

UMCES GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL BY-LAWS; Approved TBD

I. Introduction

The student body of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) is integral in achieving UMCES' vision of excellence in its academics, research, and community service by functioning in a support role to its staff and faculty. The President of UMCES and the President's Executive Council have found it appropriate that the students serve as the liaison between graduate students, individually and collectively, the faculty, the administration, and the alumni of UMCES in areas of policies and procedures that support and improve the quality of the environment for the graduate students at UMCES. The opportunity to be heard on these matters through a recognized Student Council is indicative of UMCES' goal to develop a more responsive environment distinguished by consistently high levels of commitment and productivity from its students.

II. Purpose and Functions of the GSC

1. The GSC has plenary jurisdiction to investigate, discuss, and make recommendations to the President concerning any matters submitted to it by the President or by any member of the UMCES community.
- 2. There shall be a GSC representing all degree-seeking students registered for graduate credit with UMCES, non- exempt employees, Faculty, and academic administrators are already represented by the collective bargaining unit, Faculty Senate and Administrative Council, respectively.**
3. The functions of the GSC shall include the following:
 - A. To represent the interest and concerns of all graduate students at UMCES in accordance with current regulations;
 - B. To support the Administration and Academic Community with the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the graduate students;
 - C. To provide a forum for discussion and recommendations on matters involving students and the welfare of UMCES;
 - D. To participate, in an advisory capacity, in the review and implementation of University policies affecting the students;
 - E. To participate, in the interest of the graduate students, in the recommendation and development of policies, procedures, and/or rules concerning the general operation of UMCES;
 - F. To establish its own committees;
 - G. To conduct elections for representatives of UMCES to serve on the University

System of Maryland Student Council (USMSC);

a. The Chair and Co-Chair will serve as the two voting/primary members to the USMSC and will serve the duration of their terms on the Executive Council. UMCES gets one vote collectively on the USMSC as a graduate-only institution

H. To serve as a channel of communication between;

- a. UMCES students and the President; and
- b. UMCES students and the USMSC.

I. To coordinate nominations and awarding of the UMCES outstanding faculty award to be given each year at the Faculty convocation and UMCES graduation ceremony.

4. Carrying out its purpose and functions, the Graduate Student Council will observe all established University administrative policies and procedures, including but not limited to USM Board of Regents Policy I.6.[00](#) on shared governance.

III. Membership, Election, and Term Length

1. There are eight (8) members of the UMCES Graduate Student Council composed of eligible graduate students. Graduate Student Council membership consists of two elected Lab representatives from IMET, AL, CBL, and HPL. These eight (8) members represent voting members of the GSC. Within this 8 member council will be the executive council (Chair, Co-chair, and Secretary). Graduate students from UMD College Park and UMES can attend and serve on the UMCES GSC as non-voting members.

A. If an eligible student is located at one unit but financially supported by another, the unit that the student represents will be determined on a case by case basis and must have the support of both the director of the person's location as well as the director of the unit that financially supports the student .

B. Following temporary vacancies created by long-term illness or other personal reasons, the newly-vacated alternate position will be filled with a new member from the same lab, by a simple majority of the council.

C. Eligible graduate representatives from each Laboratory unit are selected on a voluntary basis and by each Lab unit. New members are introduced to the GSC when personnel changes occur. Lab representatives on the GSC serve a one-year term but are not limited to a one-year term.

2. Three (3) executive council GSC seats will stand for election; Chair, Co-chair and Secretary.

A. The Chair and Co-chair serve 2-year terms while the Secretary serves a 1-year

term, renewable upon election. The chair will serve as past-chair for 6 months following their two year term in order to ease transition during the leadership change and maintain continuity within the shared governance structure.

B. The executive council positions are selected on a voluntary basis. If there are two or more students interested in any executive council position, each student will be given an opportunity to present their pitch for the position to the GSC. The voting members of the GSC will then anonymously elect an officer. The voting procedure will be conducted by the current Chair.

3. Regular elections shall be held during the months of May and June for the upcoming year term (July 1 through June 30).

A. Candidates shall be self-nominated or nominated by other eligible student members.

B. Each nominee shall confirm that he or she is willing to serve before his or her name is formally submitted as a candidate.

C. Voting members of the GSC vote, and the results shall be reported to the UMCES President, and Vice President of Education no later than the first week of July of that year.

4. The GSC, by two-thirds (2/3) vote, may remove any of its members.

A. A seat vacated by resignation, removal or for any other reason shall be filled by an alternate elected from the affected unit.

B. The unit/lab shall appoint a new alternate based on the eligible students from that unit to be voted upon by GSC.

5. There are no limits on the number of terms any member of the Executive Council or GSC Lab representatives may serve.

IV. Executive Council Positions Descriptions

1. There shall be three (3) officers of the GSC who will form the Executive Council. The officers shall be the Chair, Co-chair, and Secretary.

A. The duties of the officers will be as follows;

(a) CHAIR

(1) Presides at all meetings of the GSC,

(2) Finalize the agenda of each GSC meeting,

(3) Serve as chief liaison with the UMCES President,

(4) Serve as Student representative to UMCES Administrative

Council, Faculty Senate and Graduate Faculty Council,

- (5) Serve as a primary/voting member to the USMSC and attend all USMSC meetings,
- (6) Perform other duties as assigned by the GSC,
- (7) Enforce the GSC Bylaws,
- (8) Represent the GSC at all official and social occasions or to appoint a representative, as appropriate, and
- (9) Conduct training and orientation for the GSC.

(b) Co-CHAIR

- (1) Serve in the absence of the Chair,
- (2) Serve as GSC parliamentarian,
- (3) Serve as a representative on the USMSC and attend all USMSC meetings
- (4) Perform other duties as assigned by the GSC, and
- (5) Assist with graduate student orientation programs.

(c) SECRETARY

- (1) Record and distribute minutes,
- (2) Maintain all records of the GSC and maintain the official roster and take attendance at all meetings GSC,
- (3) Perform other duties as assigned by the GSC, and
- (4) Provide a annual brief written report of all GSC actions to the President of UMCES.

2. The GSC shall meet a minimum of three (3) times during each term year.

A. The Executive Council shall fulfill the following functions:

- (a) Set the agenda for GSC meetings,
- (b) Distribute the agenda at least three (3) days prior to each regular meeting to all members of the GSC,
- (c) Accept proposals for GSC considerations from eligible member(s) of the UMCES community (These proposals are normally submitted through his/her local representative who must respond in writing to the person submitting, stating he/she has submitted the proposal to the Executive Committee, who will give it full consideration in preparing the agenda.),

and

(d) Referral or automatic postponement of non-agenda proposal except in an emergency, as determined by a two thirds vote of the members present, any proposal introduced under new business which does not appear on the agenda shall either be referred to an appropriate committee or automatically postponed until the following meeting.

B. At the request of any four (4) members of the GSC, the Chair will be required to call a Special Meeting provided all members have been notified at least 24 hours in advance of the date and time of the special meeting.

C. Prepare and submit reports on the work of the GSC to the UMCES President, and the UMCES campus community,

D. Be a point of contact with the UMCES President,

E. Recommend to the GSC the establishment, composition and responsibilities of standing and/or special committees, fill irregular vacancies on committees, and recommend participation in joint campus committees; and

F. Perform such functions as given by the GSC.

V. Meetings

1. There shall be at least one (1) Open Forum meetings of the GSC each year at the MEES colloquium, but there may be more depending on need.

A. Meetings will be held subject to availability and scheduling of IVN.

B. Four working full-Council and/or committee meetings may be held as necessary.

2. If any member is absent from more than twenty five percent (25%) of the yearly scheduled working meeting sessions, without prior approval from the Chair, the Executive Council will notify the member in writing of its recommendation for removal from the GSC.

3. Special meetings may be called by the Executive Council, by resolution of the GSC, or by petition signed by at least **one-third (1/3) of the GSC membership**.

4. Special meetings may be open with or without voice, or closed to all eligible students at the discretion of the Executive Council.

5. All eligible graduate students may attend Open Forum meetings of the Council, without voice or vote, subject to requirements of space and good order.

6. A quorum shall consist of one more than half of the elected members. An affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting shall be necessary to adopt any

motion or resolution.

7. Notices to members are sent by e-mail.

8. Any three (3) GSC members may require that an item be placed on the agenda of an Open Forum or special meeting.

9. Council members shall be released from their normal work responsibilities, if necessary, each term year in order to attend the following meetings:

A. One (1) Open Forum Council meetings;

B. Members may require additional time to fulfill their GSC responsibilities, e.g. attendance at committee or special meetings and other activities.

C. Members and their supervisors shall work together in coordinating these activities so as to not interfere with the members normal work responsibilities as students of UMCES.

10. All procedures not otherwise set forth in these Bylaws or by rules adopted by the Student Council shall be in accordance with the latest revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order

VI. Committees

1. The GSC will establish standing committees, with membership by selections as needed. GSC Lab representatives are encouraged and expected to serve on committees on a volunteer basis.

2. The GSC will also establish committees as assigned by the President of UMCES.

A. The GSC will send representation to intra and inter-campus committees and invited faculty committees.

3. The GSC may elect as needed a chair to each committee.

A. The GSC may request, within a thirty day time period, any reports it deems necessary from any committee.

VII. Administrative Resources.

1. UMCES resource staff (i.e.: Human Resources Management, Information Services, Facilities Management) is available to assist the GSC in its functions.

A. Resource staff may be included as non-voting participants in Council, Executive, or committee meetings in order to provide information and other support activities.

B. The Director of Human Resources Management and his/her designee(s) shall function as the primary resource for the Student Council.

C. Travel expenses in support of USMSC related meetings shall be funded by Center Administration while travel expenses in support of GSC meetings shall be funded by the laboratories.

D. GSC shall review by-laws every two years at a minimum and update as needed.