

**UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION  
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE  
GENERAL MEETING AGENDA**

**February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021 7:00 P.M.**

**Zoom Conference Call**

<https://oklahoma.zoom.us/j/94328421969?pwd=OTlCRlkyRVNlQTEvU2tCQUszZUlnUT09>

**Call to Order**

**Reading and Approval of the Minutes:**

**Officer Reports:**

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary

**Committee Reports:**

- Academic Affairs
- Development & Philanthropy
- External Affairs
- Human Diversity
- Internal Affairs
- Public Relations
- Sustainability
- Ways and Means

**Special Orders:**

**Old Business:**

- GS21-09 An Act Appointing the Chief of Staff of the Executive Branch of 2021
- GS21-10 No Spring Break, But Here's an Election Act of 2021
- GS21-06 Auxiliary Allocation 11 Act of 2020-2021
- GS21-11 Auxiliary Allocation 12 Act of 2020-2021
- GS21-07 Senate Elections and Selections Act

**New Business:**

**Announcements:**

**Adjournment**

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CONGRESS  
CONGRESSIONAL SESSION CV

February 9, 2021

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE  
SENATE SESSION GS21

February 28, 2021

CONGRESSIONAL BILL CB-105-10  
SENATE BILL GS21-09

AS INTRODUCED

A Congressional Act of Procedure appointing the Chief of Staff of the Executive Branch; providing short title; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CONGRESS:

**Section 1:** Title: This act shall be known and may be cited as the “An Act Appointing the Chief of Staff of the Executive Branch of 2021.”

**Section 2:** Purpose: The purpose of this act shall be to appoint the Chief of Staff of the Farzaneh-Gray Administration within the Executive Branch.

**Section 3:** In accordance with Title I, Chapter 2, Section 7b, which delineates the appointment process for the Chief of Staff position, the following student shall thus be appointed:

- Cricket Kaya

**Section 4:** This act shall become effective when passed in accordance with the SGA Constitution.

Author(s): Tavana Farzaneh, SGA President  
Alex Gray, SGA Vice President

Co-Author(s): Crispin South, Undergraduate Student Congress Chair

Co-Sponsor(s):

Submitted on a Motion by: Representative Grebe seconded by Representative Sertovic

Action taken by Congress: 31-0-0

Verified by Chair of Congress: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted on a Motion by:

Action taken by Senate

Verified by Chair of Senate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by SGA President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CONGRESS  
CONGRESSIONAL SESSION CV

February 9, 2021

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE  
SENATE SESSION GS21

February 28, 2021

CONGRESSIONAL BILL CB-105-09  
SENATE BILL NO. GS21-10

AS INTRODUCED

A Congressional Act of Legislation providing for a Spring Election Date; providing short title; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CONGRESS:

- Section 1:** Title: This act shall be known and may be cited as the “No Spring Break, But Here’s an Election Act of 2021.”
- Section 2:** Purpose: The purpose of this act shall be to provide for a Spring Election date, after the OU Administration’s cancelation of Spring Break.<sup>1</sup>
- Section 3:** The date of the Spring General Election shall be on March 29<sup>th</sup> and March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021; due to OU Administration canceling Spring Break for the Spring of 2021 academic calendar<sup>2</sup>, which date is used for the Spring General Election (*Code Annotated § Title VI, Chapter 2, Section 9, Subsection B*).
- Section 4:** This bill shall allow the Election Commissioner to use March 29<sup>th</sup> and March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, as the dates of the Spring General Election, and shall use those aforementioned dates for the other timelines as needed in the Code Annotated § Title VI and others.
- Section 5:** This act shall become effective when passed in accordance with the SGA Constitution.
- Section 6:** Copies of this bill shall be sent to:
- Emily Smith, General Council
  - Elections Commissioner, when appointed;
  - Isaac Kabrick, Election Staff Member;
  - Beau Lauffer, Election Staff Member; and
  - Joy Nath, Election Staff Member.
  - OU Daily

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<sup>1</sup> “OU Announces Calendar Updates to Fall, Spring Semesters”:  
[https://www.ou.edu/web/news\\_events/articles/news\\_2020/ou-announces-calendar-updates-to-fall-spring-semesters](https://www.ou.edu/web/news_events/articles/news_2020/ou-announces-calendar-updates-to-fall-spring-semesters)

<sup>2</sup> “OU Academic Calendar”, before the cancelation of Spring Break:  
[https://ou.edu/dam/registrar/docs/2020-2021\\_academic\\_calendar\\_chronological.pdf](https://ou.edu/dam/registrar/docs/2020-2021_academic_calendar_chronological.pdf)

Author(s): Chairman Foster Hillis, Congressional Administration Committee; and Associate Coy Taylor.

Co-Author(s): Chairwoman Melissa Maxey, Graduate Student Senate

Submitted on a Motion by: Representative Esmeraldo seconded by Representative Poupore  
Action taken by Congress 32-0-0

Verified by Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted on a Motion by:

Action taken by Senate

Verified by Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by the President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

SENATE SESSION GS21

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021

SENATE BILL NO. GS21-07

AS INTRODUCED

A Senatorial Act of Procedure amending the  
Graduate Student Senate Bylaws; providing short title; and  
providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT  
ASSOCIATION GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE:

- Section 1:** This Act shall be known and may be cited as the “Senate Elections and Selections Act.”
- Section 2:** Purpose: The purpose of this Act shall be to amend the Bylaws of the Graduate Student Senate to provide revised policies and procedures affecting representation, extending to membership, senatorial terms, and methods of selection.
- Section 3:** AMENDATORY: All text from Section 2, Subsection A of the Graduate Student Senate Bylaws shall be removed in its entirety and replaced by the following.

**SECTION 2. Representation**

- A. MEMBERSHIP. Any Graduate Student within any Department satisfying requirements for office shall be eligible for service as a Senator in the Graduate Student Senate. Such Senators shall be Graduate Students within that Department and shall only represent the interests of those Graduate Students in that Department. If a Graduate Student belongs to more than one (1) Department, they may only serve as a Senator for one (1) Department.
1. ELIGIBILITY. Each member of the Graduate Student Senate must be currently enrolled in a recognized graduate program at the University of Oklahoma Norman Campus. Each member shall have and maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher, which such requirement shall also extend to the elected officers of the Graduate Student Senate.
    - a. PERIODIC EVALUATIONS. The Chair of the Graduate Student Senate shall consult with the Graduate Contact of each Department to perform enrollment and G.P.A. performance evaluations for each member of the Graduate Student Senate. These evaluations shall occur at the time of any election and upon appointment to the Graduate Student Senate.
    - b. CONFIDENTIALITY. Evaluations are confidential and are only employed for determining membership qualifications.
    - c. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE. If, at any time, a member of the Graduate Student Senate is found to not meet these minimum eligibility requirements for membership in the Graduate Student Senate, that member shall be notified by the Chair of the Graduate Student Senate and their position declared vacant.
- B. AUTHORITY. The Graduate Students of a Department shall have the sole authority to select among themselves representatives that will serve as Senators in the Graduate Student Senate. Each Department shall be represented by no more than two (2) Senators. It is at the discretion of the Graduate Students within a Department whether such Department shall have representation in the Graduate Student Senate.

1. The Chair of the Graduate Student Senate shall not represent a Department and shall not at any point be counted toward the two (2) senatorial seats allotted to any Department.

C. ELECTION.

1. GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE INTERNAL ELECTION COMMISSION. The Graduate Student Senate Internal Election Commission (hereafter "Internal Election Commission") shall have the sole authority to prescribe the date, time, and method of election of Senators to the Graduate Student Senate.

- a. POWER. The Internal Election Commission shall be responsible for overseeing and enforcing all provisions of this Section 2, subsection C, and ensuring fair elections.

- b. COMPOSITION. The Internal Election Commission shall consist of: Chair of the Graduate Student Senate; the Vice Chair of the Graduate Student Senate; the Secretary of the Graduate Student Senate; the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee; the Chair of the Ways and Means Committee; the Chair of the Publicity Committee; and the Election Commissioner of the Student Government Association as an ex-officio member.

- i. CANDIDACY OF INTERNAL ELECTION COMMISSION MEMBERS. Members of the Internal Election Commission are permitted to be a candidate to represent the Department to which they belong in any election. However, no member of the Internal Election Committee shall be permitted to directly oversee the administration of any election occurring within their respective Department.

- c. TERM. Members of the Internal Election Commission shall serve in this capacity from the last general meeting of the previous Session until the second-to-last general meeting of the current Session.

- i. ELECTION COMMISSIONER. The Chair of the Graduate Student Senate shall serve as Election Commissioner and shall automatically be appointed as such, absent an act of procedure, upon confirmation to office as Chair of the Graduate Student Senate.

- A. RESPONSIBILITIES. The Election Commissioner shall hold all those responsibilities provided in this Section 2 of the Graduate Student Senate Bylaws.

- ii. INTERNAL ELECTION COMMISSION. The Internal Election Commission shall comprise at all times seven (7) persons, of which the Election Commissioner shall be the chairperson of the Internal Election Commission and of which the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee and the Election Commissioner of the Student Government Association shall be non-voting members of the Internal Election Commission. The Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall vote only in the case of a tie. The Internal Election Commission shall be responsible for conducting the election and enforcing the election rules as provided in Subsection C of this Section 2.

- A. QUORUM. A majority of the members of the Internal Election Commission shall be necessary to conduct business.

2. ELECTIONS TO BE ADMINISTERED. Elections of the Graduate Student Senate shall extend to two (2) types of elections: the general election and the several special elections.

- a. GENERAL ELECTION. General elections shall occur on the Tuesday of the third academic week of the academic year, unless the Executive Committee of the Graduate Student Senate alters this date by an Act of Legislation, and shall include all senatorial seats for each recognized Department.
- b. SPECIAL ELECTIONS. Special elections shall occur on the Tuesday immediately following the two-week period after receipt of a response by a Department to a Notice of Vacancy and shall only include those senatorial seats belonging to the Department.
  - i. NOTICE OF VACANCY. If a Department fails to participate in a general election, it may yet still obtain representation in the Graduate Student Senate. One (1) month following the date of the validation of a general election, The Election Commissioner shall distribute to each Department that did not participate in such election a Notice of Vacancy.
  - ii. CONTENTS. Such Notice of Vacancy shall inform the Department of the following: its right to and the benefits of representation in the Graduate Student Senate; the eligibility requirements for Senators; its right to special election and the applicable election procedures for such; and other relevant information.
  - iii. RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF VACANCY. If a Department responds to a Notice of Vacancy in the affirmative, the Internal Election Commission shall open a filing period of two (2) weeks following the date of such response by the Department for Graduate Students of the Department.
  - iv. OTHER NOTIFICATIONS. If a Department does not respond to a Notice of Vacancy within one (1) week, the Department shall forfeit immediate representation. However, no response shall not forbid the Department of future representation. A Department may inquire into representation at any time during the current Session, at which point a Notice of Vacancy will be provided to the Department.
    - A. The following statutory Notice of Vacancy is sufficient (content framed in brackets indicates inclusion is optional; content framed in parentheses, which the exception of numerical values, indicates inclusion is mandatory but variable among documents):

NOTICE OF VACANCY

(DATE)

To whom it may concern,

This notice serves to inform you of vacancies in the Graduate Student Senate for your Department. Our records indicate your Department did not participate in the general election of the Graduate Student Senate held on (date of election). Your Department may still receive representation in the Graduate Student Senate, however, by special election.

Each Department is allotted two (2) senatorial seats. Departments may remain in good standing and eligible for funding provided by the Graduate Student Senate so long as at least one (1) Senator for

that Department has regular attendance in the Graduate Student Senate, as provided in the Bylaws of the Graduate Student Senate. We encourage full participation by a Department, however, and request two (2) individuals represent each Department.

Senators ordinarily serve a term of one (1) academic year, beginning the fourth academic week of the academic year. However, in such cases as this, a Senator elected by a Department shall only carry out the remainder of an electoral term.

Graduate Students duly enrolled in a Department with a G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher are eligible for office. If a Graduate Student belongs to more than one (1) Department, that student may only represent one (1) Department.

If your Department responds affirmatively to this notice and seeks representation, the Internal Election Commission of the Graduate Student Senate shall open an online filing period of two (2) weeks following the date of your Department's response to this notice. A special election shall be held for your Department upon the Tuesday immediately following the close of the filing period. In the event of a runoff, your Department will be notified of the appropriate procedures.

If your Department responds negatively or fails to respond to this notice within one (1) week, your Department shall forfeit immediately representation. However, your Department may inquire into representation at any other time during the academic year, at which point your Department will be provided a Notice of Vacancy, as the one provided herein.

[Other relevant information.]

Sincerely,

[First Name, Last Name]

Election Commissioner of the Internal Election Commission of the Graduate Student Senate

- c. VOTING. Candidates shall be elected by a simple majority of the electorate of a Department. No Graduate Student of a Department shall be permitted to vote for more than two (2) candidates for office in the Graduate Student Senate. The Election Commissioner shall call the total number of votes for each candidate, whereby the two (2) receiving the greatest number of votes shall be deemed Senators for the Department.
- d. RUNOFF ELECTIONS. Runoff elections shall be held two (2) business days following the date of an election and shall only occur in the event more than one (1) candidate receives an equal number of votes or such votes are within five percent (5%) of one another with respect to the total number of Graduate Students within the Department.
- e. UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS. All Graduate Students that have filed for election must be placed on the ballot for their respective Department, even if the position is

uncontested. In an uncontested election, the candidate must receive votes totaling at least ten percent (10%) of the total number of Graduate Students within the Department. However, if the total number of votes for a candidate of a Department does not meet this minimum threshold, it shall be at the discretion of the Internal Election Commission to certify such results for a candidate and permit representation in the Graduate Student Senate for the Department. In such an event, the Election Commissioner must note such decisions in the Election Report to be submitted to the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee.

3. ELECTION RULES. The Internal Election Commission may promulgate any additional rules to those provided in this Section that it deems necessary to the administration of a fair and effective election. All rules promulgated by the Internal Election Commission shall be synthesized into a single document separate from these Bylaws and made at all times publicly accessible. Such document shall also be provided to any Graduate Student seeking candidacy for office as a Senator in the Graduate Student Senate.
  - a. APPLICABILITY OF ELECTION RULES. The policies, regulations, and stipulations in Subsection C of this Section 2 and those promulgated by the Internal Election Commission shall be applicable only to candidates for senatorial terms in the Graduate Student Senate and shall not apply to other election procedures set forth by the senatorial body or its several Standing Committees.
  - b. PURPOSE OF ELECTION RULES. The provisions governing elections are intended to provide for the fairness, equity, and efficiency of senatorial elections, with respect to both candidates and voters. In the absence of established guidelines, any ruling concerning an election should be made in light of this principle.
  - c. ELECTORATE. The electorate of a senatorial race shall consist of all Graduate Students within the Department for which the senatorial seat belongs. In the absence of any guidance regarding the delineation of certain Departments, the Internal Election Commission may adopt any rules to determine or provide any opinions to clarify the electorate of a senatorial seat.
  - d. CANDIDATE INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS. The following provides critical information and certain requirements for candidacy for a senatorial term.
    - i. FILING. Filing for general elections shall occur online on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of the week immediately preceding the first academic week of the academic year and of the first academic week of the academic year, unless the Executive Committee of the Graduate Student Senate alters these dates by an Act of Legislation. Filing for special elections shall occur online on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday the two (2) weeks following receipt of a response by a Department to a Notice of Vacancy.
      - A. In any case, the filing period shall run for a term of at least two (2) weeks. Filing forms for senatorial seats shall be provided by the Internal Election Commission and shall include both the Senator Responsibility Statement and the following acknowledgment statement, of which both must be signed by a candidate before submitting a filing form:

“I do hereby affirm that I am required to abide by the SGA Constitution, SGA Code Annotated, and the rules and guidelines promulgated by the Internal Election Commission of the Graduate

Student Senate provided to me. I understand that I can be disqualified from a senatorial election if I disregard these election guidelines and rules.”

- ii. ELIGIBILITY. Any Graduate Student seeking candidacy as a Senator in the Graduate Student Senate must be currently enrolled in a recognized graduate program at the University of Oklahoma Norman Campus and shall have a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher.
  - A. The Election Commissioner shall consult with the Graduate Contact of each Department to perform enrollment and G.P.A. performance evaluations for each candidate. If a candidate fails to meet the minimum eligibility standards provided herein, they shall not be considered for candidacy and their name struck from all ballots.
- iii. CANDIDATE WITHDRAWAL. Any candidate may withdraw their name from the ballot any time prior to 5:00 p.m. the Friday before an election by submitting written notification to the Election Commissioner. The Election Commissioner shall verify the notification.
- e. DEADLINES. The Election Commissioner, with the advice and consent of the Internal Election Commission, may suspend any deadline within this Section 5, absent those exceptions provided herein.
- f. POLLING. If any member of the electorate of an election cannot vote through the online voting software implemented by the Internal Election Commission, they may be permitted to request a ballot from the Internal Election Commission either in person in the office of the Student Government Association or over the University-maintained email service. In so doing, the elector shall provide their University identification number as sufficient identification. The ballot may be requested at any time during and immediately following the filing period and shall be sent to the elector on the date of the election. This alternative ballot must be accepted if received on the date of the election. The Internal Election Commission shall ensure that any person that employs an alternative ballot does not and is unable to vote more than once (1) in any election.
- g. VOTERS' RIGHTS. The following rights shall not be infringed.
  - i. The right of the Graduate Students of a Department to vote by secret ballot shall not be infringed.
  - ii. The right of the Graduate Students of a Department to arrive at a voting decision free from undue influence shall not be infringed.
  - iii. No person, group, or organization, regardless of its affiliation, shall require any Graduate Student to vote, or shall require any Graduate Student to vote either for or against any candidate or candidates in any election sanctioned by the Graduate Student Senate.
  - iv. All Graduate Students have the right to request, in writing, a ruling of the Election Commissioner at any time from the start of the filing period and up to the close of the polls. The Election Commissioner shall make a written ruling on any such petition within twenty-four (24) hours of its submission.

4. OVERSIGHT AND ENFORCEMENT.

a. ELECTION RULES INFRACTIONS. Candidates shall be expect to uphold and abide by all rules and guidelines promulgated by the Internal Election Commission. Such rules and guidelines shall apply to all election-related activity regardless of whether such activity occurs prior to or during the election period, which shall run from the start of a filing period to the date of validation of an election.

i. LIABILITY. Candidates shall be liable for any offending action of which they specifically directed or for which they are directly responsible, but it shall be at the discretion of the Internal Election Commission to determine whether the connection between an offending action and a candidate is too tenuous to find that a candidate is responsible for such action.

ii. REPORTING ELECTION RULES INFRACTIONS. All complaints regarding violations of these elections rules shall be submitted in writing to the Internal Election Commission within five (5) business days of the incident which is the basis of the complaint or within twenty-four (24) hours of the close of the polls, whichever is earlier. The Election Commissioner shall notify all affected parties of any grievance filed against them and allow the accused to file a written statement in response to the accusation within twenty-four (24) hours from the time the notification was received. The Internal Election Commission shall issue a ruling within one (1) business day after the accused has either filed a written statement in response to an accusation or failed to submit such statement within the twenty-four (24) hour period.

A. CONTENTS OF INTERNAL ELECTION COMMISSION RULING. Upon making a ruling on an alleged rules infraction, the Internal Election Commission shall compose a succinct written opinion detailing the relevant facts that inform its opinion, what punishment will be imposed, if any, and an explanation of the Internal Election Commission's reasoning in how it came to its conclusion. Dissenting members of the Internal Election Commission shall issue their own separate opinion, contents of which shall be the same, to be attached to the ruling issued by the majority of the Internal Election Commission.

B. CONSIDERATIONS WHEN MAKING A RULING. The Internal Election Commission shall consider the following when making its ruling:

- i. The severity of the rule violation;
- ii. Whether the candidate has committed a prior violation of the particular rule at issue;
- iii. Whether the candidate knowingly or negligently violated such rule; and
- iv. The effect the infraction may have had on an election, on other candidates, and to the Graduate Students of the Department.

- iii. PUBLISHING OF INTERNAL ELECTION COMMISSION RULINGS. All opinions furnished by the Internal Election Commission must be published and made publicly available within twenty-four (24) hours of the making of its ruling.
  - iv. BINDING EFFECT. Any ruling by the Internal Election Commission shall be binding on any election, unless overturned by the Internal Affairs Committee on an appeal. Moreover, any request for a ruling by the Internal Election Commission shall not toll any applicable statute of limitations provided in this Section 2 of the Graduate Student Bylaws nor create a new charge or cause of action for an incident for which the statute of limitations has already run.
    - A. LIMITATIONS ON ELECTION COMMISSIONER. The Election Commissioner shall not make any unilateral rulings on alleged election rules infraction. Such power shall rest only in the Internal Election Commission.
  - v. SANCTIONS. The Internal Election Commission may sanction a candidate for an election rules infraction, unless such sanction or sanctions would otherwise conflict with the Code Annotated or Constitution of the Student Government Association or the Bylaws of the Graduate Student Senate. Sanctions shall include, but are not limited to, the following:
    - A. DISQUALIFICATION. The Internal Election Commission may disqualify a candidate from an election, in which case the candidate's name shall be struck from the ballot. However, such candidate shall be permitted to run as a candidate in a subsequent election.
    - B. PROHIBITION OF OFFICE. The Internal Election Commission may disqualify a candidate from an election, in which case the candidate's name shall be struck from the ballot, and prohibit such candidate from running as a candidate in all subsequent elections for a period not to exceed three (3) years.
  - vi. RULE VIOLATION COMPLAINTS FILED IN GOOD FAITH. The Internal Election Commission shall be permitted to recast a formal complaint as a public notification if it believes the complaint was filed in good faith but without an objective belief that the alleged misconduct violated an election rule promulgated by the Internal Election Commission.
- b. ELECTION IRREGULARITIES. Any action of a candidate which may not rise to that of an election rule infraction shall be considered an election irregularity.
  - c. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION PROCESS. The Internal Election Commission shall make an electronic form available for the duration of any election, by which any member of the electorate of a Department may report election irregularities or other matters of which they believe the Internal Election Commission should be made aware. Respondents shall have the option to remain anonymous, if they so choose. Candidates shall be encouraged to employ the public notification process in lieu of filing a formal complaint for such complaints that lack sufficient evidence. However, it shall be to the discretion of the Election Commissioner to determine if it would be more proper that a public notification be considered as a formal complaint, at which point it shall be dealt with as such. All form submissions shall be made public at the

conclusion of an election and documented in the Election Report. Following the validation of an election, the Internal Affairs Committee shall hold a hearing to review all public notifications submitted during an election to determine if any action should be taken to remedy any documented irregularities or other complaints provided therein.

d. ELECTION FRAUD. No member of the Internal Election Commission shall commit election fraud, which shall consist of any act or omission completed or attempted with the intent to deprive a candidate or voter of their rights.

i. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ELECTION FRAUD. Evidence of fraud shall be presented to the Internal Affairs Committee in the following manner:

A. COMPLAINTS. All complaints regarding election fraud shall be submitted in writing to the Internal Affairs Committee within three (3) business days of the close of the polls.

B. PROSECUTION. The Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall review all complaints and determine whether there is sufficient cause to warrant formal charges. If the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee decides to press formal charges, they shall notify the affected election official, collect all available evidence and testimony, and prosecute the offender before the body of the Graduate Student Senate. It shall be at the discretion of the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee whether to bring formal charges, which may be brought within five (5) business days of the incident which generated the charges or within three (3) business days of the close of the polls.

C. EXCEPTION. If the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee should be accused of election fraud, the Vice Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall assume such office and determine to prosecute pursuant to the immediately preceding section.

D. SANCTIONS. Upon bringing formal charges before the body of the Graduate Student Senate, the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall also inform the body of the recommended sanction or sanctions to be imposed on the accused upon a finding of fraud by the body of the Graduate Student Senate. The body of the Graduate Student Senate shall be permitted to issue additional sanctions beyond those recommended by the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee or issue alternative sanctions than those recommended by the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee. The Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee may recommend one or more of the following sanctions, which shall also be those sanctions available to the body of the Graduate Student Senate:

i. CENSURE. The accused may be censured by the Graduate Student Senate, at which point the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall notify the Department of the accused of such censure. The Department shall be given a period of two (2) weeks to respond to the notice, whereby the Department may choose to retain the accused

as a Senator in the Graduate Student Senate or to seek removal of the accused and appoint a new Senator to the Graduate Student Senate. If the accused is not a Senator of a Department, the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall notify the appropriate office of the censure, at which point the office may choose to issue its own sanctions upon the accused.

- ii. REMOVAL. The accused may be removed from the following:
  - 1. INTERNAL ELECTION COMMISSION. The accused may be removed as a member of the Internal Election Commission, at which point the body of the Graduate Student Senate may appoint a new member from among the body of the Graduate Student Senate. The newly appointed member shall serve in such capacity until the date of election for the officers of the Graduate Student Senate and the chairs of the several Standing Committees of the Graduate Student Senate.
  - 2. STANDING COMMITTEE. The accused may be removed as Chair of the Standing Committee to which they belong, if applicable, at which point the Vice Chair of the Standing Committee shall assume such position and the rules of succession for the Standing Committees shall take effect.
  - 3. OFFICE. The accused may be removed from the office of Chair of the Graduate Student Senate, Vice Chair of the Graduate Student Senate, or Secretary of the Graduate Student Senate, if applicable, at which point the rules of succession for officers shall take effect and the procedures for special elections of officers shall control.
  - 4. GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE. The accused may be removed from the Graduate Student Senate, at which point the procedures for appointment of a Senator shall control.
- e. APPEALS. All appeals of the rulings of the Internal Election Commission shall be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee within five (5) business days of the incident or ruling which is the basis of the complaint or within three (3) business days of the close of the polls, whichever is earlier. The Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall provide a copy of all appeals relating to an election to the Election Commissioner, the Graduate Contact of the affected Department, and all other affected parties, all of which shall have at least forty-eight (48) hours to file a written response with the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee.
  - i. ORAL ARGUMENTS. The Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee may also schedule oral arguments, whereby the Election Commissioner,

Graduate Contact of the affected Department, and all other affected parties shall have the opportunity to address the Internal Affairs Committee.

- ii. **DEADLINES.** If any such party fails to respond to an appeal or foregoes participation in oral arguments, it shall have no effect and appeals proceedings shall not be delayed. However, the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee may, at its discretion, amend the deadlines provided herein sua sponte or at the request of a party.
  - iii. **RULES OF LAW.** In rendering decisions relating to elections, the Internal Affairs Committee shall cite the specific constitutional or statutory provisions or precedential decisions of the Internal Affairs Committee applicable to the decision. All opinions of the Internal Affairs Committee shall contain the following: a succinct statement of the conclusion or holding; a statement of the applicable rule of law; an explanation of the rule of law; an application of the rule to the facts of the dispute; and a brief restatement of the conclusion or holding. Dissenting members of the Internal Affairs Committee shall issue their own separate opinion, contents of which shall be the same, to be attached to the ruling issued by the majority of the Internal Affairs Committee.
  - iv. **PUBLISHING OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE RULINGS.** All opinions furnished by the Internal Affairs Committee must be published and made publicly available within twenty-four (24) hours of the making of its ruling.
  - v. **BINDING EFFECT.** Any ruling on an appeal by the Internal Affairs Committee shall be binding and may not be further appealed.
5. **ELECTION CERTIFICATION.** The Internal Election Commission shall meet within twenty-four (24) hours of the close of the polls to certify the election results, at which point the unofficial election results shall be publicly posted and the Election Commissioner shall distribute such results to all candidates and the Graduate Contact of their respective Departments over the University-maintained email service.
6. **ELECTION REPORT.** At the conclusion of each election, the Election Commissioner shall make a report to the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee for their consideration in validating an election. This report must be submitted to the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee within forty-eight (48) hours following the closing of the polls. The Election Commissioner shall also file a copy of this report in the records of the Graduate Student Senate to be kept for a period of not less than three (3) academic years. This report shall include:
  - a. The total number of votes cast for each candidate or ticket at each poll.
  - b. Any written rulings issued by the Election Commissioner.
  - c. Information about any election irregularities or problems.
  - d. Other appropriate information
7. **ELECTION VALIDATION.** The Internal Affairs Committee shall meet within four (4) business days from the date of submission of the Election Report to consider the validation of an election for a Department or Departments. If there is any appeal pending before the Internal Affairs Committee relating to an election, such appeal must be resolved before the Internal Affairs Committee may consider the validation of the election and the

aforementioned period shall be tolled. The aforementioned period shall resume upon the making of a ruling by the Internal Affairs Committee. In validation proceedings, the Internal Affairs Committee shall give deference to the administrative regulation of the Internal Election Commission, whereby a rebuttable presumption shall exist which may be rebutted by clear and convincing evidence.

- a. LIMITATIONS ON REVIEW. The Internal Affairs Committee may only consider the information contained in the Election Report and those issues expressly and specifically addressed in any complaint or appeal on record.
- b. ASSUMPTION OF VALIDITY. If the Internal Affairs Committee fails to rule whether an election is valid or invalid within seven (7) business days from the close of the polls, the election shall be assumed valid. The Internal Affairs Committee may validate the results of any completed race independently of those races which it believes are unresolved and should not be validated without additional review or resolution of remaining issues, such as in the case of a runoff election or an appeal of an election for a Department.
- c. GROUNDS FOR INVALIDATION. The Internal Affairs Committee shall not enjoin or invalidate an election unless there is clear and convincing evidence that the true will of a voting electorate is not reflected. To set aside an election, there must be gross fraud, which leaves the intent of the voters in doubt, or irregularities in the course of an election of such a nature so as to affect the result, whereby the irregularities as a whole would render the result doubtful.
- d. RESULTS OF ELECTION UPON VALIDATION. Upon the validation of an election of a Department, the Election Commissioner shall notify all Graduate Students of the Department of the election results within twenty-four (24) hours of such validation.

D. APPOINTMENT. All members not elected according to the most current provisions of Subsection C of this Section 2 shall be appointed by the following procedure:

1. A Department may appoint a Senator or Senators to the Graduate Student Senate; provided that, the Department has held representation pursuant to Subsection C of this Section 2 during an ordinary senatorial term, and a Senator or Senators representing such Department resign or are otherwise removed from the Graduate Student Senate during that term.
  - a. If a Department has not held representation pursuant to Subsection C of this Section 2 during an ordinary senatorial term following the issuance of a Notice of Vacancy or at the date of the Department's request for representation, the Internal Election Commission shall administer a Special Election for that Department. In which case, procedures for the administration of a Special Election shall control.
2. Upon a Senator's resignation or removal from the Graduate Student Senate, the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall notify that Senator's Department of a vacancy within five (5) business days from the date of the Senator's resignation or removal and provide a Request to Appoint Form to the Department. This notice of a vacancy is not to be confused with the Notice of Vacancy provided to Departments, which do not participate in a general election are, therefore, devoid of any representation whatsoever.
  - a. The following statutory Request to Appoint Form is sufficient (content framed in brackets indicates inclusion is optional; content framed in parentheses, which the exception of numerical values, indicates inclusion is mandatory but variable among documents):

REQUEST TO APPOINT FORM

(DATE)

To whom it may concern,

This form serves to inform you of a vacancy[/-ies] in the Graduate Student Senate for your Department. The named individual[/s] below has[/have] [resigned/been removed] from the Graduate Student Senate [for the following reason or reason]:].

Name: (Last Name, First Name)

Department: (DEPARTMENT)

[Name: (Last Name, First Name)

Department: (DEPARTMENT)]

Your Department has two (2) weeks from the date of this correspondence to appoint one[/two] Graduate Student[/s] to continue the electoral term of the named individual[/s] above. To note, elected Senators serve a term of one (1) academic year, beginning the fourth academic week of the academic year.

Each Department is represented by no more than two (2) Senators. According to our records, your Department is currently represented by [zero/one/two] Senator/[s].

Graduate Students duly enrolled in a Department with a G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher are eligible for office. If a Graduate Student belongs to more than one (1) Department, that student may only represent one (1) Department.

[Departments may remain in good standing and eligible for funding so long as at least one (1) Senator for that Department has regular attendance in the Graduate Student Senate. We encourage full participation by a Department, however, and request two (2) individuals represent each Department.]

If your Department chooses not to appoint any individual at this time, your Department may fall into bad standing and be ineligible for funding. Failure to complete this form and return it to the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee by close of business at the end of the two-week period shall also constitute a forfeiture of immediate representation. However, your Department may request a Special Election no earlier than one (1) month from the close of the two-week period.

Please provide the names of the individual/[s] your Department intends to appoint:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

(First Name, Last Name)

Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee of the Graduate Student Senate

3. The Graduate Liaison, or other Department contact, (hereafter “Graduate Contact” within this Section) shall be provided two (2) weeks from the date of notice of a vacancy provided by the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee to procure an appointment from the Graduate Students of that Department.
    - a. The Graduate Contact may appoint any Graduate Student of the Department that satisfies all eligibility requirements for service as a Senator in the Graduate Student Senate; provided that such Graduate Student consents to represent the Department.
    - b. The Graduate Contact must provide adequate notice of the vacancy and opportunity for appointment to all Graduate Students of the Department.
  4. The Graduate Contact must furnish the Request to Appoint form containing the names and contact information of the appointee(s) to the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee at the close of the two (2) weeks.
    - a. If the Graduate Contact is for whatever reason unable to complete the Request to Appoint form and return it to the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee by close of business at the end of the two-week period, it shall constitute a forfeiture of immediate representation. However, the Department may request a Special Election, to be administered by the Internal Election Commission as provided in Subsection C of this Section 2, no earlier than one (1) month from the close of the two-week period.
    - b. It shall be at the discretion of the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee to accept a Request to Appoint form submitted after the two-week period, but not longer than four (4) weeks following the date of a notice of vacancy.
  5. The Internal Affairs Committee shall author an act of procedure appointing members of the Graduate Student Senate, of which such act shall provide the names of both the members and their respective Departments. This act shall be on the Items to be Considered agenda of the next general meeting following receipt of the Department’s Request to Appoint.
  6. The Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee and the Vice Chair of the Graduate Student Senate may provide a condensed orientation for appointed Senators up to three (3) times per academic semester.
  7. Appointments shall not be permitted unless an election has been previously held for a Department within an ordinary senatorial term.
  8. Senators appointed by a Department shall have all the same rights and privileges as Senators elected by a Department.
- E. ASSOCIATESHIP. All members of the Executive Committee shall automatically be considered associates for the duration of their term in office, unless they are elected by a Department.
1. APPOINTMENT. All associates shall be appointed by the Chair of the Graduate Student Senate by an act of procedure upon the last general meeting of the current Session, for a term that shall run until the end of the following Session, unless an associate is elected by a Department, is removed from the Graduate Student Senate, or resigns.
  2. PRIVILEGES. Associates appointed by the Chair of the Graduate Student Senate shall have all the same rights and privileges as Senators elected or appointed by a Department but shall not represent a Department nor count toward its allotted number of senatorial seats.
- F. TERM.

1. ELECTED SENATORS. Senators elected by a Department shall serve for a term of one (1) academic year, immediately following the results of the General Election and any subsequent runoff elections deemed necessary by the Internal Election Commission.
2. APPOINTED SENATORS. Senators appointed by a Department shall serve for the remainder of the electoral mandate of the Senator previously elected by that Department and for whose office the appointed Senator was selected to carry out. A senatorial appointment, however, will not commence until such Senator has submitted a Senate Credential Form and Senator Responsibility Statement to the Secretary of the Graduate Student Senate.
3. CONSECUTIVE OR LATER TERMS. Senators may serve consecutive or later terms in the Graduate Student Senate, regardless of whether such individuals were elected to or appointed to their first term, if such individuals satisfy all eligibility requirements for service as a Senator in the Graduate Student Senate.

**Section 4:** AMENDATORY. Section 2, Subsection B. Vacancies, Expulsions, Removals, and Resignations shall be renumbered as Section 3 and all Sections thereafter shall be renumbered in subsequent.

**Section 5:** AMENDATORY. Section 8, subsection B, presently referring to operations of the Executive Committee, shall be amended to provide the following.

B. The Executive Committee shall meet twice a month during the academic year at a regularly scheduled and published time. The Chair of the Graduate Student Senate shall have the authority to suspend meetings of the Executive Committee. The Chair of the Graduate Student Senate shall further have the authority to call special meetings of the Executive Committee outside of those regularly scheduled and published times.

1. If the Executive Committee shall be called to meet during times when the body of the Graduate Student Senate is not in session, the Executive Committee shall act with the full authority of the Graduate Student Senate on any matter; provided that it shall have no authority to act on matters regarding funding allocations of the Ways and Means Committees of the Undergraduate Student Congress and Graduate Student Senate, or amendments to the Bylaws of the Graduate Student Senate and the Constitution and Code Annotated of the Student Government Association.

**Section 6:** AMENDATORY. All text of Section 5 of the Graduate Student Senate Bylaws shall be removed in its entirety and replaced by the following:

**SECTION 5. Elections of Officers and Standing Committee Chairs**

A. ELECTION OF OFFICERS. The officers of the Graduate Student Senate shall include the Chair of the Graduate Student Senate, Vice Chair of the Graduate Student Senate, and Secretary of the Graduate Student Senate.

1. DATE OF ELECTION. The body of the Graduate Student Senate shall elect its officers upon the second-to-last regularly scheduled general meeting of the current Session for a term that shall run until the end of the following Session.
2. ELIGIBILITY. A Senator must represent a Department in Good Standing and have attended at least four (4) general meetings during the current Session as a Senator to be eligible to serve as an officer. Associates are ineligible for office, unless elected or appointed by a Department.

3. LIMITATIONS. No elected officer may serve in two or more capacities, nor may any elected officer serve as chair of a Standing Committee.
4. ELECTION GUIDELINES. The officers of the Graduate Student Senate shall be elected in the following manner.
  - a. ELECTION COMMISSIONER. The Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee shall serve as Election Commissioner and oversee the election of officers. In the event the Chair of the Internal Affairs Committee is a candidate for office, the Internal Affairs Committee shall appoint by a simple majority one person from among of its members to serve as Election Commissioner.
  - b. NOMINATIONS. Nominations shall be submitted in writing to the Election Commissioner by close of business the Friday two (2) weeks before the date of election. Nominations may be made by any Senator or associate of the Graduate Student Senate.
  - c. CAMPAIGN MATERIALS. No candidate for office shall be permitted to send any unsolicited campaign materials or correspondence to any member of the Graduate Student Senate. However, the Election Commissioner will request the following information from each candidate, to be distributed to the Graduate Student Senate by the Secretary of the Graduate Student Senate:
    - i. The name of the candidate.
    - ii. The name of the Department which the candidate represents.
    - iii. A personal statement of not more than 250 words explaining the candidate's principal goals to be achieved while in office and any other relevant information the candidate deems useful to include.
  - d. CANDIDACY REQUIREMENTS. Each candidate shall appear before the Executive Committee the week preceding the date of election. The Executive Committee will be provided fifteen (15) minutes per candidate to ask any relevant question of the candidate regarding their intent to serve in office, their principal goals to achieve, and other related matters.
    - i. CONSIDERATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. The Executive Committee may furnish a document to be read before the body of the Graduate Student Senate on the date of election providing any objections, recommendations, or other considerations it believes should be made by the body when evaluating a candidate.
  - e. CANDIDATE ADDRESS. On the date of election, each candidate shall be permitted to address the body of the Graduate Student Senate for no more than five (5) minutes. This time may not be extended. After all candidates for an office have addressed the body of the Graduate Student Senate, the body shall be permitted five (5) minutes to ask questions of each candidate for that office. This time may be extended.
    - i. MANDATORY APPEARANCE BY A CANDIDATE. The candidate must appear before the body on the date of election or they shall forfeit their candidacy. If the candidate is not present, it shall be up to the discretion of the Election Commissioner to allow the candidate to retain their candidacy, at which point the Election Commissioner may speak on behalf of the candidate before the body of the Graduate Student Senate in

lieu of the candidate's appearance. The Election Commissioner may only use materials obtained from the candidate and may not make their own remarks on behalf of the candidate.

- ii. SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF A CANDIDATE. After all questions have been taken by the body of the Graduate Student Senate and if additional time may remain, the Election Commissioner may allow members of the Graduate Student Senate to make their own remarks on behalf of a candidate.
  - f. VOTING. Elections shall be conducted by a plurality vote of the active membership of the Graduate Student Senate, which shall include Senators and associates. No member of the Graduate Student Senate shall be permitted to vote for more than one (1) candidate at a time per office. The Election Commissioner shall call the total number of votes of each candidate for an office, whereby the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes shall be immediately appointed to that office.
- B. SPECIAL ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS. If for any reason any one of the officers of the Graduate Student Senate should resign or be otherwise removed from office, a special election shall be held for that position. The rules of succession shall not be affected by a vacancy and shall operate in the interim until a special election can be held.
1. SPECIAL ELECTION GUIDELINES. Vacant offices of the Graduate Student Senate shall be filled in the same manner as ordinary officer elections, as provided in Subsection A of this Section 5, except as elsewhere provided in this Section.
    - a. NOMINATIONS. Immediately following receipt of an officer's resignation or notice of removal, the Election Commissioner shall open a nomination period of one (1) week, whereby members of the Graduate Student Senate may nominate a Senator to fill the vacant office.
    - b. DATE OF ELECTION. All candidates for an office shall be presented to the body of the Graduate Student Senate at the next occurring general meeting of the Graduate Student Senate following the end of the nomination period.
      - i. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. If no regularly scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee shall occur before the next occurring general meeting, the Chair of the Graduate Student Senate, or other Senator operating under the rules of succession, shall call a special meeting of the Executive Committee.
    - c. VOTING. Special Elections shall be conducted by a plurality vote in the same manner as ordinary officer elections.
- C. ELECTION OF CHAIRS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES. The chairs of the several Standing Committees shall be elected in the following manner.
1. DATE OF ELECTION. The body of each Standing Committee shall elect its chair upon the second-to-last regularly scheduled general meeting of the current Session for a term that shall run until the end of the following Session.
  2. FILING. Any individual appointed to a Standing Committee may seek office as Chair of that Standing Committee. Each candidate shall provide their name to the current Chair of the Standing Committee at least one (1) week preceding the date of election, at which point the Chair of the Standing Committee will inform all members of the Standing Committee of those members who shall be candidates for office.

3. VOTING. Standing Committee elections shall be conducted by a plurality vote of the members of the Standing Committee, whereby the candidate receiving the greatest number of votes shall be immediately appointed to that office, with the sole exception of the Chair-Elect of the Internal Affairs Committee. The Chair-Elect of the Internal Affairs Committee shall not be appointed to that office until elections for the officers of the Graduate Student Senate have concluded.

**Section 7:** This Act shall become effective when passed in accordance with the SGA Constitution.

Author(s): Dayten Israel, Internal Affairs Committee Chair, Senator for the College of Law

Co-Author(s): Melissa Maxey, Graduate Student Senate Chair

Co-Sponsor(s):

Submitted on a Motion by:

Action taken by Senate:

Verified by Chair of Senate: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by SGA President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_