

# **Graduate History Society Constitution of the University of Toronto**

**Adopted on: 25 April 2016**

**Latest amendment: 29 February 2024**

## **1. Name and Definitions**

- 1.1. The Graduate History Society is the primary representative body for graduate students enrolled in the Department of History at the University of Toronto.
- 1.2. The Graduate History Society will hereafter be referred to as the GHS.
- 1.3. The Department of History will hereafter be referred to as the Department.

## **2. Objectives**

- 2.1. The objectives of the GHS will be to:
  - 2.1.1. Promote and maintain communication between history graduate students and both the Department and the University administration.
  - 2.1.2. Represent individual history graduate students, as well as groups of graduate students, in matters relating to the interests of such students.
  - 2.1.3. Initiate, sponsor, coordinate and promote the social functions of the GHS.

## **3. Membership**

- 3.1. The following will be members of the GHS: all full- and part-time students registered with the School of Graduate Studies in the Department of History.
- 3.2. All members will have full voting and speaking rights at General Meetings.
- 3.3. The GHS will strive to create an accessible, equitable environment and will not discriminate against members on the basis of age, race, disability, creed, colour, national origin, caste, political or religious affiliation, sex and/or gender, sexual orientation, marital status, place of residence, status as a full-time or part-time graduate student, status as a domestic or international graduate student, or type of programme.

## **4. Executive Committee**

- 4.1. The Executive Committee of the GHS will consist of the following:
  - 4.1.1. President
  - 4.1.2. Vice-President
  - 4.1.3. Secretary
  - 4.1.4. Treasurer
  - 4.1.5. Social Chairs (2–3)
  - 4.1.6. Graduate Students' Union Representatives (2)
  - 4.1.7. Program Committee Representatives (3–4)
  - 4.1.8. Listserv Administrator

- 4.1.9. Webmaster
  - 4.1.10. M.A. Representative
  - 4.1.11. CUPE Representative
  - 4.1.12. Canadian Historical Association Representative
- 4.2. The Executive Committee will be chosen by election at a General Meeting of the GHS. See Article IX for election procedures.
- 4.3. General Responsibilities:
- 4.3.1. Members of the executive will attend all GHS meetings, barring illness, emergencies, etc.
  - 4.3.2. The executive will send eight members to each departmental faculty meeting. These spots will be filled by the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and four other members of the executive. If eight members of the executive are unable to attend, graduate students who are not in the executive will be asked to attend the faculty meeting in order to ensure full representation for graduate students.
- 4.4. Duties of Executive Positions:
- 4.4.1. President
    - 4.4.1.1. Organize GHS meetings
    - 4.4.1.2. Meet with the Graduate Coordinator and Department Chair and keep them informed of graduate student issues
    - 4.4.1.3. Serve as primary liaison with the HSA
    - 4.4.1.4. Attend regular departmental meetings with voting privileges
    - 4.4.1.5. Ensure smooth running of the GHS
  - 4.4.2. Vice-President
    - 4.4.2.1. Assist the President
    - 4.4.2.2. Attend regular departmental meetings with voting privileges
    - 4.4.2.3. The Vice-President will assume all administrative duties, if the President is absent from the Department or otherwise unable to fulfil GHS obligations.
    - 4.4.2.4. The VP will organise academic workshops (approximately 5-8 per academic year).
  - 4.4.3. Secretary
    - 4.4.3.1. Take minutes at all GHS meetings
    - 4.4.3.2. Post minutes on GHS listserv and in GHS Google Drive
    - 4.4.3.3. Maintain grants and comp folders in GHS Drive
    - 4.4.3.4. Obtain recent comp questions from graduate office each term, and put out a call for previous comps lists successful scholarship statements each spring, which are then uploaded to the GHS Drive
    - 4.4.3.5. Attend regular departmental meetings with voting privileges

- 4.4.3.6. The grants and comps questions portion of the secretary role (4.4.c.iii-iv) can be split into a separate role of Archivist if desired by Secretary and potential Archivist.
- 4.4.4. Treasurer
  - 4.4.4.1. Maintain GHS checking account (with president)
  - 4.4.4.2. Balance the books
  - 4.4.4.3. Apply for annual GSU head grant
  - 4.4.4.4. Attend regular departmental meetings with voting privileges
- 4.4.5. Social Chairs (2-3)
  - 4.4.5.1. Organize coffee socials, pub nights, athletics, and/or other social events
  - 4.4.5.2. Sit on the Orientation Committee, assisting with events during the first month of the fall semester.
- 4.4.6. Graduate Students' Union Representatives (2)
  - 4.4.6.1. Attend all GSU meetings and report back to the GHS
  - 4.4.6.2. Post important notices on the GHS listserv
  - 4.4.6.3. It is necessary for reps to attend all GSU meetings in order for the GHS to receive its funding from the GSU
- 4.4.7. Programs Committee Representatives (3-4 positions: 1 MA; 2 PhD min.)
  - 4.4.7.1. Attend all Graduate Program Committee Meetings
  - 4.4.7.2. Report on Graduate Program Committee Meetings to the GHS
- 4.4.8. Listserv and Web Administrator
  - 4.4.8.1. Administer the GHS listserv (as owner)
  - 4.4.8.2. Maintain the list by performing an annual purge in the spring
  - 4.4.8.3. Monitor content to see that listserv etiquette is followed
  - 4.4.8.4. Maintain and update the GHS website and GHS content on the department website
  - 4.4.8.5. Liaise with the departmental webmaster as appropriate
  - 4.4.8.6. The web portion of the Listserv and Web Administrator can be split into a separate role of Webmaster if desired by Listserv Administrator and potential Webmaster
- 4.4.9. M.A. Representative
  - 4.4.9.1. Bring to the attention of the GHS any issues or concerns on behalf of M.A. students
  - 4.4.9.2. Organize the annual M.A. students' history symposium
- 4.4.10. CUPE Representative (1-2)
  - 4.4.10.1. Serves as liaison between the GHS and CUPE 3902
  - 4.4.10.2. Attends CUPE 3902 meetings

- 4.4.10.3. Reports CUPE 3902 news to GHS members via the listserv, facebook, and at GHS meetings
- 4.4.10.4. Must be a current member of CUPE 3902
  
- 4.4.11. Canadian Historical Association Representative
  - 4.4.11.1. Serves as liaison between the GHS and the Canadian Historical Association (CHA)
  - 4.4.11.2. Reports relevant CHA news to GHS members via the listserv, facebook, and at GHS meetings
  
- 4.5. Executive positions may be shared between two members (for example, co-presidents or co-vice presidents). Members wishing to share an executive position should make a joint bid for election, and otherwise follow the procedures in Article IX.
  
- 4.6. Termination of Executives or General Members:
  - 4.6.1. Any member of the GHS who commits an act negatively affecting the interests of the GHS and its members, including non-disclosure of a significant or continuing conflict of interest, may be given notice of removal.
  - 4.6.2. The member up for removal shall have the right to defend their actions.
  - 4.6.3. A two-thirds majority vote of the current members present in favour of removal is required. The member must have the right to an appeal before the general membership, and the majority vote of the general membership will have the final say on the matter.
  - 4.6.4. The member will be removed from the GHS' membership and will lose any privileges associated with being a member of the GHS.
  - 4.6.5. Executive members are subject to the same termination or impeachment process and, as determined by the vote, may lose their executive position along with their membership to the group.

## **5. Finances**

- 5.1. The GHS receives its funds primarily from the GSU and the History Department.
- 5.2. The Treasurer will handle the administration of the expense reimbursements approved by the body of the GHS.
- 5.3. The Treasurer and the President will have signing authority on the GHS Chequing Account.<sup>1</sup>

## **6. Meetings**

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<sup>1</sup> The group's executive or members may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature. This is not intended to preclude the collection of membership fees to cover the expenses of the group, or of charges for specific activities, programs or events, or to prohibit groups from engaging in legitimate fundraising. However, the group will not have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial organization, will not provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the organization, and will not pay salaries to some or all of its officers.

- 6.1. The GHS will hold one general meeting per month during the academic year.
- 6.2. Other informal executive meetings are held at the discretion of the President and Vice-President.
- 6.3. Quorum for the Monthly General Meeting is 6 members.
- 6.4. The Monthly General Meeting will be convened by the President.
- 6.5. The Monthly General Meeting will be held in Sid Smith.
- 6.6. The agenda for the Monthly General Meeting will be distributed to members by the president at least 24 hours in advance.

## 7. Committees

- 7.1. Standing and ad-hoc committees may be formed by a motion passed with majority vote in a GHS general meeting.
- 7.2. Such committees may be staffed by any member of the GHS.
- 7.3. Such committees may be dissolved by majority vote in a GHS general meeting.
- 7.4. Permanent standing committees include:
  - 7.4.1. *Past Tense: Graduate Review of History* Editorial Team
  - 7.4.2. Annual Graduate History Symposium Organizing Committee
  - 7.4.3. Graduate Study Space Committee

## 8. Elections

- 8.1. Elections for the GHS executive committee will be held at the first General Meeting of the academic year, which should take place in September.
- 8.2. The outgoing president will circulate the list of Executive Positions to the GHS Membership at least one week prior to the General Meeting.
- 8.3. Nominations may be submitted to the outgoing president prior to the General Meeting, or may be presented at the meeting.
- 8.4. If there is only one nomination for an Executive Position, the nominee will be awarded the position by acclamation.
- 8.5. If there is more than one nominee for the position, each nominee has the opportunity to speak and garner support for their nomination during the GM.
- 8.6. A simple majority ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) vote is required for a nominee to claim that position. Votes will be cast by show of hands, unless a secret ballot is approved.
- 8.7. Any member at the General Meeting may submit a motion to vote by secret ballot. If approved by a majority vote, voting will proceed by secret ballot with results counted by the outgoing president.
- 8.8. In the event of a tie, a second vote is held immediately. After two attempts to break a tie (i.e. after the third vote) the outgoing president will cast the deciding vote.

8.9. If a member of the Executive Committee resigns, by sending the President an email indicating resignation, a by-election will occur at the next regularly scheduled monthly meeting and will follow the election protocol as above.

8.9.1. If the President resigns from their position, they must send a letter of resignation to the GHS membership via the listserv. They must also set the next monthly meeting at which the by-election will take place and follow the election protocol as above.

## **9. Listserv**

9.1. The GHS listserv will be accessible to all members of the GHS.

9.2. The contents of the GHS listserv are to be kept in strict confidence—access is only permitted to members of the GHS and graduate History Department.

## **10. “Graduate History Society (University of Toronto)” Facebook group**

10.1. The Facebook group “Graduate History Society (University of Toronto),” hereafter the “GHS Facebook Group,” is the Facebook group for members of the Graduate History Society

10.2. The GHS Facebook Group will be accessible to all members of the GHS.

10.3. Membership to the GHS Facebook Group consists of current GHS members in addition to former members of the GHS up to 6 months after program completion.

10.3.1. Graduate students from related programs will be granted membership on a case by case basis.

10.4. The GHS Facebook Group’s membership will be moderated by the Executive Committee.

## **11. Amendments**

11.1. Amendments to this Constitution will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Membership of the GHS present at a General Meeting.

11.2. Written notice of any proposed Amendment will be prepared and copies distributed to all GHS members at least two weeks in advance of such a Meeting.

11.3. Members away on research or otherwise unable to attend General Meetings will have the right to vote on proposed Amendments by proxy, normally by emailing the President in advance of the scheduled Meeting.

## **12. Statements and Letters**

12.1. The GHS, in fulfilling its Objective under 2.1.2, may issue statements and/or letters on matters related to the interests of its members.

12.1.1. Statements or letters issued by the GHS will be written by members of the Executive and/or by committees formed by the GHS.

12.1.2. Statements or letters issued to the Department on matters immediately relevant to Members' experience in the program (such as program structure and funding) must be approved at a GHS meeting by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote of the Membership present at a General Meeting.

12.1.2.1. Proposed statements or letters will be circulated to membership via the Listserv for at least one week prior to the General Meeting.

12.1.2.2. Members away on research or otherwise unable to attend General Meetings will have the right to vote on proposed statements or letters by proxy, by emailing the President in advance of the scheduled Meeting.

12.1.3. Statements or letters issued to the Department on matters relating to the interests of GHS Members but beyond those immediately relevant to Members' experience in the program or statements issued externally to an audience intended to include the general public must be approved by the GHS membership in an online vote.

12.1.3.1. Proposed statements or letters will be circulated to membership via the Listserv at least two weeks prior to a vote.

12.1.3.2. Votes will require participation from half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of the GHS membership.

12.1.3.3. Statements or letters will require a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote.

12.1.3.4. Ballots will be secret.

12.2. The GHS, in fulfilling its Objective under 2.1.2, may endorse statements and/or letters circulating within the University on matters related to the interests of its members.

12.2.1. Such statements should be written by members of the University community.

12.2.2. GHS approval of statements or letters circulated within the University on matters immediately relevant to Members' experience at the University (such as structure or funding) must be approved at a GHS meeting by a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote of the Membership present at a General Meeting.

12.2.2.1. Proposed statements or letters will be circulated to membership via the Listserv at least one week prior to the General Meeting.

12.2.2.2. Members away on research or otherwise unable to attend General Meetings will have the right to vote on proposed statements or letters by proxy, normally by emailing the President in advance of the scheduled Meeting.

12.2.3. Statements or letters circulated within the University on matters relating to the interests of GHS Members but beyond those immediately relevant to Members' experience at the University must be approved by the GHS membership in an online vote.

- 12.2.3.1. Proposed statements or letters will be circulated to membership via the Listserv for at least two weeks prior to a vote.
- 12.2.3.2. Votes will require participation from half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of the GHS membership.
- 12.2.3.3. Statements or letters will require a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote.
- 12.2.3.4. Ballots will be secret.