

CONSTITUTION OF THE English Graduate Organization at the University of Miami

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Article I. Name

Section 1. Name

The name of the organization catering to graduate students of the University of Miami Department of English shall be the English Graduate Organization, abbreviated as “EGO.”

Article II. Statement of Purpose

Section 1. Guiding Principles

The purpose of EGO is to foster better camaraderie within the Department of English Graduate Program and between faculty, staff, and students of the Department of English Graduate Program.

Section 2. Objectives

The objectives of EGO will be to:

- Advocate for graduate students in the Department of English
- Organize the end-of-year English Graduate Symposium
- Elect two representatives to represent interests of both the MFA and PhD programs on their respective Graduate Studies Committees in the Department of English
- Establish and sustain collaboration with other graduate student organizations
- Elect senators to represent both graduate programs of the department in the Graduate Student Association (GSA)

Article III. Affiliation Statement

This Organization shall be affiliated with the Department of English in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Miami and the Graduate Student Association (GSA).

Article IV. Responsibility

The English Graduate Organization (EGO) shall comply with all University of Miami policies and procedures, including but not limited to those policies set forth in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, The Student Organization Handbook, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

Article V. Membership

Section 1. General Membership

Membership to EGO shall be open to all University of Miami students in good Academic Standing who have paid their Student Activity Fee and are actively pursuing a graduate degree within the Department of English at the University of Miami. The EGO shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, handicap, age, sexual orientation, or political and religious affiliation in any of its policies, procedures, or practices. Non-voting memberships may be extended to interested students, faculty, administrators, staff members, and alumni of the University.

Section 2. Active Membership

A. Active Membership in EGO is defined as those students who are current Department of English Graduate Students seeking a Masters of Arts or Doctorate of Philosophy in English as well as those seeking a Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, Fiction or Poetry track.

B. Benefits of Active membership include the right to vote, participate in fundraising, attend seminars, seek the advice of any department representative, and attend any events sponsored by the EGO.

Article VI. Executive Council

Section 1. Positions

A. Chair

1. Manage the organization and Executive Council (E-Council) meetings.
2. Protect the welfare of the organization and act in a manner befitting members as well as the University of Miami and EGO at events and activities.
3. Plan and coordinate all events, meetings and activities.
4. Represent the EGO to the best of their ability according to the standards defined herein and throughout the tenure of the EGO.

B. Co-Chair

1. Manage and execute Chair's responsibilities for the organization in the absence of the Chair.
2. Serve as ex-officio member of all committees.
3. Assist the Chair and assume the position in the event of a vacancy.
4. Prepare agendas for each meeting and attend them as well as events and activities.

5. Represent the EGO to the best of their ability according to the standards defined herein and throughout the tenure of the EGO.

C. Treasurer

1. Keep accurate financial records of the organization's finances, and make them available upon request by the Chair, members, Advisor, or GSA.
2. Ensure the annual disbursement of GSA funds to the organization
3. Administer the organization's funds upon approval of the Chair and Advisor, and in accordance with all GSA and University of Miami policies.
4. Contact the Center for the Humanities or other organizations to acquire funds for the organization, in accordance with University of Miami Solicitation Policy.
5. Attend meetings, events and activities.
6. Organize fundraising events.
7. Represent the EGO to the best of their ability according to the standards defined herein and throughout the tenure of the EGO.

D. Secretary

1. Handle all correspondence, organize and maintain online workspace as well as any documents used or distributed by the officers.
2. Handle registration and contact details of all members and keep a schedule of all active members.
3. Record the minutes of each meeting and maintain the minutes in an orderly fashion and distribute the minutes to both the members and the non-members if requested to do so by the executive committee, Advisor, or the GSA.
4. Attend meetings, events and activities.
5. Represent the EGO to the best of their ability according to the standards defined herein and throughout the tenure of the EGO.

E. Department representatives (2)

1. Contact individual graduate students of the department and hear about their concerns, suggestions and ideas.
2. Raise graduate students' concerns, suggestions and ideas to their respective positions on their program's Graduate Studies Committee
3. Submit a written list of concerns, suggestions and ideas to the Executive Council at least once every academic year, at the end of spring semester.
4. Represent the EGO to the best of their ability according to the standards defined herein and throughout the tenure of the EGO.

Section 2. Length of Term

The length of the term of office for Executive Council members shall be for one academic year, as determined by the relevant University of Miami Academic Calendar.

Section 3. Installation

Installation of new Executive Council members will occur annually by June 15th and is to be facilitated by the exiting executive board and/or advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies.

Section 4. Vacancies/Succession

If a vacancy occurs, it will be filled by an emergency election within 5 weeks of the official vacancy, to be carried out by the remaining Executive Council officers in conjunction with the organization's advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies.

Section 5. Impeachment/Removal of Executive Council

A. Petition

Three-fourths (3/4) of the Executive Council must agree or two-thirds (2/3) of active members must sign a petition to ask for impeachment of Executive Council member.

B. Process

Active members, the Executive Council, Advisor, and the Executive Council member being impeached must be notified at least two weeks in advance of the impeachment hearing. The impeachment hearing must occur while the Council is in session, which is defined as being during an academic year and not during any recess from classes as defined by the official University of Miami Academic Calendar.

C. Hearings

The moderator of the impeachment hearing will be the Parliamentarian of GSA, except in the case where this person is an EGO member, when this role will be filled by another GSA E-Board member. One-third (1/3) of active members must be present in order for the impeachment hearing to proceed. Each side will be given the opportunity to present their case and the active members may ask questions. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of active members present is needed for conviction and removal.

Article VII. Graduate Student Association Representatives, "Senators"

Section 1. Definition

A. General

- i. In accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Graduate Student Association (GSA) senate, each graduate program in the Department of English (PhD and MFA) shall have a seat in the graduate senate.

- ii. These two (2) senators, one for each program, shall be elected according to the provisions defined by Article VII, Section 2.
 - iii. In the case where no two active members of the EGO are nominated and accept these nominations, which would prevent a vote from occurring, the Executive Council will appoint two (2) senators, one for each program, to serve in the GSA senate.
- B. Eligibility
- i. These two (2) senators, one for each program, may be members of the Executive Council or may come from the general membership of the English Graduate Organization (EGO).
 - ii. These two (2) senators, one for each program, must be active members of the EGO and must both be able to attend GSA senate meetings, except in the case of sickness.
 - iii. These two (2) senators, one for each program, must have a minimum of one (1) academic year remaining to be considered for election.
- C. Duties
- i. Sit on the Graduate Student Association (GSA) senate as representatives of the PhD Program and MFA Program (one senator per program)
 - ii. Raise graduate students concerns, suggestions and ideas to the Graduate Student Association (GSA) senate through the protocols defined by the GSA Constitution and Bylaws.
 - iii. Serve on ad-hoc and constitutionally defined committees in the Graduate Student Association (GSA) senate based upon availability and senators' willingness
 - iv. Represent the EGO to the best of their ability according to the standards defined herein and throughout the tenure of the EGO.

Section 2. Election

A. Timeline

Elections for two (2) senators, one for each graduate program in the Department of English, will take place during the first meeting of the fall semester each academic year at a time and place left determined by the Executive Council; to be completed by August 31st. In the case where the Executive Council is unable to perform this task, the election will proceed as conducted by the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies.

B. Procedures

i. Facilitation

Elections will be facilitated by Executive Council members who are not nominated for senator positions, except in the case where there are no members of the Executive Council who are not nominated. In such a case, the elections will be facilitated by the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies, or by the Parliamentarian of the GSA.

ii. Nominations

1. Nominations will be opened as soon as the incoming Executive Council has been elected, the date of which is on or prior to June 15th.

2. Nominations may happen on or prior to the day of voting and must be accepted by the nominee.
- iii. Voting
1. Only active members, as defined by Article V, Section 2, have the right to vote.
 2. Elections are done by secret ballot; the winner will be determined by popular vote (“the candidate that receives the most votes”). In the event that there is a tie for the most votes received, a run-off election will occur between the tied candidates until there is a winner. In the case where this tie remains unresolved for two consecutive votes, a coin toss will decide the election results.
 3. The sequence of voting will be as follows: 1) M.F.A. Senator and 2) Ph.D. Senator.
 4. A candidate for office must be present at the election, except in the case where this is unable to occur because the candidate is or ill. In the case where candidates are unable to attend the Election in person, the Election may be held virtually. Virtual elections can be either synchronous or asynchronous, as determined by the Executive Council and/or the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies.
 5. Candidates will be allowed to give a timed presentation on their platform and why they feel they should be elected as Senator followed by questions from the active members present. The time limit for the speech and questions shall be determined by the Executive Council and/or the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies. During these presentations, other candidates for the same position will be asked to leave the room. In the case of asynchronous virtual elections, candidates will be asked to submit no more than one page of writing explaining their platform or reason for candidacy at one week before the election begins. This statement will be distributed to active members via email or other virtual means at least two days before the election begins.
 6. Senators shall be elected by a popular vote of voting members present at the election meeting provided quorum is met. Quorum is defined as 50% of active membership. In the case of asynchronous virtual elections, 50% of active membership must vote in order for the candidate to win proper majority.

Article VIII. Election of Executive Council

Section 1. Timeline

Elections for EGO Executive Council will take place during the second half of the spring semester at a time and place left determined by the current Executive Council; to be completed by June 15th. In the case where the current Executive Council is unable to perform this task, the election will proceed as conducted by the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies, or the Parliamentarian of the GSA Senate.

Section 2. Procedures

A. Facilitation

Elections will be facilitated by a non-returning Executive Council Member and the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies. This member does not have to relinquish their right to vote but can only vote if they are not in their graduating semester.

B. Eligibility

All active members who have been active for at least one semester are eligible to run for office, except in the case where there are no students willing or eligible as defined by Article VI, Section 2, in which case these requirements may be waived by the Director of Graduate Studies. Members must have one (1) full academic year remaining before graduation.

C. Nominations

- i. Nominations for Executive Council positions shall be opened no later than four weeks prior to the election. Candidates for the Executive Council can be self-nominated or nominated by an active member of the organization. Candidates may be nominated for more than a single office, however, once elected to a position; their name shall be removed from consideration for any subsequent office. The nominee must accept their nomination either in person or in writing to the Executive Council or the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies, on or before May 15th.
- ii. Current nomination lists shall be sent to organization members no later than one week prior to the election.
- iii. The Candidate must accept his/her nomination, either in writing or in person to any member of the Executive Council or the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies, in order to complete the nomination process.

D. Voting

- i. Only active members, as defined by Article V, Section 2, have the right to vote.
- ii. Elections are done by secret ballot; the winner will be determined by popular vote (“the candidate that receives the most votes”). In the event that there is a tie for the most votes received, a run-off election will occur between the tied candidates until there is a winner. In the case where this tie remains unresolved for two consecutive votes, a coin toss will decide the election results.
- iii. The sequence of voting for Executive Council will be the same as outlined in Article VIII Section 2 of this constitution.
- iv. A candidate for office must be present at the Election, except in the case where this is unable to occur because the candidate is an off-campus student or ill. In the case where candidates are unable to attend the Election in person, the Election may be held virtually. Virtual elections can be either synchronous or asynchronous, as determined by the outgoing

Executive Council and/or the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies.

- v. Candidates will be allowed to give a timed presentation on their platform and why they feel they should be elected to a specific position followed by questions from the active members present. The time limit for the speech and questions shall be determined by the current Executive Council and/or the Advisor, who is de facto the Director of Graduate Studies. During these presentations, other candidates for the same position will be asked to leave the room. In the case of asynchronous virtual elections, candidates will be asked to submit no more than one page of writing explaining their platform or reason for candidacy at least two weeks before the election begins. This statement will be distributed to active members via email or other virtual means at least one week before the election.
- vi. Executive Council members shall be elected by a popular vote of voting members present at the election meeting provided quorum is met. Quorum is defined as 50% of active membership. In the case of asynchronous virtual elections, 50% of active membership must vote in order for the candidate to win proper majority.

Article IX. Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

A. Committee Organizing Annual English Graduate Symposium

- i. Representatives may be nominated by the Executive Council or volunteer their appointment.
- ii. Responsibilities
 1. Plan and coordinate planning and meeting for English Graduate Symposium (which will take place in spring semester)
 2. All representatives are responsible for disseminating information to their department's members, faculty, and chair.
 3. Should one member need help from another, representatives must be prepared to do so.

Section 2. Special Committees may be appointed at the discretion of the Executive Council and/or the Advisor, who is by de facto the Director of Graduate Studies.

Article X. Advisor

The Advisor of EGO shall be a full-time faculty, administrator, or staff member at the University of Miami within the Department of English. De facto advisor is the Director of Graduate Studies within the Department of English.

Article XI. Meetings

Section 1. General

General member meetings will be held a minimum twice per semester in each academic year.

Section 2. Executive Board

Executive Council meetings will be held a minimum once a month.

Section 3. Special

Special meetings will be held at the discretion of the Executive Council.

Article XII. Discipline

Section 1. Reason

Misrepresentation of the organization or behavior that is detrimental to its guiding principles and/or objectives.

Section 2. Process

A mandatory meeting between the member being disciplined, the advisor, and the Chair of the Executive Council shall be held at a time and place agreed upon by all parties involved.

Section 3. Consequences

Based on the severity of the action, the member will be disciplined accordingly. Sanctions will be determined during the mandatory meeting by the Chair of the Executive Council, with the approval of the Advisor.

Article XIII. Amendments to the Constitution

Section 1. Submission

Amendments to this constitution shall be submitted to the Executive Council in writing.

Section 2. Process

- A. 100% of the Executive Council must be in agreement for a vote of the adoption of the amendment to occur.
- B. A vote of active membership must occur for the adoption of the amendment.
 - i. Notification of changes to the constitution must be made at least 2 weeks before voting occurs.
 - ii. 1/2 of the active membership is needed before voting can occur. A 2/3 vote of active members present is needed for the adoption of the amendment.

Section 3. Final Approval

Amendments must be presented to the GSA Committee on Student Organizations & Constitutional Review for approval prior to implementation, except in the case where this is not possible. In such a case, a 2/3 vote of active members ratifies the amendments.

Article XIV. Dissolution of the Organization

Section 1. Process

The EGO may be dissolved after dissolution is approved by the Executive Council and by a vote of 3/4 active members, provided that a notice of the vote on dissolution is furnished to all active members at least sixty (60) days prior to the vote.

Section 2. Obligations

Upon dissolution, the Executive Council will utilize assets of the organization to pay all obligations and expenses of the organization.

Section 3. Approval

Notice of dissolution must be presented in writing to the Advisor and GSA Parliamentarian/Committee on Student Organizations & Constitutional Review and must include reason of dissolution.

Article XV. Hiatus of the Organization

Section 1. Process

The EGO may be put on hiatus due to exceptional circumstances after this hiatus is approved by the most recent Executive Council, with guidance from the Advisor.

Section 2. Term of Hiatus

The term of the hiatus will not be longer than one academic year as defined by the official University of Miami Academic Calendar.

Section 3. Resumption of Organization

The EGO may be taken off hiatus upon the agreement of the previous Executive Council except in the case where this is not possible at which point a group of graduate students of the Department of English may re-create the organization in accordance with the procedures outlined in this constitution.

Section 4. Notice

Notice of hiatus of the organization shall be given to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Parliamentarian of the GSA.

Article XVI. Robert's Rules of Order

Any situation or circumstance not covered by this constitution will be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised (11th Edition or later).