



GSO Senate Resolution 24.05

A Resolution to Amend the GSO Constitution (Recommendations of the R&A Constitutional Convention)

Author(s): Members of the GSO Rules & Administration Committee: Daniel J. Kimmel (GSO President & CEO); CJ Arnell (GSO Vice President of Internal Affairs & Committee Chair); Roger Rosena (GSO President Pro Tempore of the Senate & University Senator); R. Luke VanderSchaaff (GSO Parliamentarian); Nicholas Pelletier (APS Applied Data Science)

Sponsor(s):

Date(s): 6 December 2023 (Introduced)

Action(s): Passed (25 Yes, 4 No, 3 Abstentions)

Chair of the Senate: CJ Arnell

President Pro Tempore of the Senate: Roger Rosena

Parliamentarian: R. Luke VanderSchaaff

President of the Student Body: Daniel J. Kimmel

Whereas, the Rules & Administration Committee (R&A) held a Constitutional Convention in accordance with the previously announced plan;¹ and,

Whereas, the mandate of the Convention, in line with the R&A Committee charge,² was to identify inconsistencies, ambiguities and other organizational or procedural issues in the GSO Constitution and to formulate comprehensive amendments for the consideration of the Senate by the end of the 56th Session; and,

Whereas, the R&A Committee dedicated approximately 22 committee hours, in addition to uncounted hours outside committee, to study, drafting, and formal deliberation in pursuit of this endeavor; and,

¹ This was done at the direction of the President, with approval of the Senate, in response to clear institutional needs. See **GSO President's Report 2 (4 October 2023)**, esp. p. 2 under "Legislative Agenda: Internal Reform," and **Appendix A: Constitutional Convention Plan** prepared and presented to the Senate by the Vice President of Internal Affairs (4 October 2023).

² See **Appendix B: GSO Rules & Administration Committee Charge** below, as well as **GSOC Article I, Section 14** (or **GSOC Article II, Section 14** should the proposals in this Resolution be adopted).

Whereas, the comprehensive amendments recommended herein are grounded in a careful study of the current GSO Constitution, the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (RONR), and GSO institutional memory;³ and,

Whereas, the Rules & Administration Committee forwards these recommendations for consideration of the Senate with the consensus that, if adopted, they will improve the GSO Constitution's clarity and consistency as a governing document as well as strengthen the GSO's organizational and procedural infrastructure; therefore, be it,

Resolved, that the updated GSO Constitution presented below be ratified by the Senate, effective immediately upon a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote:

³ For transparency and accessibility, a synopsis of the major updates is provided in **Appendix C: Synopsis of Proposed Changes in the GSO Constitution** below.

CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION OF SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Effective Date: March 6, 2024

PREAMBLE

We, the Graduate Students of Syracuse University, in order to foster greater representation of our interests and concerns, hereby establish the Graduate Student Organization of Syracuse University and its Senate. The Graduate Student Organization shall serve as the student government of graduates at Syracuse University. Its purpose is to represent and promote the interests of graduate students and the University community. The Graduate Student Organization Senate shall function as the organization's representative deliberative assembly to establish policies and initiatives that are in the best interests of all graduate students at Syracuse University consistent with the principles outlined in this Constitution. It will be an independent organization free from internal or external coercion.

ARTICLE I: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: All matriculated, main campus, enrolled graduate students at Syracuse University registered outside the College of Law, whose graduate student activity fees have been paid, are GSO members.

Section 2: All matriculated, main campus, enrolled graduate students at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF), whose Syracuse University graduate student activity fees have been paid, are GSO members.

ARTICLE II: THE SENATE

Section 1: All legislative powers of the GSO are vested in the Senate.

Section 2: The following shall be members of the Senate with the power to vote: GSO Officers, Academic Plan Senators, University Senators, At-large Senators, and SUNY-ESF Senators. The GSO Parliamentarian shall be considered a member of the Senate without the power to vote, per Article IV Section 5.

(a) No member of the Senate shall have more than one vote.

Section 3: Any person who is a GSO member per Article 1 shall be eligible for the office of Senator.

- (a) Only SUNY-ESF students shall be eligible for the office of SUNY-ESF Senator.
- (b) A Senator's term in office shall last for the Session, defined per Article 2 Section 12, for which they are elected.

Section 4: Each academic plan at Syracuse University shall be allotted one Senate seat. These Senators are known as "Academic Plan Senators."

- (a) The list of academic plans shall be determined by the enrollment data provided annually by the University.
- (b) Each academic plan may determine the nature, time, and place of their Senator election, so long as all Senator elections are held in an open and fair manner and an election is held at least once per academic year.
- (c) Academic plans may combine allotted seats into one office should they choose and may separate such combined seats should they choose.
- (d) Academic plans must elect and maintain an Academic Plan Senator to be eligible to request funds from the GSO budget through their associated Recognized Graduate Student Organization.
- (e) Each Academic Plan Senator may appoint a single GSO member of their academic plan to serve as their Alternate. The Alternate must be verified by the Vice President of Internal Affairs and entered into the Senate Roll and, if so verified, may attend and vote at Senate meetings in that Senator's stead.
 - (i) If both the Academic Plan Senator and their Alternate attend Senate meetings, only the Academic Plan Senator may vote.

Section 5: SUNY-ESF graduate students shall be allotted three Senate seats. These Senators are known as "SUNY-ESF Senators."

- (a) SUNY-ESF graduate students may determine the nature, time, and place of their Senator elections.

Section 6: There shall be a number of graduate student University Senator seats as determined by the Bylaws of the University Senate.

- (a) The Senate shall elect half of these seats, rounded down, in the annual Elections Special Meeting and shall elect all remaining seats at the first meeting of the fall semester and subsequent meetings as needed.

- (b) University Senators shall have seats in the GSO Senate as well as seats in the University Senate.
- (c) The office of University Senator may not be held simultaneously with the office of Academic Plan Senator or of At-large Senator.

Section 7: There shall be ten At-large Senate seats.

- (a) The Senate shall elect half of these seats in the annual Elections Special Meeting and shall elect all remaining seats at the first meeting of the fall semester and subsequent meetings as needed.
- (b) The office of At-large Senator may not be held simultaneously with the office of Academic Plan Senator or of University Senator.

Section 8: Elections for University and At-large Senators shall run as follows:

- (a) University Senator elections shall precede At-large Senator elections.
- (b) If there are more candidates than the number of open seats, run-off voting shall be used to eliminate last-place candidates in sequential rounds across multiple ballots until the number of remaining candidates equals the number of seats. If a candidate procures a simple majority vote in a non-tiebreaking vote for last place that candidate shall be elected.
- (c) Ties for last place in a run-off voting round shall be broken by immediately re-voting on the tied candidates on their own ballot. This step shall be repeated as needed to determine the last-place candidate eliminated from the next round of run-off voting.
- (d) Once the number of candidates matches the number of seats, each candidate shall be voted on individually and shall be elected if the candidate procures a simple majority vote.
- (e) If there are at least a number of open seats as there are the number of candidates, each candidate shall be voted on individually and shall be elected if the candidate procures a simple majority vote.

Section 9: If there is a vacancy in an At-large or University Senator seat, the Senate shall hold an election to fill the seat at its next Regular Meeting or a Special Meeting called for this purpose.

Section 10: All Senators are required to attend all Regular and Special Meetings of the GSO Senate. University Senators are additionally required to attend all meetings of the University Senate.

- (a) Any Senator who does not attend two consecutive Senate Meetings or who misses three total Meetings, regardless of Meeting type, will be removed from office immediately at the conclusion of the relevant Meeting that Senator does not attend. The seat will then be vacant. Academic Plan Senators shall be considered in attendance if that Senator's verified Alternate is in attendance. Attendance shall be understood as the Senator being present for the majority of the Meeting's duration.
- (b) Any University Senator who does not attend two consecutive Meetings or who misses three total Meetings of the University Senate shall likewise be removed from office. The roll listed within the published minutes of the University Senate shall serve as the definitive attendance list for this purpose.

Section 11: All Academic Plan and At-large Senators must serve on one GSO standing committee, special committee, or in a liaison position appointed by the President. All University Senators must serve on one University Senate committee as determined by the University Senate or on one GSO standing or special committee approved by the President and Vice President of Internal Affairs or in a liaison position appointed by the President.

Section 12: The Senate shall be in Session starting on its first meeting of the fall semester no earlier than the last week of August and ending on the last meeting of the succeeding spring semester no later than commencement in May. The Senate will meet at least ten times every academic year. Meetings must include eight Regular Meetings, a Budget Special Meeting, and an Elections Special Meeting. The first meeting of the fall semester must be a Regular Meeting.

- (a) Regular Meetings shall be announced as far in advance as possible to the entire GSO membership and Senate. There must be at least 14 days' notice of a Regular Meeting.

- (i) The Agenda of a Regular Meeting shall include: (I) Call to Order, (II) Roll Call, (III) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (unless there are no previous minutes to approve), (IV) Land Acknowledgment & Opening Remarks, (V) Invited Guest Speaker (when applicable), (VI) Elections & Confirmations (when applicable), (VII) Executive Reports, (VIII) Committee Reports (whether standing, special or task force, when applicable), (IX) Unfinished Business, (X) New Business, (XI) Announcements and Remarks for the Record, (XII) Adjournment. The Agenda shall be sent no later than three academic days in advance of a scheduled Regular Meeting.
- (b) Special Meetings must be called with specific business or a specific topic as their agenda. No other business may be discussed or voted upon at a Special Meeting apart from its stated purpose. There must be at least seven days' notice of a Special Meeting, announced to the Senate.
 - (i) The agenda of a Special Meeting shall include: (I) Call to Order, (II) Roll Call, (III) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes, (IV) Land Acknowledgment & Opening Remarks, (V) Relevant Reports, (VI) Conduct of Designated Special Business, (VII) Announcement and Remarks for the Record, (VIII) Adjournment.
- (c) The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall chair all Senate Meetings. The Chair shall vote only in cases of a tie or when their vote would change the outcome of the vote.
- (d) At all Senate Meetings, Quorum shall be $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total voting Senate membership, excluding vacant seats, unless the Senate is voting on an Impeachment or a Constitutional Amendment, per Article V Section 2(e) and Article VI Section 3.
- (e) The rules contained in the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall serve as the GSO's parliamentary law and shall thereby govern the Senate and its subsidiary bodies where the parliamentary law is not in direct conflict with the Constitution, standing GSO legislation on rules and procedures or Syracuse University policies.
- (f) All Senate Meetings must be open to all GSO members except in the case of Executive Sessions or Impeachment per Article V. The Senate may proceed into Executive Session for any portion of any Meeting by a majority Vote by Roll. Guests who are not GSO members may be

invited to attend meetings but can be removed by a majority vote of the Senate or by proceeding into Executive Session.

- (g) Special Meetings of the Senate may be held out-of-Session, pursuant Article II Section 12(b).
 - (i) Article II, Section 10, and subsections are not in effect during out-of-Session Special Meetings.
 - (ii) Out-of-Session Special Meetings may not be called for the purpose of proposing or voting upon amendments to the Constitution, elections, or interim appointments.
 - (iii) The membership of the deliberative assembly for out-of-Session Special Meetings shall be Officers, appointed Staff per Article IV, and Senators elected for the forthcoming Session.

Section 13: The Senate shall have the power to:

- (a) Represent the graduate students of Syracuse University comprising the GSO membership and speak on their behalf;
- (b) Establish the position of the GSO on any matter of importance to graduate students;
- (c) Make recommendations and draft Resolutions to the University or other bodies on any matter of policy affecting graduate students;
- (d) Set the priorities of the Executive Board, especially when advocating to the University on behalf of the graduate students;
- (e) Create or authorize any programs of action to accomplish the goals and purposes of the GSO in serving the interests of graduate students except where jurisdiction is expressly denied by the rules and regulations of Syracuse University or where jurisdiction is granted by Syracuse University's judicial system;
- (f) Set the time and place of Senate meetings;
- (g) Create, merge or dissolve any standing committees, special committees, or task forces as it deems fit;
- (h) Request reports from any such committees or task forces created by the Senate;
- (i) Create positions inferior to the Executive Board and liaison positions between the GSO and other organizations;
- (j) Elect all At-large and University Senators pursuant to the preceding sections;

- (k) Elect all Officers, excepting the Executive Board's power of vacancy appointment, in which case the Senate shall have the power to confirm such appointments pursuant Article III Section 2(e);
- (l) Confirm or elect the President Pro Tempore and Parliamentarian pursuant Article IV Section 2(c);
- (m) Call any Officer before the Senate for a hearing;
- (n) Override any action, including a veto, of the Executive Board or any of its Officers by Resolution with a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote;
- (o) Serve as the exclusive forum for the Impeachment and removal of Officers pursuant to Article V;
- (p) Remove a Senator from office by Resolution with a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote;
- (q) Schedule Regular Meetings of the Senate if the Executive Board has not otherwise done so, pursuant to the restrictions within Article II Section 12(a);
- (r) Call Special Meetings of the Senate by Resolution or by the petition of ten Senators, pursuant the restrictions in Article II Section 12(b);
- (s) Raise or lower the graduate student activity fee, adhering to reasonable timing requirements on fee changes imposed by the University;
- (t) Allocate the graduate student activity fee in accordance with University policies and all applicable laws;
- (u) Amend the Constitution of the GSO pursuant to Article VI; and
- (v) Enact all measures necessary and proper in the fulfillment of these powers.

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 opinions to the 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 Senate and calling such proceeding or action to the attention of the Senate when necessary. This ought include curating and making a yearly donation of GSO Legislation, Presidential Reports, and other items of vital interest to the GSO Archives housed in Syracuse University's Special Collections Research Center.
- (d) When any proposed legislation touches upon the GSO's Fiscal Policy and operations, the Rules and Administration Committee operates as an advisory and consultatory resource to the Comptroller and Finance Committee. However, the Rules and Administration Committee maintains the right to contest such legislation before the Senate in accordance with its constitutional mandate and charge should it deem necessary.

Section 15: There will be a Finance Committee of the Senate which will act in an advisory capacity on fiscal matters to the Senate and Executive Board.

- (a) The Finance Committee shall adhere to and enforce the GSO Fiscal Policy established by Resolution of the Senate.
- (b) The Finance Committee may make recommendations on fiscal matters to the Senate, but the Senate maintains the sole power to establish GSO Fiscal Policy and to authorize the allocation and expenditure of GSO funds in line with it and University Policy.
- (c) All campus Service Providers and Recognized Graduate Student Organizations in good standing may argue their case for funding before the Senate. The Senate retains the right to place reasonable limits on the time allotted for such arguments. The Finance Committee may hear arguments for funding from campus Service Providers and Recognized Graduate Student Organizations before forwarding funding requests and relevant recommendations to the Senate.

- (d) The Finance Committee shall prepare and propose a GSO annual budget for the Special Budget Meeting, though the Senate may dispose of it in the same manner as all other Senate business.
- (e) If the Senate has not approved a GSO annual budget for the following fiscal year by the end of the current Session, then the GSO annual budget originally proposed by the Finance Committee shall be considered approved and in force.

ARTICLE III: THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1: All executive powers of the GSO are vested in the GSO Executive Board, which shall be empowered to oversee and to act for the organization within the limits set by this Constitution and the Senate.

Section 2: The Executive Board shall consist of seven Officers: President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Director of External Affairs, Comptroller, General Secretary of the Senate, Financial Secretary, and Communications Secretary.

- (a) The President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Director of External Affairs and Comptroller shall serve as voting members of the Executive Board on Board business. The Secretaries shall serve as Junior Officers of the Executive Board without the power to make motions on the Board or vote on Board business.
 - (i) The rules concerning boards and committees contained in the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Executive Board where they are not in direct conflict with the Constitution, standing GSO legislation on rules and procedures, or Syracuse University policies.
 - (ii) Quorum for all Executive Board actions shall be a majority of voting Officers, excluding vacancies.
 - (iii) In case of a tie within the Executive Board, the President's vote shall decide.
- (b) A person must be a GSO member per Article I as of the start of that person's term or time of election, whichever is later, to be eligible to hold an Executive Board Office.

- (i) To be eligible to serve as President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Director of External Affairs or Comptroller, a person must have previously attended at least four Regular Meetings of the Senate as a Senator or Officer, excepting the rules for executive appointment of Interim Officers per Article III Section 2(e).
- (c) The President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Director of External Affairs and Comptroller shall be elected by the Senate at its Elections Special Meeting in the academic year prior to the one in which they will serve.
- (d) The General Secretary of the Senate, Financial and Communications Secretaries shall be elected by the Senate at the first Regular Meeting of the academic year during which they will serve.
- (e) Vacancies in the Executive Board shall be filled by executive appointment. Executive appointees to an Officer position must be confirmed by majority vote of the Senate at its next Regular Meeting after appointment or a Special Meeting called for that purpose. Officers appointed in this way shall be known as Interim Officers.
 - (i) To be eligible for executive appointment as an Interim Officer, a person must be a current or previous member of the Senate, having attended at least one meeting of the Senate.
 - (ii) If not confirmed, or if the Executive Board declines or fails to exercise the power of executive appointment, the Senate shall fill the vacancy at any Regular Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose.
 - (iii) If in any Regular or Special Meeting called to confirm an executive appointment, the Senate rejects the appointment, the Senate may immediately hold an election for the vacant position.
- (f) In any Officer elections, runoff voting shall be used, eliminating the last place candidate on each ballot until a single candidate receives a majority vote.
 - (i) If a candidate runs unopposed, a yes/no/abstain ballot shall be used. The candidate shall be elected if the candidate receives a simple majority.
- (g) The President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Director of External Affairs and Comptroller shall hold office from June 1st of the year in

which they are elected, or once elected if that person's election or appointment occurs after June 1st, until the following May 31st.

- (h) The Secretaries shall hold office immediately upon election until the following May 31st.
- (i) No person shall serve more than two terms in any single position on the Executive Board.
- (j) Officers, during their terms in office, may not simultaneously be Academic Plan or At-large Senators. An Officer may serve as a University Senator without any of the associated duties and rights of a University Senator in the GSO Senate.
- (k) Each Officer may receive a stipend for the year in which the Officer serves, if the Senate so directs.
- (l) Officers are expected to be students in residence at Syracuse University's main campus in Syracuse, NY during their terms in office. In the event that circumstances call them away from campus for a period of absence greater than two weeks, unless such absence occurs strictly during the winter break, an Officer must submit an appeal for approval of absence to the Rules and Administration Committee, which shall review the case for approved absence within one week of receipt of the appeal and report recommended actions to the Senate at the next Regular Meeting.
 - (i) Between Regular Meetings, the Executive Board shall have the power to act on the recommendations of the Rules and Administration Committee regarding the case, though the Senate may dispose of the recommendations in the same manner as all other Senate business.

Section 3: The Executive Board shall have the following powers, duties, and functions:

- (a) Advise the President on internal, external, and fiscal operations;
- (b) Assist the President in implementing all policies, directives, and Resolutions of the Senate;
- (c) Take over the duties of any vacant office, delegating such responsibilities and powers as the President sees fit, with the Board's approval, to the remaining Officers;
- (d) Assist the President in nominating graduate student representatives to relevant bodies outside of the GSO but within Syracuse University;

- (e) Shall have the power to dispense with an Executive Board discretionary fund of an amount the Senate so chooses, so long as the action adheres to GSO Fiscal Policy, standing legislation, and University Policy.
 - (i) The President must authorize such actions.
 - (ii) The Comptroller must report such actions to the Senate at the next Regular Meeting;
- (f) Attend all Meetings of the Senate unless excused by majority vote of the Senate;
- (g) Establish the place and time of Senate Meetings, unless the Senate otherwise directs by majority vote per Article II Section 12(a);
- (h) Have the power to call Special Meetings of the Senate, pursuant to Article II Section 12(b); and,
- (i) Have the power to veto, by majority vote, motions and Resolutions passed by the Senate within five academic days of their passage.
 - (i) The Vice President of Internal Affairs must report such actions to the Senate as expeditiously as possible via email and at the next Regular or Special Meeting of the Senate.
 - (ii) The Senate retains the right to override a veto of the Executive Board per Article II Section 12(n), and shall be informed of this right when the veto is reported, and shall be given the explicit opportunity to override the veto at the next Regular or Special Meeting.
 - (iii) The Executive Board does not have the power to veto an annual budget.

Section 4: The President shall:

- (a) Serve as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the GSO, exercising primary oversight and direction of the GSO's officers and its internal, external, and fiscal operations;
- (b) Serve as Chair of the Executive Board, and call regular meetings thereof;
- (c) Represent graduate students and the GSO to the Board of Trustees, the University administration, and the Graduate School, as well as to other units of the University as necessary;
- (d) Prepare reports to the Board of Trustees and its committees, when necessary, in consultation with the Executive Board, which shall be shared with the Senate and made public on the GSO website;

- (e) Advocate on behalf of graduate students to the University administration;
- (f) Advocate for graduate student representation on University-wide ad hoc and other committees, task forces, and working groups, and shall serve on the same as needed, or appoint a GSO member otherwise;
- (g) With the cooperation of the Student Association, meet with the leadership of the Student Association;
- (h) Present executive reports to the Senate at all Regular Meetings;
- (i) Faithfully implement all policies, directives, and Resolutions of the Senate;
- (j) Submit Resolutions and other motions from the Senate to other units of the University as is deemed prudent or when directed to do so by the Senate;
- (k) Submit legislation to the Senate from other units of the University as is deemed prudent;
- (l) Appoint all staff, lesser officers and liaisons that the Senate may create;
- (m) Manage any staff, lesser officers, liaisons and other non-elected positions within the GSO;
- (n) Serve as an *ex officio* member of all GSO committees, except the Committee on Impeachment per Article V; and,
- (o) Serve as an *ex officio* member of the University Senate.

Section 5: The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall:

- (a) Serve as the Acting President with all powers and privileges thereof during absence, infirmity, or incapacity of the elected President, and become Interim President in the event of the President's resignation or removal;
- (b) Serve as the President's Chief of Staff, assisting the President in managing and directing the Executive Board Officers and any staff, lesser officers, liaisons and other non-elected positions within the GSO;
- (c) Report to the President and assist them in implementing and enforcing all initiatives, directives, policies and tasks related to the GSO's internal affairs;
- (d) Oversee the work of the General Secretary of the Senate;

- (e) Serve as Chair of the Senate with all the powers and limitations thereof as stipulated by this Constitution and the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*;
- (f) Certify the vote count, result, and sponsors of all motions and Resolutions of the Senate, sending the authorized version thereof to the President for dissemination to relevant bodies within and outside of the organization and to the Communications Secretary for posting publicly on the GSO Website;
- (g) Establish clear and consistent rules on the recognition of Academic Plan Senators;
- (h) Have the power to certify the election of Academic Plan Senators;
- (i) Maintain a list of all academic plans, the list of Senators, and oversee the maintenance of Senate roll and attendance records;
- (j) Set and promulgate the agenda for Senate meetings, in consultation with the Executive Board, and serve as the Chair of an Agenda Committee or other similar body the Senate creates;
- (k) Serve as Chair of the Rules and Administration Committee, which can be run concurrently with the Agenda Committee;
- (l) Serve as an *ex officio* member of all GSO committees, except the Committee on Impeachment per Article V;
- (m) Appoint all committee members and committee Chairs in consultation with the President, except as otherwise stated in this Constitution, and except the Committee on Impeachment per Article V;
 - (i) The terms of committee Chairs, barring resignation or removal, shall last from the time of appointment to the following May 31st.
- (n) Oversee all GSO committees, including maintaining regular communication with them, and report to the President and Senate the status of the committees ;
- (o) Serve on a GSO committee or as a liaison in the event that a necessary position is not filled;
- (p) Serve in the University Senate in the event that one of the GSO's allotted seats is not filled;
- (q) Manage and certify the registration and good standing of Recognized Graduate Student Organizations with the GSO;

- (r) Encourage the compliance of Recognized Graduate Student Organizations with GSO and University Policies when necessary;
- (s) Establish, in consultation with the President, a clear and consistent process for settling disputes internal to Recognized Graduate Student Organizations when called upon to do so; and,
- (t) Represent the GSO to other University bodies with oversight of student organizations as necessary;

Section 6: The Director of External Affairs shall:

- (a) Report to the President and assist them in implementing and enforcing all initiatives, directives, policies and tasks related to the GSO's external affairs;
- (b) Oversee the work of the Communications Secretary;
- (c) Serve as Chair of all committees dealing with university outreach, civic engagement, and event planning;
- (d) Recruit Senators from academic plans without representation in consultation with the Vice President of Internal Affairs;
- (e) Oversee the organization and running of GSO events, working toward increasing the visibility of the GSO in the university community;
- (f) Oversee the maintenance of an active and relevant website and social media presence for the GSO, as well as university press relations;
- (g) Assist Recognized Graduate Student Organizations and other university units in advertising events, services and initiatives of interest to the graduate student body;
- (h) Serve on a GSO committee or as a liaison in the event that a necessary position is not filled; and,
- (i) Serve in the University Senate in the event that one of the GSO's allotted seats is not filled.

Section 7: The Comptroller shall:

- (a) Report to the President and assist them in implementing and enforcing all initiatives, directives, policies and tasks related to the GSO's fiscal affairs;
- (b) Oversee the work of the Financial Secretary as well as any other bookkeeping and accounting staff or similar appointed positions;

- (c) Serve as Chair of the Finance Committee;
- (d) Maintain current and accurate financial records of the GSO;
- (e) Submit written financial reports to the Senate, including:
 - (i) At the first Regular Meeting, an overview of the GSO annual budget passed in the previous academic year, including any updates and executive spending per Article III Section 3(e) throughout the summer;
 - (ii) At all Regular Meetings, any pending funding requests or fiscal appeals, including the recommendations of the Finance Committee on funding requests as well as the balance of funds available for such requests.
 - (iii) At the Budget Special Meeting, an account of funds allocated in the previous budget but not spent;
- (f) Meet with the Budget Officer of the Graduate School on a monthly basis.
- (g) Prepare the GSO annual budget proposal for the Budget Special Meeting in consultation with the President, which must have been approved by the Finance Committee before forwarding to the Senate;
- (h) Report all funding and fiscal policy problems or complications to the President when they arise and resolve such issues in consultation with the President; and,
- (i) Serve on the University Senate Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee and any related university fiscal bodies as needed.

Section 8: The General Secretary of the Senate shall:

- (a) Report to the Vice President of Internal Affairs and assist them in implementing and enforcing all initiatives, directives, policies and tasks related to the Senate;
- (b) Assist the Vice President of Internal Affairs in taking attendance at each Senate meeting and maintaining attendance rolls, in maintaining a list of current Officers, Senators, Staff and other deliberative assembly members and their contact information for posting publicly on the GSO website, and in maintaining a list of all GSO committee members;
- (c) Record the Minutes at all Senate and Executive Board Meetings, as well as at other Meetings as needed and so directed by the President or Vice President of Internal Affairs;

- (d) Send the Senate Meeting Minutes to the Vice President of Internal Affairs for review and dissemination to the Senate and to the Communications Secretary after approval for posting publicly on the GSO website, excepting any portions held under Executive Session which shall be recorded separately and archived but not posted publicly;
- (e) Serve as Chair of all GSO grant program committees or other similar GSO committees to process all related applications, paperwork and correspondence;
- (f) Serve on a GSO committee or as a liaison in the event that a necessary position is not filled; and,
- (g) Serve in the University Senate in the event that one of the GSO's allotted seats is not filled.

Section 9: The Communications Secretary shall:

- (a) Report to the Director of External Affairs and assist them in implementing and enforcing all initiatives, directives, policies and tasks related to the GSO's external affairs;
- (b) Assist the Director of External Affairs in recruiting Senators from academic plans without representation, increasing the visibility of the GSO in the university community, organizing and running GSO events, and managing GSO advertisements, social media presence, and university press relations as directed;
- (c) Maintain the GSO's various public documents and forms, including the GSO website, and update them as needed, in consultation with the Executive Board or the relevant committees;
- (d) Serve as Vice Chair of all committees dealing with outreach, civic engagement, and event planning;
- (e) Serve on a GSO committee or as a liaison in the event that a necessary position is not filled; and,
- (f) Serve in the University Senate in the event that one of the GSO's allotted seats is not filled.

Section 10: The Financial Secretary shall:

- (a) Report to the Comptroller and assist them in implementing and enforcing all initiatives, directives, policies and tasks related to the GSO's fiscal affairs;

- (b) Assist the Comptroller in maintaining accurate financial records, creating reports to the Senate and creating the GSO annual budget proposal;
- (c) Keep records of all payments made and received on the accounts of the GSO, the accounts of Registered Graduate Student Organizations, and other entities with a GSO funding allocation;
- (d) Process all reimbursements and other routine financial paperwork;
- (e) Serve on a GSO committee or as a liaison in the event that a necessary position is not filled; and,
- (f) Serve in the University Senate in the event that one of the GSO's allotted seats is not filled.

ARTICLE IV: THE STAFF

Section 1: All staff positions of the GSO are advisory, consultatory, and/or supportive in function.

Section 2: The GSO Staff shall consist of any number of staff positions, as needed by the Senate and Executive Board.

- (a) In order to be eligible for a staff position, a person must be a GSO member per Article I as of the start of that person's time of appointment. To be eligible to serve as Parliamentarian or President Pro Tempore of the Senate, one must have previously attended at least one Regular Meeting.
- (b) Staff positions are appointed by the President and managed by the President with the assistance of the Vice President of Internal Affairs.
 - (i) As an exception to the general rule for appointing staff positions, the staff positions of Parliamentarian and President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall be appointed in the following manner: The Vice President of Internal Affairs shall recommend a member to the Executive Board to be appointed by majority vote. The Senate shall then confirm the appointment by majority vote at the next Regular Meeting.
- (c) Vacancies in staff positions may be filled by the Executive Board, which must be confirmed by the Senate at its next Regular Meeting when appropriate. If not confirmed, or if the Executive Board declines to make

an appointment, the Senate may choose to fill the vacancy at any Regular Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose.

- (d) Staffers shall hold office immediately upon their appointment until the following May 31st.
- (e) Staffers, during their terms in office, may simultaneously be Senators, with the exception of:
 - (i) the Parliamentarian, who may not be a Senator;
 - (ii) the President Pro Tempore of the Senate who must be a Senator.
- (f) Staffers may receive a stipend for their service if the Senate so directs.

Section 3: The duties, powers, and functions of the Staff:

- (a) The rules concerning parliamentary procedure, debate conduct, and organizational structure contained in the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Staff where they are not in conflict with the GSO Constitution or Syracuse University policies.
- (b) The Staff shall:
 - (i) Assist and advise the Executive Board and Senate as necessary;
 - (ii) Assist the Executive Board in implementing all policies, directives and Resolutions of the Senate;
 - (iii) Attend all Meetings of the Senate unless excused by the Senate.

Section 4: The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall:

- (a) Serve as the Acting Vice President of Internal Affairs with all powers and privileges thereof during absence, infirmity or incapacity of the elected Vice President of Internal Affairs, and become Interim Vice President of Internal Affairs in the event of the Vice President of Internal Affairs' resignation, removal or succession to the Presidency per Article III Section 5(a);
- (b) In the absence of the Vice President of Internal Affairs, temporarily serve as the Chair of the Senate;
- (c) Serve as the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate at the direction of the Chair of the Senate;
- (d) In collaboration with the Parliamentarian, assist and advise the Chair of the Senate;
- (e) Serve on the Agenda and Rules and Administration Committees;

- (f) Serve as an *ex officio* member of all GSO committees, including the Committee on Impeachment per Article V.
 - (i) In the event that the President Pro Tempore of the Senate is the subject of Impeachment or a Signatory on the Articles of Impeachment, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall not serve on the Committee on Impeachment.

Section 5: The Parliamentarian shall:

- (a) Serve as the primary advisor and consultant on parliamentary procedure, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, GSO standing legislation and the GSO Constitution;
- (b) In collaboration with the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, assist and advise the Vice President of Internal Affairs and Chair of the Senate;
- (c) Serve as the Reading Clerk, Teller and Timekeeper of the Senate;
- (d) Serve as the Assistant Sergeant at Arms of the Senate at the direction of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;
- (e) Serve on the Agenda and Rules and Administration Committees;
- (f) Serve as an *ex officio* member of the Finance Committee without the power to vote;
- (g) Serve as an *ex officio* member of the Committee on Impeachment per Article V without the power to vote;
 - (i) In the event that the Parliamentarian is the subject of Impeachment, the Parliamentarian shall not serve on the Committee on Impeachment.
- (h) When requested, advise on legislation and the constitutionality of GSO activities;
 - (i) The Parliamentarian shall not author or sponsor legislation unless it is legislation referred to or submitted by the Rules and Administration Committee.
- (i) Intervene in the situation that GSO Senators, Officers, legislation, or initiatives contradict the GSO Constitution, bylaws, or Syracuse University policies;
- (j) Apply for membership in the National Association of Parliamentarians if the confirmed office holder is not already a member.

- (i) Once per term in office, all dues and fees associated with this application and membership shall be paid in full by the GSO.
- (ii) The Senate shall be informed of the Parliamentarian's membership examination results at its next Regular Meeting.

ARTICLE V: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

Section 1: A GSO Officer or member of the Staff—both are referred to as “Officer” within this Article—shall be removed from office in a manner listed in this Article.

Section 2: An Officer shall be removed by the impeachment process as follows:

- (a) Articles of Impeachment may be brought by any Executive Board member or ten Senators. Articles of Impeachment shall either be brought to the President at any time, or the Executive Board as a whole at any time or presented to the Chair of the Senate at any Regular or Special Meeting.
 - (i) In the event that the President is the subject of Impeachment, the Vice President of Internal Affairs and members of the Rules and Administration Committee, excluding the President, shall preside over the Impeachment process between the submission of the Articles of Impeachment and the appointment of the Committee on Impeachment.
 - (1) In this event the Vice President of Internal Affairs shall chair the meeting to appoint the Committee on Impeachment.
 - (ii) In the event that any Officer other than the President is the subject of Impeachment, the President and members of the Rules and Administration Committee, excluding the Officer in question, shall preside over the Impeachment process between the submission of the Articles of Impeachment and the appointment of the Committee on Impeachment.
 - (1) In this event the Vice President of Internal Affairs, or President Pro Tempore of the Senate if the Vice President of Internal Affairs is the subject of Impeachment, shall chair the meeting to appoint the Committee on Impeachment.

- (2) In the event that both the Vice President of Internal Affairs and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate are concurrently the subjects of Impeachment, whether in the same or separate Articles of Impeachment, the Parliamentarian shall preside over the election of the temporary Chair of the meeting to appoint the Committee on Impeachment.
- (b) Once Articles of Impeachment are received, the presiding Officer, per Article V Section 2(a), shall arrange a meeting between the Signatories of the Articles of Impeachment, the Executive Board, the Staff and the Officer in question to take place within 48 hours of receiving the Articles of Impeachment.
 - (i) At this meeting, the Officer in question will be briefed on the Impeachment process and the Signatories of the Articles of Impeachment shall be afforded the opportunity to explain their reasons for submitting the Articles of Impeachment.
 - (ii) Following the Signatories' explanation of their reasons for submitting the Articles of Impeachment, in order to protect the reputation of the Officer in question and that of the GSO, the Officer in question shall be offered the opportunity to resign.
 - (1) The Officer in question shall have 24 hours to submit a written Letter of Resignation to the Executive Board and Staff. Upon receipt of the Letter of Resignation, the Resignation is effective immediately and shall be communicated to necessary parties.
 - (2) If the Officer in question chooses not to resign, or does not submit a Letter of Resignation within the 24 hour window, the presiding Officer shall immediately forward the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate and proceed with the process for appointing the Committee on Impeachment.
 - (3) Once the Articles of Impeachment are forwarded to the Senate, the remainder of the Impeachment process shall be completed regardless of whether or not the Officer in question resigns after this point.
- (c) Once the Articles of Impeachment are forwarded to the Senate, the Senate shall appoint a Committee on Impeachment at its next Regular

Meeting or Special Meeting called for that purpose, specifying the Committee Chair and Committee members not already specified by this document per Article IV Section 4(f) and Article IV Section 5(g).

(i) The Senate reserves the right to suspend by Resolution any power or access of the Officer(s) subject to Impeachment for the duration of the Impeachment proceedings should they deem necessary.

(1) Any power or access suspended in this manner must be clearly stipulated in the Resolution forming the Committee on Impeachment.

(2) Any power or access suspended in this manner shall be automatically reinstated upon rejection of the motion to remove the Officer in question.

(ii) The Senate reserves the right to appoint any Officer to the Committee on Impeachment, unless that Officer is subject to Impeachment or a Signatory of Articles of Impeachment.

(iii) The Senate reserves the right to remove the Officer(s) subject to Impeachment from the meeting to appoint the Committee on Impeachment, or any member obstructing the proceedings.

(iv) All meetings, documents and correspondence pertaining to the Impeachment process occurring from the submission of the Articles of Impeachment to and including the meeting to appoint the Committee on Impeachment shall be held in Executive Session.

(1) In exception to this provision, the Resolution appointing the Committee on Impeachment shall be public.

(d) The Committee on Impeachment shall interview the Signatories of the Articles of Impeachment and the Officer(s) in question as well as any other individuals the Committee may deem informative. The Committee shall make a Recommendation by Resolution to the Senate within ten academic days of its appointment.

- (i) The meetings of the Committee on Impeachment shall be held in Executive Session.
 - (ii) In making its Recommendation, the Committee must vote by roll, and be published in the Committee's Recommendation. The Committee shall recommend one of the following options: that the Senate (I) take no action, (II) censure the Officer, or (III) remove the Officer.
 - (iii) In the Committee on Impeachment's Recommendation, the Committee may include any evidence or argumentation in support of their Recommendation.
- (e) Once the Committee on Impeachment has made a Recommendation by Resolution, a Special Meeting of the Senate shall be called pursuant to Article II Section 12(b), to be held no later than ten academic days after the Committee issues its Recommendation by Resolution.
 - (f) The Senate shall consider the Committee's Recommendation by Resolution and dispose of the Recommendation by Resolution in the same manner as all other Senate business.
 - (i) Removal of an Officer requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.
 - (ii) When sitting for such a vote, quorum is a majority of Senators, excluding vacant seats.
 - (iii) Upon result of the vote on the Recommendation by Resolution, the Recommendation by Resolution and result shall be made public.
 - (g) The Senate reserves the right to lift the protections of Executive Session for any documents or information pertaining to the Impeachment process in question.
 - (i) This action must occur by Resolution and requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.

Section 3: An Officer may be removed by unanimous vote of the Executive Board.

- (a) An Executive Board Officer may be removed by unanimous vote of the other Executive Board Officers.
- (b) This action may only be taken when the Senate is not in Session.
- (c) This action may be overruled by the Senate pursuant to Article II Section 13(n).

Section 4: An Officer may resign from office by submitting a written Letter of Resignation to be accepted by the Executive Board.

Section 5: On any procedure pertaining to the Impeachment or removal of an Officer not specified in this document, the most recent addition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall serve as the official guide on how to proceed.

ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by any Senator or Officer.

Section 2: Proposed amendments may be considered either at a Regular or Special Meeting.

(a) To be considered at a Regular Meeting, the amendment must be presented to the Senate at the preceding Regular Meeting.

(b) To be considered at a Special Meeting, the amendment and notice of the meeting must be sent to all Senators at least 14 days before the Special Meeting.

Section 3: Amendments to the Constitution require a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote. Quorum for amendments shall be a majority of voting Senate membership per Article II Section 2, excluding vacant seats. Amendments to Resolutions to amend the Constitution also require a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote.

Section 4: The Rules and Administration Committee shall have the responsibility of ensuring that all proposed amendments are communicated to the Senate in a transparent manner. The Rules and Administration Committee shall not have the power to block proposed amendments from going to the Senate floor.

Section 5: Resolutions of Amendment must have an effective date.

ARTICLE VII: MISCELLANEOUS

Section 1: The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Student Organization of Syracuse University, also called the Graduate Student Organization, and also referred to as the GSO.

Section 2: The GSO is a not-for-profit organization.

Section 3: The GSO does not discriminate and prohibits harassment or discrimination related to any protected category including creed, ethnicity, citizenship, sexual

orientation, national origin, sex, gender, pregnancy, reproductive health decisions, disability, marital status, political or social affiliation, age, race, color, veteran status, military status, religion, sexual orientation, domestic violence status, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender.

Section 4: The GSO shall not conspire or engage in hazing, as defined by University Policy.

Section 5: The GSO shall comply with Syracuse University's Code of Student Conduct.

Section 6: No GSO member is eligible for a fee waiver whatsoever.

Section 7: GSO Officers and Staff are not University employees in their capacities as Officers and Staff.

Section 8: Graduate students at SUNY-ESF shall pay a portion of the total student fee as determined by an agreement reached between the Executive Board and the SUNY- ESF Graduate Student Association. The graduate students of SUNY-ESF are eligible to use select services provided by the GSO, as determined by the aforementioned agreement.

Section 9: Within this document the following terms are defined as such:

- (a) An academic day is defined as any day in the Fall, Spring, Maymester, or Summer semesters with scheduled class meetings.
- (b) Executive Session is defined as a meeting or portion of a meeting, and any documents or information pertaining thereto, that is held in confidentiality in which only the members of the Senate per Article II Section 2 and any special invitees are permitted to be in attendance.

Appendix A: Constitutional Convention Plan



Rules and Administration Committee AY23/24

Constitutional Convention Plan

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I. Preparatory Phase:

- a. Establishing Legitimacy: Although any Senator can write a resolution to change the Graduate Student Organization Constitution (**GSOC**), it is in the special interest of the Rules and Administration Committee to review and make recommendations for changes to the **GSOC**. This is under the charge of the RAC as per GSO SR 23.05.
- b. Goals: Identify ambiguities, update outdated language (e.g. Academic Plan vs Academic Program), address constitutional gaps and incongruencies.
- c. Research and analysis: Review the existing constitution thoroughly and identify areas that require modification or clarification. This will be the responsibility of everyone involved, there will be shared document for line by line changes, notes, and comments.
- d. Agenda: The CCC will consist of 5 meetings, and the crafting of a Resolution that will be presented during the December Regular Meeting and Voted on in the first meeting in the Spring Semester. Each meeting will cover (a) specific Article(s) within the **GSOC**.
 - i. *Meeting 1*: Article I-The Senate
 - ii. *Meeting 2*: Article II- The Executive Board
 - iii. *Meeting 3*: Article III V and VI- The Staff & Amendments & Article VI- Miscellaneous
 - iv. *Meeting 4*: Article IV- Removal of Officers
 - v. *Hearing*: Public hearing will be published on the GSO Calendar to invite the public to share any concerns regarding the current language of the constitution.
 - vi. *Meeting 5*: Overview, and Resolution Drafting/Approval
 - vii. *December 6th Regular Senate Meeting*: Submit Resolution to the Senate
 - viii. *First Regular Senate Meeting in Spring*: Senate Votes on Resolution

II. Member Selection:

- a. Representation: The Rules and Administration Committee will form a subcommittee for the purpose of constitutional convention this will consist of all the members of the RAC and others that show interest.
- b. Size: There shall be no more than 11 members of the committee to facilitate meaningful discussions and foster collaboration.
 - i. Automatic members include the RAC members: President, Internal Vice President, President Pro Tempore, Parliamentarian, Invited members.
 - ii. The other members will include any senator that applies via an application designed and implemented by the Vice President of Internal Affairs.

III. Convention Structure:

- a. Chair: The chair of the Constitutional Convention Committee (CCC) (special subcommittee of the RAC) will be the Vice President of Internal Affairs. Meetings will be scheduled in advance as far as possible.
- b. Record Keeping and Transparency: All meetings will be recorded for minute keeping and transparency purposes. Meeting minutes will be available to any senator upon request. Any member of the senate can join meetings but, to facilitate meaningful discussion any person that is not a member of the official committee will not be allowed to participate unless the majority of members vote to allow it⁴. Non-members will not be allowed to vote in the meetings. All documents and files associated with this process are, by default, available for viewing by any GSO member unless the majority of committee members vote to cover any portion of the proceedings under executive session (ES)⁵. In this case, the meeting minutes will reflect the time

⁴ This is in an intentional exception to **RONR 50:27** Conduct of Business in Committees- "... During actual Deliberations of the committee, only committee members have the right to be present."

⁵ See **RONR 9:24-7; 47:36; 49:17-19**.

in ES and the reason the committee decided enter ES. Any person that is in the meeting and not a member of the committee will be asked to leave if the committee decides to enter ES and can be invited back after the portion of the meeting under ES has concluded.

IV. Discussion and Decision-Making:

- a. Meetings: All meetings will be conducted in accordance to **RONR 50: 21-30** (Conduct of Business in Committees) unless this document, the current GSO Constitution (**GSOC**), or university by-laws dictate otherwise.
- b. Consensus-building: The shared document will have a list of specific lines in the constitution that the committee wishes to address, this will be in order (eg **GSOC Article II Section 4(k)** will be addressed after **GSOC Article I Section 13(t)**). If it is pointed out that a change in one section necessitates a change in a subsequent section, it will be put on the list in its appropriate place and discussed accordingly.
 - i. Additions: If there are proposed additions to the GSOC, the member will write out the addition and place it in the shared document in the place they feel it should be. For example, if the member wants to add to Article IV Section 2, they will place this in the appropriate section of the shared document and clearly mark it as an “Addition.” The member must draft their reasoning behind the addition for both the committee and—if approved by the committee—the senate.
- c. Voting: Each finalized line edit will be voted upon by the members of the committee, each decision will be by simple majority except the approval of the finalized revised constitution. The finalized version of the constitution shall be approved before going to the senate. This will require $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of the committee. The Parliamentarian will have the tie breaking vote. It is understood that this vote will not reflect the Parliamentarian’s personal view on the motion rather it will reflect if the motion is procedurally sound.
 - i. Minority Opinion: If there is division among members and those in descent wish to draft a minority opinion on the document as a whole or specific line edits, they are free to do so. This opinion will be disseminated to the senate alongside the majority approved document with explanations in the December Regular Senate Meeting and the First Regular Meeting of the Spring Semester.

V. Drafting the Revised Constitution:

- a. Compilation: As the discussions progress and decisions are made, a compilation of all the proposed changes and revisions will be distilled into a consolidated draft constitution. A document indicating each line change accompanied by an explanation will be created to keep track of changes and votes.
- b. Review: Once the revised draft of each section is complete, careful independent review by each committee member will occur to ensure the changes adhere to University Policy and do not inadvertently introduce conflicts or inconsistencies. A vote requiring a $\frac{2}{3}$ threshold will be conducted after each section is complete. Once the entire document is complete a further vote requiring a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote threshold will be required before the document can be forwarded to the Senate for consideration.

VI. Ratification and Implementation:

- a. Public awareness: Throughout the process the committee must work with the External Vice-President and the Communications Secretary to conduct a public education campaign to inform the graduate population about the proposed revisions and their implications. This can be done through a special bulletin that gets sent out prior to the November Regular Meeting to encourage public dialogue and debates to promote understanding and garner support for the revised constitution.

- b. Ratification process: Please see **GSOC Article V**. If there are proposed changes to this section, the ratification process must adhere to the current language within the **GSOC** and not the proposed changes.

Appendix B: GSO Rules & Administration Committee Charge

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 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 Officer of the GSO. The committee may invite other members of the GSO Senate to its meetings at its discretion.

Appendix C: Synopsis of Proposed Changes in the GSO Constitution

Expanded Membership to Include SUNY-ESF Students

- **Current (Article I, Section 1):** Membership is limited to Syracuse University graduate students.
- **Proposed (Article I, Section 2):** Extends membership to SUNY-ESF students who pay Syracuse University graduate student activity fees. This inclusive approach integrates a broader student community, potentially enriching the GSO's diversity and representation.

Restructuring of the Senate and Voting Rights

- **Current:** Basic structure with limited details on composition and voting rights.
- **Proposed (Article II, Sections 2-10):**
 - Clearly defines Senate membership, including GSO Officers, types of Senators, and a non-voting Parliamentarian.
 - Introduces a more democratic approach in Senator elections and attendance requirements, promoting active participation and accountability.

Redefinition of Executive Board and Junior Officers

- **Current (Article II, Section 2):** Secretaries hold full Executive Officer status with voting rights on the Executive Board.
- **Proposed (Article III, Section 2(a)):**
 - Redefines Secretaries as "Junior Officers," without voting rights on Board business.
 - **Discussion:** Throughout this process there was immense effort to distinguish the roles and responsibilities within the Executive Board. The proposal to classify Secretaries as "Junior Officers" without voting rights on Executive Board matters was based on the understanding that these roles are primarily administrative and supportive, not decision-making. This distinction aligns with common practices in other organizations where secretaries attend board meetings but do not vote on strategic or policy matters.
 - **Impact:** This change aims to streamline Executive Board decision-making and clarify the distinction between strategic and administrative roles within the organization.

Codified Voting Rights for Executive Board Officers (Revision)

- **Previous Understanding:** Traditionally, Executive Board Officers, except for the Vice President of Internal Affairs, who votes only to break ties, have been voting members in the Senate.

- **Proposed Change (Article II, Section 2):** The amendment seeks to codify the longstanding tradition by explicitly granting voting rights to all Executive Board Officers in Senate meetings, aligning the written constitution with the actual operational practices.
- **Rationale for the Amendment:**
 - **Consistency and Tradition:** Historical attempts to create exceptions for officer voting rights were often overlooked, leading to a discrepancy between the constitution and practice. The proposed amendment addresses these inconsistencies and formally incorporates the Senate's traditional operations into the constitution.
 - **Impact of the Overhaul:**
 - **Elimination of Ambiguity:** This change removes the obscurity of previous provisions and clarifies the role of Executive Officers in Senate votes, except for the Vice President of Internal Affairs, whose voting is limited to tie-breaking scenarios.
 - **Democratic Integrity:** Formalizing this right enhances the democratic process within the GSO, ensuring all Executive Officers can fully participate in the legislative discussions and decisions.

Stipends for Staff Members

- **Current (Article III, Section 2):** Staff roles are advisory without eligibility for stipends.
- **Proposed (Article IV, Section 2):** Introduces the possibility of staff receiving stipends, contingent upon Senate direction. This amendment could enhance the attractiveness of staff positions and bring in more skilled professionals.

Revised Officer Removal Processes

- **Current (Article IV, Sections 1-3):** Provides a basic framework for the impeachment and removal of Officers, including the ability to bring articles of impeachment and the process for Executive Board or Senate action.
- **Proposed Revisions (Article V, Sections 1-5):**
 - **Expansion of Process:** The proposed changes introduce a more granular step-by-step impeachment process. This begins with initial meetings between the parties involved to discuss the grounds for impeachment, offering a structured approach introducing preliminary hearings.
 - **Opportunity for Resignation:** Before formal Senate proceedings, Officers are given the opportunity to resign. This aligns with guidance in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR)* that allows an individual to withdraw from their position voluntarily when facing potential disciplinary action.

- **Transparency and Fairness:** By outlining a clear sequence of actions and ensuring all parties have the opportunity to present their case, the process is made more transparent. This mirrors *RONR*'s emphasis on protecting the rights of all members, including those facing disciplinary measures.
- **Accountable Removal Proceedings:** By requiring a structured process and multiple checks, the proceedings for removal are designed to be fairer and more accountable, providing a balance between the authority of the organization and the rights of its Officers.

Integrating these revisions into the GSO Constitution ensures that the removal of Officers is conducted with the utmost fairness, aligning the organization's governance with the established standards set forth by *RONR*. These changes aim to fill in the gaps of the previous version, offering a more detailed and robust procedure that upholds the principles of due process and equitable treatment.

Other Notable Changes

- **Attendance Requirements for Senators (Article II, Sections 10-12 Proposed Changes):**
 - Proposed Changes: Implement strict attendance rules for Senators, requiring presence at all Regular and Special Meetings of the GSO Senate. Senators who miss two consecutive meetings, or three in total, are subject to removal. Attendance is defined as being present for the majority of the meeting.
 - Impact: These changes aim to enforce accountability and ensure active and consistent participation from Senators, which is vital for effective governance and decision-making within the GSO.
- **Senate Powers and Committee Dynamics (Article II, Sections 13-15 Proposed Changes):**
 - Extends Senate's authority in creating, merging, or dissolving committees, which could lead to more dynamic and responsive committee structures.
 - Enhances Senate's role in fiscal decision-making and policy establishment, potentially leading to more efficient resource allocation and policy development.
- **Detailed Roles of President Pro Tempore and Parliamentarian**
 - **President Pro Tempore (Article IV, Section 4 Proposed Changes):**
 - Will act as Vice President of Internal Affairs when needed, and potentially step into the role permanently in specific circumstances.
 - Is tasked with chairing Senate meetings in the absence of the Vice President of Internal Affairs.

- Is responsible for maintaining order as Sergeant at Arms and aiding the Chair of the Senate, supported by the Parliamentarian.
- Participates on influential committees, including the Agenda and Rules and Administration Committees.
- Holds *ex officio* membership on all GSO committees and, uniquely, the Committee on Impeachment, excluding cases of personal involvement.
- **Parliamentarian (Article IV, Section 5 Proposed Changes):**
 - Serves as the primary advisor on parliamentary procedure, ensuring Senate adherence to the GSO Constitution and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.
 - Assists and advises the Senate Chair, in collaboration with the President Pro Tempore.
 - Manages Senate meeting logistics as the Reading Clerk, Teller, and Timekeeper.
 - Supports the President Pro Tempore in maintaining order as the Assistant Sergeant at Arms.
 - Sits on key committees, such as the Agenda and Rules and Administration Committees, and non-voting *ex officio* on the Finance Committee.
 - Provides consultation on the constitutionality of GSO activities and legislation, intervening when necessary.
 - Is mandated to pursue membership in the National Association of Parliamentarians, with the GSO covering associated costs, to ensure professional standards are met.

These proposed changes highlight the evolution of the President Pro Tempore and the Parliamentarian's roles to more involved and influential positions within the GSO, justifying the potential for stipends as approved by the Senate.

- **Executive Board's Expanded Advisory Role (Article III, Sections 2-3 Proposed Changes):**
 - Details the Executive Board's advisory and supportive roles to the President, including handling of vacancies and discretionary fund management.
 - This change may lead to a more cohesive and strategically aligned Executive Board, potentially enhancing organizational effectiveness.

Conclusion and Considerations for Senators and Constituents

The proposed changes to the GSO Constitution are extensive and aim to enhance governance structures, inclusivity, and operational efficiency. The reclassification of Secretaries, introduction of stipends for staff, and the formalization of Executive Board Officers' voting rights in the Senate are particularly impactful. Constituents should consider how these changes align with the long-term goals of the GSO, their potential impact on representation and decision-making, and the implications for organizational dynamics. The decision to implement these changes should be informed by a thorough understanding of their potential effects on the GSO's governance and operations.