

**Constitution of the**

**Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee**

**(GAFAC)**

**Updated Fall 2025**

## **GRADUATE ACTIVITY FEE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (GAFAC) CONSTITUTION**

The Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee (GAFAC) is established to determine the distribution of the unallocated portion of the Graduate Activity Fee in an objective manner that serves the best interests of graduate students. GAFAC meetings are held during the Fall and Spring Semesters.

### **Article I. Membership**

1. The GAFAC Committee will be comprised of a total of **twelve (12)** graduate students in good academic standing who have paid their respective Activity Fees and are enrolled through their full term of office.
  - A. One delegate representing each of the eight schools and colleges (Architecture, Arts & Sciences, Business, Communication, Education & Human Development, Engineering, Music, Nursing & Health Studies).
  - B. Three at-large delegates from three separate schools/colleges.
  - C. The Director of Finance of the Graduate Student Association or the designee of the Graduate Student Association President.
2. The GAFAC Advisor shall be appointed by the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Alumni Engagement.
3. GAFAC delegates will be selected through an application and interview process facilitated by the GAFAC Advisor, Graduate Student Association Director of Finance, and a selected group of returning GAFAC Delegates from the previous year.
4. All GAFAC Delegates will serve a term of office that coincides with a full academic year, and any delegates wishing to return the following year must reapply for their position.

### **Article II. Vacancies or Incapacitation of Representatives**

1. In case of a vacancy or incapacitation of a delegate, the Advisor shall facilitate an application and selection process to fill the vacancy.
2. In the case of a vacancy or incapacitation in the seat held by the Director of Finance of the Graduate Student Association, the procedure specified in the constitutional document of the governing agency shall be followed to designate a new or acting delegate to serve for the duration of the disability or to serve the duration of the term affected by the vacancy.
3. In case of a vacancy or incapacitation of the Advisor, a new Advisor will be designated by the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Alumni Engagement.

### **Article III. Removal from Office**

1. GAFAC, upon verification by the Advisor as to the attendance record of the delegate, shall have the power to remove any of the delegates, for three or more unexcused absences from normally scheduled meetings of GAFAC of which the delegate is a delegate, for which notice was attempted to be given under Section V and X. A 2/3rds vote of delegates present is required to remove a delegate.

### **Article IV. Duties of Representatives**

1. GAFAC Delegates shall attend all regularly scheduled GAFAC meetings in full.
2. Representatives shall hear presentations brought to GAFAC in accordance with the normal and emergency provisions of the guidelines contained herein.
3. Representatives shall award funding to graduate students based on the award criteria contained herein.
4. No delegate shall take actions or make statements under the apparent authority of GAFAC

without the prior authorization of GAFAC.

5. GAFAC Delegates will approach the responsibilities thereto with the highest sense of integrity, fairness, and without undue bias. In the event a delegate feels that there is a personal doubt as to his/her ability to render a fair appraisal of any given matter, then the delegate may advise the Chair of such, and may thereupon decline to participate in any discussion or voting on the matter (other than an abstention if needed to ensure that a quorum exists.) This privilege shall also extend to the Chair.
6. GAFAC Delegates are responsible for making available to students in their School or College updated GAFAC information, a copy of the GAFAC Constitution, and any additional material distributed by GAFAC. Delegates are responsible for informing faculty, administrators and students in their respective School or College of the availability of GAFAC funding.

#### **Article V. Censure of Representatives**

1. Any GAFAC delegate may be censured for actions taken or statements made under apparent authority of GAFAC without the prior authorization of GAFAC. Censure will require six affirmative votes of GAFAC.
2. Any statements (without the prior approval of GAFAC) or misuse of authority by a delegate will be considered non-binding of GAFAC.

#### **Article VI. Official Voting Procedures**

1. All official actions taken by GAFAC in recommending the allocation of funds or in rendering other recommendations must be approved by a simple majority of the delegates present. Representatives must vote yes or no; there shall be no abstentions except in cases of conflict of interest. In the event an application or constitutional matter is tabled and time is of the essence, the Chair may call for a vote via electronic mail. Only those members who were present at the meeting when the application or constitutional matter was discussed may participate in the electronic vote.
2. In the event that a quorum of eight delegates cannot be reached, meetings may still be held provided that four of the delegates present agree unanimously on approval or denial of the proposed funding application. When four delegates cannot reach agreement, the proposal shall be tabled until the next meeting in which a quorum is present.
3. All presentation sessions will be open to the university community unless the delegates vote to close the session.
4. All voting sessions will be open only to GAFAC Delegates and the Advisor(s).
5. All official actions of GAFAC will be recorded and placed on file in the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and will be available for public review.
6. Proxy votes are not accepted. Delegates must be present at a meeting to vote, except in cases where the Chair has the authority to initiate a vote by email.

#### **Article VII. Allocation of Funds**

1. Students must seek alternate sources of funding prior to applying to GAFAC.
  1. All funding commitments and/or rejections from other sources are to be submitted in writing along with the proposals.
  2. The written statement must include the dollar commitment by the funding source.
  3. Funding commitments from alternative sources will be applied toward total costs before GAFAC monies will be committed.
2. GAFAC will have the responsibility for recommendations dealing with the unallocated portion of the Activity Fee paid by graduate students each semester.
3. All funds will be distributed in accordance with the GAFAC allocation guidelines contained

herein.

4. All allocations and recommendations for allocations of funds shall be approved in accordance with the provisions of this document. All unallocated funds or funds not used for the purpose for which they were allocated shall revert to the central GAFAC account so that they can be reallocated in the following years.
5. All recommendations by GAFAC for the expenditure and disbursement of unallocated funds are to be submitted to the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Alumni Engagement, who will act within ten days of their receipt to either approve or deny the recommendation. In any instance where the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Alumni Engagement finds that they cannot approve or accept the recommendations of GAFAC, such decisions will be submitted in writing by the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Alumni Engagement to the GAFAC Chair.
6. GAFAC will not fund any activity or event that constitutes criminal activity, violent behavior, or a violation of any University policy, including but not limited to the University's Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy and the University's Freedom of Expression: Demonstration, Outside Speakers, and Political Campaign Policies.
7. Recipients of funding must submit receipts within 30 days of the funded event/program or within 30 days of notification from GAFAC, whichever is later, or funding will revert to the general GAFAC fund. Exceptions must be approved by the GAFAC Committee prior to the end of the 30 days.
8. All GAFAC funds will be allocated in accordance with stated guidelines. These guidelines will be available from the GAFAC Committee or the GAFAC Advisor. Any exceptions to said guidelines must be approved by a simple majority vote by a quorum of GAFAC delegates.
9. A GAFAC operating budget in the amount of \$1,500.00 per year shall be established from the GAFAC account to meet the operating needs of the Committee. Any unused funds shall revert back to the GAFAC disbursement account by June 1 of each academic year.

### **Article XIII. GAFAC Chair and Vice Chair**

1. The Chair and the Vice Chair will be elected by GAFAC at the first GAFAC meeting when a quorum is present.
2. Duties of the GAFAC Chair:
  - A. The Chair is a voting delegate of GAFAC.
  - B. The Chair shall call regular meetings of GAFAC at least once a month or more frequently if needed.
  - C. The Chair shall call special meetings upon the request of at least two or more delegates of GAFAC.
  - D. The Chair will be responsible for facilitating all meetings in accordance with the rules and guidelines adopted by the GAFAC Committee.
  - E. The Chair will be the official agent for GAFAC in formally transmitting their signature on all GAFAC recommendations and resolutions voted on by the Committee.
  - F. The Chair will be responsible for notifying all delegates of GAFAC of normally scheduled meetings at least six days in advance.
  - G. The Chair shall perform other such duties as determined by GAFAC.
  - H. The Chair position shall not be held by a Delegate from the same school or department for more than one academic year in succession, unless approved by the Committee.
3. Duties of the GAFAC Vice Chair:
  - A. The Vice Chair is a voting delegate of GAFAC.
  - B. The Vice Chair shall serve as Chair in the event of their absence.
4. In case of vacancy of the Chair, a new Chair will be selected by election at the meeting where the resignation is accepted.

## **Article IX. GAFAC Advisor**

1. The Advisor(s) shall be a non-voting delegate of the GAFAC Committee.
2. The Advisor(s) shall set the dates of GAFAC meetings prior to the start of the academic year.
3. The Advisor(s) shall serve as a resource person regarding GAFAC and University policies.
4. The Advisor(s) shall assist GAFAC in the receipt and processing of funding applications.
5. The Advisor(s) shall ensure that all approved funding is appropriately disbursed to recipients through appropriate University methods.
6. The Advisor(s) shall monitor the GAFAC Budget in conjunction with the Chair of GAFAC, the Director of Finance of the Graduate Student Association and the respective signatories.
7. The Advisor shall advise GAFAC at each formally scheduled meeting of the balance of all GAFAC accounts.

## **Article X. Application Process**

1. Applicant(s) must be degree-seeking graduate student(s) and must have paid the Graduate Activity Fee for the semester in which they are applying and the semester in which the travel/event is taking place. GAFAC will check the applying student's records for this information.
2. All applications must be submitted online. The online application can be found on the GAFAC website <https://gafac.miami.edu/>.
  - A. Prior to seeking GAFAC funding, applicants must seek other sources of funding from:
    - a. Their school/college/department; and
    - b. Max and Peggy Kriloff Graduate Student Travel Scholarship (Arts and Sciences students only)
  - B. Applicants must submit a letter or e-mail from their department administrator or faculty advisor supporting the GAFAC application. The letter should indicate whether funding was provided from the department to support the travel/event.
  - C. The GAFAC application shall be open from the first day of classes in the fall semester through the day prior to spring break in the spring semester. Applications during any given year may be submitted for any travel, events, or activities taking place between the first day of classes of that semester and the first day of classes of the following fall semester.
  - D. To receive funding from GAFAC, the conference/event must occur entirely prior to the applicant's graduation from the University.
3. Each applicant will be required to give an oral presentation about their application to the GAFAC Committee at a regularly scheduled GAFAC meeting.
4. Applications for funding must be submitted to GAFAC **before** the scheduled event/conference takes place. Applications received after the event/conference date(s) will not be considered.
5. GAFAC will make every reasonable effort to schedule presentations and make funding decisions before the event or conference date. However, if this is not possible because of a high volume of applications or academic breaks, the Committee will review the application at its next available meeting, as long as the application was submitted online before the event or conference takes place.
6. Application instructions, funding guidelines, and the GAFAC Constitution can be found online at <https://gafac.miami.edu/>. It is the applicant's responsibility to comply with all GAFAC guidelines when submitting a GAFAC application.
7. Scheduling of Application Hearings
  - A. It is the responsibility of the applicant to select a presentation time once notified by the GAFAC advisor that their application has been received and is complete.
  - B. If the applicant fails to appear on their designated presentation date and time, the presentation will be rescheduled for the next available meeting.

- C. If the applicant fails to appear at their rescheduled hearing, the application will be cancelled.
- 8. GAFAC funding decisions shall be based on the following criteria:
  - A. The merits of the individual application.
  - B. The direct or indirect benefit(s) provided to the University and to graduate students.
  - C. The applicants efforts to generate or obtain funding from sources other than GAFAC.
  - D. The amount of funds available for allocation.
  - E. Compliance with all GAFAC policies and procedures.
- 9. No individual student will be funded more than once during the same academic year.
- 10. GAFAC funds cannot be used towards the payment of any tuition and/or required texts, this includes all materials and/or resources provided by their respective departments.
- 11. GAFAC funds cannot be used to pay a salary to an individual, e.g. an actor/actress, accompanist, performer, etc. GAFAC may approve the payment of an honorarium to a guest speaker or performer if the event is open to all graduate students and is held on the University of Miami campus.
- 12. Applying for GAFAC funds does not guarantee receipt of funding. Previous receipt of GAFAC funding also does not guarantee future funding. Under no circumstances may applicants spend or commit to spending activity fee funds before receiving written notice that GAFAC has approved their funding allocation. Applicants may choose to spend other funds at their own risk, but they should understand that GAFAC does not guarantee any reimbursement unless GAFAC has specifically authorized the reimbursement and it has been approved by the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs or their designee.
- 13. If funding is granted by GAFAC for specific events, any advertising put forth by said group must bear the statement "A GAFAC SPONSORED EVENT."
- 14. Every effort will be made to e-mail the applicant of the Committee's decision as soon as possible. Final notification of the allocation of funds cannot be made until the GAFAC Chair and the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Alumni Engagement have signed the minutes of the meeting in which the applicant presented.
- 15. Funds must be used for the expressed purpose for which they are awarded. Any deviation without prior approval from GAFAC will result in the loss of said funds.
- 16. Upon completion of the funded activity, the applicant will:
  - A. Conduct a lecture or seminar, when appropriate, for graduate students on a topic of relevance to his/her project.
  - B. Submit to GAFAC copies of all posting and other notices publicizing the project (if appropriate).
  - C. Collect and make relevant materials readily available to other graduate students through his/her department.
  - D. Ensure that all equipment purchased with GAFAC funds be clearly marked in some fashion with the following: "PAID FOR WITH GAFAC FUNDS."
- 17. In special circumstances where the normal funding of expenses to graduate students is not possible, the GAFAC Committee may approach the Senior Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School to allow the utilization of GAFAC funds to provide financial support to graduate students as needed.

## **Article XI. Appeals**

- 1. Decisions made by GAFAC delegates at a regularly scheduled meeting are final. If applicants wish to ascertain the reason for a denial they may contact the GAFAC Advisor for a brief verbal explanation.
- 2. In the event that an error has been made on a funding application, GAFAC may reconsider its prior decision. The procedure is:

- A. There must be a quorum at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- B. A motion to set aside a previous decision must be proposed by a GAFAC delegate, seconded, and passed by simple majority.
- C. Discussion on why a GAFAC decision should be reversed must ensue, with specific reference to as why an incorrect decision was made previously.
- D. A motion to approve or deny funding may then be made, seconded and passed by a simple majority.
- E. This will be the final decision of GAFAC and is irreversible. No oral presentation by the applicant is necessary. However, it is the prerogative of the Committee to approve or deny a second oral presentation for the applicant in an appeal. The Chair does not have the authority to unilaterally grant a second oral presentation.
- F. A brief verbal explanation of GAFAC's decision may be obtained from the GAFAC advisor.

## **Article XII. Amendments**

1. Amendments to this Constitution must be made with a total of nine affirmative votes by the GAFAC Committee, representing at least two-thirds of the total membership of GAFAC, and must be approved by the Administrative Head of the Graduate School and the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Alumni Engagement.
2. Ratification by GAFAC will take place when nine affirmative votes by the GAFAC Committee, representing at least two-thirds of the total membership, signs the Constitution.
3. This Constitution will become binding when ratified by the GAFAC Committee and approved by the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs.
4. GAFAC shall establish by-laws that outline the funding guidelines and limits. Amendments to the by-laws must be made with a total of nine affirmative votes by the GAFAC Committee, representing at least two-thirds of the total membership, and must be approved by the Administrative Head of the Graduate School and the Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Alumni Engagement.

**By-Laws of the**

**Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee**

**(GAFAC)**

**Updated Fall 2025**

## **GRADUATE ACTIVITY FEE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (GAFAC) BY-LAWS**

### **Article I. General Guidelines**

1. Students applying for funds from GAFAC must answer all questions in the online application.
2. GAFAC will not fund food or drinks, except for events as described below.
3. GAFAC will fund up to \$500 per applicant, once per academic year.
4. Gift card incentives for any research endeavors will not be supported by funding through GAFAC.
5. Graduate Student Organizations are not eligible for funding from GAFAC. The funding process for organizations is managed by the Graduate Student Association.

### **Article II Conferences and/or Workshops**

1. **Applicant is presenting at the conference.** To qualify for funding, the applicant must:
  - A. Be presenting original work.
  - B. Be one of the authors (only one author will be funded at any single conference).
  - C. Submit documentation confirming his/her presentation at the conference.
2. **Applicant is attending a conference.** To qualify for funding the applicant must:
  - A. Describe the conference and organizing body.
  - B. Describe the purpose of attendance.
  - C. Explain what he/she expects to present upon return.
3. **Applicant is organizing a conference or lecture.** This must be a student organized and run conference or lecture. To qualify for funding, the applicant must:
  - A. Describe the location, duration, and how organizing the conference or lecture specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
4. **Participation in other workshops and courses.** This must be a topic for which a similar course is not offered at the University of Miami. Additionally, funding may not be requested to cover tuition for a class at another university. To qualify for funding, an applicant must:
  - A. Provide documentation from their advisor to show the importance of the event for their professional or academic development.

### **Article III Equipment**

1. GAFAC funds may be used to purchase equipment provided that the equipment is:
  - A. Reusable.
  - B. Returned to the applicant's department after use.
  - C. Marked "Purchased with GAFAC Funds."

No group application is accepted under this category, as well as no application for computer hardware. Equipment must be used for individual research or in activities directly related to field of study.

### **Article IV Field Research**

1. **Data collection.** To qualify for funding, the applicant must:
  - A. Describe in detail the location, duration, itinerary and purpose of the research.
  - B. Describe how the research specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
  - C. Collect data that specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
  - D. GAFAC will not fund incentives for study participants.

## **Article V      Film Production**

1. **Applicant is involved in the production of a film.** To qualify for funding, the applicant must:
  - A. Explain the purpose of the film
  - B. If applicable, list any additional participants and describe their role,

## **Article VI      Events**

1. GAFAC will fund an event provided that the event:
  - A. Is open to all graduate students.
  - B. Has documented departmental sponsorship or approval.
  - C. Is held on a University of Miami campus.
2. Up to \$250 may be allocated towards food and non-alcoholic beverages provided for event attendees.

## **Article VII      Performances**

1. GAFAC will fund costs associated with one of the following categories:
  - A. Applicant is performing.
    - a. describe the location, duration, and how the performance specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
  - B. Applicant is having his/her work performed.
    - a. describe the location, duration, and how the performance specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
    - b. describe performance and organizing body.
    - c. describe the purpose for attending the performance.
    - d. explain what the applicant expects to present upon return.
  - C. Applicant is staging a performance. This must be a student-organized and student-run performance.
    - a. describe the location, duration, and how the performance specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

## **Article VIII      Exhibitions**

1. **Applicant is curating an exhibition.** This must be a student-organized and student-run exhibition.
  - A. Describe the location of the exhibition being curated.
  - B. Describe the duration of the exhibition being curated.
  - C. Explain the purpose of curating the exhibition and how the exhibition specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
2. **Applicant is exhibiting his/her work.**
  - A. Describe location of the exhibition.
  - B. Describe the duration of the exhibition.
  - C. Explain how the exhibition specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
3. **Applicant is attending an exhibition.**
  - A. Describe the location of the exhibition being attended.
  - B. Describe the duration of the exhibition being attended.
  - C. Explain the purpose of attending the exhibition and how the exhibition specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

**Article IX      Publications (including audio, visual, digital publications)**

1. GAFAC will consider funding a publication related to the applicant's field of study, except for the publication of a thesis or dissertation.