



Memorandum

TO: University Steering Committee;
FY20 UMBC GSA Executive Council
FROM: FY19 UMBC GSA Executive Council
DATE: 04/11/2019
SUBJ: Structure of the Graduate Senate

Senators

43 Senators

Executive Council

Roy Prouty
President

Adam Harvey
Vice President

Evgenia Barannikova
Treasurer

Deanna Cerquetti
Historian

Alex Rittle
GEARS Chair

Felipe Muñoz Castillo
GAAC Chair

Kiki Malomo-Paris
Legislative Concerns Chair

In December of 2018, the Graduate Senate (the senate) Agenda included a discussion item on the restructuring of the senate. The senate discussed ideas regarding lack of engagement, exclusion from GSA Initiatives due to lack of engagement, and a potential down-sizing of the senate. In March of 2019, the GSA Executive Council (EC) then reported on a few possibilities for a senate restructure after meeting with a group of graduate senators between official meetings.

While no consensus was achieved at the March meeting, the senate resolved to restructure the senate from a program-based model where the size could be anywhere from 1-60 senators to a fixed-number of senators with a final membership from 10-20 senators. The details of the restructure were left to the EC to discuss and propose at the next senate meeting.

In April of 2019, the EC proposed a restructure plan that the senate confirmed with over 2/3 of those present voting 'for' the structure. Below is that structure with details concerning the faculty of representation, the selection of senators, compensation, and the eligibility of graduate students for GSA Initiatives.

Structure of Representation

4 groups were identified. Each will contribute 4 senators.

1. CNMS
2. CAHSS (+Erickson School¹)
3. COEIT
4. Cultural, Religious, Social, Professional Interest Groups (hereafter: Non-Academic or NA)

Representation by a Graduate Senator of a Group

Graduate senators will be expected to jointly lead at least four Town Halls within their constituency per year. These will be paid for by the GSA. The purpose of these Town Halls will be to offer a forum for anyone to air issues/concerns/praise/ideas.

Between Town Halls, the GSA Executive Council (EC) will work with the GPDs and GPCs in the various groups to ensure pertinent information is shared across the groups. These communications will feature the names of the appropriate senators, to ensure they are visible to their constituencies. It is important that the infrastructure for this communication is used to schedule the Town Halls.

The GSA Community Liaison will be responsible for relaying information to the NA group on behalf of the NA Senators. The GSA Community Liaison will be responsible for working with the NA Senators and the EC to ensure their Town Halls are appropriately scheduled and executed.

Selection of Graduate Senators

Yearly, interested graduate students will submit applications to the Graduate Senate to express interest in being a graduate senator for either the applicant's college AND/OR for the NA group. A complete application will also contain brief statement of interest and references from **five** individuals on campus.

This statement of interest should highlight goals, pertinent background, and interests regarding the group(s) the applicant would be willing to represent. Note that applicants may only represent one group, but may express interest in being a senator for the NA group, should they be deemed better representatives for the NA group.

The **five** references will be from the following individuals on campus: a single reference from a member of the UMBC faculty belonging to the department of the applicant and four graduate students. The four graduate students must all be current graduate students at UMBC. At most two of these graduate students can be from the academic program of the applicant.

Once the application window has closed, the current NA graduate senators will select their top 4 from the subset of the applicant pool interested in being NA graduate senators in the following year. The remaining applicants will then be sorted by their colleges. The graduate senators from the appropriate college will then select their top 4 applicants from the appropriate pool.

¹ The Erickson School is not formally a part of CAHSS, but the EC and senate find its academics—and therefore academic interests—to be most closely related to that school

The entire ensemble of 16 senators will then be reviewed by the Graduate Senate, providing oversight across the academic and non-academic groups (e.g., ensuring equitable representation across the groups²). The Graduate Senate may resolve any issues/concerns as to converge to a final set of 16 graduate senator nominees so long as it agrees with the Structure of Representation, given above.

This final set of nominees will then be approved by the newly elected EC, barring any egregious concerns.

Compensation of Graduate Senators

Each graduate senator will be expected to participate in all Official Meetings of the Graduate Senate as well as fulfill responsibilities as outlined in the GSA Bylaws and GSA Annual Points of Policy. A successful graduate senator, in this regard, will then be compensated \$200 per semester. Once in December and once in May.

GSA Initiative Eligibility

It is the recommendation of this group that eligibility to GSA Initiatives is no longer related to participation in the Graduate Senate. These initiatives are (1) the Grants Initiative and (2) the GSO Funding Initiative.

Grants

Any UMBC graduate student is eligible for GSA Grants.

GSOs

GSOs may continue to exist with their own structure and funding as laid out in the GSA Bylaws and GSA Annual Points of Policy. GSO representatives are welcome to participate in the Meetings of the Graduate Senate, but hold no vote other than through their academic graduate senator (belonging to any of the groups 1-3) OR through any of the NA graduate senators.

² It is the general intent of the FY19 GSA Executive Council that no two graduate senators would come from the same academic program in order to represent their college.