

Graduate Electrical Engineering at Columbia (GEEC) Constitution

Revision: 02/28/2019



Article 0

Section 1

The founding members of EE graduate council (by appointment) shall form the interim Executive Board until the first Executive Board election in March 2019. The interim Executive Board will assume all responsibilities and powers of the Constitution.

Article I – Name and Purpose

Section 1

The name of this organization shall be the Graduate Electrical Engineering at Columbia (“GEEC” or the “Council”) and shall consist of all graduate students enrolled in the Columbia University Department of Electrical Engineering (the “Department”) in the Columbia University Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science (the “School” or “SEAS”). Any Columbia University student who is working towards their graduate degree with a research advisor from the Department of Electrical Engineering is also considered a member of GEEC. Any other Columbia University graduate student may petition to the Council for membership.

Section 2

The Council shall be the student governing body of the graduate students of Department of Electrical Engineering (the “Students”).

Section 3

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Section 4

The Council shall have any authority necessary and proper to carry out its enumerated purposes in consistency with the rules and procedures of the Department and the School set forth by the Administration.

Article II – Council Membership

Section 1

The Council shall be composed 7 officers of the Executive Board as well as all graduate students enrolled in the Department.

Section 2

All members of the Council shall be graduate students currently enrolled in the Department, or are working towards their graduate degree with a research advisor from the Department.

Section 3

Executive Board Officers form Voting Members of the Council, unless approved by the Department and the current Voting Members.

Article III – Executive Board Officers

Section 1

The Executive Board of the Council shall consist of the following 7 Executive Board Officers (“Officers”) each with responsibilities including, but not limited to, those listed below.

Section 2

Each Officer shall be elected by the Council as required by **Article VII**.

Section 3

The Executive Board term shall begin on the day of the first meeting of the spring semester and end on the day of the first meeting of the following spring semester.

Section 4

Only Members who will be registered Students of the Department for the entire Executive Board term shall be considered for election to the Executive Board.

Section 5

Executive Board Officers and duties:

A. President

- i. Chair the meetings of the Council and Executive Board.
- ii. Be responsible for the execution of all resolutions passed by the Council.
- iii. Represent the Council at official functions and serve as primary spokesperson of the Council.
- iv. Advise the committee chairs to help guide their priorities and agendas.
- v. Coordinate the organization of Orientation with the Department.

B. Vice President

- i. Perform the duties of the President in their absence.
- ii. Succeed the President in case of vacancy.
- iii. Regularly meet with the Administration of the School to voice Student issues.
- iv. Chair Election Board for Executive Board election in the end of Fall semester.
- v. Plan and execute Quality of Life survey in Spring semester, including drafting and distributing of the survey, purchase swags and formulate report to the Board and the Department.
- vi. Coordinate the organization of all academically oriented events.

C. Secretary

- i. Determine **quorum of half (1/2)** of the Council’s voting Members at the beginning of each meeting.
- ii. Keep complete and accurate records of all Council meetings including, but not limited to, attendance, minutes, and resolutions.
- iii. Present such records to the Council when asked.
- iv. Prepare the agenda of each Council meeting in consultation with the Executive Board.
- v. Conduct all correspondence for the Council as necessary.
- vi. Be responsible for the upkeep of the Constitution and By-Laws.

- vii. Be responsible for all allotted and generated funds of the Council, including but not limited to the Student Activity Fee.
- viii. Keep all financial transactions according to standard accounting procedures.
- ix. Prepare a financial report for the Council at the end of every semester.
- x. Inform the Officers and Council about the budget upon request.
- xi. Coordinate the maintenance of GEEC website content as determined by the Council.
- xii. Manage all Council listservs.
- xiii. Manage the GEEC Events Google Calendar.

E. Social Chairs (2)

- i. Coordinate the organization of all Student social events organized by the Council.
- ii. Assist Secretary in maintaining a up-to-date budget report.
- iii. Present a calendar of upcoming social events to the Council at all meetings.
- iv. Recruit Students to assist in Social Events if need be.

F. Career Chair

- i. Coordinate the organization of career-oriented events.
- ii. Maintain contact with Career Placement Officers in the Department and the School.
- iii. Inform the Council about upcoming alumni-related events.

G. Outreach Chair

- i. Coordinate the organization of outreach events.
- ii. Serve as point of communication between GEEC and GWC-UAW (the “Union”), as well as EGSC.

Section 6

Additional responsibilities of all Officers:

- A. All duties, regulations, and restrictions as required by the By-Laws of this Constitution.
- B. Attendance at all Executive Board meetings.
- C. Attendance at all Council meetings.
- D. Perform timely transitions to their successors as Officers, no later than two weeks after election. This includes, but is not limited to, sharing of documents, processes, and methods.

Section 7

The Executive Board of the Council shall meet at least once a month during the academic year.

Article IV – Meetings

Section 1

The Council shall hold weekly meetings consisting of Members as defined in Article II.

Section 2

All Members shall be notified of all Council meetings at least **five (5) days** prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3

The President or a simple majority vote of the Executive Board may call a special meeting of the Council to discuss issues that need specific and immediate attention.

Section 4

No regular and special meetings shall be convened on weekends or holidays.

Section 5

The agenda for all Council meetings shall include an opportunity for all Members to raise any issues before the Council. The President shall initiate and present these issues to the Council as he/she sees fit.

Section 6

In the event of an emergency that requires immediate action prior to a meeting of the Council, the President, consulting the Executive Board if possible, shall act on behalf of the Council. The President shall be responsible to the Council for these actions.

Section 7

All meetings of the Council shall be open to all Students of the Department.

Section 8

No voting shall be conducted or considered binding unless conducted by a duly constituted quorum, **defined as at least half (1/2) of** voting Members.

Section 9

A simple majority shall constitute the right to pass resolutions and close meetings except for amendments to the Constitution. Amendments to this Constitution and the By-Laws shall pass by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board. All resolutions and amendments to this Constitution and the By-Laws shall be in effect immediately until repeated unless otherwise stated.

Section 10

All meetings of the Council shall be governed by this Constitution and the By-Laws. The Council may declare special rules consistent with the Constitution and the By-Laws. All other rules of order shall be determined by the President.

Section 11

Attendance to regular and special meetings shall be compulsory for all Members.

Section 12

In the event that a Member is unable to attend a Council meeting, that Member shall contact the President or Secretary at least twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled start of the meeting and assign a proxy to represent them during the meeting if necessary.

Section 13

Failure to excuse oneself prior to the start of a Council meeting shall be deemed an unexcused absence and result in a warning regarding Member status by the President or Secretary.

Section 14

Two unexcused absences without a proxy in one academic semester may result in removal as a Member and replacement by a newly elected representative, as outlined in Article VII.

Section 15

Members may be represented by proxies up to four (4) times in a given semester; an unexcused absence will count against this four (4) time total.

Section 16

A proxy may be a current Member.

Section 17

A proxy designated by a Member shall not be eligible to vote on any Council resolutions, even if the designated proxy is a current Member.

Section 18

A member shall be considered absent without excuse if they are more than 20 minutes late past the meeting start time.

Section 19

The President or a simple majority vote of the Executive Board shall determine the Council meeting schedule for the summer academic term.

Section 20

During the summer academic term, quorum shall consist of those Members who attend the meeting.

Section 21

During the summer academic term, a simple majority vote shall constitute the right to pass resolutions or close meetings except for the amendments of the Constitution and By-Laws. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws shall pass two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board.

Article V – Voting

Section 1

Voting shall be conducted under the rules and regulations mandated by Article V.

Section 2

The President shall hold the discretion to end any and all debate on a resolution and shall initiate voting procedures as required.

Section 3

The Council shall first vote on the appropriate voting method for the resolution being discussed. This voting method will be show-of-hands vote, unless otherwise indicated by the President.

Section 4

Appropriate voting methods are:

- A. Voice vote: The President calls for the affirmative vote first, negative vote is called for second and abstentions are called for third.
- B. Show-of-hands vote
- C. Ballot vote: This vote is to be conducted by secret ballot administered by the Vice President. Primarily conducted to protect a voter's right to secrecy.
- D. General consent vote: Informal agreement of the group.

Article VI – Elections, Vacancies, Impeachment

Section 1

Except for the founding Board, the Council shall hold elections for Executive Board Officer positions at the regular Council meeting in the beginning of the spring semester. The Council shall follow the voting procedures as detailed in the By-Laws.

Section 2

Only members who've held Officer positions before are eligible to be elected as President, except for the interim board of 2018.

Section 3

Elected Executive Board Members shall begin their term of office on the first meeting after Executive Board election in spring semester and end their term on the first meeting after Executive Board election of the following spring semester.

Section 4

Only Members who will be registered Students of the Department for the entire Officer term shall be considered for election to the Executive Board.

Section 5

No member shall hold two offices simultaneously.

Section 6

Council Member can declare and be considered for only one Officer position in any given election. However, if a position remains vacant after candidate declarations, then Members may declare and be considered for those vacant Officer positions.

Section 7

In the event of a vacancy in the Office of the President, the Vice President shall immediately become the President, and the Office of Vice President shall become vacant.

Section 8

For vacancies in other Offices, the President shall appoint a department representative or Executive Officer to serve as an interim Officer until an election may be held. The Council shall follow the voting procedure as detailed by the By-Laws. Interim officers shall serve until March 2019.

Section 9

Members who fail to fulfill their responsibilities as stated in Articles II, III, and IV may be issued a Warning by the President. Each subsequent infraction by a Member may result in Second and Third Warnings. Upon receiving a Second Warning, the Member is immediately placed on Probation for the remainder of the semester. If the Member receives a Third Warning, impeachment proceedings will immediately commence.

Section 10

Members may be impeached and removed from office for unethical behavior, failure to adhere to the regulations of the Council, and not fulfilling the responsibilities of the office. Three Warnings need not have been issued by the President for a Member to be impeached.

Section 11

Motions to impeach a member shall only be introduced by a written memo stating the reasons for removal. All Members shall be notified at least one week prior to impeachment proceedings. The decision may be given by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board.

Article VII – Revenues and Expenditures

Section 1

The Council shall have the right to receive allotted funds by the Department, EGSC, the School and the University including, but not limited to, Student Activity fees.

Section 2

The Council may, with the consent of the Administration of the Department, introduce concessions or hold events for the Students of the Department in order to generate revenue. The Council reserves the right to sell, rent, subcontract, or franchise the proceeds and/or management of such revenue-producing operations.

Section 3

The Council shall exercise exclusive control over the spending of funds obtained under Sections 1 and 2 of this Article. The Council shall spend such funds to further the purposes of this Constitution.

Article VIII – Ratification, Amendments

Section 1

This Constitution takes effect as of March 1st, 2019 after it has been ratified by unanimous vote of the interim Council.

Section 2

Amendments to the Constitution or the By-Laws shall pass by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board.

Section 3

For renewal of the Constitution, a ratification vote shall be conducted. All Council Members have the right to vote. The renewed Constitution shall be in effect by simple majority of the Council or two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board for ratification.