the Senate. Any graduate student may be appointed as a Graduate Justice, subject to the requirements of the Purdue Student Supreme Court. Any vacancy in a Supreme Court Graduate Justice position shall be filled no later than the second Senate meeting following the vacation of the position.
Article V
Amendments

A) All amendments to the Constitution must be proposed and voted on within meetings of the PGSS.
B) Amendments may not be both proposed and voted on within the same PGSS meeting.
C) Amendments must be voted on within one-hundred (100) days of proposal. This requirement is waived in the event that an amendment is proposed at the final PGSS meeting of the spring semester, in which case the amendment must be voted upon at the first PGSS meeting of the fall semester.
D) Two (2) weeks written notice shall be given to all Senators before a vote may be taken on an amendment to the Constitution. At the time of notification, a verbatim copy of the amendment to be considered will be provided to all Senators.
E) Amendments shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote in the PGSS to be ratified.
F) All amendments are subject to the approval of the Office of the Dean of Students.
G) The amendment shall take effect immediately upon ratification by the PGSS and approval by the Office of the Dean of Students.

Article VI
Ratification and Replacement

Section 1: Ratification

A) Ratification of this Constitution shall occur upon a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the PGSS.
B) Two (2) weeks written notice shall be given to all Senators before a vote may be taken to ratify the Constitution. At the time of notification, a verbatim copy of the amendment to be considered will be provided to all Senators.

Section 2: Replacement

A) This Constitution may be superseded only through a ratification process similar to that outlined in the preceding section for initial ratification of this Constitution.