

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS  
ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS  
OF  
NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the Associated Graduate Students of New Mexico Highlands University, in order to support the rights, issues, and needs of graduate students at New Mexico Highlands University, and in order to form a truly representative graduate student government, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the Associated Graduate Students of New Mexico Highlands University.

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of the organization is the Association of Graduate Students of New Mexico Highlands University hereafter referred to as AGS.

**ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE**

AGS shall represent and serve the graduate students of New Mexico Highlands University, as enumerated in this Constitution.

**A. Goal**

AGS shall strive to enhance the academic environment for graduate students at New Mexico Highlands University by facilitating an intellectual environment that promotes rights, interests and the development of the University community through advocacy, education and financial support.

**B. Policy**

1. AGS encourages every graduate student's effort to carry out the objectives of AGS, and the Association shall respect the autonomy of the individual, while acknowledging and abiding by applicable University policies and procedures.
2. AGS encourages social, cultural, academic and research activities for graduate students.
3. AGS will only fund individual clubs or organizations with a membership of greater than 50% graduate students.

**C. Governmental Structure**

The governing structure of AGS shall consist of Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches.

**ARTICLE III. DEFINITIONS**

**A. Association of Graduate Students:**

The representative government of the graduate student body of New Mexico Highlands University.

**B. AGS Member:**

Any graduate student enrolled at New Mexico Highlands University who has paid the AGS fee for the current semester.

**C. Academic Year:**

The day after the spring semester ends through the last day of the subsequent spring semester.

**D. Constitution:**

The original portion of this document passed by AGS membership and ratified by the AGS Senate and including amendments.

**E. Bylaws:**

The portions of this document that clarify, designate, or ratify sections of the Constitution.

**F. This Document:**

The integrated Constitution and Bylaws of AGS.

**G. Bill:**

A draft of a proposed legislation presented for approval to the AGS and the Bill enacted from such a draft. Text of Bills is always shown in this document in a plain (Roman) typeface.

**H. Censure:**

A written expression of strong disapproval.

**I. Sponsor:**

A senator who proposes and urges adoption of a bill.

**J. Business Day:**

A day on which classes are in session.

**K. Senate – refer to as AGS**

## ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE

The Executive branch shall be composed of a President, a Vice President and appointed cabinet members.

**A. Qualifications**

All members of the Executive shall be members of AGS, and shall be a fulltime student as defined by the Graduate School and with the exception of the senate pro-temp, cannot serve simultaneously as a member of ASNMHU.

**B. Election**

The President and Vice President shall be elected in a general election as set forth in Article XII of this document.

**C. Term Limits**

1. The President may serve a maximum of two terms.
2. The Vice President may serve a maximum of two terms.

**D. Replacement of the President**

In the case that the President is unable to complete a term, the Vice President shall fill the vacancy.

**E. Replacement of the Vice President**

In the case that the Vice President is unable to complete a term, the President will nominate a candidate to be confirmed by a majority vote of the Senate.

**F. Duties of the President**

1. Administer the budget.
2. Appoint cabinet members as deemed necessary. Appointments are subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the Senate.
3. Serves as the official representative of AGS to the New Mexico Highlands University Board of Regents.
4. Chair and coordinate the Executive branch.
5. Appoint Justices and committee members.
6. Oversee Executive ad-hoc committees.
7. Appoint a Secretary and a Treasurer. Appointments are subject to confirmation by a majority vote of the Senate..
8. Other duties as defined by AGS Bylaws.

**G. Duties of the Vice President**

1. Preside over the Senate.
2. Coordinate committee meetings.
3. Will vote in the event of a tie.

**ARTICLE V. ADMINSTRATIVE**

**A. Secretary**

1. The Secretary shall publicize meeting times and agendas to all AGS members.
2. The Secretary or designated replacement shall take detailed minutes at all AGS meetings.
3. Minutes from the previous meeting shall be provided for the approval of the senate.
4. The Secretary shall faithfully carry out all duties assigned by the President or Vice President pertaining to AGS business

**B. Treasurer**

1. The Treasurer shall provide a written and oral budget report at least once a month at regular meetings, except in the case of official University break periods lasting at least seven days. The report will be given at the next regular meeting after the break.
2. The Treasurer shall maintain, in conjunction with the Graduate School Office and University Business Office, complete financial reports and provide such reports upon request by the President or by a simple majority vote of the Senate.
3. The Treasurer shall serve as the chair of the Finance Committee.
4. The Treasurer shall faithfully carry out all duties assigned by the President or Vice President pertaining to AGS business.

**C. President Pro Tempore**

1. The Pro Tempore shall be elected from the ranks of the Senators by a simple majority vote of the entire voting membership present at the meeting.
2. The Pro Tempore shall act as chair and conduct meetings only if the Vice President is absent, except that if both officers have resigned, been removed, or are not capable of conducting the meeting, the order of succession shall be in force.
3. When acting as Chair, the President Pro Tempore shall only vote on legislation in case of a tie. The senator member acting in the position of Pro

Tempore is not considered a regular voting member of the Senate until they relinquish the Chair.

4. Relinquish the role of Chair immediately if the Vice President arrives at the meeting.
5. Shall be a member of the Executive Council representing the views and concerns of the Senators.
6. Shall attend all Executive Council meetings.
7. The President Pro Tempore shall faithfully carry out all duties assigned by the AGS Constitution and other duties as assigned by the President or Vice President.

## **ARTICLE VI. LEGISLATIVE**

### **A. Membership**

1. Senators shall be members of AGS.
2. The Legislature shall consist of twelve Senators, two from each of the following colleges:
  - a. School of Business (2 senators)
  - b. School of Education (2 senators)
  - c. School of Social Work (2 senators)
  - d. College of Arts and Sciences
    - i. Behavioral/Natural Sciences (2 senators)
    - ii. Communication and Fine Arts/Computer and Mathematical Sciences (2 senators)
    - iii. Humanities (2 senators)

### **B. Election**

Senators shall be elected in a general election as set forth in Article XII of this document.

### **C. Term Limit**

A Senator may be allowed to serve a maximum of three terms.

### **D. Attendance, Censorship, Removal, and Vacancy**

1. A Senator with two absences from Senate meetings in the same semester shall be notified by the Senate, and receive written notification by the Vice President or President Pro Tempore.
2. Should a Senator have three or more absences from Senate meetings in the same semester, the Senate shall have the authority to recommend, with 2/3 majority, that the Senator be removed by the AGS.
3. A majority of the Senate must vote in favor of removal to remove a Senator.
4. In the event that there exists a vacancy within the senate, two professors from the departments listed under Article VI, Section A will nominate two individuals to represent that specific department. Nominations will then be considered by the AGS President, and voted upon by the senate.

### **E. Leadership**

1. The Vice President shall preside over the Senate and shall cast a vote only when the Senate is equally divided.
2. The Senate shall elect a President Pro Tempore. Should the Vice President not be in attendance, or should the Vice President assume the Presidency, the President Pro Tempore shall preside over the Senate.

## **F. Powers and Duties**

1. The Senate shall receive a budget from the President during the first regular Senate meeting of each semester.
  - a. The Senate shall approve or reject the budget with 2/3 majority.
  - b. The President shall, in open Senate hearings during the first Senate meeting of the fall semester, make amendments to the budget until a 2/3 majority vote is obtained.
  - c. The Senate may approve funds within budget constraints only after the budget is approved.
2. The Senate shall have authority to pass legislation, amend the Constitution and create Bylaws.
  - a. At least a 3/4 majority must vote in favor of Amending the Constitution.
  - b. At least a 2/3 majority must vote in favor of adding a Bylaw.
3. The Senate shall conduct investigations of alleged wrong doing by the Judiciary.
  - a. At least a 3/4 majority must vote in favor of removal of a member of the Judiciary.

## **G. Bills**

1. Bills shall be passed by a majority vote of the Senate and shall be sent to the President for approval.
2. The President shall have the power to approve or veto a bill.
3. Should the President fail to sign or veto a bill within 10 business days, a 2/3 majority of the Senate may override the veto.

## **ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES**

### **A. Standing Committees:**

1. A Finance Committee shall be formed and maintained as set forth in Article IX of this document.
2. An Elections Committee shall be formed and maintained.
  - a. The Elections Committee shall be responsible for soliciting names for elections and appointments.
  - b. The Senate shall direct the Elections Committee, the Election Committee shall be made up of three Senators and the Dean of Graduate Studies.
3. Other standing committees shall be formed as the Senate sees fit.
  - a. The Senate shall decide which committees are necessary.
  - b. A standing committee may be formed by 2/3 majority of the Senate.
4. Standing Committees shall be composed of Senators.
5. Committee members and Committee Chairs shall be appointed by the Vice President and affirmed by a majority vote of the Senate.
6. Responsibilities
  - a. Provide a monthly written report to the Senate.
  - b. Other duties directed by the Senate in writing.

### **B. Ad-Hoc Committees:**

1. Ad-hoc committees shall be created either by the President or by a majority vote of the Senate.

2. Membership
  - a. Committee members shall be appointed by the President.
  - b. All Committees must include at least one Senator as a member.
  - c. The Committee Chair shall be decided amongst committee members.
3. Committees created by the Senate shall dissolve upon the completion of duties prescribed by the Senate.
4. Committees created by the President shall dissolve at the end of the term of the President that created it.

## **ARTICLE VIII. JOINT COMMITTEE**

### **A. Membership**

The committee shall be composed of three Senators from AGS & three senators from ASNMHU.

### **B. Procedures**

1. Coordinate shared programs with ASNMHU.
2. All other procedures will be defined by the Senate.
3. Joint Committee members will attend ASNMHU meetings (as needed) in order to further promote the well being of New Mexico Highlands University.
4. Committee chair shall alternate between every meeting of the ASNMHU & AGS.

## **ARTICLE IX. FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **A. Membership**

1. The committee shall be composed of three Senators and the Treasurer.
2. The Treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee and vote only in the event of a tie.
3. The President Pro Tempore may not be a member of the Finance Committee.

### **B. Procedures**

1. Funding bills can be proposed by any member of AGS with the sponsorship of a Senator from that member's college.
2. Sponsors shall introduce all funding bills to the Finance Committee.
  - a. Copies of the funding bill shall be distributed to Finance Committee members.
  - b. The sponsor of the bill shall give a presentation to the committee not to exceed fifteen minutes in length on the proposed funding bill.
  - c. The sponsor can request ten additional minutes with the approval of the Finance Committee Chair.
  - d. Each committee member may ask up to five questions of the funding bill sponsor.
3. A decision shall be made immediately following questioning.
  - a. The sponsor shall be excused from the proceedings while the committee deliberates.
  - b. The Committee shall take no more than thirty minutes to take action on funding the bill.

- c. The funding bill representative shall be called back and informed of the action taken.
4. The Finance Committee shall forward its recommendation on all funding bills considered to the sponsor by the senate for action.
5. Finance Committee notes shall be made available to the Senate and appended to the Senate meeting minutes.
6. All approved funding bills must be approved by a majority vote of the Senate.
7. The Treasurer shall be charged with maintaining information about current budget constraints and communicating those to the President, Vice President, and Senate Pro Tempore.
8. The Senate shall not consider funding bills that are proposed in excess of available budget funds.
9. Funds that are left over at the end of the academic year in excess of expenditures shall be rolled over.

## **ARTICLE X. APPROPRIATIONS**

AGS shall receive graduate student fees each semester to be distributed according to the approved AGS budget and through funding bills passed by the Senate or Finance Committee during each semester.

## **ARTICLE XI. MEETINGS**

All AGS meetings shall be subject to the Open Meetings Act of New Mexico.

### **A. Schedule**

1. An agenda shall be posted no less than twenty four hours before any scheduled AGS meeting.
2. The Executive Cabinet shall meet twice per month at a time of their own choosing.
3. The Senate shall meet twice a month and each meeting will not adjourn until all immediate business is concluded.
4. Committee members shall schedule committee meetings.

### **B. Quorums**

1. At least 2/3 of the Senators are required to be present to conduct business.
2. At least fifty percent of a committee's members shall constitute a quorum.

### **C. Minutes**

1. The Secretary or a designated replacement shall take detailed minutes at all AGS meetings.
2. Minutes from the previous meeting shall be approved before conducting any business at all AGS meetings.

### **D. Procedure**

Robert Rules of Order will be followed unless specifically stated otherwise in this document.

## **ARTICLE XII. ELECTION RULES**

### **A. Election**

1. A President and a Vice President from each of the colleges listed under Article VI, shall be elected by the most votes cast by AGS members casting ballots.
2. Twelve Senators, two from each college listed under Article VI shall be elected by the members of AGS from that school.
3. The AGS shall adopt the election procedures of ASNMHU for at least the first year of operation.
4. The Election Committee shall propose future action and amendments to this section.

**B. Representation of Undecided Majors**

1. AGS members not belonging to a represented college shall be allowed to choose a college to represent them until such a time that they become affiliated with a college as defined by the Graduate School.
2. AGS members not belonging to a represented college shall be allowed to choose which college to vote in during the balloting process.

**C. Terms of Office**

1. Each elected Executive officer and member of the Senate shall be elected for a term of one year.
2. All appointed officers shall serve a term commencing at the time of appointment and shall serve the remainder of the vacated term.

**ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS AND RATIFICATION**

**A. Amendments**

These By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Senate by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.

**B. Ratification**

This Constitution shall supersede all previous constitutions.

*Approval:*

**Voted and approved by the ASNMHU and the office the ASNMHU President**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jesse A. Lopez, President

**Voted by the New Mexico Highlands University Student Body**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Margaret Gonzales, Chair Student Elections

**Approved by NMHU Board of Regents**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Javier Gonzales, Chair

