

# BY-LAWS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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## **Article I. Duties of Officers**

### **Section I-1. Co-Presidents**

There shall be two Co-Presidents. They shall oversee the operations and activities of the Association. They shall call and preside at the General Body Meetings and maintain minutes from these meetings. They shall interface with other organizations, the departmental administration, and the outside world, including regular meetings with the department head. They shall ensure that the Association's workload is distributed such that the Association's activities do not place an undue burden on any Member or set of Members. They shall mentor the other members of the Executive Committee, and their own successors.

### **Section I-2. Vice Presidents**

There shall be four Vice Presidents. They shall call and preside at the Executive Committee Meetings and maintain minutes from these meetings. Each one shall be responsible for overseeing and informing the Executive Committee of developments within a specific domain, which are described below. They shall be responsible for mentoring and providing resources to enable members to accomplish their goals, coordinating and communicating with the rest of the Association on their own domain, and encouraging new initiatives in their own domain.

### **Section I-3. Vice President of Publications**

The Vice President of Publications (or "VPP") shall be the *ex officio* chair of the Publications Committee.

### **Section I-4. Vice President of Academics and Diversity**

The Vice President of Academics and Diversity (or "VPAD") shall oversee the operations and activities of the Academic, Research, and Careers Committee, the Diversity Committee, and all other related programs.

## **Section I–5. Vice President of Student Life**

The Vice President of Student Life (or “VPSL”) shall oversee the operations and activities of the Athletics Committee, the Social Committee, and all other related programs.

## **Section I–6. Vice President of Orientation**

The Vice President of Orientation (or “VPO”) shall oversee the operations and activities of the Orientation Committee and all other related programs.

## **Section I–7. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall receive, disburse, and account for all funds of the Association and its activities, present a written report of finances at least once per year, coordinate all budget and financial decisions, prepare the budget for the next fiscal year to be voted upon by the Executive Committee, and seek out additional sources of funding. The Treasurer shall mentor his or her own successor, and coordinate with his or her own predecessor, on these tasks.

# **Article II. Committees**

## **Section II–1. Committee Structure**

The Association may establish Committees (or boards) to pursue specific goals of the Association. Those Committees provided for in the By-laws shall be referred to as Standing Committees. Other committees may be formed by passing legislation at a General Body Meeting; these shall be referred to as *Ad Hoc* Committees. All *Ad Hoc* Committees shall terminate when the term of the Officers under which they were created expires. The membership of Committees shall consist of Committee Chairs (the number of which shall be determined by those voting in the elections for the Committee Chairs), volunteers from the EECS Graduate Student Body and *ex officio* members as specified by the Committee guidelines or appointed by the Association. Any Member of the EECS GSA may inquire into the proceedings of any Committee and the Association may pass legislation at a General Body Meeting to suspend or unsuspend a Committee. A Committee’s chairpersons shall call and preside over all meetings and shall enlist members at their discretion.

## **Section II–2. Committee Procedures**

Committees established by the EECS Graduate Students Association must operate under the GSA Constitution and By-laws. Committees shall report on their activities to the Association on a regular basis, inform the Executive Committee of current developments, maintain pertinent documentation, and handle the responsibilities of distributing publicity or otherwise communicating with the EECS Graduate Student Body. Committees may also form subcommittees, as well as adopt their own official operating guidelines or amendments thereof. For Standing Committees, this shall require amendments to the By-laws. *Ad Hoc* Committees may do so through the passing of legislation at a General Body Meeting, unless their mandate specifies otherwise.

## **Section II–3. Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the EECS GSA, have overall coordination of nominations, finances, and budgets not delegated to other committees, prepare an agenda for each General Body Meeting, and may deal with all matters pertinent to the Association. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers and other persons appointed (and removable) by the Association through the passing of legislation. The Executive Committee shall convene at the request of any of its members.

## **Section II–4. Social Committee**

The Social Committee is a Standing Committee whose responsibility is to foster and promote events and activities that enhance the social environment for members of the EECS Graduate Student Body.

## **Section II–5. Academic, Research and Careers Committee**

The Academic, Research and Careers Committee (or simply "Academic Committee" for short) is a Standing Committee responsible for examining issues students may have regarding the academic or research structure of the department. It should also promote seminars, career development activities, and related topics.

## **Section II–6. Orientation Committee**

The Orientation Committee is a Standing Committee that shall organize and oversee the orientation of new EECS graduate students, as well as the open houses and visit days for prospective EECS graduate students.

## **Section II–7. Publications Committee**

The Publications Committee is a Standing Committee responsible for facilitating the publicizing, recording, and archiving of GSA events and activities to and for the EECS Graduate Student Body. The tasks of this Committee shall include, but not be limited to:

- Maintaining Association documents,
- Maintaining the Website and Calendar,
- Maintaining the e-mail lists,
- Coordinating communication from the Association to Members,
- Advertising Association events and activities,
- Photographing and archiving events, and
- Publishing regular newsletters.

## **Section II–8. Athletics Committee**

The Athletics Committee is a Standing Committee responsible for organizing teams of EECS graduate students to play in MIT's intramural sports leagues. Students can also use the mailing list to find buddies to play pick-up games.

## **Section II–9. Diversity Committee**

The Diversity Committee is a Standing Committee responsible for incorporating issues pertinent to under-represented groups in the department, such as, but not limited to, women, ethnic minorities, international students, and LGBT, into events already planned by the GSA and coordinating events solely geared at addressing these issues.

## **Article III. Board of Advisors**

### **Section III–1. Duties**

The Board of Advisors (or “Advisory Board”) shall ensure the continuity of the spirit, principles and history of the Association, advise and mentor active Association Members, maintain the Constitution and By-Laws, administer the election of Association Officers, and assume other duties as requested by the Executive Committee or by legislation, such as interpreting Association documents and exercising judicial powers.

### **Section III–2. Membership**

The Board shall consist of members whose term of office shall be the same as that of the Officers with whom they serve. No member of the Board may hold any other position in the Association concurrently, and assumption of any other position shall result in immediate termination of Board membership. Any Member of the Association is eligible to be a member of the Board. Members of the Board shall be individually nominated by any Officer which must be seconded by another Officer, and confirmed by a two-thirds vote of a General Body Meeting at which quorum is reached. Nominations may also be made by Officers-elect, and Board membership takes effect when the Officers-elect take office. Removal of Board members from office shall follow the same procedure as that of removing the Officers.

### **Section III–3. Operations**

The Board may call its own meetings and determine its own operating guidelines. The Board shall elect a Chair from among its members. Decisions of the Board shall be made by majority vote.

## **Article IV. General Voting Procedures**

All elections for offices of the Association shall be done by the Instant Runoff Voting procedure defined as follows.

### **Section IV–1. Uncompetitive Elections: No More Candidates than Positions**

For an election in which the number of available positions is greater than or equal to the number of candidates, the following procedure shall be used. A vote shall be taken independently for each candidate to determine if that candidate should be elected to the given position, or if the position should be left vacant. A simple majority of those voting shall be required to elect the candidate.

### **Section IV–2. Single-Winner Elections with Multiple Candidates**

For an election with multiple candidates and only one winner, the following procedure shall be used. Voters are to list the candidates in order of preference and the first-choice votes for each candidate shall be counted. If no one receives an (absolute) majority of first-choice votes, the candidate with the fewest first place votes shall be eliminated. Each vote for the eliminated candidate shall then be transferred to the candidate, among those candidates not yet eliminated, listed next in the voter’s preferences. If a voter’s ballot does not list any such candidates, the ballot shall be considered an abstention for the remainder of the voting process. This process of dropping the candidate with the fewest votes and transferring ballots to the next choice candidate shall continue until a candidate receives a majority of the non-abstained votes. If there are ever ties between multiple candidates for fewest number of votes at any time during this process, and if it is mathematically impossible for the method by which the ties are broken to affect the outcome of the election, then all the candidates with the fewest votes shall be dropped. If, on the other hand, a method of breaking the ties is required to determine the outcome of the election, those ties shall be broken according to the following ranked criteria for each such candidate:

1. The number of top-choice votes the candidate received on the first round, then second round, then third round, and so on.
2. The average of the candidate's rankings at each round so far.
3. The average of the candidate's rankings among surviving candidates on each of the ballots of the other candidates still in the race. If the candidate does not appear on a ballot, then the candidate's ranking for that ballot shall be considered to be the the candidate's (tied) rank for this round.

If there are still ties, then the Officers shall decide how to break them.

### **Section IV–3. Competitive Multiple-Winner Elections with Multiple Candidates**

For an election in which the number of candidates exceeds the number of available positions, and there is more than one position available, the following procedure shall be used. Voters shall mark their ballots as in Section IV–2 and a single winner shall be determined accordingly. The winner shall then be struck from the ballots. The ballots shall be recounted with all the preferences moved up accordingly and another winner shall be determined. This process is repeated until all the available positions are filled.

## **Article V. Election Details**

### **Section V–1. Election of Officers**

1. All Members of the Association are eligible to run for any GSA Officer position, except as specified in Sections IV–1 and IV–3 of the Constitution.
2. The Board of Advisors shall set the date, time and location of the elections for new Officers at least 30 days prior to the election. This date must be in between October 15 and two days before Thanksgiving Day, inclusive, and cannot be held on a day on which MIT does not hold classes. The Board of Advisors shall be responsible for announcing the date, time and location of the elections to Members at least 21 days prior to the elections.
3. Candidates must secure a nomination in order to participate in an election for an Officer position. Nominations shall be declared open beginning at 21 days prior to the elections. A nomination consists of written messages to the Board of Advisors signed by at least two Members of the Association, where all such signatures do not include the nominee.
4. Candidates must formally accept a nomination, either orally at a General Body Meeting or in writing, in order to verify their desire to run for an Officer position. As soon as possible after a candidate accepts his or her nomination, the Board of Advisors shall be responsible for providing all relevant information about the candidate on the Website.
5. Nominations for all Officer positions shall close 24 hours prior to the elections unless fewer than three nominations have been accepted for an Officer position by that time, in which case nominations for that position shall remain open until the election. At this point, a nomination shall consist of a motion by any Member, including the nominee himself or herself, which is seconded by another Member. Such nominations shall require the consent of the nominee to be considered valid.
6. Nominees who cannot be present at the election shall, by a written statement sent to the Board of Advisors, appoint someone to act on their behalf at the election.
7. Members who cannot be present at the election and want to vote shall, by a written statement sent to the Board of Advisors, either appoint someone to vote on their behalf at the election or state their voting preferences.

8. A quorum of ten Members shall be required to proceed with the elections. If the qualifications for a General Body Meeting is also met, then the election shall also be considered as and may act as a General Body Meeting. Absent Members who followed the procedures of the previous item shall be counted as part of this group. If quorum is not reached within 30 minutes after the published starting time of the elections, a new election date, time and location shall be decided by the Board of Advisors and announced within 48 hours. The new election date must be before the last day of classes of the fall semester. Additional nominations may be made subject to the rules above. If quorum is not reached at the second election date, then the Board of Advisors shall appoint the incoming set of Officers.
9. The Board of Advisors shall preside over the election, or appoint others, with the approval of a General Body Meeting, to do so in its place or to assist it. If any member of the Board participates in the election, he or she may not be involved in presiding over the election.
10. Elections shall proceed in the following order: Co-Presidents, Vice Presidents, and Treasurer. The presiding officer of the election shall decide the order among the Vice Presidents after consulting with the candidates. Any unsuccessful candidate may run for one of the remaining positions without any further nomination procedure. In the event that no one is nominated for a position, the position shall remain vacant.
11. Elections shall begin with each of the current Officers explaining the duties of his or her office. This shall be followed by speeches from each of the candidates of no more than five minutes each. The attendees of the election shall have the chance to ask questions of the candidates.
12. The candidates will be asked to leave the room and the attendees of the election shall discuss the candidates. Once a motion to close discussion is seconded, voting will take place.
13. After Officer elections there shall be a transition period in which the Officers-elect will be instructed in the responsibilities of their office. The terms of office of the outgoing Officers shall expire at noon Eastern Standard Time on January 15 of each year at which point the Officers-elect shall officially take office.

## **Section V–2. Election of Committee Chairs**

1. All Members of the Association are eligible to run for any Committee Chairpersonship, except as specified in Section IV–3 of the Constitution, and the last clause of this Section.
2. The Officers shall elect the Committee Chairs. The Officers must at the time of election state the term of office of each Committee Chair, which may not end after the term of office of the current Officers. The Officers shall decide at the election the number of Chairs a Committee shall have. If a Committee has more than one Chair, those Chairs shall share the same term of office.
3. If the term of office of the Chair or Chairs of a Committee exceeds six months, the Committee Chairs must secure the approval of a General Body Meeting through legislation within those six months in order to serve the entire term. If the Committee Chairs fail to secure such approval, their term of office shall expire at the end of those six months. If a Committee has more than one Chair, those Chairs shall be considered for approval as a single group. Any Chairs who fail to secure such approval cannot hold that position for the six months after the end of the term for which approval was not given.
4. The Chairs of a Committee may, by unanimous approval, decide to expand the number of Chairs of that Committee and appoint additional Members to those positions for the current term of office; this shall require the approval of a majority of the Officers. If the remainder of the term of office exceeds six months, the Committee Chairs (both new and old) of that Committee must secure the approval of a General Body Meeting through legislation within those six months in order to serve the remainder of the term. If the Committee Chairs fail to secure such approval, their term of office shall expire at the end of those six months. Those Chairs shall be considered for approval as a single group. Any Chairs

who fail to secure such approval cannot hold that position for the six months after the end of the term for which approval was not given.

## **Article VI. Vacancies**

### **Section VI-1. The Creation of a Vacancy**

If a Member holding a position in the GSA ceases to be Member by failing the eligibility requirements of Article III of the Constitution or by giving up membership in writing to the Executive Committee, allows his or her term of office to expire without a successor-elect in place, is removed from office in accordance with Section VI-5 of the Constitution, or resigns the position in writing to the Executive Committee, the position shall be considered vacant immediately.

### **Section VI-2. Presidential Vacancy**

If the Office of exactly one of the Co-Presidents becomes vacant, the remaining Co-President may appoint someone to serve in that position in an Acting role. If the Offices of both Co-Presidents become vacant, the Executive Committee may appoint one Member to serve in one of those positions in an Acting role, and the new Acting Co-President may appoint someone else to serve in the other position in an Acting role. Upon confirmation at the next General Body Meeting through legislation, the Acting Co-President(s) shall take office as Co-President(s) for the rest of the term of office. If the Acting Co-President(s) fail(s) to secure confirmation at the next General Body Meeting, the office immediately becomes vacant again and the appropriate body may re-appoint someone to serve as an Acting Officer. Two Acting Co-Presidents serving together shall be confirmed or rejected individually. Anyone who serves in a position in an Acting role may not be appointed more than one consecutive time in that Acting role.

### **Section VI-3. Officer Vacancies Other Than the Presidency**

If any Officer position other than the Presidency becomes vacant, the Executive Committee may appoint someone to serve in that position in an Acting role. Upon confirmation at the next General Body Meeting through legislation, the Acting Officer shall take office as an Officer for the rest of the term of office. If the Acting Officer fails to secure confirmation at the next General Body Meeting, the office immediately becomes vacant again and the Executive Committee may re-appoint someone to serve as an Acting Officer. Anyone who serves in a position in an Acting role may be not appointed more than one consecutive time in that Acting role.

### **Section VI-4. Vacancies in Committee Chair Positions**

If the Chairpersonship of any Committee with only one Chair becomes vacant, or if all the Chairpersonships of any Committee with multiple Chairs become vacant, then the the Officers shall elect a new Chair or Chairs for that Committee in accordance with Section V-2. If a strict subset of Chairpersonships of any Committee with at least two Chairs becomes vacant, the remaining Chairs of that Committee may elect Members to fill those vacancies for the remainder of the term of office subject to the approval of a majority of the Officers. If the remainder of the term of office exceeds six months, the approval process stated in Section V-2 Clause 4.