

# Constitution of the Agricultural Economics Graduate Student Organization

Article I Name – The name of this organization is the Agricultural Economics Graduate Student Organization, hereafter referred to as Ag Econ GSO.

Article II Purpose – The purpose of this organization is to enhance the experience and effectiveness of graduate students in the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Kentucky. The Ag Econ GSO shall facilitate student discussion and concerns for graduate-related department decisions and strategies. The Ag Econ GSO shall foster opportunity for student interaction among themselves and with faculty at the University of Kentucky as well as opportunity to interact with other students and faculty beyond Kentucky.

Article III Membership – Full membership shall be limited to - Ag Econ graduate students in good standing with the graduate school. Full membership is automatically granted when students join the graduate program and is automatically ended if a student leaves the program. Full members may hold office and vote on matters of concern to the organization. Full members may disassociate themselves from this organization at any time.

Article IV Concerning Discrimination – This organization, nor its full members, will not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or disability. Harassment in any form is prohibited.

Article V Finance – There are no dues for full members in the Ag Econ GSO.

Article VI Officers

Section 1 – The officers of the Ag Econ GSO will be President, Vice President, Treasurer and Information Officer.

Section 2 – Nominations for Officer Positions shall be made no later than March 30 of the Spring Semester. Any full member of the Ag Econ GSO may make a nomination and self-nomination with a second is permissible.

Section 3 – Officers will hold office immediately upon completion of fall elections until the next fall election, or upon graduation or leaving the Ag Econ GSO. Officers will hold office immediately upon completion of fall elections until the next fall election, upon graduation, or leaving the Ag Econ GSO. Officers must be full members of the Ag Econ GSO. An officer may not stay in any particular officer position for more than two consecutive terms, but may run for another position.

Section 4 – Faculty Advisor – The Faculty Advisor is to be nominated by the Agricultural Economics Department Chair and the Ag Econ GSO Officers, to be voted on by the full members, and may serve in this role indefinitely. The role of the Faculty Advisor shall be as follows: to support the organization members in fulfilling the purpose of the organization, be a resource and represent the organization to the community and the University of Kentucky. The advisor may attend meetings by invitation only.

Section 5 – The role of the President shall be as follows:

- a. Be the chief executive officer of the organization.
- b. Preside over meetings of the organization.

- c. Be a liaison between graduate students and faculty, specifically through mandatory attendance of faculty and departmental meetings. If the President cannot attend a specific meeting, it is his or her responsibility to have another student representative attend, generally another officer. The president may appoint another officer to attend other program and research committee meetings indefinitely.
- d. Call special meetings or form committees that are deemed necessary for the Ag Econ GSO.
- e. Meet with the Department Chair/Director of Graduate Studies/faculty advisor as needed.
- f. Ensure that this constitution and student body laws are faithfully executed.
- g. Work with the department chair and staff to assign graduate student office space in the department.
- h. Perform any administrative power or duty consistent with Article II not provided for in this constitution.
- i. Report the outcomes of the Graduate Committee meeting to the full members.

Section 6 – The role of the Vice President shall be as follows:

- a. Exercise presidential duties in absence of the president, including attending faculty meetings in the president’s absence.
- b. Report to the president and assume presidential office upon vacancy.
- c. Serve as the organization’s coordinator for social activities including completion of event registration and program report forms.
- d. Work with the designated representative(s) from the faculty and/or support staff to jointly plan social gatherings within the department (spring and/or fall picnic, holiday celebration, etc.)
- e. Coordinate student help with special events (Ag Roundup, Extension Field Days, etc.) and departmental tasks (e.g. coordinating representation, departmental displays, etc.).

Section 7 – The role of the Treasurer shall be as follows:

- a. Keep complete and accurate accounts of the organization funds.
- b. Sign requisitions for organization funds.
- c. Report to the President.

Section 8 – The role of the Information Officer shall be as follows:

- a. Take minutes at meetings and post them to the graduate student listserv.
- b. Maintain complete and accurate records of all organization meetings.
- c. Effectively communicate meetings and events to students, the faculty advisor, and other interested parties to promote the reputation of the Ag Econ GSO.
- d. Report to the President.

Section 9- Appointed Positions and At-Large Officers:

- a. At-Large Officers serve in auxiliary role to help other officers with events and coordinate upcoming opportunities.
- b. Other appointed positions (e.g. GSO webmaster) have roles that are defined prior to accepting the position.
- c. All members are encouraged to participate in planning and organizing opportunities for socializing among students, faculty and staff.

## Article VII Elections

Section 1: Full Members – Each Ag Econ graduate student in [non-academic e.g. financial/disciplinary] good standing and who chooses to be active participant in Ag Econ GSO shall comprise the electorate and is entitled to one vote.

Section 2: Spring Elections – Elections shall be held during an Ag Econ GSO meeting in the Spring Semester, to occur no later than the 31<sup>th</sup> of March. The winning candidate must receive a simple majority of votes cast by secret ballot of attending full members. In the case of a tie or less than simple majority, the previous officers must select the winning candidate based on their opinion of who can more effectively fulfill the purpose of Ag Econ GSO.

Section 3: Qualifications of Office – All officers must be a registered graduate student in good standing with at least a GPA of 3.0 during the entire term of office and at the time of election. Incoming graduate students shall be exempt from the GPA requirement during the first academic semester in office or until a cumulative GPA has been established.

Article VIII Meetings – In order for the Ag Econ GSO to hold meetings, advanced notification and an agenda of the meeting via the graduate student listserv must occur one week prior to the meeting. To have a quorum, 50% of the Ag Econ GSO Officers and 10% of Ag Econ graduate students, not including the officers, must be in attendance. Meetings may only occur on business days. Abrupt matters of voting and funding not placed on the agenda must receive at least 24-hours' notice before ad hoc meeting and votes can occur. Faculty, staff, and other UK students are welcome to attend, but may be precluded based on the agenda of the meeting.

Article IX Funding – Fundraising money and organizational funds that may become available shall be distributed based on approval of the Ag Econ GSO Officers. Only active graduate students may receive funding for academic purposes. The Ag Econ GSO Officers will define what is considered active participation per semester, based on the number of opportunities and events available to students such as GSO meetings (students with class at GSO meeting times will not be penalized), department functions, seminars, etc. Every effort must be made to make attendance of the meeting as equitable and achievable as possible.

Article X Vacancy of Office – In the event that the President's position becomes vacant, the vacancy shall be filled by the Vice President. If the positions of the Vice President, Information Officer or Treasurer become vacant, the President must expeditiously appoint a provisional replacement from the full members effective for the next two general meetings. The vacancy will be immediately reported on the GSO listserv. A special election to fill the vacant office must occur within two meetings, and the winning candidate must receive a simple majority by method of secret ballot of attending full members of the Ag Econ GSO.

#### Article XI Impeachment

Section 1 – All officers may be impeached for misfeasance, malfeasance, abuse of power or conviction of a criminal offence while in office.

Section 2 – Any full member may file an impeachment resolution. The Ag Econ GSO officers, faculty advisor and affected person must receive a copy of the impeachment resolution. Impeachment resolutions must be resolved at the impending meeting.

Section 3 – Impeachment Body – The attending full members of Ag Econ GSO will make up the body, which will hear the impeachment proceedings. The faculty advisor shall preside over the impeachment meeting. A two-thirds vote of attending full members is required for impeachment.

Section 4 – Effect of Conviction – Judgment of conviction in cases of impeachment shall remove the officer.

Article XII Authority – The Ag Econ GSO shall conform to the standards of the Ag Econ Graduate Student handbook and rules governing the University of Kentucky and its students. Hazing in all forms is prohibited.

Article XIII Amendments – Amendments to the Constitution may be suggested by any member of the Ag Econ GSO. After deliberation of proposed amendments it shall be tabled until it is brought up for a vote at the next meeting. A two-thirds majority will be required to pass amendments. Any amendments will be added following Article XI. If there is a change of earlier articles, they will supersede the previous conditions. There is no need to continually change the document.

Respectfully submitted by the Ag Econ GSO Officers and accepted by the Ag Econ GSO on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2011

Student Officers Present at Acceptance

Marie Pelton, President  
Jerrod Penn, Treasurer  
Xiaowen Hu, Information Officer  
Na Zuo, At-Large Officer  
Guzhen Zhou, At-Large Officer

Accepted by Leigh Maynard, Professor and Department Chair