

**Constitution and Bylaws of the
Sociology Graduate Student Caucus
(SGSC)**

**Department of Sociology
University of Calgary**

March 2013

1 NAME

- 1.1 The official name of the graduate caucus shall be the Sociology Graduate Student Caucus (SGSC).

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the SGSC shall be:
- i) To promote a sense of community and facilitate communication among graduate students in the Sociology Department at the University of Calgary.
 - ii) To provide an organizational framework for graduate student activities.
 - iii) To offer a means of representation for Sociology graduate students with the department and the university community.
- 2.2 The aims and objectives of the SGSC shall be consistent with those of University of Calgary Graduate Students Association as outlined in the [University of Calgary Graduate Students' Association \(GSA\) constitution and policies regarding Departmental Graduate Associations \(DGA\)](#).

3 MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 All graduate students registered with the Department of Sociology at the University of Calgary shall be members of the SGSC.

4 MEETINGS

- 4.1 At least seven general meetings of the SGSC shall take place in the eight months during the fall (September to December) and winter (January to April) semesters.
- 4.2 At least one general meeting of the SGSC shall take place during the summer semester (May to August) if there is reason to do so.
- 4.3 A meeting shall not be called to order unless quorum for the specified meeting, as defined in Article 5, is present.
- 4.4 Meetings of the SGSC will generally follow [Robert's Rules of Order](#).
- 4.5 All meetings shall be open to all members.
- 4.6 For any meeting, the agenda shall be made available to all members at least one week prior to the meeting.
- 4.7 The chair, and other elected members of caucus, must honour a petition requesting a meeting, if it is signed by at least 6 members, by calling a meeting within one week of receiving the petition.

5 QUORUM

- 5.1 A quorum at any general meeting of the SGSC shall consist of 8 members not on leave. Quorum was set assuming that approximately 30 graduate students are more or less consistently around the department, and 8 members represents 25% of that number.

- 5.2 All members of the SGSC who are unable to attend any general meeting can submit a proxy vote by providing a signed written statement indicating the motion(s) under consideration and their vote. The proxy vote can be given to any SGSC member who will be attending the meeting.

6 ELECTED POSITIONS

- 6.1 There are 15 regular elected positions:

- i) Chair
- ii) Secretary/Treasurer
- iii) Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) Representatives
 - a.a. 1 PhD Student
 - a.b. 1 MA Student
 - a.c. 1 PhD or MA Student
- iv) Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Representatives

Preferably

 - a.a. 1 PhD Student
 - a.b. 1 MA Student
- v) COSEP Representative
- vi) Social Representative
- vii) Communications Representative
- viii) Graduate Student Research Symposium (GSRS) Coordinators

Preferably

 - a.a. 1 Continuing Student
 - a.b. 1 Additional Student
- ix) Equity Awareness Representative
- x) Presentation Seminar and Writing Workshop Coordinators

Preferably

 - a.a. 1 or 2 Continuing Students

1.6.1.a The SGSC will also provide a member to sit on other departmental standing committees as needed.

- 6.2 The duties of the **Chair** shall include:

- i) Organizing and chairing meetings of the SGSC, including setting the agenda.
- ii) Acting as a signing officer with the power to distribute funds when authorized by the members of the SGSC.
- iii) Generally acting as a liaison between the graduate students and the Department of Sociology and co-ordinating the affairs of the caucus.
- iv) If necessary, supporting GSC representatives by attending and representing graduate student interests at department meetings.
- v) Once their term is complete, acting as a source of information and “organizational memory” for the newly elected Chair by being accessible and answering questions during the new Chair’s term (in person or via email, telephone etc.).

- vi) Organizing at least one event during the first week of the September semester (i.e., orientation week) to welcome the new cohort and provide these students with an opportunity to interact with current graduate students in a more informal, social setting.
- 6.3 The duties of the **Secretary/Treasurer** shall include:
- i) Keeping minutes of the meetings of the SGSC.
 - ii) Handling correspondence, including distributing the agenda and other materials to caucus members, and organizing the SGSC's filing system.
 - iii) Acting as a signing officer with the power to distribute funds when authorized by the members of the SGSC.
 - iv) Handling and accounting for the finances of the SGSC, such as establishing and/or maintaining bank accounts, managing funding arrangements and keeping track of receipts. This includes monthly reports to the SGSC regarding account balances and completion of financial accountability reports, as outlined in Article 10.
 - v) Responsibility to apply for any available funding if that funding is not specifically for social events or the graduate research symposium.
- 6.4 The duties of the **Graduate Studies Committee Representatives** (3 members; at least 1 MA and 1 PhD student) shall include:
- i) Attending and representing graduate student interests at meetings of the Sociology department's graduate studies committee (GSC).
 - ii) Attending and representing graduate student interests at regular departmental meetings, including acting in their capacity as voting members *on behalf* of graduate students (2 members can vote at each meeting).
 - iii) Providing regular reports to the SGSC members at monthly meetings about the issues discussed at both the GSC and department meetings and soliciting graduate student opinion.
- 6.5 The duties of the **Graduate Students' Association Representatives** (2 members; preferably, 1 MA and 1 PhD student) shall include:
- i) Attending and representing graduate student interests at meetings of the university's Graduate Students' Association (GSA), including acting in their capacity as voting members *on behalf* of graduate students.
 - ii) Providing regular reports to the SGSC members at monthly meetings about the issues discussed at the GSA meetings and soliciting graduate student opinion.
 - iii) If they choose, the representatives may become members of GSA committees.

- 6.6 The duties of the **COSEP Representative** shall include:
- i) Attending and representing graduate student interests at meetings of the department's COSEP committee, which organizes presentations by sociology-related speakers.
 - ii) Providing regular reports to the SGSC members at monthly meetings about the issues discussed at the COSEP meetings and soliciting graduate student opinion.
- 6.7 The duties of the **Social Representative** shall include:
- i) Acting as a signing officer with the power to distribute funds when authorized by the members of the SGSC.
 - ii) Organizing regular social activities such as hiking, dinners and potlucks, bowling, clubbing etc., for graduate students (occasionally faculty may be invited as well). The frequency of these activities will be dependent on demand but usually would not occur more than once a month.
 - iii) Attending and representing graduate student interests at meetings of the department's social committee, which organizes the annual Christmas party and the annual ethnic dinner.
 - iv) Apply for any [funding offered by the Graduate Students Association](#).
 - v) Providing regular reports to the SGSC members at monthly meetings about the issues discussed at the social meetings and soliciting graduate student opinion.
- 6.8 The duties of the **Communications Representative** shall include:
- i) Attending and representing graduate student interests at meetings of the department's communications committee, which primarily makes decisions about the department's website.
 - ii) Administering the loan of SGSC electronics as per the "SGSC Electronics Policy" (Appendix A).
 - iii) Providing regular reports to the SGSC members at monthly meetings about the issues discussed at the communications meetings and soliciting graduate student opinion.
 - iv) Administering the Sociology Graduate Library, including maintaining an up-to-date catalogue of the Sociology Graduate Library holdings, Distribution of keys to access the Sociology Graduate Library.
- 6.9 The duties of the **Graduate Student Research Symposium Coordinators** (2 members; preferably one continuing student) shall include:
- i) Developing ideas related to the scope and possible theme of the annual GSRS.
 - ii) Drafting a call for conference papers, distributing it, and advertising the conference.

- iii) Serving as the main contact for potential presenters, reviewing abstract submissions, selecting presentations suitable for the GSRS, organizing the presentations, and developing the conference program.
 - iv) Coordinating the logistics of the conference, including the organization of the venue and the catering for the day of the conference, as well as the organization of faculty members to act as session chairs.
 - v) Applying for any available funding associated with the GSRS (such as the Group Project Grant offered by the GSA)
- 6.10 The duties of the **Equity Awareness Representative** shall include:
- i) Bringing information relating to issues of equity to the caucus.
 - ii) Focusing on equity education and promoting awareness within the department.
 - iii) Developing and updating a collection of resources (in a binder) for University of Calgary student support services.
 - iv) Arranging workshops and guest speakers for students and faculty members.
 - v) Informing the caucus of relevant student and community events.
 - vi) Overseeing all charitable endeavours undertaken by the SGSC, including but not limited to: GSA campus food bank drive, United Way campaign, and any other initiatives.
- 6.13 The duties of the **Presentation Seminar and Writing Workshop Coordinator(s)** (1 or 2 students) shall include:
- i) Organize bi-weekly presentation seminars based on particular themes identified by student need and interest, chosen at the discretion of the coordinators.
 - ii) Recruit students to present and be part of a review panel each week.
 - iii) Provide refreshments (funding permitting) for the bi-weekly seminars.
 - iv) Complete any funding proposals required for the provision of these seminars.
 - v) Serve as a liaison between the graduate students and the faculty members of the Graduate Studies Committee and provide support in the coordination of the bi-weekly writing workshops.
- 6.14 Each year the SGSC will also ask the **Sociology Students Association (SSA)** to elect/appoint an SSA member to regularly attend the SGSC meetings and represent the interests of the Sociology undergraduate students.
- 6.15** All elected members who attend meetings externally from the SGSC are expected to find an alternate to attend these meetings, and to vote on their behalf, when they are unable to attend.

7 **SGSC EXECUTIVE**

- 7.1 The SGSC Executive includes the Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, Social Representative, one GSC representative, and one GSA representative, for a total of five executive members.
- 7.2 The SGSC Executive has a mandate to make administrative and/or managerial decisions on behalf of the SGSC when necessary. Decisions will be deemed “necessary” when they are time-sensitive, making it difficult to have all members vote on the matter at an SGSC meeting, and are the exception rather than the rule.
- 7.3** The Chair is required to report to the members of the SGSC at the following general SGSC meeting about any decisions that have been made by the SGSC Executive to ensure accountability.

8 **ELECTIONS**

- 8.1 Terms of office shall be for one year.
- 8.2 More than one position may be held by the same person, and a given position may be held by the same person more than once.
- 8.3 Elections for the positions of Chair and Secretary/Treasurer for the upcoming academic year will be held in the final meeting of the winter semester (typically April) to facilitate continued operation of the SGSC through the Spring/Summer semesters.
- 8.4 Elections to the Scholarly Workshop Committee (2 people) will be held in the Spring to accommodate for the abundance of work required of the position(s) in the summer months.
- 8.5 A general meeting of the SGSC to elect members into the remaining positions shall be held during the first four weeks of the fall semester.
- 8.6 The positions shall be elected by a secret ballot, majority vote at the general meeting.
- 8.7 If a position remains uncontested, any member of the caucus can make a motion to ratify the appointment of the uncontested nominee into the position.
- 8.8 Prior to any meeting of the SGSC at which elections or by-elections are to be held, at least 48 hours notice must be given during which time written nominations shall be accepted by the current Chair or Secretary/Treasurer. Written nominations are to be signed by the nominee, the nominator and a seconder. Nominations may also be called for at the meeting, but no nomination will be accepted without the consent of the nominee.
 - 8.8.1 Written nominations submitted by e-mail shall, for all intents and purposes, be considered to be signed by the nominator authoring the e-mail.
- 8.9 All members elected into positions must maintain the requirements of membership in order to continue their positions.

- 8.10 Any member who holds an elected position may resign at any time by tendering their resignation to the Chair and/or Secretary/Treasurer.
- 8.11 An interim representative to fill any vacant position may be appointed by the Chair and Secretary/Treasurer until such time as a by-election can be held at the next general meeting of the SGSC.

9 **RECALL OF ELECTED POSITIONS**

- 9.1 Any individual who holds an elected position may be recalled by a two-thirds majority vote at a general meeting of the SGSC, with at least one week's notice of a motion for a recall being previously distributed to all members.

10 **FINANCES**

- 10.1 In order to promote accountability, a statement of the SGSC shall be prepared at the end of each semester by the Secretary/Treasurer, in order to account for the use of all monies. In addition, any member of the SGSC shall be allowed access to the financial records of the caucus, within 48 hours notice to the Chair and Secretary/Treasurer of such a request.
- 10.2 Annually two SGSC members will review the funds and receipts provided by the Secretary/Treasurer within two months of the fiscal year-end.

11 **CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT**

- 11.1 This Constitution shall be amended, as the need arises, by a two-thirds majority vote at a general meeting of the SGSC, with at least one week's notice of a motion for a change being previously distributed to all members.

12 **DISSOLUTION**

- 12.1 In the event that the SGSC is inactive for a period of two years, the assets of the association shall revert to the Sociology Department to be held in trust for a minimum of two years.
- 12.2 If the SGSC is resurrected during the specified time period, the trust shall be dissolved and all assets shall be at the direct disposal of the SGSC.

APPENDIX A: SGSC ELECTRONICS LOAN POLICY

The SGSC has purchased a selection of electronic equipment for use by graduate students in the Department:

1. Presentation Remote (1)
2. Digital Recorders (5)
3. Foot Pedals (3)
4. Telephone Interface (1)
5. Tabletop Microphone (1)

Loans of this equipment occur on a first-come-first-served basis. Within reason, there is no limit on how long a student can keep a device, but the borrower will be guaranteed a three week loan. Please respect the needs of fellow students and exercise courtesy by returning the device when you are finished with it. However, other students will be able to put in a request to have the device recalled, and the student who has had a device for the longest time will be asked to return it. If this poses a problem, the Communications Representative will put the student who has the device in contact with the person who wishes to borrow the device, and it will be the responsibility of the aforementioned students to work out an arrangement. If no agreement can be reached, the Communications Representative will act as arbiter.

Students borrowing equipment are also responsible for providing their own batteries as no guarantee is made that any batteries currently in a device will still hold a charge. It is the responsibility of the borrower to figure out how to use the device (the user manual will be provided when signing the device out). Students are further responsible for obtaining any necessary software.

When returning any piece of equipment, it is the borrower's responsibility (not the responsibility of the Communications Representative) to ensure that all data has been erased from the device (if applicable). When returning a device, all components (e.g. cables, USB receivers, user manuals) must be returned. If any components are missing or damaged, it is the borrowers responsibility to replace the device with one of equal quality and/or value.

The equipment is kept in a locked filing cabinet, and it is the responsibility of the Communications Representative to handle the signing-out of equipment borrowed, and the signing-in of returned equipment. As a courtesy, you are required to provide the Communications Representative with 48 hours notice before you need the equipment so that the Communications Representative can arrange to be on campus. Similar notice is required when returning borrowed equipment.