

The University of Denver / Iliff School of Theology
Joint Doctoral Program in Religion

Graduate Student Association Handbook and Constitution



UNIVERSITY *of*
DENVER

ILIFF
— SCHOOL *of* THEOLOGY —
DENVER

Updated Spring Quarter 2018

**2017 – 2018 Joint Doctoral Program
Graduate Student Association
Official Positions**

President/Director of Communication: Joshua Smith

Vice President/Director of Finance: Michael Laminack

Graduate Student Council Representative: Rode Molla

Director of Inclusive Excellence and Community Engagement: Philippa Meek

JDP Committee Representative(s): Joshua Smith

AAR Liaison: Vacant

SBL Liaison: Joshua Smith

At-Large Member(s): Vacant

About the Joint Doctoral Program Graduate Student Association

The University of Denver/Iliff School of Theology Joint Doctoral Program Graduate Student Association officers are elected by the students in the JDP to serve as a resource for both the students and the institutions they represent. We advocate for student issues to both DU and Iliff and function as a central point of coordination and communication about student concerns and activities.

The GSA meets at least once per academic quarter, with meeting times and dates set near the beginning of each quarter to accommodate the schedules of the officers. Meetings are open to all students in the Joint Doctoral Program and are a great way to get involved and stay informed about student life.

The GSA consists of several elected officers (e.g. President, Vice-President) as well as *ex officio* members who represent outside groups (e.g. AAR Liaison, SBL Liaison). As a neutral point of contact between faculty and students, the JDP Program Manager also sits on the association in an *ex officio* capacity and is invited to attend at least one meeting per quarter. Regular elections for any vacant positions are held during the spring quarter of each academic year. All members serve an initial term of one year, with an option to extend their service for an additional year uncontested. Nominations will be solicited from all JDP students each spring. All students are encouraged to self-nominate.

Services of the GSA

Conference Reimbursements

JDP students who attend or present papers at conferences related to their academic discipline are eligible to receive partial funding from the GSA. The reimbursement application form must be accompanied by suitable documentation, including original receipts or PDFs of emailed receipts for all reimbursable expenses (registration, travel, lodging, meals). Generally speaking, only two events will be reimbursed per student per academic year; the maximum reimbursable amount for all students is determined annually by the GSA, usually according to available funds. Forms and additional information are found under the GSA tab of the JDP Portfolio page: <http://portfolio.du.edu/jointphd>. The GSA Vice President/Director of Finance may also provide specific instructions for reimbursement applications.

PhD Forums

The GSA occasionally sponsors forums on topics of interest to the JDP student community. Potential topics include: New Student Concerns; Conference Paper Presentation Workshops; CV Preparation; Dissertation/Writing Workshops; and Student Town Hall Meetings.

Social Events

The GSA is available to sponsor student-organized social events. Students or faculty interested in obtaining GSA sponsorship may contact any GSA officer to present at the

next scheduled meeting. Program-sponsored parties in the fall for incoming first-year students and at the end of the academic year are an annual tradition.

Speakers List

The GSA also sponsors a list of JDP students who are available to speak about their topics of interest at local churches and other organizations. The JDP Program Manager maintains this list.

Communication, Collaboration, Advocacy

The GSA represents the larger JDP student body on a variety of committees at Iliff and DU, and works closely with the JDP office and JDP Committee on numerous issues of concern for doctoral students. Recent efforts have included advocating for additional teaching opportunities at both institutions and helping ensure that both institutions take adequate responsibility for meeting the needs of students in the program.

GSA activities and events are posted regularly on the JDP Portfolio page. We also stay in touch with students throughout the year via email, most frequently in the form of regular messages from the President/Director of Communication. Students may contact any GSA officer with questions or to share ideas and suggestions for how the JDP might be improved.

Awards

Each spring the GSA facilitates the selection of three students and one faculty member for the Annual GSA Excellence Awards: Outstanding Student, Outstanding Leadership and Community Service, Outstanding Publishing and/or Research, and Outstanding Faculty Member. Nominations are solicited from all JDP students early in the spring quarter, and students are encouraged to self-nominate.

Annual GSA Excellence Awards

Open nominations for these awards will be announced during the spring term, and nominations are solicited from all JDP students. All students are invited to submit the names of deserving students and faculty and may submit their own names as well. Self-nomination is particularly helpful in the case of the Outstanding Publishing and/or Research award. GSA officers review the nominations and select the recipient for each award based on both the number of nominations received for each potential recipient and a qualitative evaluation of the reasons offered in support of each nominee. GSA officers nominated for excellence awards customarily recuse themselves from the final vote.

Outstanding Student

This award is presented to a student who has demonstrated all-around excellence in academics, extracurricular activities, and leadership skills.

Outstanding Leadership and Community Service

This award is presented to a student who holds a leadership position in the JDP or in the wider non-academic community (e.g. a religious community or nonprofit organization) and has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to community service.

Outstanding Publishing and/or Research

This award is presented to a student who has demonstrated excellence in scholarly research and/or who has published scholarly material within the current academic year. Students who are nominated for this award are encouraged to provide a list of publications along with their nomination.

Outstanding Faculty Member

This award honors a faculty member who has demonstrated excellence in academics, teaching skills, leadership, and accessibility and commitment to students. Students receiving these awards must be enrolled in the JDP for the academic year in which the award is presented and must not have received the award in any of the previous three years. Candidates for Outstanding Faculty Member must have taught at either Iliff or DU for at least the full year for which the award is being presented and also may not have received that award in any of the previous three years.

Award Recipient History*

Outstanding Student

Bo Yong Lee (2006 – 2007)
Gichul Kim (2007 – 2008)
Kelly Arora (2008 – 2009)
Micah Saxton (2009 – 2010)
Aaron Conley (2010 – 2011)
Jason Wesley Alvis (2011 – 2012)
Gil Rosenberg (2012 – 2013)
Ben Sanders III (2013 – 2014)
Andriette Jordan-Fields (2014 – 2015)
David N. Scott (2015 – 2016)
Teresa Crist (2016 – 2017)
Joshua Smith (2017 – 2018)

Outstanding Leadership and Community Service

Ibrahim Kazerooni (2006 – 2007)
John Fadden (2007 – 2008)
Mark Freeland (2008 – 2009)
Nestor Gomez-Morales (2009 – 2010)
Zoe Cole and Elizabeth Coody (2010 – 2011)
Heike Peckruhn (2011 – 2012)

* Note: The most recent **three years** of award recipients should be posted to the GSA tab of the JDP Portfolio page and updated annually.

Elizabeth Coody (2012 – 2013)
Emily Kahm (2013 – 2014)
Hannah Ingram (2014 – 2015)
Albert McClure (2015 – 2016)
Joshua Bartholomew (2016 – 2017)
Nestor Gomez-Morales (2017 – 2018)

Outstanding Publishing and/or Research

Njenga Kariuki (2006 – 2007)
Adriana Nieto (2007 – 2008)
Julie Todd (2008 – 2009)
R.J. Hernandez-Diaz (2009 – 2010)
Heike Peckruhn (2010 – 2011)
April Favara (2011 – 2012)
Nestor Gomez-Morales (2012 – 2013)
Becky Chabot (2013 – 2014)
Dave Pettit (2014 – 2015)
Danny Yencich (2015 – 2016)
Benjamin Peters (2016 – 2017)
Rode Molla (2017 – 2018)

Outstanding Faculty Member

Albert Hernandez (2006 – 2007)
Frank Seeburger (2007 – 2008)
Carrie Doehring (2008 – 2009)
Gregory Robbins (2009 – 2010)
Pamela Eisenbaum (2010 – 2011)
Debbie Creamer and Katherin Turpin (2011 – 2012)
Andrea Stanton (2012 – 2013)
Larry Graham (2013 – 2014)
Sarah Pessin (2014 – 2015)
Miguel De La Torre (2015 – 2016)
Annette Stott (2016 – 2017)
Mark George (2017 – 2018)

Special Award (awarded infrequently)

Gil Rosenberg and Mary Ragan (2011 – 2012)

Constitution
of the
Joint Doctoral Program in Religion
Graduate Student Association

PREAMBLE

The JDP Graduate Student Association was established in 1989 at the initiation of students in the Joint Ph.D. Program in Religious and Theological Studies at the University of Denver/Iliff School of Theology to bring students and program administrators together to address student concerns. By vote of the Graduate Student Association officers, this constitution replaces the prior constitution, effective Fall Quarter 2018, and incorporates revisions approved by the officers of the GSA on June 7, 2018.

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

§1. Constituents of the Association

All students enrolled in the University of Denver/Iliff School of Theology Joint Doctoral Program in Religion are constituents of the JDP Graduate Student Association.

§2. Governance of the Association

The governing organization of the constituents shall be the JDP Graduate Student Association.

§3. Purposes and Objectives of the Association

The purposes and objectives of the GSA are as follows:

- a. To provide a forum for academic and programmatic discussions among Ph.D. students.
- b. To help orient new students to the JDP.
- c. To promote communications between student and faculty concerning initiatives of the JDP Committee and other concerns.
- d. To promote communications between students and the administration of the JDP.
- e. To provide social gatherings for students, faculty, and staff of the two institutions as well as their families.
- f. To promote interdisciplinary scholarly dialogue for students and faculty.

g. To administer the funds of the GSA so as to promote and enhance academic opportunities for students in the JDP.

ARTICLE II: COMPOSITION OF THE ASSOCIATION

§1. Membership

The voting members of the GSA shall be as follows:

- a. The President/Director of Communication.
- b. The Vice President/Director of Finance.
- c. The Representative to the University Denver Graduate Student Government and Iliff Student Senate.
- d. The Director of Inclusive Excellence and Community Engagement.
- e. One Representative to the JDP Committee who does not also serve as the President of the GSA.
- f. One *ex officio* Representative who serves as the student liaison to the American Academy of Religion.
- g. One *ex officio* Representative who serves as the on-campus student representative to the Society of Biblical Literature.
- h. Any At-Large Member of the GSA.

§2. Nominations and Elections

Elections shall be held during the spring quarter (or no later than June 30th) as follows:

- a. The Association shall solicit names of candidates for each open position for the following year by a notice emailed to all constituents of the GSA.
- b. Once interested candidates have been identified, the GSA shall notify constituents by email, giving them the opportunity to accept or reject nominations.
- c. The GSA shall review ballots as necessary.
- d. Elections shall be by acclamation, unless there is a contested election, in which case the election shall be by simple majority of all votes cast.
- e. The newly elected members will participate in GSA meetings upon election.

f. A special election will be held if a vacancy occurs prior to the spring quarter and shall be filled at the next regular election if one occurs during or after spring quarter.

§3. Terms of Membership

The terms of membership for the GSA shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30 of the following year. All elected officers shall commit to one full year of service, with the option to extend their term an additional year uncontested. At-large members are not term limited and may serve as long as they so choose. All other officers may serve up to two years in the same office; they are encouraged to serve as at-large members of the GSA upon the completion of their term.

§4. Recall and Replacement

Any member of the GSA may be recalled as follows:

- a. A petition stating the reasons for recall, signed by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the JDP student body, shall constitute a recall petition; it is to be submitted to the GSA.
- b. Within two weeks of receiving a recall petition, GSA officers shall submit a ballot for a recall vote to all constituents of the Association. A two-thirds majority of the votes cast shall result in the removal of an officer from their position.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS AND DUTIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

§1. President/Director of Communication

The President/Director of Communication shall have the following duties:

- a. To preside at all meetings of the GSA.
- b. To serve as an *ex officio* member of all GSA committees.
- c. To appoint members to any committees set up by the GSA.
- d. To set the agenda for all GSA meetings.
- e. To notify members of the GSA of all meeting dates, times, and locations.
- f. To designate a member (in the absence of the Vice President) to record minutes of all meetings of the GSA and to present them for approval at the following meeting.

§2. Vice President/Director of Finance

The Vice President/Director of Finance shall have the following duties:

- a. To carry out the duties of the President in his or her absence.

- b. To coordinate events planned by the GSA.
- c. To coordinate plans for new student orientation with the administration.
- d. To manage the funds of the GSA, including the co-approval of reimbursement applications with the GSA President.
- e. To keep accurate records of all funds and report regularly to the GSA.
- f. To take minutes at meetings and file them in an orderly fashion according to their approval by the GSA at the following meeting.

§3. Representative to the University of Denver Graduate Student Government and the Iliff Student Senate

The GSG/Iliff Student Senate representative shall have the following duties:

- a. To attend all GSG meetings and represent the interests of JDP students, and to provide regular updates to the GSA.
- b. To attend all Iliff Student Senate meetings and represent the interests of JDP students, and to provide regular updates to the GSA.

§4. Director of Inclusive Excellence and Community Engagement

The Director of Inclusive Excellence and Community Engagement shall have the following duties:

- a. To be the point of contact in the JDP for ensuring that equal time and consideration are given to the voices of women, people of color, ethnic minorities, students of varying social and economic backgrounds, LGBTQI individuals, and those with disabilities and learning differences.
- b. To be concerned with the spiritual, mental, and emotional health of doctoral students at every stage of their studies, working to foster a sense of well-being and community cohesion among the JDP's diverse student body.
- c. To provide regular updates to the GSA.

§5. *Ex Officio* Student Liaisons to AAR and SBL

The AAR and SBL Liaisons shall have the following duties:

- a. To provide regular updates to the GSA on AAR- and SBL-related events and opportunities for students.
- b. To represent the JDP to their respective professional organizations.

§6. At-Large Members

At-Large Members of the GSA shall have the following duties:

- a. To represent the student body in all GSA meetings.
- b. To take part in every vote held by the GSA.
- c. To attend meetings or functions when other officers are unable to do so.

ARTICLE IV: OPERATIONS OF THE GSA

§1. Responsibilities

The GSA shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. To serve as an advocacy organization for the JDP student body.
- b. To review and approve student reimbursement applications for conference attendance.
- c. To participate in new student orientation at the beginning of each year.
- d. To select recipients of the annual GSA Excellence Awards, to be presented each year at the JDP Spring Soirée.
- e. To conduct elections for its own membership.
- f. To hold meetings regularly.

§2. Meetings

The GSA shall meet at least once a quarter. The dates, times, and locations of meetings shall be determined cooperatively by the GSA and shall be posted for the benefit of the student body. The Program Manager and Student Social Media Coordinator of the JDP shall be informed and invited to all GSA meetings. The President may call special meetings as needed, with twenty-four hours notice to all GSA members. The President must call a special meeting upon receipt of a petition signed by at least four GSA members stating the reason for said meeting. If there is no President elected for a given year, any member of the GSA may call a special meeting with twenty-four hours notice to all GSA members.

§3. Quorum

At least fifty percent (50%) of the elected members of the GSA must be present to constitute a quorum. Meetings conducted without a quorum shall be limited to discussions and follow-through on actions decided at prior meetings for which a quorum was present. In the absence of a quorum, no new business may be discussed.

§4. Committees

The GSA may establish *ad hoc* committees or task forces as the need arises. All committees shall report to the GSA. Actions taken by committees are subject to GSA review and approval.

ARTICLE V: REVISION AND AMENDMENTS

§1. Amendments

Proposed amendments to this constitution must be submitted in writing to the GSA, which shall distribute them to all constituents currently enrolled in the JDP at least two weeks before a vote is held. Students shall submit votes by email and this constitution shall be amended by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

§2. Revisiting and Updating the Constitution

The constitution and GSA Handbook shall be reviewed no later than June 30, 2020, and every two years thereafter. During this time, necessary revisions shall be made and presented to the student body for approval. Reviews and revisions shall also be made in the event of significant changes to the structure of the JDP.