

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 scholarships, departmental rules and regulations, upcoming academic and social activities in the department, and policy affecting graduate students;
- c) To liaise between said graduate students and the University-wide Graduate Students Association (GSAED), the Departmental Assembly of the History Department, and 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 1. 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 2. 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 1. The HGSA shall hold two (2) General Meetings yearly. The first shall be convened on the first Thursday of October. The second shall be convened on the first Thursday of April.

Article 2. Members of the HGSA shall receive thirty (30) 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 3. Members of the HGSA who wish to run for executive positions must submit their candidacy to the President two (2) weeks prior to the General Meeting. Names of candidates shall be listed on the aforementioned agenda.

Article 4. During the General Meeting in October, three (3) Executive Officers shall be elected: the Vice-President External, the Vice-President Finance, and the Secretary-Archivist.

Article 5. During the General Meeting in April, two (2) executive officers shall be elected: the President and the Vice-President Internal.

Article 6. The election of Executive Officers and representatives shall comply with the following procedures:

- a) Each candidate shall be permitted to address the General Meeting. Their speaking time shall not exceed five (5) minutes;
- b) The Chair shall then explain voting procedures and may appoint a returning officer to oversee said procedures;
- c) Each member present in person shall be entitled to exercise one (1) vote;
- d) Every vote shall be registered through secret ballot;
- e) The Candidate who receives a simple majority (50%+1) of votes shall be declared elected by the Chair;
- f) 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;
- g) In the event of a second tie, the Chair shall toss a coin to determine the candidate elected.

Article 7. 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.

Article 8. 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 9. 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 10. Within a period of fourteen (14) 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 1. 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 2. 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 3. 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 4. 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 1. 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.

Article 2. The President shall:

- a) Be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Executive;
- b) Be bilingual (French and English);
- c) Conduct Bi-Annual 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) Oversee the activities of Departmental Assembly, Library, and CUPE representatives.
- k) 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 3. 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) Promote a policy of bilingualism by coordinating workshops, conversation groups and a variety of cultural activities;
- d) Disseminate notices for Bi-Annual and Monthly Meetings;
- e) Disseminate information on behalf of the Executive;
- f) Keep HGSA members abreast of upcoming activities and application deadlines;
- g) Oversee the activities of the CHA representative;
- 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 4. The Vice-President External shall:

- a) Direct community services on behalf of the HGSA;
- b) Organize social events;
- c) Assume co-signing authority with the President and the Vice-President Finance for all decisions affecting the monetary affairs of the HGSA;
- d) Organize the annual History Graduate Students' Colloquium;
- e) Maintain contacts with other graduate student associations in order to foster an interdisciplinary academic community;
- 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 5. 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 6. 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 5,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 7. 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 8. All Executive Officers must be members of the HGSA.

Article 9. In the event of an Executive Officer's written resignation prior to the end of his/her term of office, the remaining members of the Executive shall appoint another member of the HGSA to that position.

Article 10. 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 1. The HGSA shall designate representatives to attend and report on Meetings of the following organizations: the University-wide Graduate Student Association (GSAED); the graduate students' Union (CUPE); the Departmental Assembly of the History Department; the Graduate Studies Committee of the Department; and the University of Ottawa Library Committee.

Article 2. All representatives must be members of the HGSA.

Article 3. All representatives must report to a designated Executive Officer under Section IV, Articles 2, 3 and 5 of this Constitution.

SECTION VI – STANDING COMMITTEES

Article 1. The HGSA may create standing committees and/or ad-hoc committees as required.

Article 2. All committees shall report to a designated Executive Officer.

SECTION VII – IMPEACHMENT

Article 1. 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 2. Should the HGSA choose to impeach, a new Executive Officer shall be elected in accordance with Section II, Article 6 of this Constitution.

Article 3. Quorum for the impeachment of an Executive Officer shall be two-thirds (2/3) of the entire HGSA, present in person. Failure to meet quorum will result in the exoneration of the Executive Officer under review.

SECTION VIII – AMENDMENTS

Article 1. This Constitution is subject to amendment.

Article 2. Any amendment to this Constitution must be approved by a majority of two-thirds (2/3) of members present at a Bi-Annual General Meeting.

Article 3. Quorum for the amendment of this Constitution shall be ten (10) voting members of the HGSA present in person.