



Officer **Elections**

2024-2025

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION
ELECTION INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE OFFICER CANDIDACY INFORMATION PACKET

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2024-2025 CANDIDATE GUIDE

About the Graduate and Professional Student Association

The purpose of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GAPSA) is to establish a forum through which graduate and professional students can address issues affecting them, advocate for the greater good of the community, grow professionally and socialize with one another, and create a stronger graduate community that promotes personal and academic success. The goal of GAPSA is to bridge the gap between faculty and graduate students, build a stronger connection between University Life and graduate students, conduct professional development programs for graduate students, create social outlets for graduate students, build the strength of the graduate community, enhance the graduate experience, and increase Mason's competitive edge.

Structure

The Graduate and Professional Student Association (GAPSA) comprises only one elected governing body, known as the Executive Board, which consists of the President, the Executive Vice President, the Vice Presidents of Regional Campuses, and the Director of Communications. GAPSA's Executive Board is responsible for the general operation of the organization and for being the collective voice of all graduate and professional students.

Executive Officer Position Descriptions

Summaries of the responsibilities of the Executive Officer positions follow. Additional responsibilities are outlined in the [GAPSA Constitution](#) and [Bylaws](#).

President

The President is responsible for overseeing all aspects of GAPSA. The President shall preside over and set the agenda for all Association meetings. The President may only vote in the case of a tie.

- The President shall be elected by the entire electorate and is responsible for overseeing all aspects of GAPSA.
- It is highly recommended that the President be based on Fairfax Campus at least part of the time due to the volume of meetings that take place on Fairfax Campus, including, but not limited to, meeting with George Mason University's Vice President of University Life, Senior Associate Provost for Graduate Education, and the advisors to GAPSA, and all-day Board of Visitors meetings, Graduate Council meetings, search committee meetings, and University committee meetings.
- The President shall liaise with the Student Government and Faculty Senate.
- The President shall set the agendas and chair the meetings of the Executive Board and General Assembly.
- The President shall be the voting student representative to the Graduate Council.
- The President has veto power over all resolutions passed by the General Assembly. All resolutions must be signed or vetoed by the President.
- The President shall only cast a vote in the case of a split body.
- The President is responsible for meeting with the Executive Officers and GAPSA advisors regularly.

- The President will be offered a half-time graduate professional assistantship (GPA) with the expectation that they will work 10 hours/week on average. The President must be a full-time graduate or professional student in a degree-seeking program to accept the assistantship.

Executive Vice President

The Executive Vice President (EVP) shall maintain the records of the Association and support the President in the administration of the Association. The EVP shall act in an official capacity on behalf of the President in the absence of the President and shall hold a voting seat in the General Assembly unless chairing. It is highly recommended that the EVP be based on Fairfax Campus. The EVP is responsible for meeting with the Director of Graduate Student Life and other advisors to GAPSA.

- The EVP shall be elected by the entire electorate.
- The EVP shall maintain the records of the Association and support the President in the administration of the Association.
- The EVP shall be the non-voting student representative to the Graduate Council.
- The EVP shall be parliamentarian and secretary of the Executive Board and the General Assembly.
- The EVP shall hold a voting seat in the General Assembly.
- The EVP shall work on general programming for the GAPSA population.
- The EVP is responsible for attending regular (i.e., biweekly) meetings with the Executive Board.
- The EVP shall meet regularly with the GAPSA advisers.

Vice Presidents of Regional Campuses

The Vice Presidents of Regional Campuses shall represent the interests of the graduate and professional students from one of GMU's regional campuses and shall be based at the regional campus they represent by being a student in one of the graduate or professional programs housed on that regional campus or working or living on that campus. There shall be a Vice President of the Arlington Campus, Vice President of the Fairfax Campus, and Vice President of the Science and Technology Campus. The Vice Presidents of Regional Campuses are responsible for meeting with the Director of Graduate Student Life, GAPSA advisors, and University Life staff/faculty on their campus. They are voting members of GAPSA's General Assembly.

- The Vice Presidents shall be elected by the entire electorate.
- The Vice Presidents shall hold voting seats in the General Assembly.
- The Vice Presidents shall hold town halls or other programs to understand and address the needs of the graduate and professional student population at their regional campus and to help set the agenda for the General Assembly.
- The Vice Presidents shall be responsible for all communication for their respective campus.
- The Vice President of each campus is responsible for attending regular (i.e., biweekly) meetings with the Executive Board.
- The Vice Presidents shall meet regularly with the GAPSA advisors.

Director of Communications

The Director of Communications (hereafter called “DC”) shall act as the external communication officer for the Association and lead efforts for engaging graduate and professional students through communications.

- The entire graduate and professional student body shall elect the DC.
- The DC shall be responsible for all marketing communications, including social media.
- The DC shall coordinate between GAPSA and the Graduate Newsletter team regarding the Association’s news and events publications.
- The DC shall hold a voting seat in the General Assembly.
- The DC shall meet regularly with the GAPSA advisors.
- The DC is responsible for attending regular (i.e., biweekly) meetings with the Executive Board.

IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES

Applications Available	Monday, February 26, 2024
Applications Due	Sunday, March 31, 2024, 11:55 PM
Review of Applications and Qualifications	Monday, April 1 - Friday, April 5, 2024
Announcement of Candidates and General Campaigning	Monday, April 8, 2024: Candidates will be announced, and general campaigning begins through Thursday, April 18, 2024.
Meet the Candidates	Date to be determined (April 8-12, 2024)
Election Voting Opens	Tuesday, April 16, 2024, 12:00 AM
Election Voting Closes	Thursday, April 18, 2024, 11:55 PM
Election Results Announced	Monday, April 22, 2024
Transition Meeting/Retreat	Wednesday, May 1, 2024 (tentative)

CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES

1. Candidates may not engage in “negative” campaigning. All campaigning should be conducted in a positive and professional manner. Negative campaigning includes slander, vandalism, removal of opponent materials, and any action deemed by the current GAPSA executive board to attack a candidate in a personal and/or false manner.
2. All flyers and posters may ONLY be posted on public bulletin boards on campus and must follow university posting guidelines. Candidates may not post directly on glass, walls, doors, outdoors, etc.

3. Candidates may not disrupt any classes, on-campus events, or activities when campaigning unless approved by the professor or event organizer.
4. All campaign materials must be removed from campus(es) by **Friday, April 19, 2024**. This includes all posters, fliers, and other printed materials.
5. All questions about acceptable campaign practices should be addressed to Bernard Atieme at batieme@gmu.edu. If you are unsure if something is acceptable, you are strongly encouraged to ask before you act.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

This year, candidates will participate in a Meet the Candidates session, hosted by the current Executive Board for Mason's graduate and professional student populations. This meeting will be recorded and will appear on the election website and GAPSA communications. This recording may be used by candidates in their own marketing and campaigning. A date for the session will be selected upon review of candidates' availability. Candidates whose eligibility has been confirmed will receive an email from Dr. Julie Choe Kim, Director of Graduate Student Life and advisor to GAPSA, and will be notified of the date and time of the Meet the Candidates event.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Can I run for more than one position?

A: No, since there are only 6 elected positions.

2. Can Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Program (BAM) students run for a position?

A: Only students who have fully matriculated into a graduate or professional degree program (after the bachelor's degree is conferred) may run. BAM students who are taking graduate courses before receiving their bachelor's degree are not eligible to run for a GAPSA officer position.

3. Can I still be a part of this organization if I don't run for an elected position?

A: Yes, GAPSA is meant as an outlet to voice concerns, gather together as graduate students, and network with each other. We need and want as many grad students as would like to participate in the Assembly and on various committees.

4. Can I still run for a position if I am a part-time student?

A: Yes, GAPSA is open to all degree-seeking graduate and professional students, whether they are full-time or part-time students. The President must be a full-time graduate student in a degree-seeking program in order to accept the graduate professional assistantship offered.

5. When does the term of office begin and end for each position?

A: All elected offices hold a one-year term, beginning **July 1, 2024**, and ending **June 30, 2025**.

6. How much time will holding a leadership position take?

A: The amount of time spent in a leadership position and devoted to the organization is dependent upon the position. The following are minimum estimates of the time required by each position:

- President: minimum of 10 hours per week on average during the academic year (AY).
- Executive Vice President: 7 hours per week on average during the AY
- Vice Presidents of Regional Campuses: 5 hours per week on average during the AY
- Director of Communications: 5 hours per week on average during the AY

7. How will officers spend their time?

A: Officers will be expected to attend biweekly Executive Board meetings, usually ranging from 1.5-2 hours; regular meetings with GAPSA advisors (1-2 hours/month); monthly General Assembly meetings, usually lasting 1.5 hours; committee meetings; a transition meeting with outgoing and incoming officers; 2 all-day retreats, one per semester; and GAPSA events. Officers should consider that commute time does not count toward the weekly average work time.

8. Do officers of GAPSA receive compensation?

A: The President will be offered a part-time graduate professional assistantship with a stipend and tuition benefits. The other GAPSA officers will receive scholarships, based on meeting expectations. Officers will be required to sign an agreement to terms in order to receive compensation.

9. Do I have to campaign?

A: No, that is why each applicant is asked to include a biography about themselves and a candidate statement, as well as participate in the Meet the Candidates event, to share what makes them qualified for the position so each voter can make an informed decision.

10. When is the deadline for applications?

A: **Sunday, March 31, 2024, 11:55 PM.**

11. How will elections be conducted?

A: GAPSA elections will take place online through the Mason 360 platform (mason360.gmu.edu). Email instructions will go out to all eligible voters prior to the opening of voting.

12. When will the election take place?

A: Elections begin on **Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at 12:00 AM** and end on **Thursday, April 18, 2024, at 11:55 PM.**

13. How will I be notified of the outcome of the election?

A: Candidates will be notified whether they have or have not acquired an elected position via email. Election results will be announced to the public on the GAPSA website on **Monday, April 22, 2024.**

CANDIDACY APPLICATION PROCESS

How to Apply

- Applications for GAPSA Executive Officer positions must be submitted using the online form at <https://cglink.me/2d7/s94944>. You will be required to log in to access the form. You will have the ability to edit your submission until the application deadline.
- Applications must be submitted by **Sunday, March 31, 2024, 11:55 PM**.

Overview of GAPSA Executive Officer Candidacy Application

The online application (<https://cglink.me/2d7/s94944>) requests the following information:

- **Part 1: Candidate Information**
 - First and Last Name
 - G Number
 - What Executive Officer position are you seeking?
 - Academic Department
 - College/School
 - Degree Program (master's, doctoral, or JD)
 - Expected date of graduation (month/year)
 - Campus where your academic department is located
 - Campus(es) where you attend classes, work, and/or reside (please describe)
 - During the **2024-2025 academic year**, will you be a full-time student or a part-time student? *Graduate students are considered full-time if they are enrolled in at least 9 graduate credits per semester OR hold a full-time assistantship and are enrolled in at least 6 graduate credits per semester. Additional definitions are available at <http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/>.*
 - Would you be able to attend a 4-hour Executive Officer Transition Retreat for outgoing and incoming officers on **Wednesday, May 1, 2024** (tentative)? Please provide additional information, if needed.
- **Part 2: Contact Information**
 - Current mailing address
 - GMU email
 - Preferred email (if not GMU)
 - Phone Number
- **Part 3: Open Response Questions** (Please note that these responses will be posted online to help voters make an informed decision.)
 - A brief biography and candidate statement about why you would be qualified for this position (no longer than 500 words in total).
 - Will you be able to meet the time commitments and expectations of the position? Describe your probable availability for the **2024-2025 academic year**, as well as other ongoing time commitments (e.g., classes, work, organizational involvement).
- **Part 4: Attestation and Certification**
 - Are you in good academic and disciplinary standing with the University?
 - I hereby certify that I have read the information contained in the GAPSA Executive Officer Candidacy Packet and that I have supplied truthful information on this Candidacy Application Form and additional application materials. I also give permission to Graduate Student Life to verify my enrollment information and academic and disciplinary standing.

Questions?

If you have questions, please contact Bernard Atieme, Graduate Professional Assistant for Graduate Student Leadership and Advising and co-advisor to GAPSA, at batieme@gmu.edu.