

The Constitution of the McGill University Geography Graduate Society

Article I – Name

The following is the Constitution of the McGill Geography Graduate Society, the organization representing the graduate students of McGill University's Department of Geography. In practice, this organization shall be known as the **Geography Graduate Society** or **GGS**.

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of the GGS is to serve as the collective voice of the graduate students of McGill University's Department of Geography and bring into a more unified and collegial community for those who constitute its membership. To those aims, the GGS will offer resources, help, and support to all current students in the department of geography and will promote and organize intellectual and social exchanges amongst its membership, and in some circumstances, department faculty.

Those elected to GGS Executive and auxiliary positions will advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion in all actions of the GGS Executive, ensuring accessibility and a space for all voices. The GGS will foster both a space and sense of place for all individuals in the GGS, representing and supporting all members through their time at McGill University and their graduate degree(s).

Article III – Membership

All full-time and part-time graduate students, currently registered in the Department of Geography, with no discrimination or prohibition based on any defining individual or community characteristics, are regular members of the GGS.

Article IV – Executive Officers

- A. The Executive Officers of the Society shall constitute the main executive body of the GGS, responsible for executing the Purpose of the organization (Article II) and animating the social, cultural, and academic life of the graduate student community in the Department of Geography at McGill;
- B. The Executive Officers shall take office each year on May 1, with the end of their term occurring on April 30 of the following year, presuming said officers are elected during the yearly General Election. Exceptions shall be made in the case of by-elections;
- C. The Executive Officers of the Society shall be as follows:
 1. Co-Presidents
 2. Treasurer and Secretary

3. Communications Officers
 4. Social Co-Chairs
 5. Student Affairs Officer
- D. There shall be no more than two officers elected to serve as Co-Presidents, Communications Officers, and Social Co-Chairs. There shall be no more than one officer elected to serve as Treasurer and Secretary. The exact number of officers shall be determined by the electorate at the time of the annual general elections, unless otherwise indicated in Article IV (E.);
- E. Duties and Responsibilities:
- E1. Co-Presidents:
The Co-Presidents shall:
- a. Be the Chief Executives and designated spokespeople of the GGS and the primary contact to the department chair;
 - b. Preside over meetings of the Executive and organize, or direct to be organized, the proceedings of those meetings;
 - c. Preside over General Assemblies and organize, or direct to be organized, the proceedings of those meetings;
 - d. Oversee and provide support as needed to the events held by the GGS and ensure they abide by the necessary rules and regulations as established by the relevant authority;
 - e. Serve concurrently with their counterpart - that is to say, there shall always be TWO Co-Presidents.
- E2. Treasurer and Secretary
The Treasurer shall:
- a. Manage and monitor the finances of the GGS bank account;
 - b. Approve and reimburse expenses incurred by GGS members for GGS-related activities subject to executive approval;
 - c. Attend every meeting and update the GGS executive on the current state of finances, including anticipated expenses and income;
 - d. Ensure the transfer of access to both the GGS bank account and the GGS-PGSS e-mail address.
 - e. Perform their executive duties while recording the ongoing at all meetings and activities;
 - f. Attend every GGS Executive meeting unless prior arrangements for a replacement have been made;
 - g. Document proceedings of meetings and distribute relevant information to the executive (i.e. managing meeting minutes). The Secretary is responsible for keeping members up to date on the organization.
 - h. Hold an obligation to call a meeting in the event that the Co-Presidents fail to organize a meeting as per their responsibilities;

- i. There shall always be ONE Treasurer and Secretary.

E3. Communications Officers:

The Communications Officers shall:

- a. Perform their executive duties while recording the ongoing at all meetings and activities;
- b. Attend every GGS Executive meeting unless prior arrangements have been made;
- c. Be responsible for keeping the membership up to date on the activities of the organization.
- d. Distribute flyers, notes, advertisements, or whatever means necessary to inform the appropriate parties of all events;
- e. Manage the GGS website and ensure continuity of management before the end of their term.

E4. Social Co-Chairs:

The Social Co-Chairs shall:

- a. Plan and coordinate the social events within the department while being an active member of the society;
- b. Attend meetings, activities, and events unless prior arrangements have been made;
- c. Organize and coordinate mandatory GGS events, with support from the executive, delegating tasks where/when necessary;
- d. Create a space that is welcoming to all GGS members at all events;
- e. Entertain ideas from other members by listening intently and proposing new activities. Then the Presidents will examine all options before making a decision.

E6. Student Affairs Officers

The Student Affairs Officers shall:

- a. Uphold the principles of the EDI Working Group Position Statement by actively working to implement and advocate for equity initiatives within GGS and the geography department (*liaising with faculty where appropriate*);
- b. Ensure accessibility for all GGS members, seeking to create an inclusive space and organization;
- c. Promote the mandate of supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all GGS members;
- d. Chair and organize the Equity Working Group, by scheduling and attending meetings, and inviting GGS students to participate in the group;
- e. Report progress and actions taken to improve equity in the department to GGS members at the end of the academic year;

- f. Coordinate closely with the GGS representative to the Faculty EDI Committee and have an awareness of ongoing equity initiatives in the department more broadly, liaising with other student representatives where necessary.

F. Executive Officers will transfer pertinent documentation to the next elected officer, where appropriate, at the end of their term.

Article V – General Meetings

The General Meetings of the GGS shall be the membership's primary opportunity to participate in the regular governance of the organization.

The General Meetings shall:

- A. Occur at least once per semester;
- B. If they are the last of the year, hold the General Election for GGS Executive positions, which must be called by the GGS Executive at a date prior to the end of their term of office;
- C. Be preceded by a Notice of a General Meeting, which shall be given by one of the Communications Officers to the general membership of the GGS at least one week before the meeting;
- D. Have a quorum for the General Meeting shall be 10% of the general membership;
- E. Ensure that all motions are passed upon a simple majority of 50% + 1 vote.

Article VI – Elections

The procedure for elections shall be as follows:

- A. General Elections shall be held once per year, at the Winter term General Meeting;
- B. Notice of open positions shall be given at least one week in advance of the General Meeting by means laid out in Article V (C.);
- C. Any regular member of the society may seek election for open positions, providing they acquire the nomination of two (2) other regular members, which shall occur at the time of the election;
- D. Ballots shall be secret, and shall be counted in the presence of at least two non-competing candidate members;
- E. In the event that as many candidates are nominated as there are offices available, the Co-President(s) running the General Meeting shall ask the assembled membership for their approval, which, upon being provided, shall see the candidates duly elected by acclamation. In the event that general approval is not provided, the floor will remain open for nominations;

- F. If there are no nominations for a position, or consensus for acclamation is not provided as outlined in Article VI (E.), a by-election will be scheduled for the position at a time agreeable to the current members of the Executive;
- G. Vacancies, be they due to resignation or the events outlined in Article VI (F.), within the GGS Executive during the course of the year shall be filled through by-election(s), to take place at a special General Meeting. Notice of positions, nominations, and voting shall take place as stipulated in the regulations of Articles V (C.) - V (D.) and VI (A.) - VI (D.).

Article VII – Affiliations

The society shall be affiliated with the Post Graduate Students' Society of McGill University (PGSS), as provided for by that body's constitution, and with other bodies as the membership sees fit.

Article VIII – Adoptions and Amendments

The present¹ iteration of this constitution has been adopted by a two thirds majority of a General Meeting of the society.

Further adoptions and amendments to this constitution shall:

- A. Be made at a General Meeting where quorum is reached;
- B. Be preceded by a Notice of Proposed Amendments, which shall be posted at least one week before the General Meeting, in the manner stipulated in Article V (C.);
- C. Have amendments that will be approved using an open ballot, and shall pass by a 2/3 majority of those present at the General Meeting.

Article IX – By-Laws

The GGS will maintain a set of By-Laws that will govern the day-to-day operations of the organization. The By-Laws are intended to be consistent with the policy aims of the GGS Executive and aid in the daily functioning of the organization.

The By-Laws of the GGS shall:

- A. Be approved by a majority vote of the Executive;
- B. Not contradict an existing By-Law or any part of the Constitution;
- C. If the By-Law is new, be recorded as By-Law #, followed by the year the By-Law was approved by the Executive, followed by a title explaining what the By-Law concerns (eg: By-Law 1 (2020) - A By-Law concerning x);

¹ As of April 28, 2022.

- D. If the By-Law is being modified, the By-law will be recorded as the original By-Law number with the addendum of a .#, representing the updated version, followed by the year the By-Law was updated by the Executive, followed by a title explaining what the By-Law concerns (eg: By-Law 1.1 (2021) - A By-Law concerning x);
- E. If the By-Law is being modified, include a subsection that lists the years of each modification.

By-Laws of the McGill Geography Graduate Society

By-Law 1 (2020) - A By-Law Concerning the Election of Auxiliary Officers

- A. The Auxiliary Officers of the Society shall hold predefined and uniquely-mandated positions in the Department of Geography at McGill, with those definitions and mandates typically originating from outside the GGS. These offices provide the graduate students of the department a voice on distinct committees and boards as established by the administration, faculty, or community at-large.
- B. The Auxiliary Officers shall be voted in during the first General Meeting in the Fall semester. The Auxiliary Officers shall be responsible for duties, or point of contact, until the new officer is elected at the next Fall Semester General Meeting. Exceptions shall be made in the case of by-elections.
- C. In the case that an Auxiliary Officer steps down, the GGS Co-Presidents must come to a consensus on appointing a new officer. If consensus is not reached, the GGS will hold a by-election determining the new officer following the procedure outlined in the Constitution of the McGill Geography Graduate Society, Article VI (E.)
- D. Auxiliary Officers are expected to transfer pertinent documentation to the next elected officer, where appropriate, at the end of their term.
- E. Auxiliary Officer positions may be created on a temporary or permanent basis depending on department and/or student needs. The current² permanent auxiliary officers of the GGS are as follows:
 1. Faculty Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion GGS Representative
 2. Mental Health Committee Chair
 3. AGSEM Delegate(s)
 4. PGGG Representative(s)
 5. GAC Delegate
 6. UAC Delegate
 7. Health and Safety Committee Delegate
 8. Space and Equipment Committee Delegate
 9. Geospectives Representative(s) (*typically two, preferably one master's and one doctoral student either with a 'physical' and 'human' geography background*)
 10. GIC Committee Delegate

² As of April 28, 2022.