



CONSTITUTION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT CAUCUS OF THE COMICS STUDIES SOCIETY

Proposed Revisions July 2022

The Comics Studies Society recognizes the Graduate Student Caucus as an affiliated organization of members that works to grow the field by supporting its members (4.1) and providing guidance to undergraduates who hope to enter the field.

SECTION 1—NAME

- 1.1 The name of this organization will be the Graduate Student Caucus (**hereafter** GSC) of the Comics Studies Society (**hereafter** CSS).

SECTION 2—PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of the **GSC** is to **provide support to its members, which include currently enrolled graduate students, newly admitted graduate students, graduate students between programs (4.1), and scholars engaged in postdoctoral research. The GSC will assess the needs/interests of its members and will** provide fellowship, **professional programming**, and advocacy for such individuals as they pursue their work in comics studies. Specifically, the GSC aims to:
- Determine and assess the needs of **GSC members doing comics research.**
 - Create spaces that allow **GSC members** to network with one another.
 - Integrate **GSC members** into the community of international comics scholars.
 - Mentor **GSC members** preparing for the job market, with specific regard to their comics studies specialization by organizing professionalization workshops.
 - Connect **GSC members** with potential outside committee members or readers for thesis and dissertation projects.
 - Assist **GSC members** instructors in integrating comics into the classroom.
 - Recognize the outstanding efforts of **GSC members** working in the field through prizes for outstanding student work.
 - Facilitate regional graduate conferences in comics studies, organized and implemented by **GSC members** with **CSS** support (**when required**).
 - Run a **GSC member**-centered column or page in our online presence, continually updated with reflections and news.
 - Recruit **GSC members** outside of the humanities and social sciences.
 - **Provide support for undergraduate students looking to enter the field.**

SECTION 3—FINANCES

- 3.1 The GSC shall be provided an annual budget allocation of \$500.00 USD from the CSS Executive Board. The budget shall be used for the purposes of providing professional development programming aimed at supporting current comics studies projects and the future careers of GSC members.**
- 3.2 The GSC Budget is subject to annual review by the CSS Executive Board (initiated at their discretion). At this time, all documentation requested must be provided to the CSS Executive. The results of this review will inform decisions on renewal or revocation of the annual budget.**
- 3.3 It is the responsibility of the GSC, in coordination with the CSS Treasurer, to maintain accurate financial bookkeeping and records. The Secretary/Treasurer assumes the responsibility of keeping track of on-going available GSC funds (from year-to-year), as well as maintaining financial records such as receipts from purchases.**
- 3.4 Moneys raised through fundraising efforts (merchandise, promotions, etc.) belong to the GSC, but will be held in the CSS central organization account until withdrawal by the GSC is requested. These funds will be tracked by the GSC Secretary/Treasurer alongside the annual budget.**

SECTION 4—MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 All currently enrolled graduate students, newly admitted graduate students, graduate students between programs, and scholars engaged in postdoctoral research who are members of CSS are de facto members of the GSC. Graduate students between programs are defined as members who have received the receipt of a graduate degree (within the last three years) and are in the process of or intend on applying to doctoral programs.**
- 4.2 All GSC members retain their membership in the Caucus for three years following the receipt of their (terminal or non-terminal) graduate degree under the condition that they maintain their membership with CSS.**
- 4.3 Members of the Graduate Student Caucus are eligible to run for GSC executive committee positions, vote in elections and on caucus matters, and benefit from all the rights and privileges guaranteed by the caucus.**
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SECTION 5—EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

- 5.1** The GSC strives to be an inclusive organization **and is committed to** actively seeking out, **promoting, and encouraging** the participation/engagement of marginalized groups and underrepresented persons.
- 5.2** In pursuit of this commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion within the field of comics studies, the GSC pledges to:
- Provide opportunities for marginalized members of the GSC to take on leadership roles within the organization, if interested, without an expected history of publication, presentation, or historical involvement with the field at large.
 - Encourage membership and engagement within the GSC without the expectation of extra service labor in order to be recognized as a full participant.
 - Commit to promoting and maintaining a presence at CSS events in order to assist in fostering a welcoming space for our members.
 - Host online participation options for all GSC events and meetings that are open to our membership in order to address the ways that scholars with disabilities, those without financial wealth, and international scholars have been excluded from academic modes of participation.
 - Center and compensate the intellectual and creative work of those who have been marginalized scholars within comics studies and publishing, specifically scholars of color and of marginalized gender and sexual identities. In the event that the GSC cannot provide monetary compensation, the GSC Executive Committee will work with the scholar to find other ways to acknowledge and recognize that work.
 - Commit to using our broader digital platform as a space where we connect comics practitioners, fans, and scholars together regardless of institutional affiliation to encourage multimodal participation across digital spaces.
 - Commit to demystifying the profession and breaking down barriers to access and inclusion within the field of comics studies via sharing of information about conferences, CFPs, speaker opportunities, etc.
 - Support the interdisciplinarity of our field through the make-up of our featured GSC panels, roundtables, etc. and the CFPs that we share through our digital platforms to recognize the diversity and interdisciplinarity of our field of study.
 - Actively combat the tenets of white supremacist and capitalist culture by creating a flexible labour environment from within which we prioritize personal well-being and collective care above productivity and perfectionism.
 - Actively confront white supremacy, sexism, aggressions/discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ community, transphobia, and ableism within the GSC, CSS, and the field of comics studies at large.

SECTION 6—EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 6.1 The executive power of the Graduate Student Caucus will be vested in the GSC Executive Committee.
- 6.2 A member of **the** GSC Executive Committee may be removed through a vote of no-confidence, which is accomplished through a quorum majority vote **by the GSC Executive Committee**. In the case of the removal of a member of the Executive Committee, the remaining Executive Committee members will appoint, if deemed necessary, a temporary replacement to fulfill the duties of the vacated office until an official election can be held.
- 6.3 **A member of the GSC Executive Committee may voluntarily step down from their elected/appointed position at any time if they no longer believe that they are able to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of their position (as outlined in Section 7). In the case of a member voluntarily removing themselves from office, the remaining Executive Committee members will appoint, if deemed necessary, a temporary replacement to fulfill the duties of the vacated office until an election can be held.**
- 6.4 The Executive Committee and any **extraordinary** meeting of members are each empowered to establish from time to time such **sub**-committees as may be deemed advisable and to appoint the membership thereof.

SECTION 7—POWER AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

- 7.1 The GSC Executive Committee will consist of five elected officers and **two** officers appointed by the Committee. The elected officers are the **President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, and two Members-at-Large**. The appointed officers **are** the **Web Editor and Social Media Specialist**.
- 7.1.1 The President shall assume responsibility for the GSC **Executive Committee's** strategic work **through monthly planning of meetings and committee activities. They will commit to guiding, organizing, and leading the development of programming initiatives that align with the GSC mandate/constitution and reflect** the best interest of the **GSC membership**. The President will also serve as representative of the GSC on the **CSS Executive Board and Conference Committee (see 10.1.1)**. **As such, they** will be responsible for all communication between the CSS Executive Board, the GSC Executive **Committee**, and **the GSC membership**. In addition, they shall determine the agenda of the **GSC's Annual Business Meeting. The President may only serve a single term for one year.**
- 7.1.2 The Vice-President shall work with and assist the President in various duties, acting as a stand-in if necessary. **When necessary, they** will manage internal committee affairs, such

as overseeing and delegating various tasks to committee members working cooperatively on rendering the GSC functions operational (building online presence, delivering news, organizing workshops/events, etc.). **The Vice-President will work closely with the two Members-at-Large as they work on GSC programming.** The Vice-President shall also serve as **chair of the CSS Hillary Chute Prize Committee.** Upon completion of their one year term as Vice-President, the Vice-President will advance to the position of President.

- 7.1.3** The Secretary/Treasurer shall assume responsibility for the records of the GSC. As such, they will obtain and preserve a copy of the GSC constitution and they will create and maintain a written record of the GSC during their one year tenure as Secretary/Treasurer. That written record will be composed of minutes from GSC **Executive Committee** meetings and minutes from the **Annual Business Meeting**. In the event that the Secretary/Treasurer cannot attend a GSC **Executive Committee** meeting or the **Annual Business Meeting**, they will endeavor to secure a stand-in. The Secretary/Treasurer will assist the **President** in scheduling such meetings. Further, the Secretary/Treasurer will assume the responsibility of managing GSC finances **and is responsible for keeping and maintaining financial records, as well as coordinating with the CSS Treasurer. The Secretary/Treasurer will also sit on the CSS Outreach Committee (see 10.1.2).** The Secretary/Treasurer serves a one year term. **If elected to do so, the Secretary/Treasurer may serve an indefinite number of terms (consecutive or otherwise).**
- 7.1.4** The Members-at-Large **(2)** provide advice and aid to the officers on an ongoing basis in carrying on the business of the Caucus. **Additionally, they will be responsible for co-organizing the annual GSC Mentorship Program and GSC Professional Development Series.** Members-at-Large serve one year terms. **If elected to do so, Members-at-Large may serve an indefinite number of terms (consecutive or otherwise).**
- 7.1.5** The Web Editor is responsible for maintaining, editing, and **curating the GSC webpage, while collaborating with other members of the GSC Executive to grow** the Caucus's online presence. **The Web Editor will work closely with the Social Media Specialist to ensure web content is shared across all platforms. The Web Editor will also design and solicit content from members for the Spring and Winter Newsletter.** The Web Editor is appointed by the elected members of the Committee and serves a **two**-year term. The Web Editor may serve an indefinite number of terms **(consecutive or otherwise).**
- 7.1.6** **The Social Media Specialist is responsible for maintaining, creating, posting, and managing various GSC social media profiles. The Social Media Specialist will work closely with the Web Editor to ensure web content is shared across all platforms. They will also collaborate with the CSS Social Strategist and coordinate reciprocal online support for sharing information about news, projects, and initiatives to our members. The Social Media Specialist will also be responsible for digital social**

networking that engages with potential GSC members (see 4.1) for the purposes of expanding GSC membership during their tenure. The Social Media Specialist is appointed by the elected members of the Executive Committee and serves a two-year term. The Social Media Specialist may serve an indefinite number of terms (consecutive or otherwise).

SECTION 8—ELECTION PROCEDURES

- 8.1 Elections for Executive Committee positions will be held annually, concurrent with the general election of CSS. Elected positions on the GSC Executive include President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and (two) Members-at-Large.**
- 8.2 The Executive Committee of the GSC shall, with the help of the CSS Executive Board, solicit suggestions from the membership for nominees to the positions of (two) Members-at-Large, Secretary-Treasurer, and Vice President.**
- 8.3 All GSC members may vote on the formation of the GSC Executive Committee during the annual general election. The quorum is established at half the membership of the GSC plus one.**

SECTION 9—APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

- 9.1 Appointments to the GSC Executive Committee will be made by elected members of the GSC Executive Committee when required. Appointed positions include the Web Editor and Social Media Officer.**
- 9.2 When an appointed position becomes vacant, the GSC Executive Committee will send out an open call for applications to the position(s). The Executive Committee will collect applications and may solicit applicants from GSC members. Any member of the GSC in good standing is eligible for a position.**
- 9.3 The GSC Executive will review applications and may conduct interviews with eligible candidates. Upon completion of this process, the GSC Executive may choose to approve an appointment or continue their search.**
- 9.4 When an elected position becomes vacant, the GSC Executive may choose to appoint a current elected member of the GSC Executive to the vacant position. In this instance, the member would serve in an interim capacity until the term's conclusion or until their position is ratified at the annual election. Vacancies of elected positions that are not able to be filled in this way should proceed as outlined in 9.2.**
- 9.5 Appointments to the GSC Executive are confirmed by a quorum majority vote from the Executive Committee.**

SECTION 10—REPRESENTATION ON SOCIETY COMMITTEES

- 10.1 The GSC is responsible for establishing and maintaining processes for the recommendation or, when necessary, appointment of individuals who will occupy positions reserved on CSS standing committees for GSC members. These recommendations must be approved by the CSS Executive Board.**
- 10.1.1 The President will be the first recommendation for the CSS Conference Committee. In the event that this recommendation is not approved by the CSS Executive Board, the Vice-President should be considered the first alternate.**
- 10.1.2 The Secretary/Treasurer will be the first recommendation for the CSS Outreach Committee. In the event that this recommendation is not approved by the CSS Executive Board, the Vice-President should be considered the first alternate.**
- 10.1.3 In the event that the CSS Executive Board votes not to approve the recommendations made by the GSC Executive Committee as outlined in either 10.1.1 or 10.1.2, the Members-at-Large should be considered second alternates.**
- 10.2 In the event of the formation of a new CSS standing committee that requires GSC representation, one of the elected members of the GSC Executive Committee who is not currently sitting on another CSS ad hoc or standing committee should be recommended.**
- 10.3 In the event of the formation of a new CSS ad hoc committee that requires GSC representation, one of the elected members of the GSC Executive Committee who is not currently sitting on another CSS ad hoc or standing committee should be recommended.**

SECTION 11—GENERAL VOTING PROCEDURES

- 11.1 When deemed appropriate by the GSC Executive Committee, members may be requested to vote on general matters important to the GSC at times other than the Annual Business Meeting or Annual General Election. Matters to be voted on may include, but are not limited to, amendments to the Constitution.**
- 11.2 The quorum for voting on general matters is established at half the membership of the GSC plus one.**

SECTION 12—ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

- 12.1 The GSC Executive Committee will hold an Annual Business Meeting each year at the annual CSS Conference.**
- 12.2 The agenda for the meeting will be determined by the President of the GSC. The agenda will be shared with the GSC membership at least 14-days prior to the meeting date.**
- 12.3 All GSC members are invited to be active and contributing participants in the meeting. They are invited to participate in all aspects of the meeting including (but not limited to) asking questions, making suggestions, responding to initiatives, and voting on business.**
- 12.4 The quorum for voting is established at two thirds the membership of the GSC who are present (in-person or virtually) during the meeting.**
- 12.5 All CSS general members are invited to be visiting guests in the meeting at the GSC Executive’s discretion. They are encouraged to be present and listen to the proceedings of the meeting, but are not permitted to actively participate.**

SECTION 13—EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF MEMBERS

- 13.1 An extraordinary meeting **of members** may be called by a decision of the **GSC Executive**, or upon the request of at least **one quarter** of **GSC** membership. No meeting may be held unless all the members receive adequate notice. **Adequate notice is hereby defined as email/social media notification of no fewer than 14 days prior to the meeting.****
- 13.2 The agenda for **extraordinary** meetings of members shall be distributed **by the organizer** to the membership by email/**social media** at least 14 days prior to the meeting.**
- 13.3 Following any extraordinary meeting of members, the Organizer(s) are invited to attend the next GSC Executive Meeting in order to present on the discussion or make recommendations based on the meeting.**

SECTION 14—AMENDMENTS

- 14.1 The constitution may be amended by two-thirds the members**hip of the GSC who are present and voting, either virtually or in-person,** at the **Annual Business Meeting or Annual General Election.****

- 14.2 The constitution may be amended by half the total membership of the GSC plus one in a general vote.**
- 14.3 A minimum six weeks written notice of proposed changes must be provided to the GSC membership and a method for submitting responses or hosting discussion about the amendments must be facilitated by the GSC Executive (or, if applicable, the GSC Constitution Revision Sub-Committee) prior to an in-person or virtual vote.**