

Article I. Introduction

Section I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Geography Graduate Student Organization, hereinafter referred to as the GGSO.

Section II: Mission Statement

The mission of the GGSO is to improve the graduate school experience for those students in the Geography Department at Syracuse University.

Section III: Objectives

The objectives of the GGSO are as follows:

1. To organize, support, and represent the Geography graduate students at Syracuse University
2. To provide a space where their opinions and concerns can be discussed
3. To recognize and promote those concerns to the faculty and the University at large via the GSO
4. To provide resources to strengthen the department academically, professionally and socially

Article II. Organizational Structure

Section I. Executive Board and Other Officers

1. The Executive Board, consisting of two Graduate Representatives and two GSO Representatives, will collectively share the responsibilities of the position that would traditionally be considered “President”. That is, any Executive Board member can sign paperwork associated with the successful functioning of the GGSO, call meetings, etc.
2. Officers are positions related to department activities that are important to department functioning regardless of the existence of a GGSO. This constitution codifies their responsibilities, and ensures that officers and board members are interacting to ensure a successful department and student organization.

A. List of Executive Board Positions and General Responsibilities

1. Two Graduate Student Representatives (“Grad Reps”)
 - a. The Grad Reps will attend Faculty Meetings where they will act as representatives of the student body, ensuring our opinions and concerns are voiced to the faculty. They will take notes and distribute them to the student listserv to ensure access to the discussions. They will meet with the other board members at the beginning of each semester to ensure a coherent organizational plan. They will organize and facilitate at least one meeting per semester to discuss department and organization affairs with the entire geography graduate student body.

- b. The grad reps will be elected in alternating semesters, one at the end of the spring term (beginning of fall), one at the end of the fall term (beginning of spring).
 - c. Whichever grad rep has been in office longer will be referred to as the “Senior” Rep, whereas the more recently elected will be referred to as the “Junior” Rep.
2. Two Graduate Student Organization Representative (“GSO Reps”)
 - a. Will attend GSO meetings, acting as our representative/senator and ensure the graduate student body is informed on the various issues by distributing notes to the listserv. Will arrange proper use of GSO funds by coordinating appropriate paperwork, work with the executive board to organize events (social, professional and otherwise), coordinate any fundraisers and ensure the perpetuation of this organization.
 - b. The GSO Reps will follow the staggered election process and naming conventions of the Grad Reps
 - c. Senior GSO Reps will have the primary voting responsibility at GSO meetings, though both reps should attend GSO meetings.
 - i. Both reps should discuss the vote in relation to how they believe the department at large would vote.
 - ii. The Junior Rep is responsible for compiling and distributing notes about the meeting to the listserv. Notes should include information about the various discussions and the outcomes of votes, as well as information on how the Senior Rep voted and why.

B. List of Other Officers

1. One Future Professoriate Program Coordinator (“FPP Coordinator”)
 - a. The FPP Coordinator will work with the Primary Faculty Liaison, the Future Professoriate Program and the Graduate School to ensure geography graduate students have access to the FPP and the benefits that entails by organizing events and ensuring students are aware of FPP programs, eligibility and requirements.
 - b. The Primary Faculty Liaison reserves the right to veto a vote if he/she feels the voted in candidate is not adequate. The PFL must supply adequate reasoning for rejecting the vote winner to the Executive Board. If the event the PFL wants an alternative, they must first consider other nominees, in the order of plurality vote (i.e., they must first consider the second place nominee).
2. One Supporting Women in the Geosciences (SWIG) Officer
 - a. Responsible for organizing and overseeing the development of a SWIG chapter at Syracuse. Solicit donations for speakers and creating ties with other geoscience graduate students at Syracuse and SUNY-ESF.
3. One GTU Representative
 - a. Gather and submit applications, work with (GTU staff???)—Kelsey is looking into it!

4. One Graduate Committee Representative
 - a. Represent the interests and perspectives of the students on the department wide Graduate Committee by attending the meetings of that committee, assisting in recruitment and selection of the incoming class, and reports any necessary information to the student body as a whole.
 - b. Eligibility for Graduate Committee Representative is partially determined by the needs of the Graduate Committee, who attempt to have a diverse group in terms of background and research interest that will best represent the department as a whole. For this reason, it is not an elected position, though the grad reps reserve the right to nominate and recommend students for the committee.
5. One Colloquium Representative
 - a. Work with the colloquium committee to recruit and select colloquium speakers that speak to the interests of the graduate students. May be asked to help in coordinating accommodations, dinners, etc. for visiting speakers as part of their role on the committee. The colloquium committee has the final say on which nominee selected for the committee.

C. Qualifications for Becoming an Officer

1. All matriculated Geography Graduate Students are eligible to run for office
2. Students must be in residence for the entire duration of their term
3. Must be able to meet all responsibilities regarding attendance at outside meetings
4. Must maintain a 3.0 as required by department regulations for matriculation
5. Cannot have previously held the office for which they are running, but may have previously held a different office
6. Cannot hold more than one office simultaneously

D. Terms of Office

1. Each office is to be held for one full year after voting occurs
2. Elections for one grad rep, one GSO rep, and all other offices will be held in April
 - a. If in the April election a position is not filled, there will be another vote at the beginning of September to fill the position.
3. A special election will take place in January for the second grad rep and second GSO rep to ensure staggered terms

E. Procedure for Filling Vacated Offices

In the event that an officer must vacate their position, a special election will be held to replace them. The new candidate will hold office for the remainder of the former officer's term. The replacement officer will be allowed to run for the same office, and therefore exempt from Article 2, Section 1B, Point 5, if and only if the duration of their term as replacement officer is less than three months/one semester.

Section II: Committees

There will be no committees created at the time of the writing of this Constitution. If there is need for a committee, the GGSO will create an amendment explaining their formation and roles.

Section III: Advisor

The current graduate director will also act as advisor to the GGSO. In the event the students want a different advisor or a graduate director refuses to also act as advisor, the GGSO will hold a vote to determine which faculty member should be asked next, and we'll ask until someone agrees.

B. Qualifications

In the event that the geography graduate student body wishes to select someone other than the graduate director as their advisor, or the current graduate director does not wish to be the advisor, the selected advisor must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a faculty member of the Geography Department
2. Is in residence
3. Is willing and able to support the GGSO

C. Terms of Office

The advisor's term will last as long as they hold the position of graduate director. If the advisor is not also graduate director, they will serve a one year term. A replacement vote will take place at the same time as the executive officer elections. There are no limits to the number of terms an advisor elects to sponsor GGSO.

D. Roles and Duties of an Advisor

The primary role of the advisor is to act as a source of knowledge and guidance in the operations of the GGSO. They will act as a liaison between the students and faculty if necessary.

Article III. Membership

Section I: Membership Eligibility All matriculated graduate students are eligible for membership in the GGSO.

Section II: Executive Board Eligibility Article II, Section 1B outlines the criteria for eligibility regarding becoming an Executive Board Member/ Officer.

Section III: Committee Eligibility Any member of the GGSO is eligible for participation in committees, should they be formed.

Section IV: Executive Board Resignation If an executive board member must be relieved of duty, they are to give the organization at least two weeks notice in order to fill their position. In the event that a member does not comply with this notice, the other executive board members are to fill the position as promptly as possible, while substituting for the duties of the vacated office until a replacement can be found.

Article IV. Executive Board Election/Selection Process

Section I: Time and period when selection occurs

An election for one grad rep, one GSO rep, and all other officers will occur in the second half of April. An additional election for the second grad rep and second GSO rep will occur in the first half of December.

Section II: Nominations

The Senior Grad Rep will solicit nominations in the third week of April/first week of December via the GEO-GRADS listserv. Self-nomination is allowed. A single member may nominate no more than two members for a single position. The Senior Grad Rep will use this week to ensure all nominees are eligible and willing to hold office. Nominees are to submit a 3-5 sentence self-summary detailing qualifications, expectations and aspirations for their term should they be elected. The Senior GSO Rep is charged with insuring honest and accurate interpretation of the results. Numerical results of the poll will be available upon request.

Section III: Election Procedures

In the final week of April/first week of December, the Senior Grad Rep will distribute the nominee biographies and a poll to the listserv. The poll will be open no more than seven days. The poll should be run through an independent anonymous survey tool such as Google Forms or SurveyMonkey. At the end of the voting period, officers will be elected based on a plurality win. In the event of a tie, the two nominees will be given the option of deciding between themselves who will hold office. Alternatively, if a decision cannot be reached between them, a second vote will be held as a tiebreaker. If only one student runs for a position, they will be given the position automatically. All students (and therefore members of the GGSO) on the listserv are eligible to vote. If a student/member does not vote before the end of the seven day period, it is assumed they have chosen to abstain and they are no longer able to cast a vote.

Section IV: Notification and Posting of Elections

Nominations and elections will be held through the listserv.

Article V. Meetings

Section I: Types of Meetings

There will be 4 different types of meetings.

1. Executive Board meetings
 - a. This is a meeting of the executive officers to discuss their plans for the semester.
2. Regular/Business Meetings
 - a. To meet with the members of the GGSO to discuss events and goings on in the department and University wide. This is an opportunity to discuss concerns, opinions, news and events pertaining to the GGSO.
 - b. The executive board is advised to find a time that works for as many students as possible as early as possible. A good starting point is Friday afternoons when there is no colloquium or faculty meeting, as generally our grads have that time free.
3. Special Meetings
 - a. To meet and discuss a specific topic of interest to the GGSO (i.e., chair vote, travel funding)
4. Emergency Meetings
 - a. If an event occurs that requires a special meeting on short notice, it will be considered an “emergency” meeting (i.e., broad university changes to health insurance policies)

Section II: Time and Occurrence of Meetings

1. Executive Board meetings will occur once at the beginning of the semester to discuss plans and the goings on of the department. Further meetings should be held as needed.
2. At least one regular/business meeting will occur during the semester. Preferably, at least one meeting per month will occur.
 - a. It will take place when as many in residence grads can attend, as determined by a doodle poll or survey on the listserv.
 - b. There will be at least one week’s notice to the regular/business meetings.

Section III: Special Meetings

1. Special meetings regarding a single, timely topic will occur when needed.
 - a. Grads will be given at least one week notice to such meetings.
 - b. Timing will be based on availability of in residence grads.
 - c. These meetings are for events that require discussion, but are not particularly time sensitive such as the chair vote.
2. Emergency meetings will occur as soon as possible when an event warrants them and will be announced on the listserv.
 - a. These meetings are for time sensitive topics, such as the health care situation of Spring 2015.

Section IV: Quorum

1. Quorum occurs when half of the number of in residence members plus one are in attendance.
2. Due to the nature of our membership, with students often being away for research, conferences, etc., voting regarding major department issues will be discussed, reviewed, and voted upon via public forum (google docs, google forms, etc., over the listserv).
3. Issues that are only immediately relevant to in residence members (i.e., timing and activities of social events) may take place without this process, assuming quorum has been met at the meeting and the majority (half plus one) of attending members agree it is not necessary to hold a listserv wide conversation. To determine if an issue should be brought to the listserv, an initial vote on each topic should take place asking whether or not the members in attendance believe this is a department-wide concern.
4. It is expected that these listserv conversations will remain confidential among the graduate students and that faculty will not see them unless absolutely necessary/approved by a quorum vote.
5. If we do not meet quorum for regular/business meetings three times in a row, the Executive board and officers should revisit the meaning of quorum in this constitution and have the power to change it without an official amendment until quorum can be met.

Section V: Parliamentary Procedure

Meetings will use the General Consensus model to conduct regular business. When voting, a preliminary vote should take place regarding whether or not it is acceptable to determine the decision with quorum attendance and only voting through attending members, or if the topic should be disbursed to the listserv.

Section VI: Voting

Voting will occur over the GEO-GRADS listserv using an anonymous tool such as Google Forms or Survey Monkey. Any student on the listserv is eligible to vote. A concise description of the reason for the vote, minutes/notes of any meetings regarding the topic, the different options, and timeline for response will be included in the email with the link to the survey. It will be assumed that those who do not answer the survey are choosing to abstain. The time period for which voting occurs will be determined by the executive board based on the topic at hand. Students will be given, at minimum, three days to vote, though should be given more time whenever possible. Unless otherwise decided, the vote will be determined by a plurality. In the event of a tie, a second vote will be sent as a tiebreaker.

Section VII: Meeting Minutes and Records

An executive officer present at the meeting will be in charge of taking notes. Though notes need not be comprehensive, the executive board and note-takers should take requests for more detailed notes seriously. Minutes, records and other documents created by the organization will be circulated to the listserv and stored in the shared google drive folder that all geography grads have access to. Comments and edits should be incorporated into these documents via the use of

google docs suggesting/commenting feature, so that the changes are clearly visible. Corrections and comments will be noted in the next meeting's minutes, and discussed when necessary.

Article VI. Impeachment

This article provides the outline of the impeachment process, which empowers members the ability to recommend the removal of an executive board member or officer. This allows members to hold each other accountable for their responsibilities and actions. ***However, due to the nature of this organization, all efforts should be made to resolve issues between members prior to starting the impeachment process.***

Section I: Ground for Removal

Grounds for removal are as follows:

- 1) An executive board member or officer is actively ignoring their duties
 - a) I.e., not attending meetings, circulating notes, planning events, etc.
- 2) A board member or officer's official actions are contrary to the mission statement and/or objectives of the GGSO
 - a) I.e., only including certain members in meetings/discussions, abusing department funds, etc.

Section II: Procedure for Impeachment

- 1) If any GGSO member feels an executive board member or officer has met one or more of the grounds for removal, and ***all practical efforts have been made to resolve the issue before resorting to impeachment***, they are to approach another board member about their concern. The board members will then inform the officer in question. A special meeting will be held as soon as possible to discuss the impeachment. The executive board should make all efforts to ensure the meeting can be attended by a quorum. Unless otherwise discussed, the member who brings the complaint will remain anonymous to all those besides the officer(s) they originally approached.
 - a) When approaching the other officer(s), the member suggesting impeachment must have the following information:
 - i) Charge or complaint against the individual directly relating to the grounds for removal
 - ii) Evidence to support the complaint
- 2) The impeachment meeting will be overseen by the GGSO's advisor. The advisor is to act as an impartial facilitator to ensure both sides are adequately represented. They will run the secret ballot and the final impeachment/replacement vote, described below.
- 3) The meeting will only proceed if quorum is met.
 - a) If quorum is not met, it will be assumed that the complaint is not supported widely enough to support the impeachment process and the officer in question should continue with their duties as usual.
- 4) The meeting will be organized as follows:

- a) The advisor will present the claim and evidence brought to them prior to the meeting
- b) Other members will then be allowed to support the claim
- c) The individual will present their defense
- d) Members who support the individual will be able present evidence for defense
- e) A secret ballot will then occur with the attending members.
 - i) If the majority of attending members (half plus one) agree that the officer should be removed, they will enter a two week probationary period.
 - ii) The officer in question should use this time to overcome the complaint (i.e., if the FPP rep is thought to not be providing adequate programming, they have two weeks to plan/carry out an FPP event).
 - iii) At this time, the other board members will solicit nominations for a replacement following the election procedure outlined above.
 - iv) At the end of two weeks, a vote will occur over the listserv following the usual procedures, presenting the replacement options and the current officer. If a replacement wins, the current officer will be relieved of their duties.
 - (1) If the current officer is chosen, it is assumed that they have successfully addressed the complaint and/or the voting members do not feel the impeachment is necessary.
 - v) If the secret ballot results in agreement that the officer should not be impeached, then they will resume their duties as usual.

Section III: Procedure for Appeal of Impeachment

1. An impeached officer has two weeks to appeal impeachment.
2. Impeachment can be appealed if the officer feels there was unsatisfactory following of the procedure described above or if they feel the GGSO advisor was not acting impartial.
3. Appeals will be brought to the executive board, excluding the officer's replacement, and should include evidence that procedure was not followed.
4. An alternative faculty member will be chosen to run a new impeachment procedure.
5. If the officer is once again removed from office, they cannot appeal the second impeachment.

Article VII. Constitutional Amendments

Section I: Amendment

Any member of the GGSO can suggest an amendment to the Constitution. Members should discuss the amendment with the executive board and officers, who will then work with the member to draft a proposed amendment. The amendment will then be distributed to the listserv, where members at large will be able to comment, propose changes, etc. A special meeting will be held within two weeks of the draft's distribution to fully discuss and determine the final

version of the amendment. The amendment will then once again be sent to the listserv to be voted upon.

Section II: Ratification

Majority (half plus one) of all voting members must agree to the amendment in order for it to be ratified. Members who do not reply to the listserv vote are assumed to be abstaining, and will not count toward the majority. The newly ratified amendment will go into effect the following semester.

Article VIII. Various Required Statements

Section I: Not-for-Profit Statement This is a not-for-profit organization.

Section II: Financial Obligation A majority of voting members of this organization may determine reasonable dues and fees assessed to each member at the beginning of each semester. A specific member or members, designated by this organization shall be responsible for payment in full of all debts accumulated by the organization not covered by funds on deposit.

Section III: Statement of Non-discrimination Syracuse University is an equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, or status as a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era to any extent discrimination is prohibited by law. This nondiscrimination policy covers admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs, services, and activities.

Section IV: Statement of Non-Hazing This organization will not conspire to engage in hazing, as defined by New York Penal Law 120.16 and New York Penal Law 120.17, or commit any act that causes or is likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any fellow student or person attending the institution.

Section V: Statement of Compliance with Campus Regulations This organization shall comply with the Syracuse University Code of Student Conduct.

Section VI: Training All officers will complete any mandatory training required by the GSO or the University.