

# **The Constitution of the Political Science Graduate Organization (PoGo) at the University of Notre Dame**

## **Preamble**

The mission of the Political Science Graduate Organization (hereinafter PoGo) is to:

- Provide a forum for the organized expression of student opinion within the department
- Provide a mechanism for discussion and enactment of student initiatives
- Provide resources that promote the professional advancement of graduate students within the Political Science Department
- Foster social, institutional, and intellectual links between the graduate students and faculty of the Political Science Department
- Facilitate the maintenance of amicable relations between the graduate students and the faculty and administration of the Political Science Department
- Promote opportunities for social interaction between graduate students of this department

## **Article I: Membership**

Section 1: All full time graduate students in the Political Science department are members of PoGo. This includes all students enrolled in the doctoral program as well as full-time MA students and those enrolled in the joint MA/JD program.

Section 2: Membership shall be divided into voting members and nonvoting members. All resident graduate students are voting members. Voting members are entitled to vote in all PoGo elections, on proposed constitutional amendments, and any other proposals put before the full membership by the Executive Committee. Each voting member will be asked to pay annual dues of \$5, which will be used to fund PoGo activities. All non-resident graduate students are considered nonvoting members. Nonvoting members are entitled to all of the services PoGo provides to its members and may attend PoGo meetings and present initiatives for the consideration of the membership, but nonvoting members are not entitled to vote in PoGo elections and are not required to pay dues. Nonvoting members are allowed, however, to vote on proposed constitutional amendments.

Section 3: The Director of Graduate Studies (hereinafter DGS) serves as the PoGo advisor and is an *ex officio* member of PoGo. The DGS does not have voting power but does have veto power over any proposed events/activities that are *clear* violations of university policy.

## **Article II: Elections**

Section 1: The PoGo Executive Committee shall have eight elected officers:

- President
- Vice President for Professional Development
- Vice President for Social Affairs

- First Year Representative
- A Field Representative for each of the four departmental subfields:
  - American Politics
  - Comparative Politics
  - International Relations
  - Political Theory

**Section 2:** The Executive Committee shall be elected by PoGo's voting members for a term of one calendar year, which begins on May 15<sup>th</sup> and ends on May 14<sup>th</sup>. All voting members are eligible to serve as officers of the Executive Committee. Officers are re-eligible for election, and there are no term limits. No individual may hold more than one office on the Executive Committee at a time, but members of the Executive Committee may also serve as a PoGo representative to the Graduate Student Union.

**Section 3:** Elections for all positions on the Executive Committee except the First Year Representative are to be conducted in the following manner:

1. The President, no later than March 30<sup>th</sup> of each year, will call for Executive Committee nominations from the voting members of PoGo via a department-wide email or memorandum. In addition to voting members, individuals who are currently nonvoting members but who will be eligible to vote during the subsequent academic year are eligible to run for Executive Committee positions and may also make nominations and vote in the election. There is no limit to the number of individuals who may be nominated for any one position. An individual may run for more than one position, but if elected to multiple positions, he/she may accept only one. Nominees for Field Representative of the four subfields must have as their primary subfield the field for which they have been nominated. The nomination process will be open for a minimum of one week and a maximum of two weeks, excluding university breaks and holidays.
2. Once nominations are closed, the President will then contact the nominees to ask them if they accept the nomination(s). After nominations are confirmed, the President will compile a ballot and issue the ballot to the voting members using the same medium used for the nomination process. The voting period will be no less than one week and no more than two weeks, excluding university breaks and holidays. Ballots shall be returned to the President either via email or in an anonymous ballot box, which will be located in the graduate studies office in O'Shaughnessy Hall. Those who vote via the ballot box should check their names off of the department roster that will be in the care of the Graduate Studies Administrative Assistant in order to ensure fairness by preventing individuals from casting multiple or fraudulent votes.
3. Upon the conclusion of the election, the President will count the ballots and announce the election results within 48 hours of the close of the voting period. The individual with the most votes wins. In the event of a tie, there will be a run-off election, which will be conducted in the same manner outlined in Section 3.1-3. If the tie cannot be broken through an election of all PoGo voting members, then the members of the Executive

Committee will vote to break the tie. If the President is running for an Executive Committee office, another Executive Committee officer who is not running for office will count the ballots. This individual will be appointed by a majority of the members of the current Executive Committee. The entire election process should be completed by May 14<sup>th</sup>, and the new members of the Executive Committee will assume the duties of the office to which they have been elected at on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Section 4: The First Year Representative will be elected in the following manner:

1. The President, no later than September 15<sup>th</sup> of each year, will invite the members of the first year cohort to nominate a member of their cohort to be the First Year Representative. The nomination process will be conducted either via email or memorandum and will last not less than one week and not longer than two weeks, excluding university breaks and holidays.
2. Once nominations are closed, the President will then contact the nominees to ask them if they accept the nomination. After nominations are confirmed, the President will compile a ballot and issue the ballot to the members of the first year cohort using the same medium used for the nomination process. The voting period will be no less than one week and no more than two weeks, excluding university breaks and holidays. Ballots shall be returned to the President either via email or in an anonymous ballot box, which will be located in the graduate studies office in O'Shaughnessy Hall. Those who vote via the ballot box should check their names off of the roster that will be in the care of the Graduate Studies Administrative Assistant in order to ensure fairness by preventing individuals from casting multiple or fraudulent votes.
3. Upon the conclusion of the election, the President will count the ballots and announce the election results within 48 hours of the close of the voting period. The individual with the most votes wins. In the event of a tie, there will be a run-off election, which will be conducted in the same manner outlined in Section 4.1-3. If the tie cannot be broken through an election of first year cohort, then the members of the Executive Committee will vote to break the tie.
4. The First Year Representative will assume the duties of his/her office immediately upon the announcement of the election results and will relinquish these duties with the rest of reigning Executive Committee on May 15<sup>th</sup> when the new Executive Committee is installed.

Section 5: In addition to the PoGo Executive Committee, the voting members will also elect two individuals to represent the department at Graduate Student Union Council meetings. These individuals will be responsible for attending monthly GSU meetings and for reporting back to the Executive Committee about the proceedings of these meetings. The GSU representatives will also vote for the department at GSU meetings and should solicit opinions of the Executive Committee and voting members about upcoming votes. If the GSU representatives feel that the issues to be discussed at the GSU meeting are urgent, they may call upon the President to call a department-wide PoGo meeting to discuss these matters. The procedure for electing GSU Representatives will be as follows:

1. The President, no later than September 15<sup>th</sup> of each year, will invite the voting members to nominate individuals to serve as the GSU Representative. These individuals must be voting members. Members of the Executive Committee and first year students are eligible for nomination. The nomination process will be conducted either via email or memorandum and will last not less than one week and not longer than two weeks, excluding university breaks and holidays.
2. Once nominations are closed, the President will then contact the nominees to ask them if they accept the nomination(s). After nominations are confirmed, the President will compile a ballot and issue the ballot to the voting members using the same medium used for the nomination process. The voting period will be no less than one week and no more than two weeks, excluding university breaks and holidays. Ballots shall be returned to the President either via email or in an anonymous ballot box, which will be located in the graduate studies office in O'Shaughnessy Hall. Those who vote via the ballot box should check their names off of the department roster that will be in the care of the Graduate Studies Administrative Assistant in order to ensure fairness by preventing individuals from casting multiple or fraudulent votes.
3. Upon the conclusion of the election, the President will count the ballots and announce the election results within 48 hours of the close of the voting period. The two individuals with the most votes will win. In the event of a tie, there will be a run-off election, which will be conducted in the same manner outlined in Section 3.1-3. If the tie cannot be broken through an election of all PoGo voting members, then the members of the Executive Committee will vote to break the tie. If the President is running for an Executive Committee office, another Executive Committee officer who is not running for office will count the ballots. This individual will be appointed by a majority of the members of the current Executive Committee.
4. The GSU Representatives will assume the duties of their office immediately upon the announcement of the election results and will relinquish these duties with the reigning Executive Committee on May 15<sup>th</sup> when the new Executive Committee is installed.

### **Article III: Impeachment and Office Vacancies**

Section 1: In the event an Executive Committee member fails to perform the duties of his/her office, any voting member of PoGo may bring forth charges of impeachment. These charges should be submitted in writing to the DGS. Upon receipt of such charges, the DGS will inform the members of the Executive Committee, including the impeached officer of these charges. The President will then call a meeting of all members of PoGo to publicize these charges and to allow the members to voice their concerns. This meeting must take place within two weeks of the DGS's receipt of the charges, and all members of the Executive Committee must be present. If the President is the impeached officer, the Vice President of Professional Development will be in charge of calling and chairing this meeting. At the conclusion of this meeting, all of the Executive Committee members, except the impeached officer, will each cast an anonymous vote on whether or not the impeached officer should be removed from office. A 5/7 majority is required to remove the individual from office. If the First Year Representative has yet to

be elected, a 4/6 majority will be required to remove the individual from office. The votes will be counted by the DGS, and the results will be announced immediately.

Section 2: In the event that any Executive Committee office becomes vacant due to impeachment, resignation, or any other reason, the following procedure shall be followed for filling the vacancy:

1. President: If the office of the President becomes vacant, the Vice President of Professional Development will be named President. If the Vice President of Professional Development is unable or unwilling to assume the duties of the office of President, then the Vice President of Social Affairs will be named President. If neither is able or willing to become President, then a new President shall be chosen from among the Field Representatives by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. If none of the four Field Representatives is able or willing to be President, then a new election will be held in the same manner outlined in Article II, with the exception that one of the members of the Executive Committee will be in charge of overseeing the election process instead of the President. This election overseer will be chosen through secret ballot by the members of the Executive Committee.
2. Vice President of Professional Development, Vice President of Social Affairs, Field Representatives, and First Year Representative: If any of these offices becomes vacant, then a new officer will be appointed by the President and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee members. If the Executive Committee is unable to reach a consensus on filling the position due to a tie or a lack of a majority vote, then a new election will be held following the same procedure outlined in Article II.

Section 3: Impeachment charges may be brought against the GSU Representatives in the same way that they are brought against members of the Executive Committee. The impeachment proceedings will follow the same process outlined in Article III, Section 1, except that a 5/8 vote is required to remove a Representative from office. In the event that a GSU Representative position becomes vacant, the same procedure outlined in Article III, Section 2.2 will be followed in order to fill the vacancy.

#### **Article IV: Executive Committee Duties**

Section 1: The President shall be the executive officer of PoGo and shall be responsible for its general direction.

1. The President shall be accountable to the membership of PoGo and should ensure that he or she is available to hear suggestions regarding the agenda of future meetings and other activities of PoGo.
2. The President will be responsible for calling meetings of the Executive Committee, and the President will serve as the Chair of such meetings. The President will be responsible for calling and publicizing meetings of the general PoGo membership as well.
  - a. The Executive Committee should meet at least once per semester at a time designated by the President. There are no set requirements for the number of PoGo general meetings that need to be held annually.

- b. The President can call an Executive Committee meeting when one is requested by an Executive Committee member. The President can call a meeting of the general membership when one is requested by an Executive Committee member or a voting member. If the President denies a request to schedule a meeting, the person requesting the meeting may petition the members of the Executive Committee. With a simple majority vote, the Executive Committee members may override the President's veto, in which case the President must schedule a meeting.
  - c. All meeting times and locations should be publicized at least five days in advance.
  - d. In the event that an emergency meeting needs to be scheduled, the President must provide at least 24 hours notice to the Executive Committee and/or the voting members.
  - e. For all general PoGo meetings, the quorum is 20 voting members, not counting the members of the Executive Committee. If less than 20 voting members are in attendance, no decisions made at the meeting are binding. However, at meetings when quorum is not reached, members may make proposals that can later be presented by the President to all of the voting members via email or memorandum.
3. The President shall be responsible for overseeing the finances of PoGo and of submitting budgets and expense reports to the Executive Committee for their approval.
  4. The President shall participate in the formulation of the agenda for both Recruitment Weekend and Welcome Weekend and should be present during these times to help facilitate meetings and activities.
  5. The President will be in charge of updating the PoGo website on a regular basis.

Section 2: The Vice President for Professional Development shall be responsible for organizing events that promote professional development.

1. At the beginning of each semester, the Vice President for Professional Development should take a survey of PoGo members, asking them what sort of professional development activities they would like for PoGo to sponsor in the coming semester. Upon compiling the results of this survey, the Vice President of Professional Development should consult with the other members of the Executive Committee to determine what workshops or professional development activities should be scheduled for that particular semester. Workshops that should be offered on a regular basis (e.g. biennially) include ones focusing on the following topics: tips for first year students, publishing, the steps for writing a good dissertation, getting prepared to go on the job market, and tips for teaching in the various subfields.
2. The Vice President for Professional Development is responsible for assigning the department's library carrels and for keeping track of carrel usage throughout the year.

3. The Vice President for Professional Development is responsible for recording minutes at each PoGo meeting and should ensure that these minutes are available to the members by posting them on the PoGo website and/or by circulating them electronically.
4. The Vice President for Professional Development will serve as the PoGo Pro Tempore, assuming the duties of the President during his/her absence.

Section 3: The Vice President for Social Affairs shall be responsible for facilitating opportunities for social interaction among the members of the department.

1. The Vice President for Social Affairs should work with the President during the Recruitment and Welcome weekends to plan social activities and should be present to make sure that these activities run smoothly.
2. The Vice President for Social Affairs shall publicize department social activities via email and/or through announcements in the department mailroom.
3. The Vice President for Social Affairs will organize the purchasing of football tickets for interested members of the department by communicating to members of the department the times during which lottery numbers will be drawn and tickets will be purchased.
4. At minimum, the Vice President for Social Affairs should organize one social activity per semester. Suggested activities include a beginning of the year welcome party and post-comprehensive exam parties.
5. If the Vice President for Professional Development is absent from a PoGo meeting or is assuming the duties of the President, then the Vice President for Social Affairs will be responsible for recording and publicizing the minutes of the meeting.

Section 4: The four Field Representatives will serve as liaisons between graduate students and faculty members of their respective subfields.

1. The Field Representatives should work with the Faculty Field Chair to publicize field specific events such as job talks and lectures.
2. The Field Representatives should be available to communicate with students and should relate students' concerns to faculty members of their respective subfields.
3. The Field Representatives will serve as the graduate students' representative on Department hiring committees for their respective fields. The Field Representatives should seek feedback from the graduate students concerning candidates' job talks, interactions with students, and potential contribution to the department.
4. The Field Representatives will maintain the comprehensive exam notes archives for their respective fields by collecting study notes from those graduate students who are willing to share them and by making these notes accessible to future exam takers (e.g. by storing them in the department graduate office).

## **Article V: The Disbursement of Funds**

Section 1: All purchases must be must be approved by a majority vote of the members of the Executive Committee. Only the members of the Executive Committee, the DGS, and the graduate administrative assistant shall have the ability to charge expenses to the PoGo account via the University's account charge system.

Section 2: Reimbursements for charges less than \$50 are left up to the discretion of the President. Reimbursements for charges in excess of \$50 must be approved by a majority vote of the members of the Executive Committee. Reimbursement for expenditures will only be accepted for members who have retained an original, itemized receipt and a description of the expense incurred. Under no circumstances will students be reimbursed for purchasing alcoholic beverages.

Section 3: All PoGo financial transactions will be managed through the University of Notre Dame's accounting system, as stipulated by the Student Union Treasurer's Office.

## **Article VI: Ratification and Amendment of the Constitution**

Section 1: The approval of a majority of the full membership of PoGo – both voting and nonvoting members - is required for ratification of the Constitution. The ratification procedure will be directed by the President and will be as follows:

1. The President will circulate the Constitution to both the voting and nonvoting members via email.
2. Upon circulating the draft of the Constitution, the President will call for a vote on this Constitution. Members shall be given at least one week but not more than two weeks, excluding University breaks and holidays, to cast their ballot for or against ratification.
3. Upon ratification by a majority of the full membership of PoGo, the President shall submit the Constitution to the Student Activities Office for review/approval. The DGS should also be given a copy of the adopted Constitution.

Section 2: The Constitution may be amended through the following procedure:

1. Any member of PoGo may propose an amendment by submitting the proposed change in writing to the President.
2. Upon receipt of a proposed amendment, the President should circulate the amendment to both voting and nonvoting members via email and call for a vote. Members shall be given at least one week but not more than two weeks, excluding University breaks and holidays to cast their ballot for or against the proposed amendment. Amendments may be made to this constitution at any time by a two-thirds vote of the full PoGo membership, which includes both voting and nonvoting members.
3. Upon being approved by 2/3 of the full membership of PoGo, the President shall submit the amendment revision in writing to the Student Activities Office for review/approval. The DGS should also be informed of the revision.

**Ratified on September 5, 2006**