

Constitution

(Proposed: March 22, 2001. Ratified: April 5, 2001. Latest revision: proposed November, 2016; ratified December, 2016.)

I. Name

The name of this organization will be the Graduate History Association (hereby referred to as GHA).

II. Purpose

To further and support the interests of history graduate students at Columbia University.

III. Membership

All graduate students of the Columbia University History Department (including all students in History-East Asia/EALAC) are considered members of the Graduate History Association.

IV. Officers

1. All GHA officers will be members of the GHA.
2. All GHA officers will serve for terms of one (1) academic year with the exception of the GEC Representatives and the GSAC Representative. Terms of office will last from June 1 to May 31 of the following year.
3. All GHA officers will attend GHA Meetings and the meetings of their respective committees.
4. The Presidency
 - a. The GHA will elect two co-Presidents.
 - b. The Presidents will lead the GHA and represent the organization to the Department of History and the University.
 - c. The Presidents will be in charge of setting the GHA budget in coordination with the History Department and in consultation with the other GHA officers.
 - d. The Presidents will serve ex-officio on the History Department's Graduate Education Committee.
5. The Social Chair
 - a. The GHA will elect a social chair or social chairs.
 - b. The Social Chairs will be responsible for planning social activities and fostering a sense of community among the membership of the GHA.
 - c. The Social Chairs will coordinate with the GHA Presidents and the History Department to help plan Orientation and History Day.
6. The Students of Color Coordinator
 - a. The GHA will elect one or two Students of Color Coordinator(s).
 - b. The Students of Color Coordinator(s) will:
 - i. Be charged with recruiting, advocating for, and supporting underrepresented graduate students of color in the History Department.
 - ii. Lead efforts to build community among the different fields and years.

- iii. Organize events for students of color to socialize, and exchange intellectual and political ideas and visions in an informal manner, in addition to workshops specifically addressing the problem of underrepresentation in academia and the historical profession.
 - iv. Lead recruitment efforts: making contact with newly admitted students, providing admits with a contact list of interested students of color in the department and potentially across disciplines.
 - v. Voice concerns to both the Graduate History Association and the History Department.
- 7. History-East Asia Representative
 - a. The GHA will elect one or two History-East Asia Representative(s).
 - b. The History-East Asia Representative(s) will coordinate with the GHA and both the History Department and EALAC to ensure that both departments treat students in History-East Asia equitably.
- 8. LGBT/queer Coordinator
 - a. The GHA will elect one or two LGBT/queer Coordinators(s).
 - b. The LGBT/queer Coordinator(s) will:
 - i. Represent the interests of History Department students of all sexual and gender identities to the GHA.
 - ii. Work with students to identify and address institutional and bureaucratic barriers for queer members of the Department.
 - iii. Promote visibility of queer perspectives within the Department.
 - iv. Organize a recruiting weekend event for queer admitted students.
 - v. Solicit names for and maintain a LGBT/queer mailing list in order to facilitate communication among interested students.
- 9. M.A. Representative
 - a. The GHA will elect one or two M.A. Representative(s) at the first general GHA meeting of the fall semester.
 - b. The M.A. Representative(s) will represent the interests of History Department Master's students to the GHA.
 - c. Responsibility for the selection of any other internal programmatic M.A. Representative(s) will be left to the administrators and students of the M.A. program.
- 10. GEC Representatives
 - a. The GHA will elect two (2) representatives to the History Department's Graduate Education Committee.
 - b. The GEC Representatives will advocate for the interests of the graduate students at GEC meetings.
 - c. The term of the GEC Representative is two (2) academic years.
- 11. GSAC Representative
 - a. The GHA will elect a one representative to the Graduate Student Advisory Committee.
 - b. The GSAC Representative will represent the interests of the GHA to the GSAC.
 - c. The GHA is encouraged to select a GSAC representative from the incoming cohort.

- d. The term of the GSAC Representative is encouraged to be two (2) or more academic years.
12. Gender Inclusivity and Sexual Respect coordinators
- a. The GHA will elect one or more Gender Inclusivity and Sexual Respect Coordinator(s), who will be charged with:
 - b. Making sure graduate students are aware of university and outside counseling, medical, and legal resources available to survivors of sexual harassment and/or sexual assault;
 - c. Organizing events and training for students to discuss and improve gender inclusivity and sexual respect in the department, as students, peers, and instructors;
 - d. Identifying problems with and barriers to gender inclusivity and sexual respect in the department;
 - e. Voicing relevant concerns to both the Graduate History Association and the History Department.

V. Elections and Removal/Vacation of Office

- 1. Elections
 - a. The election of GHA officers for the following academic year will occur annually at the final GHA general meeting of the spring semester. All officers will be elected at this meeting except for the M.A. Representative.
- 2. Campaign and Election Procedures
 - a. A call for volunteers will be sent by the Presidents in early- to mid-April.
 - b. All volunteers will write a written pitch regarding their experience and plans for the position, to be circulated on the GHA listserv.
 - c. Volunteers will introduce themselves at the final GHA meeting.
 - d. All members of the GHA will be eligible to vote at the final meeting.
 - e. The Presidents are encouraged to open election voting to email over the GHA listserv for a period of up to a week.
 - i. Any member of the GHA executive board may request a vote to require GHA Presidents to open voting to email over the GHA listserv. If the motion is seconded, the executive board will vote on the matter.
 - ii. If a majority of the executive board votes to open voting to email over the GHA listserv, the Presidents will do so.
 - f. All GHA members may vote upon all officer positions.
 - g. If the election is contested, voting will be on paper and anonymous.
 - h. Votes will be tabulated by the current Presidents.
 - i. The candidate(s) with the most votes for the office will be elected.
 - j. There will be no new elections after the final May meeting except under these circumstances:
 - i. The officer is removed from office via a vote (see below).
 - ii. The officer neglects their duties and attendance as described below.
 - iii. There was no volunteer for the position at first asking, and the position therefore needs to be filled at a later date.
 - iv. The only exception to this article is the M.A. Representative position. This officer will be elected at the first (or, if time runs out,

the second) general meeting of the fall semester, following these same election procedures.

- k. The executive board will allow at least two weeks for volunteers to be solicited, pitches to be written, and adequate notice given that a vote will be held at an upcoming meeting. If there is less than two weeks before the next general GHA meeting, the campaigning and voting process will be postponed to the following month.
 - l. It is expected that there will be two Co-Presidents and two Social Chairs. If volunteers for any other officer position wish to share their responsibilities, they will inform the Co-Presidents of this before the elections and campaign, and be elected, as a team. Two students may be elected individually, and subsequently serve together, as Presidents and Social Chairs.
 - m. Students who have served in any GHA position may campaign for any other position in a subsequent year.
 - n. No student may hold any particular position for more than one term during their time at Columbia.
3. Following the elections, the current GHA Presidents will notify the History Department of the name of the new Presidents within one week, and the current Presidents will give the incoming Presidents all relevant GHA documents and instructions by June 1.
 4. Removal/Vacation of Office
 - a. The officer(s) may be removed from office by two-thirds vote of the members attending a meeting on removal.
 - b. A motion to remove the Presidents may be made over e-mail or at a general meeting and will have a second. Following such a motion, the GHA will wait one week to publicize a meeting on removal. At such a meeting the membership will vote "yes" or "no" on the proposal that to remove the officer from office.
 - c. Voting will be by secret ballot and tabulated by the Presidents. In the case that the Presidents is subject to removal, the most senior GHA member (based on number of completed semesters of graduate study in the History Department at Columbia University) present at the meeting.
 - d. An office will be considered vacated if a GHA officer fails to attend two consecutive GHA meetings or the meetings of their respective committees. This rule will apply equally to all officers, in the event a position is shared.
 - e. If any office is vacated, an election will be held two weeks after the announcement of the vacancy. Voting procedures will follow the procedures of the annual elections, unless the Presidents has been removed. In such an event, the most senior GHA member present will tabulate the votes.

VI. Meetings

1. General meetings will be held approximately once per month at the discretion of the Presidents. The Presidents will chair general meetings.
2. Business can be raised by any GHA member.

3. A quorum for voting at GHA meetings is ten members, including the officers of the GHA.
4. Voting will be conducted by blind, written ballot if requested by any GHA member.
5. Committees may be initiated or discontinued at the discretion of the Presidents.

VII. Communications

1. The GHA has an e-mail list that allows history graduate students to write to the entire membership. This list is an open forum for announcements and brief discussions of interest to Columbia history graduate students.
2. Group members who are not members of the GHA will be removed by the list administrator. Posting messages containing epithets, ad hominem attacks, 'flames,' hate language, or other violations of University proper use guidelines can also result in a writer's removal from the list.
3. A disclaimer will be included on all emails sent via the listserv to the effect that any messages sent are on behalf of individual students, rather than the GHA as a body.

VIII. Amendments

1. This constitution may be amended, revised, or revoked by a two-thirds vote of the GHA members present at a general meeting. The Presidents are encouraged to open voting to email over the GHA listserv.
2. An email will be sent on the GHA listserv to inform members of any vote on constitutional issues at least two weeks before the vote is to take place.
3. Votes for amendments to, revisions to, or revocation of the constitution will be tabulated by the Presidents.

IX. Student Lounge/TA Office

1. The Presidents are responsible for maintaining communication with the department administrators and university facilities staff about the use and maintenance of 611 Fayerweather. This may be done directly by the president or through an appointee made by the Presidents to manage the lounge/TA office.
2. The GHA is responsible for maintaining and updating the lounge library and acquiring and updating lounge equipment and software, including computers, printers, scanners, kitchen equipment, etc.

X. Budgeting

1. The GHA budget will be determined by the Presidents in consultation with the History Department and the other GHA officers. The yearly budget will be posted online and circulated at the first meeting of the academic year.