

# GPSC | GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COMMITTEE

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE Spring 2024

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## I GPSC MEMBERS

### 1. Voting Members

#### Definitions:

- Graduate Senator: Must be currently enrolled in the University Graduate School and their academic department as a full-time student.
- Law Senator: Must be currently enrolled in the College of Law
- Medical Senator: Must be currently enrolled in the College of Medicine.

Graduate senators are elected by graduate students during the general election, voted in by the senate, or by means stated in the SGA (Student Government Association) governing documents. The Medical Senator and Law Senator are elected by the Medical Student Body and Law Student Body, respectively, and all voting members will receive salary as enumerated by the SGA Constitution.

The voting committee is composed as follows:

- 5 SGA Graduate Senators, will hold office from May to April
- 1 Law Senator, will hold office from May to April
- 1 Medical Senator, will hold office from April to March

## II. GPSC MEETINGS

- GPSC members should meet at least on a bi-weekly basis (twice a month) during the fall and spring semesters, and at least once a month during the summer semesters starting in June.
- GPSC members may meet during a semester break at the discretion of the GPSC Chair.
- In the case that a GPSC member is unable to attend an event, they should notify the GPSC Chair and senate leadership in writing at least 24 hours prior to the event.

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### III. MEMBER DUTIES

#### 1. General duties:

- GPSC voting members shall attend all Committee meetings.
- GPSC members must set and attend office hours each week as directed by SGA leadership.
  - Hours may include meetings with administrative staff, working on legislation, GAB meetings, meetings with SGA advisors, reviewing funding applications, attending events, etc.
- At the beginning of the legislative session, GPSC members must vote on whether the committee will actively review incoming travel funding applications on a weekly basis.
  - If yes: GPSC members **must** receive training on how to review applications by the GPSC Travel Funding Coordinator. Then, the committee must vote on the number of applications or time committed to reviewing applications each member must perform per week/month.
  - If not: the GPSC Travel Funding Coordinator will be responsible for reviewing all funding applications. Members will still review appeals, and vote on application decisions at the chair’s discretion.
- GPSC members shall participate in the review process for all appeals made to the GPSC. Students who make appeals shall be given the opportunity to make their case in the next GPSC meeting, or have their opinion read by the Chair. A vote shall take place by the GPSC for any appeal.
  - The decision on the appeal will be provided to the student and to the GPSC Travel Funding Coordinator via email within 48 hours of the committee’s vote.
- GPSC members shall meet annually, before the end of SGA term, along with SGA and UGS Advisors, to review travel funding policies and procedures and ensure that they are working effectively.

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- GPSC members shall participate in the organization of both non-academic and academic activities, such as, but not limited to, Gradsfellars, Workshops, Coffee Hours, etc.
- GPSC members must assume one of the following roles: Chair, Vice Chair, Events Coordinator, GSAW Coordinator, UGS Liaison.
- Roles should be assigned during the first GPSC meeting after senators have transitioned.
  - Chair and Vice Chair are selected by SGA Leadership of that session before any other roles (or otherwise stated in the SGA Constitution).
  - The remaining roles will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis by either emailing the Chair, or selecting roles in the first meeting on the committee, at the discretion of the Chair. If two or more senators are interested in the same position, a majority vote will decide which senator will assume the contested position. In the event that members do not select their roles, it shall be the Chair’s duty to assign roles.
- The GPSC Chair may create new roles on an as-needed basis. Before the end of the next legislative session, the GPSC will vote on creating a permanent role for this new position.
- If the Senate Leadership, SGA Constitution, or other SGA entity creates an additional role to be filled by a graduate student, the remaining GPSC members without a role shall assume these roles by first-come, first-serve basis. If two or more senators are interested in the position, a majority vote will decide which senator will assume the contested position.

## 2. Duties of the Chair:

- Coordinate the work of the GPSC.
- Oversee the GPSC budget.
- Oversee relevant event planning.
- Oversee the GPSC correspondence (e.g., GPSCchair email).

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- Create and set the agenda for each GPSC meeting.
- Report to the SGA President, Senate President, and SGA Advisors as required per the SGA governing documents and written University guidelines.
- Oversee and update the GPSC website by sending update requests to Creative Media.
- The Chair must propose the total allocation amounts for programming and travel by semester based on the current budget for the fiscal year and a majority approval of committee in collaboration with the GPSC Travel Funding Coordinator.
- The Chair must fulfil any other role as assigned to them by Senate Leadership, or the SGA governing documents.

### 3. Duties of the Vice Chair:

- Take meeting minutes.
- Coordinate (i.e., schedule and send reminders) all GPSC meetings including but not limited to: sending out scheduling polls, sending calendar invites, sending reminders, creating zoom links, or reserving rooms.
- Assist Chair in all duties and assume Chair duties when Chair is unavailable.
- In the event that neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair are available, the remaining committee members must nominate an Interim Chair to assume Chair duties .

### 4. Duties of the Events Coordinator

- Organize GPSC events (including requesting quotes, booking rooms, submitting publications requests, and other publicity) .
- Register and report attendance for all GPSC-sponsored events
- Coordinate with interested organizations about co- sponsorship of events.
- Communicate with different school, colleges, departments about GPSC awareness/visibility. These include but are not limited to: the production of promotional materials (flyers, pens, portfolios, etc.), and holding GPSC workshops or townhalls within departments
- Work with GSAW coordinator in GSAW planning.

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## 5. Duties of the GSAW Coordinator

- Oversee the planning of Graduate Student Appreciation Week including but not limited to: ice cream social quotes, scholarly forum quotes, other event quotes, room reservations, etc.
- Coordinate with GAB members working on GSAW for events and volunteering.
- Plan Scholarly Forum with UGS.
- Organize events including but not limited to: room reservations, volunteers, calendar invites, collaborating with FIU (Florida International University) or outside organizations.
- Report to the committee each meeting on GSAW updates.

## 6. Duties of the UGS Liaison

- Work in tandem with UGS to facilitate relevant programming and processes.
- Report to the UGS Advisors as needed.
- Send updates and news to UGS to be distributed through the grad student listserv.
- Attend all GAB meetings as directed by UGS.
  - Report to the committee a summary of GAB meetings.

## 7. Medical and Law Senators – Additional duties

- In addition to one of the above roles, the Medical and Law Senators have additional duties described below:
  - The Medical Senator should act as liaison with Medical Student Council (MSC) to promote cooperation with GPSC guidelines and ensure no medical student is receiving funding from both MSC and GPSC for the same event. The Medical Senator should also forward all appropriate GPSC news to the medical student email listserv.
  - The Law Senator should act as liaison with Student Bar Association (SBA) to promote cooperation with GPSC guidelines and ensure no law student is

- receiving funding from both SBA and GPSC for the same event. The Law Senator should also forward all appropriate GPSC news to the law student email listserv.

## IV. FUNDING POLICIES

### 1. Definitions

- GPSC Student Funding: Funding approved by the GPSC for student reimbursement by an individual, currently enrolled FIU graduate student.
- GPSC Funding Year: June 1 - May 31.
- Graduate Student: Any student currently enrolled in the University Graduate School and their academic department.
- Law Student: Student currently enrolled in the College of Law.
- Medical Student: Student currently enrolled in the College of Medicine.
- A&S: Activity and Service fees collected from all students each semester. A&S fees source GPSC funds.
- Student: FIU, graduate student who is currently enrolled in classes, who is paying Activity & Service Fees, and will be enrolled in classes at the time of reimbursement.
- Department: Student's academic department for which they are currently enrolled classes and pursuing a degree in. Trip/Travel: Entire trip, from date of departure to date of return.
- Event: Conference, workshop, research acquisition trips, etc.
- Quorum: Majority of voting members of the GPSC
- Blackout Dates: Dates in which the GPSC will not be meeting or reviewing applications. These dates are finals week, semester breaks, and transition period, typically the month of May.



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- Complete application: An application that includes filled out and signed application forms along with each supporting documentation as indicated in the checklist.
- Incomplete application: An application that is missing at least one of the documents as indicated in the checklist.
- On-time application: An application turned in by the five-week (35 days) deadline or earlier from first date of travel.
- Late application: An application that is submitted at least one day (34 days) after the five-week (35 days) deadline from first date of travel.
- Vicinity travel: Travel less than 50 miles (one way) from university headquarters (MMC Campus).

## 2. Eligibility Requirements

The outlined requirements pertain to Graduate Students that apply for travel, conference, professional development, and research funding requests.

- All applicants should be FIU graduate students, paying A&S fees, registered for classes during the semester of the event for which the funding is requested and at time of reimbursement;
- Students may receive funding from only one A&S-funded entity for the same event;

No funding request can or will be approved post facto by the GPSC as per A&S guidelines;

- Per the “Florida Travel Act” Section 1011.90(6) (<http://www.flsenate.gov/Laws/Statutes/2011/1011.90>), the GPSC cannot fund students who wish to travel for an event held in a country that the Department of State has designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. Please visit their website for the current list: <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/list/c14151.htm>.
- Students cannot earn credit or certification for the event they wish to receive funding for (e.g., classes, internship, continuing education, practicum, study abroad, etc.)

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- In addition to the above FIU, SGA, and A&S Travel Policies, each graduate student can only receive the GPSC travel fund once in each GPSC funding year.

### 3. Types of Funding

#### Conference Travel Funding

The GPSC understands that presenting research at conferences provides graduate students with a unique opportunity to represent themselves and FIU, on both an academic and professional level. We are proud to facilitate funding which allows students to present their research at their respective conferences/meetings

The student must be a presenting author. If not the first author, the abstract must be included in the application submission and proof of presenter status (from conference).

- For oral presentations, all presenters are funded and all presenters must provide an individual acceptance letter.
- For poster presentations, one student per presentation will be funded and must provide an acceptance letter as well.
- The amount allotted to each student is no more than \$500 for domestic travel and \$700 for international travel.

#### Professional Development Travel Funding

The GPSC understands that graduate students need to gain valuable skills crucial to their academic development. Professional development funding will allow students to attend various events as Non-presenting authors, workshop/seminar participants, etc. A sample of eligible events include public speaking and grant writing workshops, pedagogical seminars, such as technology in the classroom and job fairs.

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- If student is participating in the conference, workshop, symposium, etc. as an attendee only, then the amount allotted to each student for both domestic and international travel is no more than \$300.
- If the student is participating in the conference, workshop, symposium, etc. in a more substantive role (e.g. panel discussion, workshop organizer, leader, etc.) but does not meet the requirements for Conference Funding (e.g. ability to submit an abstract) then the student must provide a document proving this role in the event and the amount allotted to each student for both domestic and international travel is no more than \$450.

- Students cannot earn credit or certification for the event they wish to receive funding for (e.g., classes, internship, continuing education, practicum, study abroad, etc.)

□ Research Travel Funding

The GPSC understands that research is one of the primary concerns of many graduate students. We are proud to facilitate travel funding which will help students conduct their research endeavors.

- Needs M-2 Master’s Thesis Proposal approved by UGS for Master students
- Needs Online Dissertation Milestones: Defense of Dissertation Proposal approved by UGS for PhD students.
- The amount allotted to each student is no more than \$500 for domestic travel and \$700 for international travel.

#### 4. Travel Application Process

Any incomplete or late application as of the 5-week (35 days) deadline will not be considered by the GPSC, but denied. Applications can be found online at [gpsc.fiu.edu](https://gpsc.fiu.edu). A funding workshop presentation is also available and required for viewing prior to applying. The procedure to request GPSC Travel Funding is explained below.

- a) Complete the GPSC Funding Application found at <https://webforms.fiu.edu/view.php?id=176663>:
- b) A notification of application by the student will be sent to the faculty advisor. If the faculty advisor does not approve of the travel, they must let the GPSC know as soon as possible. If the faculty advisor does not approve of the travel, funding will not be provided.
- c) Submit the following documents for travel via the online webform:
  - Transportation quotes :For air travel, quotes must be printed from kayak.com with no filters applied to the search. The quotes must be downloaded as a pdf directly from the website with hyperlink headings. Receipts will not be an acceptable form of air travel quote, and applications with a receipt will be denied immediately.

- Rideshare quotes may be submitted as screenshots from the rideshare app. However, official receipts from email (including headers/footers) must be used in reimbursement.
  - Budget airlines (e.g., Frontier, Spirit) will not be considered the “lowest” cost for travel reimbursement. Instead, the lowest ticket price non-budget airline (e.g., American, Delta) will be used as the lowest price ticket.
- o For road travel, besides a quote for air travel from kayak.com, mileage estimates must be printed from mapquest.com with the shortest route (by mile) selected. The quotes must be downloaded as a pdf directly from the website with hyperlink headings. If the cost of air travel is cheaper than the road travel, students will be reimbursed only with the air travel cost.
- Registration and/or Abstract Submission fees quotes:
    - Must submit the full table of registration/abstract fee from the official conference website, not just the student fee. Receipts will not be an acceptable form of proof for registration and/or abstract submission fees quotes. GPSC will only reimburse the early bird registration amount. GPSC will not fund membership fees for the student, unless the fees are included within the registration without the option to registration without membership fee.
  - Accommodation quotes for Conference Presentation Only:
    - Must be submit along with your funding application and receipt with proof of payment under the student name is required as part of the post travel documents.
- d) Submit proof of abstract submission via online webform (for Conference applicants only)
- e) Submit proof of event registration or proof of event via online webform (for Professional Development applicants only).

- f) Research applicants must submit the following additional documents via online webform:
- Proposed Detailed Itinerary
  - For Master students: M-2 Master’s Thesis Proposal approved by UGS.
  - For PhD students :Online Dissertation Milestones: Defense of Dissertation Proposal approved by UGS.
- g) Submit all the above documents via the online webform. No paper applications will be accepted.

## 5. The Approval Process

- a) Applications are approved by the GPSC Travel Funding Coordinator.
- Voting members of GPSC may be trained to review applications as voted at the beginning of the SGA session.
  - Voting members of GPSC recuse themselves from the funding review process and appeal if the applicant(s) include any student(s) who originate from the member’s same department/program or if the member has a personal connection to the applicant(s) (e.g., a family member or friend)
  - A quorum of members must be present for applications to be reviewed
  - If necessary, any application received by GPSC can be shared with outside entities for expert opinions/advice.
- e) Applicants should apply for Conference, Professional Development, or Research travel Funding at least five (5) weeks (35 days) before the first day of travel. Applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. The GPSC will notify the applicant within 3 weeks of the date in which the application was received of its final decision.

**WARNING:** Any application received after the deadline has expired will automatically be denied funding.

- f) An application can be placed in the following categories following review:
- Approved: Complete, on-time, signed, with amount allocated
  - Pending: Complete, on-time applications but contain errors including, but not limited to: indemnity form completed incorrectly, supporting

documentation in incorrect format, letter of support in incorrect format. GPSC members must be able to place an allocated amount and sign.

Pending applications will be given up to five (5) days from notification to resubmit incorrect paperwork, otherwise the application will be considered incomplete and denied.

- Rejected: Any incomplete applications, late applications, students who received funding within funding year, ineligible students, or applications with an excessive number of errors as determined by the GPSC.

**WARNING:** The application should be complete in order to be reviewed. All incomplete applications will be automatically denied.

- g) Amount allocated will be determined based upon need. Funds are disbursed contingent upon availability of funds, after all procedures have been followed and all receipts/documents have been turned in via the post-travel online webform (<https://webforms.fiu.edu/view.php?id=243935>) and the student's department.
- h) The primary goal of GPSC travel funding is to fund transportation, accommodation, and registration.
  - TRANSPORTATION: One primary mode of transportation plus rideshare to/from airport:
    - o Airfare /rail (including taxes & fees, but not first class, seat reservation fees or baggage). Must submit a list of quotes even if the flight has already been purchased. Needs to justify the amount of purchased flight (e.g., picked flight because of class times, etc.)
    - o Rental car & gas (must submit gas receipts for reimbursement, quote must be generated from MapQuest Gas Calculator). No insurance or extra fees can be funded. No vicinity travel reimbursement (travel < 50 miles)
    - o Mileage (if driving own car, based on 0.445 per mile, not to exceed price of round-trip airfare to destination).

- o Rideshare: (e.g. Uber, Lyft). Must submit estimate from rideshare for application, and official receipts from rideshare for post-travel documents.
  - GPSC will cover (if funds allow) 1) a ride to the airport from home/university. 2) a ride from the conference hotel to the airport.
  - If your rideshares differ from these locations, please include a memo explaining the situation.
  
- REGISTRATION & ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FEES
  - o Must provide documentation, cannot include any extras, such as: meals, banquets, mixers, extra workshops, program book, etc. GPSC will only reimburse the early bird registration amount.
  
- ACCOMODATION FOR CONFERENCE PRESENTATION ONLY:
  - o At time of filling the application form, students can request to receive up to \$300 for accommodation. This amount will be part of the maximum possible amount of \$500/\$700.
  - o An accommodation quote must be submitted along with your funding application and receipts with proof of payment under the name of the student is required as part of the post-travel documents. Only receipts from hotels with the name of the student will be accepted. Failure to provide this document as part of the post-travel documents will disqualify the student from receiving the allocated fund for travel.
  
- i) GPSC travel funding cannot be used for hiring people, buying equipment (e.g. computers), mixers, luncheons, back-to-back conferences/events, preferred seating, one-way travel, extra workshops, luggage fees, etc.

DISCLAIMER: Students are not guaranteed to be approved for reimbursement for the maximum amount requested. Reimbursement amounts are allocated at the discretion of the committee and prioritized based on type (transportation, registration) and total amount and contingent on the GPSC budget for the funding year.



## V. APPEAL

Applicants have the right to dispute the GPSC funding decision. If travel has already begun for the event, the appeal will be denied. The process of appeal has the following steps:

### 1. Stage 1 - Internal Appeal

- Notify the GPSC voting members about your decision to appeal by email to [gpsc@fiu.edu](mailto:gpsc@fiu.edu) and CC [gpscchair@fiu.edu](mailto:gpscchair@fiu.edu)
- Schedule to appear before the GPSC with additional evidence and explain the case.
- The GPSC will decide based on the evidence and will communicate it to student within 1 (one) week.

### 2. Stage 2 - Appeal in the Senate

- If the applicant is not satisfied with the GPSC decision made at Stage 1, they should notify the SGA Senate President ([sgasenatep@fiu.edu](mailto:sgasenatep@fiu.edu)) about their decision to appeal in front of the SGA Senate. Contact the SGA Office, GC (Graham Center) 230.
- Schedule to appear before the SGA Senate with additional evidence and explain the case.
- The SGA Senate will vote on your application based on the evidence provided.

### 3. Stage 3 - Presidential Appeal

- If the applicant is not satisfied with the Senate decision made at Stage 2, they should notify the GPSC voting members about their decision to initiate the 3rd stage of the appeal.
- Schedule to appear before the SGA Student Body President with additional evidence and explain the case.
- The SGA Student Body President will make a final decision on the case.