



# CONSTITUTION OF THE PRINCETON UNIVERSITY BLACK GRADUATE CAUCUS

## Article I. Organizational Name

The name of the organization shall be The Princeton University Black Graduate Caucus (BGC), a non-profit graduate student run organization of Princeton University.

## Article II. Purpose

The primary purpose of the BGC shall be to promote a professional, informative, and social network for Black graduate students in order to ensure their retention and continued academic success at Princeton. In addition, the BGC serves to make the Princeton University community aware of and responsive to the needs and concerns of Black graduate students.

The secondary purposes of the BGC shall be as follows:

- Assist Princeton University in recruiting qualified graduate students and faculty from ethno-racial groups that are underrepresented in academia.
- Encourage undergraduate students from underrepresented minority groups to pursue graduate degrees.
- Facilitate social events and fellowship among members and friends of the BGC; to promote excellence in teaching, research, and presentation of graduate work
- Strengthen liaisons with administrators, faculty, other student organizations and the community at large.
- Create a sense of community, for persons of the African Diaspora, within the University and surrounding areas.

## Article III. Membership

Section 1. Voting Membership. Membership shall be open to Princeton University graduate students who wish to support the organization's purposes. Graduate student status shall be based on the student being subject to and/or paying the annual payment of the graduate student activity fee.

Section 2. Associate Membership. All other interested parties (non-Princeton University Graduate Students) who wish to support the organization's purposes (as outlined in Article II) shall be associate members with no voting privileges.

Section 3. Membership and participation shall be free from discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnic group, age or national origin.

## **Article IV. Officers of the Executive Board**

Section 1. Executive Board Structure. The Executive Board shall consist of the following offices: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Program Director, Webmaster/Historian, Graduate Student Government Representative, and Undergraduate Representative.

Section 2. Responsibilities of the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall:

- Determine all questions of policy and shall administer the affairs of the BGC under the constitution under which it is created.
- Be subject to the orders of the membership and none of its acts shall conflict with the decisions made by the vote of the general body or the purpose of the organization.

Section 3. Officer Elections.

- A. Election Process. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of the members during the election meeting to be held annually, or as needed to fill vacancies created during the year. The annual election meeting shall be held no earlier than April 1<sup>st</sup> and conclude no later than the start of the University's spring reading period.
- B. Election Terms. The term of each office shall begin on the day after the Princeton University commencement in the year of the annual election meeting and conclude on the day of the Princeton University commencement in the following year. Officer-elects shall participate in an apprenticeship under the outgoing officers following their election until their term begins. Officer-elects may complete the outgoing officer terms if a resignation or removal from office of the existing officer occurs prior to the Princeton University commencement in the year of annual election meeting.
- C. Election Terms – Unexpired Term. When an officer is elected to fill an unexpired term, they shall take office immediately and serve until the normal expiration of the term, as outlined in Article IV, Section 3C.

Section 4. Eligibility for Office. Officers of the Executive Board must be voting members of the BGC (as outlined in Article III, Section 1) during their entire term.

Section 5. Succession and Vacancies.

- A. Vacancies occur immediately in offices or positions established herein by resignation, loss of voting membership status, and removal from office (per Article VI).
- B. If a vacancy occurs in the office of the Chair, then the Vice-Chair shall serve as acting Chair for the remainder of the term of office. A vacancy occurring in the office of Vice Chair, Secretary or Treasurer shall be filled by an appointment by the Executive Board for a member to complete the remaining term of the office. The Executive Board may also call for a special election to fill vacant positions for the remainder of the term.

Section 6. General Duties and Responsibilities. All elected officials shall accept the responsibility of the office as outlined in Section 6. All elected officials are required to attend executive board and general body meetings. Failure to take responsibility of the office or greater than two absences from required meetings are grounds for removal from office (nonfeasance as described in Article VI, Section 1) unless the executive board approves extenuating circumstances.

## **Article V. Duties of Elected Officers**

### **Section 1. Specific Duties and Powers.**

#### **A. The CHAIR shall:**

- Be responsible for the administrative function of the BGC.
- Maintain the purpose of the BGC.
- Act as liaison to administration, faculty, staff, and students.
- Facilitate board meetings.
- Raise funds within and without the University community.
- Create committees and delegate responsibility to officers and members.
- Be responsible for scheduling and canceling meetings within the BGC and between the BGC and the University.
- Cast the deciding vote in cases of tie ballots.

#### **B. The VICE CHAIR shall:**

- Be responsible for carrying out the duties of the Chair in his/her absence or resignation.
- Sit on the board of, and act as liaison to, the Carl A. Fields Center for Equality and Cultural Understanding and its staff.

#### **C. The SECRETARY shall:**

- Be responsible for maintaining the non-financial records of the BGC.
- Take minutes of the meetings and make them available prior to the next meeting.
- Maintain the BGC mailing list and all BGC communications.
- Regularly maintain the BGC e-mail account.
- Compile a confidential and annually updated list of members.

#### **D. The TREASURER shall:**

- Maintain the BGC financial records and matters.
- Report on finances monthly, compile and submit the BGC budget request, and pay BGC debts in a timely fashion. The Treasurer shall ensure that all Princeton University financial policies and procedures are followed.

#### **E. The PROGRAM DIRECTOR shall:**

- Be the coordinator of social, cultural, political, educational, and community events.
- Create committees to carry out planning and execution of events.
- Also responsible for preventing scheduling conflicts between the BGC and other graduate departments/organizations.

#### **F. The WEBMANAGER/HISTORIAN shall:**

- Be responsible for content, design, management, updating, and maintenance of the BGC website.
- Keep a written and photographic record of the BGC, which may be archived physically or electronically.

#### **G. The GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT (GSG) REPRESENTATIVE shall:**

- Be the liaison between the BGC and the GSG, attend GSG meetings, and present reports.
- Be responsible for being aware of issues in the University and surrounding community and their effects on the BGC.

H. The UNDERGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE shall:

- Be the liaison between the BGC and black and other ethnic minority undergraduate student organizations.
- Maintain a rapport with the black and other ethnic minority undergraduate organizations and convey pertinent information and news from these groups to the BGC.
- Be responsible for being aware of possible scheduling conflicts between the BGC and undergraduate organizations and shall communicate any expected conflicts to the executive board.
- Attempt to build solidarity among and promote a relationship between the black and other ethnic minority undergraduate and graduate student populations.

#### Section 2. Officer Reports

- A. All members of the Executive board shall produce officer reports by the end of their term. These reports shall be given to the newly elected officers. The Chair of the BGC shall specify the format and contents of these reports.

### **Article VI. Removal and Expulsion of Officers and Members**

#### Section 1. Petition for Removal and Expulsion.

- A. Removal from Office. At their option, any member of the BGC may petition the officers for the removal of an officer believed to be guilty of malfeasance, nonfeasance, neglect of duty, or abuse of power. In addition, upon a majority affirmative vote of the officers of the executive board, the executive board may bring a petition for the removal of an officer to the voting membership.
- B. Removal of Voting Membership or Expulsion. At their option, any member of the BGC may petition the officers for the removal of voting membership or expulsion of such a member believed to be guilty of conduct counter to the best interest of the organization.

#### Section 2. Action Taken on Petitions and Judicial Review.

- A. The executive committee shall forward the petition, with or without recommendations, to a meeting of the voting membership that is to be held within 30 days following the executive committee's signing or receipt of the petition for removal from office.
- B. Any accused member reserves the right to a judicial review by making a written request submitted to the officers. If the member requests a review within 15 days of the expulsion vote, then a judicial investigation conducted by the officers of the BGC and an advisor from the Associate Dean of the Graduate School will commence. The vote on removal will be delayed pending their ruling.

Section 3. Voting on Expulsions and Removal. The active membership may approve an executive board petition to remove an executive member by a simple affirmative majority vote. Alternatively, the active membership may approve a voting member petition to expel or remove voting privileges of an executive member by an affirmative majority vote of two-thirds of the active BGC voting membership.

## **Article VII. Meetings**

Section 1. Regular Meeting. Regular meetings of the BGC shall be held monthly during the fall and spring semesters. The General Body meeting shall be announced at least one week in advance of the meeting.

Section 2. Executive Board Meeting. Executive Board meetings shall be held monthly during the fall and spring semesters. The Chair shall announce executive Board meetings to all Executive Board members.

Section 3. Special Meeting. Special meetings of the membership may be called by the Executive Board and shall be announced to all members.

Section 4. Special Executive Board Meetings. The Chair may call a special meeting of the Executive Board. In addition, any other member of the Executive Board may call a special meeting, which shall take place with the consent of a majority vote of the Executive Board. Moreover, the special meeting of the Executive Board shall be announced to all Executive Board Members.

Section 5. Quorum.

- A. Quorum of the Executive Board shall consist of a simple majority.
- B. Quorum for a Regular Meeting of the Membership shall consist of the number of members present, in addition to a quorum of the Executive Board.
- C. Quorum for a Special Meeting of the Membership shall consist of one-third of the voting membership. If less than one-third of the voting membership is present at a meeting of the Membership, then the meeting may proceed with consideration of the agenda but without binding effect. Any deliberation and consensus of such a meeting shall be reported as New Business, at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the membership.

Section 6. Throughout this constitution, the terms “majority vote” and “two-thirds vote” shall mean percentage of quorum unless otherwise stated.

Section 7. Absentee Voting. If a voting member is unable to attend a meeting during which a vote occurs, he or she may make an absentee vote by e-mailing the BGC secretary (from his or her Princeton email account only) his or her vote within a two day period before the day of the event.

Section 8. Parliamentary Procedure. The rules contained in the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall govern in all cases where it is deemed necessary and applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the BGC Constitution, rules or by-laws. (Note: Online Info at <http://www.robertsrules.com/>. Online version at <http://www.constitution.org/rror/rror--00.htm>.)

## **Article VIII. Amendments to the Constitution**

This constitution may be amended at any special meeting by a two-thirds vote. The membership shall have received the proposed amendment or amendments at least 14 days prior to regular meeting. Proposed amendment or amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee. Within 30 days of the date received, The Executive Committee shall review the proposed amendment(s) and submit the amendment to the full membership in writing, with or without recommendation.

## **Article IX. Dissolution**

In the event of dissolution of this organization, the Executive Committee shall, after payment of all liabilities of the organization, dispose of all the assets of the chapter by forwarding them to the Office of Graduate Student Life with the request that they be retained in a non-interest bearing account and made available to the organization should it ever be reorganized. Under no circumstances shall any of the property or assets of the organization during its existence or upon the dissolution thereof be distributed to any officer, member employee, or subsidiary of this organization.

## **Article X. Ratification of the Constitution**

Section 1. Officers. The officers previously elected by the Black Graduate Caucus in the spring of 2002 shall remain in office until their one-year term expires. All newly created positions and vacant positions will be filled by an election to take place immediately upon ratification of this document.

Section 2. Procedure.

- A. The constitution shall be distributed to the BGC mailing list, interested parties, and posted on the BGC website 14 days prior to the first Regular Meeting of the 2002-2003 academic year.
- B. All present and prospective members of the BGC will be invited to this meeting with proper notice. At this meeting, the first order of business will be a vote on the ratification of the BGC Constitution.
- C. This document, the Constitution of the Black Graduate Caucus of Princeton University, will take immediate effect upon ratification by simple majority vote of all Black graduate students present at the first Regular Meeting of the 2002-2003 academic year.
- D. The secretary will be responsible for ensuring that all University procedures are followed, and that the Constitution be placed on file with any relevant University authority upon its ratification.

