

**Communications Graduate Student Association**  
**Drafted on: March 26, 2008**

**Article One NAME OF ORGANIZATION**

Section 1 - The name of this organization shall be the Communication Graduate Student Association (CGSA).

**Article Two PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION**

Section 1: The mission of CGSA is to facilitate and provide academic, social and professional support for graduate students studying Communication at George Mason University.

Section 2: Goals of CGSA at George Mason University.

- A. To promote the study, criticism, research, pedagogy and application of the artistic, humanistic and scientific principles of professional communication.
- B. To enhance communication among Communication graduate students and between students and faculty and to provide a social arena for that purpose.
- C. To elevate the quality of graduate education.
- D. To provide a community service to students and the public.
- E. To secure the rights and privileges of graduate students as members of the Department of Communication and George Mason University.
- F. To promote the professional development of graduate students by encouraging publishing, academic excellence and career opportunities.
- G. To promote and represent the George Mason University Department of Communication and the global academic community.

Section 3: Responsibilities and Activities

- A. CGSA will be responsible for providing activities that stimulate the academic, professional and social lives of the Communication graduate students whom the organization represents.
- B. CGSA will work with the graduate secretary to compile and mail out an orientation packet to all incoming students the summer before their first semester. CGSA will also meet with the new graduate students during orientation week.

**Article Three MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1: Any graduate student currently enrolled in the George Mason University Department of Communication (MA Communication student; PhD Communication student; or other graduate program with a concentration in Communication) is considered to be a member of CGSA. CGSA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, sex, age, political affiliation or marital status.

Section 2: An active member is one who has paid their yearly dues.

Section 3: Excluding general elections in April, only active members may vote on CGSA issues throughout the year including amendments, elections, and other motions

Section 4: All active members must be currently enrolled at George Mason University with a minimum academic achievement record defined as a cumulative grade-point average of at least a 2.0.

#### **Article Four OFFICERS**

Section 1: The duties of each officer are as follows:

President - Convene and preside at all CGSA meetings, coordinate the delegation of duties to other board members, and meet with the Department Head at least twice a semester.

Vice President - Assume the President's duties if that person is incapacitated or is unable to fulfill his/her responsibilities. The Vice-President is also responsible for implementing or developing one area of CGSA-sponsored activities.

Secretary - Take notes at CGSA Board meetings and disseminate information to the CGSA members. The Secretary is also responsible for other clerical duties that support CGSA activities and goals.

Treasurer - Keep financial accounts and records, collect dues, collecting travel funding documentation, and submit financial reports at CGSA Board meetings. The treasurer is also responsible for submitting a year-end financial report.

Member-At-Large - Represent new students in the program and be their spokesperson to the CGSA Board. The Member-At-Large is also responsible for implementing or developing one area of CGSA -sponsored activities.

Faculty Representatives - Attend the faculty meetings and report the minutes of these meetings to the CGSA Board.

Section 2: CGSA board members may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote during any CGSA board meeting if it is determined that s/he is being grossly negligent of the duties outlined above.

Section 3: In the event that a CGSA board member should resign from their office, a replacement will be sought. The position will be advertised and self-nominations will be solicited. CGSA will collect the nominations and an election by secret ballot will follow. If there is only one self-nomination, that person will immediately be appointed to the board.

Section 4: In the event that a faculty representative cannot complete his or her responsibilities due to a class conflict, the CGSA board may take the initiative to switch officer roles and duties among remaining members in order to keep the aforementioned CGSA board member on the CGSA board. The President and Member-At-Large are not eligible for this switch.

#### **ADVISOR**

Section 1: The primary advisor shall be a member of the faculty or staff at George Mason University.

Section 2: The primary advisor, once selected will remain in duty until he/she resigns from their office or is removed by a two-thirds majority vote during any CGSA board meeting if it is determined that s/he is being grossly negligent of the duties as primary advisor.

Section 3: In the event of a vacancy in the primary advisor office, candidates will be selected and voted on during the next CGSA board meeting.

Section: 4: The advisor may offer guidance and support for the organization, but MAY NOT have a vote.

#### **Article Five: ELECTIONS**

Section 1: The officers will be elected every April for a term of one year: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, two Faculty Committee Representatives and one Member-At-Large from the incoming class of new graduate students.

Section 2: Elections will be conducted in a two-step process. The first step will consist of CGSA members submitting nominations for each office. The three people receiving the highest number of nominations will be placed on the final ballot. The four people receiving the highest number of nominations for Faculty Representative will be placed on the final ballot.

Section 3: The second step will consist of all CGSA members (active and non-active) voting by secret ballot on the nominees for each position. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will be held.

Section 4: Nominees may either accept or decline their invitation in person or by proxy. Nominees can only be placed on the final ballot per their consent.

#### **Article 6: MEETINGS**

Section 1: The CGSA Board, which is comprised of all of the officers mentioned above, will meet biweekly. The CGSA Board will call a general meeting for all CGSA members during the month of September.

- A. A calendar of meeting times, for the current academic year, will be constructed at the first general meeting of the CGSA.
- B. The secretary is responsible for the composing and distributing the agreed upon annual calendar of scheduled meeting times to all CGSA members.

Section 2: The President shall convene and preside at all CGSA meetings.

Section 3: There will be no less than eight general meeting for all CGSA members held during each academic year.

Section 4: During the regular semester, the gap between meetings will not exceed four weeks.

Section 5: Meeting times preferably will not conflict with normal academic scheduling and may be held on Sunday evenings.

Section 6: If a special meeting is required, the secretary will notify members of the time and location.

Section 7: Rules for General Meetings

- A. All members have the right to vote at general meetings of the CGSA.
- B. All members have the right to initiate resolutions and legislation in accordance with the purposes and details of the CGSA constitution.
- C. Resolutions and legislation will be passed by a majority of CGSA members.
- D. Legislation will narrowly achieve its intended purpose(s).
- E. Resolutions will be presented to the faculty by the co-chairs at faculty meetings and forwarded to the Communication graduate liaison for continued advocacy.

#### **Article 7: FINANCE**

Section 1: The amount of dues and the method of collection will be decided by a majority vote of the CGSA Board at the beginning of each school year for annual dues, or at the beginning of each semester for semi-annual dues.

Section 2: Any CGSA member is eligible for departmental-level travel funding when travel expenses are related to the presentation of a refereed conference paper.

Section 3: Departmental-level funding requests will not be processed by the CGSA travel committee when those requests are related to:

- a. Any research-related expenses.
- b. Noncompetitive panel presentations.

Section 4: At the discretion of a majority of the CGSA, departmental-level funding will be capped at an appropriate amount per conference presentation.

Section 5: Departmental-level funding resources may be proportionately allocated on a per-semester basis as determined by a majority vote of the CGSA body and the availability of funds.

#### **Article 8: AMENDMENTS**

Section 1 - Active CGSA members may propose amendments to this constitution.

Section 2 - Proposed amendments must be submitted to and approved by the CGSA board. Once approved by the board, the amendment(s) will be voted on by CGSA members.

Section 3 - Suggestions for improvements and/or revisions to a proposed amendment must follow the process described in Sections 1 and 2.

Section 4: The Office of Student Activities must review all amendments in the same manner as a completely new constitution.

**Article 9: RATIFICATION**

Section 1: This constitution shall become effective upon approval by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the membership, the Council of Student Umbrellas and the Director of Student Activities.