Graduate Planners Society

*Student Organization Constitution*

A logo with a city skyline and a leaf

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

Section 1 - Name

The name of the organization is Graduate Planners Society. Once the student organization has been in good standing with the Ohio State University for two years, the committee may vote to change the name to include, “at the Ohio State University.” If the organization’s registration status is changed to Inactive, Unregistered, or Active- Re-established “at the Ohio State University” will be removed from the organization name per university policy.

Section 2 - Purpose

The Graduate Planners Society is a student organization whose primary purpose is to promote the advancement of its members, in and out of the classroom, by providing opportunities for personal and professional development. The Graduate Planners Society is a Non-profit Community or Volunteer Group legally registered with the IRS; The executive committee will speak on behalf of its members, organize academic, career and social & cultural events and strive to improve the overall graduate experience within the City & Regional Planning section. The student organization will serve as an opportunity for students to network and form collaborations, both personal and professional in nature. The student organization has no employees, produces no commercial goods or services for business. The executive committee will work as volunteers.

Section 3 – Harassment and Discrimination Policy

The Graduate Planner Society agrees that it will not engage in sexual misconduct nor any harassment or discrimination 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 basis in accordance with these guidelines.

Section 4 - Hazing Policy

The Graduate Planner Society agrees to maintain a zero-tolerance policy for hazing, in compliance with Ohio State University and Collin's Law. All members must conduct themselves in a manner that supports an environment free from hazing. Hazing includes any activity, regardless of consent, that causes or creates a substantial risk of physical, mental, or emotional harm or humiliation to any individual as part of membership or affiliation with the student organization. If found responsible for hazing, members and/or the organization may face disciplinary actions.

Article II - Membership

Section 1 - Student Memberships

All graduate students enrolled within the Knowlton School of Architecture’s City & Regional Planning Graduate and PhD Programs are considered eligible for Graduate Planners Society membership. Those students in good academic standing, consisting of a grade point average no lower than 3.0, will have full voting rights within the organization.

Section 2 - Honorary Memberships

The Graduate Planners Society student organization will also hold two honorary memberships. These positions will be reserved for the Section Head and Graduate Studies Chair within the City & Regional Planning section. Honorary memberships allow the individuals to participate in committee meetings and student events but will not hold voting rights.

Article III - Organization Leadership: Titles, Terms of Office, Type of Selection, Qualifications and Duties of the Leaders.

The primary duty of all committee members is to work together in a collaborative and supportive environment for the benefit of the entire student organization. In the meantime, the committee members are encouraged to think of themselves as equals in voting and idea generation. The leadership group in details is listed in Section 1-7 as the follows:

Section 1 – The President

Subsection A - Terms of Office

The President of the Graduate Planners Society is an annual term. A student may serve as President for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The President's term will begin on the first of January and will terminate on the thirty-first of December. Once the term has been completed the previous President will serve on the executive committee as a committee member from the first of January to the thirty-first of December (or until they leave the organization) in an advising capacity.

Subsection B – Selection

See Election Procedures in Article III, Section 8A.

Subsection C – Qualifications

The President of the Graduate Planners Society must be enrolled within the City & Regional Planning Graduate Program. The student must have completed or will complete one semester of study by January first of the coming year. The student must have maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Aforementioned qualifications may be waived at the discretion of the executive committee, according to the special elections procedures outlined in Article III, Section 8A, Paragraph 5.

Subsection D – Duties

The President will call meetings, initiate the next year’s elections, sign appropriate paperwork, and attend university training and vote on necessary matters. The President will attend and participate in executive committee meetings. The President is responsible for completing the annual paperwork required for the continued operation of the student organization within The Ohio State University. The President will actively participate in the recruitment of students and will serve as a mentor for first year Ohio State City & Regional Planning graduate students. The President will serve as graduate student representative at City & Regional Planning Section Faculty meetings. The President will monitor the work of Fund-raising chair and the Treasurer. The President will keep the PhD coordinator updated for GPS plans, programs, events and activities to get PhD students engaged with GPS.

Section 2 - Vice President Subsection A - Terms of Office

The Vice President of the Graduate Planners Society is an annual term. A student may serve as Vice President for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Vice President's term will begin on the first of January and will terminate on the thirty-first of December. Once the term has been completed the previous Vice President will serve as an informal advisor to the incumbent VP.

Subsection B – Selection

See Election Procedures in Article III, Section 8A.

Subsection C – Qualifications

The Vice President of the Graduate Planners Society must be enrolled within the City & Regional Planning Graduate or PhD Program. The student must have completed one or will complete one semester of study by January first of the coming year. The student must have maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Aforementioned qualifications may be waived at the discretion of the executive committee, according to the special elections procedures outlined in Article III, Section 8A, Paragraph 5.

Section D – Duties

The Vice President will attend and participate in executive committee meetings and fulfill the roles of the president if the latter is unable to perform those duties. The Vice President will serve as the graduate student representative for any recruitment efforts in the City & Regional Planning section. The Vice President will maintain and cultivate a network of contacts to include University officials and persons at external organizations or businesses. This list will be passed to the newly elected Vice President from their predecessor to facilitate future events and partnerships within the University and with external parties. The Vice President will monitor the work of Media Chair and assist the Media Chair for outreach and promotion. The Vice President will also monitor the President to avoid one-man rule in leading the organization.

Section 3 – Treasurer

Section A - Terms of Office

The Treasurer of the Graduate Planners Society is an annual term. A student may serve as Treasurer for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Treasurer’s term will begin on the first of January and will terminate on the thirty-first of December. Once the term has been completed, the previous Treasurer will serve as an informal advisor to the incumbent Treasurer.

Section B – Selection

See Election Procedures in Article III, Section 8A.

Section C – Qualifications

The Treasurer of the Graduate Planners Society must be enrolled within the City & Regional Planning Graduate Program. The student must have maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Aforementioned qualifications may be waived at the discretion of the executive committee, according to the special elections procedures outlined in Article III, Section 8A, Paragraph 5.

Section D - Duties

The Treasurer’s main role is to balance, maintain, and direct the finances of the student organization. The Treasurer will maintain a bank account for the organization. The Treasurer will prepare a budget for events or activities based on the organization’s agreement at least one month ahead. The Treasurer will request funds applications on programing and operating from The Council on Student Affairs (CSA) of OSU according to CSA’s requirement on schedule. The Treasurer will also attend and participate in executive committee meetings and report the financial balance sheet. The Treasurer must attend university sanctioned training. The Treasurer will request all related funds for the organization and complete audit forms. The Treasurer should not share the duties of procurement and fund raising for the sake of transparency unless due to special reasons and special needs and with the consent of all executive committee.

Section 4 – Secretary

Section A – Terms of Office

The Secretary of the Graduate Planners Society is an annual term. A student may serve as Secretary for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Secretary’s term will begin on the first of January and will terminate on the thirty-first of December. Once the term has been completed, the previous Secretary will serve as an informal advisor to the incumbent Secretary.

Section B – Selection

See Election Procedures in Article III, Section 8B.

Section C – Qualifications

The Secretary of the Graduate Planners Society must be enrolled within the City & Regional Planning Graduate Program. The student must have maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Aforementioned qualifications may be waived at the discretion of the executive committee, according to the special elections procedures outlined in Article III, Section 7B, Paragraph 5.

Section D – Duties

The Secretary will attend and participate in all committee meetings. The Secretary of the Graduate Planners Society will work with the committee members to schedule future meetings and facilitate any special seminars in the City & Regional Planning Section. The Secretary will also take notes and send a follow-up email to the committee summarizing the minutes of the meetings. The Secretary will also help the President organize student elections.

Section 5 – Social Media and Outreach Chair

Section A - Terms of Office

The Social Media and Outreach Chair of the Graduate Planners Society is an annual term. A student may serve as social chair for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Social Media and Outreach Chair’s term will begin on the first of January and will terminate on the thirty-first of December. Once the term has been completed, the previous Social Chair will serve as an informal advisor to the incumbent Social Media and Outreach Chair.

Section B – Selection

See Election Procedures in Article III, Section 7B.

Section C – Qualifications

The Social Media and Outreach Chair of the Graduate Planners Society must be enrolled within the City & Regional Planning Graduate Program. The student must have maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Aforementioned qualifications may be waived at the discretion of the executive committee, according to the special elections procedures outlined in Article III, Section 7B, Paragraph 5.

Section D – Duties

The Social Media and Outreach Chair will attend and participate in all executive committee meetings. The Social Media and Outreach Chair will create and post engaging content (such as text, images, videos, etc.) that showcases GPS’s brand, events, activities, or values. The Social Media and Outreach Chair will communicate and interact with graduate students, followers, influencers, and other stakeholders on social media channels. The Social Media and Outreach Chair will develop and implement social media strategies that align with GPS’s goals and objectives.

Section 6 – Fund-Raising Chair Section A - Terms of Office

The Fund-Raising Chair of the Graduate Planners Society is an annual term. A student may serve as Fund-Raising chair for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Fund-Raising Chair’s term will begin on the first of January and will terminate on the thirty-first of December. Once the term has been completed, the previous Fund-Raising Chair will serve as an informal advisor to the incumbent Fund-Raising Chair.

Section B – Selection

See Election Procedures in Article III, Section 8B.

Section C – Qualifications

The Fund-Raising Chair of the Graduate Planners Society must be enrolled within the City & Regional Planning Graduate Program. The student must have maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Aforementioned qualifications may be waived at the discretion of the executive committee, according to the special elections procedures outlined in Article III, Section 7B, Paragraph 5.

Section D – Duties

The Fund-Raising Chair will attend and participate in all executive committee meetings. The Fund-Raising Chair will develop and manage a sponsorship and procurement team, plan, and organize fundraising activities. The Fund-Raising Chair needs to work with school administration, the President and Treasurer to plan key fundraising dates. The Fund-Raising Chair will plan and present reports on proposed fundraising activities at executive committee meetings for approval. The Fund-Raising Chair will organize fundraising and donation activities for the budget and goals for the members of the Graduate Planners Society. The Fund-Raising Chair will maintain records of sponsors for annual outreach efforts. The Fund-Raising Chair will train volunteers to support outreach efforts.

Section 7 – Advisor

Section A - Terms of Office

The Advisor position of the Graduate Planners Society is an annual term. There is no restriction on the number of terms, consecutively or non-consecutively, that an individual may serve as advisor. The Advisor’s term will begin on the first of January and will terminate on the thirty-first of December.

Section B – Selection

The City & Regional Planning Section will appoint an Advisor with the advice and agreement of the Graduate Planners Society executive committee. Appointed Advisors should be agreed upon before the first of January. If the executive committee cannot come to an agreement on an Advisor, the committee may suggest an alternative advisor until an agreement is reached with the City & Regional Planning Section.

Section C – Qualifications

The Advisor must attend university sanctioned training and be a current faculty member of the City & Regional Planning Section at The Ohio State University.

Section D – Duties

The Advisor must attend university sanction training at least every three years but may attend training annually if desired. The Advisor will approve the organization’s registration annually, approve all funding requests, and serve as co-signer on the organization’s bank account. The Advisor will attend all committee meetings. If the Advisor is not the City & Regional Planning Section Head, they will coordinate with the Section Head and Treasurer to approve funding requests.

Section 8 – Election Procedure

Section A – President, Vice President and Treasurer

1.Nominations: In the first week of November, the President will initiate the selection procedure by requesting student nominations for the Graduate Planners Society President, Vice President, and Treasurer. Students interested in serving on the Executive Board will need to indicate interest the first week of November. Students may nominate themselves or another student that they feel exemplifies the criteria and meets the constitutional qualifications.

2.Voting: Voting will occur in the second week of November via an online poll. Candidates will have the opportunity to prepare a video speech up to 3 minutes in length on why they are running and will be submitted to the current President to distribute to the membership. The President will distribute a ballot with the nominees for each position. Students will vote for one nominee for each position and can only vote for members of GPS who have been nominated. Acceptable nomination and voting forums include Google Forms, GroupMe polls, and Qualtrics software. If there is only one candidate interested in a position, they will win the nomination by default and no election will be held.

3.Accepting Positions: The nominees receiving the most votes for President, the most votes for Vice President and the most votes for Treasurer will serve on the following year’s committee in that capacity.

4.Special Elections: Under exceptional circumstances and with the majority vote of the executive committee, qualifications for any position described herein may be amended or waived. Qualifying appointments will be made by the executive committee on behalf of the student member constituency and will follow all appropriate term appointments contained herein.

Section B – Fund-Raising Chair, Social Media and Outreach Chair, and Secretary

1.Nominations: In the first week of November, or at any time should the roles not be filled, the President will initiate the selection procedure by requesting student nominations for the Graduate Planners Society Secretary, Fund-raising Chair and Social & Media Chair. Students will have two weeks to nominate committee members. Students may nominate themselves or another student that they feel exemplifies the criteria and meets the constitutional qualifications.

2.Appointments: Once a candidate has notified the Executive Committee of their interest in holding the Fund-Raising Chair, Social Media and Outreach Chair, or Secretary positions, the Executive Committee will appoint the best nominee for each position. Each nominee will be permitted a 2-minute speech before the Executive Committee to explain why they would be the best fit for the position.

3.Accepting Positions: The nominees appointed by the Executive Committee will serve on the following year’s committee in that capacity. The appointments must be voted upon by the Committee and must be unanimous.

4.Special Elections: Under exceptional circumstances and with the majority vote of the executive committee, qualifications for any position described herein may be amended or waived. Qualifying appointments will be made by the executive committee on behalf of the student member constituency and will follow all appropriate term appointments contained herein.

Section C – Extraneous Positions

It shall not be in the best interest of the committee to turn willing students away from participation. Students who have been nominated, but not selected to serve on the committee will be offered the title, “Committee Member.” These students are encouraged to attend and participate in committee meetings.

Article IV - Executive Committee: Size and composition of the Committee.

The executive committee will consist of elected officials: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Fund-Raising Chair and Social Media and Outreach Chair, as well as selected committee leaders from each standing committee. The previous year’s executive committee will serve under the title as “Committee Member” for one month after the termination of their term to advise the newly elected executive committee. The executive committee will conduct organizational business between regularly scheduled meetings. The actions of the executive committee will be reviewed at the beginning of each regularly scheduled organizational meeting.

Members may be added to the executive committee at the discretion of the executive committee by a majority vote. A member of the executive committee will oversee the organization of every event hosted by or participated in by the Graduate Planners Society and will report the progress to the committee. Events will be split among the members of the executive committee as they see fit to balance the workload. The overseeing committee member for an event will seek out volunteers from the members of the Graduate Planners Society when assistance is needed.

Article V - Standing Committees

Section A – Networking & Community Outreach Committee

The Graduate Planners Society student organization will engage the city & regional planning field by connecting with professionals, organizations, and the surrounding community. Networking and outreach activities should serve to provide members with opportunities to connect professionally with active planners, recent alumni, and professional planning organizations. These activities may also serve to improve the visibility of the organization, its members, and the City & Regional Planning Graduate Program. Activities may include, but are not limited to, attending local APA events, site and office visits, philanthropic events and volunteering, professional development workshops, etc.

Section B – Recruiting Committee

The Graduate Planners Society student organization will provide support with graduate student recruitment each year. All elected members that serve on the executive committee will serve on the recruitment committee. The Graduate Planners Society will also enlist the help of any student from the City & Regional Planning graduate program willing to participate. The role of this committee will be to assist the Section with welcoming visiting admitted students.

Article VI –Method of Selecting and/or Removing Officers and Members.

Section A – Removing Officers and Advisors

Officers and advisors will remain active on the committee so long as they remain in good academic standing, represent the student organization positively, and regularly attend and participate in committee meetings and events. If a student serving on the executive committee allows their grade point average to drop below a 3.0, they will lose voting privileges for the following semester. If the student is in poor academic standing for two consecutive semesters, attends less than half of the executive committee meetings, or fails to promote and represent the student organization in a positive light, they may be removed permanently from the executive committee. For such action, the entire voting executive committee (with the addition of the organization’s faculty Advisor) must unanimously agree on the individual’s removal. Once an executive committee member has been removed from office, they may not run in future elections for any position.

Section B – Removing Members

Members of the Graduate Planners Society student organization will only be removed under the most serious offences. Removing members from the organization will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and will require a unanimous vote from all executive committee and honorary members.

Section C-Self Removal from the Committee

If a committee member wishes to step down at any point during their term, their request will be granted. If the executive committee member steps down, their position will be filled by hierarchy within the executive committee. That is, the Vice President may fulfill the Presidential role, the Treasurer may fulfill the Vice-Presidential role, the Fund-Raising Chair may serve as Treasurer, and the Social Media and Outreach Chair may serve as Fund-Raising Chair and the Secretary may serve as Social Media and Outreach Chair. Members of the executive committee may maintain their original position if desired, in which case the next hierarchical position may fill the vacant role. Once the vacant role has been filled from within the existing executive committee, a special election will be conducted to fill any unoccupied positions. The committee will follow the special election protocol outlined in Article III, Section 8A, Paragraph 5.

Article VII –Meetings of the Organization

The Graduate Planners Society student organization will hold general meetings open to all members every other month. At any point, the executive committee may hold closed committee meetings. Meetings may be cancelled, or extra gatherings may be called as necessary. The President of the organization is responsible for calling the meetings which will be scheduled by the Secretary. These meetings will be required for executive committee members to remain in good standing.

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

Section A – Initial Proposal to Amend the Constitution

If an executive committee member or advisor wishes to amend the Constitution, they should present a written proposal at an official executive committee meeting that includes the desired change and reasoning for the change. If the request comes from a student within the organization, they must present it to an executive committee member, who will present it to the executive committee. The executive committee member sponsoring the proposal will read the proposal to the executive committee. The secretary will make a note of the request and include it in that meeting’s minutes. The executive committee will have from that date to the date of the next meeting to take the proposal under advisement.

Section C – Voting

At the next meeting, the executive committee will vote on the proposed amendment. An executive committee member may vote one of three ways: “In favor”, “against”, or “majority vote by the student organization body.” The results of this vote must be unanimous. If the committee remains divided, there will be no amendment to the constitution. If the voting is deferred to the student body organization, the vice president will contact the student organization and hold a vote on the amendment, which will last for one week. The students shall receive a copy of the written proposal to advise their vote. The students will vote “in favor” or “against.” Under these circumstances the proposal will be approved if 50% +1 of the student organization participates and 50% + 1 vote “in favor.” If the majority of the organization fails to report for voting, or less than half of the students vote “in favor”, the constitution will not be amended. If a proposal is rejected, the topic may not be voted on for at least one year from the final voting date.

Section D – Amending the Constitution

If a proposal passes, the president will write the approved amended policies in their respective Article in the Constitution. A record of all amendments will be outlined and dated in Article IX. The language should be clearly written and the constitutional article it addresses should be clearly referenced. Amendments to the constitution may be amended themselves following the protocol for Amending the Constitution described herein.

Article IX – Constitutional Amendments

Constitutional amendments must be written in the same formatting as the original constitution and should begin below this text.

Amendment I, April 2nd, 2025 – Changing Dates for Elections

Elections for the roles of President, Vice President, and Treasurer shall be changed from the Spring semester to the Fall semester. Instead of elections occurring in March or April, they will occur in November. Leadership shall serve from January first to December thirty-first, and assume advisory roles to their replacements once their annual term(s) are completed. This is to ensure the organization’s longevity, so new members can assume leadership roles as graduating executive committee members focus on graduation requirements. Similarly, appointment processes for the Fund-Raising Chair, Social Media and Outreach Chair, and Secretary will be changed to reflect this timeline. The Advisor role’s annual term will also be updated to reflect this timeline.

Article X –Method of Dissolution of Organization Section A – Dissolution of the Organization

Dissolution of the student organization shall follow a three-step process.

1.Initial Proposal to conclude the Graduate Planners Society student organization: If an executive committee member, Advisor, or Section Head wishes to close the organization, they should verbally announce their proposal at an official executive committee meeting. The secretary will make note of the request. If the request comes from a student within the organization, they must present it to an executive committee member, who will present it to the executive committee. The student initiating the dissolution request is encouraged to attend the meeting.

2.Written Proposal to conclude the Graduate Planners Society student organization: The committee will ask the executive committee member (and student member if appropriate) initiating the request to type and present a one-page document detailing the merits of their position. At the next meeting, the executive committee will receive the proposal. The dissolution proposal will be read out loud by the initiating member. The executive committee will have from that date to the date of the next meeting to take the dissolution proposal under advisement.

3.Voting: At the next meeting, the executive committee will vote on the proposed amendment. An executive committee member may vote one of three ways: “In favor”, “against”, or “majority vote by the student organization body.” The result of this vote must be unanimous. If the executive committee remains divided, there will be no dissolution of the organization. If the vote is deferred to the student organization body, the Vice President will contact the student organization body and hold a vote, which will last for one week. The students shall receive a copy of the written dissolution proposal to take under advisement. The students will vote “in favor” or “against.” Under these circumstances, the proposal will be approved if 50% +1 of the student organization participates and 50% + 1 vote “in favor.” If the majority of the organization fails to report for voting, or less than half of the students vote “in favor”, the organization will not be terminated. If the dissolution proposal is rejected, the topic may not be voted on for at least one year from the final voting date.

4.Dissolution: If the dissolution proposal passes, the President will file the appropriate paperwork to terminate the student organization with the University. The committee will be disbanded and relieved of their duties.

Section B – Assets and Debt

1.Assets: If the Graduate Planners Society is terminated while still possessing assets, those assets will be donated to a student organization within the Knowlton School of Architecture. The committee will vote which organization(s) and how to distribute said funds. Approval of this resolution requires a simple majority vote of the executive committee.

2.Debts: All financial decisions must be approved by the Graduate Planners Society Advisor. As such, the City & Regional Planning Section will be responsible for settling any and all debts accrued by the Graduate Planners Society student organization.

(Constitution adapted from the Students for the Advancement of Microbiology student organization constitution)