

# **Regent University**

## **Council of Graduate Students**

### **CONSTITUTION**

#### **Preamble**

We, the graduate students of Regent University, having been authorized by the Regent University Administration to form the Council of Graduate Students (COGS), do hereby set forth the following COGS Constitution.

#### **Name and Structure**

1. The name of this organization shall be the Council of Graduate Students (COGS). COGS should be subject to the final authority of the Regent University Administration and Board of Trustees.
2. COGS shall consist of the General Council. Under the oversight of the General Council and its members shall be other committees that serve specific functions within COGS. The graduate schools shall submit a fall and spring budget to the General Council as well as adhere to expressed guidelines in this Constitution.
3. All authority expressed by and through the COGS Constitution is subject to approval by the Administration of Regent University.
4. It is understood that the Administration of Regent University reserves the right to change or eliminate any procedure or action that is deemed inappropriate and not in accord with the standards established by the University.
5. Such changes must be made in consultation with the organization's advisor and the organization (COGS). COGS can request a review of the decision or action by the University's Executive Vice-President.

#### **Purpose and Objectives**

We believe that all Christians are admonished in the Scriptures to bear witness to Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20; John 20:21) and have the power available through the Holy Spirit to do so (Acts 1:8). The purpose of COGS is to provide Regent University students with opportunities to reach out in the name of Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit to those who do not know Him. This organization is called by God to be a vehicle through which students can go out into the community and share their Christian faith and love with unbelievers. Moreover, the purpose of COGS shall be:

1. To promote the University's Commitment to biblical principles and spiritual development.
2. To advocate and represent the graduate student body's collective ideas, interests, and concerns to the Regent Administration and vice versa.

3. To facilitate collaboration and community-building among the students of the University's constituent graduate schools.
4. To assist the Regent Administration in fostering a quality academic environment.
5. To identify specific areas where the efforts of COGS should be concentrated, according to the leading of the Spirit.
6. To keep efficient records of the results of all efforts so that effective follow-up can be administered.
7. To make prudent and Spirit-led decisions, according to the Scriptural principles, regarding the use of the resources and finances of COGS, so that we will be good stewards of that which God has entrusted to use.
8. To keep efficient records of all the financial dealings of COGS.
9. To constantly seek to glorify and lift up the Lord Jesus Christ through all that is said and done in COGS.
10. To meet regularly in order to maintain the health and spiritual formation of the organization.

#### **COGS Composition**

The COGS Executive Board is comprised of the following positions:

- A. COGS Executive President
- B. COGS Vice President
- C. COGS Vice President of Administration

#### **Executive Functions:**

1. Coordinate COGS operations and functions.
2. Channel-specific COGS issues to the General Council.
3. Advise and assist the COGS Executive President in providing spiritual growth, leadership, and purpose to the Council of Graduate Students.
4. Annually review the Constitution with leadership team from Student Engagement and Campus Ministries to ensure that it is accurate and up to date.
5. To function as an appropriate representation of the graduate student body, a limit may be imposed by the Executive President on how many of each school may be represented on the Board.
6. No more than two student positions on the Executive Board may be held by students from the same school unless this is impractical due to membership numbers or lack of applicants.

#### **General Council:**

- A. COGS Executive President (non-voting)
- B. COGS Vice President (non-voting, unless tied)
- C. COGS Vice President of Administration
- D. COGS Senators from all graduate schools
- E. COGS Delegates from all graduate schools
- F. Any administration that desires to sit in on a COGS meeting (non-voting, but may express opinions)

**Scheduling and Attendance Requirements:**

A. At the outset of the semester, the Executive President will distribute a schedule of planned General Council meetings, specifically designating those to which the General Council is required to attend.

B. The Executive President reserves the right to add or cancel any meetings with prior notification of three days to all members.

C. All scholarly members are required to attend and participate in all scheduled meetings of the General Council unless given prior notice and approval of at least three days to the Executive President.

**a.** Each Executive Board meeting will take place once per week. (In person or online) **b.** Each General Council meeting will take place once per week. (In person or online) **c.** Each Executive Board member will meet with their assigned representatives once a week. (In person or online)

D. COGS Executive members, Senators and Delegates will attend Campus Ministries Graduate Connect Groups. (In person or online)

E. COGS Executive Board and representatives will attend University Chapel OR UnChapel. (In person or online)

F. COGS Executive members, Senators and Delegates have optional attendance at monthly Leadership Labs (where CGLs receive training) to ensure their Spiritual Growth Events remain aligned with Campus Ministries' efforts.

**Attendance Discipline:**

- All Executive Board members and General Council are required to attend all COGS meetings, events, spiritual formation trainings, connect groups, and chapels, with the exception of three excused or unexcused absences.
- Attendance shall be recorded at every COGS meeting.

- In the event that a selected member has more than three unexcused absences, COGS members need to submit their reason for missing a meeting to the COGS Executive Board or Advisor(s) no later than one week after their absence.
- If a COGS member exceeds the number of allowed absences during a semester and has not been in contact with the COGS Executive Board or Advisor, he or she may be subject to removal from COGS.
- If a COGS member has prior knowledge of an absence, it is requested that they inform the President.
- Upon an unexcused or excused absence from a meeting, the COGS member is asked to review the minutes from the meeting(s) they missed.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

#### **Executive Board Responsibilities:**

The Executive Board of COGS shall have express control and authorization to use the General COGS budget for the following events:

- A. Graduate Student Welcome Day shall be held within the first two weeks of the Fall Semester.
- B. COGS will facilitate and host an event that brings together all new and returning On Campus graduate students to introduce them to the COGS representatives, and any other services or departments that may be beneficial to them.
- C. Help each school facilitate discussion panels shall be held no less than once per semester for the express purpose of garnering student concerns.
- D. No less than one discussion panel that incorporates online students. This may be merged with the normal on-campus discussion panel if feasible. Otherwise, it shall be its own separate event.
- E. The COGS Executive Board are responsible to provide regular Spiritual Growth Events. • The Executive Board is responsible for providing regular Spiritual Growth **Events** for their respective schools.

o Executive President:

- The Law School
- School of Divinity
- With the help of their respective officers

o Vice President:

- The School of Business and Leadership
- School of Health and Behavioral Sciences

- School of Government
- With the help of their respective officers

o Vice President of Administration:

- School of Education
- School of Communication
- With the help of their respective officers

• **Spiritual Growth Events** can be chosen from the following options based on school appropriateness.

o School-specific Connect Group (Weekly, Biweekly, Monthly, in-person, or online using Campus Ministries' Curriculum)

o School-specific chapel (Weekly, Biweekly, Monthly, in-person, or online in collaboration with Campus Ministries' leadership)

o School-specific University Chapel Endorsement (Weekly, in-person attendance, or online viewing parties)

o School-specific UnChapel Endorsement with weekly in-person attendance

• **Spiritual Growth Events**

o Must align with Campus Ministries' direction and oversight, including the annual Chapel Theme, Sermon Series, and Connect Group Curriculum, with minor adaptations for each respective school.

o Will be executed (led) by COGS representatives and the Executive Board Members.

o Feedback on Spiritual Growth Events will be collected through surveys after each event and evaluated during General Council Meetings with the Director of Campus Ministries.

o The Director of Campus Ministries will provide support, encouragement, and accountability for the quality and consistency of **Spiritual Growth Events**, ensuring alignment with Campus Ministries and the mission and values of Regent University.

**Executive President Responsibilities:**

1. Provide leadership, unity and vision to the Council of Graduate Students.

2. Oversee the Law School and School of Divinity COGS senators and offer assistance and guidance with planning and executing any necessary events or support for their schools.

- 3.** Act as the principal graduate student representative before Regent University administration, trustees, faculty, and the surrounding community through service, written correspondence, and personal contact.
- 4.** Meet with any interested and potential applications prior to them applying to discuss the role of COGS officers and/or executive positions so applicants are aware of their roles and the full scope of responsibilities and time commitments.
- 5.** Act as the principal student representative on behalf of Regent University administration, trustees, faculty, and the surrounding community to students through clear communication and accessibility.
- 6.** Plan and chair meetings of the COGS Executive Board and General Council every week.
- 7.** Facilitate the production of regular status reports from Board members.
- 8.** Ensure that the provisions of the COGS Constitution are properly implemented and upheld.
- 9.** Work with new COGS senators to review policies, procedures, and deadlines relating to running an effective student organization.
- 10.** Work with the COGS Vice President to provide leadership and oversight to General Council meetings.
- 11.** Address student concerns and present proposals to the General Council. The approval of the General Council is necessary for proposals to be considered representative of the graduate student body.
- 12.** Work with COGS senators to implement proposals for their schools.
- 13.** Work with the COGS Executive Board, Advisor and Director of Campus Ministries to approve or deny petitions to amend the Constitution.
- 14.** Coordinate the interest and interview process for all new and existing COGS representatives during the spring semester transition period.
- 15.** Meet weekly with COGS Advisor and submit monthly status reports.
- 16.** Meet semi weekly with Director of Campus Ministries and submit monthly spiritual formation and growth reports.
- 17.** Meet regularly with department representatives and University Administration.
- 18.** Compile a written end-of-year-report, including individual reports from each member of the Executive Board that summarizes the year and offers suggestions for the future to submit to the incoming COGS Executive President, COGS Vice President, and COGS Advisor.
- 19.** Have at least 2 hours of office hours a week, either online or in person.
- 20.** Attend leadership and spiritual formation trainings.

**21.** Plan and executive the annual executive board and representative's retreat.

**22.** Attend mandatory fall event training.

**Vice President Responsibilities:**

**1.** Serve as an active member of the COGS Executive Board by reliably and consistently attending and participating in all required Board meetings or other events.

**2.** Work with the COGS Executive President in providing leadership, spiritual growth, unity, and vision for COGS.

**3.** Oversee the School of Business & Leadership, School of Health and Behavioral Sciences, and School of Government representatives and offer assistance and guidance with planning and executing any necessary events or support for their schools.

**4.** Meet with any interested and potential applicants prior to them applying to discuss the role of COGS senators and/or executive positions so applicants are aware of their roles and the full scope of responsibilities and time commitments.

**5.** Serving as temporary Chair of COGS when the Executive President is away and ensuring that the Executive President receives all passed proposals for approval or veto within two days of vote.

**6.** Work with new COGS senators to review policies, procedures, and deadlines relating to running an effective student organization.

**7.** Provide leadership and vision for General Council, ensuring they are efficient and productive.

**8.** Fulfill all presidential responsibility and power within reason in the President's absence or upon the President's request or resignation.

**9.** Meet regularly with the Executive President, COGS Advisors, Director of Campus Ministries, and any other appropriate University Administration.

**10.** Submit all on and off-campus event request forms on behalf of COGS as a whole.

**11.** Prepare a written end-of-year report in the spring for the incoming COGS Vice President and the outgoing COGS Executive President, including each of the proposals passed by the General Council and approved by the President.

**12.** Have at least 2 hours of office hours a week, either online or in person.

**13.** Facilitate the training of the incoming COGS Vice President.

**14.** Attend leadership and spiritual formation trainings.

**15.** Attend mandatory fall event training.

### **Vice President of Administration Responsibilities:**

- 1.** Serve as an active member of the COGS Executive Board and General Council by reliably and consistently attending and participating in all required Board and General Council meetings or other events.
- 2.** Serve as the treasurer of COGS; in charge of budgets, email communication to school officers communicating budget amount per semester, recording receipts for each school and their expenses and providing biweekly report out to the advisor.
- 3.** Create live Google document for keeping track of budget and expenses as well as meeting notes for each Executive Board meeting and General Council meeting notes.
- 4.** Oversee the School of Education and School of Communication Representatives and offer assistance and guidance with planning and executing any necessary events or support for their schools.
- 5.** Initiate and implement the budgeting process in fall and spring semesters as outlined in the Constitution.
- 6.** Record notes for meetings and share with Executive Members.
- 7.** Keep attendance of COGS members at general assembly meetings and spiritual growth events.
- 8.** Meet with any interested and potential applicants prior to them applying to discuss the role of COGS officers and/or executive positions so applicants are aware of their roles and the full scope of responsibilities and time commitments.
- 9.** Lead workshops for COGS senators at the beginning of each semester to inform them of current and new COGS budgeting and financial policies and procedures; sometimes including new general policies. This can be done with the COGS Advisor.
- 10.** Oversee graduate schools to ensure that each is acting in accordance with the expectations and guidelines as outlined in the Constitution primarily through required monthly reports.
- 11.** Ensure the transition of graduate school operations from year to year by monitoring and recording changes in graduate school officers.
- 12.** Encourage graduate schools to collaborate when sponsoring events for the entire graduate student body and help plan, organize, and fund such events as necessary.
- 13.** Arrange an annual budget reconciliation of all COGS accounts for the COGS Advisor.
- 14.** Meet at the end of the month with the Executive President and COGS Advisor to review budget and expenses.
- 15.** Prepare a written end-of-year report in the spring for the incoming VP of Admin and the outgoing Executive President.



16. Have at least 2 hours of office hours a week, either online or in person.

17. Facilitate the training of the incoming VP of Admin.

18. Attend leadership and spiritual formation trainings.

19. Attend mandatory fall event training.

**School Senators:**

- Each school will have one senator.
- Model and embody the values of a Christ-first institution.
- Actively support the university and COGS mission.
- Will serve as a direct connection between their school administration and faculty and the students.
- Oversee school delegates and offer assistance and guidance.
- Will meet with their specific school faculty at least twice a semester, excluding summer, in order to discuss goals for the year.
- Will partner with school delegates to provide regular **Spiritual Growth Events**. • **Spiritual Growth Events** can be chosen from the following options based on school appropriateness.
  - o School-specific Connect Group (Weekly, Biweekly, Monthly, in-person, or online using Campus Ministries' Curriculum)
  - o School-specific chapel (Weekly, Biweekly, Monthly, in-person, or online in collaboration with Campus Ministries' leadership)
  - o School-specific University Chapel Endorsement (Weekly, in-person attendance, or online viewing parties)
  - o School-specific UnChapel Endorsement with weekly in-person attendance
- **Spiritual Growth Events**
  - o Must align with Campus Ministries' direction and oversight, including the annual Chapel Theme, Sermon Series, and Connect Group Curriculum, with minor adaptations for each respective school
  - o Will be executed (led) by COGS officers and the Executive Board Members.
  - o Feedback on Spiritual Growth Events will be collected through surveys after each event and evaluated during General Council Meetings with the Director of Campus Ministries. o The Director of Campus Ministries will provide support, encouragement, and accountability for the quality and consistency of **Spiritual Growth Events**, ensuring alignment with Campus Ministries and the mission and values of Regent University.

- Represent the views and concerns of the graduate student body, identifying student needs and bringing them to the General Council.
- Present issues and proposals to the General Council for discussion and action.
- Communicate information about COGS business and campus updates and proceedings to fellow students.
- Attend COGS meetings regularly, and promptly, and be prepared to address the items of business on the agenda.
- Accurately reflect the graduate student body by being an equal number of both online and on-campus students.
- Inform the VP of Admin of any purchases made for their school-specific accounts through the means set out by the VP of Admin.
- Submit on and off-campus event requests for their school-specific events (must receive prior approval from Executive Board before submitting event request).
- Shall be the primary COGS officer for their specific school.
- Term Limit shall be 1 year
- Senators must commit and serve the entire year.

#### **School Delegates:**

- Each school will have two delegates.
- Model and embody the values of a Christ-first institution.
- Actively support the university and COGS mission.
- Will meet with their specific school senator at least 2 times a month to discuss goals and objectives.
- Will partner with COGS senator and fellow delegate to provide regular **Spiritual Growth Events**.
- **Spiritual Growth Events** can be chosen from the following options based on school appropriateness.
  - o School-specific Connect Group (Weekly, Biweekly, Monthly, in-person, or online using Campus Ministries' Curriculum)
  - o School-specific chapel (Weekly, Biweekly, Monthly, in-person, or online in collaboration with Campus Ministries' leadership)
  - o School-specific University Chapel Endorsement (Weekly, in-person attendance, or online viewing parties)

o School-specific UnChapel Endorsement with weekly in-person attendance

- **Spiritual Growth Events**

o Must align with Campus Ministries' direction and oversight, including the annual Chapel Theme, Sermon Series, and Connect Group Curriculum, with minor adaptations for each respective school

o Will be executed (led) by COGS officers and the Executive Board Members.

o Feedback on Spiritual Growth Events will be collected through surveys after each event and evaluated during General Council Meetings with the Director of Campus Ministries. o The Director of Campus Ministries will provide support, encouragement, and accountability for the quality and consistency of **Spiritual Growth Events**, ensuring alignment with Campus Ministries and the mission and values of Regent University.

- Partner with fellow delegate to host one focus group in person or online per semester to identify student needs and listen to student views and concerns.

- Communicate information about COGS business and campus updates and proceedings to fellow students.

- Attend COGS meetings regularly, and promptly, and be prepared to address the items of business on the agenda.

- Accurately reflect the graduate student body by being an equal number of both online and on-campus students.

- Inform the school senator of any purchases made for their school-specific accounts through the means set out by the VP of Admin.

- Term Limit shall be 1 year.

- Delegates must commit and serve the entire year.

### **Advisor**

#### **Role**

- The roles of the Advisor(s) include, but are not limited to:

- An employee of Regent University

- Guide, coach, and mentor to COGS Executive Board

- Primary administrator for COGS; and

- Overseer of COGS and its operations

## **Responsibilities**

- The responsibilities of the Advisor include, but are not limited to administering:
- Selection processes.
- Process of removing a member of COGS.
- Compensation of qualified COGS members.
- Approves funding and provides company credit card as necessary.
- Assists with event approvals and ideas to ensure they align with the institution's event policies.

## **Selection Process**

### Eligibility:

Students who want to serve in COGS as an Executive Member, COGS Senators and Delegates must:

- Be full-time, on-campus or online student enrolled in a graduate program at Regent University.
- Be in good financial and disciplinary standing with their schools and meet minimum GPA requirements.
- Attend an information session with the President, Vice President, and Treasurer before applying to understand the full scope of the role.
- Be able to attend all required trainings, meetings, events, and chapel services. (online or in person)
- Meet with the Executive President to review policies, procedures, and deadlines relating to running an effective student organization.
- Be available to serve a one-year term that begins in September and ends in April.

### Special Circumstances

- Resigned and Removed Members
- May apply for next academic year's selection.
- Replacing Members
- If an executive board member or representative member becomes vacant during the school year no selection will take place and the position will be filled at the start of the new school year.
- Unless otherwise indicated by the Advisor or Dean of the school.

## Selection Process

### **Executive Board**

- Graduate students may apply for any position on the executive board. Students need to re apply each year.
- Following the applications there will be interviews with the faculty advisor, Director of Campus Ministries, and Dean of Students. If multiple students apply for the same position, there will be interviews with the faculty advisor, Director of Campus Ministries, and Dean of Students until the field has been narrowed down to two candidates.
- The two candidates will move to the next round of interviews with the EVP of Student Life and Chancellor's Office. These individuals will select between the two final candidates.

### COGS Senators

- Graduate students may apply for an officer position for the school in which they are enrolled.
- The school can select 1 officer per school.
- Students need to re-apply each year.
- Following the applications there will be interviews with the faculty advisor, Director of Campus Ministries, and Dean of Students. From there, they will interview the Dean of their school.

### **COGS Delegates**

- Graduate students may apply for an officer position for the school in which they are enrolled.
- The school can select 2 officers per school.
- Students need to re-apply each year.
- Following the applications there will be interviews with the faculty advisor, Director of Campus Ministries, and Dean of Students. From there, they will interview the Dean of their school.

### **Application Procedures**

- Applications for candidacy must be filed with the Advisor to the Executive Board by the application deadline.
- All applications will be scanned and approved by the President and the Vice President of COGS.
- For executive board positions, applicants will interview with the advisor, Director of Campus Ministries, and the Dean of Students. If multiple students apply for the same position, there will be interviews with the faculty advisor and Dean of Students until the field has been narrowed down to two candidates. The two candidates will move to the next round of interviews with the EVP of Student Life and Chancellor's Office. These individuals will select between the two final candidates.

- For COGS senators and delegates, applicants will interview with the advisor, Director of Campus Ministries, Dean of Students, and the Dean of their school for final approval.

#### Terms of Office

- The Executive members, Senators and Delegates shall commit to serving one academic year.
- A term begins in September of the academic year and concludes the final week of courses in April during the spring semester.
- All scholarships are applied in September for the fall semester, and in January for the spring semester. Scholarships are not applied over the summer semester regardless of enrollment. o Scholarships are for academics only. Scholarships cannot be applied to housing or books.
- All currently selected members must reapply each academic year.
- All selections must be finalized by April 1st for the following term.

#### Funding

- COGS may receive an allocation of Regent University student fees each semester for on campus student enrollment.
- The Student Activities Fee (SAF) is paid by every member of the graduate student body and shall be used to serve the graduate student body. The SAF should be used to support the different graduate schools to foster student interests; provide fun events; and promote leadership, personal, and spiritual development. When able, the SAF should be used conservatively to benefit as many students as possible.
- COGS shall follow the student organization fundraising policy as set forth by the University.
- All fundraising efforts must be approved by the Advancement Office and the Advisor.

### **Resignation, Removal & Vacancies**

#### **Filling Vacancies**

##### COGS Executive President

- If the COGS Executive President role becomes vacant, the COGS Vice President shall assume the role of President, then the Vice President may appoint an interim Vice President for the fall semester. If this occurs in Spring no Vice President will be appointed, but elections will be held for both executive positions in Spring.

##### COGS Vice President

- If the COGS Vice President role becomes vacant, the COGS Executive President shall appoint an interim Vice President in either semester and the interim Vice President shall serve until a new COGS Vice President is elected during the Spring semester. If the Interim Vice President is elected the temporary term will not be included in their term limitation.

### COGS VP of Administration

- If the COGS VP of Administration becomes vacant, the President and VP shall evenly divide the responsibilities and serve until the role is selected during the spring semester. COGS Senators and Delegates
- If any COGS Senator and Delegate position becomes vacant, the application will re-open and the selection process will start until the position is filled.

### **Removal from Office**

#### Automatic Removal: University Probation

- Any COGS Officer or Executive Board position who is placed on any form of University Probation at any time during their term of office, must automatically step down from their position immediately following notification of probation from Regent University. The resulting vacancy should be filled expediently according to the outlined procedure in this Constitution.
- o 5.3 in the Student Handbook states: Conduct and Scholarships: Regent reserves the right to adjust or cancel scholarships/grants in response to student conduct and/or academic integrity violations.

#### Disciplinary Procedures for Executive Board

1. If any individual believes that an Executive Member has neglected their duties or has violated their obligations or the professional ethics of COGS, that individual shall first seek to personally address the situation with the individual in question.
  2. If the concerned individual is not content with the result of the meeting from Phase 1, they shall speak with the president about the situation, and the two shall seek to resolve the situation and notify the Advisor. If the situation cannot be resolved proceed to Phase 3. If one of the contended individuals is the president, skip to Phase 3.
  3. If found to have violated their obligations, the executive board member will be placed on probation. If the individual is the president, there is no probation, the president will be removed by the Dean of Students.
- o Any probation will cause the executive member to not be eligible to run the following semester.

#### Disciplinary Procedures for COGS Officers

The grounds for removal of selected COGS Senators and Delegates shall be: • Failure to complete outlined duties (general and specific).

- Misconduct as a student or COGS member, as defined in the Student Handbook and COGS Constitution.
- Selected members can be removed for failing to fulfill their job responsibilities by the following procedures:

- If any individual believes that a COGS Senator, Delegate or member has neglected their duties or has violated their obligations or professional ethics of COGS, that individual shall first seek to personally address the situation with the individual in question.

- If the concerned individual is not content with the result of the meeting from Step 1, they shall speak with the President, and the two shall seek to resolve the situation. The officer must email the President if a meeting is held

between two individuals regarding a concern and notify the Advisor of the situation.

- If the concerned individual is still not content, all involved individuals and the President will meet with the advisor together and work on a resolution.

#### Removal by the Advisor

- The grounds for removal of selected members shall be:

- Failure to complete outlined duties (general and specific).

- Misconduct as a student or COGS member as defined in the Student Handbook and COGS constitution.

#### Resignation

- COGS Senators, Delegates and/or Executive members who wish to formally withdraw their COGS membership must notify the COGS Executive Board in writing with a two weeks notice.