

The
Graduate Association of Latine and Latin American Students (GALA)
Constitution

Our Goals and Principles

Article I - Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy of the Organization.

Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Association of Latine and Latin American Students (GALA).

Section 2: Purpose

Graduate Association of Latine and Latin American Students (GALA) at The Ohio State University (OSU) is dedicated to fostering a supportive and inclusive community for Latinx graduate and professional students. Our organization is committed to providing a safe space where members can connect, share experiences, and celebrate our diverse cultures and identities. Our primary purpose is to create a sense of belonging and camaraderie among Latin American graduate and professional students at OSU. By organizing cultural events, workshops, and social gatherings, we aim to cultivate a supportive network that uplifts and empowers our members throughout their academic and professional journeys. In addition to nurturing a sense of community, GALA is dedicated to supporting the professional development of our members. We understand the unique challenges that Latinx students may face in academia and beyond, and we are committed to providing resources, mentorship opportunities, and career guidance to help our members succeed. Our organization serves as a bridge for Latinx students transitioning into graduate school and navigating the early stages of their careers. Through workshops, panels, and networking events, we aim to equip our members with the skills, knowledge, and connections needed to thrive in their chosen fields.

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.

Sexual Misconduct Policy:

As a student organization at The Ohio State University, GALA 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.

Section 1: General membership will consist of OSU students who accept, believe, and work for the goals and objectives of GALA.

Section 2: Members must not work towards any activities and/or any organizations that attempt to undermine the autonomy and self-determination of GALA.

Section 3: Registered OSU students will make up sole membership, which will constitute the General Assembly.

Section 4: Active membership will consist of the following:

- A. OSU students are limited to six years of active membership.
- B. Active participation in one of GALA committees.
- C. Attendance of three-fourths (3/4) of all GALA General Meetings. If two consecutive meetings are missed, membership will no longer be active, and may only be reactivated after two consecutive meetings are once again attended.
- D. Non-student members such as faculty, alumni, professionals may become members but only as non-voting associate or honorary members.

Section 5: Only active members may vote.

Article III – Methods for Removing Members and Executive Officers

Section 1: If a member engages in behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, violates the organization's constitution or by-laws, or violates the Code of Student Conduct, university policy, or federal, state or local law, the member may be removed through a majority vote of the officers in consultation with the organization's advisor.

Section 2: Any elected officer of the GALA may be removed from their position for cause. Cause for removal includes, but is not limited to: violation of the constitution or by-laws, failure to perform duties, or any behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, including violations of the Student Code of Conduct, university policy, or federal,

state, or local laws. The Executive Committee may act for removal upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the executive board in consultation with the organization's advisor.

Section 3: In the event that the reason for member removal is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or cannot otherwise be shared with members (e.g., while an investigation is pending), the executive board, in consultation with the organization's advisor, may vote to temporarily suspend a member or executive officer.

Section 4: Voluntary Members Withdrawal: Any member of our organization, at any time, can voluntarily withdraw membership from the organization. Member must inform a executive committee member 1 month prior to withdrawing membership.

Article IV - Organization Leadership: Titles, terms of office, type of selection, and duties of the leadership.

Section 1: Organization leaders represent the Executive Committee and general membership and are elected or appointed by majority vote of GALA's active members.

Section 2: Only active members may be Executive committee members of GALA.

Section 3: All Executive committee members will be directly accountable to the General Assembly.

Section 4: All Executive committee members will hold their office for up to two years.

Section 5: All Executive committee members must be able to meet the following:

- A. Stay an active member.
- B. Provide time when their respective committee can meet on-campus.
- C. Must be able to fulfill the duties and responsibilities.

Section 6: Roles of the Executive Committee

- A. Primary Leader (President):
 - a. The President shall preside over all meetings of the organization and executive board.
 - b. The President shall represent the organization at university events and serve as a liaison between the organization and other student organizations, university departments, and external entities.
 - c. The President shall uphold and enforce the constitution and bylaws of the organization.
 - d. The President Shall work with the Treasurer to prepare and present an annual budget.

B. Secondary Leader (Vice President):

- a. The Vice President shall assist the President in overseeing the organization and ensuring the fulfillment of its mission and objectives.
- b. The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in their absence.
- c. The Vice President shall coordinate and oversee the organization's events and activities.

C. Treasurer:

- a. The Treasurer shall manage the financial affairs of the organization, including budget preparation, financial reporting, and compliance with university policies.
- b. The Treasurer shall maintain accurate records of all financial transactions.
- c. The Treasurer shall provide regular financial reports to the executive board.

D. Advisor:

- a. The Advisor shall provide guidance, support, and mentorship to the Graduate Association of Latine and Latin American Students (GALA) and its executive board.
- b. The advisor shall meet with the executive board meetings at least 3 times per semester to facilitate discussions and assist in decision making process when necessary.
- c. The Advisor shall connect GALA with university resources, departments, and faculty members that can support the organization's mission and goals.
- d. The Advisor shall facilitate communication and collaboration between GALA and other student organizations, university departments, and external entities.
- e. The Advisor shall promote an inclusive and supportive environment within GALA that values diversity, equity, and belonging, and fosters a sense of community among its members.

Article V- Election / Selection of Organization Leadership

Section 1: Only active members will be allowed to nominate and be nominated for any Executive position.

Section 2: Nominations

- A. Nominations will open up on the second to last General Meeting of the semester.
- B. Nominations will close on the final meeting of the semester immediately before the election.

Section 3: Only active members may cast ballots for any Executive position.

Section 4: Elections

- A. Each nominee will provide a presentation before the General Assembly explaining their reasons for running for their respective position.
- B. The General Assembly will discuss the different candidates in an open discussion.
- C. Votes will be cast in a closed ballot once discussion ends.
- D. The General Assembly will choose two active members that are not running for any position to count the ballots.
- E. Candidates with the most votes will be the elected in an Executive position.

Section 5: Officers will assume their positions immediately following elections.

Article VI - Standing Committees (Roles and Duties)

A. Executive Committee

- a. Shall actively work on strategies, which will recruit members to our student organization.
- b. Have the responsibility to serve as a liaison between GALA and all outside organizations, groups, individuals in the manner decided by the voting membership. When deemed necessary, by the voting membership, they will also produce press release and contact all print, radio, television media on and off campus.
- c. Shall organize and develop cultural activities on campus for the purpose of teaching the membership and non-GALA of our culture.
- d. The Executive committee shall be the official voice of GALA on all campus issues.
- e. Shall ensure that the GALA Constitution is upheld and abided by.
- f. Shall ensure that all Committees are fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.
- g. Shall facilitate all General Meetings and Executive Committee Meetings.
- h. Shall fulfill all the duties and responsibilities of any vacant officer position.
- i. Shall be responsible for all financial transactions and business regarding GALA.

B. External Committee

- a. Shall attend all Regional and National Meetings.
- b. Shall organize trips for the GALA to all Statewide and National Conference.
- c. Shall ensure that voting rights for our GALA are maintained at both the Regional and National level.
- d. The External Coordinator(s) shall be the official voice of our GALA at all external meetings.

C. Community Committee

- a. Shall establish close working relations with Latinx organizations in the community that support GALA's purpose and goals.

- b. To find different community events that members can be involved with, examples, Habitat for Humanity, can food drive, etc.
 - i. Must keep close ties with our community partners such as developing relations with external community organizations.
 - c. The Community Coordinator(s) will be the official voice of GALA at all meetings and events, which concern the local community.
- D. Administrative Committee
 - a. Shall maintain attendance of members at all General Meetings.
 - b. Shall create a Membership List with telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, to distribute to the membership of GALA.
 - c. Shall take clear and concise minutes at both General and Executive Committee Meetings.
 - d. Shall pick up and sort mail received by GALA.
 - e. Shall update the GALA Constitution following the approval of any proposed amendments.
 - f. The Administrative Coordinator(s) will be responsible for maintaining records of all members voting rights.
- E. Historian Committee
 - a. Shall be responsible for maintaining GALA files.
 - b. Shall provide end-of-semester reports on GALA's goals and objectives.
 - c. Shall provide a GALA Orientation Workshop for all new members concerning GALA history, philosophy, and ideals.
 - d. The Historian Coordinator(s) will be responsible for actively researching and gathering information of our organization for the GALA files.

Article VII– Advisor(s) or Advisory Board:

Section 1: Advisors of student organizations must be full-time members of The Ohio State University faculty or Administrative & Professional staff. If a person is serving as an advisor who is not a member of the above classifications, a co-advisor must be chosen who is a member of the Ohio State University.

Section 2: The Advisor shall serve as a mentor and provide guidance to the Graduate Association of Latine and Latin American Students (GALA) and its executive board. The Advisor's role is crucial in supporting the organization's development, fostering its growth, and maintaining its alignment with the university's mission and policies. The specific responsibilities and requirements of the Advisor include:

- A. Attending at least five (5) executive board meetings per semester to provide advice, facilitate discussions, and assist in decision-making processes.

- B. Attending at least one (1) student event organized by GALA per semester to demonstrate support and engagement with the organization's activities.
- C. Attend at least one (1) workshop and training session relevant to the organization's development and its members' growth, including but not limited to leadership, cultural competency, and professional development workshops.
- D. Ensuring compliance with university regulations, policies, and procedures, particularly those related to student organizations' functioning and financial management.
- E. Connecting GALA with university resources, departments, and faculty members that can support the organization's mission and goals.
- F. Providing guidance to the executive board in developing and implementing strategic plans, setting goals, and assessing the organization's performance.
- G. Promoting an inclusive and supportive environment within GALA that values diversity, equity, and belonging, and fosters a sense of community among its members.
- H. Working closely with the President to ensure the organization's overall success and address any challenges that may arise.

Article VII – Meetings and events of the Organization: Required meetings and their frequency.

Section 1: General Meetings

- A. General Meetings will occur every other week and will consist of the General Assembly.
- B. All major decisions regarding GALA will be brought to the General Meeting for input and approval.
- C. Meetings may be closed to only active members by the request of an active membership.
- D. A minimum of one educational segment will be provided at a General Meeting every month.

Section 2: Executive Committee Meetings

- A. Executive Committee Meetings will determine the Agenda for all General Meetings.
- B. Executive Committee Meetings will be empowered to make minor decisions regarding GALA.
- C. Executive Committee Meetings may be closed to only Executive committee members by the request of a Coordinator and approval by a majority (50% + 1) of the executive committee members.

Section 3: Committee Meetings

- A. Committee meetings will meet outside of the General Meetings at the discretion of its committee members and Executive committee members.

Section 4: All GALA meetings will be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order.

Article IX – Attendees of Events of the Organization: Required events and their frequency.

Section 1: Active members must attend three-fourths of the general meetings during the semester.

Section 2: The organization reserves the right to address member or event attendee behavior where the member or event attendee's behavior is disruptive or otherwise not in alignment with the organization's constitution.

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

Section 1: A constitutional amendment may be proposed by any voting member in GALA.

Section 2: Any proposed amendments should be presented to the organization in writing and should not be acted upon when initially introduced. Upon initial introduction, the proposed amendments should be read in the general meeting, then read again at a specified number of subsequent general meetings.

Section 3: The general meeting in which the votes will be taken and should either require a two-third or three-quarter majority of voting members (a quorum being present) or a majority or two-thirds of the entire voting membership of the organization, present or not. The constitution should not be amended easily or frequently.

Section 4: Amendments become effective immediately upon passage.

Article XI – Method of Dissolution of Organization

Section 1: In the event of dissolution, all unspent GALA funds shall remain property of OSU.

Section 2: All other privately obtain funds shall be donated to a non-profit organization whose goals and purpose aligns with GALA.