

# Science & Technology Studies Graduate Students Association

## Constitution & Guidelines

Fall 2017

### **The Purpose of this Constitution is:**

1. To provide a general philosophy and rationale for the Graduate Student Association.
2. To provide a general orientation for the membership.
3. To lend stability and continuity to the Graduate Student Association.
4. To provide an understanding of the operations, practices and procedures carried on within the various parts of the Graduate Student Association.

### **ARTICLE 1: Name and Compliance**

***I.I Name:*** This organization shall be known as Science & Technology Studies Graduate Students Association, the name under which it is officially registered with York University Graduate Students Association (YUGSA). It will hereinafter be referred to as STSGSA.

***I.II Compliance:*** STSGSA operates at York University, subject to York University and York University Graduate Students Association (YUGSA) policies and procedures.

### **Article 2: Preamble**

The Graduate Student Association—hereafter referred to as the GSA—represents and advocates for the collective interests of Science & Technology Studies graduate students in all matters of program, departmental, and faculty policy and action at York University. The GSA seeks to build community amongst the graduate students, faculty, and larger university, with consideration for diverse experiences and interests. Above all, the GSA works to optimize the environment within which graduate students develop, both professionally and personally.

### **Article 3: Membership**

The members of the GSA are Science & Technology Studies graduate students. Current enrolment in the graduate program is sufficient for membership. No general membership dues will be collected from members, although members may be expected to pay nominal fees for specific events.

### **Article 4: Meetings**

GSA meetings will be moderated by the President/co-Presidents and held a minimum of two times per academic year. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. Normally, any

voting will take place in the meeting, and members who are not in attendance at the meeting forfeit their right to vote, unless a proxy vote has been arranged in advance. The GSA does reserve the right to decide, by a majority vote or the decision of the President/ co-Presidents, to put any vote to the entire GSA. In these cases, the issue will be presented via written or electronic memo to all members, and members will be given a prespecified period of time in which to cast their ballots. Before any official action is taken by the GSA, a majority vote must be obtained for those votes taken outside of meetings (as per the stipulations outlined above). In all cases, the votes of all members will be weighed equally.

## **Article 5: Elections and Eligibility**

Elections for GSA offices will be held by September 30 every year. Only GSA members may hold official positions. All nominations for elected office will be decided by those members present at the GSA meetings (or submitted by a member via advance proxy). If necessary, individuals—except for the President—may hold more than one GSA office, but preference is for a diversity of members amongst those elected to official positions. After the nomination period, ballots will be distributed to all graduate students, and persons will have a pre-specified period in which to cast their ballots. For each position, the person receiving the largest number of votes will be elected. Ballots will be submitted to and tabulated by the current GSA President/Graduate program assistant.

## **Article 6: Elected Positions**

The GSA has 9 elected positions: President, Secretary-Treasurer, PhD Graduate Executive Committee Representative, MA Graduate Executive Committee Representative, YUGSA Councillor (x 2), Graduate Conference Chair(s), Workshop and Events Coordinator(s), and CUPE 3903 Steward. Of these positions, the President, Secretary-Treasurer, PhD Graduate Executive Committee Representative, MA Graduate Executive Committee Representative, and YUGSA Councillors are classified as “Officers of the GSA”. The office of President may be held by one individual or by two co-presidents of equal authority who run for the office jointly.

### *Section 6.1: Requirements of Officers*

The Officers of GSA must attend >75% of regularly scheduled meetings.

- **President (or co-Presidents):**

Requirements: The president is responsible for organizing and overseeing meetings, setting the agenda for the GSA for the year, communicating with other officers and the general membership, calling special meetings, and coordinating officers in special tasks. The president shares signing authority for the GSA bank account with the secretary-treasurer. The president (or a proxy) will represent the GSA at departmental functions and on departmental (sub-)committees, as required and/or requested.

- **Secretary-Treasurer:**

Requirements: The secretary-treasurer is responsible for recording the minutes of the meetings and distributing them to the membership, keeping all records and lists updated. They are also responsible for drafting the GSA's budget and presenting it to the executive, membership, and YUGSA; keeping the membership informed of the GSA's current budget; and reporting the amount of expenditures by the GSA at each meeting.

- **MA/PhD Graduate Executive Committee Representatives:**

Requirements: The Executive Committee Representatives represent the MA and PhD students to the STS Graduate Program Executive. They must be respectively an MA student and a PhD student. Executive Committee Representatives are obligated to brief the GSA Executive of all major STS Graduate Program Executive meeting agenda items.

- **YUGSA Councillor(s):**

Requirements: The YUGSA Councillors are responsible for attending each of the monthly YUGSA council meetings and submitting registration and all other required documentation **on time**.

*Section 6.2: Requirements of Other Elected Positions*

- **Graduate Conference Chair(s):**

Requirements: The Graduate Conference Chairs(s) are responsible for the planning and execution of the annual STS graduate conference. The Chair(s) shall keep the GSA Executive informed of all major decisions and planning directives. The Chair(s) will regularly consult with the Secretary-Treasurer regarding budget and payment.

- **Workshop and Events Coordinator(s):**

Requirements: The Workshop and Events Coordinator(s) are responsible for organising workshops as per student demand, liaising with the Graduate Program Director (or their representative) regarding the program workshop series, and organising social activities throughout the year.

- **CUPE 3903 Steward:**

Requirements: The CUPE 3903 Steward is responsible for representing the program at Stewards' Council Meetings. During bargaining years, the Steward should attend General Membership Meetings (GMM), Annual General Membership Meetings, and Special General Membership Meetings, while also reporting back with any updates regarding bargaining, which shall be posted on the Graduate Student Listserv.

## **Article 7: Replacing Officers and Representatives**

If a member serving in an elected position, other than the President, resigns or is otherwise unable to fill their position, the GSA executive will appoint a replacement to fill the remainder of the term. If the President resigns or is otherwise unable to fill their term, an election will be held following all the guidelines and stipulations for a regular election. Replacement members for any position, including those elected, will serve only until the end of the original term of that position.

## **Article 8: Finances**

The GSA's money will be primarily acquired through funds allocated to the GSA by YUGSA and the department. Any expenditures of the GSA must be in accordance to the GSA's annual budget, approved by the membership. Only if the GSA exceeds its budget or needs money for a special event may dues be collected. This must be approved by a majority (50% +1) of the membership. All monies belonging to the GSA shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for the GSA. All funds must be deposited within one week of collection.

## **Article 9: Ad Hoc Committees**

Ad hoc committees may be created at any time by the decision of the President or a majority vote at a GSA meeting. Appointments to the ad hoc committee will be the responsibility of the executive committee. Each ad hoc committee must select a contact person so that GSA members and others can communicate efficiently with that committee. All ad hoc committees are responsible for maintaining records of their activities and for reporting pertinent information to members at the GSA meetings.

## **Article 10: Amendments and Revisions**

An amendment can be added to this constitution with a  $2/3$  vote of all members present at the meeting when the issue arises. The amended constitution must be presented to the YUGSA office in the beginning of every academic year.