

# **Constitution of the Graduate Student Body of the Asian Languages and Literature Department**

(Final Draft, Summer 2015)

Being a graduate student in the Asian Languages and Literature (AL&L) department is both a privilege and a responsibility. The body of the graduate students in the department is often small, consisting of no more than forty active, registered students in a given year. Many of the students have known one another through the activities in the department, and over the years lasting fellowships have been developed which turn into long-term professional relationships. To foster these fellowships, it is necessary to adopt a few simple guidelines so that incoming students can quickly settle in and the student body can function effectively with its yearly membership turnover. This document is both a source of information for new students and a description of procedures relevant to all members of the AL&L graduate student body.

Although all AL&L graduate students are encouraged to serve as officers to perform the functions listed below, the primary responsibilities rest with the second-year graduate students and with graduate students who have been with the department for a few years. Incoming graduate students are welcome to participate either as officers or as volunteers, if they are so interested; but experience has shown that they may need time to adjust to the new environment or have a course load that prevents them from serving the AL&L graduate student body in these functions. In the event that the number of second-year graduate students falls below the threshold required to fill all officer positions, the group of second-year AL&L graduate students has the responsibility to enlist the help of other graduate students so that all functions listed below are covered.

Election of officers of the AL&L graduate student body is conducted annually, typically in the Autumn Quarter. An election is called by the President of the AL&L graduate student body of the previous year, if he or she has not yet graduated; otherwise, the election will be coordinated and called by the officers of the previous years. This annual election will elect five officers: one departmental representative in the university level Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS), one student representative in the AL&L Departmental Faculty Meetings, one Treasurer, one chairperson for Annual Book Sale, and one chairperson for Annual Graduate Student Colloquium. This annual election will also elect one of the five officers as President of the AL&L graduate student body. Their appointments last for a term of one full year. For continuity, officers of the previous years will be canvassed to see if they are willing to serve for another term. If they are, they automatically become a candidate of the election. All officers are volunteer positions and collect no pay.

## **Overview**

The following is an overview of the five regular activities organized by and for the AL&L graduate student body:

1. Departmental Representative to participate in the university GPSS meetings
2. Student Representative to attend the AL&L Departmental Faculty Meetings
3. Treasurer: The graduate student body has a specific fund with a bank account. This fund is independent from the AL&L departmental finance and is to support the graduate students in the department in the areas of conference travel, Graduate Student Colloquium, computer maintenance, and other expenses relevant to the common good of the AL&L graduate student body. One graduate student in the department will be elected as Treasurer. One of the other four elected officers, except the President, will be appointed by the President to serve as a backup.
4. Annual Book Sale: This is a two-day event, taking place usually in the Spring Quarter. During the Book Sale, donated new or used books related to our field of study will be sold at a low price first to

our own students then to the general public. These books, including materials on non-paper media, are donated by UW faculty members, former graduates, friends, students who have just finished their degree programs, and even current students. Many entry-level books on Asian languages can be found here and they often attract students and faculty members from other departments. The revenue of the Book Sale is used to offset the expense incurred for the AL&L graduate students to attend off-campus conferences. It is the responsibility of the chairperson of the Book Sale to form an ad hoc committee of volunteers to implement the Book Sale.

5. Annual Graduate Student Colloquium: This is held every year typically during the Winter Quarter so as to not conflict with the Spring Quarter Book Sale. The colloquium provides graduate students the chance to share research results and collaborate with one another. It further allows the organizers to have an experience planning and carrying out an event like a professional academic conference. It is the responsibility of the chairperson of the Graduate Student Colloquium to form an ad hoc committee of volunteers to implement the Graduate Student Colloquium.

### **The President**

The President of the AL&L graduate student body has the overall responsibility to oversee the five principal activities organized by and for the AL&L graduate student body. The President also serves as one of the five officers. In addition, the President calls the annual meeting to elect new officers including the new president who will succeed the incumbent. If the President has graduated or left the AL&L department before the election is called, the remaining officers will have the responsibility to jointly call the meeting to elect new officers.

The President also works with each officer before the annual election to identify a candidate for the position in the new election, including the possibility of enlisting the incumbent officer as a candidate. This is to assure that there is at least one candidate in each of the five positions and is not intended to circumvent nominations of candidates by AL&L graduate students at large in the annual meeting.

### **The GPSS Representative**

At the beginning of each Autumn Quarter an AL&L graduate student will be elected as a representative to the GPSS. The duties of a GPSS Representative include the following:

1. Attend all meetings of the GPSS, usually once a month every quarter.
2. Inform the AL&L graduate students of any announcements or upcoming events.
3. Represent the department and vote on issues brought before the Senate.

### **The benefits to the AL&L Department include the following:**

1. The representative is able to report on issues facing all graduate students at the University of Washington.
2. The representative provides a voice for the concerns of the department in measures passed by the Senate.
3. Only a GPSS representative can apply for department funds from the Senate. Any upgrades to the department to be funded by the GPSS must come through the representative.
4. Each quarter the GPSS offers travel grants for up to \$250 each for all graduate students. This information can be found on the GPSS website <http://www.gpss.washington.edu/>
5. Each year the GPSS offers up to \$350 for general purchases that assist in the lives of graduate students of a given department; the only stipulation is that these purchases cannot be academically related (computers, printers, etc.). The Student Representative in the AL&L Departmental Faculty Meetings A graduate representative chosen through election attends the monthly faculty departmental meetings. These meetings are usually held at the beginning of the month and last about two hours. During these meetings, the function of the graduate representative is solely to observe

and take notes. Afterward, the representative will distribute a summary of pertinent information to all department graduate students. This function keeps graduate students abreast of the latest on departmental issues and a chance to act on issues that will affect departmental students.

### **The Treasurer**

All official and business documents and bank checks are kept by the current Treasurer and Academic Counselor (presently, Abby Petty). Any graduate student requesting for funds should follow the procedure. (The travel grant policy is posted on the departmental website). The Treasurer should maintain complete and clear records of the expenses and incomes and should monitor the account balance to avoid overdraft.

The primary source of the fund is from the proceeds of the Annual Book Sale, which normally can bring in \$500 after expenses. The fund is currently kept in Chase Bank under the name of Graduate Student Association.

The Treasurer is automatically the principal signer of bank checks. There are normally two check signers, in case the principal signer is out of town. The backup Treasurer appointed by the President from the pool of the elected officers during the annual election meeting serves as the backup signer. Any change of principal or backup signer should be approved in the meeting of the AL&L graduate student body and by the department. The procedure to change a check signer is dictated by the bank policy.

### **The Annual Book Sale**

The Annual Book Sale will be organized by the chairperson of the Book Sale each year in the spring quarter. To organize a successful Book Sale, the organizer will need to send an email to prospective donors of books, followed by an email to announce the dates of the event to the AL&L faculty members and students. The books collected will need to be sorted by categories and displayed in the Student Lounge. The organizer will also ask for volunteers to help supervise the sale, including collecting money and checking the student status on the first day of the event.

1. **Donation** - Books that were not sold in the previous Book Sale events have been stored in the Gowen M226 storage room. For new donations, an email should be sent to faculty members and fellow students asking for donations of books, journals, CDs, and DVDs. See a sample email in the Appendix.
2. **Announcement** - The announcement should include both emails and posters, and it should include the following information:

**Time:** two days (open to public only on second day afternoon)

**Place:** student lounge

**Price:** (See a sample price schedule in the Appendix.)

3. **Set-up** - This can be a labor intensive task, with several volunteers and carts needed. One day before the set-up, the Student Lounge has to be reserved. Classifying the books and other media by languages (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, South Asian, Others) and price-setting will need to be completed. An email asking for volunteers should be sent out days (probably a week In advance) before the Book Sale date; and a volunteer schedule with sign-up sheets should be posted publicly concurrently. A cash drawer with cash and changes should be ready before the Book Sale date. Changes can be obtained from the Treasurer and the cash drawer can be checked out from the main departmental office. A notebook to record the sale should also accompany the cash drawer.

4. **The duty of the volunteer** (cashier) - The duty of each volunteer includes (1) recording each transaction, (2) safeguarding the books and the proceeds of the sales, (3) politely asking used-book

dealers to come back in the afternoon of the second day, (4) transferring the cash drawer and sales record to the next volunteer.

5. **Clean-up** - After the sale event, several volunteers and carts will be needed to clean up. The proceeds should be documented and promptly reported to the Treasurer. Leftover books should be boxed and moved to the Gowen M226 storage room. The cash drawer and student lounge key should be returned to the main office

6. **Acknowledgment** - The organizer should send an email to thank the donors, volunteers, and other helpers after the Book Sale concludes. Typically, an email to announce the proceeds to the graduate students is also sent out at this point.

### **The Annual Graduate Student Colloquium**

The Graduate Student Colloquium will be organized each year by the second year graduate students in the Department of AL&L under the direction of the chairperson of the Graduate Student Colloquium. At present, the Colloquium will consist of panels in four areas: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and South Asian, and a representative in a given area should organize papers from the area. It is recommended that in the event a representative from any of the areas cannot be filled, a substitute from non-second year AL&L students or a representative from another department at the University of Washington be invited to serve on the committee.

A theme for papers, panels and workshops may be selected or the topic may be left open to individual presenters.

It is recommended that each presenter is placed on a panel according to area or theme; however, this is left to the discretion of the organizers.

A keynote speaker may be selected from UW faculty or prominent people in the academic study of Asia. It is recommended that this invitation be extended and confirmed three to four months before the date of the colloquium.

The organizers may determine the limits of students to be involved, It is recommended that the event be interdepartmental in order to increase the number of students participating and encourage more collaboration. A colloquium restricted to the department will likely result in the inability to form panels. Participation of undergraduate students may be considered on some level.

Organizers should select a time limit for papers, choose a date (typically a Saturday or Sunday), schedule a room through the department Curriculum Secretary, finalize the theme (if used), and announce the event to the department(s) at least two months before the date of the colloquium.

Funding for refreshments, programs, etc. can be drawn from the graduate student account or requested from the Department of AL&L. Another campus department or off campus businesses could also be solicited for co-sponsorship.

Conference rooms can be reserved through the Curriculum Secretary in the Department of AL&L or through agreements with other departments. The conference rooms owned by various departments (Philosophy, Sociology, etc.) on the fourth floor of Savery Hall are good examples of rooms that are ideal for the colloquium. In any case rooms larger than a regular classroom would likely exceed the size requirements for this event.

A deadline should be set for participants to submit abstracts. Panels or order of speakers should be arranged and a final program should be created. The organizing committee may choose to have upper level graduate students and/or faculty members to moderate panels.

### **Amendment**

Any part of this constitution can be amended if a motion to amend is seconded and voted in favor in a general assembly of all AL&L graduate students with a simple majority, provided that the votes in favor exceed a minimum vote of one fourth of the registered graduate students of the quarter when the amendment is considered.

## **Appendix. A Sample Email and a Sample Price Schedule for the Annual Book Sale**

1. The following is a sample email to graduate students to ask for book donations:

Dear Fellow Grads,

Just to remind everyone, the deadline for donating those dusty tomes for the annual Book Sale is almost upon us. Everyone who would like to pare down their accumulation of scholarly or popular texts written either in an Asian language or about Asian languages and literature, please drop them off in the Main office (Gowen Room 225) on or before [date].

2. Sample Price Schedule hardcover
  - a. Hardcover, 500 pages or more \$3
  - b. Hardcover, less than 500 pages \$2
  - c. Paperback, 500 pages or more \$2
  - d. Paperback, less than 500 pages \$1
  - e. Journals \$0.50
  - f. CD's & DVD's \$1