

Geography Graduate Organization at The Ohio State University

Constitution

(Date of revision: October 2024)

Article I- Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy of University

Section 1- Name of Organization: Geography Graduate Organization (GGO) at The Ohio State University

Section 2- Purpose: The primary purpose of the Geography Graduate Organization (GGO) is to provide an open and scholarly forum for OSU geography graduate students, as well as other graduate students interested in geography. Related to this main purpose, the group also allows geography graduate students and other graduate students interested in geography to: 1) provide a forum and voice for graduate students within the department. 2) engage in scholarly discussions, 3) discuss strategies for professional development, 4) participate in social and learning opportunities outside of the formal academic setting, and 5) promote geographic scholarship throughout The Ohio State University and beyond.

Section 3- Non-Discrimination Policy: This organization does not discriminate on the basis 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 bases under the law, in its activities, programs, admission, and employment.

Section 4 - As a student organization at The Ohio State University, Geography Graduate Organization (GGO) at The Ohio State University expects its members to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains an environment free from sexual misconduct. All members are responsible for adhering to University Policy 1.15, which can be found here: <https://hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/policy115.pdf>. If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleIX.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at titleIX@osu.edu.

Article II - Membership: Qualifications and categories of membership

Membership in the GGO is open to all graduate students in the Department of Geography at The Ohio State University and other graduate students with an interest in discipline and departmental affairs. No formal acceptance procedures are required to become a member of the GGO. Graduate students become members simply by showing up for GGO meetings and related activities.

Section 1- Voting Membership: Voting membership is limited to all enrolled Ohio State graduate students within the department of geography and those graduate students with an interest in geography. The organization is student-initiated, student-led, and student-run given the main purpose and objectives of the group are to provide an open forum for graduate student discussion about geography.

Section 2- Membership Academic Standing: Members must be enrolled graduate students and be in good academic standing with the university. Voting membership will be limited to: 1) all graduate students within the department of geography and 2) graduate students from outside of the geography department with an interest in geography who are active members of the organization.

Article III - Organization Leadership: Titles, duties, terms of office

Section 1- Officers and Duties:

- A) *President:* This position serves as the main contact for the organization with the department chair and other departmental leadership. This position is responsible for scheduling and leading meetings, assisting other members with GGO events and social activities, communicating relevant information about the department and university to graduate students, and providing leadership for the day-to-day operations of the group.
- B) *Treasurer:* This position serves as the chief financial officer of the organization. The position is responsible for handling all monies for the group, including the group's financial account as allowed by university guidelines. The position is responsible for filing all university funding paperwork (with the assistance of the president and membership) and for organizing all fundraising.
- C) *Secretary:* This position takes and publishes minutes of the group's meetings and provides these notes to the general membership via email communication, and generally assists with all GGO executive committee activities
- D) *Social Chair:* This position plans graduate social events (such as game nights, hiking trips, and volunteer activities) and coordinates with staff on department social events (such as coffee hours and picnics).
- E) *Faculty Meeting Representative:* This position attends monthly faculty meetings to keep grads informed of department affairs and to share graduate concerns with faculty as appropriate.
- F) *Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) Representatives:* This position attends and represents graduates at meetings of the graduate studies committee. One position is reserved for master's level students, the other for PhD level students.
- G) *Speakers Committee Representative:* This position works with the faculty and staff Speakers Committee to organize and conduct colloquium events.
- H) *Personnel Committee Representative:* This position attends meetings of the personnel committee and ensures graduate student input is included in any departmental hiring decisions.
- I) *Council of Graduate Students (CGS) Delegates:* Both the Geography graduates and the ASC graduates are allotted one official delegate each to the Council of Graduate Students (CGS). The CGS is separate from the GGO, but elected delegates are considered GGO officers as they represent the interests of students in these programs. Delegates are expected to attend monthly CGS meetings, serve on at least one internal and one external committee, and pass along information and communications from the CGS.
- J) *Equity Committee Representative:* This position attends meetings of the equity committee and ensures graduate student input is included in any departmental justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) initiatives.

Section 2- Elections and terms of office

- A. Officers will be elected for a term of 1 academic year. Election for President, Treasurer, Secretary and Social Chairs will be held by the second to last week of the Spring semester. Officers will begin serving their terms on the first day of the summer semester. In autumn the committee representatives will be filled at the first GGO meeting of the fall semester.

- B. Officers will be elected by ranked choice voting. Voting will be conducted online via an anonymous form. For accommodation purposes a virtual option (zoom, teams meeting, skype) will be given to any member who requests to join virtually. Special elections will be held when there is a vacant position. The rules of Article 2-Section 2 apply.

Section 3- Special Committees

- A. It may become necessary for special committees to be organized to discuss a specific issue in-depth. These committees will be created by the president in conjunction with the voting membership.
- B. Leadership roles on each committee will be appointed by the president on a voluntary basis. A special election will be held in the event that more than one person wishes to lead a committee. Such an election would follow the guidelines set forth in Article III: Section 2.

Article IV — Method of Selecting and/or Removing Officers and Members

General membership in the GGO does not entail a formal selection process. Interested geography graduate students and graduate students from other disciplines with a strong interest in geography become members simply by attending meetings. All individuals within the GGO are encouraged to seek officer positions. Nominations are required to become a candidate, and nominations can occur through either self-nomination or by a nomination from another member of the organization.

Elected leaders of the GGO are expected to perform the duties and responsibilities outlined for their respective officer positions in a reasonable manner. If an officer fails to live up to this expectation, the following steps will be taken as appropriate.

1. Discuss the problem in a closed door, officers-only meeting.
2. Involve the GGO's faculty advisor to attempt to correct the problem.
3. If the officer is still unwilling to perform stated responsibilities the matter will be brought to the GGO membership during a meeting to discuss removal of the officer. A **majority vote** of the general membership is required to remove an officer.
4. In case of an officer being removed from office, a replacement officer will be elected according to the guidelines in article 2 section 2.

For general members, the GGO acknowledges that members have varying desires for their respective levels of involvement in the organization. As a result, minimal participation among general members is tolerated, though participation in organizational happenings is encouraged equally for all members. If, however, a general member behaves in a manner that prevents the GGO from carrying out its stated organizational goals and objectives, the following steps will be taken to resolve the issue. First, the offending party who disrupts the GGO's objectives—will meet with the advisor and officers to discuss the issue. If no solution is found during the meeting, the member will be brought up for removal at the next meeting. To remove a member from the organization a **majority vote** from the general membership is required for removal.

Article V – Advisor and Advisor Responsibilities

Section 1- Advisor: The group advisor will be a full-time faculty member within the department of geography. The voting membership will choose a candidate for advisor by a simple majority and then ask that candidate if she/he accepts the position. *Section 2- Advisor Responsibilities:* The advisor will have a limited role in the organization given the student-run nature of the group.

- A. The advisor will be required to sign all necessary university paperwork related to the organization.
- B. The advisor will be updated each semester on issues of general interest brought up by the organization.

Article VI – Meetings of the Organization

Section 1- General Meetings: At least 1 general meeting open to all members of the organization will be held monthly (except Summer semester).

Section 2- General Meeting Announcements: Meetings will be announced by the president or secretary in an email communication to the voting membership at least 1 week prior to the scheduled meeting. Meeting time, location and a summary of discussion items for the meeting will be included in the email.

Section 3- Committee Meetings: Specific committee meetings may be held at any time throughout the semester as deemed necessary by the president, committee leadership or voting membership.

Section 4- Committee Meeting Announcements: Committee meetings will be announced by the president, leadership of the committee, or secretary in an email communication to the voting membership at least 1 week prior to the scheduled meeting. Meeting time, location and a summary of discussion items for the meeting will be included in the email.

Article VII – Method of Amending Constitution: Proposals, notice, and voting requirements

Section 1- Proposed Amendments: All proposals shall be made in writing and made available in electronic format to the voting membership. The first reading of a proposed amendment will occur at a general meeting. The proposed amendment will also be read at a second meeting.

Section 2- Proposed Amendment Voting: Voting on the proposed amendment will occur electronically through the adviser after two readings of the proposed amendment. In the electronic vote, at least 2/3 of the voting membership will be required for a valid vote on a proposed amendment. A simple majority will be required to accept an amendment.

Article VIII – Method of Dissolution of Organization

Section 1- Dissolution Vote: In the event that the organization should be dissolved, ¾ of the voting membership must vote in favor of dissolution of the group.

Section 2- Assets or Debts upon Dissolution: Should any organization assets remain upon dissolution, a vote about how to utilize such funds will occur. A simple majority of the voting membership will be required to allocate such assets. In the event that debts exist for upon dissolution, the treasurer and president will work in consultation with the advisor to figure out ways to eliminate any debts.

Article IX - Constitution By-Laws

Section 1-Proposed by-laws: All proposed by-laws shall be made in writing and made available in electronic format to the voting membership. The first reading of a proposed by-law will occur at a general meeting. The proposed by-law will also be read at a second meeting.

Section 2- Proposed by-law voting: Voting on the proposed by-law will occur electronically through the advisor after two readings of the proposed by-law. In the electronic vote, at least 2/3 of the voting membership will be required for a valid vote on a proposed by-law. A simple majority will be required to accept a by-law.