

English Graduate Organization Constitution

Name:

The name of this organization is the English Graduate Organization (EGO)

Membership:

All full-time and part-time graduate students in the English department are members of EGO (this includes all MA, MFA, and PhD students) and have the right to attend meetings, elect officers, elect departmental committee representatives, and elect the representative to the Graduate Student Organization.

Purpose:

The purpose of EGO is to provide an inclusive, public and democratic space in which to advocate for the interests of all English graduate students, through cooperation among students and negotiation with faculty and administrators.

Officers:

1. EGO will elect two facilitators who will serve as three-way points of contact between EGO, students in the English Department, and the faculty. One of these officers will be an MFA student and the other a PhD student. It will be the duty of these officers to solicit input from students on ongoing issues, assemble agenda items for upcoming meetings, and post information about meetings and agenda items to the EGO listserv.

A. In the event that the English department resumes acceptance of MA students, a third facilitator, the MA facilitator, shall be elected to serve from the group of existent MA students.

B. The MFA facilitator may also serve as the Creative Writing Representative (see Article 3) or can stand as an elected facilitator on their own.

2. EGO shall elect either: One (1) representative to serve as a voting member of the Graduate Student Organization (GSO), representing both English and Creative Writing programs collectively; or Two (2) representatives, one PhD/MA student and one MFA student, representing the English and Creative Writing programs respectively at all GSO senate meetings. In the event that two graduate students are elected to serve, those representatives shall act as independent Senators and will treat the members of their academic program as their sole constituency. These Representatives will have the following duties:

A. To inform EGO of issues which arise in GSO meetings.

B. To solicit input and debate from EGO members on topical issues.

C. To solicit the opinion of the body of EGO if germane resolutions are to be voted upon

in the GSO Senate.

3. EGO will elect one representative to each of the following English Department Committees: Agenda, Graduate, Undergraduate, Creative Writing, and ad-hoc committees such as hiring committees.

A. Each Representative of a standing committee will have a vote on the Department Assembly committee.

B. All Committee representatives are EGO officers, and have the following duties:

i. To inform EGO of issues which arise in committee meetings.

ii. To solicit input and debate from EGO members on topical issues.

iii. To abide by the principle that in cases where deliberative processes have taken place to determine EGO's position on a given issue direct representation will stand for that issue.

4. The PhD facilitator will appoint one member to act as web caretaker. In the event that no member is appointed to act as web caretaker, the PhD facilitator will perform this role themselves. It will be this person's duty to maintain the EGO listserv list and website. Acting in this capacity will not render one ineligible for any other office or position.

5. First Year Representative:

A. Members of EGO in the first year of a graduate program may elect a First Year Representative (henceforth, FYR), who will be responsible for representing the concerns and questions of first year students to the EGO body, as well as collaborating with the EGO Facilitators on the Negotiations Paper Series and collaborating with the EGO webmaster in the maintenance of the EGO Document archive.

B. Only graduate students in the first year of a graduate program in the English Department at Syracuse University are eligible for this position.

C. In the fall of each year EGO will solicit nominations for a new FYR. Any member of the EGO body may nominate a student to serve as FYR. After a slate has been established (according to normal EGO election procedures) a paper ballot will be distributed by the last week of September. Any candidate running unopposed on the ballot by a date specified by the PhD facilitator during the nominations stage will automatically be declared winner. Candidates running with opposition will secure the position by simple majority (quorum = 4 votes). Only students in the first year of a graduate program may vote in the election of the FYR.

Election Procedure for GSO, Committee Reps, and Facilitators:

1. During the first week of March EGO will post information about its officers and representative

positions to the listserv (and website). Each standing officer and committee member will explain what work their committee does, and give some examples of the type of situations that their committee dealt with during the previous year.

2. At least four weeks before the end of classes, a nomination/informational meeting will be called for—this meeting must be called at least one full week in advance. At this meeting three things will occur: standing representatives will speak about their positions, nominations will be called for, and a date will be set for when the nominations need to be received. Nominees will then make short statements about their candidacies, and will make themselves available for questions.

3. After the nomination/information meeting, candidates will be asked to publish brief statements about their candidacy to the listserv--these statements will also be posted to the EGO website.

4. At least one week after the nomination meeting a ballot-box election will be held in the graduate office. EGO members who cannot physically vote in the election may send in votes via email to the graduate coordinator. If any of the candidates are running unopposed by a date set by the PhD facilitator, those candidates will be declared the winner and their names will not appear on the paper ballot. Should all positions be unopposed, there will be no ballot-box election.

5. A member cannot hold more than one committee representative position.

6. Should a student resign from an elected position (due to personal issues, health problems, scheduling conflicts, or otherwise), another election must take place.

A. If this resignation occurs during the fall or spring semester, nominations will be open over a period of three (3) days via the EGO listserv. When nominations have closed, a new ballot will be made. Students will then have three (3) days to submit a ballot.

B. If this resignation occurs during winter or summer break, nominations will be open until the third day of the upcoming semester (fall or spring) via the EGO listserv. When nominations have closed, a new ballot will be made. Students will then have three (3) days to submit a ballot.

7. Impeachment Procedure: All elected EGO positions are subject to the terms of impeachment. An elected officer will be considered for impeachment should they fail to fulfill the duties of their elected position and/or fail to uphold the constitution. To submit an elected officer for impeachment, a member needs to motion for impeachment. The officer against whom impeachment charges are brought will have a week to prepare a statement in response to the charges, should they wish to defend themselves against the charge. A vote on whether to impeach the officer will be taken. To secure impeachment, a majority vote must be reached. Should the officer be impeached, elections will be held for that office as soon as possible.

Election Results:

1. Each officer's position will be separately balloted.

2. Any candidate running unopposed for any office will be considered to have been elected to that office if no other candidates are nominated by the date set by the PhD facilitator. Candidates running for a position against one or more opponents will be considered to have been elected if they receive a simple majority of the votes cast.

3. For any position in which no candidate attains the number of votes required to fill a position, EGO will seek new candidates and hold a second election. A nomination meeting to find candidates for this second election will be held within one week of the original election. A blank ballot cast for an officer running unopposed in this election will be considered a vote of “no confidence” in that officer.

4. If any position remains unfilled after this second election attempt, nominations will be reopened during a nomination meeting to be held early in the Fall semester.

Meetings:

1. Meeting times:

A. EGO meeting times will be chosen so as to minimize potential conflicts with classes/teaching obligations/and institutional obligations of EGO members.

B. At the beginning of each term EGO will select one regular meeting time and set aside an additional time for emergency meetings in the event that urgent matters arise which must be dealt with in a timely fashion.

C. Regular meetings will be held at least once per month.

D. Additional meetings may be called to deal with issues that arise in departmental committee meetings, and other pressing business. Any member of EGO may call for a meeting over the listserv, and a meeting will be held if at least two additional members second the call for a meeting.

2. Meeting procedure:

A. Meetings are an important decision making institution, and therefore must be as open, transparent, and accessible as possible.

B. Every EGO meeting will be announced over the listserv prior to that meeting, and a preliminary agenda for that meeting will be announced at that time. The facilitators will serve as points of contact for forwarding items to the listserv for the preliminary agenda and goals.

C. Any EGO member may add items to the agenda for a given meeting over the listserv before the meeting, or during any meeting.

i. Decisions made at meetings will be decided by hand vote. Outcomes of

votes will be determined by simple majority.

ii. Members who cannot attend meetings in which the agenda indicates important matters will be voted on may call for another meeting time, or vote on a particular issue by proxy.

iii.. Proxy votes may be emailed to the listserv, or handed to one of the two facilitators.

iv. At the beginning of each meeting, a person is chosen to be the meeting moderator. It is this individual's responsibility to make certain that everyone's voice has been heard and solicited during the meeting, and that the agenda is adhered to. This person will also be responsible for making certain that the meeting proceeds forward in as timely a manner as possible. No meeting will exceed two hours.

v. The first part of the meeting will be allotted to Committee reports and urgent business. The remainder of the meeting will be allotted to addressing agenda items and meeting goals.

vi. At the beginning of each meeting someone will be chosen to take notes for the meeting and post them to the listserve before the next meeting is called. Notes should consist of a minimum of a roll call and tallies of any votes taken during the meeting.

vii. Before any meeting is adjourned, a preliminary agenda and goals for the next meeting will be constructed.

Budget:

1. Each year, EGO receives a yearly budget from the Graduate Student Organization (GSO). It shall be the policy of EGO that this budget be formally recognized when it is voted upon at the last special meeting of the GSO and again during the first regular business meeting of EGO at the start of the new fiscal year during the fall semester.
2. The GSO representative shall serve as the treasurer for EGO. In the event that two representatives are elected, each representative shall maintain the treasury for their respective budget line.
3. During the first business meeting of the fiscal year, a GSO representative shall move a motion to establish the formal yearly budget for the organization. This will be an amendable, debatable motion that divides the budget between the PhD/MA students and the MFA students to spend as their students see fit. This motion shall be based upon the existing GSO budget guidelines from the current fiscal year.

4. The subdivision of the budget will last for the full fiscal year and the two budgets will be treated as fully separate. Money from one budget will not be used to cover expenses from the other budget without a declaration of unanimous consent by the body of EGO.
5. In order to facilitate the spending of the yearly budget, one PhD/MA EGO officer and one MFA EGO officer will attend the yearly GSO officer training. These officers will then be tasked with the responsibility of working with the GSO to spend the organization's yearly budget, per GSO fiscal policy.
6. Per the GSO fiscal policy, EGO is able to make a single special programming request for events beyond our yearly organizational budget. Any special programming requests in excess of EGO's yearly budget, made in service of MFAs, PhD/MAs, or collectively, shall require a motion by the proposing students at a regular business meeting of EGO before the programming request is formally proposed to GSO. This motion will be an amendable, debatable motion approved by a simple majority vote of the members of EGO.

Constitution:

1. In the event that changes are proposed to the Constitution, one of the facilitators must provide at least ten (10) days notice of a special meeting of the organization. The notice must contain a provision advising members of the meeting agenda. The proposed amendments must be in writing and disbursed to all members in attendance at the meeting. Amendments to this Constitution may be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all voting members in attendance at the special meeting.
2. The constitution will be kept up to date and made accessible for all students in the English department. It will be a permanent part of the agenda of the final EGO meeting of the academic year to discuss whether the constitution is up to date and accessible in an updated form.

Amendments:

1. Statement of Non-Hazing: This organization will not conspire to engage in hazing, as defined by New York Penal Law 120.16 and New York Penal Law 120.17, or commit any act that causes or is likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any fellow student or person attending the institution.
2. Statement of Compliance with Campus Regulations: This organization shall comply with the *Syracuse University Code of Student Conduct*.
3. Not-for-Profit Statement: EGO is a not-for-profit organization.
4. Financial Obligation: A majority of voting members of this organization may determine reasonable dues and fees assessed to each member at the beginning of each semester. A

specific member or members, designated by this organization shall be responsible for payment in full of all debts accumulated by the organization not covered by funds on deposit.

5. Statement of Non-Discrimination: Syracuse University is an equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, or status as a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era to any extent discrimination is prohibited by law. This nondiscrimination policy covers admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in University programs, services, and activities.

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