

*Boston College*  
*Graduate Student Association*  
*Constitution*  
*September 4, 2007*

Preamble and Mission

We, the graduate students of Boston College, including the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the Lynch Graduate School of Education, the Carroll Graduate School of Management, the Connell Graduate School of Nursing, and the Graduate School of Social Work, in order to establish ourselves as an association of the greater Boston College (BC) community, do declare and constitute our association in accordance with the following fundamental principles:

We hereby affirm that the rights and privileges of graduate students will not in any way be violated or abridged for reasons of age, race, sex, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion, or political affiliation. We affirm that no graduate student should be subject to hazing of any kind. All graduate students ought to abide by this principle in their relations with all members of the Boston College community. We further declare our recognition of the necessity for active support of all actions by individuals or groups which are seeking to ensure that university life be conducted in accordance with this principle.

We hereby affirm that all graduate students, during the period of their association with the University, are entitled to an adequate standard of living and further, that lobbying on behalf of graduate students for the economic resources necessary for the maintenance of such a standard will be a primary concern of the University and will be acted upon with participation by the graduate students through their representative organization, the Graduate Student Association (hereafter referred to as the GSA).

We hereby affirm that the graduate students of Boston College have the right and responsibility to participate actively in all University matters that are relevant to the lives of the Graduate Student Body. The graduate students of BC have the right to participate in and have audience with University committees and offices dedicated to graduate education and all aspects of University life. These rights will be acted upon by the graduate students via GSA representation.

By means of this Preamble, we affirm our position and principles as fully participating and concerned members of the BC Community. We affirm our right and our intention to use the means necessary to ensure the implementation of these principles through the effective representation of the interests of the graduate student body in the decision-making processes of the University. We affirm that it is our sincere desire to work together with all members of the BC Community in an effort to improve University

life for the Boston College Community as a whole.

The intent of this document is to set order for the operations of the GSA.

### Article I. Graduate Student Association Statement of Purpose

The GSA will represent the interests of its members in their relations with the other members of the BC Community and will strive to improve the general quality of the University Community as a whole. The GSA will establish and facilitate programs which are designed to meet the academic, social, and personal needs of all graduate students, and to ensure that the activities of graduate students are conducted in accordance with the principles established in the Preamble of this Constitution. The GSA will provide general information and services to graduate students concerning all aspects of university life.

### Article II. Membership

Any student who pays a graduate student activity fee and is currently enrolled (including part time and full time students) at BC is considered a Member of the GSA. All Members are invited to the GSA Council Meetings held every other month during the academic year.

### Article III. Executive Board

The GSA Executive Board consists of the President, the Vice-President and the Financial Director. The GSA Executive Board is the senior leadership body of the GSA. GSA Executive Board members are elected by the GSA Council in April or May prior to the academic year in which they will serve. The members of the GSA Executive Board, seeking input from the GSA Senate, set the general agenda for the GSA during the summer months preceding their tenure. The GSA Executive Board members also agree upon and set the budget for their tenure. The budget must be voted upon and accepted by all three Executive Board members before it may be put into effect. All GSA Executive Board Members must be current graduate students matriculated in a degree program at BC and in good standing with the University.

1. President: The President serves as the external spokesperson to the BC Community and beyond. The President of the GSA maintains contact with the BC Administration and will be responsible for advocating on behalf of BC graduate students. The President will also be involved in the design and creation of new GSA programming. Together with the other members of the Executive Board and with the advisement of the outgoing committee chairs, the President will appoint committee chairs. The President will call and chair meetings of the GSA Council and the GSA Senate. The President will make appointments to University committees.

2. Vice-President: The Vice President serves as the internal conduit for communication within the GSA. Primary responsibilities include overseeing the internal workings of the GSA (e.g., committee activities, communication with the GSA Senate and Council). Specifically, the Vice President oversees committee processes and functions, as well as develops and supports GSA Representatives in their roles. The Vice President, as part of the Executive Board, will appoint committee chairs.

3. Financial Director: The Financial Director oversees the allocation and administration of all GSA funds. The Financial Director keeps the financial records of the GSA and ensures that the official GSA annual budget is adhered to by the Executive Board and the membership of the GSA. The Financial Director trains all organization treasurers and serves as the primary liaison between the university budget office, student services and other BC administrative offices. The Financial Director serves as the primary contact person for GSA members regarding all financial issues and serves on the Special Funding Committees.

#### Article IV. The GSA Council

The GSA Council is composed of the Executive Board (defined in Article III), Senators (defined in Article V) and Representatives (herein defined). Representatives vote on all issues excluding constitutional amendments and executive impeachment, advocate on behalf of Members, communicate and proactively promote all events, programs and the agenda of the GSA to Members. Representatives are afforded the opportunity to influence the formation of the GSA agenda and access to subsidized tickets to select GSA events at the discretion of the Executive Board. Any GSA Member who is in good standing with the University and meets the criteria of one of the three categories outlined below is a Representative of the GSA.

##### 1. Category 1: Member of Senate or Leadership Body and Active GSA Council Member. Individual must meet the following two criteria:

- a. Is a member of one or more of the following graduate leadership bodies:
  - African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American Graduate Student Association (AHANA GSA)
  - Graduate Education Association (GEA)
  - Graduate International Student Association (GISA)
  - Graduate Management Association (GMA)
  - Graduate Nursing Association (GNA)
  - Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Departments (GSAS)
  - Graduate School of Social Work Collective (GSSW Collective)
- b. Attends at least 75% of the GSA Council meetings (3 of 4)

2. Category 2: Member of a GSA Committee and Active GSA Council

Member. Individual must meet the following two criteria:

- a. Is an active member of one of the GSA Committees (as defined in Article X)
- b. Attends at least 75% of the GSA Council meetings (3 of 4)

3. Category 3: Member of Senate or Leadership Body, Member of GSA Committee, and Active GSA Council Member. Individual must meet the following three criteria:

- a. Is a member of one or more of the following graduate leadership bodies:
  - African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American Graduate Student Association (AHANA GSA)
  - Graduate Education Association (GEA)
  - Graduate International Student Association (GISA)
  - Graduate Management Association (GMA)
  - Graduate Nursing Association (GNA)
  - Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Departments (GSAS)
  - Graduate School of Social Work Collective (GSSW Collective)
- b. Is an active member of one of the GSA Committees (as defined in Article X)
- c. Attends at least 75% of the GSA Council meetings (3 of 4)

Article V. The GSA Senate

Senators are GSA Representatives in the Council (as defined in Article IV Section C). Senators are appointed or elected by the graduate student leadership body which they will represent according to the constitution or bylaws of that student leadership body. The GSA Senate will consist of one Senator from each of the following BC graduate leadership bodies:

- African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American Graduate Student Association (AHANA GSA)
- Graduate Education Association (GEA)
- Graduate International Student Association (GISA)
- Graduate Management Association (GMA)
- Graduate Nursing Association (GNA)
- Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Departments (GSAS)
- Graduate School of Social Work Collective (GSSW Collective)

GSA Senators will attend all Senate and Council meetings. Only in exceptional circumstances wherein the Senator cannot attend a Council meeting, he or she may appoint a Representative to fulfill his or her role. Senators mediate their caucus during voting in GSA Council Meetings. Furthermore, Senators act as liaisons between their representative student body and the Executive Board. Finally, Senators vote on Senate issues with include Constitutional changes, financial

decisions and sanctioning, and impeachment of Executive Board members. GSA Senators are afforded the opportunity to influence the formation of their respective graduate leadership body, the formation of the GSA agenda and will have access to subsidized tickets to select GSA events at the discretion of the Executive Board. In the case of a vacancy caused by extenuating circumstances, the corresponding body will choose a replacement Senator to serve for the remainder of the term. If the Senator does not fulfill his or her duties, consequences include but are not limited to dismissal and or freezing of the graduate leadership group's funds.

#### Article VI: Advisor

The Advisor to the GSA is the Associate Dean of Graduate Student Life at Boston College. In addition to serving as the primary administrative resource to the GSA Executive Board, the Advisor attends and assists in the development of GSA meetings, functions, and events. The Advisor assures that the GSA functions in compliance with the rules and regulations of Boston College and in the spirit of the University. The Advisor does not vote on GSA matters, but will hold the GSA to the tenets of this Constitution and to BC principles, policies, and procedures. The Advisor has the responsibility to appoint Executive Board or Senate members should there be no interested Members to serve in these roles. Appointments must proceed in consultation with Representatives.

#### Article VII: Meetings

The GSA meets in one of several capacities outlined below.

1. Executive Board Meetings: The Executive Board convenes a minimum of once a month with the Advisor for the purpose of performing executive duties. Other individuals may be invited to attend Executive Board Meetings at the discretion of the Executive Board members. A meeting of the Executive Board may be called at any time by any member of the Executive Board or the Advisor.
2. Senate Meetings: GSA Senate meetings occur once every other month (alternating with the GSA Council meetings) for 1.5 hours at a designated place. The purpose of the Senate meetings includes but is not limited to identifying issues of broad importance and application to the graduate student body, setting the Council agenda, amending the constitution, and Executive impeachment. Senators and Executive Board members attend the Senate meetings. Other individuals may be invited to these meetings at the discretion of the Senate and Executive Board. Specific attendance procedures are discussed in Bylaw X.
3. Council Meetings: GSA Council meetings occur once every other month (alternating with the GSA Senate meetings) for 1.5 hours at a designated place. The purpose of the Council meetings includes but is not limited to providing a forum for discussion of important and pertinent topics, giving

voice to the Members, and for the announcement of committee reports. Council meetings are open to all Members. Council meeting attendance is mandatory for Representatives, Senators, and the Executive Board.

4. Special Meeting Procedure: A Special meeting is a meeting that was not previously scheduled but is needed for some special reason, as determined by the Executive Board. Members of the Executive Board, Senators, Representatives, and/or Members may be invited or required to attend. In order to call a special meeting, the Executive Board must determine that the matter is urgent enough to require additional time from Senators or Representatives. If a Special meeting is needed for any reason, the Executive Board will indicate the time, place, and purpose of the Special meeting.

5. Referendum: A Referendum is an open meeting of which all Members are notified. The purpose of Referendum meetings is to discuss a pressing issue affecting all Members and to vote on a resolution. In a Referendum meeting, all Members receive one vote. Quorum is the number of Members in attendance at the Referendum.

#### Article VIII: Impeachment

The sanctioning, impeachment, and removal of Executive Board members will be undertaken for gross neglect of duty and/or other just cause. Senators and Executive Board members may sanction a single member of the Executive Board by an impeachment, which may lead to the member's removal. Quorum for an impeachment motion requires all seven Senators. A vote of no-confidence requires a 6/7 majority to pass. Process for impeachment is outlined in Bylaw X. Should the vote of no-confidence pass, the Executive Board member under impeachment will be removed from office with immediate effect. The impeachment process is open to all Members, yet only Senators and the Executive Board members have a voice during the proceedings. Senators must consult with their constituents prior to the vote. Only Senators have a vote in the Impeachment process.

#### Article IX: Amendments

Constitutional Amendments may be submitted by Representatives, Senators and/or the Executive Board. Constitutional Amendments are reviewed in Senate meetings. Before a Constitutional Amendment is brought before the Senate, it must be presented and discussed at a GSA Council meeting. Once the proposed amendment is presented at the GSA Council Meeting it may not be changed. The proposed amendment must then be sent to the Senate. Quorum for voting on Constitutional Amendments is six Senators. The motion must be passed by a minimum eighty percent vote (6/7 or 5/6 majority).

#### Article X: Committees

Six committees serve under the auspices of the GSA. Each committee has a specific purpose as outlined below. Each committee is lead by one or two individuals (herein called Chairs) who are appointed by the Executive Board at the beginning of each academic year. Should Chair vacancies arise during the academic year, a member of the Executive Board will oversee the committee in question until a new Chair is appointed.

1. Scholarship & Excellence: The Scholarship & Excellence committee develops initiatives and organizes programming related to intellectual, scholarly and academic life.
2. Service & Spirituality: The Service & Spirituality committee develops initiatives and organizes programming related to the Jesuit values of the University. Furthermore, the Service & Spirituality committee serves the religiously diverse Membership by providing multi-faith and non-religious programming.
3. Social: The Social committee develops and organizes social programming for Members that address a broad range of social and community building interests.
4. Outreach: The Outreach committee is responsible for facilitating communication between the GSA Executive Board, Senate and Council and the BC Community. This includes, but is not limited to, maintenance of the GSA website, day-to-day communication about GSA events and annual surveys to assess GSA functions.
5. Research Expense Grants: The Research Expense Grants committee is responsible for distributing funds to be used for graduate research projects.
6. Special Funding: The Special Funding committee is responsible for distributing funds to be used by graduate student for projects that enhance the intellectual, academic, social or cultural lives of graduate students.

#### Article XI: Bylaws

Bylaws are to be drafted pending constitution approval. By-laws will be voted into the Constitution according to the new voting procedure.

#### Bylaw 1. Voting Procedures

1A. Executive Board Voting Responsibilities and Privileges: The Executive Board organizes the voting process in Council meetings. The President will reside over all votes and will be responsible for tallying Representatives' votes during Councils meeting and Senators' votes during Senate meetings. The Vice President will be responsible for recording voting outcomes. Executive Board members are responsible for putting policies into place once they have been voted upon. Executive Board members do not vote on Council business, although the Executive Board holds veto power over all Council and Senate votes. Executive Board vetoes may be by-passed by an 80% majority in the Council and Senate (6/7 majority in the Senate). In the case of a tie in the Council or Senate, the Vice President will serve as the tie-breaking vote.

1B. Senate Voting Responsibilities and Privileges: Quorum in the GSA Senate is 6 Senators. Each GSA Senator receives 1 vote in the Senate meeting. Senators vote on behalf of their leadership body. Votes will be made publicly and resolutions will be determined by majority rule. The GSA President will call for votes in the Senate meeting and the GSA Vice President will record votes made by Senators. Voting resolutions in the Senate are veto protected when the vote has passed by a greater than or equal to 80% (6/7) majority.

1C. Council Voting Responsibilities and Privileges: Quorum in the GSA Council meeting is 15 Members. There must be at least one member from 6 of the 7 member leadership bodies (i.e., GSAS, GEA, GMA, GSSW, GNA, GISA, AHANA). Voting will proceed by an electoral college based on the proportion of students enrolled in each leadership body. The proportion of votes allotted to each graduate leadership body in Council Meetings will be subject to change and will be determined by the GSA Executive Board based on enrollment numbers at the beginning of each academic year. Pending large changes in enrollment, the electoral collect will be based upon the following precedent proportions:

GSAS	5 votes
GEA	5 votes
GMA	3 votes
GSSW	2 votes
GNA	1 vote
GISA	1 vote
AHANA	1 vote

In Council Meetings, the GSA President will call for votes. Following the President's call, Members of each respective leadership body will caucus. Caucuses must proceed by democratic principles, whereby the representatives of a given leadership body who are in attendance at a GSA Council meeting convene, discuss and decide by majority vote how to split up that leadership body's proportion of GSA votes. Senators are the Member who convene caucuses and reports how their leadership body will vote. Votes will be made publicly by the Senator and recorded by the GSA Vice President. Vote resolutions will be determined by majority rule.

## Bylaw 2. Election Procedures

2A. Executive Board Election Procedures: Members will vote for GSA Executive Board Members in May of each academic year. The outgoing president will preside over elections. In the case that the current president is running for re-election, any other outgoing Executive Board Member will reside over elections (i.e., Vice President or Financial Director). Should all current Executive Board Members be running for re-election, the GSA Advisor will preside over elections. The individual presiding over Executive Board elections will be here forward known as Election Coordinator.

Candidates must make their candidacy known to the Election Coordinator prior to submitting their candidacy application. The Election Coordinator will hold a special meeting for interested applicants 1 month to two weeks prior to the Executive Board election. At this meeting, the Election Coordinator will brief interested applicants on the roles of the GSA Executive Board Members. Interested applicants will be given an application sheet, which they will return to the Election Coordinator in 1 week's time. The Election Coordinator will make the applicant's candidacy known to GSA Members. Candidates will present their candidacy in a 2 minute speech to GSA Members in the last GSA Council meeting of the academic year (May). Quorum is the number of GSA Members in attendance. Voting will proceed via rules outlined in Bylaw WC. Candidates who are also Council Members will abstain from voting.

2B. Senate Election Procedures: Senators will be elected by each respective leadership body according to the by-laws put forth by each leadership body's Constitution.

2C. Leadership Body Election Procedures: Leadership Body Members (e.g., GEA Members who serve on the Council) are appointed or voted upon by each respective GSA leadership body (e.g., departments within GEA, GSAS). Election Procedures and voting proceed according to the by-laws put forth by each leadership body's Constitution.

### Bylaw 3. University Committees

#### 3A. Committee Membership

Any Member of the GSA may be a committee member. Members may serve on up to 2 committees per semester. To apply for committee membership, Members should contact either the Committee Chair or in the absence of a committee chair, the Vice President.

#### 3B. Committee Chair Appointment

Committee chairs will be recruited and appointed by the Executive Board. Committee chairs may be any Member of the GSA (who do not already serve the role of Executive Board member, Senator, etc). The incumbent Executive Board will appoint committee chairs in the spring or summer of the academic year of their tenure. In the case that the Executive board is not re-elected for another academic year, they will still recruit and appoint committee chairs for the following year. In the case that committee chairs cannot be secured in the spring or summer, they may be appointed in the fall by the Executive Board in office.

#### 3C. Role and Responsibilities of Committee Chair

The committee chairperson's role is to lead, organize, and enact committee activities. The committee chair is responsible for developing programming for the committee activities with the support and input of the Executive Board. The committee chair

will act as a contact person for that committee. The committee chair is also responsible for documentation and accounting associated with committee activities. Finally, the committee chair is responsible for on-going and annual evaluation of the committee.

### 3D. Communication between Committee and Executive Board

The Committee Chair and Vice President are the primary communication conduits between committees and the Executive Board. The Vice President will meet with committee chairs on a monthly basis in a Special Meeting. These Special Meetings may occur in person or via email at the discretion of the Vice President and Committee Chair. Committee chairs will also have the opportunity to communicate with the President monthly during Council meetings.

## Bylaw 4: Documentation

4A. Meeting Minutes: Minutes will be taken at every Senate, Council, Executive Board, and Special Meeting. Minutes will be taken by the Vice President during all meetings with the exception of Special Meetings in which the Vice President is not involved. In the case of Special Meetings, the most senior ranking Member in attendance must appoint another member to take Minutes. Minutes will include Members in attendance, details of the meeting agenda and any additional topics that arouse in the context of the meeting. Minutes will be published and circulated to Members following every Senate and Council meeting. Minutes from Executive Board and Special Meetings will be made available to any Member upon request. In instances where Executive Board or Special Meetings covered sensitive topics, the Executive Board may decide not to release minutes. The Executive Board and Advisor must reach consensus in order to prevent release of minutes.

4B. Record Keeping: Record Keeping is a responsibility for every Member involved in the GSA Senate or Council. Members must keep records related to activities in which they are involved. In particular, Chairs, Senators, Budget Director, Vice President, and President will be responsible for keeping records associated with their specific elected or appointed roles. At any time, the Executive Board may request records from any Member, Chair, or Senator. At the end of each academic year, the President will collect records from each Committee for filing.

4C. Record Keeping for Executive Board: The President, Vice President and Budget Director will each keep records associated with their particular roles. The President has primary record keeping responsibility, in that he or she will be responsible for the long term organization and storage of records. In this capacity, the President will ensure that past records are available to the Advisor and future Executive Board Members.