Graduate Student Association (GSA) Handbook

Medical College of Wisconsin
School of Graduate Studies

Updated: 2023-2024 Academic Year

Graduate Student Association Handbook
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Constitution of the Graduate Student Association, Medical College of Wisconsin, School of Graduate Studies

I. **Title**

The Graduate Student Association of the Medical College of Wisconsin's School of Graduate Studies

II. **Purpose**

A. To provide a democratic form of self-government by and for the graduate students of the School of Graduate Studies;

B. To provide a mechanism for voicing collective graduate student opinions to the faculty and administration of the School of Graduate Studies;

C. To aid in disseminating information to graduate students;

D. To promote and encourage fellowship among graduate students.

III. **Structure**

A. **Membership** of the Graduate Student Association is composed of all degree-seeking students in programs administered by the School of Graduate Studies.

B. The **Representative Council** of the Graduate Student Association is composed of the following:

1. The **Officers** of the **Representative Council**:
    a. President
    b. Vice President
    c. Treasurer
    d. Secretary
    e. Public Relations
2. One **Representative** from each degree-granting program, including umbrella programs, or department of the School of Graduate Studies.
3. **Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) Representative**:
    a. Upon mutual agreement between the Medical Student Assembly and the Graduate Student Association, a student seeking both MD and PhD degrees will be elected by the MSTP students to serve as a liaison between the two groups in addition to the existing representatives from each organization.
    b. The **MSTP Representative** must have partially completed the MD program and currently pursuing the PhD program.
4. The **Advisory Board**
    a. One Faculty Advisor elected annually by the **Representative Council** during the All Student Meeting
    b. One Faculty Advisor appointed by the Graduate Studies Council

c. The Director of Enrollment for the School of Graduate Studies
d. Any other advisors elected by the voting members of the **Representative Council** during the All Student Meeting
e. Administrative Staff on Enrollment Team

IV. **Responsibilities**

A. **President**

1. To vote as a member of the **Representative Council**
2. To act as a liaison between the Graduate Student Association and the Medical College of Wisconsin's Administration and Faculty
3. To serve as a student representative to the Graduate Studies Council of the School of Graduate Studies
4. To serve as a student representative to the Commencement Committee
5. To serve as a student representative to the Assessment Oversight Committee
6. To call and run the meetings of the **Representative Council**
7. To create standing committees of the **Representative Council** and approve their chairs
8. To create ad hoc committees of the **Representative Council** and approve their chairs

B. **Vice President**

1. To vote as a member of the **Representative Council**
2. To serve as a student representative to the Graduate Studies Council of the School of Graduate Studies
3. To serve as a student representative to the Commencement Committee
4. To serve as a co-President of the Student Leadership Collective (SLC)
5. To fulfill the **President's** responsibilities in the **President's** absence or as requested by the **President**

C. **Treasurer**

1. *This position serves for two years*
2. To vote as a member of the **Representative Council**
3. To act as liaison between the **Representative Council** and the Business Manager of the School of Graduate Studies
4. To keep record of financial transactions and to present a written financial status report of Graduate Student Association accounts at each meeting of the **Representative Council**
5. To serve as a student representative to the Faculty Council

D. **Secretary**

1. To vote as a member of the **Representative Council**
2. To record and disperse minutes of **Representative Council** or Graduate Student Association meetings

3. To serve as a student representative to the Medical College of Wisconsin/Marquette Medical Alumni Association
    a. As a student representative, the **Secretary** acts as a liaison between the Director of the Alumni Association and the Graduate Student Association. They will also attend the Alumni Association's Board of Directors' quarterly meetings where they will provide an update on the happenings of the Graduate Student Association and outcomes or circumstances that are relevant to the interest of the Alumni Association.

E. **Public Relations**
1. To vote as a member of the **Representative Council**
2. To help plan, advertise, and document Graduate Student Association events
3. To work with the Graduate School to update the Graduate Student Association's website as needed
4. To manage and post to the Graduate Student Association's social media pages

F. **Department / Program Representatives**
1. To vote as members of the **Representative Council**
2. To represent their respective programs' interests to the **Representative Council** and distribute important GSA updates to their respective program
3. To make themselves available to chair or serve on standing or ad hoc committees of the **Representative Council**
    a. **Representatives** must serve on at least two standing committees

G. **Medical Scientist Training Program Representative**
1. To vote as a member of the **Representative Council**
2. To act as liaison between the Medical Student Assembly and the Graduate Student Association's **Representative Council** by attending the monthly meetings of each.

H. **Non-voting Members of the Representative Council**
1. **Connection Groups**
    a. International / Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: This group has a primary focus on inclusion and supporting international students in the School of Graduate Studies. This group is dedicated to connecting and supporting graduate students by providing a positive environment where they can feel included, share their experiences, and talk about issues today regarding diversity and inclusion. This group meets monthly.
    b. LGBTQ+: This group is dedicated to facilitating connections among members of the LGBTQ+ community in the School of Graduate Studies. This group is meant to offer support by fostering a safe

and welcoming environment on campus so that students can show up as their authentic selves and perform at their full potential. This group provides a platform for sharing LGBTQ+ resources that are available on and off campus as well as participate in educational and social group activities. This group meets monthly.

c. Student Parents: This group brings together graduate students that have the dual responsibility of graduate school and parenting or caretaking. This group's goal is to provide a safe space to discuss the unique challenges faced raising children while pursuing higher education. This group meets monthly during the lunch hour.
d. Women in Science: This group offers support to anyone identifying as female through a community for sharing specific and unique experiences women have in academic research. This group meets monthly during the lunch hour.

2. **Advisory Board**
   a. Elected Faculty Advisor: To provide the viewpoint of the faculty of the School of Graduate Studies
   b. Appointed Faculty Advisor: To provide the viewpoint of the Graduate Studies Council
   c. Director of Enrollment: To provide the history and policy of the School of Graduate Studies
   d. Administrative Staff: To assist with disseminating information related to the Graduate Student Association, scheduling related meetings, and planning events

V. Election Procedures

A. Nomination

1. All degree-seeking graduate students who have completed at least one year in a degree-granting program of the MCW School of Graduate Studies are eligible for election to a **Department** or **Program Representative** position for their respective department or graduate program
2. All members of the Graduate Student Association that have served at least one year on the **Representative Council** are eligible for election to **Officer** positions
   a. If no members with at least one year on the **Representative Council** are able to fill the **Officer** positions of **Treasurer**, **Secretary**, and **Public Relations**, then the positions may be filled by any member of the Graduate Student Association
   b. The **President** and **Vice President** positions ***must*** be filled by a member with at least one year on the **Representative Council**.
3. Any degree-seeking graduate students can self-nominate or nominate their peers for the positions of the **Officers** and **Department** and **Program Representatives** of the **Representative Council**
4. Degree-seeking graduate students who are accepting nominations for

any **Officer** or **Representative** position are expected to attend all meetings of the **Representative Council** from 12pm-1pm on the first Tuesday of each month (with exceptions around holidays)

B. **Election of Officers**
   1. Persons accepting nomination for an **Officer** position will be put on a ballot and a general election will be held in which all Graduate Student Association members are eligible to vote
   2. The new **Officers** (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Public Relations) are the top vote recipients for each position

C. **Election of Department and Program Representatives**
   1. All departments and programs hold an election following the election of **Officers** in which all degree-seeking graduate students of that department or program are eligible to vote for their **Representative**
      a. **Representatives** are expected to attend all monthly meetings of the **Representative Council** – notice of absence must be given to the **President** and **Secretary** as far in advance as possible
   2. The new **Department** and **Program Representatives** are the top vote recipients in each department and program
      a. If a **Representative** must step down or can no longer attend the monthly **Representative Council** meetings, they will be expected to find a replacement from their department or program

D. **Election of Advisory Board Members**
   1. A Faculty Advisor will be elected by the **Representative Council** during the All Student Meeting

E. **Appointment of Additional Advisory Board Members**
   1. A Faculty Advisor will be appointed by the Graduate Studies Council
   2. The Director of Enrollment will be appointed to the Advisory Board
   3. An Education Program Coordinator from the Graduate School Office will be appointed to the Advisory Board

F. **Timing of Elections**
   1. The newly elected **Representative Council** will assume their respective offices on June 1st of each year
   2. The term of office for all **Officer** and **Representative** positions, except the **Treasurer**, is one year
   3. There are no term limits on **Officer** or **Representative** positions

VI. Impeachment and Replacement

A. Impeachment of an **Officer** or **Representative** is to be initiated by another member of the **Representative Council** and shall be voted on by all other voting members of the **Representative Council**

B. Impeachment of a **Department** or **Program Representative** may also be initiated by a member of the Graduate Student Association in that **Representative's** department/program and shall be voted on by all other degree-seeking students in that **Representative's** department/program

C. After a call for impeachment has been seconded, the **Officer** or **Representative** under impeachment will leave the meeting room

D. The vote on impeachment will take place no sooner than one week after the call for impeachment but no later than the time needed to collect all material evidence after the call for impeachment

E. All voting members of the **Representative Council** will vote

F. A 2/3rds majority vote is needed for impeachment

G. If a 2/3rds majority is reached in the vote for impeachment, the action is immediate. The impeached **Officer** or **Representative** will turn over all the material related to their former position
   1. If a 2/3rds majority is not reached, the matter is to be dropped

H. If an **Officer** position is vacated for any reason during a term, this position will be filled by a **Department** or **Program Representative** who is elected by the voting members of the **Representative Council**

I. If a **Department** or **Program Representative** position is vacated for any reason during a term, this position will be filled by a new **Representative** who is elected by the graduate students of the respective department or program

J. Newly elected **Officers** or **Representatives** will fulfill all obligations of their new position until that position comes up for re-election

VII. Meetings of the Graduate Student Association and Representative Council

A. Meetings of the Graduate Student Association will be called annually, or more often as necessary

B. Any member of the Graduate Student Association may request through an elected **Representative** that additional meetings be held

C. The **Representative Council** will meet the first week of each month (unless affected by a holiday), and the first meeting of each academic year (July) is to include an overview of the procedures of the **Representative Council** by an **Officer**

VIII. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws

A. Any Graduate Student Association member may propose an amendment to the Graduate Student Association Constitution

B. Any proposed amendment must be submitted in writing at least one week in advance of the next **Representative Council** meeting and will be distributed to the **Representative Council** at its next meeting

C. Public posting by **Representatives** will be made of the current Constitution and proposed amendment in their degree-granting department or program within the School of Graduate Studies, and the **President** will send an email to the Graduate Student Association

D. The **Representative Council** must vote on a proposed amendment no sooner than 21 days and no later than 60 days following distribution at the **Representative Council** meeting

E. All voting members of the **Representative Council** must cast a vote

F. A 2/3rds majority vote is needed for ratification of an amendment

IX. **Voting on Motions by the Representative Council**

A. Any member of the **Representative Council** may bring a motion before the rest of the **Representative Council**

B. No motion shall conflict with the constitution, by-laws, or standing rules or resolutions of the **Representative Council**

C. Voting on motions shall follow Robert's Rules of Order (yes, no, abstain)

D. A 2/3rds quorum of all voting members in the **Representative Council** must be present to hold a vote on a motion

E. Any **Representative Council** voting member may abstain from voting and cannot be compelled to vote

F. If more than 1/3rd of the voting members of the **Representative Council** present for the vote abstain, the vote will be considered null and void

G. A simple majority vote is needed for a motion to pass

Graduate Student Association Standing Committees

All members of the Graduate Student Association **Representative Council** must serve on at least two standing committees. Committee assignments are finalized before the start of the academic year. Graduate Student Association **Officers** and **Representatives** are responsible for getting in contact with the members of their respective committees and attending all meetings of their committees. **Representative Council** members may be asked to report activities and proposals of their respective committees during the monthly **Representative Council** or Student Leadership Collective meetings.

Descriptions of the Graduate Student Association Committees:

1. Academic Standing and Welfare Committee: This committee is organized and run by the Graduate Studies Council and meets as needed. This committee shall make recommendations to the Graduate Studies Council on matters concerning student welfare and shall guide students on academic probation. This committee shall be comprised of two faculty members elected by the Graduate Faculty (3-year term), two faculty members appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (3-year term), and one graduate student member identified by the **Representative Council** (1-year term).

2. Assessment Oversight Committee: This committee is organized to ensure the Medical College of Wisconsin meets the requirements for upcoming accreditation evaluations. This committee is comprised of the President and all the Deans of the Medical College of Wisconsin. The Graduate Student Association **President** serves as the graduate student representative.

3. Awards Committee: This committee is organized and run by the Graduate Studies Council and communicates as needed via email. This committee organizes the annual Teacher and Mentor of the Year awards of the Graduate Student Association and reviews and approves graduate student applications for travel awards. This committee shall also review and award monies for poster submissions at the Annual Poster Session. This committee shall be compromised of three faculty members elected by the Graduate Faculty (3-year term), three faculty members appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (3-year term), and one graduate student member identified by the **Representative Council** (1-year term). The **Representative Council** member should maintain communication with the **Treasurer** about Graduate Student Association award monies.

4. Commencement Committee: This committee is organized and run by the President of the Medical College of Wisconsin's Office and meets regularly in person. This committee is responsible for the selection of honorary degree recipients, keynote speakers, and arrangements for ceremonial proceedings for the graduate and medical school commencement ceremonies. The Graduate Student Association **President** serves as the graduate student representative on this committee.

5. Course Evaluation Committee: This committee is organized and run by the Graduate Studies Council and meets a minimum of three times per year. **Officers** or **Representatives** in this committee are required to participate in the evaluation process. This committee shall review course evaluations completed by graduate students at the end of each term. Courses receiving low scores from course evaluations will be further reviewed, and new courses are reviewed by default. This committee is also responsible for triennial course reviews. This committee shall be compromised of four faculty members elected by the Graduate Faculty (3-year term), three faculty members appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (3-year term), and one graduate student member identified by the **Representative Council** (1-year term).

6. Curriculum & Program Committee: This committee is organized and run by the Graduate Studies Council and communicates via email. This committee shall review all newly proposed courses and programs (including certificate programs) or major revisions of courses and programs of MCW's School of Graduate Studies. This committee shall recommend to the Graduate Studies Council acceptance, modification, or rejection of proposed courses or programs. Approval by this committee shall be the first step toward accreditation of new courses or programs. This committee shall be compromised of three faculty members elected by the Graduate Faculty (3-year term), three faculty members appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (3-year term), and one graduate student member identified by the **Representative Council** (1-year term).

7. Faculty Council: The Faculty Council is the representative governing body of the faculty at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Membership is comprised of a representative from each department and institute, the chairperson of each of the Council's standing committees, the Dean of each academic school, a representative from the Women's Faculty Council, and a representative from the Society of Teaching Scholars. The Faculty Council is charged with improving communication between the faculty and administration at the Medical College of Wisconsin, advising the administration of issues and concerns among the faculty, and, conversely, communicating all administrative directives to the faculty.

8. Faculty IT Committee: This committee provides central leadership and a forum for discussion of global IT issues and IT planning so that all MCW IT constituencies can participate and/or be informed in this process. When this committee deems it appropriate, the recommendation(s) shall contain an analysis of the implications to assist the Faculty Council, the Executive Committee of the Faculty and the Dean in their deliberations. Meetings of this committee are held the fourth Monday of every month at 7:30am. One **Representative Council** member shall serve on this committee.

9. Fundraising Committee: This committee will coordinate fundraising events to support the Graduate Student Conference Education Fund. At least two **Representative Council** members shall serve on this committee, and they shall provide regular updates to **Public Relations** and the **Treasurer**.

10. Graduate Outreach and Recruitment Program: Through this recruitment program, graduate students volunteer to visit local undergraduate institutions (*i.e.*, their Alma Mater) and assist with recruitment events at MCW to discuss their research and advertise/promote the School of Graduate Studies. Travel, food, lodging, and registration, if necessary, are covered by the Graduate School after the student's participation in a recruiting event has been established/confirmed with the Director of Student Recruitment. At least two **Representative Council** members shall serve on this committee, and they will assist in planning visits and recruiting graduate student volunteers.

11. Graduate Studies Council: This committee is composed of the Program and Recruitment Directors from each program within the School of Graduate Studies, the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, and other members appointed by the Dean. This committee meets at noon on the first Monday of each month. The Graduate Student Association **President** and **Vice President** serve as the graduate student representatives.

12. Library Committee: This committee functions to serve as a liaison between the library staff, MCW Administration, and the faculty and students of MCW. This committee advises on budget development and implementation, library policies, library computer services, implementation of plans developed by the Strategic Library Council, and promotion of library use to faculty, students, patients, and community members. This committee meets six times per year. One **Representative Council** member, who also serves on the Student Leadership Collective's Facilities subcommittee shall serve on this committee.

13. Program Evaluation Committee: This committee is organized and run by the Graduate Studies Council and meets as needed. This committee shall review appropriate criteria and metrics of program evaluation and shall periodically evaluate all programs of the School of Graduate Studies. The chair of this committee will report the results of each review to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and to the Graduate Studies Council. This committee shall be compromised of three faculty members elected by the Graduate Faculty (3-year term), three faculty members appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (3-year term), and one graduate student member identified by the **Representative Council** (1-year term).

14. Research Affairs Committee: This committee conducts scientific peer review of research proposals for Faculty Institutional Grants. This committee helps organize and evaluate basic science and clinical research for presentation at the annual Research Day. This committee serves as a review and advisory

board on matters concerning research ethics and scientific conduct and helps formulate policy and guidelines on research matters. Meetings are held as needed based on the grant deadlines in April/October. One **Representative Council** member serves on this committee. While the **Representative** is not allowed to vote on the internal grants reviewed, they may provide comments and suggestions as a member of this committee.

15. Social Committee: This committee organizes most of the social events that are sponsored by the Graduate Student Association throughout the year, including working with the Fundraising Committee for coordinating fundraising events. Members of this committee will work closely with the Graduate Student Association **Public Relations** and **Treasurer**, the Graduate School Office, and the MCW Business Manager to coordinate activities and arrange finances. At least three **Representative Council** members shall serve on this committee.

16. Spotlight on Science Committee: This committee is funded by the School of Graduate Studies and is led by the Assistant Dean of Postdoctoral Education. This committee meets as needed to choose topics and speakers for the Spotlight on Science seminar series, including the biannual Responsible Conduct of Research, RCR, Refreshers. Three **Representative Council** members typically serve on this committee.

17. Symposium Committee: This committee will plan and coordinate the Annual Graduate Student Association Symposium, which takes place in the Spring, with support from the Graduate School Office. At least three **Representative Council** members shall serve on this committee.

18. Travel Award Policy Committee: This committee will review and modify all travel award policies and applications to serve graduate students better and more fairly. Members of this committee will also be responsible for helping organize any requirements related to the Graduate Student Association travel awards (*i.e.*, volunteer opportunities or presentations). This committee will consist of the **Treasurer**, an Awards Committee representative, and any other **Representative Council** member interested in this committee.

Student Leadership Collective Subcommittees

While Student Leadership Collective committees oversee all three schools (Graduate, Medical, and Pharmacy) at the Medical College of Wisconsin, they remain active within the Graduate Student Association and School of Graduate Studies. Additional details on the following subcommittees can be found in the Student Leadership Collective Bylaws.

1. Alumni Relations (**Secretary** + one other **Representative Council** member)
   A. MCW/Marquette Medical Alumni Association
   B. The ENGAGE program
   C. Hoops for Hunger event (Spring semester)

2. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Two **Representative Council** members)
   A. Council for Women's Advocacy
   B. Women in Science
   C. Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee (DIAC)

3. Facilities (Two **Representative Council** members)
   A. Student lounge and study rooms
   B. Student technology/equipment
   C. Library
   D. Send a representative to Food Services and Administration meetings

4. Professionalism and Institutional Relations (**Treasurer** + one other **Representative Council** member)
   A. Student Leadership Collective documents (*e.g.*, bylaws, handbook)
   B. Student Conduct
   C. Inter-professional group collaboration

5. Student Programming Board (One or two **Representative Council** members)
   A. Student Life events
   B. Intramurals
   C. Community outreach
   D. MCW Student Health Conference

6. Student Wellness (Two **Representative Council** members)
   A. Tonkens Gym
   B. Food Service
   C. Study Centers
   D. Health Insurance
   E. Access to health (mental and physical) resources

7. Title IX

Representative Council Officer and Representatives Election Timeline

Week 1*	The **President** or **Vice President** will send out descriptions of **Officer** positions and a nomination survey to the Graduate Student Association. ******A Qualtrics survey will be created by the Graduate School Office. Nominations are due the following Sunday no later than 11:59pm.
Week 2	The **President** or **Vice President** will send out a survey to the Graduate Student Association to vote for next year's **Officers**. ******A Qualtrics survey will be created by the Graduate School Office. Voting will conclude the following Sunday at 11:59pm.
Week 3	The current **Officers** will notify the new **Officers** that they have won the vote and asked to attend the All Student Meeting when their position will be announced. The **President** or **Vice President** will send out descriptions of **Department** and **Program Representative** positions and a nomination survey to the Graduate Student Association. ******A Qualtrics survey will be created by the Graduate School Office. Nominations are due the following Sunday no later than 11:59pm.
Week 4	The **President** or **Vice President** will send out a survey to the Graduate Student Association to vote for next year's **Department** and **Program Representative**. ******A Qualtrics survey will be created by the Graduate School Office. Voting will conclude the following Sunday at 11:59pm.
Week 5 Onward	New **Department** or **Program Representatives** are notified that they have won the vote and are asked to attend the All Student Meeting when their position will be announced. **All Student Meeting is held.**

***Week 1 begins the last Monday of March**

Graduate Student Association Timeline of Events

Month	Planning/Events	Email Reminders
June	• New committee assignments	• June & July Socials • Kay and Guy Berst Travel Award applications due June 30th
July	• Discuss/plan Brewers game • Discuss/plan All Student Picnic	• July & August Socials • Welcome new students • Representatives introduce themselves to their program/department
August	• Budget Planning meeting • Social Committee outlines social events for the academic year • Fundraising Committee outlines fundraising events for the year	• August & September Socials • Welcome new students
September	• Discuss/plan fall-themed event • GSA Brewers game • Begin planning GSA Symposium	• September & October Socials • Research Poster Day
October	• Fall-themed event • Initiate Travel Fund policy review	• October & November Socials • Flu Shots
November	• Discuss/plan winter-themed event	• November & December Socials
December	• Winter-themed event • Discuss chess event fundraiser • Vote on Travel Fund Policy for upcoming calendar year	• December & January Socials • Research Poster Day
January	• Discuss late-winter all student event	• January & February Socials • Volunteering for chess event
February	• Chess event fundraiser	• February & March Socials • GSA Elections
March	• Teacher/Mentor of the Year nominations • GSA elections (Officers, then Representatives)	• March & April Socials • Teacher/Mentor of the Year • GSA Elections
April	• Announce GSA election winners • GSA Symposium	• April & May Socials • Teacher/Mentor of the Year • GSA Elections • All-Student Meeting
May	• All Student Meeting (current and new officers/representatives)	• May & June Socials