



# Constitution

## Article I

### *Name of the Organization*

The name of this organization shall be the New Jersey Institute of Technology Graduate Student Association abbreviated as GSA.

## Article II

### *Purpose and Objectives*

The NJIT Graduate Student Association shall provide a structure through which graduate students work together to improve the quality of graduate student life. The objectives of the NJIT Graduate Student Association are to represent and articulate the interests of the graduate students; to promote communication between students, faculty, and the administration; oversee the expenditure of graduate student association fees; and to promote and encourage the professional growth, social and cultural development, and academic excellence of students in the graduate programs of the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

## Article III

### *Membership*

#### **A. Definition of Membership**

##### Members

A member of the Graduate Student Association is any student currently enrolled in graduate programs at the New Jersey Institute of Technology and paying the Graduate Student Association fee at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Membership ceases at the date of graduation or termination of affiliation with NJIT.

##### General Body

The General Body is defined as the entirety of the members of the Graduate Student Association, their program representatives, and the elected officials of Executive Board of the Graduate Student Association.

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## **B. Member Privileges and Responsibilities**

1. Any Member of the Graduate Student Association has the right to attend any meeting of the general body of the Graduate Student Association as well as any event sponsored by the Graduate Student Association.
2. Any member has the right to address the general body of the Graduate Student Association. This right may include but is not limited to making announcements, requesting advice and guidance, and/or asking for financial assistance for activities that relate to and impact the lives of graduate students of the New Jersey Institute of Technology.
3. Any member enrolled in a graduate program is entitled to represent his or her graduate program in the Graduate Student Association.
4. Any member is entitled to vote in the election of the program representative and alternate program representative to the Graduate Student Association for his or her graduate program only.
5. Any member is entitled to vote in the election for the officers of the executive board of the Graduate Student Association.

## **Article IV**

### *Programs and Representation*

#### **A. Definition of Program**

A graduate program is defined as a program represented on the Graduate Council of the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

#### **B. Program Responsibility**

Each graduate program shall elect one (1) Program Representative to the Graduate Student Association. This representative will speak for and act in the best interests of the students of the program for which they have been elected.

In addition, each graduate program shall elect one (1) Alternate Representative, who is empowered to vote in the event that the Program Representative is absent or in some other way unable to fulfill the duties of the representative.

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## C. Program Representatives Selection

1. Representatives and Alternate Representatives shall be nominated and elected by the students in their graduate program.
2. When an election is not possible, Representative shall be appointed by the General Body upon recommendation of the President of the Graduate Student Association.
3. If a Representative cannot be either elected or appointed the Graduate Student Association shall represent the program of study in its best interests.
4. No graduate student may represent more than one graduate program during the same term of office.
5. Students of each graduate program shall have the right to dismiss their Representative by majority vote of those in attendance at a meeting of the graduate students of the program provided that the meeting and its purposes are announced to all students in the program ten (10) days prior to the meeting and a majority of the graduate students of the program are present at the time of the vote.

## Article V

### *Responsibilities of Representatives*

#### A. Responsibilities

The duly elected Representatives or alternate acting as the representative of the program to the GSA shall complete the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Aid in the nomination and election process for all GSA representatives and officers in accordance with the election rules and guidelines of GSA Constitution and Bylaws.
2. Discuss and vote upon GSA Activities.
3. Approve the President's appointments to all GSA committees, University committees, and any position that would represent the GSA as a whole.
4. Vote on expenditures according to the guidelines for appropriation of funds.

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5. Be appointed to and serve on at least one GSA committee and one University committee. Each representative shall report the events of their respective committee to the GSA general body.
6. Be available to his or her constituency.
  - a. This availability must be in the form of both a departmental feedback session and office hour held once per week either in the GSA office or in space provided by their program department.
  - b. Each representative has the right to allocate funds for department feedback sessions as well as use the facilities, supplies, and equipment of the GSA to accomplish adequate representation.

## Article III

### *Positions Of the Executive Board*

The Officers of the GSA shall be President, Vice President – General Affairs, Vice President – Public Relations, Treasurer, Secretary, and Technology Officer.

The advisor of the organization shall be the Dean of Graduate Studies and shall be an ex-officio member of the GSA.

#### **Description of Positions**

The **President** shall call and preside over all official meetings, participate in the planning and organization of events, appoint committees, and serve as the liaison between GSA members and NJIT as a whole.

The **Vice President – General Affairs** is to aid the President as necessary and oversee the functioning of GSA office, affiliated clubs, as well as activities and events sponsored by and/or run by GSA. In the absence of the President, the Vice President – General Affairs shall assume the duties of the President in his/her absence.

The **Vice President -Public Relations** is to provide the GSA with a respectable and prominent image through public relations campaigns and marketing plans for GSA endorsed events. These should be focused on projecting a positive image to existing and future members of the NJIT community. The Vice President – Public Relations shall be responsible for the perception of the GSA and its operations. In the absence of the President and of Vice President – General Affairs, the Vice President - Public Relations shall assume the duties of the President.

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The **Treasurer** shall be responsible for the collection of all monies and their disbursement. Appropriate records shall be maintained and a financial report prepared for the membership annually and as requested by the President. The Treasurer, upon being elected, shall be responsible for the compilation and submission of an annual budget for his/her term in office.

The **Secretary** shall keep minutes of all meetings, maintain all official records and correspondence, and maintain a roster of all GSA members (name, student ID number, address, phone number, e-mail address, and degree program). A copy (paper or e-mail) of the minutes of all meetings or a report on any event shall be made available for review by the general body within two weeks of the meeting/event. The event report shall contain general information concerning the event and a count of the people present at the event.

The **Technology Officer** shall be responsible for all equipment and technology-related aspects of the GSA. This includes up-keep of the GSA webpage, computers, audio/visual equipment, and other appliances, as well as the supplies necessary to keep these devices in good working order. The Technology Office shall work with the Secretary to create and maintain communication among the representatives and officers of GSA as well as to keep the general body informed of the happenings of the GSA.

## Vacancy of Positions

- A. If any seat becomes vacant, a temporary replacement may be appointed by the President, or in the President's absence, by the Vice President – General Affairs, until the GSA elects a replacement for the remaining term of office.
- B. In the event that the President's seat becomes vacant the person who is Vice President – General Affairs is promoted to President.

## Limits on Services

- A. No member may be elected to or serve more than two terms in any one GSA officer position.
- B. No member currently serving as an officer of a GSA-recognized club may serve as an officer of the GSA.

## Executive Board Authority

Should the GSA General Body adjourn for a period exceeding thirty days, the Executive Board shall be given the authority to make decisions on their behalf.

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- A. During this period, the Executive Board shall retain all of the rights, privileges and immunities of Representatives as defined in the Constitution & Bylaws except amending the Constitution & Bylaws.
- B. Passage of motions shall be restricted to the same guidelines the Representatives must abide by as defined in the Constitution & Bylaws.
- C. The Executive Board shall pass any and all motions with the best interests of the graduate student body in mind.
- D. Any motions passed by the Executive Board acting as the Representatives shall be subject to a Presidential Veto and may be overturned by a two-thirds vote of the General Body.
- E. The GSA Faculty Advisor shall be kept abreast of all motions pending before the Executive Board during this period.
- F. The General Body shall receive a report of all motions passed during executive session and may overturn any and all such motions with at 2/3 majority vote.

## Article III

### *Elections*

An election shall consist of nominations, campaigning, and voting. The duration of an election is from the opening of nominations to the last day of elections. Voting shall occur two weeks after the opening of nominations. Campaigning shall occur between the opening of nominations and the close of elections.

#### **A. Nominations**

- 1. Nominations can occur verbally in a General Body meeting or in written form by filling out a nomination form.
- 2. All nominations must be seconded in writing.
- 3. Nominees must accept their nominations verbally at a General Body meeting or in writing.

#### **B. Election Timetable**

- 1. Elections for all executive board officers' positions shall be held each spring semester.

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- a. A nomination period shall begin the Monday after spring break ends and shall remain open for two weeks.
  - b. Elections shall begin on the first Monday following the close of nominations or the first Monday in April, whichever comes last. The elections will continue through the Friday of that same week.
2. Elections for all representatives' positions shall be held each fall semester.
    - a. A nomination period shall begin the second Monday of the semester and shall remain open for two weeks.
    - b. Elections shall begin on the first Monday following the close of nominations or the first Monday in October, whichever comes last. The elections will continue through the Friday of that same week.

## **C. Officer Elections**

1. Any member of the GSA may nominate another member of the GSA to be a candidate for election for an executive board position.
2. When there is more than one candidate competing for an officer position, the platforms of each of the candidates must be made publicly known by the GSA in a fair and consistent manner. This must occur after the close of nominations and before the first day of elections.
3. Write-in ballots for officers are disallowed.
4. If an Executive Board position is uncontested, the nominee is automatically designated the winner at the opening of the elections on Monday.

## **D. General Body Elections**

1. Any member of an academic program recognized by GSA may nominate another member of that program to be a candidate for election as a Program Representative or Alternate Program Representative.
2. When there is more than one candidate competing for a position, the platforms of each of the candidates must be made publicly known by the GSA in a fair and consistent manner. This must occur after the close of nominations and before the first day of elections.
3. Write-in ballots for officers are disallowed.

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4. If a position is uncontested, the nominee is automatically designated the winner at the opening of the elections.
5. If an election is deemed unfeasible by the GSA executive board, then a representative may be appointed by petition, with 1/4 of the students in the applicants program, or 25 signatures of such students, whichever is less.

## **E. Terms of Office**

1. Executive board officers shall take office on April 15 and hold the office for one calendar year.
2. All Representative and Alternate Representative shall take office on October 1 and hold the office for one calendar year.

## **Article VIII**

### *Duties of Officers*

- A. Officers of the GSA shall participate in programs of orientation for incoming graduate students.
  - i. The President shall:
    1. Preside over all Association meetings.
    2. Vote in case of a tie.
    3. Meet regularly with the advisor and such others as shall be appropriate to discuss organizational matters, relevant issues, and to plan activities.
    4. Be responsible for implementing GSA decisions and periodically checking and reporting progress to the general body.
    5. Preside over the nomination and election of the incoming officers.
    6. Appoint the chairperson for each GSA committee.
    7. Appoint representatives to committees as well as to fill vacant positions within the GSA.
  - ii. The Vice President – General Affairs shall:

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1. Oversee the procedures of the GSA club process.
  2. Serve as Chairperson to the GSA Club/Constitution Review Committee.
  3. Represent the GSA on university committees and at university events that involve decisions related to graduate student interests.
- iii. The Vice President – Public Relations shall:
1. Serve as the Chairperson of The Activities Committee, serve as the GSA Spokesperson and oversee all social & cultural activities of GSA.
  2. Coordinate with Hazell Center for activities for GSA members.
  3. Initiate GSA campaigns with the help of new slogans, brochures, and flyers
  4. Submit GSA news and concerns for publishing in *The Vector* on a regular basis
  5. Scheduling regular meetings and feedback sessions with NJIT leadership
  6. Circulate GSA paraphernalia around campus (buttons, t-shirts, sweaters, hats, bags, etc.)
- iv. The Treasurer shall:
1. Maintain accurate and complete financial records and ensure that a balanced budget is maintained at all times.
  2. Make a financial report at each GSA meeting.
  3. Issue and authorize payment vouchers. This may be delegated to either the President or Vice President as necessary.
- v. The Secretary shall:
1. Record and report the minutes of each GSA meeting.
  2. Maintain appropriate records and correspondence.
  3. Notify members of all GSA meetings and, where appropriate, notify the general graduate student body of such meetings.
  4. Maintain the GSA mailing list for both congenital and electronic mail.

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5. Work with the Technology Officer to maintain and update the GSA web page.
- vi. The Technology Officer shall:
1. Be responsible for all equipment and technology-related aspects of the GSA.
  2. Build and maintain the GSA webpage.
  3. Work with the Secretary to maintain and update the GSA web page.
  4. Administrate the GSA computers, printers and other computer related equipment to ensure they are in good working order.
  5. Be in charge of all audio/visual equipment, including the GSA stereo system and CDs used for pub nights, barbecues and other events. If equipment is borrowed by a GSA club, it is the responsibility of the Technology Officer to sign it out and arrange for its return in good working order.
  6. Maintain all other appliances and other supplies (paper, batteries, cables, etc.) related to the devices in the GSA office.

## Article IX

### *Meetings and Attendance*

- A. There shall be at least two meetings per month during the academic year.
- B. The meetings shall be run according Robert's Rules of Order.
- C. Any graduate student may attend the GSA meeting, but only elected or appointed Representatives may vote.
- D. Both Program and Club Representatives are expected to attend all GSA meetings. In the case of unavoidable absence they must ensure the presence of an alternate representative from their program or club.
  - a. In the event that a club has two unexcused absences, the club will automatically be put on probation following official notice from the Secretary after the second unexcused absence. All of the club's assets will be kept frozen until they resume attendance to the meetings.

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- b. In the event that a program representative has two unexcused absences, the GSA shall dismiss the representative and/or alternate representative by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the GSA Program Representatives following official notice of such a vote by the Secretary after the second unexcused absence. The GSA representative in question shall have an opportunity to address the Representative body before the scheduled vote, but shall not have an opportunity to vote.
  - c. "Unexcused absence" shall be defined as an absence that has not been excused in writing and signed and dated by a GSA officer.
- E. Executive Board members are expected to attend all official meetings of the GSA.
- a. In the event that an Executive Board member has two unexcused absences in a given semester, the President shall bring a motion for their dismissal to the General Body.
  - b. An "unexcused" absences" shall be defined as an absence that has not been excused in writing and signed and dated by the GSA President.

## Article X

### *Constitutional & Bylaw Amendments*

#### **A. Proposals of Amendments to the Constitution**

1. Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any member at a GSA meeting and must be seconded by another member.
2. The proposed amendment must be submitted to the GSA in written form.
3. The proposed amendment must be put to a vote at the GSA meeting one week after proper submission to the GSA.

#### **B. Notice of and Voting On Conditional Amendments**

1. Public notice of this vote and the date and location of the next scheduled GSA meeting must be made at least one week prior to the meeting. Public notice may be considered, but is not limited to, notification of an amendment vote at a public GSA meeting.
2. Ratification of amendments to the Constitution requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  affirmative vote of the Representatives present.

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## **C. Proposals of Amendments to the Bylaws**

1. Amendments to GSA Bylaws must be proposed by the same procedure as the GSA Constitution

## **D. Notice of And Voting On Amendments to Bylaws**

1. Ratification vote for amendments to the Bylaws of the GSA requires a simple majority affirmative vote of the Representatives present.
2. A properly proposed amendment can be voted upon at the meeting in which it is proposed without the one week waiting period accorded constitutional amendments.

## **Article XII**

### *Quorum*

A "Quorum" is the minimum number of representative necessary to allow the business of GSA to be conducted.

The GSA President may convene a meeting and conduct it with any number of members in attendance.

For matters pertaining to financial disbursements, at least one-quarter plus one (?+1) elected or appointed representatives of the GSA must be present to constitute Quorum.

For matters pertaining to amendments to the GSA Constitution and Bylaws, at least one half plus one (?+1) elected or appointed representatives of the GSA must be present to constitute Quorum.

## **Article XIII**

### *Finances*

#### **A. Funding**

1. The Graduate Student Association shall be funded from the Graduate Student Association fee levied against all graduate students for this purpose.

# Constitution

2. The GSA Budget must fall within the boundaries of the annual income garnered from graduate student fees and the surplus remaining from past years.
3. The GSA budget must be approved by the GSA representatives to the general body before disbursements can be made.
4. The budget of the GSA may be changed by the University only in the event that the budget is in conflict with NJIT policies or regulations of the State of New Jersey.

## **B. Budget**

All expenditures must be consistent with the purposes and objectives of the GSA and with votes on expenditures pursuant to rules set down in the GSA Constitution and Bylaws.

1. Each April, the executive board shall review the Operating Budget prepared by the Treasurer and submit a completed copy to the general body for a vote. Once passed, this is the budget of GSA for the next academic year.
2. The Operating Budget shall enumerate each responsible Committee, and the Line Item(s) they have authority over. In the event a committee becomes nonfunctioning, its authority shall be passed to the General Body.
  - a. Budget Line items are approval by the Executive Board or the appropriate committee and submitted to the treasury without the need for general body approval.
  - b. Budget Line items can be requested by any GSA member, club, or campus organization. Accepted line items will be assigned to an appropriate committee or executive board member for oversight and disbursement purposes.
  - c. Committees to which Line Item authority has been granted must provide a monthly report of expenditures to the General Body. The monthly report is due to the General Body at the first meeting of each month (the previous month's expenditures).
3. All other expenditures of money must be by recommendation of the appropriate committee, and approval by the General Body.
4. NJIT financial authorization by GSA advisor is required for all disbursements of money.

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## Article XIII

### *Member Emeritus*

**A. The necessary qualifications for appointment as a Member emeritus are:**

1. Have been an active GSA officer, Member emeritus, or GSA representative during the preceding year.
2. Been involved with the planning and/or operation of a major GSA event or ongoing project during the preceding year.
3. Currently a member of the GSA.

**B. The process to elect a Member emeritus is as follows:**

1. An interested candidate must submit a petition to the President of the GSA explaining the reason(s) as to why Member emeritus status should be granted.
2. Any petition submitted to the President of the GSA must then be approved by a simple majority of the GSA representatives before the petition is granted.

**C. Responsibilities of a Member emeritus:**

1. The term for a Member emeritus shall end at the next general election of GSA representatives.
2. The GSA Member Emeritus shall serve in an advisory capacity and have the responsibilities and obligations for service of a representative including voting power.
3. There is no limit to the number of times that a person may be granted membership as a Member Emeritus provided they are members of the GSA. There is a one term limit that a Member Emeritus can have voting power.

## Article XIV

### *Committees*

**A. Standing Committees of the Graduate Student Association shall be:**

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1. The Clubs and Constitution Committee
2. The Activities Committee
3. Student Achievement Awards Committee
4. Any other committee defined by the bylaws

**B. The operation and responsibilities of all standing committees shall be defined in the appropriate set of bylaws.**

**C. Membership to standing committees shall be defined by the appropriate set of Bylaws**

**D. The chairperson for each standing committee shall:**

1. Preside over the standing committee meetings.
2. Be responsible for implementing GSA decisions through the committee and periodically checking and reporting progress of the committee to the GSA.

**E. Voting members of Committees**

1. Voting members of the Club/Constitution Review Committee must be GSA representatives (including Member emeritus), or GSA officers, or officers of GSA clubs in good standing.
2. Voting members of the Activities Committee can be any member of the GSA.
3. Voting members of the Long Range Planning Committee must be officers, past-officers, and Member(s)-at-Large.

## Article XX

### *Dismissal of Executive Board Members*

Members of the Executive Board may be dismissed for violating the Constitution & Bylaws or if they are judged to have engaged in conduct unbecoming of a GSA officer, violated the Constitution or Bylaws or have excessive unexcused absences. A motion to begin the dismissal proceedings may only be initiated in writing to the Representatives establishing the grounds for impeachment by any Representative or Board Member.

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- A. The acceptance of any motion for impeachment shall be preceded by a minimum seven days notice to the Representatives.
- B. The motion shall require a two-thirds majority of the Representatives. If the Executive Board member in question is also a Representative, they shall not be permitted to vote.
- C. Any motion for impeachment shall not be subject to a Presidential Veto.

## Article XVII

### *Club Representative*

#### **A. The necessary qualifications for appointment as a Club Representative are:**

- 1. Have been a chartered GSA club executive board member during the preceding year.
- 2. Been involved with the planning and/or operation of a chartered GSA club or organization or ongoing project during the preceding year.
- 3. Currently a member of the GSA.

#### **B. The process to elect a Club Representative is as follows:**

- 1. An interested candidate must submit a petition to the President of the GSA stating their interest in the position.
- 2. Any petition submitted to the President of the GSA must then be approved by a simple majority of the GSA representatives before the petition is granted.

#### **C. Responsibilities of a Club Representative:**

- 1. The term for a Club Representative shall end at the next general election of GSA representatives.
- 2. The Club Representative shall serve in the interests of the GSA Clubs and organizations and have the responsibilities and obligations for service of a representative including voting power.
- 3. There is a one year term limit that a person may be granted membership as a Club Representative provided they are members of the GSA.



# Constitution

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