

# CONSTITUTION OF THE HOUSE OF THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

Princeton University

## I. Name

This organization shall be known as the House of the Graduate College, Princeton University, henceforth referred to as the House.

## II. Purpose

The purpose of the House is to provide services designed to benefit the individual members of the House, to provide and maintain facilities for the benefit of the resident members of the House, and to represent the concerns of the resident members of the House to the various administrative offices and bodies of Princeton University.

## III. Membership of the House

- A. All Princeton University graduate students who reside in the Graduate College or Annexes as defined by Graduate Student Housing are members of the House, henceforth referred to as “resident members”.
- B. Graduate students with university housing contracts other than at the Graduate College and Annexes automatically become non-resident members of the House upon payment of dues as outlined in Article V below, except to the extent one opts out of the non-resident membership at their request. Such members shall henceforth be referred to as 'non-resident members'. Any other graduate student of Princeton University (including post-enrolled students in their first year of such status) can apply for non-resident membership, and upon payment of dues as outlined in Article V below, becomes a member of the House. Such members shall also be referred to as 'non-resident members'. The Committee reserves the right to refuse membership or suspend the privileges of membership to any person who is not a resident member upon consultation with the Graduate School. Non-resident members shall have access to such facilities of the House as the Committee may direct.
- C. Residents of Wyman House (namely the Dean of the Graduate School and spouse/partner) and Graduate School Staff as designated by the Dean, upon payment of dues as outlined in Article V below, becomes a member of the House, and such members shall henceforth be referred to as ‘non-resident members’.
- D. The Committee reserves the right to refuse membership or suspend the privileges of membership to any person who is found to be in violation of the community standards in section IV.

## IV. Community standards

All members of the House are expected to abide by a set of community standards, as outlined in *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities* and embodied in the core values of respect and civility.

The behavioral expectations are as follows:

- A. Use positive and productive means to manage conflict without resorting to violent or abusive behavior. If a situation escalates, community members are expected to intervene (e.g. direct, delegate, or distract) on another person's behalf and report any criminal activity to the proper authorities.
- B. All members of the House should be afforded the same respect, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, appearance, or disabilities. Slurs, acts of harassment, and unwanted contact of a sexual nature, will be considered particularly egregious.
- C. Shared spaces, including Common Rooms, the Coffee House, the Debasement Bar, and the kitchens, should be treated in a respectful manner and left clean after use.
- D. Private property should be respected. Theft and vandalism are not tolerated.

#### V. Membership fees

- A. The Committee shall set membership fees consistent with the objectives of the House, subject to approval by the Graduate School.
  - i. All resident members of the House shall be required to pay a residential membership fee.
  - ii. Non-resident members shall be required to pay a non-residential membership fee. The non-residential membership fee must be not less than 10% of the residential membership fee. Non-resident members may, upon payment of the residential membership fee, enjoy the use of all facilities normally available only to resident members.
- B. The House Committee shall refund a prorated portion of the fee, if a membership is revoked.
- C. Payment and refunding of fees are administered through the Graduate School and the Graduate Student.

#### VI. Governing Body

- A. The governing body of the House is the Graduate College House Committee, henceforth referred to as the Committee.
- B. An individual must be a current resident or non-resident member of the House to run for and serve on the Committee.
- C. Resident members are preferred candidates for all Committee positions. This means that if there is a resident member candidate for any positions, non-resident members will not be eligible as candidates for that position.
- D. Eligible candidates for the two Bar Czar positions are limited to current Debasement Bar leadership.
- E. The objective of the Committee is to facilitate the fulfillment of the purpose of the House.
- F. The Committee is responsible for the interpretation and enforcement of this Constitution.

## VII. Officers of the Graduate College House Committee

Officers shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution. Officers shall be expected to provide for the continuation of their services during the summer. Members of the Committee shall not be paid for serving on the Committee.

- A. The Committee shall consist solely of fourteen voting officers: Chair, Assistant Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, two Social Activities Officers, two Special Events Chairs, two Bar Czars, two Regular Facilities Officers, and two Coffee House Manager.
- B. The Committee retains ultimate authority over all duties and responsibilities of the officers. Besides performing the specific duties of their office, each Committee member shall:
  - i. Maintain written records of their Committee activities and written records of expenditures.
  - i. Submit to the Committee, once per semester, projected expenditures for their office for the semester.
  - ii. Seek approval by the Committee for intended expenditures which exceed a limit determined by the Committee.
  - iii. **Perform other duties as determined by the Committee.**
  - iv. Pass on relevant information to the incoming Committee at the end of their term by participating in a transition meeting and as requested.
- C. Office-specific duties are listed below. This section of the Constitution can be amended by a two thirds majority of the Committee.

**The Chair** shall:

- a) Be the executive officer of the Committee and authorize all delegations of authority within the Committee.
- b) Preside over meetings of the House and the Committee.
- c) Act as spokesperson for the Committee in its relations with individuals and with other organizations.
- d) Procure holiday gifts for the staff.

**The Assistant Chair** shall:

- a) Assist the Chairperson with his or her duties.
- b) Serve as acting Chairperson and assume the responsibilities of the Chairperson in the event of her or his absence.
- c) Manage the Student Events Fund with the assistance of the Special Events Chairs.
- d) Assist the Treasurer with the timely completion of tax returns.

**The Chair and Assistant Chair** shall split the remaining leadership duties as they see fit:

- a) Serve as representative for the members of the House and the Committee to the University and act as liaison between the House and the following offices:

- i. Graduate Student Housing
  - ii. the APGA
  - iii. the Graduate Student Government
  - iv. the Graduate School
  - v. Building Services and the Foreman for the Graduate College
  - vi. the manager of the Graduate College Dining Hall
  - vii. other University committees as deemed appropriate by the Committee
- b) Manage and oversee internal house affairs including but not limited to:
- i. Assisting special events chairs with proctor hall parties.
  - ii. Sending out meeting reminders for house meetings.
  - iii. Making sure that each member of the committee is acting upon their duties.

**The Secretary shall:**

- a) Annually update a House handbook and publish it on the website.
- b) Take minutes of all meetings of the Committee and post minutes on the House web page within one week of the meeting.
- c) Maintain records from all committee meetings and all non-financial records of the House, both past and present.
- d) Publish a House newsletter at regular intervals or as deemed necessary by the Committee;
- e) Provide for newspaper and magazine subscriptions for resident members and conduct an annual poll to determine House periodical preferences.
- f) Maintain and update the House web page and social media accounts.

**The Social Activities Officers shall:**

- a) Organize weekly social hours.
- b) Organize screening of major sports and cultural events in collaboration with the Bar.
- c) Publicize the above events throughout the House. This includes but is not limited to email, social media, and fliers.
- d) Maintain a House Cultural Library including but not limited to DVDs, streaming subscriptions and board games.

**The Special Events Chairs shall:**

- a) Organize two dances in Procter Hall: one in the fall semester and one in the spring semester.
- b) Organize three summer social events.
- c) Publicize the above events throughout the House. This includes but is not limited to email, social media, and fliers.

- d) Assist with the Student Events Fund as directed by the Assistant Chair.

**The Bar Czars**, assisted by Debasement Bar leadership, shall:

- a) Manage all finances of the bar including the monthly remittance and quarterly filing of the NJ sales tax.
- b) Provide bimonthly financial updates to the Committee.
  - i. The Debasement bar is a subsidiary of the registered nonprofit the House of the Graduate College. This implies that the Committee is ultimately responsible for bar finances. To fulfill this responsibility, the Committee is empowered to make binding recommendations to the bar based on the financial updates.
- c) Submit an annual financial report to the Treasurer for the annual tax return.
- d) Order and stock all food and drink to be served at the bar.
- e) Maintain the physical space of the bar by:
  - i. Submitting facilities requests in a timely manner.
  - ii. Scheduling an annual health inspection.
  - iii. Updating décor.
  - iv. Ensure that the liquor license is renewed annually.
  - v. Hire, train and manage bar staff.
  - vi. Establish and enforce bar policies.
  - vii. Organize and publicize weekly events at the bar.
  - viii. Organize 1-2 large scale parties at the bar per semester.

**The Regular Facilities Officers** shall:

- a) Monitor the service and maintain laundry leasing contract with Mac-Gray.
- b) Purchase and maintain ice machines, photocopier, vacuum cleaners and other capital equipment in the Graduate College which are not solely and specifically the duty of the Bar Czars.
- c) Purchase, install and maintain audio/visual equipment of the House.
- d) Coordinate maintenance and repairs with University Facilities as needed.
- e) Provide for the maintenance supplies of the private-use kitchens in the Graduate College.
- f) Be responsible for the maintenance of the Music Room and any other such rooms designated for the use of the House by the Committee.

**The Coffee House Manager** shall:

- a) Manage all finances of the Coffee House.
- b) Submit a yearly financial report to the Treasurer for the purpose of tax preparation.

- c) Order and stock all food and drink to be served in the Coffee House.
- d) Hire, train and manage staff, organize and record salaries.
- e) Maintain the physical plant and equipment of the Coffee House.
- f) Maintain the financial records of the Coffee House.
- g) Organize at least 2 study breaks per semester.

**The Treasurer shall:**

- a) Manage the financial resources of the House (except for those of the Bar), maintain updated balances of all cash assets, and make quarterly reports on the budget to the Committee.
- b) Be responsible for arranging all payments of properly documented expenditures made by the Committee. Such payment must be made within two weeks of submission of the receipts, except as noted under d) and e) below.
- c) Ensure that any capital improvements or equipment purchased with House funds are located at the Graduate College.
- d) Oversee the budgets appropriated to Officers of the Committee. He or she may refuse an Officer reimbursement for expenses until the next meeting of the Committee only under the following conditions:
  - i. The Officer is exceeding his or her budget, or is not allocating sufficient funds approved in a new fiscal year for the subsequent Committee, and the amount of the excess exceeds \$100.
  - ii. The Officer was previously served written notice by the Treasurer of unforeseen changes in the amount or flow of anticipated income that require restrictions on or revisions to his or her budget, and the Officer violates the conditions specified in the notice.
  - iii. The expense is for an item or service (not approved in advance by the Committee) that is unrelated to the duties or mission of the position of the Officer.
  - iv. The expense is a gift or grant to an individual or organization, unless the amount is for services rendered at the Graduate College or unless it is specifically approved by the Committee.
  - v. Authorization or reimbursement of the expense, or use of the goods or services it provides, violates the terms of the non-profit tax status of the Committee.
  - vi. Authorization or reimbursement of the expense, or use of the goods or services it provides, violates local, state, or federal law, or recklessly exposes members of the Committee or residents of the House to criminal or civil proceedings.
  - vii. If the Treasurer invokes any of the above provisions to refuse authorization or payment, the Committee may override him or her with a majority vote of the full Committee; but the Treasurer's action shall remain in effect unless and until an override vote succeeds.

- e) Have the authority to delay (but not refuse) payments for up to 30 business days under the following conditions:
  - i. There are insufficient funds available for all outstanding charges or expenses.
  - ii. A deposit or transfer is needed first to maintain a minimum balance set by an outside bank or the University, and such a deposit or transfer can be made within 25 business days.
- f) Present an itemized financial report for the previous year to the House Committee during the Fall, which report shall be available to members of the House upon request.
- g) Maintain the financial records of the Committee, both past and present, and at the end of the each fiscal year have the books audited by two House members hired by the Committee, who are not officers of the Committee.
- h) File all financial reports required of the Committee and the House including IRS tax responsibilities.

*D. Selection of Officers*

- i. The fourteen officers shall be elected by the members of the House. Election of officers shall be conducted by secret ballot. Elections may be conducted electronically provided sufficient measures to protect against voting fraud.
- ii. A member shall be placed on the ballot if the House Committee receives a petition announcing his or her candidacy. The petition shall contain a statement specifying which office the candidate is running for and bear the names, signatures, and addresses of 30 resident members of the House. The Committee must receive all nominating petitions at least two days prior to the election of the officers. The Committee must also receive a written campaign statement from each candidate at least two days prior to the election. The Committee shall post campaign statements for inspection by members of the House.
- iii. Petitioning members must run for a specific office when campaigning and shall consent to the use of their name beside that office and no other on a secret ballot.
- iv. Election of officers shall take place within a month of the end of the Fall Break. The exact time and place shall be determined by the Committee. Members of the Committee not standing for election shall constitute an Election Committee and be responsible for the conduct of the election, the counting of ballots, and the announcement of results. If not at least three Committee members are available for the conduct of the election and the counting of ballots, the Committee shall appoint members of the House who are not standing for election to take on these responsibilities. The conduct of the election and the counting of ballots must be carried out by at least three members of the House, at least one of whom shall be a resident member.
- v. In the event of an unopposed race, voters shall have the opportunity to express approval or disapproval of the candidate for that office. If at least as many disapprovals as approvals are received, that office shall be considered unfilled.

- vi. In the event of a tie result for an office, the election for that position shall be re-held within one week, with only the candidates who jointly received the greatest number of votes appearing in the election. Should the second election result in a tie, the Committee shall choose a winner.
- vii. If the Committee receives, from a member of the House, a written complaint about the conduct of an election for one or more positions on the Committee, the current Committee shall decide (using the standard voting procedure for motions) whether to re-hold the election for one or more offices. In no case shall a current Committee member participate in such a vote if that member is running for any position in question. A re-held election must be held within one week of a Committee decision to re-hold the election.
- viii. In the event of an unfilled position in the Committee, the Committee announces the vacancy for at least two weeks. If no candidates come forward, the Committee can appoint a House member to fill the vacant position. If one candidate comes forward, the Committee may appoint that person. The appointed holder of the position shall have the same duties, rights and privileges as though she or he were elected to that position. In the event that there is more than one candidate, a special election shall be held, following the guidelines for normal elections.

#### *E. Tenure of Officers*

- i. Officers shall begin their tenure within two weeks following the election and shall terminate their tenure upon the installation of the new officers.
- ii. A member may terminate tenure on the Committee upon written notification at least 1 month in advance of his or her proposed termination date.

#### *F. Recall of Officers*

- i. Failure of a Committee member to carry out the responsibilities of his or her office as specified in this Constitution or nonattendance at three consecutive Committee meetings without Committee approval shall be considered grounds for recall. Recall requires a two-thirds vote of the full Committee. A recall vote shall also be initiated upon receipt by the Committee of a recall petition bearing the signatures of a number of members not less than twenty percent (20%) of the number of resident members of the House.

### VIII. Meetings of the House and Meetings of the Committee

House and Committee meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the standard rules of parliamentary procedure unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson. A motion shall be considered passed if more approvals than disapprovals are received except where this Constitution dictates otherwise.

#### *A. General Meetings of the House*

- i. There shall be at least one general meeting of the House each academic year.
- ii. The Committee may call a general meeting of the House at any time and must schedule such a meeting within one week after the receipt of a petition bearing the



signatures of a number of members not less than ten percent (10%) of the number of resident members of the House, calling for such a meeting.

- iii. No business may be conducted at a General Meeting of the House without the approval of the Committee, unless the nature of this business was specified in a petition calling for the meeting, with the exception of the recall of officers and the submission of Constitutional amendments, which shall be deemed in order, provided that a quorum of the House is present.
- iv. A Constitutional referendum may be approved by a General Meeting of the House, by a simple majority.
- v. A quorum of the House shall be a number of members equal to a majority of the total number of resident and non-resident members of the House, including a majority of resident members.

#### B. *Meetings of the Committee*

- i. Meetings of the Committee shall be scheduled by the Committee or called by the Chairperson, except as specified in the sections on meetings of the House or below. The meetings shall take place at the Graduate College.
- ii. A majority of the Committee members shall constitute a quorum of the Committee. In the event of need and/or unavailability of the Chairperson, a meeting of the Committee may be called by any two voting members of the Committee as long as each member is notified at least two days before the intended date and the Chair, Assistant Chair, Treasurer, or Secretary, is secured to preside.
- iii. A Committee member may appoint another member of the House to serve as proxy, provided that this is submitted in writing to the Chair; only resident members may serve as proxies. A quorum of the Committee may not be filled by a proxy vote.

#### IX. Graduate Student Affairs Administrator of the House

The Assistant Director of Residential Life shall serve as an advisor to the Committee. When appropriate, the Committee shall request his or her assistance in organizing cultural and social events for the benefit of the House and invite him or her to attend Committee meetings and provide advice. The Committee shall seek to meet at least once each year with the Associate Dean of the Graduate School for Student Life to discuss the performance of the resident administrator. The Committee shall seek an active role in the interview and hiring process for a new resident administrator.

In the event of a vacancy in the role of resident administrator, the Committee shall be empowered, in consultation with the Associate Dean, to select a University administrator to advise the Committee.

#### X. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments may be proposed in three ways:

- A. By the Committee.

- B. By the House upon receipt by the Committee of a petition bearing the proposed amendment and signed by a number of members not less than fifteen percent (15%) of the number of resident members of the House.
- C. By a vote at a General Meeting of the House.

Copies of the proposed amendment(s) shall be published at least one week prior to a vote, which shall occur during the academic year. The Committee shall appoint a Referendum Committee of three of its own number to supervise the referendum and report on the results. Amendments shall be incorporated in the Constitution if approved by a two-thirds majority of the members voting in a referendum and a simple majority of those resident members voting. A number of members, not less than twenty percent (20%) of the number of resident members of the House must participate in order for the results to be valid. The referendum shall be held either at a House meeting or by ballot; the Committee shall determine the manner of the referendum. The Referendum Committee shall be empowered to establish rules on the conduct of the election.

#### XI. Ratification

Ratification of a new Constitution shall require the approval of two-thirds of members voting in a referendum, as well as the approval of majority of resident members voting. A number of members, not less than twenty percent (20%) of the number of resident members of the House must participate in order for the results to be valid. The referendum shall be held in the same manner as a referendum on an amendment to this Constitution.

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Ratified February 12, 1998

Amendments:

- 1. Amended October 20, 1998 (creation of Events Chair, revising duties of Assistant Chair)
- 2. Amended January 20, 2000 (creation of Secretary, revising duties of Assistant Chair)
- 3. Amended February 16, 2000 (expansion of membership, revising duties of Secretary) - [Text, after amendment 3](#)
- 4,5,6. [Amended](#) February 28, 2001 (clarification of Officer duties toward nonresident members and nonresident members' eligibility to vote and hold Office, honorary membership, reducing number of General Meetings of the House) - [Text, after Amendments 4, 5, and 6](#)
- 7. [Amended](#) February 20, 2002 (empowerment of the Committee to establish and abolish temporary annexes) - [Text, after Amendment 7](#)
- 8,9,10. [Amended](#) January 20, 2005 (two Special Events Chairs instead of one Social Chair and the Events Chair, update to duties of Regular Facilities Officers, adopting gender-neutral language in Article VIII) - [Text, after Amendments 8, 9, and 10](#)
- 11. [Amended](#) October 21, 2007 (removal of honorary membership)
- 12. Amended March 9, 2015.
- 13. Amended Fall 2015 (III. C. inserted)

- 14. Amended March 2019
  - Section III B from/to:
    - Any other graduate student of Princeton University (including postenrolled students in their first year of such status), upon payment of dues as outlined in Article V below, becomes a member of the House, and such members shall henceforth be referred to as 'non-resident members'. The Committee reserves the right to refuse membership or suspend the privileges of membership to any person who is not a resident member for any reason. Non-resident members shall have access to such facilities of the House as the Committee may direct.
    - Graduate students with university housing contracts other than at the Graduate College and Annexes automatically become non-resident members of the House upon payment of dues as outlined in Article V below, except to the extent one opts out of the non-resident membership at their request. Such members shall henceforth be referred to as 'nonresident members'. Any other graduate student of Princeton University (including post-enrolled students in their first year of such status) can apply for non-resident membership, and upon payment of dues as outlined in Article V below, becomes a member of the House. Such members shall also be referred to as 'non-resident members'. The Committee reserves the right to refuse membership or suspend the privileges of membership to any person who is not a resident member upon consultation with the Graduate School. Non-resident members shall have access to such facilities of the House as the Committee may direct
  - Section VI from/to (on the Dbar Czars responsibilities)
    - Manage all finances of the bar
    - Manage all finances of the bar including the monthly remittance and quarterly filing of the NJ sales tax
  - Section VIII from/to
    - The Master, Residence Life Coordinator, or other resident student life administrator of the Graduate College shall serve as an advisor to the Committee. When appropriate, the Committee shall request his or her assistance in organizing cultural and social events for the benefit of the House and invite him or her to attend Committee meetings and provide advice. The Committee shall seek to meet at least once each year with the Associate Dean of the Graduate School for Student Life to discuss the performance of the resident administrator. The Committee shall seek an active role in the interview and hiring process for a new resident administrator. In the event of a vacancy in the role of resident administrator, the Committee shall be empowered, in consultation with the Associate Dean, to select a University administrator to advise the Committee.

- The Assistant Director of Residential Life shall serve as an advisor to the Committee. When appropriate, the Committee shall request his or her assistance in organizing cultural and social events for the benefit of the House and invite him or her to attend Committee meetings and provide advice. The Committee shall seek to meet at least once each year with the Associate Dean of the Graduate School for Student Life to discuss the performance of the resident administrator. The Committee shall seek an active role in the interview and hiring process for a new resident administrator. In the event of a vacancy in the role of resident administrator, the Committee shall be empowered, in consultation with the Associate Dean, to select a University administrator to advise the Committee.
- Delete all appearances of the Athletic Chair, since the GCHC discontinued this occupation.