

**Associated Student Government**

University of Arkansas

*ASG Joint Bill 4*

*2016-2017*

**An Act to Support the Chancellor’s Guiding Priorities by Creating the Associated Students Supreme Constitution**

Authors: GSC Representative Alex Marino, GSC Speaker Scout Johnson, GSC Vice Speaker Arley Ward, GSC Parliamentarian Josh Burbridge, GSC Representative Leah Morse, GSC Representative Adrian Ordorica

Sponsors: GSC Secretary Garrett Jeter, GSC Treasurer Korab Vranovci, GSC External Affairs/Marketing Co-Director Rachel Gerner, GSC Chair of the Graduate Life Committee Johnathan Blanchard, GSC Legislative Affairs and Advocacy Director Jesse Sims, GSC Representative Stacy Kimbrough, GSC Representative Ashley Whiting, GSC Representative Kristen Callahan, GSC International Concerns Chair Min-Ji Park, GSC External Affairs and Marketing Co-Director Katie Wilkinson, GSC Representative Md Rakib Shahriar, ASG Director of Campus Diversity Lionel Davis II, ASG Chair of Senate Will Watkins, Senator Barth Onyekwelu

Whereas, since the creation of the Graduate Student Congress, there has been less ASG legislation, as joint bills and resolutions have had to go before both legislative bodies, which meet at different times and frequencies, each with their own procedures; and

Whereas, this is not a problem at other schools in Arkansas, since the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, University of Arkansas for Medical Science, and Arkansas State University all have independent graduate student governments; and

Whereas, in the Southeastern Conference, only Louisiana State University and the University of Tennessee lack an independent graduate student government. Of our non-SEC benchmark schools, only the University of Oklahoma lacks graduate student government; and

Whereas, Chancellor Steinmetz has chosen “Strengthening Graduate Education” as one of his guiding priorities for the University of Arkansas, including to “work to enhance and improve graduate education at the University of Arkansas by intensifying the recruitment and boosting support of graduate students as well as making sure that our programs are preparing graduate students for a variety of productive careers” (<https://chancellor.uark.edu/campus-strategic-planning-process/index.php>); and

Whereas, another of the Chancellor’s guiding priorities is “Reaffirming our Land-grant and Flagship Responsibilities,” including to “define what it means to be a land-grant and flagship university in the 21st century and augment our outreach and engagement efforts, broadly defined, across Arkansas”; and

Whereas, to achieve the Chancellor’s guiding priorities, the Teaching and Learning Committee Report calls for “increasing proportional enrollment of graduate students in line with our Carnegie classification,” to “improve packages for graduate assistants,” to “prepare doctoral students to secure faculty positions,” and to encourage the creation of “student organizations connected to academic majors and departments” (<https://campusdata.uark.edu/Resources/Uploads/files/Teaching-and-Learning-Report.pdf>); and

Whereas, the Research and Discovery Phase II Planning Committee Report has set goals “to recruit quality graduate students and expand the proportion who are doctoral students,” to “expand support for travel stipends and other resources to support professionalization,” and to “improve recruitment of quality graduate students from diverse backgrounds across all levels” (<https://chancellor.uark.edu/campus-strategic-planning-process/pdf/research-and-discovery-phase-II-planning.pdf>); and

Whereas, the Outreach and Engagement Committee Report identified a need to “assess best practices,” to “identify gaps in existing efforts for sectors or partners that are under-engaged,” to “use resources efficiently,” and to “leverage and reward student, faculty, and staff participation,” as well as to “utilize and connect existing university structures to build upon and enhance current strengths,” and to “connection alumni with campus outreach and engagement efforts and communities” (<https://campusdata.uark.edu/Resources/Uploads/files/Outreach-and-Engagement-Report.pdf>) ; and

Whereas, ASG has committed “to increase appeal for prospective students, faculty, and staff to assist in admissions recruitment,” “to instill value and pride in the Razorback experience while at the University of Arkansas so as to increase student involvement in areas of campus life,” and “to increase communication across campus” (<https://campusdata.uark.edu/Resources/Uploads/files/Student-Body-Vision.pdf>); then

**Be it therefore enacted:** following best practices from peer and aspirant institutions,this act shall establish the attached Associated Students Supreme Constitution **(see Appendix I)** to continue the University of Arkansas’ 95 year legacy of student government, to better represent graduate and professional students, to increase the production of ASG legislation, and to improve the operation of ASG; and

**Be it further enacted:** the University of Arkansas shall lead the state and nation in incorporating graduate and professional students in shared governance, and the Graduate and Professional Student Congress (GPSC) shall serve as the flagship graduate student government in the state of Arkansas, and will support the university’s outreach and engagement efforts; and

**Be it further enacted:** that by creating the GPSC, a student government organization for graduate and professional students, ASG seeks to improve communication across campus among graduate and professional students, as well as to increase and intensify the recruitment of highly qualified and diverse graduate and professional students; and

**Be it further enacted:** that the GPSC shall provide rich educational, professional development, and social programs to create a graduate and professional student experience at the University of Arkansas that students can be proud of, so that the Razorback experience is just as memorable for graduate and professional students as it is for undergraduates, while also connecting graduate and professional student alumni with GPSC programs, and campus outreach and engagement efforts; and

**Be it further enacted:** that the GPSC shall be a student led advocate for increasing the number of graduate programs, the number and size of graduate assistant stipends, the quality of graduate assistant benefits, the size of the graduate and professional student body, and the number and size of travel stipends and other resources to support professionalization and the sharing of research**;** and

**Be it further enacted:** that the GPSCshall more efficiently allocate student activity fee resources to support graduate and professional students by granting conference travel stipends; and

**Be it further enacted:** that the referendum to approve this new Supreme Constitution will coincide with the spring general election, and must follow all the rules and regulations found in both the current ASG Constitution and the ratification and implementation rules found in the new Associated Students Supreme Constitution. The text of the referendum shall read:

“Do you support creating the Associated Students Supreme Constitution and the Graduate and Professional Student Congress?”

**Appendices**

1. **Associated Students Supreme Constitution**
2. **Organizing Documents Guide**
3. **Budget Breakdown**
4. **Transition Timeline**

*Official Use Only*

Amendments:

Senate Vote Count: Aye Nay Abstentions

GSC Vote Count: Aye 16 Nay 0 Abstentions 0

Legislation Status: Passed Failed Other

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Scout Johnson, ASG GSC Speaker Date

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Will Watkins, ASG Chair of Senate Date

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Connor Flocks, ASG President Date