

THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
HISTORY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
CONSTITUTION

(Hereinafter referred to as "the HGSA")

OBJECTIVES

- Article 1. The objectives of the HGSA shall be:
- a) To represent and promote the interests of all graduate students in the History Department;
 - b) To provide said graduate students with information on
 - (i) scholarships,
 - (ii) departmental rules and regulations,
 - (iii) upcoming academic and social activities in the department, and
 - (iv) policy affecting graduate students;
 - c) To liaise between said graduate students and
 - (i) the University-wide Graduate Students Association (GSAED),
 - (ii) the Departmental Assembly of the History Department, and
 - (iii) the Graduate Studies Committee of the History Department;
 - d) To nurture a bilingual environment so that said graduate students can express their concerns and ideas, pursue academic and social interests, and address their colleagues in either French or English.

SECTION I – MEMBERSHIP

- Article 2. In order to be a member of the HGSA, a student must be registered (full- or part-time) in the Department of History Graduate Programme at the University of Ottawa.
- Article 3. No person shall be eligible for membership in the HGSA if he or she attends history seminars without being registered as a graduate student in the Department of History.

SECTION II – BI-ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- Article 4. The HGSA shall hold two (2) General Meetings yearly.
- a) The first shall be convened on the third Thursday of September.
 - b) The second shall be convened on the first Thursday of April.
- Article 5. Members of the HGSA shall receive twenty-one (21) days' notice before these Meetings are convened. This notice shall include an agenda of issues to be discussed at the General Meeting. The agenda shall be set and drafted by the Executive of the HGSA in either English or French. It shall then be translated and disseminated – in both French and English – by the Vice-President Internal.
- Article 6. During the General Meeting in April, each Executive Officer shall issue a report on the execution of his/her respective mandate over the course of the previous academic year. The budget and any other financial statements shall also be presented. These reports shall be heard before the commencement of election procedures.

Article 7. A simple majority (50% + 1) of votes cast by the members present shall settle all questions except when the vote or consent of a greater number of members is required by this Constitution.

Article 8. Executive Officers shall be elected during the General Meetings

- a) During the General Meeting in September, three (3) Executive Officers shall be elected, whose terms of service runs from 1 October to 30 September:
 - (i) the Vice-President Finance, and
 - (ii) the Secretary-Archivist.
- b) During the General Meeting in April, two (2) executive officers shall be elected, whose terms of service runs from 1 May to 30 April:
 - (i) the President and
 - (ii) the Vice-President Internal.
 - (iii) the Vice-President External,

Article 9. The election of Executive Officers and representatives shall comply with the following procedures:

- a) Quorum for the election of Executive Officers shall be ten (10) voting members of the HGSA present in person. Failure to meet quorum shall result in the postponement and rescheduling of the General Meeting by the Chair.
- b) The Chair shall then explain voting procedures and may appoint a returning officer to oversee said procedures;
 - (i) Each member present in person shall be entitled to exercise one (1) vote;
 - (ii) Every vote shall be registered through secret ballot;
 - (iii) Each candidate may request one (1) scrutineer to observe the tallying of the ballots by the Chair;
 - (iv) The candidate who receives a simple majority (50%+1) of votes shall be declared elected by the Chair;
 - (v) If there are more than two candidates and no candidate receives a simple majority on a given ballot, the lowest candidate(s) will be excluded and there will be a subsequent round of balloting;
 - (vi) In the event of a tie, candidates shall again be permitted to address the General Meeting. Their speaking time shall not exceed two (2) minutes. Voting shall then resume;
 - (vii) In the event of a second tie, the Chair shall toss a coin to determine the candidate elected.
- c) Each candidate shall be permitted to address the General Meeting. Their speaking time shall not exceed four (4) minutes;

Article 10. Within a period of seven (7) days after the General Meeting, the Secretary-Archivist shall file the minutes of the said Meeting in the HGSA archives.

SECTION III – MONTHLY MEETINGS

Article 11. The HGSA shall hold open Meetings on the first Thursday of every month. All members are encouraged to attend said Meetings in order to discuss matters of business and help plan upcoming events.

Article 12. Members shall receive seven (7) days' notice before these Meetings are convened. This notice shall include an agenda of issues to be discussed at the Monthly Meeting. The

agenda shall be set and drafted by the Executive of the HGSA in either English or French. It shall then be translated and disseminated – in both French and English – by the Vice-President Internal.

- Article 13. A simple majority (50% + 1) of votes cast by the members present shall settle all questions except when the vote or consent of a greater number of members is required by this Constitution.
- Article 14. Within a period of fourteen (14) days after the Monthly Meeting, the Secretary-Archivist shall file the minutes of the said Meeting in the HGSA archives.

SECTION IV – THE EXECUTIVE

- Article 15. The HGSA shall recognize an Executive consisting of the President (who shall serve as Chair during all Meetings), the Vice-President Internal, the Vice-President External, the Vice-President Finance, and the Secretary-Archivist.
- a) All Executive Officers must be members of the HGSA.
- Article 16. In the event of an Executive Officer's disqualification or resignation from office prior to the end of his/her term of office, the following rules shall apply:
- a) the remaining members of the Executive shall appoint another member of the HGSA to that position as an Acting Officer.
- b) The Executive shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting with a minimum of twenty-one (21) days notice to coincide with a monthly meeting in order to elect a member to the vacant position.
- c) The term of office of any Executive Officer appointed or elected in such a manner shall expire *no later* than the following 30 April or 30 September, whichever occurs earliest.
- d) Any member elected as an Executive Officer during a Biannual General Meeting shall have the right to serve out the remainder of the term of that office.
- Article 17. The President shall:
- a) Be an *ex officio*, non-voting member of the Executive;
- b) Be bilingual (French and English);
- c) Conduct Biannual and Monthly Meetings in accordance with the rules and procedures set out in *Robert's Rules of Order*;
- d) Serve as official representative of graduate students in the Department of History;
- e) Serve as liaison between graduate students, faculty, and administration;
- f) Be responsible for the daily management and general organization of the HGSA;
- g) Coordinate the activities of the Executive;
- h) Assume co-signing authority with the Vice-President External and Vice-President Finance for all decisions affecting the monetary affairs of the HGSA;
- i) Set and draft the agenda for Bi-Annual General Meetings and Monthly Meetings;
- j) Present a general report on the execution of his/her mandate over the course of the previous academic year at the Bi-Annual General Meeting in April.
- Article 18. The Vice-President Internal shall:
- a) Serve as Communications Officer of the HGSA;
- b) Assume the responsibilities of the President, should the President be unable to fulfill his/her duties, *or* set forth a motion to elect another Officer to assume said responsibilities;
- c) Direct community services and organize social events on behalf of the HGSA;

- d) Promote a policy of bilingualism by coordinating workshops, conversation groups and a variety of cultural activities;
- e) Disseminate notices for Bi-Annual and Monthly Meetings;
- f) Disseminate information on behalf of the Executive;
- g) Keep HGSA members abreast of upcoming activities and application deadlines;
- h) Assume any other duties, as assigned by the Executive;
- i) Present a general report on the execution of his/her mandate over the course of the previous academic year at the Bi-Annual General Meeting in April.

Article 19. The Vice-President External shall:

- a) Assume co-signing authority with the President and the Vice-President Finance for all decisions affecting the monetary affairs of the HGSA;
- b) Organize the monthly History Graduate Students' Colloquiums
- c) Organize the annual History Graduate Students' Conference;
- d) Maintain contacts with other graduate student associations in order to foster an interdisciplinary academic community;
- e) Oversee the activities of Departmental Assembly, Library, CHA, GSAED, and CUPE representatives and any other delegates for which the HGSA may require external representation.
 - (i) The Vice-President External shall be, *ex officio*, an alternative representative for each of these positions
- f) Coordinate fundraising activities in order to generate revenue for the HGSA;
- g) Assume any other duties, as assigned by the Executive;
- h) Present a general report on the execution of his/her mandate over the course of the previous academic year at the Bi-Annual General Meeting in April.

Article 20. The Vice-President Finance shall:

- a) Manage the funds of the HGSA;
- b) Keep a basic record of the expenditures of the HGSA, consisting of cheques and receipts;
- c) Assume co-signing authority with the President and the Vice-President External for all decisions affecting the monetary affairs of the HGSA;
- d) Keep the HGSA informed on grants, scholarships, and refunds for conference expenditures;
- e) Oversee the activities of the GSAED representative;
- f) Assume any other duties, as assigned by the Executive;
- g) Present a financial report at the Bi-Annual General Meeting in April.

Article 21. The Secretary-Archivist shall:

- a) Take minutes of all Meetings and file these minutes in the HGSA archives;
- b) Ensure that said minutes are made accessible to all members of the HGSA;
- c) Refer back to said minutes in order to offer clarification or cite precedent when discussing policy;
- d) Maintain a record of attendance and voting for all Meetings;
- e) Ensure that members of the HGSA are able to contact specific members of the Executive;
- f) Archive the records compiled by the Vice-President Finance (Article 20.b);
- g) Assume any other duties, as assigned by the Executive;
- h) Present a general report on the execution of his/her mandate over the course of the previous academic year at the Bi-Annual General Meeting in April

- Article 22. Other Executive positions may be created when deemed necessary by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the HGSA at a Bi-Annual General Meeting.
- Article 23. The Executive shall be subject to the instruction and control of the HGSA. In coordinating the management of the HGSA, Executive Officers are bound by the terms of this Constitution. Their contravention of this Constitution or their failure to abide by policies approved by the HGSA may result in their impeachment.

SECTION V – REPRESENTATIVES

- Article 24. At the September Bi-Annual General Meeting, elections shall be held for representatives to attend and report on Meetings of the following organizations:
- (i) the University-wide Graduate Student Association (GSAED);
 - (ii) the graduate students' Union (CUPE);
 - (iii) the Departmental Assembly of the History Department;
 - (iv) the Graduate Studies Committee of the Department; and
 - (v) the University of Ottawa Library Committee.
- Article 25. All representatives must be members of the HGSA.
- Article 26. The term of all representative expires at the September Bi-Annual General Meeting
- Article 27. All representatives must report to the Vice-President External.
- Article 28. If any representative is unable to fulfill her responsibilities, the HGSA Executive may designate another member of the HGSA to fulfill said responsibilities.
- Article 29. If any position is vacant at the time of the April Bi-Annual General Meeting, elections will be held for those representatives.

SECTION VI – HGSA OFFICERS

- Article 30. The HGSA may create officers charged with specific tasks on an *ad hoc* basis as required. Such officers *may* include, but are not limited to:
- a) Communication Officer, responsible for translations and promotion
 - b) Conference Chair, responsible for aiding in the co-ordination of the monthly colloquiums and the annual conference
- Article 31. All HGSA officers shall report to a designated Executive Officer.

SECTION VII – STANDING COMMITTEES

- Article 32. The HGSA may create standing committees and/or *ad hoc* committees as required.
- Article 33. All committees shall report to a designated Executive Officer.

SECTION VIII – IMPEACHMENT PROCEDURES

- Article 34. The impeachment of individual Executive Officers shall comply with the following procedures:
- a) At a Bi-Annual General Meeting or a Monthly Meeting, a motion for impeachment shall be put forward from the floor by a member of the HGSA and seconded from the floor by another member of the HGSA;
 - b) Members of the HGSA present in person shall then vote on the said motion;

- c) Should the motion be defeated, the Executive Officer in question shall be exonerated;
- d) Should the motion be passed, the Executive Officer in question shall be placed under review;
- e) Should a motion of impeachment against the President be passed, the Vice-President Internal shall assume the duties of Chair for the remainder of the Meeting;
- f) After voting procedures, no further discussion on the motion shall ensue and the Meeting shall resume along the lines set out in the agenda;
- g) At the following Meeting, the member who put forward the motion for impeachment shall present his/her case before the HGSA. Speaking time shall not exceed five (5) minutes;
- h) The Executive Officer under review shall then be given the opportunity to respond. Speaking time shall not exceed five (5) minutes;
- i) The Chair shall then explain voting procedures;
- j) Each member present in person shall be entitled to exercise one (1) vote;
- k) Every vote shall be registered through secret ballot;
- l) A two-thirds (2/3) majority is required for impeachment to pass.

Article 35. Should the HGSA choose to impeach, a new Executive Officer shall be elected in accordance with Section II, Article 6 of this Constitution.

Article 36. Quorum for the impeachment of an Executive Officer shall be thirty (30) members of the HGSA, present in person. Failure to meet quorum will result in the exoneration of the Executive Officer under review.

SECTION VIII – AMENDMENTS

Article 37. This Constitution is subject to amendment.

Article 38. Any amendment to this Constitution must be approved by a four-fifths (4/5) majority of members present at a Bi-Annual General Meeting.

Article 39. Quorum for the amendment of this Constitution shall be ten (10) voting members of the HGSA present in person.

SECTION IX – GENERAL

Article 40. (1) The French and English versions of this Constitution are equally authoritative
 (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the English version of this Constitution will be solely authoritative until a French version of this Constitution is prepared and ratified by the HGSA at a Bi-Annual General Meeting.

- a) It is the responsibility of the President and Secretary Archivist to present a French version of this Constitution at every Bi-Annual General Meeting until such version is ratified by the membership.