

# Constitution

Constitution of the **Tri-University Graduate Students Association** of the Tri-University Graduate Programs in History at Wilfrid Laurier University, The University of Waterloo, and The University of Guelph

Approved on 20 March 2008

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## *General*

1. This association shall be known as the Tri-University Graduate Students Association (TUGSA) of Wilfrid Laurier University, The University of Waterloo, and The University of Guelph.
2. The object of the TUGSA shall be to support the academic, professional, and social concerns of its membership, and to develop a joint student body between the three campuses of the Tri-University Graduate Program in History.
3. The membership of the TUGSA shall consist of all part-time and full-time students registered in the MA or PhD history programs of the Tri-University (Wilfrid Laurier University, The University of Waterloo, and The University of Guelph).

## *Executive*

4. The executive of the TUGSA shall ordinarily consist of one (1) president (registered PhD student at any of the three Tri-U campuses); three (3) Vice President PhDs (one registered PhD student from each of the three universities); and three (3) Vice President MAs (one registered MA student from each of the three universities). The positions of Treasurer and Secretary will be elected from within the 7-member executive (**see Sections 9 and 10**).
5. In general, all executive members will maintain a file specifically relating to their portfolio for the purposes of record-keeping, and for the use of any successors to the position. Vice-President PhDs and Vice-President MAs of each university will assume either the role of Departmental GSA Representative or Director of a TUGSA committee (**see Section 7 and 8**). For further clarification of the organization of the Executive **see Appendix A - TUGSA Governance Chart**.

6. In general, it will be the duty of the President to lead the group and act as the TUGSA's public representative. Further duties of the President include:

- 1) The President shall be responsible for ensuring the Vice-Presidents execute their duties
- 2) The President, with the Vice-Presidents, shall ensure that all TUGSA services offered to members are properly administered
- 3) The President shall be responsible for calling and attending 2 mandatory executive member meetings a term (fall, winter, spring) and is permitted to call additional meetings of the TUGSA Executive and/or the TUGSA general membership (**all members of the TUGSA as outlined in Section 3**)
- 4) The President shall chair all Executive meetings and be responsible for Executive meeting minutes
- 5) The President will only have voting power at Executive meetings in the event of a tie vote among the six Vice Presidents (**see Sections 7.4 and 8.4**)
- 6) The President shall serve a one-year term (1 November to 31 October)

7. In general, it will be the duty of the three Vice President PhDs to act as either the head representatives of their home university and its history GSA **OR** serve as Director of one of the TUGSA committees (finance, social activities, communications etc.). Further duties of the Vice President PhDs include:

- 1) The Vice President PhDs, along with the Vice President MAs, will assume the duties of the President if he or she is not able to fulfill his or her duties until a new President is elected.
- 2) The Vice President PhDs, with the President and Vice President MAs, shall ensure that all TUGSA services offered to members are properly administered
- 3) The Vice President PhDs shall attend 2 mandatory executive member meetings a term (fall, winter, spring) and are permitted to call additional meetings of the TUGSA Executive and/or the TUGSA general membership (**all members of the TUGSA as outlined in Section 3**)
- 4) The Vice President PhDs shall each have one vote during Executive meetings
- 5) The Vice President PhDs will be required to assume the role of either Departmental GSA representative (this portfolio would include reporting all TUGSA activities to your home university's history department and securing and maintaining monies and financial matters at their home university for use by the TUGSA) **OR** Director of a TUGSA committee (this portfolio would include overseeing committee meetings and reporting committee activities to the Executive).
- 6) The Vice President PhDs shall each serve a one-year term (1 November to 31 October)

8. In general, it will be the duty of the three Vice President MAs to act as either the head representatives of their home university and its history GSA **OR** serve as Director of one of the TUGSA committees (finance, social activities, communications etc.). Further duties of the Vice President MAs include:

- 1) The Vice President MAs, along with the Vice President PhDs, will assume the duties of the President if he or she is not able to fulfill his or her duties until a new President is elected.
- 2) The Vice President MAs, with the President and Vice President PhDs, shall ensure that all TUGSA services offered to members are properly administered

3) The Vice President MAs shall attend 2 mandatory executive member meetings a term (fall, winter, spring) and are permitted to call additional meetings of the TUGSA Executive and/or the TUGSA general membership (**all members of the TUGSA as outlined in Section 3**)

4) The Vice President MAs shall each have one vote during Executive meetings

5) The Vice President MAs will be required to assume the role of either Departmental GSA representative (this portfolio would include reporting all TUGSA activities to your home university's history department and securing and maintaining monies and financial matters at their home university for use by the TUGSA) **OR** Director of a TUGSA committee (this portfolio would include overseeing committee meetings and reporting committee activities to the Executive).

6) The Vice President MAs shall each serve a one-year term (1 November to 31 October)

9. In general, it will be the duty of the Executive each year to elect a treasurer. The treasurer must be a current member of the TUGSA Executive (excluding the President). Duties of the treasurer include:

1) Preparing a budget for the yearly activities of the organization.

2) Reporting all expenses and up-to-date balances at all executive meetings and general members meetings.

10. In general it will be the duty of the Executive each year to elect a secretary. The secretary must be a current member of the TUGSA Executive (excluding the President). Duties of the secretary include:

1) Recording minutes at all Executive and General Member meetings.

2) Typing out the minutes from all Executive and General Member meetings.

### *Finances*

11. Each TUGSA member will be required to pay an annual fee of \$10 at or before the first general meeting (this first general meeting will coincide with the annual election meeting to be held each year between 1 October and 31 October). The membership fees will support yearly activities organized by the TUGSA executive and its committees (**see Section 14**). All Tri-University history graduate students can opt-out of this organization; however, participation in TUGSA sponsored events might then carry a nominal fee for non-paying members of the TUGSA. Such expenses that will normally be covered under TUGSA sponsored events, might include, but are not limited to, honorariums, catering fees, equipment rentals etc.

12. All monies accruing to the TUGSA will be held in an account created at The University of Guelph under the supervision of the Tri-University Secretary.

1) All bank accounts and outgoing cheques shall require the signature of one of the following executive members (the President, the Secretary, or the Treasurer) and one other member of the TUGSA executive.

13. The organization's fiscal year shall run from 1 November to 31 October.

1) Throughout the fiscal year, the Treasurer shall keep the Executive updated of all TUGSA financial matters, including up-to-date balances.

### *Activities*

14. The executive shall plan and organize the functions of the TUGSA with consideration of suggestions from the general membership.

1) These activities may include, but need not be restricted to the following:

- a) Tri-University Orientation activities;
- b) A Tri-U GSA sponsored event at the annual Tri-U conference;
- c) Tri-University spring workshop;
- d) End of term parties

2) Due to the distance between the three Tri-U campuses, members will be notified in a timely fashion of all forthcoming events, and the activities will be rotated between the cities of Waterloo and Guelph to accommodate the general membership of all three universities.

### *Communications*

15. The TUGSA will maintain a website, <http://www.triuhistory.ca/?cat=126> with all information concerning the governance structure of the organization, and will be the primary means of communication with its membership (**see Section 3**).

16. The executive shall ensure that information concerning any forthcoming TUGSA event is posted on the TUGSA website, <http://www.triuhistory.ca/?cat=126>

17. The executive shall ensure that paper and email copies of forthcoming TUGSA events are circulated to all three Tri-University campuses.

### *Elections*

18. The TUGSA executive shall be elected from the general membership each year between 1 October and 31 October (thus these elections will take place every year sometime in the month of October as decided by the Executive of that term).

19. In the case that one member of the executive cannot act for an extended period of time that member shall notify the remaining executive members, who shall then designate one or more members of the TUGSA to act in the place of the absent member of the executive (**see Section 20**).

20. In the event that an executive member who cannot act for an extended period of time (**see Section 19**) decides to abdicate their position permanently they may be replaced by a simple majority vote of those present at a TUGSA general members meeting.

21. In the event that an executive position is not filled during the elections, that position will remain vacant and the remaining members of the executive will assume the responsibilities that fall under the portfolio of said vacant executive position.

22. The President shall be responsible for running elections.
- 1) In the event that the President is running for re-election, a disinterested executive member shall run the election.
  - 2) Elections shall be determined at an election meeting by secret ballot using the first-past-the-post system.
  - 3) The franchise is open to all TUGSA members. Those members who are not present at the election meeting will be permitted to submit an electronic ballot to the Tri-University Director **before** the election meeting. These electronic votes will be printed off by the Director and delivered by the Director in a confidential and sealed envelope to the executive member running the election. The envelope containing the results of electronic votes cast will be opened by the Chief Returning Officer on the day of the election.
23. Candidates names will appear individually and alphabetically on the ballots. In the event that a candidate is running unopposed their appointment to the executive will be acclaimed.
- 1) Prior to the election meeting, candidates may run independent campaigns.
  - 2) At the election meeting, each candidate will be permitted to give an election speech that shall be no more than five minutes in length.
  - 3) Candidates' speeches will be followed by a question-and-answer session of approximately 5-10 minutes.
  - 4) No additional campaigning shall occur at the election meeting itself.
24. Voting shall be overseen by the President (or a disinterested executive member) and a Chief Returning Officer, who shall be a volunteer from among those present at the election meeting.
- 1) The President and the Chief Returning Officer shall **not** cast ballots.
  - 2) The Chief Returning Officer shall tabulate the votes in the presence of the President, or a disinterested executive member, and shall announce the results immediately.
  - 3) In the event of a tie, the Chief Returning Office shall cast the deciding vote.
  - 4) The exact number of votes that each candidate receives shall not be announced, and the ballots shall be destroyed immediately following tabulation.
25. The decision of the Chief Returning Officer shall be final.

### *Constitution*

26. This constitution will be posted on the TUGSA website.
27. Any general or executive member of the TUGSA is permitted to propose amendments to the constitution by calling a general meeting. The TUGSA membership must be given one weeks notice in advance of such a meeting. The constitution may then be amended at such a meeting with a simple 2/3 majority vote of all TUGSA general and executive members in attendance of said meeting.