

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS
of the Graduate Student Council of New Mexico State University

ARTICLE I :
Name

The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Student Council, hereafter referred to as the Council.

ARTICLE II :
Object

The object of the Council shall be to further the aims and goals of students enrolled in the Graduate School at New Mexico State University and to serve as an intermediary between the students and the University, the Graduate School, and the Associated Students of NMSU for the mutual benefit of all parties involved.

ARTICLE III :
Members

Section 1.

The membership of the Council shall consist of all graduate student organizations (hereafter GSOs) representing departments or programs offering graduate degrees at NMSU.

- a. Every GSO at NMSU is eligible to designate its representatives to attend Council meetings. Each GSO, chartered or in the process of chartering, will have one vote in Council matters.
- b. To become a voting member, a GSO must submit to the Council Secretary a copy of the paperwork required by the Student Organizations & Programs office for official university recognition as a chartered organization.

Section 2.

Any student enrolled in a graduate program at NMSU shall be permitted and encouraged to attend all meetings of the Council and to participate as a nonvoting member.

Section 3.

The ASNMSU Graduate Senators shall be ex-officio nonvoting members, and therefore may not serve as GSO representatives to the Council.

Section 4.

The Graduate School's Graduate Assistant Training Coordinator shall be an ex-officio nonvoting member of the Council.

Section 5.

The Faculty Advisor of the Council shall be an ex-officio nonvoting member of the Council.

Section 6.

The Graduate Dean may appoint an ex-officio nonvoting member to the Council.

Section 7.

The Graduate Council may appoint an ex-officio nonvoting member to the Council.

ARTICLE IV : Elected Positions

Section 1.

The officers of the Council shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

- a. The President shall coordinate all activities of the Council, shall impartially enforce the Bylaws, shall serve as the official representative of the Council, shall govern all proceedings during general meetings of the Council, and shall call regular and extraordinary meetings when necessary.
- b. The Vice President shall be responsible for documenting financial procedures and providing the information to the membership about financial policies and procedures. The Vice President shall also serve as a member of the Finance Committee. In the absence or inability of the President to serve in her/his authorized capacity, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President. In the event the President ceases to be an officer in her/his term of office, the Vice President shall assume the office of the President and all duties thereof.
- c. The Secretary shall keep all records and informal minutes of the Council, keep copies of all minutes of committee meetings, keep an accurate list of voting Council members and chartered GSOs, and notify members of meetings and meeting agendas.
- d. The Treasurer shall oversee the disbursement of all funds coming into the possession of the Council, keep an itemized account of all Council monies and expenditures, and subject this account to an open audit by the Council upon request.
- e. Responsibilities shall not be delegated from one position to another (in ways contrary to the bylaws) except by mutual consent of involved parties and with prior approval of the president. (If the president is one of the affected parties, then the prior-approval of the executive council must be sought.) Notice shall be made both verbally and in writing at the next GSC meeting after the change. Long term (4 weeks or more) changes must be posted on the web site. Roles revert back to those stated in the bylaws when a new officer is elected to the affected position. The above shall in no way preclude arrangements made publicly and openly and explicitly to the GSC at time of elections.

Section 2.

The Council shall elect the officers from among its membership by the third meeting of the spring semester. The names of the candidates must be announced at least one meeting prior to voting, and new officers shall be elected by a simple majority of the voting members, provided a quorum is present. New officers will assume their duties no later than the second meeting of the fall semester.

- A. In the case where no candidate has been nominated despite a reasonably visible call for nominations or all candidates have voluntarily withdrawn, the council may vote to accept nominations from the membership on the election day, provided a quorum is present.
- B. If there are still no nominations or candidates, president will be allowed to appoint members to fill vacant positions.

Section 3.

ASNMSU Graduate Senators may not serve as officers of the Council, but may serve on the Executive Committee in said roles of VP of Operations, VP of Activities or VP of Development as members at large according to Article 4 section 6 and Article 5 section 2b.

Section 4.

The Council Advisor must be a member of the graduate faculty of NMSU and must be willing to take the position for at least one fiscal year. The advisor shall be elected by a majority of the voting members present, provided they constitute a quorum. The duties of the advisor are to provide guidance to the Council upon request and to be available for signatures necessary for the accomplishment of Council business.

Section 5.

The Council will elect two representatives (one M.A. candidate and one Ph.D. candidate) to the Graduate Council. The representatives shall be elected by a simple majority of the voting members present, provided they constitute a quorum.

Section 6.

Two Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee shall be elected by a simple majority of the voting members present, provided they constitute a quorum.

Section 7.

An officer may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the Executive Committee. The resignation becomes official upon approval by the Executive Committee.

Section 8.

Any vacancy shall be filled by a special election to be conducted as in a regular election, with the exception that the new officer takes office immediately.

Section 9.

A petition signed by at least 30 percent of the voting Council members is sufficient to initiate impeachment proceedings. The impeachment investigation shall be conducted by the Council at large. The Council may unseat any elected official with a two-thirds vote, provided a quorum is present.

ARTICLE V : Committees

The Council will recognize Standing Committees and General Committees. While each type of committee will be governed by its own set of rules, all committees must comply with the following set of guidelines: all committee meetings must be open to every member of the Council; meeting times and places must be announced at general Council meetings and posted where all students can access the information; any decision made by a committee may be appealed by any member of the Council; and a GSO will be allowed only one voting member per committee.

Section 1.

General Committees may be formed and dissolved by the Council at large at the Council's discretion. All General Committees are automatically dissolved at the end of each fiscal year.

- a. Structure. Each General Committee shall select a Committee Chair and a Committee Secretary. The Chair is responsible for calling and conducting committee meetings. The Secretary is responsible for taking minutes and attendance at every committee meeting, and for keeping records of committee business. The Committee Secretary must submit a copy of the meeting's minutes and attendance to the Council Secretary no later than seven days after each meeting. The Chair and Secretary positions may be rotated among committee members at their discretion.
- b. Duties and Authority. The duties and authority of a General Committee shall be determined as the Council sees fit; however, these issues must be resolved within a reasonable amount of time following the creation of each new committee.

Section 2.

Standing Committees may only be formed and dissolved by amendment to the Council Bylaws. The amendment must define the committee's membership, structure, duties and authority, and rules and requirements.

- a. Finance Committee
 - 1) Membership.
 - a) Membership is open to any member of the Council, who may join the Finance Committee at any time.
 - b) The Council Vice President is automatically a member of the Finance Committee and votes only as needed to maintain an odd number of votes.
 - c) To become a voting member of the Finance Committee, the same individual must attend two consecutive Finance Committee meetings. After becoming a voting member, that individual may miss up to two Finance Committee meetings per semester without losing his/her voting privilege. Voting members may also designate someone from their GSO to attend a Finance Committee meeting and vote in their stead.
 - 2) Structure. The Finance Committee will follow General Committee structure.
 - 3) Duties and Authority. No money may be disbursed from the Council's general account to the Council, the GSOs, or any person representing the Council or GSOs without the approval of the Finance Committee. Under no circumstances should anyone ever be in a position to approve his/her own request for money; therefore, should the Finance Committee itself request an expenditure, the expenditure must be approved by the Executive Committee.
 - 4) Rules and Requirements.
 - a) Quorum for the Finance Committee shall consist of a minimum of three voting members, not including the Council Vice President.
 - b) All decisions in the Finance Committee must be approved by a simple-majority of the voting members, provided a quorum is present.
 - c) Meetings may be called as needed by the Council Vice President or Chair of the Finance Committee.
 - d) The Finance Committee is responsible for ensuring that all financial matters develop in compliance with the Funding Policy.
 - e) The Finance Committee will decide questions concerning the interpretation and application of the current financial policy regulations, and may recommend to the general membership that those rules be amended as needed. Because all changes to the financial policy must be approved by the general membership, the Finance Committee cannot itself change any policies or regulations.

- f) The Finance Committee will approve or reject requests for financial appropriations. Finance Committee members may not vote on appropriations requests sponsored by their own GSO and are encouraged to disqualify themselves from any vote in which they feel there may be a conflict of interest.
- b. Executive Committee
 - 1) Membership.
 - a) Voting membership shall consist of the Council officers and two Members-at-Large elected from the general membership of the Council. The Members-at-Large must be elected by the second meeting of the fall semester.
 - b) The Faculty Advisor to the ASNMSU Graduate Senators shall be considered an ex-officio nonvoting member of the Executive Committee.
 - 2) Structure. The Executive Committee will follow General Committee structure.
 - 3) Duties and Authority. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for overseeing enforcement of the Council bylaws, recommending policy changes or decisions to the general membership, setting agendas for general meetings, coordinating the activities of the Council, and hearing grievances and appeals.
 - 4) Rules and Requirements.
 - a) Quorum for the Executive Committee shall consist of a minimum of four voting members.
 - b) All decisions or recommendations of the Executive Committee must be approved by a simple majority of the voting members present, provided they constitute a quorum.
 - c) Meetings may be called as needed by the Council President or the Chair of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI : Meetings

Section 1.

Meetings shall be held at least once per month during the fall and spring semesters. The schedule of meetings shall be approved at the first meeting of each semester by a majority of the voting members, provided a quorum is present. Extraordinary meetings may be called by the President or by a petition signed by at least 30 percent of the voting Council members.

Section 2.

A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the voting membership.

Section 3.

A majority vote of the voting members present is sufficient to pass a motion or act introduced in the Council, except as otherwise specified herein.

Section 4.

At the last Council meeting of the fall semester, the dates of the first Council meeting and first Finance Committee meeting of the spring semester shall be set.

ARTICLE VII : Parliamentary Authority

The Executive Committee may opt to forego Robert's Rules of Order. Otherwise, the rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Council in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any additional rules the Council may adopt.

ARTICLE VIII : Funding Policy

The goals of the Funding Policy are to increase GSO participation in the Council, increase the strength of GSOs, allow GSOs to determine their own financial needs, and give individuals a chance to compete for Council monies. The policy may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a two-thirds vote, provided a quorum is present; amendments must be submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting. The policy is as follows:

Section 1. PURPOSE

- a. This funding policy establishes procedures to which the Graduate Student Council (GSC) Finance Committee will adhere when providing funding for graduate student professional development. This policy aims to allow graduate students to determine their own financial needs, to increase the strength of Graduate Student Organizations (GSOs), and to increase participation in GSOs and in the GSC.
- b. The GSC may provide partial funding for:
 - 1) Students attending conferences, workshops, or other research-related events, regardless of whether the individual is presenting (governed by sections 2a and 3).
 - 2) GSO events or purchases that promote participation in the GSO. (governed by sections 2b, 4, and 5).
- c. Requests for funding individual and GSO events must follow the guidelines in this funding policy. Once a request has been approved, disbursements will not be made until after the event occurs and necessary receipts have been provided to the Associated Students of New Mexico State University (ASNMSU) Fiscal Advisor or Comptroller.

Section 2. ELIGIBILITY

- a. Individuals must be at least half time graduate students at New Mexico State University at the time the event begins, perform 3 hours of community service, and attend 2 GSC meetings to be considered for funding. Individuals may only receive funding once per semester and must not be in violation of any items described in Section 3.f.
- b. GSOs must be chartered in accordance with ASNMSU rules at the time the purchase is made or the event begins, and they must have a representative attend 2 GSC meetings to be considered for funding. GSOs may receive funding once per academic year and must not be in violation of any items described in Section 4.e . However, no GSO will receive more than 30% of the total amount of money to be disbursed during the academic year. Funding requests will be processed on a first come, first served basis and priority will be given to those not previously funded.

Section 3. RESEARCH/CONFERENCE DISBURSEMENTS

- a. The GSC will provide funding for travel, lodging, and registration expenses associated with attending a conference, workshop, or other research-related event regardless of whether the individual is presenting. Funding requests will be processed on a first come, first served basis.
- b. REQUIREMENTS
 - 1) A funding request must include a typed Funding Appropriation form; a Community Service Projects form; a cover letter that explains exactly what the funding will be used for (airfare, lodging, etc.), where the student is traveling, what conference/event the student is attending, why the student is attending, and dates of travel; an official conference program (if applicable); and proof and cost of registration (if applicable).
 - 2) If a group of individuals (more than one student) from the same GSO is attending the same conference, workshop, or other research-related event, the group must submit one request with one Appropriation form, one cover letter, and other necessary supporting documents described above. Each individual on the request must attend 2 GSC meetings. Only one check will be cut per request, unless otherwise previously requested. Reimbursement will be made accordingly to the application packet submitted. For groups of individuals, the check will be cut to the first name listed on the request.
 - 3) Each individual who requests funding must perform at least 3 hours of on-campus or off-campus community service. Community service hours become void after 120 days, including weekends and excluding holidays.
 - 4) Each individual must attend 2 GSC meetings during the semester that he/she applies for funding before he/she will receive any reimbursement. If an individual is unable to attend a GSC meeting, a representative may be sent in his/her place. The representative must indicate on the sign-in sheet who he/she is representing.
 - 5) Students who are approved for an Individual Disbursement must participate in the next Graduate Research and Arts Symposium (GRAS), if the student is still enrolled. However, if a student's trip ends less than 2 weeks before GRAS begins, the student may participate in GRAS the following year instead of the immediately- occurring GRAS. This ensures that students have at least two weeks to prepare for GRAS.
- c. DEADLINES
 - 1) Requests must be turned in to a member of the GSC Executive Council at a GSC meeting at least 3 weeks prior to when the individual's trip starts or at the second to last GSC meeting of the semester, whichever comes first. Late applications will be subject to penalties.
 - 2) If an event occurs at the beginning of the Fall semester, the request will be accepted retroactively if it is turned in at or before the second GSC meeting of that Fall semester. If an event begins after the Spring semester ends, the request will be accepted retroactively if it is turned in at or before the second GSC meeting of the following Fall semester.
- d. Each individual or group of individuals that submits a properly completed application according to the deadlines and rules in this funding policy is eligible for:
 - 1) Reimbursement of the full amount, if the amount is less than or equal to \$200.
 - 2) Reimbursement of \$200 plus 50% of the remaining amount, with a maximum of \$500 to be disbursed to 1 individual, \$1000 to a group of individuals applying under a GSO. Students requesting large amounts of funding are encourage to apply to ASNMSU for funding in place of or in addition to applying to the GSC for funding.
- e. If exact costs (e.g., cost for ground transportation from the airport to the hotel) are unknown at the time the funding request is submitted, cost estimates may be used in the request. However, individuals or

groups of individuals who spend less than 90% of the funds indicated on their funding application may be denied funding and will not be eligible for funding for the next two semesters.

- f. The Finance Committee will determine, at their discretion, which expenses are allowable and which applications to approve. They will adhere to the following guidelines:
 - 1) The Finance Committee will decide whether to approve each request, inform the individual(s) who submitted the request of their decision, and submit approved requests to the ASNMSU Fiscal Advisor or Comptroller within 3 weeks of receipt of the request.
 - 2) No GSO will receive more than 30% of the total amount of money to be disbursed during that semester.
 - 3) If funds allocated for the Fall semester remain at the end of the Fall semester, they will carry over to the Spring semester. Funds that remain at the end of the Spring semester may be awarded as additional funding for requests that were received during that academic year. Funds available for disbursements depend on the GSC's budget, which is provided by ASNMSU, and are therefore subject to change each academic year.
 - 4) The GSC will not fund:
 - a) requests from individuals or groups of individuals who do not have receipts to account for at least 90% of the amount they requested. Those individuals will not be eligible for funding for the next 2 semesters.
 - b) more than one request from any student in a given semester, regardless of whether the request is for an individual or a group of individuals.
 - c) requests from students who were previously awarded funding (as an individual or as part of a group of individuals) but did not present their research at GRAS, unless the individual has a valid excuse (e.g., an off-campus pre-doctoral research position or another conference that overlaps with GRAS) for not presenting at GRAS. The validity of an excuse is at the discretion of the Finance Committee.
 - d) any items not in accordance with ASNMSU funding policies, including food, alcoholic beverages, and equipment or supplies solely for one student's research.
 - e) requests from individuals who have tried to bypass any part of the funding application process.

Section 4. GSO DISBURSEMENTS

- a. The GSC will fund expenses associated with purchases or events that promote participation in a GSO or that benefit all members of a GSO. Each GSO may submit one funding request per academic year. Funding requests will be processed on a first come, first served basis.
- b. REQUIREMENTS
 - 1) A funding request must include a typed Funding Appropriation form, a Community Service Projects form, and a cover letter that explains exactly what the funding will be used for.
 - 2) Each GSO that requests funding must have one or both of the following:
 - a) 10 members who each complete 2 hours of on-campus or off-campus community service. Community service hours become void after 120 days, including weekends and excluding holidays.
 - b) at least 10 points. The point system is described in Section 5.
 - 3) Each GSO must send a representative to 2 GSC meetings during the academic year that it applies for funding.
- c. DEADLINES
 - 1) Requests must be turned in to a member of the GSC Executive Council at or before the second to last GSC meeting of the Fall or Spring semester. Requests will be accepted retroactively so that a GSO will have the entire academic year to accumulate the necessary number of community service

- hours and/or points. Please keep in mind, however, that requests are processed on a first come, first served basis, and it is possible that the GSC's budget will be depleted before the end of the academic year.
- d. Each chartered GSO that submits a properly completed application according to the deadlines and rules in this funding policy is eligible for :
 - 1) reimbursement of up to 50% of the total cost, with a maximum of \$250 if the GSO has at least 10 points or if the GSO has 10 members who each complete 2 hours of on-campus or off-campus community service.
 - 2) reimbursement of up to 50% of the total cost, with a maximum of \$500 if the GSO has at least 10 points and the GSO has 10 members who each complete 2 hours of on-campus or off-campus community service.
 - e. The Finance Committee will determine, at their discretion, which expenses are allowable and which applications to approve. They will adhere to the following guidelines:
 - 1) The Finance Committee will decide whether to approve each request, inform the GSO representative of their decision, and submit approved requests to the ASNMSU Fiscal Advisor or Comptroller within 3 weeks of receipt of the request.
 - 2) No GSO will receive more than 30% of the total amount of money to be disbursed during the academic year.
 - 3) If funds allocated for the Fall semester remain at the end of the Fall semester, they will carry over to the Spring semester. Funds that remain at the end of the Spring semester may be awarded as additional funding for requests that were received during that academic year. Funds available for disbursements depend on the GSC's budget, which is provided by ASNMSU, and are therefore subject to change each academic year.
 - 4) The GSC will not fund:
 - a) more than 30% total allocated funds to any one GSO per academic year.
 - b) any items not in accordance with ASNMSU funding policies, including computers, furniture, food, gifts, flowers, cards, alcoholic beverages, office decorations, coffee, refreshments for general use, donations, scholarships, or equipment or supplies for an individual's research.
 - c) requests from GSOs who have tried to bypass any part of the funding application process.

Section 5. POINT SYSTEM

- a. Points earned during the Fall semester will be counted toward funding requests during that Fall semester and the following Spring semester. Points earned during the Spring semester will be counted toward funding requests during that Spring semester and the following Fall semester. Points may only be used once.
- b. Points will be awarded to each GSO as follows:
 - 1) 1 point per GSO member who attends a GSC meeting, including committee meetings, as the GSO's designated voting member (or actively participating member, if voting members do not exist in the committee) with a maximum of 2 points per meeting.
 - 2) 2 points per GSO member who serves on the GSC Executive Board (President, Executive Officer, Treasurer, or one of the VPs), with a maximum of 2 points per GSO. These points will be awarded at the end of each semester, assuming that GSO member holds their Executive Board position for the entire semester.
 - 3) 1 point per GSO member who volunteers as a judge at GRAS, with a maximum of 5 points per GSO.
- c. Points under section b will be awarded only if the GSO member is not using these hours as community service hours.

- d. Awarding of points from committee attendance is at the discretion of the committee chair, appealable as outlined in article IX.

ARTICLE IX :

Appeals

Any decision made by a committee may be appealed by any member of the Council. The Executive Committee shall hear the appeal first, unless it is the Executive Committee whose decision is being appealed. Further appeal shall be brought before the voting membership of the Council, whose decision is final.

ARTICLE X :

Amendment of the Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a two-thirds vote, provided a quorum is present. The amendment must have been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.