

HIGSA 2014 Constitution & by-laws

Approved on April 27, 2014: President JM. Persánch; Vice-Presiendent Daniel Fonfría; Treasurer Fabricio Silva; Secretary -Resigned/Vacant

HIGSA 2014 CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section A. This organization shall be known as the Hispanic Studies Graduate Student Association, hereafter referred to as HIGSA.

Section B. The purpose of HIGSA shall be to serve as a forum for the graduate students to express their concerns to the faculty and chair of the Hispanic Studies Department.

Article II. Membership

Section A. Eligibility. HIGSA consists of graduate Hispanic Studies Department Active students. Active students are those who are taking graduate classes in the Hispanic Studies Department or enrolled in dissertation credits. It also includes part time students and students enrolled in exchange programs abroad.

Section B. There shall be one faculty advisor who will be the Director of Graduate Studies. He or she shall be an ex officio NO voting member of HIGSA.

Section C. Voting Rights

Voting shall be open to all members who have met and maintained membership requirements.

Article III. Meetings

Section A. HIGSA shall meet at least twice a semester, unless otherwise specified by the President.

Section B. HIGSA meetings will be conducted open doors. All HIGSA members are welcome to attend as observers. 10 minutes will be allotted for them to speak at the end of the session.

Article IV. Organization

Section A. HIGSA structure shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The president shall power to appoint standing committees and other committees as deemed necessary.

Section B. Duties and Responsibilities

B.1. The primary function of HIGSA shall be to plan and implement programs that benefit the Hispanic Studies Department of the University of Kentucky. Programming committees may be established, combined, or eliminated at the discretion of the membership. Special committees may be established on a temporary basis by the president when deemed necessary.

B.2. HIGSA shall determine, interpret, and revise the by-Laws and conduct other necessary business. It shall exercise all powers and duties in keeping with its authority not herein specifically assigned.

B.3. HIGSA will meet the new graduate students each Fall during departmental orientation, and will inform them about the organization by explaining the by-laws.

B.4. HIGSA is responsible for running the elections for next year new officials.

Article V. Officers

Section A. Duties and responsibilities of the President. The President shall have the following duties: to preside at all meetings of HIGSA; to be an ex-officio member of all standing committees; to be a member of the graduate committee of the Hispanic Studies Department; to call for elections to elect the next year officials; and to perform all other duties and exercise all powers in keeping with this office not herein specifically assigned.

Section B. Duties and responsibilities of the Vice President. The vice-president shall assume the duties of the President in the event of the absence of the president. He or she shall serve as coordinator of the activities of the standing committees, and serve as HIGSA Parliamentarian.

Section C. Duties and responsibilities of the Secretary. The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of all meetings and shall provide members with a copy of the minutes of each general meeting. The Secretary shall carry on all correspondence assigned by the President. The Secretary will send the minutes to the President and Vice President for them to share with all graduate students via GradHispanistas within a week.

Section D. Duties and responsibilities of the treasurer. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of the membership of HIGSA (by elaborating a Census of active members) and of all income and expenditures. The Treasurer shall also be in charge of making any requests of funds for HIGSA organized activities, and provide a financial report at the request of the president.

Section E. Duties and responsibilities of all the officers. They shall be required to attend meetings. Officers shall also perform all duties assigned to them by the President.

Article VI. Quorum

Section A. When HIGSA meets, a quorum shall consist of the majority of the full membership of HIGSA. In case of disagreement regarding a decision, voting (hands up) shall be taken. Should a draw occur, the President's vote would determine the final result.

Article VII. Amendments

Section A. Proposed amendments to the constitution must be submitted in writing to HIGSA at a regular or special meeting.

Section B. All proposed amendments must be read at two consecutive meetings of the members before a vote on the proposal can be taken.

Section C. Proposed amendments require two-thirds vote of HIGSA, from those votes cast, for approval. Amendments will be voted using a computer software or program that guarantees a fair election and anonymous vote for all, and also facilitates and protects the right to vote of those HIGSA members who cannot be present on campus during the process.

Section D. Vacancies

Vacancies of office should a vacancy occur on HIGSA, the President shall have the authority, upon approval of the membership, to temporarily fill the position until the end of the same academic year, at which time the membership will fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. Should a vacancy occur in the office of president, and the Vice President does not wish to assume the presidency, the Vice President shall hold an election for a new President from within the organization.

Article VIII. Elections

Section A

A.1. Officer Eligibility. Any student in the Hispanic Studies graduate school may be considered a candidate for HIGSA provided that he or she: (a) is currently enrolled as an active student at the University of Kentucky, (b) is currently in good standing with the University of Kentucky, and (c) is physically present at UK throughout the time he/she occupies his/her position in HIGSA.

A.2. Manner of appointment; selection of HIGSA's officers shall be by a majority vote of the membership.

A.3. Terms of appointment: officers elected by the membership shall serve one year starting in May.

A.4. A member of HIGSA may be removed from HIGSA by a two-thirds vote of the entire membership. Neglect of duties or violation of HIGSA rules are cause for such removal.

A.5. Elections of all officers shall take place during the month of April.

A.6. Newly elected officers will take office within the month after the election.

Section B. Nomination Process:

B.1. A graduate student may nominate herself/himself for a position in HIGSA, if she/he is a member of HIGSA. A graduate student may nominate another graduate student for a position in HIGSA, if she/he is a member of HIGSA.

B.2. A graduate student may nominate herself/himself (or another graduate student) for more than one office.

B.3. Blank nomination ballots will be rejected.

B.4. Only one nomination ballot from each person will be counted.

B.5. Please note that graduate students who may be studying abroad during the nomination process, therefore active in the department, are eligible if they are to be on campus during the coming term.

B.6. Nomination ballots should be deposited in the nomination box located in the main office.

B.7. Nominations should be tabulated on the closing day of the nomination period, and nominees should be contacted for acceptance or rejection of the nomination promptly.

B. 8. If a candidate has been nominated to run for office at both SDP and HIGSA, she/he will be contacted by the presidents of both organizations to accept her/his candidacy to just ONE of the two.

B.9. All nominees will be given a chance to withdraw from consideration before election.

Section C. Voting procedure

C.1. Elections should immediately follow the nomination process. The President will establish the election day(s).

C.2. The election will be conducted electronically using a computer software or program that guarantees a fair election and anonymous vote for all, and also facilitates and protects the right to vote of those HIGSA members who cannot be present on campus during the process.

C.3. The President will send an email via GradHispanistas with a link or/and instructions to cast a vote.

C.4. In the end, the candidate with the highest number of votes wins.

C.5. Each HIGSA member can only vote once.

C. 6. Breaking ties. Should there be a tie between candidates for a certain office, a second round of voting between them for such office (only for the ones who tied, the whole election will not be repeated) will take place within a week after the first general election.