

Duke Philosophy Department Graduate Student Bylaws

1. Purpose of these Bylaws

The purpose of these bylaws is to define the various roles and responsibilities that must be fulfilled each academic year by the graduate students of the Duke Philosophy Department.

2. Membership

These bylaws apply to all graduate students, including both PhD and MA students, in residence in the Duke Philosophy Department.

3. Meetings

A meeting open to all members will be held at least once during each of the two primary academic semesters (Fall and Spring). Generally, a meeting should be held within the first three weeks of each semester (Fall and Spring). Notice of a meeting will be sent by the Philosopher Monarch to all currently enrolled graduate students by email at least two weeks in advance. Meetings will be held at times when no graduate seminar is in session, and efforts will be made to accommodate as many graduate students as possible.

4. Officers

Philosopher Monarch:

This person schedules and convenes Fall and Spring meetings. (They may also call other meetings as necessary and requested). Responsibilities include: Finding an available time for meetings, booking a room, notifying all graduate students in a timely manner, soliciting agenda items (from students, faculty, and staff), and creating an agenda for the meeting. The person in this position will run elections at the designated time. This position can be held concurrently with another position.

WIP Organizer (Works-in-Progress)

This person schedules WIP meetings. Responsibilities include: creating a WIP schedule, soliciting presentations from graduate students, sending notifications of meetings to all graduate students, working with department staff to order food for meetings, ensuring meeting room is cleaned after meetings.

Department Representative

This person is the graduate student representative in all philosophy department business. Responsibilities include: attend all faculty meetings (Occasionally, the department representative will be asked to leave faculty meetings when the faculty go into “executive mode.”) and send minutes to graduate students, bring student concerns to faculty meetings when requested, assist staff with planning prospective visit, represent the department at major fairs, etc when requested by department staff. This person should give a report at the Fall and Spring graduate student meetings and make an effort to solicit feedback from graduate students at regular intervals. This person acts as the official line of communication between graduate students, faculty, and staff. Special areas of communication include departmental hiring, feedback on degree and program requirements, needed resources for grad students, department climate, and prospective visit planning. Dept. Rep can request the convening of additional graduate student meetings whenever it is needed.

GPSC Representative

This person represents philosophy graduate students at the [Graduate and Professional Student Council](#). Responsibilities include: attend GPSC meetings and serve on a GPSC committee, be the line of communication between GPSC and the department (send minutes, highlight important issues at the Graduate School level). There is a wide variety of committees for potential involvement, including: Duke finances, diversity on campus, facilities and resources, basketball, academic integrity, etc. This person should make a report at Fall and Spring meetings.

Diversity Committee Representative

This person serves on the philosophy department Diversity Committee (alongside faculty) and on the Graduate Student Climate Committee (see below). The department Diversity Committee is part of a university-wide commitment to increasing diversity among faculty and students. Responsibilities include: attend meetings for both committees, participate in the work of the committees on department events and issues, communicate with graduate students about the work of the committees, solicit feedback from graduate students on issues of diversity.

Climate Committee Representative

This person serves on the philosophy department Climate Committee (alongside faculty) and the Graduate Student Climate Committee (see below). Responsibilities include: attend meetings for both committees, participate in the work of the committees on department events and issues, communicate with graduate students about the work of the committees, solicit feedback from graduate students on issues of climate in faculty/student relations, seminar settings, colloquium, and department events, maintain strict confidentiality when requested.

Hiring Committee Representative

This is an ad hoc position that occurs when the department is hiring and the faculty hiring committee requests a graduate student representative. The position will be filled by an election called for this purpose. Responsibilities include: work closely with the faculty hiring committee throughout the hiring process, represent graduate student interests in the hiring process (area of research, commitment to advising, teaching, etc), communicate with graduate students at each stage of the hiring process.

5. Committees

Grad Student Speaker Committee

The graduate student body invites a colloquia speaker and organizes their visit. Each spring, the third years should invite a speaker for the following academic year and set a date for their visit. The choice of speaker is based on feedback from the entire graduate student body. Third years should collect nominations and hold a vote for the speaker. When a date is settled, they should work with department staff to organize the travel logistics for the visit. In their fourth year, the cohort will be responsible for publicizing the talk and organizing the itinerary of the visiting speaker, including opportunities for meals between students and the speaker.

Climate Committee

The climate committee consists of:

- The department representative
- The diversity committee representative
- The climate committee representative
- Anyone who volunteers to serve on it

The climate committee should meet at least once per semester. The purpose of the climate committee is to help protect and improve the environment for graduate students in the Duke Philosophy Department. This may be achieved through events, awareness campaigns, coordination with the respective faculty committees, or other means. They will pick a chair for the committee amongst themselves who will be responsible for calling meetings.

6. Elections

Elections will be held at the end of each spring semester to elect officers for the following academic year. Candidates may nominate themselves, or be nominated by another member.

- If there are multiple candidates a vote will be held via an in-person paper poll or an online poll, with the office going to the candidate who receives the most votes.
- If only one candidate is nominated, there will be a yes/no vote on that candidate holding the office. If a candidate receives less than 50% yes votes, another candidate must be nominated.
- If an election concludes in a tie, the candidates, along with the outgoing philosophy monarch, can determine the outcome (on whatever criteria they select—seniority, etc). Otherwise, a coin toss can decide the outcome.
- If no candidate is nominated for an office, it is up to the graduate student body's discretion on how to solve the problem of filling necessary offices.

Elected officers serve for a term of 1 year, but there is no limit to the number of times an officer can be re-elected. Any student in residence is eligible for any position.

7. Decisions

Except for elections and changes to bylaws, all decisions may be made by a simple show of hands at those present at a meeting. For issues likely to divide the community, a secret ballot or online poll may be used. No decision shall be made at a meeting with fewer than 8 members in attendance.

8. Amendments

Amendments to these bylaws can be made at any time. A proposed amendment must be put forward in writing. After at least a one-week period for members to review the proposed amendment, a vote will be held. A two-thirds majority is required to pass an amendment.

Graduate Student Resources

Grievances

Any grievances, complaints, concerns or questions regarding the philosophy department (such as TA assignments, seminar structures, department climate, philosophy students, philosophy faculty or staff, etc.) or Duke University (such as its policies, environment, faculty, staff, students etc.) can be discussed with the Chair of the philosophy department. It is the job of the department chair to address university-related concerns, or to find the appropriate departments or university bodies to address those concerns. The chair can guarantee confidentiality on all discussions with the exception of harassment (including sexual harassment) on campus.

If a person is not comfortable discussing their concerns with the Chair of the department for whatever reason, it is up to that person's discretion on whom to consult, whether it is another member of the faculty, the graduate school, a peer, the women's center etc.

Grievances about harassment or sexual harassment can be addressed to the Chair of the department, the graduate school, or the women's center, or the police, according to what seems most appropriate to the harassed person.

Department Officers and Committees

Department Officers:

- **Chair:** role is to address any concerns regarding the philosophy department.
- **Director of Undergraduate Studies:** role is to address questions or concerns regarding undergraduate students.
- **Director of Graduate Studies:** role is to address questions or concerns regarding the graduate students, including funding, TA positions, RA positions, graduate program requirements etc.

Department Committees:

Note that the following committees are ones which graduate students are encouraged to have a representative participate in.

- **Climate committee:** role is to encourage productive discussion regarding the culture/climate of the discipline of philosophy, as well as more specifically the Duke philosophy department.
- **Diversity Committee:** role is to encourage diversity the Duke philosophy department (including faculty, staff, graduate student body and undergraduate student body).
- **Job Search Committee:** committee is ad hoc when the department is doing a general job search with intent of hiring a new faculty member.