

Social Work Association of Graduate Students [SWAGS] Constitution & Guidelines Fall 2015

The Purpose of this Constitution is:

1. To provide a general philosophy and rationale for the Graduate Student Association.
2. To provide a general orientation for the membership.
3. To lend stability and continuity to the Graduate Student Association.
4. To provide an understanding of the operations, practices and procedures carried on within the various parts of the Graduate Student Association.

ARTICLE 1: Name and Compliance

I.I Name: This organization shall be known as Social Work Association of Graduate Students [SWAGS], the name under which it is officially registered with York University Graduate Students Association (YUGSA). It will hereinafter be referred to as SWAGS.

I.II Compliance: School of Social Work SWAGS operates at York University, subject to York University and York University Graduate Students Association (YUGSA) policies and procedures.

Article 2: Preamble

The Social Work Association of Graduate Students, hereafter referred to as SWAGS represents and advocates for the collective interests of School of Social Work graduate students in all matters of departmental policy and action at York University. The SWAGS seeks to build community among the graduate students, faculty, and larger university, with consideration for diverse experiences and interests. Above all, The SWAGS works to optimize the environment within which graduate students develop, both professionally and personally.

Article 3: Membership

The members of SWAGS are School of Social Work graduate students. Current enrollment in the graduate program is sufficient for membership. No general membership dues will be collected from members, although members may be expected to pay nominal fees for specific events.

Article 4: Meetings

SWAGS meetings will be moderated by the President/Vice-Presidents and held a minimum of two times per semester during the academic year. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. Normally, any voting will take place in the meeting, and members who are not in attendance at the meeting forfeit their right to vote, unless a proxy vote has been arranged in advance. SWAGS do reserve the right to decide, by a majority vote or the decision of the President/ Vice-Presidents, to put any vote to the entire SWAGS. In these cases, the issue will be presented via written or electronic memo to all members, and members will be given a pre-specified period of time in which

to cast their ballots. Before any official action is taken by the SWAGS, a majority vote must be obtained for those votes taken outside of meetings (as per the stipulations outlined above). In all cases, the votes of all members will be weighed equally.

Article 5: Elections and Eligibility

Elections for SWAGS offices will be held in the September of every year. Only SWAGS members may hold official positions. All nominations for elected office will be decided by those members present at the SWAGS meetings. No individual may hold, or run for, more than one SWAGS office at the same time. After the nomination period, ballots will be distributed electronically to all graduate students, and persons will have a pre-specified period in which to cast their ballots. For each position, the person receiving the largest number of votes will be elected. Ballots will be submitted to and tabulated by the current SWAGS President/election officer/Graduate program assistant.

Article 6: Elected Positions

The SWAGS has seven elected officers: President, One Vice-President, One Secretary, One Treasurer, One Social chair, and Two Program Representatives. The office of President may be held by one individual or one co-president who run for the office.

Section 5.1: Requirements of Officers

The Officers of SWAGS must attend >75% of regularly scheduled meetings.

- **President:**
Requirements: The president is responsible for organizing and overseeing meetings and elections, communicating with other officers, calling special meetings, coordinating officers in special tasks.
- **Vice-President:** The vice-president is responsible for supporting the president in execution of duties and performs all relevant duties in the president's absence.
- **Secretary:**
Requirements: The secretary is responsible for recording the minutes of the meetings and distributing them to the membership, keeping all records and lists updated, and moderating the departmental listserv.
- **Treasurer:**
Requirements: The treasurer is responsible for drafting the SWAGS' budget and presenting it to the executive, membership and YUGSA, keeping the membership informed of the SWAGS' current budget, reporting the amount of expenditures by the SWAGS at each meeting.
- **Social Chair:**
Requirements: The social chair is responsible for planning and coordinating the social activities of the SWAGS.
- **Program Representative**
Requirements: The program representative is responsible for communications. The representatives will act as moderator, keeping both elected officers and SWAGS members informed on current and past concerns, and on special and upcoming events.

Article 7: Replacing Officers and Representatives

If a member serving in an elected position other than the President, resigns or is otherwise unable to fill his or her position, the SWAGS executive, will appoint a replacement to fill the remainder of the term. If the President resigns or is otherwise unable to fill her or his term, an election will be held following all the guidelines and stipulations for a regular election. Replacement members for any position, including those elected, will serve only until the end of the original term of that position.

Article 8: Finances

The SWAGS' money will be primarily acquired through funds allocated to the SWAGS by YUGSA and the department. Any expenditure of the SWAGS must be in accordance to the SWAGS' annual budget, approved by the membership. Only if the SWAGS exceeds its budget or needs money for a special event may dues be collected. This must be approved by a majority (50% +1) of the membership. All monies belonging to the SWAGS shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for the SWAGS. All funds must be deposited within one week of collection.

Article 9: Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees may be created at any time by the decision of the President or a majority vote at a SWAGS meeting. Appointments to the ad hoc committee will be the responsibility of the executive committee. Each ad hoc committee must select a contact person so that SWAGS members and others can communicate efficiently with that committee. All ad hoc committees are responsible for maintaining records of their activities and for reporting pertinent information to members at the SWAGS meetings.

Article 10: Amendments and Revisions

An amendment can be added to this constitution with a 2/3 vote of all members present at the meeting when the issue arises. The amended constitution must be presented to the YUGSA office in the beginning of every academic year.