



## The Constitution of the School of General Studies Student Council

### **Preamble**

We the General Studies Student Council shall represent the diverse undergraduate population of the School of General Studies by pursuing academic, political, social and administrative initiatives of interest to the student body and shall act as a liaison between the student body and the General Studies administration, the larger university community and other individuals and organizations.

### **Article I. Name**

The name of this governing body shall be the General Studies Student Council; hereafter referred to as the GSSC.

### **Article II. Membership and Duties**

1. The GSSC shall be comprised of the following elected officers:

- Student Body President
- Vice President of Policy
- Vice President of Student Life
- Vice President of Finance
- Vice President of Communications
- University Senator\*
- Social Chair
- Academic Affairs and Committee on Instruction Representative\*
- Alumni Affairs and Center for Career Education Representative
- Student Services Representative
- Senior Class President
- Junior Class President
- Sophomore Class President
- First Year Class President
- Parent's Representative
- Student Workers Representative
- International Students Representative
- Delegates At-Large (4 members)
- Senior Class Vice President
- Junior Class Vice President
- Sophomore Class Vice President
- First Year Class Vice President

\* These positions both fall under the jurisdiction of two governing bodies. Though elected by the General Studies student body, and impeachable by a two-thirds majority

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vote from a quorum of the GSSC, they may only be removed from the Senate or C.O.I. by a vote from that body. Please see Article VII, Section 2.

## **Article III. GSSC Authority, Officer Duties and Terms of Office**

1. To be eligible to hold a GSSC office one must
  - a. Be a General Studies student in good standing with the General Studies Dean of Students Office.
  - b. Have and maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of at least 2.5.
  - c. Remain enrolled in one class each term they are in office (excluding summer).
2. In order to carry out its mission, the GSSC will have the authority and responsibility to
  - a. Formulate the budget of the GSSC.
  - b. Distribute earmarked funds from the Student Life fee.
  - c. Express its will through resolutions.
  - d. Issue reports, including but not limited to the meeting minutes, to the General Studies student body on council activities and efforts.
  - e. Establish committees.
3. In addition to their individual duties, all GSSC officers shall
  - a. Be expected to provide a report of their specific activities at the weekly GSSC meeting.
  - b. Form relationships with the appropriate members of the other student governing bodies of Columbia University.
  - c. Attend all council meetings and all meetings relevant to position.
    - i. If a member must miss a meeting s/he shall contact the Vice President of Communications, barring unforeseen emergencies, at least one day in advance in order to be considered excused.
    - ii. A member may not have unexcused absences from two consecutive meetings, or miss five meetings during the course of the academic year. In the event that a member violates this policy, the Vice President of Communications will make additional attempts to contact the individual. If, following these attempts, the absences are not excused, the council will begin impeachment hearings.
    - iii. If a council member is absent from a GSSC meeting, s/he shall submit a written report to the rest of council prior to the meeting, when possible.
    - iv. If a council member is absent from a meeting relevant to her/his position, that member will obtain all necessary information to keep the GSSC updated.

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- d. Be responsible for the publicity of events that fall under the jurisdiction of their office.
  - e. Help the transition of future council members by providing advice and important contacts to new members, and if necessary by planning and allocating funds for events that occur after their term in office.
4. The University Senator shall serve a term of two years; all other officers of the GSSC shall serve one-year terms.
5. No GSSC officer may simultaneously hold two elected offices within the GSSC.
6. The Student Body President, the Vice President of Policy, the Vice President of Student Life, the Vice President Finance, and the Vice President of Communications shall form the Executive Board of the GSSC. The Executive Board shall:
- a. Set council meeting agendas
  - b. Mediate inter-council conflicts
  - c. Serve in an advisory role to the rest of the GSSC
  - d. Maintain a discretionary fund, the size of which will be determined by the rest of the council at the beginning of the year. Additionally, no money may be spent from this fund contrary to a GSSC decision in that same year.
  - e. Any expenditures over \$200 must be approved by a simply majority vote in the GSSC.
  - f.
    - i. The E-board will distribute minutes of its weekly meetings held with the DOS advisor to all council members.
    - ii. In order to protect the identities of the parties under deliberation, particularly when the business in question is of a sensitive nature, the e-board will report about the case being heard in general terms, and disclose no specific information.
  - g.
    - i. If performance of a council member does not meet the standards of the e-board, the e-board has the responsibility to speak to the council member and agree with the council member on a course of action whereby the council member will fulfill his or her responsibilities.
    - ii. If the e-board sees no progress to this affect, the e-board is to give the council member a choice: make the matter public before council for deliberation, or step down from his or her position.
    - iii. If the issue was brought to council, and the council member remains performing below expectations, he or she will be asked to step down or undergo impeachment hearings.
    - iv. If council is not in session for more than one week, the e-board is to give the candidate the choice whether to open the issue to council deliberation via email, or relinquish his or her responsibilities to an acting council member chosen by the e-board who will assume his or her

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responsibilities. This acting member must be later confirmed or replaced by council.

v. All actions having to do with relinquishment of responsibilities, decisions by the e-board and the council member in question, or any other issues pertinent to this matter of a sensitive nature, must be summarized in writing and signed by the issuing parties.

### **Article IV. Offices of the GSSC**

#### 1. The Student Body President shall

- a. Serve as the primary spokesperson for the GSSC.
- b. Bear primary responsibility for the execution of all GSSC directives.
- c. Determine the agenda for weekly meetings, subject to review by the entire Executive Board.
- d. Chair the meetings of the GSSC.
- e. Maintain relationships with university administrators significant to the experience of the General Studies student body.
- f. Vote only in the event of a tie.
- g. Keep the Executive Board apprised of all current business.
- h. Keep the General Studies student body updated on all relevant issues.

The following officers shall each have one vote in motions that are made before a quorum of the GSSC:

#### 2. The Vice President of Policy shall

- a. Assist the Student Body President in the fulfillment of his or her duties.
- b. Assume the role of Student Body President in the event of the resignation, impeachment, removal or ineligibility of the Student Body President.
- c. Uphold non-budgetary inter-group relations with the executive boards of other councils and governing boards.
- d. Represent the GSSC and the student body of the School of General Studies at all relevant committee meetings that are not attended by the President
- e. Attend any committee meetings that the President is required to attend but is unable to.
- f. Have explicit knowledge of the GSSC constitution.
- g. Settle or arbitrate questions pertaining to constitutional procedures which may arise in meetings of the GSSC.
- h. Fulfill the duties of the Student Body President in his or her absence at GSSC meetings, voting only in the event of a tie during such times.
- i. Chair and oversee the Policy Committee.

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## 3. The Vice President of Student Life shall

- a. Sit on inter-campus social committees.
- b. Compile and update regularly a calendar of events being planned by GSSC officers, to be posted in the lounge and on the website.
- c. Offer assistance to other GSSC members in planning events.
- d. Chair and oversee the Student Life Committee.

## 4. The Vice President of Finance shall

- a. Administer and monitor the budget of the GSSC.
- b. Implement timely, fair procedures for the funding of student activities.
- c. Submit a general ledger statement to the GSSC at each week.
- d. Advise student organizations about GSSC financial procedures and allocations.
- e. Advise the GSSC regarding the Student Activities Fee.
- f. Maintain and make accessible detailed records of revenues, expenditures and encumbrances of the GSSC.
- g. Uphold inter-group relations concerning budgetary and funding issues with the other councils and governing boards.
- h. Serve on at least one GSSC funded governing board (preferably the Activities Board at Columbia) – keeping the GSSC abreast of relevant issues on said governing board.
- i. Hold a class during the GSSC retreat teaching all GSSC members what they need to know about the University's finance systems, such as how to fill out B-Forms.
- j. Chair and oversee the Finance Committee.

## 5. The Vice President of Communications shall

- a. Oversee the maintenance of the GSSC website.
- b. Facilitate the coverage of GSSC activities by campus publications.
- c. Act as a liaison to the Pre-Medical Association at the School of General Studies.
- d. Prepare the Agenda prior to each weekly meeting.
- e. Document the activities of the GSSC by taking minutes at weekly meetings and collecting reports from all GSSC Officers and Committee Chairpersons. These are to be made available to the student body by posting them in Lewisohn Lounge or on the GSSC web-page.
- f. Take attendance at weekly meetings and notify the President in the event of an Officer's repeated absence.
- g. Maintain the GSSC office in Lerner Hall.
- h. Facilitate communication between members of the GSSC and the General Studies administration, including, but not limited to, room requests, alumni affairs, and complaints and concerns.

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6. The University Senator shall
  - a. Represent the entire student body of the School of General Studies in the University Senate.
  - b. Make every effort to participate in Senate committees whose issues affect the General Studies student body.
  - c. Submit a report of Senate activities pertinent to the G.S. student body at GSSC weekly meetings.
  - d. Sit on the Policy Committee.
  
7. The Social Chair shall
  - a. Provide at least three opportunities per semester for the General Studies community to come together socially in large, school-wide, events.
  - b. Organize the annual GSSC formal.
  - c. Assist the Vice President of Student Life with her or his programming responsibilities.
  - d. Offer assistance to other GSSC members in planning events.
  - e. Sit on the Student Life Committee.
  
8. The Academic Affairs and Committee on Instruction Representative shall
  - a. Represent the concerns of the student body at biweekly C.O.I. meetings.
  - b. Ensure that information concerning academic issues shall be made available to the General Studies student body.
  - c. Organize events that provide opportunities for interaction between students and faculty in various major departments.
  - d. Maintain a relationship with the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs.
  - e. Uphold relations with other Academic Affairs representatives from other councils.
  - f. Sit on the Policy Committee.
  
9. The Alumni Affairs and Center for Career Education Representative shall
  - a. Act as a liaison between the CCE and the student body to encourage student use of the office and student involvement in CCE events.
  - b. Work with CCE to organize events which focus on employment and graduate school opportunities.
  - c. Work with the General Studies Alumni Affairs Office and Senior Class President to organize events which focus on post-graduation life.
  - d. Maintain a relationship with the Associate Dean of Career Services.
  - e. Uphold relations with other Alumni Affairs and Academic Career Services representatives from other councils.
  - f. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

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### 10. The Student Services Representative shall

- a. Act as a liaison to the Office of the Vice President for Student Services.
- b. Monitor the quality of student life and address concerns which may involve but are not limited to the Office of the Registrar, Student Financial Services, Academic Information Systems, University Housing, Athletic Facilities, Dining Services and Health Services.
- c. Uphold relations with other Student Service representatives from other councils.
- d. Sit on the Policy Committee.

### 11. The Senior Class President shall

- a. Provide opportunities for Senior General Studies students to come together socially or for class-specific informational purposes.
- b. Work with the Alumni Affairs Office and the Alumni Affairs and Academic Career Services Representative to encourage interaction between current and future alumni.
- c. Uphold relations with other Senior Class Presidents from other councils.
- d. Organize and oversee a Senior Class Committee, when needed.
- e. Form an advisory committee and cooperate with the Dean of Students Office to plan and execute for commencement activities.
- f. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

### 12. The Junior Class President shall

- a. Provide opportunities for Junior General Studies students to come together socially or for class-specific informational purposes.
- b. Uphold relations with other Junior Class Presidents from other councils.
- c. Organize and oversee a Junior Class Committee, when needed.
- d. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

### 13. The Sophomore Class President shall

- a. Provide opportunities for the Sophomore General Studies students to come together socially or for class-specific informational purposes.
- b. Uphold relations with other Sophomore Class Presidents from other councils
- c. Organize and oversee a Sophomore Class Committee, when needed.
- d. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

### 14. The First Year Class President shall

- a. Provide opportunities for the First Year General Studies students to come together socially or for class-specific informational purposes.

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- b. Uphold relations with other First-Year Class Presidents from other councils
- c. Organize and oversee a First-Year Class Committee, when needed.
- d. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

### 15. The Parent's Representative shall

- a. Provide opportunities General Studies students who are parents to come together socially or for parent-specific informational purposes.
- b. Organize and oversee a Parents Committee, when needed.
- c. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

### 16. The Student Workers Representative shall

- a. Provide opportunities for General Studies students who are part-time and full-time workers to come together socially or for part-time and full-time worker informational purposes.
- b. Organize and oversee a Student Workers Committee, when needed.
- c. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

### 17. The International Students Representative shall

- a. Provide opportunities for General Studies students who are international students to come together socially or for international student informational purposes.
- b. Organize and oversee an International Student Committee, when needed.
- c. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

Additionally, the following class vice presidents shall be non-voting members of the GSSC, except in the absence of their respective class president. In addition the delegates-at-large shall also be non-voting members:

### 18. The Delegates-at-Large (4 members) shall

- a. At the beginning of each academic year, be assigned to and be members of either the Policy, Student Life, Finance, or Communications committees.
- b. Fulfill all special assignments as delegated by the GSSC.

### 19. The Senior Class Vice President shall

- a. Assist the Senior Class President with her or his advocacy and programming responsibilities.
- b. Assume the Senior Class President responsibilities in her or his absence.
- c. Sit on the Student Life Committee.



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20. The Junior Class Vice President shall

- a. Assist the Junior Class President with her or his advocacy and programming responsibilities.
- b. Assume the Junior Class President responsibilities in her or his absence.
- c. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

21. The Sophomore Class Vice President shall

- a. Assist the Sophomore Class President with her or his advocacy and programming responsibilities.
- b. Assume the Sophomore Class President responsibilities in her or his absence.
- c. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

22. The First Year Class Vice President shall

- a. Assist the First Year Class President with her or his advocacy and programming responsibilities.
- b. Assume the First Year Class President responsibilities in her or his absence.
- c. Sit on the Student Life Committee.

### **Article V. Committees**

1. All non-standing committees shall

- a. Be created by the council and serve at the pleasure of the council.
- b. Be open to all members of the General Studies student body.
- c. Be led by a committee chairperson nominated by any member of council and confirmed by a simple majority of quorum.
  - i. The committee chairperson is responsible for submitting a report on the actions of the committee to the council when appropriate.
- d. Develop and execute all pertinent projects under the leadership of the committee chairperson.

2. The Judicial Committee shall be composed of the following five members:

- a. The GSSC Student Body President, provided that s/he is a Senior and not directly implicated in the matters being brought before the Committee.
- b. The GSSC Senior Class President, provided that s/he is not directly implicated in the matters being brought to the Committee.
- c. The Dean of Students of General Studies, or an appropriate member of the DOS office selected by the Dean of Students
- d. Two Senior General Studies students, selected by the Student Body President.

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- e. A Senior General Studies student in the event that the GSSC Student Body President is not a Senior and therefore is unable to serve on this Committee.
  - f. If a member of the committee is implicated in the matters being brought before the committee, then the Student Body President--or the Senior Class President, if the Student Body President is implicated--may select an additional Senior General Studies student.
3. The Judicial Committee shall:
- a. Mediate conflicts between council officers.
  - b. Vote on all bylaw change proposals from the Committee on Elections; such changes will take effect immediately if they are presented before the candidacy declaration deadline of that year's election and receive a unanimous vote from the Judicial Committee.
  - c. Oversee the resolution of election bylaw infractions and election disputes if the decision of the E.C. is appealed.
  - d. If a Judicial Committee member violates any section of the GSSC Constitution or of its By-Laws, s/he will be subject to removal, following a majority vote by the entire Judicial Committee. In the event of removal, the Student Body President will appoint a new member subject to affirmation of the Dean of Students Office. In the event that the Student Body President is removed, the Senior Class President shall appoint a new member.
  - e. Communications with the Judicial Committee must be done via the Chair of the Judicial Committee.

### **Article VI. Elections, Nominations, and Succession**

1. The GSSC shall hold annual elections during the spring semester.
2. Members' terms begin after the commencement ceremonies following the elections and last until the following year's commencement ceremonies.
3. Any positions left vacant by the spring elections or which become vacant throughout the academic year will be filled by candidates nominated by the Student Body President, and confirmed by a two-thirds majority of quorum at the following meeting.
4. Members may not vote until they have been elected by the student body or confirmed by the council, and may not vote on issues discussed before they were a member of council.
5. Should the Student Body President become unable or ineligible to perform his or her duties, the line of succession to the office of the Student Body President shall be as



follows: the Vice President of Policy, the Vice President of Student Life, the Vice President of Finance, the Vice President of Communications.

6. Should a Class President become unable or ineligible to perform his or her duties, the Class Vice President shall advance and assume all of the Class President's responsibilities.

### **Article VII. Impeachment**

1. The vote of two-thirds majority of quorum in favor of impeachment shall be sufficient to remove an officer from the GSSC.

2. Because the University Senator and the Academic Affairs and Committee on Instruction Representative each serve two governing bodies, either of these officers may continue to serve their term on the University Senate or the COI upon impeachment by the GSSC. However, based upon the reasons for their impeachment, the Dean of Students Office reserves the right to ask the Senator or COI representative to resign from his or her office.

3. In the event of an impeachment, the GSSC will vote on whether to open the space on council to the public or to fill the space by appointment.

### **Article VIII. Meetings and Voting Procedures**

1. A quorum must be present to hold any vote.

- a. Quorum shall be defined as two-thirds of all eligible voting members of the GSSC.
- b. GSSC officers may vote yea or nay, or may choose to abstain from a vote.
- c. If an officer chooses to abstain from a vote, they are still counted toward quorum.
- d. A majority vote is defined as the agreement of one more than half of present members, given that quorum has been established.
- e. A two-thirds majority vote is defined as the agreement of two-thirds of quorum.
- f. If a class president is absent from a meeting, the class vice president shall vote in her or his place.

2. A GSSC officer who is on the executive board of a club or organization affected by the governance of the GSSC must abstain from any GSSC vote concerning:

- a. GSSC financial allocations to that club or organization.
- b. New rules and regulations which pertain to GSSC interaction with that club or organization.

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3. The GSSC shall have the authority to adopt rules governing meeting procedures in accordance with the needs and circumstances of each administration, unless adopted rules contradict the constitution, wherein a two-thirds majority vote is needed to implement rules.
4. If necessary, the Student Body President may call for a vote by email. The Student Body President may consider an online vote approved or disapproved once one more than half of all eligible voting members of the GSSC approved or disapproved the motion, even if not all council members replied to the e-mail.
5. If the council is voting on the confirmation of a new officer, the GSSC meeting must be temporarily closed. Otherwise, all meetings of the GSSC shall be open to the public. The Student Body President retains the right to initiate any other closed discussion or vote within the course of a meeting; however s/he may be overruled by a majority vote of the council.
6. The GSSC shall meet at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesdays while Fall and Spring Semester classes are in session, unless a different time is approved by a two-thirds majority of council.
7. Items for the agenda are set during the weekly e-board meeting (or by a weekly time determined by the e-board), however, any six members of council who wish to put an item onto the agenda may do so. If the item is voted down, then six different members of council must support it to bring it back onto the agenda.

### **Article IX. Supremacy of the Constitution**

1. This Constitution shall be the highest authority of the GSSC.
2. All bodies outlined in this Constitution shall derive their authority from this Constitution and its accompanying By-Laws.
3. The GSSC may temporarily suspend any article of the constitution with a two-thirds majority vote of quorum.
4. In the event that any GSSC officer finds himself or herself in conflict with the prevailing interpretation of the GSSC constitution, s/he may seek advisement with the GSSC Executive Board.

### **Article X. Amendments and Bylaws**

1. Any amendment including changes, additions and deletions to this constitution shall require a two-thirds majority of quorum.

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2. This constitution shall be reviewed as needed by a Constitutional Committee, and shall be updated only through amendments and bylaws.

3. The addition of a bylaw to this constitution shall require the vote of a simple majority of quorum.

a. Bylaws shall be numbered by the last two digits of the year in which they are created, followed by a hyphen, followed by a number, in sequence.

## Article XI. Ratification

1. Any revision or amendment of this constitution shall require two-thirds majority of quorum.

2. The GSSC shall hold a constitutional convention every other year, starting from 2003-2004. The GSSC, based on the recommendations of the convention, shall express its will on the state of the constitution before the end of its term.

## By-Laws of the GSSC Constitution

### 01-01 Statement of Conduct

Members of the GSSC represent both the council itself and the student body of the School of General Studies. As such, conduct and courtesy, both professional and personal, is expected to be exemplary at all times and in all situations during which a Council member represents his or her office and/or the GSSC in general. This includes but is not exclusive to a Council member's

1. Use of the council email
2. Conduct toward fellow council members
3. Conduct when representing his or her office at a GSSC meeting or event, an event organized by another council, University organization, administration or an event outside of Columbia University.

To this end, and in the interest of preserving an environment of mutual respect and cooperation for all council members, your conduct as a council member will be strictly enforced. While mature manner and adult conduct are assumed, the following shall serve as a guideline for the situations above.

#### 1. Council Email

Council email ( [gssc@columbia.edu](mailto:gssc@columbia.edu) or [gsidea@columbia.edu](mailto:gsidea@columbia.edu) ) shall

- a. Be used as a venue for the exchange of ideas, responses, and opinions concerning Council business when the Council is not convened.
- b. Not be a venue for personal opinions, judgments, or slander of fellow council

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- members or their ideas.
- c. Be used for Council business only

### 2. Manner and Conduct Toward Fellow Council Members

- a. When addressing another Council member during meetings, officers should use a respectful manner and tone.
- b. Any concern, opinion, judgment, or constructive criticism of another council member is to be directed to that officer in private directly by the concerned person(s) and with appropriate discretion. If necessary, the Executive Board members may act as mediators for this discussion. Other resources for inter-council member conflict mediation include the Judicial Committee, the General Studies Dean of Students Office and the Ombuds Office.

### 06-01 GSSC Election Procedures

1. GSSC elections shall be held annually before the last day of classes in the Spring semester.

#### 2. Annual Election Commission

- a. The Student Body President of the GSSC shall nominate a Commissioner and two other members to an Election Commission (hereafter referred to as the E.C.) at least four weeks prior to the election. If the GSSC Student Body President is not a Senior, the Senior Class President shall appoint the members of the E.C.
- b. Any current General Studies student may be nominated to the E.C. if s/he is not planning to run in the up-coming election. Priority will be given to members of the Senior Class.
- c. Decisions made by the E.C. are final, unless reversed through appeal to the Judicial Committee. (See Rules Regarding By-Law Violations, Section c.)
- d. If an E.C. member violates any section of the GSSC Constitution or of its By-Laws, s/he will be subject to removal, following a majority vote by the Judicial Committee.”

#### 3. The E.C. shall

- a. Ensure a fair election process.
- b. Assume jurisdiction from the moment of the first public GSSC notification of elections until the last election dispute it resolved.
- c. Meet at least once a week for four weeks prior to the election.
- d. Distribute an Election Packet to interested members of the student body at least two weeks prior to the election which includes, but is not limited to a Candidate Registration Form, a copy of the election by-laws and a Rules Violation Form.
- e. Specify office hours during which they will view campaign materials.

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- d. Rule on submitted Rule Violation Forms.
- f. Reserve the right to remove any candidate from the election if s/he violates the Election By-Laws.
- g. Prepare class-specific ballots for the election.
- h. Compile a Voter Guide to be distributed with a ballot to each voter, upon their logging into the election site, or upon their signing of the Voter Register in the event of paper ballot..
- i. Establish a time table of deadlines for candidacy declaration and campaign materials and start and finish times for campaigning. The deadline for Intent to Run forms may only be extended for positions for which no student has declared candidacy; supporting materials' deadlines may be extended, with the discretion of the E.C.
- j. Use only the candidates' official Columbia e-mail account when utilizing electronic mail, unless the candidate requests an alternative account on her/his Intent to Run form.

## 4. Rules Regarding Candidates

- a. Any General Studies student who meets the criteria outlined in Article III, Section i of the Constitution may run for a GSSC office.
  - i. Any student who wishes to run for the office of Senior Class President or of Senior Class Vice President must be of senior standing, as defined by the Dean of Students Office, for the entirety of the upcoming academic year.
  - ii. Any student who wishes to run for the office of a Class President or of Class Vice President must be expected to be a member of said class for the upcoming fall semester. In the event of any uncertainty pertaining to academic and/or class status, all the E.C. shall defer to the judgment of the Dean of Students Office.
  - iii. The First Year Class President and the First Year Class Vice President shall be appointed by the GSSC in the fall before the annual GSSC retreat. Students will be eligible for First Year Class President if they are in their first or second semester in General Studies.
- b. No student shall run for more than one office.
- c. All candidates must be able to attend the GSSC retreat at the beginning of the academic year for which they are running. The date for the retreat will be set by the outgoing e-board.
- d. To run for Student Body President, a candidate must have spent 1 academic year in GS with a minimum of 12 credits completed over those two semesters -- at least 6 credits a semester for two semesters.

## 5. Rules Regarding Campaigning

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- a. All campaign activities are subject to official university regulations. If the E.C. determines that a university regulation has been violated, it shall have the right to remove any involved candidates from the election.
- b. The only forms of permitted campaign materials are flyers, palm cards, personal website on the Columbia server (i.e., [www.columbia.edu/~ab1234/](http://www.columbia.edu/~ab1234/)), free community web content (including facebook groups and IM profiles), door-to-door canvassing, public announcements, telephone canvassing, and emails. A garment may be worn for campaigning purposes--by the candidate only--but it must follow the parameters used for posters, must be approved by the E.C., and will be deducted from the poster allocation. No other physical and electronic campaign materials are permitted. Prohibited materials include, but are not limited to: chalking, use of whiteboards and chalkboards, creative uses of tape, food, and stickers. No alcoholic beverages may be served in connection with a candidate's campaign.
- c. Individual Candidates may produce up to 250 total of flyers and palm cards to post or distribute as campaign materials. Each flyer may be a photocopied, single sheet of paper (any color) up to 8 1/2 x 11 inches with black ink print. Palm cards can be as small as 1/8 of the size of a flyer. Each campaign flyer and palm card must be approved and counted by the E.C. If approved, the E.C. will stamp the flyer or palm card, and deduct it from that candidate's aforementioned 250-flyer limit. Candidates will be responsible for distributing or posting their approved campaign materials, and thus are responsible for making themselves aware of and following University-wide postering guidelines. Candidates may not eliminate, damage, or cover the posters and palm card of other candidates.
- d. Candidates who wish to use emails as a promotional venue may do so, but are subject to the guidelines of CUIT, the E.C. and the Election Bylaws.
- e. All campaign materials are subject to guidelines forbidding obscene, pornographic, racist, sexist, homophobic, alcohol or drug related images or words. Materials may not mention or attack, directly or indirectly, other candidates in any way. The E.C. may designate events in which the candidates will be allowed to address one another. During said events, the candidates must uphold the GSSC Statement of Conduct. The E.C. reserves the right to reject unacceptable materials, or discipline candidates who disregard these guidelines in campaign materials that do not require their direct approval.
- f. Candidates may not misrepresent themselves or other candidates with fraudulent information in any campaign activities. They may not attack the character of another candidate.
- g. No alcoholic beverages may be served in connection with a candidate's campaign.
- h. Door-to-door and telephone campaigning may take place only between the hours of 10:00 A.M. and 9:00 P.M. daily.
- i. Candidates are responsible for the campaign-related actions of those whom they encourage, request, or solicit to be a part of their campaign. Furthermore, candidates are responsible for notifying such persons of the E.C. guidelines and



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Election By-laws.

- j. On the day of the election, campaigning may not take place within the building where the election is being held. Candidates may pass out flyers to those entering the building.
- k. No candidate may contact an individual based on information obtained from a petition, sign-in sheet, club list and/or any list compiled by the GSSC.
- l. Paid advertising of any kind is prohibited, outside of expressly approved campaign material.
- m. Candidates are responsible for checking with the EC when considering campaign activities not described in these regulations.

## 6. Rules Regarding By-Law Violations

- a. Allegations of rule violations must be submitted in writing to the E.C., even if an E.C. commissioner makes the allegation. The statement should include a description of the infraction(s), any corroborating accounts, and any materials that can be presented as evidence.
- b. The E.C., upon receiving the allegation, shall immediately give a copy of this statement to the accused candidate, who may submit a rebuttal to the E.C. within one day.
- c. The E.C. shall strive to reach a decision within two days.
- d. If the ruling of the E.C. dissatisfies the accused candidate, s/he may appeal to the Judicial Committee, which has original jurisdiction and may reconsider the entire case. An appealing candidate must submit, in writing, the grounds of their appeal to the Chair of the Judicial Committee.
- e. The Judicial Committee shall strive to reach a decision within three days.
- f. Penalties available to the E.C. shall include, but are not limited to: docking of flyers, website removal, disqualification from E.C. sponsored events, removing the right to use endorsements, removal from E.C. materials such as the GSSC website, removal from E.C. e-mail announcements and removal from the elections. Level of penalization shall be at the discretion of the E.C.

## 7. Rules Regarding Endorsements

- a. Candidates may seek endorsements from recognized student groups and publicize approved endorsements. The Student Group Endorsement Form is located at <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gssc/election/GSSCendorseform.doc>
- b. To obtain an official endorsement, a candidate or party and the endorsing organization must comply with the following regulations:
  - i. The party or candidate must present their platform at a full meeting of the student organization's executive board
  - ii. The endorsing organization must be provided with a copy of the Rules Regarding Endorsements (Section 7).

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- iii. If the candidate seeking endorsement is a member of the student group's executive board, then he/she must abstain from the vote.
- iv. The Candidate Endorsement Form must be completed and signed by the candidate seeking endorsement and the President of the endorsing organization.
- v. If the candidate seeking endorsement is President of the student group, then the next highest-ranking officer must preside over the vote and sign the Candidate Endorsement Form.
- c. Candidates must submit completed endorsement forms to the Elections Commission. Candidates may not publicize an endorsement until the accompanying form has been submitted.
- d. Endorsing organizations may not provide financial or material support to candidates. Their members may campaign on behalf of candidates, but must comply with all elections rules. Candidates may not campaign on event flyers of their endorsing organizations.
- e. Candidates may not be endorsed by the GSSC, CCSC, ESC, Barnard SGA, PMA, List College Student Council, Activities Board at Columbia, Student Governing Board, Community Impact, Club Sports Governing Board, or the Inter-Greek Council.
- f. Individual students may endorse candidates. However, candidates may not utilize said endorsements in their campaign materials.
- g. Candidates may not be endorsed by administrators, current GSSC members, E.C. members, J.C. members, or other candidates.

### 8. Rules Regarding Parties

- a. A candidate for the office of Class President and a candidate for the office of Class Vice President—for the same class—may run together as a party. They must identify themselves as a party on their Election Registration Form.
- b. In the event that candidates run together as a party, at most 50 out of each candidate's allocated 250 flyers may be used to advertise the party with which they are running.

### 9. Rules Regarding Ballots

- a. Ballots shall be prepared by the E.C. and must be approved by all three members two days prior to the election.
- b. Candidate names shall be grouped according to the position they are running for and listed alphabetically.
- c. A space shall be provided under each position's title that allows for a write-in candidate.
- d. Voters shall receive a ballot that includes the selection of candidates for Class President of their class.
- e. Voting shall be conducted on-line. In the event of technical failure, the EC shall

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hold paper balloting or choose to postpone the elections until later in the academic year.

### 10. Rules Regarding Voting

#### a. Internet Voting

- i. The date and the time of the election is to be determined by the E.C.
- ii. The ballot will be held on a secure server on the University Network
- iii. Proper precautions will be taken with CUIT and/or other appropriate bodies in order to ensure a fair election.
- iv. Any evidence of a security breach or other violation affecting the vote will result in a defaulting to a paper vote.

#### b. Paper Voting

- i. The time and place of the election is to be determined by the E.C.
- ii. Only E.C. members shall pass out and collect ballots.
- iii. Only General Studies students may vote in the election. Each student must present a C.U.I.D. at the election table. The E.C. will check to make sure they are currently enrolled by referring to a list of currently enrolled students provided by the Dean of Student's Office. Qualified voters will then sign the voter register and will receive a voter information packet and a class-specific ballot.

### 11. Rules Regarding the Tally of Votes

- a. A representative of the Dean of Students Office must be present when the votes are tallied by the E.C.
- b. A simple plurality of votes will suffice to determine the victor in each office.
- c. In the event of a paper ballot the E.C. Commissioners shall tally the number of students who have signed the Voter Register and compare the number to the vote totals. If the discrepancy is greater than 5%, the election will be declared invalid.
- d. Once elections close, candidates have one day to issue any remaining complaints to the E.C.
- e. The E.C. shall release unofficial election results to the candidates once the 24-hour complaint period has elapsed, holding the races with outstanding complaints.
- f. A candidate may request a re-count if the numerical difference between the candidate's total and the named winner's total is less than 7% of all votes cast in that race. Such requests must be submitted to the E.C. within one day of the announcement of the results.
- g. When releasing the results to the candidates and to the school, the E.C. shall include the percentage of votes received by each candidate. Names of write-in candidates will only be announced if they received more than 5% of the total votes in that race, otherwise they shall be known as "other."
- h. The E.C. shall release all results to the student body immediately after the announcement to the candidates, withholding those races under review or re-count.

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- i. The E.C. shall release all remaining results as soon as re-counts or complaints have been resolved.

### 12. Write-in votes will be accepted.

A write-in candidate must receive a minimum of twenty-five votes in order to win an office. A write-in candidate need not submit a Candidate Registration Form. However, anyone who announces his or her candidacy in any way, will be considered an official candidate, and will be bound by all Election By-laws.

### 06-02 The Judicial Committee shall

#### 1. Be composed of the following five members:

- a. The GSSC Student Body President; provided that s/he is a Senior and not directly implicated in the matters being brought to the Committee.
- b. The GSSC Senior Class President; provided that s/he is not directly implicated in the matters being brought to the Committee.
- c. The Dean of Students of General Studies, or an appropriate member of the DOS office selected by the Dean of Students.
- d. Two Senior General Studies students, nominated by the Student Body President.
- e. A Senior General Studies student in the event that the GSSC Student Body President is not a Senior and therefore is unable to serve on this Committee.
- f. If a member of the committee is implicated in the matters being brought before the committee, then the Student Body President--or the Senior Class President, if the Student Body President is implicated--may select an additional Senior General Studies student,.

#### 2. The Judicial Committee shall:

- a. Mediate conflicts between council officers.
- b. Vote on all bylaw change proposals from the Committee on Elections; such changes will take effect immediately if they receive a unanimous vote from the Judicial Committee.
- c. Oversee the resolution of election bylaw infractions and election disputes if the decision of the E.C. is appealed.
- d. If a Judicial Committee member violates any section of the GSSC Constitution or of its By-Laws, s/he will be subject to removal, following a majority vote by the entire Judicial Committee. In the event of removal, the Student Body President will appoint a new member subject to affirmation of the Dean of Students Office. In the event that the Student Body President is removed, the Senior Class President shall appoint a new member.
- e. Communications with the Judicial Committee must be done via the Chair of the Judicial Committee.