

SPA Graduate Student Council Fall 2023 Senate Elections

Thank you for your interest in running for a position with the American University School of Public Affairs Graduate Student Council! By taking this step, you are marking yourself a dedicated student leader, committed to serving your community. Please read this document in **full** as you prepare to file your candidacy.

The Graduate Student Council Fall 2023 Elections are for those positions vital to the SPA student leadership ecosystem. These positions include Academic Program Representatives, the Chairpersons for our three standing committees, and the communication director.

We hope that the information below will provide you with everything you need to successfully form your candidacy for student service. If you have any questions, please contact the **Graduate Student Council Chief of Staff, John Lenox**. We wish you the best in your election and look forward to working with you!

About Graduate Student Council

The American University School of Public Affairs Graduate Student Council (SPA GSC) is a student-run organization devoted to representing the graduate student body as best as possible. Composed of a five-person executive board and rounded out by a full council of academic program representatives and committee chairpersons.

As a body, GSC primarily serves as an advocacy group for the needs and interests of all graduate students in SPA. This includes organizing events, communicating with faculty and staff in the School of Public Affairs, and inquiring about student concerns.

The Graduate Student Council will meet biweekly (or as needed) throughout the fall semester by virtual means, primarily Zoom. At these meetings, we will discuss upcoming events, hear from our program representatives about the needs of the student body, and present legislation, be it focused on funding or amending the GSC Bylaws.

Election Timeline and Campaign Rules:

The election timeline is as follows:

- September 18: Application opens, 9:00 AM
- October 6: Application closes, 9:00 PM
- October 8: Candidates approved by 9:00 PM
- October 9: Campaigning begins, 8:00 AM
- October 11: Voting opens, 9:00 AM
- October 13: Voting closes, 7:00 PM
- October 16: Election results posted via GSC insta and Canvas, 12:00 PM

In order to run, all interested *must* apply through [this link](#) by the above-mentioned date in order to be considered an active candidate. The application includes brief biographical and necessary eligibility information, as well as a brief statement of purpose. This statement of purpose will appear on all official GSC elections and candidate materials to be disseminated to the graduate student body at large.

Failure to complete the application in full, as well as to adhere to all eligibility requirements, will result in a dismissal of your application. **No student may submit more than one application for this election cycle.** Should you have any questions about the Graduate Student Council Elections, please contact the GSC Chief of Staff, John Lenox, at jl9593a@student.american.edu

The application form will be available on September 18 by Google Form and students may apply up until Friday, October 6 at 9:00 p.m. All potential candidates are **required** to apply for candidacy.

Applications will be approved by no later than 9:00 p.m. on October 8th. Approved candidates may begin campaigning starting at 8:00 AM, October 9th. Candidates are encouraged to partake in campaign efforts, including social media organizing. However, we ask that candidates abide by the following rules:

1. No negative campaigning--ever. GSC describes “negative” as malevolent actions, such as personal attacks of an opponent’s character. Candidates should elect to highlight their own accomplishments and worth, instead.
2. No financial expenditures may be made. Candidates are free to enlist the help of their friends to produce materials, but may not pay for advertisements or pay campaign staff. The *only* exception to this rule is for the cost of printing fliers, which we ask students to limit to no more than 20.
3. Candidates shall not solicit by money, blackmail, or otherwise attempt to bribe any student for their vote at any time.
4. Candidates shall not utilize official American University, School of Public Affairs, or other official logos or insignias on campaign materials.
5. Candidates shall not partake in any campaign action that violates American University’s Student Code of Conduct.

Failure to comply with the above rules will result in the **immediate disqualification** of the candidate from the election, as well as potential action taken by the University for violations of the Student Conduct Code.

Eligibility

All candidates shall:

- Be enrolled in the American University School of Public Affairs for the full academic year (either full- or part-time);
- Be in good academic and conduct standing with American University;
- Be willing to serve the entirety of their term; and
- Maintain a 3.0 Grade Point Average over the course of their term.

Position Descriptions and Duties

Academic Program Representative

There are program representatives for each academic program along with three special Program Representative positions in the Graduate Student Council. In addition, the Communication Director cabinet position is also available. Each Representative is expected to present the priorities of their cohort members at full meetings of the Graduate Student Council.

Academic Program Representatives are expected to fulfill the following duties (see Article IV of the GSC Bylaws):

- To attend all full council meetings and attend official SPA GSC events as available. If unable to attend, the Chief of Staff must be notified of the absence at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting, except in emergency situations;
- To serve as a liaison between the SPA GSC and their respective academic departments/programs, convey their constituents' interests at SPA GSC full council meetings, and communicate pertinent SPA GSC information to their constituents; and
- To attend all departmental meetings, as necessary;
- To co-host and encourage attendance at town hall meetings, and any other school wide events;
- To create programs specific to their academic departments/programs;
- To be active participants in their assigned committees; and
- To submit committee and/or representative reports to the President for all full council meetings.

Committee Chairpersons

The Graduate Student Council operates with three standing committees that help to provide guidance and support to the Executive Board. Each committee is overseen by an elected Chairperson, who retains responsibility for the activities of their assigned committee. Committees are expected to meet at least once monthly and as needed throughout the course of the semester. At each meeting of the full Graduate Student Council, Committee Chairpersons are expected to provide updates via their Committee Reports. Committees are composed of other members of the graduate community at the discretion of the Chairperson and, if requested, upon advice by the President.

The Committees and their assigned duties are as follows (see Article V of the GSC Bylaws):

- The Academic Affairs and Professional Development Committee:
 - To plan and execute monthly academic and professional development opportunities for the SPA graduate students;
 - To liaise with relevant administration officials concerning ongoing and upcoming professional development series;
 - To submit committee reports to the President for all full council meetings; and
 - To assist in the planning of the Spring Gala.
- The Community Service Committee:
 - To plan and execute at least two community service opportunities per semester;
 - To submit committee reports to the President for all full council meetings; and
 - To assist in the planning of the Spring Gala.
- The Social Committee:
 - To plan and execute monthly social opportunities for SPA graduate students;
 - To submit committee reports to the President for all full council meetings; and
 - To assist in the planning of the Spring Gala.