Gender, Sex, and Sexuality Alliance (GSSA) Constitution-2014

Article I

NAME

We shall be formally known as “Gender, Sex, and Sexuality Alliance,” also abbreviated “GSSA”.

Article II

PURPOSE

Section 1: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality Alliance supports all sexual minorities, orientations, and expressions that involve one or more persons who are legally capable of giving informed consent. GSSA also supports the right of persons to identify and express their gender according to their own definitions. GSSA educates others about the diversity of gender and sexuality while emphasizing the observation of health and safety practices. GSSA advocates for the rights and dignity of those who have been marginalized because of ignorance of or prejudice toward those with unconventional gender, sex, or sexualities.

Section 2: GSSA shall act to advocate for equality and civil rights for all persons regardless of sexual and emotional orientation or gender identity and expression.

Section 3: GSSA shall work to create an atmosphere of respect, acceptance, and affirmation at The University of Texas at Tyler for all persons regardless of sexual and emotional orientation or gender identity and expression.

Section 4: GSSA seeks to increase the positive visibility of individuals with unconventional gender, sex, or sexualities and/or who identify as sexual minorities.

Section 5: GSSA seeks to educate the The University of Texas at Tyler community about all sexual minorities, orientations, and expressions. Additionally, GSSA seeks to provide education about safe sex practices and health screenings for all persons, the legal definition of consent, how to form and maintain healthy relationships, and address the impact of sexual and other interpersonal violence on individuals, families and society.

Section 6: GSSA seeks to provide support and resources to individuals facing harassment due to their perceived or actual orientation or identity, community affiliation(s), intimate practices, or partnership arrangements. Additionally, GSSA seeks to provide support for persons having coming out experiences, discovering their own identity, or discovering the identities of friends and/or family members.

Section 7: GSSA seeks to provide opportunities for socialization and fun for individuals with unconventional gender, sex, or sexualities, as well as allies and all members of the University of Texas at Tyler community.
Section 8: GSSA seeks the usage of contacts from support communities and other related charities and associations including anywhere from local to international organizations.

Section 9: Achievement of aforementioned purposes will be achieved by the usage of workshops, lectures, speakers, forums, meetings, events, demonstrations, campaigns, coalitions, social gatherings, films related to GSSA’s purpose or any other means ethically necessary to fulfill its purposes and goals.

Article III

BASIC POLICIES

Section 1: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality Alliance agrees to abide by the rules and regulations set by The University of Texas at Tyler that govern registered organizations and student conduct.

Section 2: GSSA will respect the right to privacy of its members. Membership in this organization will be at the member’s discretion, as will be their orientation or identity.

Section 3: This organization will cooperate with other organizations, agencies, and persons supporting the mission and purposes of Gender, Sex, and Sexuality Alliance.

Section 4: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality Alliance will cooperate with The University of Texas at Tyler to further its missions and goals.

Section 5: This organization will act as both a resource and an advocate to The University of Texas at Tyler and its community while respecting its policies and practices.

Section 6: GSSA welcomes all members of University of Texas at Tyler that are committed to working together towards GSSA goals and purposes.

Section 7: All GSSA members are to be treated with respect because of their inherit dignity as human beings.

Section 8: GSSA members and elected officers must follow the binding agreements set by other organizations and agencies while interacting with them.

Section 9: Meeting minutes and other group documentation shall be open to inspection by all GSSA members.

Section 10: GSSA will make sure that every meeting and event held on campus is accessible to group members and The University of Texas at Tyler community who are disabled or who have mobility limitations.

Article IV

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Section 1: Any person who abides to the purpose and basic policies of this organization may become a member of this organization, subject only to compliance with the provisions of the constitution. No person can be denied membership on the basis of race, community of faith,
worldview, gender identity or expression, sexual or emotional orientation, disability, age martial or partnership status, parental of child-free status, veteran status, political philosophy, or any other factor unrelated to their positive contribution to this organization.

Section 2: Membership may be obtained by returning a completed membership form and any required or requested dues, as agreed upon by the voting membership at the time of induction.

Section 3: Active membership is restricted to University of Texas at Tyler students. Associate membership is restricted to University of Texas at Tyler employees and alumni.

Section 4: Only members in good standings with the organization shall be eligible to participate in its business meetings or serve in any of its elective or appointed positions.

Section 5: Members hold the ultimate power in this organization and are encouraged to be active.

Section 6: The elected officers shall maintain an accurate list of members and their contact information.

Section 7: The elected officers shall be responsible for creating and maintaining systems of communication with members and promotion of the organization with the public.

**Article V**

**OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION**

Section 1:

a. The officers of this organization shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Public Relations Officer.

b. Officers shall be elected annually at the last meeting of the regular academic year. Membership may decide by a 2/3 vote when a quorum of members are present to dissolve the elections of the previous year and elect new officers.

c. Officers shall assume their official duties at the close of the meeting in which they are elected and shall serve for one year, or until they resign, are impeached and removed, or until the election of their successors.

d. Membership nominates members for office. Members may impeach and remove an officer by a 2/3 vote when a quorum is present.

Section 2: To be eligible to be elected, appointed, or hold an office a student must:

a. Be enrolled as a full-time or part-time student at The University of Texas at Tyler;

b. Not be on University disciplinary or scholastic probation;

c. Be willing to represent the organization in a professional manner
Section 3:

a. The President or Vice President shall preside at all meetings of the membership. They shall serve as the public face of the organization. The President shares the responsibility of ensuring the effectiveness and utility of meetings with the Vice President. They shall coordinate the work of the officers and committees in order that purposes of the organization are fulfilled.

b. The Secretary shall record the minutes of the meetings and perform other delegated duties. The Secretary shall distribute the minutes to the membership. The Secretary is responsible for keeping a historical archive of the organization including, but not limited to newspaper articles, minutes, policies etc. This information shall be passed on to the Secretary’s successor.

c. The Treasurer shall receive and handle all money provided to the organization. The Treasurer will do so by keeping accurate records or receipts and expenditure, pay out funds in accordance to an approved budget, and shall present a report at each meeting. The treasurer’s accounts shall be examined each semester by a panel of three persons selected by the officers. This member shall ensure that the report is satisfactory and correct and will sign a statement to that effect and present it at the next meeting.

d. The Public Relations Officer shall serve as the media outreach for the organization and provide information to the public about the organization through local and student media. Also, they will monitor the references to the organization in the media.

Article VI

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Section 1: As required to achieve and promote the purposes and mission of this organization, the officers shall create standing and special committees. Each officer, outside of the President and Vice President, will be appointed as the chairperson of a standing committee for a term of one year. The President and Vice President will be responsible for overseeing activity of all standing committees.

Section 2: The chair of each committee will present plans of work to the elected officers and no work will be undertaken without the approval of elected officer.

Section 3: The following committees are created and considered by the constitution to be integral to the organization:

a. The Committee for Social Responsibility and Activism will oversee and support all social and membership aspects of the organization, as well as plan and coordinate local coalitions and increase the organization’s visibility

b. The Committee for Education, Information, and Resources will develop and provide outlets for information and training related to the organization’s interests, members, and community
Section 4: Membership in committees is open to all members and is unlimited in size. Committees may form sub-committees as they see necessary. Committees may invite non-members to regularly attend meeting as a consultant in a non-voting role.

**Article VII**

**MEETINGS**

Section 1: Regular meeting of this organization shall be held bi-weekly, on a regular day to be decided by the elected officers and approved by a majority of the membership.

Section 2: Other meetings may be called by 25% of the membership in a written petition to the President or by the President.

Section 3: 25% of members will constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in meeting except in a case when a 2/3 vote is called for. In that case, at least 60% of active members must be present to achieve quorum.

Section 4: The privilege of holding office, introducing motions, debating, and voting shall be limited to active members. Members may call upon non-members to speak. Members may add agenda items by approaching the President. Twenty-five percent of members signing a petition shall force the President to call a meeting or place an item on the agenda.

**Article VIII**

**CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT**

Section 1: Gender, Sex, and Sexuality Alliance will keep the information of its members confidential. Any information that is shared will be at the discretion of the member.

Section 2: At the beginning of any meeting the following terms are to be made clear to all in attendance:

a. This time and place is considered a “safe space” for those in attendance, and each individual will be treated with respect.

b. All present members agree to abide by strict confidentiality concerning any persons present at this meeting or anything they may choose to reveal about themselves, their friends or family members.

c. The members in attendance will not make assumptions about any persons regarding: sexual or emotional orientation, gender identity or expression, relationship status or desire to form relationship(s), sexual and relational practices, sexual and relational history, ability to legally give consent, or health status.

d. Members should not feel the need to restrict themselves to any label or category and do not label or categorize others in ways the member rejects. Members will also be accommodating in use of pronouns when addressing others.
e. Members of GSSA will keep an open mind and regularly examine their own assumptions. Members may encounter ideas, practices, and partnership/family arrangements that are stigmatized and marginalized by mainstream society. Members will be given opportunities to embrace diversity and enlightenment by participating in GSSA and speaking from personal experiences.

**Article IX**

**AMENDMENTS**

Section 1:

1. This constitution may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the organization by a 2/3 vote of the membership or 2/3 vote of the elected officers. In such instances that 2/3 vote of the membership conflicts with the 2/3 vote of the elected officers, the membership resolution will be considered a valid one.

2. No amendment may be passed that dissolves the membership of its ultimate authority.

3. A constitutional committee may be created by 2/3 vote of the membership to propose a revised constitution.

**BYLAWS**

Section 1:

1. Subsequent to this constitution, GSSA may also be governed by any number of organizational bylaws.

2. Bylaw propositions may be submitted to an assembly of membership during any regular or called meeting where quorum is present. They may be discussed openly and adopted upon a two-thirds majority vote. Founding organizational bylaws may be adopted parallel to this constitution.

3. No bylaw may be adopted which is contrary in content or context to this constitution. Any such proposition should be submitted as a constitutional amendment.