

GEO CONSTITUTION

(As Amended 17 March 1978; 31 October 1978; 17 November 1981; 27 November 1985; 4 April 2007)

I. The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Employees' Organization.

II. The objectives of this organization shall include but are not limited to:

- A. Organizing: To promote the organization of graduate academic employees.
- B. Collective Bargaining: To promote the welfare of the membership and to provide a voice in the determination of the terms and conditions of employment.
- C. Education: To improve the standard of instruction, to encourage teacher and student experimentation in course content, curriculum and methodology, toward achievement of quality education.
- D. Research: To provide research services and activities designed to assist and support objectives of the organization.
- E. Social Progress: To cooperate with other segments of our society and with other labor organizations in particular for the achievement of common goals.

III. General Principles and Guarantees

- A. Rights to Membership: Every person eligible for membership, as provided herein, shall have the right of membership and an equal opportunity to hold office regardless of race, creed, color, ethnic or religious background, national origin, descent or nationality, native language, ancestry, marital status, familial status, parental status, pregnancy status, number of dependents, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, height, weight, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, HIV antibody status, political belief, or membership in any social or political organization.
- B. Democratic Elections: Members shall have the right to fair and democratic elections at all levels of the Organization. This includes due notice of nominations and elections, equal opportunity for competing candidates, and proper election procedures which shall be constitutionally specified.
- C. Accounting of Funds: Members shall have the right to a full and clear accounting of Organization funds at all levels. Such accounting shall include, but not be limited to, periodic reports to the membership by appropriate fiscal officers and annual audits of all financial records by independent auditors not otherwise connected with the Organization upon petition of twenty (20) percent of the membership or in order to satisfy the requirements of law or when required by labor federations with which the Organization may be affiliated.
- D. Participation in Decisions: Members shall have the right to full participation through discussion and vote, in the decision-making processes of the Organization, and to information required for the full exercise of this right.

IV. Membership

- A. Membership Powers: All powers of the Organization shall be vested in the membership. Except as otherwise provided herein, all decisions involving the Organization shall be taken at Membership Meetings. All members of the Organization shall have the right to attend any meeting at which the business of the Organization is conducted, except where this right is prohibited by law or

modified herein. All votes taken by this Organization shall adhere to the principle that each member in good standing shall receive one vote, except where such procedure is prohibited by law or modified herein.

- B. Membership Eligibility: All graduate students at the University of Michigan shall be eligible to for membership in the Organization.
- C. Good Standing: A member in good standing is one who pays all dues approved by the Organization.
- D. Types of Membership:
 - 1) Full Members shall be those graduate students who are members of the Organization and who hold an appointment subject to the collective bargaining agreement between the Organization and the University of Michigan. For purposes of representation, full members may elect to vote in the department in which they are employed or in the department in which they are enrolled.
 - 2) Associate Members shall be those graduate students who are members of the Organization, but who do not hold an appointment covered by the collective bargaining agreement.
 - 3) Except where specified herein or mandated by law, the rights and privileges of membership shall accrue equally to both Full and Associate Members.

V. Meetings, Referendums, and Elections

- A. Membership Meetings: Membership meetings shall be scheduled and organized by the Stewards' Council at least once each Fall and Winter term. Membership Meetings shall have the power to direct the Stewards' Council to determine and execute Organizational policy.
- B. Referenda: An affirmative vote of the majority of Full Members in good standing voting in a secret ballot referendum shall be required to declare a job action or to ratify a collective bargaining agreement. In addition, the membership may determine that any motion related to an item on the agenda of a Membership Meeting shall be decided by a secret ballot referendum of the membership.

VI. Officers

- A. Definition of Officers: The officers of the Organization shall comprise a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and the chairs of all standing committees created by the Stewards' Council.
- B. Election of Officers:
 - 1) All members in good-standing shall be eligible to run for office.
 - 2) The President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected by a majority vote at a membership meeting.
 - 3) The chairs of all standing committees created by the Stewards' Council shall be elected by a majority vote at a Stewards' Council meeting.
 - 4) The term of office for all Officers shall be one year, to commence on May 1.
- C. Vacancies:
 - 1) If an Officer becomes unable to fulfill the duties of office, the Stewards' Council shall appoint an acting Officer. The acting Officer shall retain this appointment until such time that an election is held at a membership meeting.
 - 2) Officers appointed or elected to fill a vacancy shall complete the term of office filled.
- D. Recall of Officers: Any officer of the Organization may be recalled upon petition of ten (10) percent of the membership. An election shall be held within fourteen days of receipt of the petition. The recalled member shall be eligible to run for election.

The Stewards' Council, excluding members up for recall, shall determine the validity of the signatures appearing on any recall petition.

VII. Duties of Officers

A. Officers' Committee

- 1) The Officers' Committee shall meet on a regular basis to coordinate among the committees of the Organization the execution of Organizational policy established by the membership and as directed by the Stewards' Council.
- 2) The Officers defined in Article VI.A. shall comprise the Officers Committee.

B. The President

The President shall:

- 1) Be the principal executive officer of the Organization;
- 2) Be one of the responsible financial officers of the Organization and shall be authorized to co-sign financial instruments and make regular and usual disbursement of funds;
- 3) Be responsible for signing all official documents of the Organization. This responsibility may be designated to a deputy with the approval of the Stewards Council;
- 4) Be, by office, the ranking delegate to the convention of the American Federation of Teachers and meetings or conventions of its affiliated subordinate bodies;
- 5) Represent the Organization as necessary to other organizations.

C. The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- 1) Be the principal financial officer of the Organization;
- 2) Receive, record and deposit all dues monies and other income in the name of the Organization;
- 3) Maintain accurate membership records;
- 4) Be authorized to co-sign financial instruments and make regular and usual disbursements of funds;
- 5) Shall arrange for an independent audit as required by law or the organizations with which the Organization is affiliated;
- 6) Transmit per capita payments as required to the American Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers-Michigan and to all other bodies with which the organization is affiliated;
- 7) Chair the Finance Committee;
- 8) Perform financial duties as required by law or the organizations with which the Organization is affiliated.

D. The Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- 1) Be the principal information officer of the organization;
- 2) Maintain the non-financial files and records of the Organization;
- 3) Be responsible for recording and keeping accurate minutes of meetings of the membership, Stewards' Council and Officers' Committee;
- 4) Oversee all elections and referenda of the Organization, record and report all votes.

E. The Vice-President

The Vice-President shall:

- 1) Work with the President to oversee the operations of the Organization;
- 2) Assume the responsibilities of President if that person becomes unable to perform those duties;
- 3) Supervise the non-financial responsibilities of the staff;
- 4) Chair the Stewards Council.

VIII. Committees

A. Standing Committees

- 1) Standing committees shall be created by a written resolution approved by a majority vote of the Stewards' Council for the purpose of implementing the policy of the Organization. The resolution shall delineate the role of the committee and the responsibilities of the chair.
- 2) The chairs of all standing committees shall be elected by a majority vote of the Stewards' Council and be officers of the Organization as specified in Article VI.
- 3) Chairs of all standing committees shall regularly report on the activities of their committee to the Stewards' Council and the membership.
- 4) A standing committee may be dissolved by a written resolution approved by a majority vote of the Stewards' Council.

B. Ad Hoc Committees

- 1) Ad hoc committees may be created to advise the membership or the Stewards' Council.
- 2) Ad hoc committees shall be created by either:
 - a) A majority vote of the membership at a membership meeting; or
 - b) A majority vote of the Stewards' Council.

IX. Departmental Stewards

A. Stewards' Council: The Stewards' Council shall meet regularly to oversee the implementation of Organizational policy as directed by the membership.

B. Stewards

- 1) Any member shall be eligible to be a Steward.
- 2) Stewards shall serve as union representatives at the department level. A Steward's main responsibility is to be available to members having grievances, questions or information relevant to the Organization and to inform the Stewards' Council of questions and concerns from members.
- 3) One Steward may be elected for every fifteen (15) full members or any fraction thereof in each department, but each department shall be entitled to elect at least one steward.
- 4) In the event that an elected Steward shall become unable to fulfill the duties of Steward, an election shall be held in the department for a replacement.
- 5) A Steward may be appointed by the Vice President until an election is conducted in the department.

X. Dues

A. Dues Structure: Dues for members of the Organization shall be the sum of two parts. The first part shall be a percentage of the member's salary designated to pay per capita fees to the organizations with which the Organization is affiliated (hereinafter,

"Affiliates"). The second part shall be a percentage of the member's salary designated to pay the remainder of the Organization's financial obligations.

- B. Establishment of Dues: The membership may establish a dues bylaw by a majority vote of the membership provided that twenty-five percent (25%) of the membership votes. No vote for dues bylaws shall take place during the Spring or Summer terms. Dues bylaws shall set dues in accordance with the Dues Structure defined in Section A of this article.
- C. Dues Pass Through: In the event that the Affiliates raise the per capita fees assessed, and such increase has not been accounted for by a duly established Dues Bylaw, then that part of member dues designated to pay per capita fees shall be increased by the amount necessary to accommodate the increased fees.
- D. Notification of Dues Obligations: The union shall make known the amount of dues at the beginning of each term.

XI. Amendment

Any member or members seeking to amend the constitution shall present in writing a copy of the proposed amendment to the Secretary. The Secretary shall notify the Stewards' Council immediately of such proposed amendment and its consideration shall be placed on the agenda for the next membership meeting. A copy of the proposed amendment shall be published and distributed prior to the meeting. If a majority of those members attending and voting at the membership meeting vote in favor of the proposed amendment, or if ten (10) percent of the membership petition for the proposed amendment, a vote for the proposed amendment shall commence within ten days of the membership meeting passing the proposed amendment or receipt of the petition requesting the proposed amendment. A positive vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those voting, provided that twenty five (25) percent of the membership votes, shall be required to pass the proposed amendment. Upon such passage, the Secretary shall amend the constitution as required.

XII. Bylaws

- A. Except where otherwise specified herein, the Stewards' Council shall be empowered to establish written bylaws of the Organization in order to facilitate the implementation of policy as directed by the membership. These bylaws shall include, at a minimum:
 - 1) The voting procedures of the Organization; and
 - 2) Determination of departments for the purposes of representation in Article IV.D.3.
- B. Bylaws shall be passed or amended by a majority vote of the Stewards' Council.
- C. Bylaws regarding voting procedures may not be amended while the Organization is in the process of voting.

GEO BYLAWS

(As Amended 13 October 2010; 11 November 2013; 24 January 2018)

I. Dues and Representation-Service Fees

- A. Rate of Dues and Representation-Service Fees

- 1) Establishment of Dues after the 2009-2010 Academic Year
For all terms ending on or after September 1, 2010, the dues for members of the Organization shall be the sum of the amount of the per capita fees the Organization is required to pay to Affiliates on behalf of the member and one and five one-hundredths percent (1.05%) of the member's salary to be used for the remainder of the Organization's financial obligations. [Adopted April 2007]
- 2) Graduate students who are members of the organization but do not hold an appointment covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement may choose to pay dues voluntarily. The amount will be set by the relevant committees. [Adopted 24 January 2018]

II. Membership Meetings

- A. Membership Meetings shall be closed to the press, unless opened by the meeting. [Adopted 20 October 1983]
- B. During the Spring and Summer Terms, the following items will be out of order at any membership meeting and may not be the subject of a membership referendum under Article V.B. of the constitution: dues increase, affiliation of this organization. [Adopted 14 January 1987]

III. Affiliation

This organization shall be affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers / Michigan Federation of Teachers [known as AFT Michigan, as of 22 March 2012], AFL-CIO. [Adopted 20 February 1976]