

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION,
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS LOCAL #6290, AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF LABOR – CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL
ORGANIZATIONS**

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Temple University Graduate Students' Association (TUGSA/AFT/AFL-CIO), are committed to the principles of democracy, fair employee-employer relations, and social justice on campus and beyond. Thus, as graduate employees at Temple University, we claim our right to participate in making decisions that affect our lives and communities, and therefore exercise our right to collective bargaining. The union and concerted action of graduate employees shall generate due respect for our labor and, moreover, ensure better working conditions for all of us. Establishing a collective bargaining relationship with the union will enable the University to realize its historic mission as a public institution to provide a high quality education to the City of Philadelphia's diverse constituencies. We shall do everything in our power to realize this vision and stand in solidarity with all parties who are similarly committed.

Article One: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Temple University Graduate Students' Association, hereafter known as TUGSA.

Article Two: Purpose and Goals

The purposes of this organization shall be the following:

1. *Collective Bargaining:* To promote the welfare of the membership and to provide a voice in addressing grievances.
2. *Education:* To promote quality instruction and research and to advance Temple University's mission as an inclusive public institution.
3. *Social Justice:* To cooperate with other working people on campus and beyond in order to promote social justice and increase access to higher education.
4. *Solidarity and Equality:* To cooperate among ourselves, support each other in our struggles, and to ensure that the success of each depends upon the success of all.

Article Three: Membership

1. All powers of this organization shall be vested in the membership.
2. All graduate assistants at Temple University employed in a bargaining unit recognized or proposed shall be eligible for full membership status in TUGSA.
3. All graduate students at Temple University who have been employed and are eligible to be again employed in a bargaining unit recognized or proposed shall be eligible for inactive membership status in TUGSA.
4. All graduate students at Temple University who are not employed within a bargaining unit recognized or proposed shall be eligible for associate membership status in TUGSA.
5. No-one eligible for membership in this organization shall be denied membership for any reason. Membership is open to all persons without regard to sex, race, age, national origin or citizenship, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, disability, social status, marital status, Vietnam Era and special disabled veteran status, or HIV status.
6. Membership shall be subject to dues and other criteria as set forth in the union's by-laws.

Article Four: Affiliation

TUGSA shall be affiliated with the following organizations:

1. the American Federation of Teachers (AFT);
2. the Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers (PaFT);
3. the Philadelphia AFL-CIO Central Labor Council;
4. the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO; and
5. Job with Justice

Article Five: Election of Officers

1. Officers shall be elected no later than March 31. Terms of office shall be from June 1 to May 31. The organization will elect the following officers:
 - A. President
 - B. Vice-President
 - C. Director of Organization
 - D. Director of Community Outreach
 - E. Secretary

F. Treasurer

2. To be eligible for office a person must be either
 - A. a full member in good standing of the organization for a period of three months prior to the date of election, or
 - B. an inactive member in good standing who has been employed within a bargaining unit within the previous 12 months.
3. The Elections Committee shall conduct all general and special elections and referenda of the organization.
 - A. The Elections Committee shall consist of five volunteer full or inactive members in good standing.
 - B. Any member of the Elections Committee nominated for or seeking office must vacate their position.
4. The Elections Committee shall determine the time and manner of the election in accordance with the Constitution and in such a way determined to insure maximum participation.
5. Thirty (30) days prior to the date of the election the Elections Committee shall notify all members of the opening of nominations for offices to be filled and of the date, time, and place of the election via first class U.S. mail to the members' last known home address and email to the members' last known email address.
6. Any full or inactive member may nominate candidates. The candidate must then submit to the Elections Committee a petition containing the signatures of five percent (5%) of the membership, or fifteen (15) members, whichever, is less. Said petitions must be submitted seven (7) days prior to the date of the election.
7. The elections shall be by secret ballot.
8. Full members and inactive members in good standing are eligible to vote.
9. The ballots shall be tabulated by the Elections Committee and a majority of the ballots cast shall determine the outcome of the election. In the absence of a majority the Elections Committee shall conduct a run-off election between the two candidates who have received the most votes for the office in question. The run-off election will be subject to all the procedures for a regular election specified in the Constitution.
10. Challenges and objections to the election must be submitted in writing, with a statement providing reasons and facts, to the Elections Committee within seven (7) days of the count. The Elections Committee shall issue its written opinion regarding the objections no later than ten (10) days after receipt of such objections.

11. The election results will be published and distributed to the membership within thirty days of the count. All election materials, including the ballots, will be kept in a secure location determined by the Elections Committee for one year.
12. The Executive Board will have the power to appoint persons to temporarily fill vacancies in its membership. Any such appointees must then be approved by a vote at the next General Membership Meeting. In the event that an Executive Board appointee is not approved by the membership, a special election will be held and will follow all the election procedures in the Constitution.
13. A recall petition signed by thirty percent (30%) of the membership stating specific reasons shall be sufficient to require the Elections Committee to conduct a recall election of any office specified in the petition under the procedures in Sections Four through Nine of this article.
14. In any situation in which there is a conflict between this Article and the AFT Constitution's requirement of compliance with Title IV of the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA), the AFT Constitution will prevail.

Article Six: Executive Offices and Duties

1. President
 - A. One President shall be nominated and elected by the General Membership to serve a one year term.
 - B. The President shall oversee all official business of the Executive Board and the union at large.
 - C. The President shall be responsible for the following duties:
 - i. Oversees all external relationships relating to TUGSA:
 - a. Act as liaison between AFT National, AFT Pennsylvania and Philadelphia AFL-CIO superiors and the union;
 - b. Attending (at least monthly) meetings with (1) Philadelphia AFL-CIO (2) Temple Association of University Professionals (TAUP) and (3) Alliance of Graduate Employees Local (AGEL);
 - c. Representing TUGSA at AFT National, AFT Pennsylvania, Philadelphia AFL-CIO and/or AGEL conferences;
 - d. Serving as official spokesperson for TUGSA to the media and the community at large;
 - ii. Establishing Annual Strategic Plan (summer) with Executive Board, which outlines yearly goals and plans for the union;

- iii. Establishing agendas for and leading Executive Board meetings and Semiannual (fall/spring) Planning Retreats;
- iv. Reviews budget w/Treasurer and is cosigner w/Treasurer on all organizational financial accounts;
- v. Responsible for ultimate supervision and semiannual evaluation of all salaried staff (e.g. Staff Organizer, New Member Recruiter, etc.);
- vi. Leads Contract Negotiation Team as established under Article Thirteen;
- vii. Responsible for ultimate oversight of term-end reports that provide for orderly transition.

2. Vice-President

- A. One Vice-President shall be nominated and elected by the General Membership to serve a one-year term.
- B. The Vice-President shall assist the President in the oversight of the Executive Board and the union at large.
- C. The Vice-President shall be responsible for the following duties:
 - i. Oversees all internal relationships and processes relating to TUGSA:
 - a. Manages the grievance process including all associated paperwork;
 - b. Provides counsel and develops strategy on non-grievance related issues (e.g. academic matters);
 - c. Attends meetings with Temple University Human Resources;
 - d. Acts as liaison between Executive Board members (inc. respective committees);
 - ii. Assists President with duties
 - a. Serves as Acting President in the event President is indisposed, resigns or is removed;
 - b. Attends (at least monthly) meetings with Philadelphia AFL-CIO, TAUP and AGEL if President is unable to attend;
 - c. Represents TUGSA at conferences if President is unable to attend;
 - iii. Cosigns w/Treasurer on all organizational financial accounts;
 - iv. Responsible for the ultimate supervision and evaluation of all appointment/contracted staff;

- v. Drafts term end reports and assists President in providing for an orderly transition.

3. Director of Organization

- A. The Director of Organization shall be nominated and elected by the General Membership.
- B. The Director of Organization shall be responsible for carrying out and delegating all organizing efforts, and for retaining and expanding union membership.
- C. The Director of Organization shall have the following duties:
 - i. Recruiting and recommending Department Stewards to the Executive Board for appointment;
 - a. overseeing department Stewards and department stewards in organizing efforts;
 - b. chairing stewards council meetings, planning organizing agendas, and, as deemed necessary by the executive board, planning other membership-related meetings and events.
 - c. working with the treasurer and staff organizers in keeping and updating member records;
 - d. holding regular meetings with the part-time staff organizer to gauge organizing progress and coordinate efforts among the staff organizer, the director of organization and the stewards.
 - ii. Coordinating the enforcement of the contract
 - iii. Scheduling and holding three office hours per week when classes are in session during the regular academic year: at least 1.5 office hours per week should be spent organizing in departments.
 - iv. Having oversight responsibilities for committees as assigned by the Executive Board, and recommending the officers of such bodies to the Executive Board for appointment.
 - v. Drafting a term-end report that provides for an orderly transition.

4. Director of Community Outreach

- A. The Director of Community Outreach shall be nominated and elected by the General Membership.

- B. The Director of Community Outreach shall be responsible for carrying out and delegating all of TUGSA's relationships with student, faculty and other employee organizations on campus, as well as with social justice oriented community organizations around Philadelphia
- C. The Director of Community Outreach shall have the following duties:
 - i. meeting regularly with representatives of other campus and community organizations to stay well-informed of important labor and community activities happening at Temple and in North Philadelphia;
 - ii. meeting regularly with TUGSA members to seek guidance with respect to the types of campus and community activism in which the membership would like to see TUGSA involved;
 - iii. recruiting TUGSA members to participate in TUGSA's community outreach activities;
 - iv. sending regular updates to the membership concerning TUGSA-sponsored campus and community events;
 - v. attending campus and community events sponsored by other organizations as regularly as possible;
 - vi. planning and organizing a TUGSA-sponsored social and/or educational event specifically targeted to attracting members of the greater Temple/North Philadelphia community beyond the TUGSA membership (at least once per school year);
 - vii. scheduling and holding three office hours per week when classes are in session during the regular academic year: at least 1.5 office hours per week should be spent attending meetings of campus and/or community groups or meeting with leaders of campus and/or community groups;
 - viii. having oversight responsibilities for outreach committees as assigned by the Executive Board, and recommending the officers of such bodies to the Executive Board for appointment.

5. Secretary

- A. The Secretary will be nominated and elected by the general membership.
- B. The Secretary acts as the main communications and record-keeping officer for all union business.
- C. The Secretary shall have the following duties:
 - i. preparing, with the Director of Organization, all general membership meeting

agendas;

- ii. keeping records and minutes at all Executive Board meetings, Leadership Council meetings, and General Membership meetings;
- iii. overseeing newsletters and memoranda to general membership;
- iv. working in conjunction with the President in organizing external communications;
- v. reporting all necessary information and conclusions from union meetings to the membership and bargaining unit;
- vi. being responsible for information posted on official union boards;
- vii. performing duties of office as required by the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act;
- viii. scheduling and holding three office hours per week when classes are in session during the regular academic year;
- ix. having oversight responsibilities for the communication committee as assigned by the Executive Board, and recommending the officers of such bodies to the Executive Board for appointment; and
- x. drafting a term-end report that provides for an orderly transition.

6. Treasurer

- A. The Treasurer will be nominated and elected by the general membership.
- B. The Treasurer is the chief fiscal officer who will maintain records of revenues, expenditures, and budgets.
- C. The Treasurer shall have the following duties:
 - i. overseeing the collection and investment of dues;
 - ii. preparing, with the counsel of the President, a yearly fiscal budget to be approved by Executive Board;
 - iii. co-signing with either the President or Vice-President all instruments for the disbursement of funds;
 - iv. paying dues to affiliates in order to maintain charter;
 - v. maintaining records of dues-paying members and conferring with the Director of Organization on updating all membership records;

- vi. arranging for an independent audit of finances of the organization annually and making available the same to the Executive Board, Leadership Council, and membership;
- vii. performing duties of office as required by the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act;
- viii. scheduling and holding three office hours per week when classes are in session during the regular academic year;
- ix. having oversight responsibilities for committees as assigned by the Executive Board, and recommending the officers of such bodies to the Executive Board for appointment; and
- x. drafting a term-end report that provides for an orderly transition.

Article Seven: Appointed Positions

1. Sexual Harassment Officer

- A. One TUGSA Sexual Harassment Officer shall be appointed by the TUGSA Executive Board to serve a one-year term concurrent with the incoming Executive Board beginning June 1st.
- B. The Officer shall be appointed in the preceding spring term through an application process which advertises the position's role and responsibilities.
- C. The individual will receive a stipend as established by the Executive Board and agreed upon by the appointee. Upon successful completion of all responsibilities, the Officer will be awarded the stipend in two parts: one half at the six-month mark and the second half at the twelve-month mark.
- D. The TUGSA Sexual Harassment Officer shall be responsible for the following duties:
 - i. Complete eight (8) hours of training with the University Title IX coordinator over the summer months on topics including, but not limited to, (1) Title IX reporting process and procedures, (2) University sexual harassment policy, (3) federal/state/local laws related to workplace sexual harassment, (4) University Sexual Misconduct Policy, and (5) communication, sensitivity, and privacy training.
 - ii. Offer emotional support and encouragement to graduate employees who have experienced sexual harassment by confidently explaining the Title IX reporting procedure as well as follow up with said individuals to ensure campus resources are accessible.
 - iii. Work with University Title IX Coordinator and TUGSA Staff Organizer to develop and organize two trainings within the first three weeks of the fall and spring semesters designed to inform graduate employees of their rights and responsibilities. Work with

Title IX Coordinator to organize department-specific trainings.

- iv. Coordinate a campaign to encourage harassment reporting using media (e.g. internet, flyers, op-eds in *The Temple News*, film, etc.) as well as design (or update existing) literature aimed at educating graduate employees regarding sexual harassment and reporting.
- v. When appropriate and with the consent of the reporting party, work with TUGSA and other campus organizations to coordinate collective action.

Article Eight: Executive Board

1. The Executive Board shall be comprised of the elected President, Vice-President, Director of Organization, Director of Community Outreach, Secretary, and Treasurer.
2. During the academic year the Executive Board shall meet twice per month.
3. Special meetings of the Executive Board can be convened at the request of any two of the elected officers.
4. The collective responsibilities of the Executive Board shall be as follows:
 - A. Coordinating and overseeing the implementation of the Annual Plan;
 - B. Approving the annual fiscal budget;
 - C. Creating and/or dissolving standing and/or ad hoc committees and assigning elected officers to have oversight responsibilities for such committees;
 - D. Approving committee chairs and Chief Stewards as recommended by the designated elected officers;
 - E. Calling for, scheduling, and planning meetings of the Leadership Council and General Membership; and
 - F. Responding to emergencies, problems, and/or any other issues, relating to union business, otherwise not explicitly noted in this Constitution.
5. All decisions of the Executive Board shall be determined by a majority vote of the elected leaders, except where otherwise noted in the Constitution.
6. Ultimate responsibility for all affairs of the Union resides with the Executive Board, who must take all necessary steps for the continuation of the union and the benefit of the membership.

Article Nine: Committees

1. Committees shall be created or dissolved by the action of the General Membership at a membership meeting or by the Executive Board.
2. Committees shall implement the policies of TUGSA as determined by the membership.
3. Committees shall be under the administrative supervision of the identified officers or the Executive Board and finally accountable to the membership.
4. There shall be six Standing Committees:
 - A. Organizing Committee: This committee concerns itself with the activities and events involved in organizing our membership, recruiting new members, and promoting the Union to potential new members.
 - B. Social Activities Committee: This committee concerns itself with the activities and events that promote good spirit and good social relations among our membership
 - C. Political Action and Solidarity Committee: This committee concerns itself with activities involved in providing support for the political activities that the Union itself initiates or those activities initiated by our affiliated Union. It also promotes solidarity with other Unions and working people by supporting their struggles and needs when called upon to do so.
 - D. Professional Development Committee: This committee concerns itself with developing and carrying out activities in the interests of our membership that promote their development as professional teachers and future academics in their chosen fields.
 - E. Membership Committee: This committee concerns itself with education the membership with benefit issues through the AFT Plus program and in assisting members in taking advantage of the benefits of membership to which they are entitled.
 - F. Communications Committee: This committee concerns itself with distributing literature, hanging flyers, to maintaining the TUGSA website or insuring that it is maintained on at least a monthly basis, and other activities, which communicate the existence of the Union to our community, or the initiatives we are supporting or undertaking.

Article Ten: Leadership Council

1. The Leadership Council shall be comprised of the Executive Board, appointed committee chairs, Chief Stewards, and any other designees of the Executive Board.
2. The Leadership Council shall meet at the discretion of the Executive Board, by the request of five (5) Leadership Council members, and/or at such times as are necessary to assess the progress of the Annual Plan.

3. The Leadership Council shall make policy recommendations to the Executive Board and/or the General Membership as it deems appropriate.
4. The collective responsibilities of the Leadership Council shall be as follows:
 - A. Creating and adopting an Annual Plan which outlines the intended goals and objectives of the union for the upcoming academic year; and
 - B. Assessing the progress and implementation of the Annual Plan.
5. All decisions of the Leadership Council shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

Article Eleven: Departmental Stewards

1. The Director of Organization, in concert with Chief Stewards, shall seek to designate one volunteer steward for each twelve members or potential members in a department.
2. Stewards shall be the union's core activists, and shall have four critical responsibilities:
 - A. recruiting colleagues to become members of the union;
 - B. representing the interests of members and colleagues in the business of the union;
 - C. keeping members and colleagues aware and informed of the activities of the union; and
 - D. encouraging active participation in union business and events among colleagues.
 - E. Distribute information, newsletters, surveys and other materials provided by the Communication committees.

Article Twelve: General Membership Meetings

1. There shall be one or more General Membership meetings held annually, to be called at the discretion of the Executive Board or Leadership Council. General Membership meetings shall be announced at least 14 days in advance by the Secretary, except in the case of emergencies as declared by the Executive Board.
2. Special meetings of the membership may be called by a petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the union's full members.
3. Membership meetings shall have the power to determine organizational policy, except that the ratification of contracts and the authorization and termination of strikes shall be subject to the provisions of Article Twelve.

Article Thirteen: Contract Negotiation Team

1. The Executive Board shall oversee the formation of a Contract Negotiation Team (CNT), which will solely represent the union in contract negotiations with the University.
2. The CNT shall be established in the spring term prior to the start of contract negotiations the following fall.
3. The Executive Board will solicit requests for representation on the CNT from the bargaining unit via an established selection process.
4. The CNT shall be composed of a maximum of eight (8) individuals and must conform to the following requirements:
 - A. The President and Staff Organizer must serve on the CNT along with an AFT representative;
 - B. No more than two (2) bargaining unit members from the same college/school may serve on the CNT;
 - C. At least one (1) RA and one (1) TA must serve on the CNT;
 - D. At least one (1) international student must serve on the CNT;
5. The Executive Board shall strive to establish a CNT that has maximum representation possible in terms of gender, sexual identity, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc.
6. The CNT will be presented to the bargaining unit at the first general meeting of the year of contract negotiations.
7. In the event contract negotiations extend past the end of the current Board's term, the CNT will remain in place to negotiate the next collective bargaining agreement until ratification.

Article Fourteen: Contract Ratification and Strike Authorization

1. Voting upon the acceptance or rejection of a collective bargaining agreement and the authorization and termination of strike action shall take place in such manner as determined by the Executive Board to ensure maximum participation.
2. In such votes, voting rights shall be limited to union members contemporaneously employed within the bargaining unit affected.

Article Fifteen: Dues

1. The union will establish its dues structure at a General Membership Meeting.
2. The union will charge no initiation fees.

3. The dues structure must both cover affiliation costs and allow a majority of the dues to be kept at the local level.
4. Dues will increase in the event of mandated increases in required affiliation fees.
5. Special assessments for specific purposes may be levied by a vote at a General Membership Meeting.

Article Sixteen: Modification

1. This Constitution may be amended. A petition, containing the proposed changes, signed by twenty-five percent (25%) of the full members or a four-fifths majority of the Executive Board shall be circulated to the membership at least two weeks in advance of either a regularly scheduled or special General Membership meeting.
2. Following debate and discussion at the appropriate General Membership meeting, there shall be a hand-count vote taken on the proposed modification. A two-thirds count of those present and voting shall be required for passage.

Article Seventeen: Availability

The Secretary or a designee shall make available upon request a copy of this Constitution to any member of the organization.

Article Eighteen: Internal Grievance Committee

1. A committee of three to five volunteers, designed to solve internal grievances between members of TUGSA, shall convene on an as needed basis. The committee shall be called the Internal Grievance Committee.
2. Should a member of TUGSA choose to file a grievance against another member, they must complete an internal grievance form, giving the following information: date, time of incident, location of incident, parties involved, specific comments made by both parties and requested method of resolution.
3. The Internal Grievance Committee will have a maximum of two weeks to meet and provide a written response to the grievant. If necessary, a second meeting including both parties involved in the incident shall be held afterward.
4. If the individual being filed against is an officer of TUGSA, he or she may be removed from office as per Article 5, Section 13. If removed from office by a vote, they will not be allowed to run for any other leadership position in TUGSA in the future.
5. If the nature of the grievance may affect the entire bargaining unit and is deemed severe, others in the organization who are not in the committee will also be involved in the resolution.

THE BYLAWS OF TUGSA, AFT LOCAL #6290, AFL-CIO

Article One: Interim Officer Elections

1. Interim Officers will be nominated and elected at a General Membership meeting May 7, 2002. Terms of office shall be May 7, 2002 until a special election to be held within the first 45 days of the fall semester. The organization will elect the following officers:
 - A. (2) Co-Presidents
 - B. Director of Organization
 - C. Treasurer
 - D. Secretary
2. To be eligible for office a person must be either a full member in good standing of the organization for a period of three months prior to the date of election or be an inactive member in good standing who has been employed within a bargaining unit within the previous 12 months.
3. Confidential ballots shall be prepared by volunteers. The ballots shall be tabulated by the volunteers and a majority of the ballots cast shall determine the outcome of the election.
4. The results of the election will be published in 30 days.
5. A special election will be held within the first 45 days of the semester. With the exception of scheduling, this election will follow all the election procedures in the Constitution. The officers elected in this election shall serve until May 31, 2003.
6. Effective May 1, 2003, all elections for officers and terms of office will comply with the timetables defined in Article Five of the Constitution.

Article Two: Dues

1. Effective June 1, 2004, the dues for full members of this organization shall be equal to 1.65% of an employee's salary, plus mandated increases in required affiliation fees.
2. Full members must authorize in writing the deduction of dues from monthly pay by signing forms generated by TUGSA for that purpose.
3. Effective September 3, 2002, the dues for inactive and associate members of this organization shall be equal to fifty dollars (\$50) per annum, plus mandated increases in required affiliation fees, payable in semestral installments.
4. Effective August 28, 2018, the dues for inactive and associate members of this organization shall be equal to one hundred dollars (\$100) per annum, plus mandated increases in required affiliation fees, payable in semestral installments.

Article Three: Oath of Office

1. Each newly elected officer must swear or affirm the following oath at the first event where members of the General Membership convene. The oath must be restated at the first General Membership meeting convened by the new Executive Board:

I, _____, swear or affirm to uphold the constitutional duties of my office. My duties derive from our membership and it is my responsibility to consider the needs of our membership throughout the term of my office.