# The University of Southern Mississippi

***The Graduate School– 118 College Drive #5024, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001***

# GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE BYLAWS\*

**Table of Contents**

ARTICLE I: Name 1

ARTICLE II: Purpose 1

ARTICLE III: Relationships and Responsibilities

Section 1. Relationships 1

Section 2. Responsibilities 1

ARTICLE IV: Members 1

Section 1. Voting Members 1

Section 2. Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members 1

Section 3. Elections and Terms 1

Section 4. Eligibility and Qualifications 1

Section 5. Responsibilities 2

Section 6. Proxies 2

ARTICLE V: Officers

Section 1. Officers 2

1. President 2
2. Vice President 2
3. Recorder 2
4. Symposium Chair 2
5. Bylaws Chair 3
6. Social Chair 3
7. Fundraising Chair 3 3

ARTICLE VI: Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings 3

Section 2. Special Meetings 3

Section 3. Quorum 3

Section 4. Standard Agenda 3

Section 5. Minutes 4

ARTICLE VII: Executive Committee 4

Section 1. Membership 4

Section 2. Meetings 4

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities 4

ARTICLE VIII: Committees 4

Section 1. Standing Committees 4

1. Bylaws Committee 4
2. Symposium Committee 4
3. Social Committee
4. Fundraising Committee 4

ARTICLE IX: Parliamentary Authority 4

ARTICLE X: Amendment of Bylaws 4

ARTICLE XI: Dissolution 5

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this organization is The University of Southern Mississippi Graduate Student Senate.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The purpose of the Graduate Student Senate is to advise the Dean of the Graduate School who serves as its official adviser. It is a voice for all graduate students and an advocate for their concerns and ideas concerning graduate education and graduate students at The University of Southern Mississippi.

ARTICLE III

Responsibilities

The Graduate Student Senate members’ responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

1. Making Recommendations. The Graduate Student Senate makes recommendations and provides advice regarding graduate student issues to the Dean of the Graduate School who in turn corresponds with the Provost.
2. Disseminating Information. The Graduate Student Senate disseminates information relating to activities and issues affecting graduate students including but not limited to the following:
   1. Graduate Student Research Symposium.
   2. Dissertation and Thesis research grants.
   3. Special Forum meetings.
3. Assisting the Dean of the Graduate School as requested and needed.

ARTICLE IV

Members

Section 1. Voting Members

The voting membership of the Graduate Student Senate is composed of one representative, per school and one representative per college

Ex: Arts and Sciences has 13 schools so Arts and Sciences would have 14 reps.

Section 2. Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members

All currently-enrolled graduate students are ex-officio, non-voting members. Ex-Officio members may attend senate meetings and contribute to discussion.

Section 3. Election and Terms

Graduate Student Senate voting members are elected or appointed in May by the graduate students who are enrolled in a School. The director of the school will send the name of the voting member(s) to the Dean of the Graduate School no later than August 1st.

All elected members must be able to serve the entire academic year (attend meetings in Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, March, and April)

Graduate Student Senate members will serve one-year terms beginning in August and ending in May.

If there is no voting member reported, the GSS president will contact the director of the school to notify them of their vacancy by the first GSS meeting.

If a Graduate Student Senate voting member’s position is vacated for any reason or if member misses two meetings, the GSS president will contact the appropriate school director to inform the director of the need to appoint a graduate student from that school to serve out the rest of the term.

Section 4. Eligibility and Qualifications

Graduate students who are enrolled for fall and spring semesters are eligible to serve on the Graduate Student Senate. They must be willing and able to attend the regular meetings and to communicate regularly with other graduate students in their department or school.

Section 5. Responsibilities

Members are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the Graduate Student Senate, serve on committees if possible, and communicate the issues raised in Graduate Student Senate meetings to their schools as well as communicating the concerns and opinions of their colleges back to Graduate Student Senate. Members are required to help with the Graduate Research Symposium as appointed by the GSS President-Elect. Members who miss two (2) meetings will be dismissed by the GSS president and replaced according to the procedure laid out in Article IV Section 3.

Section 6. Proxies

A member may appoint a proxy for a meeting. The proxy form must be submitted to the President of the Graduate Student Senate. The proxy forms are on the Graduate School web page. If a member misses or sends a proxy for two (2) consecutive meetings, he or she will be replaced.

ARTICLE V

Officers

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the Graduate Student Senate are the President, President Elect, Recorder, Bylaws Chair, the Fundraising Committee Chair, and the Parliamentarian.

1. President

The President of the Graduate Student Senate will be elected the year prior to serving as President. Their role of President Elect will switch to President following May commencement ceremonies.

The President’s responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Chairing the meetings of the Graduate Student Senate.
2. Preparing the agenda for the Graduate Student Senate meetings and having them posted on the web.
3. Chairing the Graduate Student Senate Executive Committee.
4. Appointing chairs and members of the various standing and ad hoc committees of the Graduate Student Senate.
5. Representing graduate students on various university committees and at commencement ceremonies.
6. Requesting funding from the Office of the Vice President for Research.
7. Determining award amounts for Symposium winners.
8. Reserving rooms and requesting equipment from iTech.
9. Assisting the President Elect with preparation of Symposium.
10. Mentoring President Elect throughout their term as President.
11. Attending monthly Graduate Council meetings and providing a report.
12. President Elect (Symposium Committee Chair)

Any member of the Graduate Student Senate is eligible to hold the office of President Elect. The President Elect is elected during the August meeting and serves for one year. The President Elect must be able to serve a second term as President, immediately following their term as President Elect.

The President Elect’s responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Assisting the President with the Graduate Student Senate activities and responsibilities.
2. Representing the Graduate Student Senate when the President cannot do so.
3. Chairing the Graduate Student Senate meetings and preparing the agenda when the President cannot do so.
4. Chairing the Graduate Student Senate Executive Committee when the President cannot do so.
5. Becoming President if the Graduate Student Senate position of President becomes vacant.
6. Accompanying the president to request for funding from VP of Research.
7. Requesting the use of easels and boards from MS INBRE and coordinating pick-up and return.
8. Assisting with the arrangements and logistics for the symposium.
9. Communicating with the participants
   * + 1. Abstract acceptance
       2. Final schedules
       3. Reminders of deadlines
       4. Fielding questions
       5. Collecting power point presentations
10. Making sure all documents have been created (creation of documents can be delegated to committee members)
    * + 1. Abstract booklet
        2. Program for Symposium
        3. Placeholder slide for any missing presentations
        4. Schedules for Rooms, moderators, volunteers, participants, and judges
11. Recruiting judges, volunteers, and moderators for the day of the symposium.
12. Recorder

Any member of the Graduate Student Senate is eligible to hold the office of Recorder. The Recorder is elected at the August meeting and serves for one year.

The Recorder’s responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Processing all correspondence from the Graduate Student Senate.
2. Writing, sending to members, and posting minutes of all meetings.
3. Chairing a meeting if the President and Vice President are both absent.
4. Bylaws Committee Chair

Any member of the Graduate Student Senate is eligible to hold the office of Bylaws Committee Chair. The Bylaws Chair is elected at the August meeting and serves for one year.

The Bylaws Chair’s responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Review the Bylaws for the purpose of considering any additions and revisions that may be deemed necessary.
2. Communicating with fellow Bylaws Committee members concerning potential changes and revisions to the Bylaws.
3. Informing the Graduate Student Senate when revisions occur, and a potential vote is required for significant changes to the Bylaws.
4. Social Committee Chair

Any member of the Graduate Student Senate is eligible to hold the office of Social Committee Chair. The Social Committee Chair is elected at the August meeting and serves for one year.

The Social Chair’s responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. The Social Committee Chair is responsible for all social media regarding the Graduate School Senate.
2. Duties include maintenance of the Graduate School Senate website, regular updates of the Graduate Student Senate social media pages, and campus-wide promotion of Graduate Student Senate events.
3. Involvement in Graduate student appreciation week.
4. Assisting President Elect/Symposium Chair and Fundraising Chair in promotion of Fundraising events.
5. Promotion of Graduate Research Symposium and related events.
6. Fundraising Committee Chair

Any member of the Graduate Student Senate is eligible to hold the office of Fundraising Committee Chair. The Fundraising Committee Chair is elected at the August meeting and serves for one year.

The Fundraising Committee Chair’s responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Attending Student Organizational Funding Meetings and completing related applications for funding.
2. Identifying and communicating with local businesses and other external funding sources.
3. Coordinating with symposium committee to facilitate donations.
4. Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian is appointed at the first GSS meeting of the year by the GSS President and serves for one year. The Parliamentarian must be familiar with Robert’s Rules of Order and the GSS Bylaws. The Parliamentarian can chair a meeting if the President, Vice President, and Recorder are all absent.

ARTICLE VII

Robert’s Rules of Order

Roberts Rules of Order shall be used as a guide by the presiding officer in all situations not covered by provisions of the constitution.

ARTICLE VII

Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Graduate Student Senate meets once a month from September to April, excluding December and January. The meetings will take place on the first Thursday of each month, from 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.

Section 2. Special Meetings

The President may call special meetings as needed. At least 5 working days’ notice should be given unless an emergency situation does not permit.

Section 3. Quorum

A simple majority of the voting members of the Graduate Student Senate constitutes a quorum.

Section 4: Standard Agenda

The Standard Agenda below is distributed to Graduate Student Senate members and posted on the Graduate School web page one week before the regular meeting. Items for the Agenda must be submitted to the President at least seven (7) working days before the regular monthly meetings.

Standard Agenda

1.0 Call to Order

2.0 Adoption of Agenda

3.0 Approval of Minutes

* 1. Officers’ Reports
  2. President’s Report
  3. Vice President’s Report
  4. Recorder’s Report
  5. Parliamentarian’s Report
  6. Standing Committee Reports
  7. Bylaws Committee
  8. Graduate Student Research Symposium Committee
  9. Social Committee
  10. Fundraising Committee

6.0 Unfinished Business

7.0 New Business

8.0 Announcements

9.0 Adjournment Section 5. Minutes

The minutes of the regular meetings are recorded by the Recorder and distributed to members and schools no later than three weeks after the monthly meeting~~s~~. Committee reports are summarized in the minutes.

Section 6. Chain of Succession

In the event that one or more members of the executive committee are absent, or the position is vacant, the chain of succession is as follows:

* President
* President Elect
* Recorder
* Parliamentarian

ARTICLE VIII

Executive Committee

The purpose of the Graduate Student Senate Executive Committee is threefold: (1) to prepare the agenda for the monthly meetings, (2) to develop long range plans for the Graduate Student Senate and (3) to assist the dean of the Graduate School when requested.

Section 1. Membership

The members of the Executive Committee are the President, President Elect, Recorder, and Standing Committee chairs.

Section 2. Meetings

The Executive Committee meets as needed but at least twice each semester: once at the beginning of each semester to set the overall agenda and once at the end of the semester.

Section 3. Duties and Responsibilities

The Executive Committee prepares the agenda, initiates action, and oversees planning for the Graduate

Student Senate.

ARTICLE IX

Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

The Graduate Student Senate has standing committees that are composed of Senate members and other graduate students as appointed by the President for a one-year term.

The committees and their purposes are:

* 1. Graduate Student Research Symposium Committee whose purpose is to plan, coordinate, and run the Graduate Student Research Symposium.
  2. Bylaws Committee whose purpose is to review and recommend revisions of the bylaws when needed.
  3. Social Committee whose purpose is to improve community outreach and build community among the student population.
  4. Fundraising Committee whose purpose is to seek out and collect funds for the Graduate Student Senate and associated events.

ARTICLE X

Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Graduate Student Senate in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Council may adopt.

ARTICLE XI

Non-Discrimination Clause

GSS at The University of Southern Mississippi does not restrict membership on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, gender identity, genetic information, race, religion, color or national origin, and/or veteran status.

ARTICLE XII

Amendment of Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Graduate Student Senate by a two-thirds vote, provided the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting or by email at least two (2) weeks ahead of the meeting they are to be voted on. Amendments to these bylaws must be approved by the Student-Faculty Committee on Student Organizations and the Dean of the Graduate School.

ARTICLE XIII

Dissolution

The University of Southern Mississippi Graduate Student Senate may be dissolved only if two-thirds of its members recommend dissolution to the Dean of the Graduate School who must approve the recommendation.