

Amended October 2020

Article 1: Title

- 1.1 This document outlines the organizational structure of the Geography Department Graduate Student Council (GSC) and the responsibility of its members.

Article 2: Mission Statement

- 2.1 The GSC will base its conduct on the principles of anti-oppression. The GSC does not tolerate hateful, discriminatory acts towards any member of the Queen's University community. The GSC will act within its means to advocate for a safe learning and working environment, which is not only free of discrimination, injustice, violence, and harassment but is also built on understanding, respect, peace, tolerance, trust, openness, and fairness.
- 2.2 The primary aim of the GSC is to advocate on behalf of graduate students in departmental and administrative dealings.
- 2.3 The secondary objective of the GSC is to promote a sense of community based on mutual respect and responsibility amongst graduate students and between students, faculty, and staff.
- 2.4 The third objective of the GSC is to serve as a liaison between students and the administration and to democratically elect graduate student representatives to other bodies it deems necessary.

Article 3: Structure and Composition of the GSC

- 3.1 All graduate students in the Geography Department, including those on leave, are members of the GSC.
 - 3.2 The GSC will operate as an independent non-hierarchical council and will democratically elect representatives as outlined in this article.
- 3.3 The GSC will elect representatives, with attention to equitable representation from human and physical geography and doctoral and masters students, who are required to report back to each meeting of council, to the following positions of:
 - Co-Chairs (2) + Departmental Meeting Representative (0 or 1, conditional on co-chairs' programs)
 - Graduate Committee (2+1 co-chair)
 - Appointments Committee (year-to-year, estimated at 1)
 - Renewal, Tenure and Promotions Committee (year-to-year, estimated at 1)
 - Departmental Health and Safety Committee (1)

- Unit Research Ethics Board for Geography and Planning (3)
- Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS) (1-2)
- Seminar / Visiting Speaker Series Committee (5 + 1 chair minimum)
- Social / Athletics Committee (5 + 1 chair minimum)
- PSAC 901 Department Steward (1 steward)
- GSC Secretary (1)
- Orientation Week Committee (Minimum of 5: 1 chair, 2 GSC grad committee representatives, 1 MA/MSc and 1 PhD)
- Social Media Representative (1)
- Finance and Administration Officer (1)
- Indigenous Advisory Committee (maximum of 5 including 2(+) Indigenous Representatives/Chairs)
- International Student Representative (minimum 1)
- Queen's Graduate Association of Planning Students (QGAPS) (1)

Article 4: General Meetings and Decision-Making Procedure

- 4.1 The Co-Chair(s), and the Departmental Meeting Representative (when applicable), will act as primary representatives to the Geography Departmental Meetings on behalf of the GSC.
- 4.2 One co-chair will also attend all meetings of the departmental graduate committee.
- 4.3 One Co-Chair will chair the meetings of the GSC. In the event that neither Co-Chair is available, any other representative (outlined in 3.3) can act as chair. The Co-Chairs will prepare the agenda, schedule the meetings, communicate this to all members and monitor the flow and timing of the discussion with attention to time constraints and to equity and anti-oppression principles. The Chair may take a speakers list if necessary or directed to do so by council.
- 4.4 There will be a regular general meeting, open to the membership, at least 3 times in each of the fall and winter semesters. Remote call-in to the meetings for off-campus students will be made available for each GSC meeting. Members should contact the secretary in order to access remote calling. Additional meetings may be called by 6 members petitioning any elected representative. Within one week of receiving the petition, the meeting chair, in consultation with council, will post a notice of the meeting to the geography graduate student email list serve

and a physical copy in each of the student lounges (on the first and third floor of Mac Corry Hall).

- 4.5 Quorum is reached when there are at least two elected representatives plus 6 GSC members present (8 in total), of which there must be at least one Masters and one PhD student from each of physical and human geography. Without quorum no binding decisions can be made.
- 4.6. The GSC will strive to build consensus when making decisions. Any member can put forward a motion for discussion at a general meeting. Once this motion has been seconded, discussion of the motion will ensue. If consensus cannot be reached after everyone who wishes to address the motion has been allowed to speak, the motion will then go to a majority vote. The membership may also move to table the motion until the next meeting, in accordance with the rules outlined in this article, in order to collect more information.
- 4.7 Members may designate another member of the GSC to represent their position via proxy at GSC general meetings. Any member present at a GSC general meeting can serve as proxy for one absent member. To designate a proxy, a member must provide their assigned proxy with written confirmation of their assigned vote and let the GSC Secretary know that their vote is being proxied.
- 4.8 An elected representative may be recalled by a two-thirds vote of voting members present at a general meeting. A motion of recall must be received by the Co-Chairs (or other elected representative in the case that both Co-Chairs are being recalled) at least one week prior to voting. The Co-Chairs or other representative will then post a notice to the geography graduate student email list serve and a physical copy in each student lounges (on the first and third floor of Mac Corry Hall). Grounds for recall include failure to fulfill the responsibilities of office and/or actions deemed detrimental to the interests of the membership.
- 4.9 The constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of voting members present at a general meeting. A motion of amendment must be received by the Co-Chairs or an elected representative acting on their behalf, at least one week prior to voting. The Co Chairs then must post a notice to the geography graduate student listserv and a physical copy in each geography student lounge (on the first and third floor of Mac Corry Hall).
- 4.10 Responsibility to record meeting minutes will be rotated among members with attention to equity and anti-oppression principles. It will be the Secretary's responsibility to store and organize the minutes on a password-protected wiki, accessible to all members, and a physical copy in an agreed location.

Article 5: Duties of the Representatives

- 5.1 a) Co-Chairs (2) + Departmental Meeting Representative (0 or 1, conditional on co-chairs' programs)

The Co-Chairs are responsible for communication between the graduate student body and Administration and Faculty through the attendance of monthly departmental meetings. The departmental meeting is the principal forum for the discussion and deliberation of matters pertaining to academic programs and general administration of the department. The GSC is given two votes at the departmental meeting, one for a MA/MSc student and one for a PhD student. In the case that both Co-Chairs are in the same program (i.e. both MA/MSc or both PhD), a second Departmental Meeting Representative from the unrepresented program must be elected to serve as a representative at the departmental meetings (5.1b). One Co-Chair must also attend all meetings of the Geography Department's Graduate Committee. Co-Chairs are responsible for ensuring that GSC activities align with the Mission Statement; while consultation with the broader GSC is desirable, the Co-Chairs may work together to respond on behalf of the GSC for time sensitive matters such as the infringement of the values outlined in section 2.1. Additional duties involve setting up the graduate student elections in the fall, and assisting in answering any graduate student concerns that apply to their studies within the department. Co-chairs are also responsible for organizing all aspects of GSC meetings, including preparing the agenda, booking space and communicating meeting times to the members. As there are two Co-Chairs, generally one can fill in for the other (e.g. departmental meetings) when scheduling conflicts arise. Co-chairs are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.1 b) Departmental Meeting Representative (0 or 1, conditional on co-chair's programs)

In the event that both Co-Chairs are in the same program (i.e. both MA/MSc or both PhD), a second Departmental Meeting Representative from the unrepresented program must be elected. The departmental representative will be responsible for representing their program at monthly departmental meetings. The departmental meeting is the principal forum for the discussion and deliberation of matters pertaining to academic programs and general administration of the department. Departmental representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

Contingent on permission from the department, both co-chairs can still attend departmental meetings in addition to the Departmental Meeting Representative, but would only have one vote between at the departmental meetings. In the case that no students nominate themselves for the Departmental Meeting Representative position, both Co-Chairs (regardless of program) will attend the Departmental Meetings.

5.2 Graduate Committee (2+ 1 co-chair)

The purpose of the Graduate Committee is to review the curriculum and operation of the graduate program, to recommend policies to the Department for its development, and to report its deliberations to the Departmental meeting. The Graduate Committee recommends regulations on academic matters pertaining to all graduate degrees offered through the Department of Geography. For example, reviewing all proposed graduate courses and course changes, and the administration of applications for fellowships and scholarships to the appropriate funding agencies. Graduate committee members will also assist with organizing the 'mentorship' program for incoming students and other orientation events as part of the

Orientation Week Committee. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.3 Appointments Committee (1)

The operation of this Committee is governed by Articles 9, 24, and 25 of the Collective Agreement between QUFA and the University. The standing Appointments Committee will consist of: Head, as Chair and voting member, three additional tenured or tenure track faculty members, one non-voting undergraduate representative and one voting graduate representative. The Appointments Committee will review applications for advertised positions in the Department and create a short-list for presentations to all members of the Department (except for in cases where a of interest exists). The Appointments Committee will interview short-listed candidates and invite all members of the department to meet the short-listed applicants when they visit the department. Following a special departmental meeting from which opinions on the applicants will be canvassed; the Appointments Committee will meet and vote, by simple majority, on whether or not the applicant(s) are accepted into the department. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.4 Renewal, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) Committee (1)

This committee looks over the official application for faculty members under consideration for renewals (3-years), tenures (6-years) or promotions to full professor (undetermined). All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.5 Departmental Health and Safety Committee (1):

The Committee serves as an advisory body in stimulating an awareness of safety issues in the Department by:

- a) identifying situations that may be a source of danger or hazard to members of the department and students;
- b) making recommendations to the Faculty of Arts and Science Joint Health and Safety Committee for the improvement of, and maintenance and monitoring of, programs, measures and procedures respecting the health and safety of members of the department and students;
- c) obtaining information from the Faculty of Arts and Science Joint Health and Safety Committee respecting the identification of potential or existing hazards of materials, processes or equipment where the employer (University) has knowledge. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.6 Unit Research Ethics Board for Geography and Planning (3)

The role of the Board is to conduct an ethics review of any faculty, staff, or student research proposal or research project, whether funded or unfunded, which involves humans. The

Committee will conduct the review according to the guidelines prepared by the Queen's University General Research Ethics Board, which are currently based on the Tri-Council Policy Statement. This is a full year commitment and candidates must be available during the summer to review proposals. Representatives must complete the CORE program. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.7 Society of Graduate and Professional Students Representative (SGPS) (2)

All graduate and professional students at Queen's University are members of the SGPS. The Geography SGPS representative(s) role is to address any issues which relate to graduate life at Queen's, whether specific to the Department or not. The number of representatives will be determined based on the number of votes allotted to the Geography SGPS. The number of votes is determined by enrollment in the program but is typically 1-2 votes. SGPS Rep(s) must send out the information communicated in SGPS council to all graduate students directly after the meeting. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.8 Seminar Series Committee (minimum 5 + 1 Chair)

The Seminar/Visiting Speakers Series Committee will organize and oversee all aspects of the seminar series. The speakers' series offers a forum to showcase a short, provocative piece of student and community research to the Department of Geography, as it is evolving. The committee is responsible for setting up the room (coffee, snacks, etc...), booking projectors, and basically ensuring that visiting speakers have what they need so things run smoothly. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.9 Social / Athletics Committee (minimum 6 + Chair):

This committee sets up social and athletic events for the Geography Graduate Student body. Committee members have traditionally been responsible for planning and organizing the holiday party in early December. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.10 PSAC 901 Shop Steward (1)

The 901 Steward will act as a liaison between Geography Graduate students and the executive committee of PSAC 901. The steward will act as a first point of contact for any Teaching Assistant, Teaching Fellow, or Post Doctoral Fellow who has questions or concerns relating to their employment. The steward will also be responsible for attending Stewards meetings as organized by PSAC 901 and communicating Union related information to 901 members in the Geography department. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.11 GSC Secretary (1)

The Secretary is responsible for keeping and organizing records of the minutes and will ensure they are kept in an accessible and safe location in hard copy and/or online. The secretary is also responsible for administering remote call-in for meetings. The secretary is also responsible for

accounting for any funds held by the GSC. This person should also keep up to date record of election results and contact information for each acting representative. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of council.

5.12 Orientation Week Committee (Minimum of 5: 1 chair, at least 1 MA/MSc and at least 1 PhD, 2 GSC Graduate Committee Representatives)

Responsible for working with the department, the graduate committee and QGAPS to welcome the new graduate students to the department. Key tasks include the organization of a mentorship program and at least one social event for orientation week. The mentorship program must start by April 1st and continue until the end of September. This mentorship program could take many forms including (but not limited to) a Facebook group, one-on-one email matches, phone calls and/or correspondence via another medium. The committee is also responsible for keeping open communication with bodies outside the department (including the SGS and the SGPS) regarding orientation week events. Members must report back to the GSC at each meeting of council.

5.13 Social Media Representative (1)

The Social Media representative is in charge of managing all GSC social media accounts, as specified in by-law (e.g. Instagram: @gphy.gsc and Facebook). The main responsibilities of this position are to (a) represent the department appropriately and maintain the brand of the GSC through social media (b) keep all platforms up to date by posting regularly on a schedule agreed upon by the GSC (c) post relevant content for current and future students in the department: this might include but is not limited to upcoming events, media from past events, departmental profiles, and other content submitted by members of the department. The social media representative should seek to attend departmental events whenever possible to capture good quality material for use on social media. When scheduling does not permit this, the social media representative is responsible for ensuring another GSC member who is available to attend fills this role. Selected content should promote departmental community and highlight relevant information and events pertaining to the graduate student social and academic experience. GSC accounts should not be a platform for political statements, personal opinions, or information that is too broad in its scope (i.e. information that students can access through the SGPS or broader Queen's platforms). Should a shared Facebook page be a part of the GSC's social media presence, the social media representative will also be responsible for maintaining regular communication with DSC and QGAPS to ensure constancy.

5.14 Finance and Administration Officer (1)

The finance and administration officer is mandated with overseeing and ensuring the effective management of all financial resources, as well as all legal and administrative functions of the GSC. Through this role, the Finance and Administration Officer is responsible for oversight over all financial activities of GSC; formulating, maintaining and presenting the budget; submitting a mid-year report to the Co-Presidents no later than 15 January, and conducting a full-year review of all GSC finances and accounts in conjunction with the Co-Presidents no later than this date; and ensuring the proper archiving of all GSC financial records. The other duties of the finance and administration officer include working with the incoming Finance and Administration Officer for a period of two (2) weeks prior to 30 Sept; providing the incoming Finance and Administration Officer with all records and a working copy of the current budget;

and providing the incoming Finance and Administration Officer with a detailed account of all financial commitments made by the outgoing GSC that have yet to be paid for, in addition to all amounts owed to the outgoing GSC.

5.15 Indigenous Advisory Committee (maximum of 5 including 2(+) Indigenous Representatives/Chairs)

The purpose of the Indigenous Advisory Committee is to ensure the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge within the Queen's University Department of Geography and Planning. The Indigenous Advisory Committee will provide guidance on matters relating to Indigenous cultural practices, the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations within the discipline of Geography and other matters of unique importance to Indigenous students. This committee may include Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, however, the Chair position should always be held by a self-identified Indigenous graduate student (if available) to ensure that the advisory committee is Indigenous-led. Additionally, self-identified Indigenous students should have precedent for committee positions. In the event there is not an Indigenous graduate student to be the representative, a non-GSC community member or graduate student from another department may hold the role with a co-chair GSC member as proxy.

5.16 International Student Representatives (minimum 1)

The International Student Representatives act as representatives of the department's international graduate students providing the department with information about international students' latest concerns and matters. These representatives also act as a connection to the university for incoming international students helping them to understand the university's lingo, structures, and layout as well as the more specific details of the department. The position is not restricted to international students, but it would be ideal that it is held by at least one international student. The International Student Representatives should also try to be engaged with or at least knowledgeable of the workings of International Student Working Group., SGPS' International Commissioner, Queen's University's International Centre, and any other relevant groups.

5.17 Queen's Graduate Association of Planning Students (QGAPS) (1)

The QGAPS representative is responsible for attending the Queen's Graduate Association of Planning Students meetings and informing QGAPS and GSC of pertinent information between the two councils. The representative will seek areas of overlap between QGAPS and GSC and will aid in communication efforts between the councils when involved with but not limited to coordinated events and orientation week. All GSC representatives are required to report back to each meeting of the GSC council.

Article 6: Elections and Expectations of Elected Representatives

- 6.1 All representatives of the GSC will be elected at the first meeting of each academic year, to be called by the Co-Chairs, held in September, or as positions become open, and shall take office immediately following adjournment of the meeting.
- 6.2 Nominations for elected positions will open during the first week of September and can be received by email or in writing to the Co-Chairs anytime from that date to 48 hours prior to the meeting. Names of nominees will be posted on the listserv and in both geography student lounges the day before the meeting. Members may also nominate themselves or other members from the floor of the meeting by putting forward a motion. Any part-time or full-time graduate student in Geography shall be eligible to be a GSC representative.
- 6.3 If a position is contested, elections will be held by secret paper ballot. A voting member present at the meeting will be elected from the floor to oversee the distribution, collection and counting of votes. All candidates may elect a representative to witness the counting of the votes. The outgoing Secretary will also be present to record and store the election results.
- 6.4 Elections by secret ballot will be carried out by a run-off vote: In run-off voting, there will be as many rounds of secret ballot as there are positions. In the first round, voters will select their first choice for a representative. In the second round, voters will select their next top choice for a representative. Subsequent rounds may follow depending on the number of positions available. In each round, the candidate with the most votes will be awarded a representative position and be removed from subsequent ballots.
- 6.5 If a position becomes vacant, an election to fill the position will be held at the earliest possible convenience for a general meeting.
- 6.6 If a committee does not reach its minimum number of committee members, someone may join if they step forward after the election period.
- 6.7 The elected candidates will hold their positions for one-year terms or until the next round of elections.
- 6.8 A GSC Representative's position will be forfeited if the GSC Representative is absent from 3 General Council Meetings. Sending a proxy is acceptable.
- 6.9 All representatives of the GSC will act in accordance with Ontario's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) regarding the collection and treatment of personal information. The GSC collects personal information in partnership with Queen's University and in accordance with FIPPA. The GSC collects only the personal information which is necessary for it to administer its programs and activities and carry out its services and functions. The personal information is used by elected members of the GSC who need the information to carry out the duties outlined in their roles in the GSC constitution. Personal information is retained only as long as is necessary for the fulfillment of the purposes for which it is collected. The GSC has in place mechanisms to protect the security of the personal information it collects. "Personal Information" is defined in FIPPA as recorded information about an identifiable individual. An individual's personal information includes information regarding his

or her race, gender, home address, educational history, identifying numbers (i.e. student number), financial or employment information, and personal opinions. If any party has concerns about the collection, use or disclosure of their personal information by GSC they may contact a co-chair.