



# **Constitution**

**Graduate Student Government at Albany of the  
SUNY Polytechnic Institute**

May 2016

## **Preamble**

The State University of New York (“SUNY”) Polytechnic Institute Graduate Student Government at Albany (“GSGA”) Constitution and Bylaws specify the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the GSGA in accordance with the graduate student resolution of May 28, 2013.

The GSGA Constitution and Bylaws affirm an overarching commitment to a unified graduate student governance structure at the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (“CNSE”), and establish the standards for the various degrees of autonomous CNSE graduate student governance in the areas of student leadership, scholarly activities and advocating the position of the graduate student body to institutional and external constituencies.

The GSGA Constitution and Bylaws establish the standards for full participation of GSGA student members in college wide governance in areas such as planning and policy, graduate academic affairs, academic assessment, and college life.

The GSGA Constitution and Bylaws shall be interpreted and applied, in accordance with the rules and regulations of SUNY, CNSE, and appropriate State and Federal law, and shall not be construed in any way as to take precedence over those rules, regulations, and laws.

## Definitions

As used in this Constitution, unless otherwise specified, the following terms shall mean:

- a. “Academic Staff” - Members of the staff comprised of those persons having academic teaching, and/or academic support as a job responsibility.
- b. “Administrative Staff” - Members of the CNSE staff who are affiliated with the administrative and management operations of CNSE.
- c. “Board of Trustees” - The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York.
- d. “Chancellor” - The Chancellor of the State University of New York.
- e. “CNSE” - The Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering of State University of New York.
- f. “GSGA” – State University of New York, Polytechnic Institute, Graduate Student Government at Albany.
- g. “Majority vote” – A yes-or-no vote for which passage requires an affirmative vote of a minimum of 51% of individuals voting.
- h. “Plurality vote” – A vote among options for which passage requires a given option receiving more votes than any other available option.
- i. “Senior Vice President and CEO” - The Senior Vice President and CEO (or other equivalent title) of the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering of the State University of New York.
- j. “Student Association” - The joint student governing body of SUNY Polytechnic Institute, which includes representatives from Student Government at Utica (SGU), Undergraduate Student Government at Albany (USGA), and Graduate Student Government at Albany (GSGA).
- k. “SUNY” - The State University of New York.
- l. “Supermajority vote” – A yes-or-no vote for which passage requires an affirmative vote of a minimum of 67% of individuals voting.
- m. “Vice President for Academic Affairs” – The Vice President and Chief Academic Officer of CNSE.

## **Article I – Name**

The name of the representative student governance body shall be "State University of New York, Polytechnic Institute Graduate Student Government at Albany," hereafter referred to as the "GSGA."

## **Article II -- Authority and Responsibilities of the GSGA**

The GSGA is authorized to participate in the initiation, development, and implementation of the programs that affect the graduate student body. In this capacity, the GSGA shall consider itself responsible for development of advice and assistance to the Senior Vice President and CEO and Administrative Staff in the following areas:

1. To represent the interests of Graduate Students in matters which pertain to their ability to conduct research, develop their careers, and maintain high morale.
2. Formulation and implementation of research, service, and outreach programs that involve the graduate students of CNSE.
3. Recruitment, admission, assessment, and advancement of CNSE graduate students.
4. Assist in review of CNSE academic standards.
5. Act as a conduit for interactions and relations between the CNSE Faculty, CNSE Administrative Staff, CNSE graduate students, and the other student governments of the Student Association
6. Consideration of other topics or issues referred to the GSGA for its consideration.

## **Article III -- Organization of the GSGA**

### **Section 1 - Membership**

The GSGA is comprised of all graduate students currently enrolled in courses or a degree program at CNSE.

### **Section 2 - Executive Board**

The GSGA shall elect annually from its membership seven members to serve as the chief representatives and governing body of the GSGA. These seven members will form the GSGA

Executive Board, hereafter referred to as “E-Board.” These elections are detailed in Article V. The E-Board shall have five officers.

### **Section 3 – Officers**

The E-Board shall elect its officers, who shall be the President, the Vice President, the Communications Officer, the Records Officer, and the Treasurer. The term of office is one year. No person may hold two offices simultaneously. No person may hold the same office for more than two full years starting the last Monday May. Any officer may resign by submission of a written resignation to the GSGA President. The recall of an officer may be initiated as outlined in the Bylaws.

## **Article IV – E-Board Elections**

E-Board member terms will be for one year, starting the last Monday of May, expiring on the last Monday of May the following year. They may seek re-election. The election procedure shall be provided in the Bylaws. Any member may resign by submission of a written resignation to the GSGA President. The recall of a member may be initiated as outlined in the Bylaws.

## **Article V -- Meetings of the GSGA**

### **Section 1 – General Meetings**

The President shall call General Meetings. At least one meeting must be held in each of the Fall and Spring Semesters. A minimum of twenty percent of active GSGA members must be present to constitute a quorum. Meetings shall be open to all GSGA members.

### **Section 2 – E-Board Meetings**

The President may call regular meetings. These meeting will be held on as a needed basis. A majority of the E-Board shall constitute a quorum. These meetings can be restricted to the membership of the E-Board as needed.

### **Section 3- Committee Meetings**

Committee chairs may call regular meetings. These meetings will be held on as needed basis. A majority of the committee members shall constitute a quorum.

### **Section 4- Special and Emergency Meetings**

Special meetings may be called to consider a special item or items of business, the procedures shall be defined in the Bylaws.

## **Article VI - Committees of the GSGA**

Membership of committees will be appointed as required by the E-Board; procedures shall be defined in the Bylaws.

## **Article VII -- Amendments**

### **Section 1 – Constitution**

Proposals to amend this Constitution may be initiated by a supermajority vote of the E-Board or by petition of at least one third of the members of the GSGA. Such proposals must be made and submitted to the E-Board at least a week before the scheduled General Meeting. The E-Board shall be required to make arrangements for a referendum on the amendment in which each member of the GSGA may vote. The E-Board shall also notify all GSGA members of the wording of the proposed amendment not less than one week prior to the vote. Amendments shall require a quorum of the E-Board and supermajority vote of the GSGA members who cast a vote in order to be ratified.

### **Section 2 – Bylaws**

Bylaws may be amended at a General Meeting by a supermajority vote of the E-Board and majority vote of GSGA members present. Quorum of the E-Board is required. The E-Board shall also notify all GSGA members of the wording of the proposed amendment not less than one week prior to the vote.

## **Article VIII. Ratification**

This Constitution and appended Bylaws shall be ratified once a majority of the GSGA members voting in a referendum shall approve the Constitution and appended Bylaws. If passed, it will take effect immediately.