

GFWSSA CONSTITUTION

GENDER, FEMINIST AND WOMEN'S STUDIES STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Constitutions 1998/99 (Ratified September 17, 1998)
Constitutions 2015-2016 updated by the GFWSSA executive per YUGSA's new mandate

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The primary objectives of the GFWSSA are to facilitate communication on relevant issues between members of the Graduate Programme in Gender, Feminist & Women's Studies, to act as a liaison between the students in the programme, the faculty, and administrative members of the programme, to select representatives for various committees (as outlined below), to foster a sense of community among students in the programme, and to pursue activist and advocacy roles on social justice and equity issues defined as relevant by the membership.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the GFWSSA is comprised of all part time and full time students registered in the Graduate Programme in Gender, Feminist & Women's Studies at York University.

3. FREQUENCY AND NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS

Typically GFWSSA meetings are held monthly or bi-monthly, but is ultimately determined by the present GFWSSA leaders. The co-chairs have the responsibility of ensuring these meetings happen.

Meeting times and locations are posted via the GFWSSA list serv and the GFWSSA facebook group page.

Once per year, in September, an Annual General Meeting of the GFWSSA shall be held, which shall include the following agenda items:

- Budget report from the last academic year
- Proposed budget for upcoming year (to be ratified by members)
- Election of co-chairs and other committee representatives (see duties below)

4. STRUCTURE OF MEETINGS

Each meeting shall be chaired by one of the co-chairs, or by an individual agreed upon by the members at the meeting. The co-chair who is not chairing the meeting, or another member of the GFWSSA executive committee, will ensure that complete minutes of the meeting are taken, that minutes are circulated on email subsequent to the meeting, and that written copies of the minutes are available at the next meeting. The minutes of a meeting must be approved by the membership at the beginning of the next meeting.

The agenda of all GFWSSA meetings will include, but is not limited to:

- a. approval of the agenda by the members
- b. approval of the minutes of the previous meeting by members
- c. co-chairs report

d. reports from committee representatives

5. QUORUM

Quorum shall consist of 10% of the GFWSSA membership. If quorum is not achieved, a GFWSSA meeting cannot be called to order, motions cannot be passed at a meeting, nor can elections of committee representatives or co-chairs take place.

6. DECISION MAKING

The decision-making authority of the GFWSSA resides in its membership. Each member of the GFWSSA is entitled to one vote. Decisions must be made at GFWSSA meetings, and voting by proxy is not permitted. All issues to be decided shall be proposed at meetings as motions and any member may propose motions during a meeting. In order for a motion to be passed, it must be supported by 50% + 1 of the members at the meeting.

Voting on motions will be held by secret ballot at the request of any member. In the event of a secret ballot, a Chief Returning Officer will be selected from the members at the meeting, to count and record the results of the election, and to destroy the ballots after the vote has been ratified.

7. ELECTIONS

Voting for committee representatives will be by secret ballot, and will only occur in instances where more volunteers/nominations exist than is necessary for the position and when a conversation between involved parties (facilitated by the co-chairs) is not enough to resolve the issue.

When committee positions become vacant, the vacancy and the call for nominations must be announced at a GFWSSA meeting and/or posted on GFWSSA list serv.

The election of representatives will occur at the next scheduled GFWSSA meeting. If it is essential to fill a position before another GFWSSA meeting can be held, a pro tem representative may be elected by the GFWSSA Executive.

Committee representatives will be nominated by GFWSSA members in one of two ways (members may nominate themselves):

- a. in writing, in advance of a GFWSSA meeting
- b. verbally at a GFWSSA meeting.

Each nominee is entitled to make a statement at the meeting regarding their nomination.

8. COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

All M.A. and Ph.D students, including both full time and part time students, are encouraged to participate as committee representatives.

All committee representatives are required to attend GFWSSA meetings regularly, and must report on the duties they have performed at meetings.

For a complete list of committee positions and descriptions of responsibilities please see the 2015-2016 GFWSSA Handbook.

Occasionally, the GFWSSA may be asked to select representatives to **other committees** and bodies, such as hiring committees, special events committees, etc. Representatives for these other committees shall be nominated and elected by the same procedure as for all other

committee positions. The length of the term shall be decided by the membership at the time of the call for nominations.

9. GFWSSA CHAIR, SECRETARY, TREASURER, SOCIAL COORDINATOR

- Each of these positions can be split between multiple individuals based on the purview of the present membership.

Duties: This general list of responsibilities is to be shared and divided accordingly by the present GFWSSA executive.

- Calling, posting and attending meetings
- Ensuring that an up to date email list, including all GFWSSA members, is maintained
- Preparing agendas in advance of GFWSSA meetings
- Facilitating and taking minutes at meetings, circulating minutes
- Following up on business arising from GFWSSA meetings
- Timely submission of the GSA Operation Grant Request Form
- Maintaining the GFWSSA budget, and reporting on these finances to the membership at GFWSSA meetings
- Keeping record of and providing GFWSSA members with reimbursements for social events and workshops
- Keeping GFWSSA members informed of GFWSSA events and initiatives
- Preparing a report from students for presentation at Programme Meetings, to be presented to and ratified by the members prior to the Programme Meeting
- Ensuring that a directory of students and a list of all committee representatives are circulated at least twice per year
- Ensuring that all nominations and election results are communicated to the membership
- Ensuring the operation of the buddy system for incoming students
- Liaising with the staff of the programme including the Director, the Programme Assistant and the GFWSSA Graduate Assistant(s)
- Arranging workshops for students, particularly incoming cohorts
- Arranging and advertising social events agreed upon at GFWSSA meetings

10. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the constitution can be proposed by the current Executive and/or GFWSSA members, but must be ratified through a majority vote at the next scheduled meeting.