

CONSTITUTION
THE ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

ARTICLE I -- NAME

This organization shall be known as THE ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS (AGS) of The University of Maine.

ARTICLE II -- PURPOSE (Mission Statement)

It is the mission of the Association of Graduate Students to support both the academic and non-academic activities of the graduate student body. Keeping with its mission, AGS will perform the following duties: act as a liaison between the University of Maine's administration, faculty, staff and graduate students; encourage graduate students' involvement in AGS activities and University functions; facilitate and encourage educational, professional and research activities of graduate students; disseminate information regarding graduate activities to graduate students, administration, faculty, staff and the campus community as a whole; represent graduate student interests to the University community, the state of Maine, and national organizations.

ARTICLE III -- RESPONSIBILITY

Section 1. The AGS may send representatives to the Council of Colleges, the Graduate Board, the Faculty Senate, and to any other board, Committee, or Organization where graduate student representation is necessary, useful or requested.

Section 2. An official delegate of the AGS shall report problems and interests of graduate students at UM to appropriate University officials, with recommendations for implementing changes necessary.

Section 3. The AGS shall be responsible for all funds obtained and shall allocate these funds as it deems proper to benefit the graduate students and the University as a whole in accordance with Article II of the AGS Constitution.

ARTICLE IV -- REPRESENTATION

Section 1. The AGS activities shall be governed by a Board consisting of representatives from graduate programs at the University of Maine.

Section 2. There shall be one representative from each program for every fifty enrolled graduate students or fraction thereof. Each program shall have at least one representative. The new program representative shall notify the Secretary of the AGS in writing of her/his appointment. Programs recognized by the Graduate School are eligible for AGS representation. Other graduate degree programs may submit a request to the AGS Board for separate representation.

Section 3. The appointment of the program representative(s) shall be the responsibility of the graduate students in each program, with the assistance of the Chair or the Graduate Coordinator.

Section 4. Program representatives shall be graduate students.

Section 5. The President of the AGS may appoint representatives to represent those programs which are otherwise not represented with the approval of the AGS Board.

Section 6. Program representatives shall serve at least one semester.

Section 7. Each representative of the AGS Board shall strive to attend as many meetings as possible. The Board reserves the right to remove representatives after repeated absences.

ARTICLE V -- QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the possible number of recognized programs. Representatives are defined in Article IV Section 2 of the Constitution. If the regular meetings of the AGS Board have not had a quorum present at any meeting for 3 complete semesters (the semesters are fall and spring, not summer), the AGS shall be dissolved (see Article XVIII).

ARTICLE VI -- VOTING

Passage of business shall be by a majority of the vote with a quorum present, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution. Each representative to the AGS Board shall have one vote.

ARTICLE VII -- OFFICERS

Section 1. Each year the AGS Board shall elect, by majority vote, a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Grants Officer from the graduate student body. The Officers may serve as a non-voting, program representative.

Section 2. The AGS Board shall fix an honorarium as they deem suitable for the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Grants Officer of the AGS.

Section 3. The AGS Board may establish additional officers and provide suitable methods for their appointment.

ARTICLE VIII -- ELECTION OF OFFICERS

AGS shall conduct an election every year for a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Grants Officer according to the procedure outlined in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE IX -- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive committee shall consist of any elected or appointed officers of the AGS.

ARTICLE X -- DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

All AGS officers shall adhere to procedures of the AGS Bylaws and Standing Rules.

Section 1. Duties of the President

- A. The President shall be responsible for overseeing that the functions of the AGS and the AGS Officers are carried out in a manner prescribed in this constitution, the AGS Bylaws, Standing Rules and as deemed by the AGS Board.
- B. The President shall act as liaison between University of Maine Administrators and the AGS.
- C. The President shall preside over all meeting of the AGS Board and the Executive Committee of the AGS.
- D. The President shall sign all of the checks, written by the Treasurer and issued by the AGS, and no check shall be valid without this signature.
- E. The President shall represent the graduate students on the Graduate Faculty Board.

Section 2. Duties of the Vice-President

- A. The Vice-President shall act as coordinator of all AGS committee activities which include: all AGS permanent, standing and ad hoc committees; all committees of the University of Maine Administration.
- B. The Vice-President shall act in the capacity of the President in any meeting or event where the President is unable to attend or participate.
- C. The Vice-President shall have the responsibility for AGS's philanthropic activities.
- D. The Vice-President shall represent the AGS on the Faculty Senate.

Section 3. Duties of the Secretary

- A. The Secretary shall keep good and true minutes and an attendance record of the meetings of the AGS Board.
- B. The Secretary shall be responsible for all official correspondence of the AGS and shall take care to see that copies of all such correspondence and the minutes of all meetings are preserved on file in the offices of the AGS.
- C. The Secretary shall be responsible for notifying all appropriate parties of resolutions passed and actions taken by the AGS Board in a timely manner.

Section 4. Duties of the Treasurer

- A. The Treasurer shall be the financial officer of the AGS and shall be responsible for all funds held by the organization.
- B. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the expenditure of all funds in a regular and proper manner in

adherence to the financial guidelines outlined in the Constitution, AGS Bylaws, and the AGS Standing Rules.

C. The Treasurer shall serve as Chair of the Finance Committee of the AGS.

D. The Treasurer shall prepare a budget and an expenditure record as instructed by the AGS Standing Rules

E. The Treasurer shall submit all accounts of the AGS for an independent audit on a yearly basis.

F. The Treasurer shall write all checks and those checks shall be signed by the President. No check shall be valid without this signature

Section 5. Duties of the Grants Officer

A. The Grants officer shall serve as Chair for the Grants Committee, Chair for the AGS Clubs and Organizations committee and shall coordinate all grants funding activity.

B. The grants shall be reviewed and awarded by a committee made up of graduate students.

C. At the end of each semester the Grants officer shall submit a detailed report to the AGS Board reporting all grant funding activity.

Section 6. Duties of the representatives to the AGS Board

A. Representatives to the AGS Board shall endeavor to serve on at least one committee, group, or organization where graduate student representation is necessary, useful, or requested.

B. It shall be the responsibility of the AGS Board to oversee the activities and actions of the Officers and Executive Committee.

C. Any member of the AGS Board may ask for a status or progress report from any committee. This report must be submitted to that member within two weeks of a written request.

D. It shall be the duty of the representatives of the AGS Board to represent their constituents, and keep them informed of AGS actions.

Section 7. Duties of the Executive Committee

A. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for submitting a proposed annual budget to the AGS board at the first meeting of the academic year. No spending of AGS funds can occur without an approved budget by the AGS Board.

B. The Executive Committee shall meet regularly or as deemed necessary by the President

Each member of the Executive Committee shall be responsible for holding regular, weekly hours at the AGS Office.

ARTICLE XI -- MEETINGS

Section 1. The AGS Board shall meet at least every month. AGS Board meetings shall be open to the entire University community. The President shall call the first meeting within three weeks of the first day of the semester.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by:

A. The Executive Committee

B. The President

C. Petition from representatives of ten percent of the graduate programs

ARTICLE XII -- SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Representatives to the AGS Board unable to attend a meeting of the AGS may designate a proxy member to attend that meeting, with all rights and privileges delegated to regular members.

ARTICLE XIII -- COMMITTEES,

Section 1. The AGS shall establish and maintain a minimum number of committees which will include an Executive Committee, Finance Committee and Grants Committee.

Section 2. The AGS Board reserves the right to establish and dissolve ad hoc committees as deemed necessary.

Section 3. The AGS Board may establish or dissolve additional permanent committees at any time by majority vote.

ARTICLE XIV -- SUCCESSION

Section 1. Should the President resign or become permanently unable to conduct the duties of the office, the

Vice-President shall be elevated to President. The Secretary shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board and preside over the election of a new Vice-President.

Section 2. Should the Vice-President become unable to conduct the duties of the office, the President shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board and preside over the election of a new Vice President.

Section 3. Should the President and Vice-President become unable to conduct the duties of their offices, the Secretary shall be elevated to the position of President. The Treasurer shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board and preside over the election of a new Vice-President and Secretary.

Section 4. Should the President, Vice-President and Secretary become unable to conduct the duties of their offices, the Treasurer shall be elevated to the position of President. The Grants Officer shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board and preside over the election of a new Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 5. Should the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer become unable to conduct the duties of their offices, the Grants officer shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board and preside over the election of a new President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section 6. Should the Secretary become unable to conduct the duties of the office, the President shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board and preside over the election of a new Secretary.

Section 7. Should the Treasurer become unable to conduct the duties of the office, the President shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board and preside over the election of a new Treasurer.

Section 8. Should the Grants Officer become unable to conduct the duties of the office, the President shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board and preside over the election of a new Grants Officer.

Section 9. In the event that all the elected Officers become unable to conduct the duties of their offices, any graduate program representative to the AGS Board shall call a special meeting of the AGS Board. The AGS Board shall elect a chairperson to preside over a special election of new Officers.

ARTICLE XV -- REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Section 1. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, or Grants officer of the AGS may be removed from office by the following procedure.

- A. Upon receipt of a petition for removal of an officer signed by fifty (50) percent of the members of the AGS Board, a special meeting of the AGS Board shall be called within two regularly scheduled Board meetings to hear the charges. The AGS Board shall designate a special chair by a majority vote to preside at this meeting.
- B. The officer whose removal is sought shall not participate in any AGS function between the receipt of the petition for removal and the hearing of the charges before the AGS Board.
- C. A vote of three-fourths of a quorum shall be sufficient to remove the officer in question.
- D. Following the removal of any officer, a successor will be chosen immediately under the designated procedure for succession.

Section 2. Program representatives may be removed from the AGS Board by a vote of three-fourths of a quorum, provided that notice of the impending removal has been placed upon the agenda of the meeting and circulated to all program representatives. He/she may not be removed without having an opportunity to defend herself/himself before a full meeting of the AGS Board.

Section 3. Committee chairs and members may be removed by a vote of three-fourths of a quorum of the AGS Board, provided that notice of the impending removal has been placed upon the agenda of the meeting and circulated to all program representatives and to the committee chair or member. He/she may not be removed from the office without having an opportunity to defend herself/himself before a full meeting of the AGS Board.

ARTICLE XVI – BYLAWS

The AGS Board is given the authority to promulgate Bylaws pursuant to this Constitution and any other activities deemed necessary by the AGS Board. Approval of proposed Bylaws and amendments shall be by a vote of a

majority of a quorum of the AGS Board, provided the proposed Bylaws or amendments were circulated to program representatives at least one week before the meeting.

ARTICLE XVII – STANDING RULES

The AGS Board is given the authority to promulgate Standing Rules pursuant to this Constitution. Approval of proposed Standing Rules and amendments shall be by a vote of a majority of a quorum of the AGS Board, provided the proposed Standing Rules or amendments were circulated to program representatives at least one week before the meeting.

ARTICLE XVIII -- CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a vote of three-fourths of a quorum of the AGS Board, provided that the proposed amendment was introduced at a previous meeting of the AGS Board and that copies of the proposed amendment were circulated to the program representatives at least one week before the meeting.

ARTICLE XIX-- RATIFICATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

Ratification of the Constitution shall be by a vote of three-fourths of a quorum of the AGS Board, provided that the proposed constitution was introduced at a previous meeting of the AGS Board and that copies of the proposed constitution were circulated to the program representatives at least one week before the meeting.

ARTICLE XX-- DISSOLUTION OF FUNDS

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Board of Trustees shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE XXI – REFERENDUM

Section 1. The graduate student body reserves the right to request by petition a referendum vote on any resolution passed by the AGS Board. A referendum petition must be filed with the President within thirty (30) academic days after passage of the resolution in question and must be signed by at least five (5) percent of the graduate student body.

Section 2. The AGS Board reserves the right to move any resolution to a referendum vote when deemed necessary.

Section 3. The referendum shall take place not less than twenty (20) days or no more than thirty (30) academic days after filing of the referendum request. The Board reserves the right to declare the means by which a referendum is announced and votes tallied. The Board must demonstrate that the entire graduate student body received notification of the referendum. Passage of a referendum shall be by a majority vote.

ARTICLE XXII – BUDGET

Section 1. Income may be derived from the imposition of a Graduate Student Activity Fee upon the graduate student body, the amount to be set by the AGS and approved by the graduate student body in a referendum (see ARTICLE XXI).

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for submitting a proposed annual budget to the AGS board at the first meeting of the academic year. No spending of AGS funds can occur without an approved budget by the AGS Board.

BYLAWS OF THE AGS CONSTITUTION

Section 1: Election Procedure

A. During the second meeting of the spring semester, the AGS Executive Committee shall establish a nominating committee. This committee shall consist of a minimum of three members. The chair of the Nominating Committee shall not be a candidate for any AGS office and will only vote in case of a tie.

B. At the third meeting of the spring semester, the chair of the Nominating Committee shall call for nominations from the floor for each office. The Nominating Committee shall then convene to prepare all nominations made for AGS Officer Positions. There must be at least two candidates for each position. Each candidate must be a graduate student for the entire upcoming academic year and be willing to be available for all AGS activities.

C. Before the last AGS Board meeting of the academic year, an election date will be set by the Nomination Committee. During elections, each candidate will be required to address the AGS Board elucidating their abilities, ideas, and experience for the position. After the speeches, the Nomination Committee shall conduct a secret ballot to elect the new officers of the AGS. In case none of the candidates have a majority of the vote, there will be a runoff election between the two candidates who gathered the most votes. In the event of a tie for an office, the chair of the nominating committee shall cast the deciding vote. The newly elected officers shall take office by June 1st.

Section 2. Discussion Protocol

The AGS Board shall use “Robert’s Rules of Order” as a guide to parliamentary procedure. Parliamentary procedure is a protocol used by legislative bodies to facilitate orderly discussion at meetings. The intent of any discussion should be to reach a solution and promote open debate by all members of a group. Since many people are not intimately familiar with Robert’s Rules of Order, the guidelines below present an abbreviated protocol that AGS Board shall follow but not limit itself to.

A. Terms of Parliamentary Procedure

1. In Order – Parliamentary procedure only allows for certain actions to be performed at certain times during the meeting. Actions allowed are referred as “in order” and those that are not allowed are called “out of order.”
2. Quorum – A quorum is the number of representatives that need to be present at an AGS Board meeting to be sufficient to pass official business. This number is defined in the AGS Constitution.
3. Motions – A motion is a suggestion to the Board to take a specific action. Any member of the Board may propose a motion. Only one motion can be considered at a time. To be discussed, a motion must be seconded.
4. Seconds – Motions proposed to the Board require that at least one other Representative supports consideration of the action. The second is made verbally after a motion is proposed.
5. Floor – A Board member or guest who has the floor has the right to speak without being interrupted. The person with the floor may entertain questions asked by others without yielding the floor. The President always determines who has the floor. One must have the floor to make a motion, but not to second one.
6. Bill – A bill is a detailed statement of action. It defines a specific course of action for the Board. The statement may contain many “whereas” clauses that outline the reasons for the action and one or more “enacted” clauses that outline the course of action to be taken. Any Board member or AGS Committee may write and/or sponsor a bill. Authors and/or Committee Chairs are usually expected to read or paraphrase the document and answer questions concerning its content or purpose.
7. Resolution – A resolution is a detailed statement of sentiment. It expresses the opinion, support, or opposition of the Board. The statement may contain many “whereas” clauses that outline the reasons for the reasons and one or more “resolved” clauses that outline the course of action to be taken. Any Board member or AGS Committee may write and/or sponsor a resolution. Authors and/or Committee Chairs are usually expected to read or paraphrase the document and answer questions concerning its content or purpose.

B. Order of Business

1. Call to Order – The President calls the meeting to order. Parliamentary procedure begins.
2. Approval of Minutes – The President shall ask if anyone is opposed to approval of the minutes of the last Board meeting as written. If no one objects, the minutes are approved by a vote of General Consent. If objection exists, a

motion can be made to amend the minutes.

3. President's Remarks – The President may address the Board and make any pertinent announcements regarding the meeting. Questions may be directed to the President, but any discussion at this point is out of order.

4. Reports from Committees and Officers – Committee Chairs and Officers in turn briefly announce any current business of their respective position. Questions may be directed to the speaker, but any discussion at this point is out of order.

5. Old Business – Any business from the last meeting that was unresolved can be addressed at this point.

6. New Business – Here, the Board may consider motions. The agenda shall list any scheduled bills or resolutions to be treated separately in the order they are listed. After any scheduled New Business, the President shall call for additional New Business. After a motion is read or paraphrased aloud and seconded, the President opens the floor for debate. Any person present may request the floor to discuss the motion at hand.

7. General Announcements – Here, any Board member or guest can request the floor to make general announcements or inquiries. Questions can be addressed to the speaker but debate ended with New Business and any issues must wait until Old Business of the next meeting.

8. Adjourn – The President shall announce the meeting adjourned. A motion may be made if there are any objections to adjourning.

C. Making Motions

1. Obtain the floor.

2. Make the motion.

3. Wait for a second. The President shall call for a second if needed.

4. The President shall repeat the motion.

5. The President shall open the floor for discussion of the motion at hand.

6. Ending discussion:

a. If discussion ceases, the President asks for any further discussion. If so, discussion continues. If not, the President initiates a vote on the motion.

b. During discussion, one of the following can be called:

1. Call the Question -- The President or any Board member granted the floor may call the question to end the discussion. After a second to call the question is made, the Board votes whether to call the question. If the call carries, a vote can be made on the original motion at hand. If the call fails to carry, discussion continues

2. Table the Motion – If a Board member wishes the motion set aside to conduct further business, a motion can be made to table the motion at hand. If the motion to table carries, it can be reintroduced later as Old Business.

3. Amend the Motion – If a Board member wishes the main motion carried in a modified form, a “friendly amendment” can be suggested and accepted by the author and/or sponsor of the main motion. Otherwise, a motion must be made to amend the original motion at hand.

4. Refer to Committee. If it is judged by a Board member that the matter can wait and should be further investigated, they can move to refer the motion to a committee. If the motion to refer to committee passes, an ad hoc committee is established.

D. Voting -- Passage of business shall be by a majority vote of the AGS Board, unless otherwise specified by the AGS Constitution. The President shall decide on the voting method to be used upon initiation of a vote. The President shall announce the result of a vote when completed. The voting methods are:

1. Vote by Show of Hands – the President asks the voting representatives to show by their hand in turn if in favor, opposed, or in abstention and counted by the Secretary.

2. General Consent – If a motion is not likely to be opposed, the President shall ask for any objection before stating that the motion carries. The membership shows agreement by their silence.

3. Roll Call – If a record of each voter is desired, each voter verbally answers the vote when called by the Secretary.

4. Ballot – If voting secrecy is desired, voters write their vote on a piece of paper to be collected and tallied by the Secretary.