

THE GRADUATE THEATRE SYNDICATE

Ohio State University
Department of Theatre
Drake Union
1089 Cannon Drive
Columbus, OH 43220

Constitution

September 26, 1995
(Amended October 20, 2021)

Article I - Name

The name of the organization shall be “The Graduate Theatre Syndicate.” The organization may also be referred to as “The Syndicate” for brevity.

Article II - Purpose

The purpose of the organization shall be to provide graduate students in The Ohio State University Theatre Department with an outlet for discussion and support. This organization will be a resource to help clarify academic requirements and to serve as an advocacy group for Theatre Department graduate students. The organization may also be a forum for grievances which can then be brought before the department’s appropriate governing body.

Article III – Non-Discrimination and Harrassment Policy

This organization and its members shall not discriminate against or harass any individual(s) for reasons of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, protected veteran status or any other basis in accordance with Student Organization Registration and Funding Guidelines. Discrimination and harassment may include, but are not limited to, actions such as the use of epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, jokes, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to sex, race, ethnicity, age, disability or other protected categories. Harassment also may include written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group based on protected characteristics, whether that material is sent by email; placed on walls, bulletin boards, computer screens or other devices, or elsewhere on the premises; or circulated in the workplace.

Per the Office of Institutional Equity policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the scope of this policy “applies to alleged discrimination or harassment in any medium. Discrimination and harassment may manifest in many evolving forms, including but not limited to: physical, verbal, visual, and online/electronic/social media.” The jurisdiction is as follows:

1. This policy applies to alleged discrimination or harassment that occurs at an event, program, or endeavor operated, conducted, or organized by the university.
2. This policy may also apply to alleged discrimination or harassment that occurs off-campus, including virtual spaces, when it could reasonably create a hostile environment in the education program or activity.

For more specifics on this policy, see Section III (A) and (B) of Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity & Non-Discrimination/Harassment Interim University Policy:

https://policies.osu.edu/assets/docs/policy_pdfs/AffirmativeActionEqualEmploymentOpportunityandNon-Discrimination-Harassment_FINAL.pdf

Article IV – Membership

Currently enrolled graduate students in the Ohio State Theatre Department may register as voting members each academic year (August through July). To register, those eligible need merely add their name and email to the Syndicate Registration form available at any and all general meetings. Others, such as faculty, alumni, professionals, etc. are encouraged to become members but as non-voting associates or honorary members.

Section I. Rights

The rights of a member shall be:

- To participate in any and all activities of the organization;
- To attend any and all meetings of the organization;
- To be recognized and allowed to voice an opinion;
- To vote on all motions, issues and resolutions;
- To vote in elections of officers;
- To be elected or appointed as an officer, chair, manager or director, in accordance with the constitution of the organization.

Section II. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of members shall be:

- To attend meetings of the organization;
- To assist in activities of the organization, including but not limited to selling concessions at OSU Theatre productions, participating in the colloquium, etc..

Dues are not required.

Article V – Meetings

Section I. Chain of Leadership of Meetings

The President shall preside over all general and Executive Board meetings. In the President's absence, the Vice-President shall preside; in the V. P.'s absence, the Treasurer shall preside; in the Treasurer's absence, the Secretary shall preside.

Section II. Conduct of Meetings

In general and Executive Board meetings, issues, motions, and elections shall be discussed and voted upon. This organization follows Robert's Rules of Order as they are described below:

Obtaining and Assigning the Floor

- A member raises their hand when no one else has the floor.
- The leader of the meeting recognizes the member by name.

How the Motion is Brought Before the Assembly

- The member makes the motion: *I move that (or "to") ...* and resumes their seat.
- Another member seconds the motion: *I second the motion that (or "to")...*
- The leader states the motion: *It is moved and seconded that ... Are you ready for the question?*

Consideration of the Motion

- Members can debate the motion.
- Before speaking in debate, members obtain the floor.
- The maker of the motion has first right to the floor if they claim it properly.
- Debate must be confined to the merits of the motion.
- Debate can be closed only by order of the assembly (2/3 vote) or by the leader if no one seeks the floor for further debate.

The Leader Puts the Motion to a Vote

- The leader asks: *Are you ready for the question?* If no one rises to claim the floor, the chair proceeds to take the vote.
- The leader says: *The question is on the adoption of the motion that ... As many as are in favor, say 'Aye'. (Pause for response.) Those opposed, say 'Nay'. (Pause for response.) Those abstained please say 'Aye'.*

The Leader Announces the Result of the Vote.

- *The ayes have it, the motion carries, and ...* (indicating the effect of the vote) or,
- *The nays have it and the motion fails.*

Section III. General Meetings

Meetings dates shall be decided upon at the beginning of each Semester. If there is a change to meeting time, or if a new meeting is called, notification must be given at least two days prior to the date of the meeting. At least two general meetings shall be held in each Fall and Spring semester.

All Syndicate members are invited.

General meetings may involve but are not limited to:

- Area and committee representatives must provide written or oral updates.
- Voting on matters such as funding above \$500, faculty/staff recognition, formal letters from the Syndicate, formation of sub-committees, Executive Board positions and Representatives, guest speakers, yearly goals, fundraising opportunities outside of concessions. The results of the vote will be based on a simple majority of members present.

Section IV. Executive Board Meetings

The Executive Board must meet at least five times throughout the semester.

All Executive Board members are invited.

Executive Board meetings may involve but are not limited to:

- A transitional meeting with the previous year's Executive Board.
- A discussion of how the Executive Board intends to collaborate moving forward.
- The remaining meetings shall entail planning meeting agendas, the colloquium, etc.

- Voting on matters such as ad hoc letters (such as the June 5th, 2020 letter responding to police brutality), funding above \$100 but less than \$500, choosing meeting dates, and planning the colloquium.

Decisions on all other matters not clearly delineated in Article IV, Section III or IV fall to the President, who is very much encouraged to consult the Executive Board before making their decision.

Article V – Elections

Section I. Nominations and Election Procedures for Executive Board and Representatives

The President will solicit nominations by email in the week prior to elections and in person at the start of the general meeting. In the case of a contested election, each nominee will be given the floor to campaign prior to the vote.

A simple majority shall constitute a winning vote. In the event that no candidate receives a majority, the two candidates with the most votes compete in a runoff election. In the event of a tie, the Executive Board shall determine the winner.

Elections of officers to the Executive Board shall be held during a general meeting at the end of each Spring Semester. Executive Board members may be elected from any area.

Election of the Season Selection representatives shall also be held during a general meeting at the end of each Spring Semester. One of two Season Selection representatives may also be elected from any area. The other of the two Season Selection representatives shall be elected from the Design area. If no graduate student in the Design area wishes to fulfill this role, the representative may be elected from any area.

The election of the Area representatives shall be held at the first general meeting of the Fall Semester. Area representatives (Acting, Design, PHT) shall be elected from among the graduate students in the corresponding areas.

The election of the Curriculum Committee representative and any additional representatives shall also be held at the first general meeting of the Fall Semester.

Section II. Alternates for Representatives (Non-Executive Board Positions)

The runner-up in an election for a committee/area/task force representative shall automatically be designated that office or position's alternate. In the event of an uncontested election for an office or other elected position, the elected individual is responsible for identifying an alternate as needed.

If a representative cannot attend a required meeting, he or she must alert their alternate in a timely manner. The officer/elected position and the alternate shall determine between themselves what constitutes a timely manner.

Article VI – The Executive Board

The Executive Board shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. In the event that all areas (Acting, Design and PHT) are not represented in the above-mentioned offices, the Board may elect a representative from the unrepresented area(s) in order to provide a voice for that area. The Board may also create additional elected Executive Board positions if they deem it necessary.

In order to hold an office the member must be a graduate student in the Ohio State Theatre Department.

- President

The duties and powers of the President shall be as follows:

- To act as an advocate for all members of the Syndicate;
- To make a good faith effort to ensure the trust of all members of the organization, so as to better advocate for said members, in particular those members of oft institutionally-marginalized identities;
- To preside over all general meetings;
- To use their experience and knowledge to make any administrative decisions not delineated in this constitution;
- To make room reservations, if necessary;
- To be in charge of all communication within the membership such as meeting places and times, when the Secretary is not available to do so;
- To meet with the chair at least once per year;
- To communicate, when appropriate, with the Department of Theatre undergraduate student organization.

- Vice-President

The duties and powers of the Vice-President shall be as follows:

- To act in place of the President in their absence or unavailability;
- To collaborate with the President in their duties;
- To organize fundraising activities;
- To greet new members.

- Treasurer

The duties and powers of the Treasurer shall be as follows:

- To oversee and operate the financial matters of the organization;
- To authorize purchases of \$100 or less according to the needs of the organization
- To submit at every meeting a financial report on the status of the organization inc.:
 - Current account balances
 - Recent authorized expenditures
- To seek out and request available sources of funding both inside and outside of the university as needed;
- To complete the University Audit Form at the end of the year

- Secretary

The duties and powers of the Secretary shall be as follows:

- To record attendance and minutes at all meetings;
- To make meeting minutes available to all members;
- To keep abreast of all University regulations as outlined in the Student Organization Handbook;
- To be in charge of all communication within the membership such as meeting places and times.

Article VII – Other Positions

The following positions are non-Executive Board positions:

The organization may create additional non-Executive Board positions should the need for such additional positions arise.

- Area Representatives

The duties and powers of the three area representatives (Acting, Design, PHT) shall be as follows:

- To attend all the appropriate area meetings and to serve as a voice for area students at these meetings;
- To inform their constituents of the actions taken, as well as the issues and concerns raised, at each area meeting;
- To file a written report before each Syndicate meeting or give an oral report at each Syndicate meeting.

- Season Selection Committee Representatives

The duties and powers of the Season Selection Committee Representatives shall be as follows:

- To read all plays included on the departmental short list for the following production season;
- To assist graduate students interested in making season selection proposals;
- To attend all Season Selection Committee meetings and to serve as a voice for graduate students at these meetings;
- To inform graduate students of the actions taken, as well as the issues and concerns raised, at each Season Selection Committee meeting;
- To confer with the undergraduate Season Selection Committee Representative when appropriate;
- To give an oral report at each Syndicate meeting.

- Additional Representatives (for example the Graduate Teaching Fellow (GTF), Additional Committees, or Additional Task Forces)

When applicable the duties and powers of additional representatives shall be as follows:

- To give an oral report at each Syndicate meeting.

While the Council of Graduate Students Representative is not beholden to the Syndicate, we do appreciate the historical and continued relationship between the two organizations by way of monthly updates at the general meetings.

Article VIII – Advisor

The advisor of the organization must be a full-time member or the University faculty or administrative/professional staff. The Advisor will be selected by the Executive Board, pending acceptance by the proposed faculty/staff member and the membership-at-large.

The duties and powers of the Advisor shall be as follows:

- To attend some meetings of the organization;
- To be available for consultation regarding organization activities;
- To provide continuity in the organization and to be familiar with the history of the organization;
- To be familiar with University policies and procedures;
- To mediate interpersonal conflict, major problems, or emergencies;
- To complete key registration requirements as specified by the Student Organization Guidelines;
- To act as a liaison between the organization and the department administration and to advocate for the organization, if necessary.

Article IX – Resignation

If an officer or other elected position resigns, nominations shall be received from the floor and the election of a new officer shall take place at the next general meeting.

If for any reason an officer or other elected position is unable to complete their term of service but does not officially resign, the Executive Board may declare the individual de facto resigned and make preparations for a replacement election.

If the resignation occurs late in the year or the Board does not feel any possible applicants are available, the Board will take over the duties of the resigned officer.

Article X – Removal

Section I: Automatic Removal

If an officer or elected position fails to attend two of the required scheduled meetings (this includes general body meeting, Executive Board meeting, and committee/area meetings) as outlined above, and does not send an alternate in their place, the officer or elected position shall be automatically removed and a replacement shall be elected at the next meeting.

Extenuating circumstances shall be taken into account when determining if an officer or elected position has failed to attend two of the required meetings.

If an officer or elected position sends an alternate in their place twice, the alternate has the right to automatically claim the office or elected position in question.

Removal by Vote - If a Syndicate member feels that an officer or other elected position has not fulfilled, or made a good-faith effort to fulfill, their constitutionally stipulated duties, the member may initiate removal procedures.

The procedures for the removal of an officer or other elected position shall be as follows.

The Syndicate member or members desiring the removal should first contact the elected officer and share their concerns in writing (this can happen personally or through a mediated party, such as the Executive Board). If a good-faith effort is not made by the officer to address the concerns with which they have been presented, the concerned party may move forward with a formal motion for removal. The Syndicate advisor should be made aware of this development.

The Syndicate member or members desiring the removal shall make a motion for removal at a general meeting. The Syndicate advisor must be present for this meeting. The motion for removal must be written out and include the grounds for removal. The member(s) seeking removal shall furnish a copy of the motion to the other members in attendance. After the motion has been read, the officer or elected position in question, if present, shall be given the opportunity to respond to the charges. Per Robert's Rules of Order, all members have the right to discuss the removal before voting. The Executive Board members, except those under consideration for removal, have the right to enforce a time limit for discussion. If no Executive Board member is able to guide the discussion, the advisor shall step in.

If two-thirds of the voting membership of the Syndicate is present, the motion shall be voted on; if two-thirds of the voting membership is not present, the motion must be reintroduced at a meeting when two-thirds are present.

For the motion for removal to carry, a simple majority is needed. If the motion does not carry, it may not be reintroduced until the next general meeting.

If the motion carries, a removal vote is immediately held. For the removal to take effect, three-fourths of the members present must vote in favor of the removal.

If the removal vote is successful, an interim officer is appointed. This interim officer should be a member who has previously held the newly vacated position. If that member is not available, a remaining member of the Executive Board shall serve in the interim. A replacement vote for the newly vacated position shall take place at the next general body meeting.

If a Syndicate member feels that a general member has not complied with or made a good-faith effort to assist with their constitutionally stipulated responsibilities, the member may initiate removal procedures. Removal procedures begin with an written warning by the officers on the first complaint. A second complaint or offense will result in a vote by the entire membership. This action can be taken if any member feels an individual has become intolerably disruptive, abusive, negligent, or criminal.

Article XI - Length of Term and Term Limits

All officers and elected positions are elected to a one-year term. Officers and positions elected during the Spring Semester begin their terms at the beginning of the Summer Semester. Positions elected at the first Fall Semester meeting begin their terms immediately.

All officers and elected positions shall not serve more than two consecutive terms in office.

Article XII - Method of Amending Constitution

The Constitution may be amended by holding a vote at two consecutive meetings at which a two-thirds majority of the Voting Members present pass the amendment.

Article XIII - Method of Dissolution of Organization

The organization may be dissolved by holding a vote at two consecutive meetings at which all Executive Board members, in addition to a two-thirds majority of the Voting Members present elect to dissolve the organization.