

Governance Committee: Election of Candidates Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

To set forth the policies pertaining to:

- A. The process for nomination of qualified candidates for election to the Board of Directors as Board Officers and Board Members, and
- B. The process for nomination of qualified candidates for election as Section Officers, and
- C. The election process itself.

2. General

The GSA Policies and Procedures Guide are formatted according to the sequential steps taken from the initial formation of the Governance Committee for Election of Candidates to the results of the election and required actions following the election. The Governance Committee will present this document yearly for approval by the Society's governing body. The motion will request approval of the Election of Candidates policies & procedures as presented and empowers the GSA Governance Committee to make slight modifications to the process so long as there is no material change to the procedures as shown.

Each member of the Governance Committee must sign a non-disclosure/confidentiality agreement.

3. Eligibility for Nomination

- A. In accordance with the Bylaws of GSA, only members with the following qualifications will be eligible for nomination.
 - i. At the time of nomination, a candidate must be primarily active in the field of gerontology as it is applied to research, education, practice or policy in the private or public sector, with no less than five years of professional experience. ESPO candidates may have fewer years of experience.
 - ii. A candidate must have relevant experience that equips him/her to serve the Society in a governance and strategic planning role focused on the long-term growth and success of the organization.
- B. A candidate must be a member in good standing for a minimum of five consecutive years. ESPO candidates may have fewer years of experience.

- C. The candidate must have the support of their organization or institution’s management, and
 - i. Must be able to attend at least three Board of Directors meetings annually if a Board Officer or Board Member; must be able to attend scheduled meetings of Section leaders if a Section Officer.
 - i. One meeting will be held in conjunction with the Annual Scientific meeting at which the expense of travel would be the responsibility of the Board Officer, Board Member, or Section Officer.
 - ii. Must be able to devote a reasonable amount of time to GSA business.

- D. A candidate ideally will have been an active participant in GSA affairs within five years immediately preceding his/her candidacy (ESPO candidates excluded), preferably including recent service in one of the volunteer positions shown below:
 - i. Member of the Board of Directors
 - ii. Member of the GSA Section Leadership
 - iii. Member of a GSA Committee, Taskforce or Workgroup
 - iv. An Interest Group Convener
 - v. Previous Editor of a GSA publication

4. Conflict of Interest

- A. At the time of nomination, the candidate shall furnish to the Governance Committee a list showing every corporation, association, or other organization in which the candidate serves as an officer or director or in which the GSA candidate is a candidate for any office. Plus, a listing of such positions held previously for up to ten years earlier.
 - i. It is possible that a majority of the Governance Committee members might determine that the candidate’s service as an officer, director, or nominee for office of any of the entities named on the list would constitute a conflict of interest.
 - ii. If so, the Governance Committee may declare the candidate disqualified for office in GSA at this time and decline the nomination.
 - iii. The candidate may offer to resign from office in any entity or service that, in the judgment of the Governance Committee, would constitute a conflict of interest, if that candidate were in fact elected to office at GSA. However, the Governance Committee is not obliged to accept any such offer.

- B. No more than one individual who becomes employed at the same organization may serve on the Board of Directors as a Board Member or Officer.
 - i. An individual whose employment changes must immediately inform the President, and the Chief Executive Officer.
 - ii. The Board of Directors may make an exception if the individual(s) employment is in separate agency, or division within the organization or institution.

5. Campaigning

- A. Nominees are expressly prohibited from campaigning for themselves or for other nominees on the ballot. All methods of campaigning are strictly forbidden by all members, non-members or third parties. "Campaigning" is defined as soliciting votes or making explicit promises of action if elected.
- B. Direct campaigning of any type is prohibited and may result in the nominee being removed from the ballot or consideration thereof.
- C. Organized campaigning by others for a candidate is forbidden as it creates disparity in the fairness and equity process of our election procedures.

6. Nominations Process

- A. The Governance Committee will ensure processes for promoting diversity and inclusion when forming the election slate. The Committee will seek representation in academic discipline, career stage, geographic location, age, gender, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity within our volunteer leadership to respond to the needs of the GSA and to reflect the changing demographics of the U.S. and our global Society.
- B. Candidates for election can be nominated according to the positions to be filled.
 - i. Board Officer positions: The Governance Committee will identify at least two individuals to stand for election.
 - ii. Board Member positions: The Governance Committee will identify at least two individuals to stand for election.
 - i. The Committee will develop potential nominations through its knowledge of the GSA membership.
 - ii. The Committee will also welcome suggestions from the general membership. The Secretary will communicate with all members regarding the open positions and invite self-nominations or nominations on behalf of a nominee.
 - iii. Section Officer positions: The Governance Committee will identify at least two individuals to stand for vice chair.
 - i. The Secretary will communicate with the Past Chair of all GSA Sections, regarding the Nominations Process.
 - ii. Each Section's Past Chair will develop potential nominations through its knowledge of the Section membership.
 - iii. Each Section will also welcome suggestions from the general membership. The Secretary will communicate with all members regarding the open positions and invite self-nominations or nominations on behalf of a nominee.
 - iv. Each Section's Past Chair will finalize and send four (4) proposed candidates in priority order to the Governance Committee.

- C. To be eligible, all nominations proceeding from the membership must be submitted through the *Online Nominations Form*.
- D. Materials required through the *Online Nominations Form* will be:
 - i. Nominee's full name, email address, institution, title, and section
 - ii. Name of the position
 - iii. Updated CV
 - iv. Diversity Statement: Candidates are requested to submit a Statement of Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (200 word-limit) providing your career aspirations and contributions toward promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through this statement, you can share how your lived experiences; and past, present, and future academic and professional activities have or will contribute to GSA's mission of promoting equity and inclusion." Note: Examples include working with others to further the goals of equity and inclusion; leading in any capacity that tangibly promotes an environment where diversity is welcomed, fostered, and celebrated; creative activity, research and scholarship that promotes equity and parity; teaching and mentoring students, and/or engaging with faculty and/or staff from traditionally underrepresented groups to create a positive and successful organizational experience.
 - v. Confirmation that nominee is willing to serve in the role
- E. GSA staff will confirm that nominee information collected via the *Online Nominations Form* meets eligibility requirements and is consistent with headquarter records.
 - i. If the nomination reflects that the candidate does not meet the eligibility criteria, the Secretary will inform the nominator of the reason for ineligibility.
- F. Nominee applications will be sent to the Governance Committee and Section Past Chairs for review.

7. Election Slate

- A. If there are not enough candidates to meet the requirement of two (2) candidates for each vacancy, the Governance Committee will solicit and select a candidate(s).
- B. The Governance Committee is the final arbiter of a candidate's qualifications and will make the final selection of nominees for election.
- C. The Governance Committee Chair will:
 - i. Notify the individuals who are not selected for nomination.
 - ii. Notify the individuals who are selected for nomination.
 - iii. Notify the Secretary and CEO of the final slate of candidates.

8. Elections Process

- A. GSA staff will prepare the ballot and the Election Guide for distribution to the members. All members will receive ballots for Board Officer and Board Member positions; Section members will receive Section-specific ballots for the election of Section Officers.

- B. Candidate materials required for the Election Guide will be:
- i. Candidate's full name (with degrees) as it is to appear on the ballot
 - i. Candidates must login to update their GSA member profile prior to the call for nominations deadline for the following information fields.
 1. Mailing Address
 2. Phone Number
 3. To update a member profile: Go to My Account, upper right-hand corner → Update Profile → Basic Information → Contact Information Name of the position the candidate is running for elected office.
 - ii. Biographical Sketch written in the third person point of view for publication on the Ballot (200-word limit)
 - i. Include recent leadership experience, associations, and affiliations relevant to serving in GSA Leadership, including names of organizations, positions held specific duties, and dates of service.
 - iii. Platform Statement written in the first-person point of view for publication on the Ballot (200-word limit)
 - i. Give voters a general overview of who you are, your goals, and reasons for running for your position. Statements give members a sense of who to vote for if they have never met nor experienced your ideas or your accomplishments in the Society first-hand (or even if they have).
 - ii. Elements to be addressed in your platform statement:
 1. What differentiates you as a candidate, or makes you uniquely suited to serve on the GSA Board or in Section Leadership?
 2. Why do you want to serve as a member of the GSA volunteer leadership, and what goals do you want to accomplish?
 3. How do you foresee GSA's function, scale, or role in the aging community changing in the future?
 - iv. Diversity Statement: (may be resubmitted from original nomination materials) Candidates are requested to submit a Statement of Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (200 word-limit) providing your career aspirations and contributions toward promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through this statement, you can share how your lived experiences; and past, present, and future academic and professional activities have or will contribute to GSA's mission of promoting equity and inclusion.
 - v. High Resolution Digital Head Shot Photo (jpeg/tiff/etc.): minimum of 300 dpi, uncropped, in color, only the candidate should be in the picture
 - vi. Letter of support from the candidate's place of employment for serving in this elected role
 - vii. A list showing every corporation, association, or other organization in which the candidate serves as an officer or director or in which the GSA candidate is a candidate for any office. Plus, a listing of such positions held previously for up to ten years earlier.
 - viii. Electronic confirmation of statement for elected positions
 - i. I, _____, do meet the set requirements to run for an elected office which include being a member of good standing in the Society, and I have given careful consideration to the office I desire, and therefore file this application for the position of _____. I understand and agree to abide by all the rules and guidelines governing this election.
 - ii. If elected to the office of _____, I,

_____ hereby promise to fulfill all responsibilities of my office enumerated in The Gerontological Society of America Bylaws and Section Charter. I agree to abide to all campaign rules and procedures as laid out in the GSA Elections Rules and Guidelines. I understand that failure to do so may result in sanctions ranging from an official warning to disqualification.

- v. All applications must be submitted in the English language. It is the responsibility of the candidate to have their statements proofread. Statements will be posted as submitted and will not be copy edited.
- C. The Annual Election will take place in the second quarter of the year, with the specific date to be selected by the Chief Executive Officer.
- D. The candidate slates will be set forth by position and in alphabetical order.
- E. Eligible voters must be members in good standing with valid email addresses as of a predetermined date prior to election opening who have not unsubscribed from previous votes in the online voting platform:
- i. Regular members
 - ii. Student members
 - iii. Transitional members
 - iv. Undergraduate members
 - v. Emeritus members
 - vi. Retired members
 - vii. Academy representatives
- F. Each voter shall vote for a nominee in each vacant position.
- i. Nominees will be deemed elected if they receive a plurality of the popular vote.
- G. The ballot will be marked and returned directly by each voter to the official Internet voting site to be tabulated.
- i. Ballots must be submitted by the deadline or they will not be included.
 - ii. Within 2 days after the closing date for the election, GSA staff will distribute the results of the election to the Secretary via email.
 - iii. The Secretary will be responsible for certifying the results within 3 days of receipt of the email.

9. Notifications

- A. The Secretary will inform the GSA President, Board Chair, Board of Directors, Section Chairs and Past Chairs, the Governance Committee, and CEO of the results of the election.
- B. The Chief Executive Officer will notify all candidates of their election or non-election.
 - i. GSA staff will prepare and distribute official notification
- C. The candidates elected will be announced to the membership as soon as possible.

- D. Newly elected leaders will take office January 1.

10. Orientation

- A. All elected individuals and Board appointees:
 - i. Do not receive compensation or an honorarium for their volunteer service,
 - ii. Are required to attend the Annual Scientific Meeting, and
 - iii. Must remain an active member of the Society for the duration of their term.
- B. The CEO will forward an information package containing pertinent information to assist with onboarding.
- C. Newly elected individuals will be asked to attend two orientation sessions.
 - i. The first will be scheduled via conference call over the Summer
 - ii. The second will be scheduled in conjunction with the Annual Scientific Meeting