



GSO Senate Resolution 23.05

A Resolution to Amend the GSO Constitution (Establishing the Rules and Administration Special Committee)

Author(s): Daniel J. Kimmel (GSO Vice President of Internal Affairs)

Sponsor(s): Yousr Dhaouadi (GSO President); Michael Ammoury (GSO Vice President of External Affairs); Daniela Puente (GSO Communications Secretary); Zafar Ali (GSO Parliamentarian); Vito Iaia (GSO President Pro Tempore of the Senate; Senator At-Large)

Date(s): 7 December 2022 (Introduced); 1 February 2023 (Voting Date)

Action(s): Passed (37 Yes; 1 No; 3 Abstentions)

President & Chair of the Senate: Daniel J. Kimmel

President Pro Tempore of the Senate: Vito Iaia (Senator At-Large)

Parliamentarian: Zafar Ali

President of the Student Body: Yousr Dhaouadi

Whereas, the Constitution of the Graduate Student Organization, along with the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RRO)*, which constitutes the organization's parliamentary law, provide the most basic and essential provisions for the organization's scope and operations;¹ and,

Whereas, the Constitution of the Graduate Student Organization sets forth the organization's highest body of rules, superseding all other rules of the organization that are within its control, which place necessary limitations on the powers of the deliberative assembly and its executive officers, and thereby cannot be suspended by the assembly or its officers;² and,

Whereas, the Constitution of the Graduate Student Organization must therefore require more effort to amend than any other body of rules within the organization's controls, as stipulated both by *RRO* and the Constitution itself, in order to ensure that all changes made to the organization's essential purpose and operations are made with the maximal amount of care and deliberation;³ and,

¹ See GSO Constitution Article I, Section 12(e) and *Robert's Rules of Order (RRO)* 2:8.

² See *RRO* 2:12-13.

³ See *RRO* 2:8, 10 and GSO Constitution Article I, Section 5.

Whereas, all legislation passed by the GSO Senate remains standing legislation unless its stated purpose is fulfilled, its stated time-limit is expired, or it is repealed, but there is currently no explicit mechanism charged with cultivating the GSO's legislative or operational institutional memory; and,

Whereas, the GSO would benefit from establishing a special committee on rules and administration through which all standing legislation might be archived and called to memory, and through which the Senate and its members might receive standardized expert feedback on all proposed changes to the Constitution or GSO policy, rules of conduct, and organization; and,

Whereas, the GSO would benefit from a body charged with the sustained study of its rules and operations with an eye toward improving the organization's ability to meet its mandate; be it,

Resolved, that a Rules and Administration special committee be established; and be it,

Resolved, that the GSO Constitution be amended and the following text be added as Article I, Section 14 framing the special committee's purpose and jurisdiction (and any subsequent sections renumbered accordingly):

Section 14: There will be a Rules and Administration Committee which will study and advise on procedural and organizational matters as required or requested. Such committee shall:

- (a) be referred all proposed legislation relating to GSO and Senate organization, rules and regulations, including but not delimited to house rules and decorum, GSO policies, and the GSO Constitution. This committee may, and may be called upon to, submit official opinion(s) to the GSO Senate on the disposition of all proposed constitutional amendments, policy changes, or changes to the GSO's organizational and operational structure; and,
- (b) make a continuing study of the GSO's organization and operations and periodically recommend improvements regarding the same with a view toward strengthening the Senate, simplifying its operations, improving its relationships with other organizations, and enabling it better to meet its mandate under the GSO Constitution. As such, it will develop, implement, and update as necessary a strategic planning process and a strategic plan for the functional and technical infrastructure support of the Senate and provide oversight over all such plans; and,
- (c) act as the GSO's legislative and operational institutional memory, archiving legislation and procedural documents, and identifying any legislative proceeding or action which, in the opinion of the Committee, is of vital interest to the GSO Senate and calling such proceeding or action to the attention of the Senate when necessary.

(d) When any proposed legislation touches upon the GSO's fiscal policy and operations, the Rules and Administration committee operates as an advisory and consultative resource to the Comptroller and Finance Committee.

And be it further resolved, that the GSO Constitution be amended and the following text be added as Article II, Section 5(f) under the Vice President of Internal Affairs's duties (and any subsequent sub-sections renumbered accordingly):

(f) Serve as chair of the Rules and Administration Committee, which can be run concurrently with the Agenda Committee;

And be it further resolved, that the GSO Constitution be amended and Article III, Section 4(c) under the Parliamentarian's duties as well as Article III, Section 5(c) under the President Pro Tempore of the Senate's duties be made to read (with appropriate punctuation):⁴

(c) Serve on the Agenda and the Rules and Administration Committee

And be it further resolved, that the GSO Constitution be amended and the following text be added as Article V, Section 5:

Section 5: The senate may require all proposed amendments to the GSO Constitution, policies, organization, or standing rules be referred to the Rules and Administration Committee for expert feedback and may call upon that committee to submit official opinion(s) on such matters to the Senate.

And be it further resolved, that the Rules and Administration special committee be charged with the following:

The Rules and Administration Committee oversees the procedural and administrative operations of the GSO. This committee makes a continuing study of the GSO's organization and operations and periodically recommends improvements on the same when necessary. As such, it develops and implements a strategic plan for the functional and technical infrastructure of the GSO. This committee acts as the institutional memory of all legislation and procedural documents passed or approved by the GSO Senate, identifying legislative proceedings or actions and bringing them to the attention of the GSO Senate when deemed necessary by the committee's members. This committee receives all proposed constitutional amendments, policy changes, or changes to GSO organizational and operational structure, making recommendations on the disposition of each in accordance with University Policy, the GSO Constitution, the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, and GSO Policy and legislation. This committee may and may be called upon to submit official opinion(s) to the GSO Senate regarding all proposed constitutional amendments, policy changes, or changes to the GSO's organizational and operational structure. This committee is chaired by the Vice President

⁴ Article III, Section 4(c) receives a semi-colon, and Article III, Section 5(c) receives a period, after "Committee."

of Internal Affairs and is staffed by the Parliamentarian and President Pro Tempore of the Senate. The President acts as an *ex officio* member in their capacity as chief executive overseer of the GSO. The committee may invite other members of the GSO Senate to its meetings at its discretion.

And be it further resolved, that a subsection on Special Committees be created on the Graduate Student Organization website's committee page, and the Rules and Administration Committee and its charge be added there; and be it,

Resolved, that this amendment will be effective immediately upon a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote, per the GSO Constitution.

Appendix to the Resolution on Sources

The US Congress Rules and Administration Committee webpage—particularly, its “About” and “History” sections—was consulted as a primary resource for drafting this Resolution. (See: <https://www.rules.senate.gov/>.)