

GRADUATE LABOR ORGANIZATION (GLO) CONSTITUTION

Ratified September 4th, 2020

Article I – Name

This organization, previously called Stand Up for Graduate Students and Stand Up for Graduate Student Employees, shall be known as Graduate Labor Organization (GLO) RIFTHP, AFT, AFL-CIO. This organization shall be referred to throughout this document interchangeably as GLO, the union, and the organization.

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of this organization shall be:

Section 1. Member welfare

- a. To support the rights of everyone enrolled in a graduate program at Brown University to organize and engage in collective bargaining;
- b. To promote the welfare of the membership and to provide members a voice in the determination of the terms and conditions of their employment.

Section 2. Building union power

- a. To promote and advance its growth through conversation with members and with graduate workers who have not yet become members;
- b. To foster community among members by building a culture of mutual empowerment and mutual respect.

Section 3. Democracy, transparency, accountability, equity

- a. To encourage all graduate students to share in the full benefits of the organization, in accordance with the principles of inclusion and non-discrimination set forth in Article III, Section 2;
- b. To build a democratic organization whose leadership is accountable to its members and regularly solicits and considers rank-and-file perspectives on union matters.

Section 4. Promoting the work of education and research

- a. To support practitioners of teaching, learning, and research at Brown, in Providence, across the United States and around the world;
- b. To expand and improve primary, secondary, and higher education for all to enjoy.

Section 5. Solidarity and social justice

- a. To support the efforts of movements that pursue social justice, including but not limited to: gender and sexuality equity, racial justice, equity for people with disabilities, international graduate workers, and undocumented people;
- b. To support the efforts of all workers to organize and engage in collective bargaining;
- c. To organize for the mutual aid, protection, and benefit of all;
- d. To promote the mutual interests of all working people through collaboration and cooperation with other people and groups on campus and beyond.

Article III – Membership

Section 1. Anyone enrolled in a graduate program at Brown University is eligible for membership in this organization.

- a. Members who are in the bargaining unit, or have worked in a bargaining unit position sometime in the previous four (4) semesters, shall be considered Bargaining Unit Members;
- b. Members who are not in the bargaining unit, and who have not worked in a bargaining unit position any time in the previous four (4) semesters, shall be considered Non–Bargaining Unit Members;
- c. Non–Bargaining Unit Members may vote for officers and delegates, serve as stewards, and serve on any committee except the Bargaining Committee. Non–Bargaining Unit Members thus have all the rights and privileges associated with Bargaining Unit Membership with the exception of running for an officer or delegate position (pursuant to the terms set forth in Article IV Section 5a) and voting in certain referenda (pursuant to the terms set forth in Article XIV Section 1d).
- d. Unless otherwise specified, “members” and “membership” refers to both Bargaining Unit and Non-Bargaining Unit Members.

Section 2. No person shall be denied membership, nor shall this organization ever discriminate against individual members or applicants for membership on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, height, weight, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, health, disability, relationship or marital status, veteran status, pregnancy or parental status, number of dependents, native language, national origin, or social, political, or economic status.

Section 3. Two or more members of the local may bring a specific and detailed accounting, including any documentation, of allegations that another member has engaged in actions that violate union values or severely harm the membership, such as strikebreaking or harassment. The Social Justice and Accountability Committee shall then pursue a transformative justice process with the consent of all involved parties.

If the members who brought forth the allegation and/or the accused are not satisfied with the outcome of the transformative justice process or do not want to engage in the transformative justice process, the Executive Board will give a copy of the charges to the accused member and the Coordinator for Social Justice and Accountability shall conduct a preliminary investigation in order to determine the extent of harm. Following the preliminary investigation, and in consultation with the members who brought forth the allegation, the Executive Board shall vote on the question of whether a disciplinary hearing should be held. Executive Board members should recuse themselves from this vote and from all further disciplinary steps if they have brought forth the allegations, if they have personal bias against any involved party, or if they are accused themselves. If a majority of the Executive Board members who have not recused themselves vote to hold a hearing, the accused member shall be given at least ten (10) days written notice of the hearing.

The President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Coordinator for Social Justice and Accountability shall hold the disciplinary hearing. The accused member shall have the right to be represented by a person of his or her choice, and shall have the right to question the charges and present evidence and witnesses to support their defense. A majority vote of the officers holding the hearing shall be required for expulsion from membership or a probation that could result in expulsion.

A disciplined member may then appeal the decision to the full Executive Board, where a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote is required to uphold the expulsion or probation. In the case of personal harm, if the members who brought forth the allegation are not satisfied with the final outcome, the Executive Board will direct the parties to conflict resolution and transformative justice groups or appropriate government agencies, so that the members who brought forth the allegation may continue pursuing justice.

Section 4. All members will receive the annual report of the President and may attend general membership meetings, but good standing status is among the requirements to run for office, serve on committees or as a steward, vote for officers and delegates, or vote in referenda. Good standing status is conferred on any member who is current in payment of dues to the organization, in accordance with Article X.

- a. Members in good standing are afforded a grace period of thirty (30) days delinquency in the payment of dues before good standing status is revoked. During this grace period, the Treasurer will notify the member of the delinquency.
- b. A member can regain good standing status through a plan to pay back-dues, approved by both the Executive Board and the member. A member entering the bargaining unit, who owes no back-dues from previous bargaining unit work, will (re)gain good standing status upon the first dues payment and will not be charged back-dues from the period outside of the bargaining unit.

Section 5. In accordance with AFT guidelines, alumni membership is an option available to graduated members of the union. This membership is purely an expression of solidarity, and the organization has no duty to represent and no responsibility to these members. Alumni members pay dues in accordance with Article X, Section 4.

Article IV – Election of Officers and Delegates

Section 1. Elections shall be conducted in accordance with the AFT Constitution and the standards set out by the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA).

Section 2. In the case of the first election of this organization, officers shall be elected in October. For all elections 2022 and onwards, officers shall be elected in May of even years, creating a two-year term of office.

Section 3. The organization will, concurrently with the procedures named in Section 2 of this article, elect delegates to conventions of the affiliated organizations, per Article XI, Section 3.

Section 4. The organization will elect the following officers which shall comprise the Executive Board:

- a. President;
- b. Vice President;
- c. Secretary;
- d. Treasurer;
- e. Political Director;
- f. Coordinator for Social Justice and Accountability;
- g. Coordinator for Communications;
- h. Coordinator for Organizing;
- j. Six (6) Lead Organizers;
 - i. Lead Organizer for Workers in Master's Programs
 - ii. Lead Organizer for International Graduate Workers
 - iii. Lead Organizer for Physical Sciences
 - iv. Lead Organizer for Life Sciences
 - v. Lead Organizer for Humanities
 - vi. Lead Organizer for Social Sciences

Section 5. Eligibility for office. To be eligible for office, a person must:

- a. Be a Bargaining Unit Member of the organization in good standing;
- b. IF running for Lead Organizer for Physical Sciences, Lead Organizer for Life Sciences, Lead Organizer for Humanities, or Lead Organizer for Social Sciences, ALSO be currently enrolled in the relevant constituency.

Section 6. The Elections Committee shall conduct all elections and referenda of the organization.

- a. The Elections Committee shall consist of five members in good standing selected by the Stewards Assembly at its first meeting of the year (operating year determined by the Executive Board), excepting the first Elections Committee which shall be provisional and formed by consensus of the membership upon ratification of this Constitution, and shall be disbanded following the inauguration of the initial Stewards Assembly to allow for the appointment of Elections Committee members by that body;
- b. Any member of the Elections Committee who is seeking office or who accepts a nomination for office must vacate their position and be replaced by a member nominated by the President and approved by the Executive Board.

Section 7. Should electronic ballots become legal for our union, the Executive Board shall have the right to implement a policy of electronic voting. Under current law as of the writing of this Constitution, the following procedure will be used:

- a. Thirty-five (35) days prior to the date of the election, the Elections Committee shall notify all members of the opening of nominations for officers, the offices to be filled and the date of the election by first class U.S. Mail to the members' last known home address.

This notice will also inform the member that good standing status is required to vote for officers, and will also inform the member of eligibility requirements to run for office or delegate. Other communication methods may be used in addition to U.S. Mail, at the discretion of the Committee.

- b. To nominate oneself or a colleague for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Political Director, Coordinator for Social Justice and Accountability, Coordinator for Communications, Coordinator for Organizing, Lead Organizer for Workers in Master's Programs, or Lead Organizer for International Graduate Workers: submit to the Elections Committee a petition containing the signatures of at least twenty-five (25) members. Said petitions must be submitted no later than fifteen (15) days following the notice of the opening of nominations.
- c. To nominate oneself or a colleague for Lead Organizer for Physical Sciences, Lead Organizer for Life Sciences, Lead Organizer for Humanities, or Lead Organizer for Social Sciences, submit to the Elections Committee a petition containing the signatures of at least ten (10) members of the constituency area. Said petitions must be submitted no later than fifteen (15) days following the notice of the opening of nominations.
- d. The Elections Committee shall determine whether nominations were timely and if the nominees are eligible for office. The Elections Committee will then ask eligible nominees if they affirmatively accept their nomination, and only those nominees who accept their nomination will appear on the ballot.

Section 8. Uncontested seats shall be elected by acclamation. Write-in candidates are not permitted. For contested seats, at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the election, the Elections Committee shall notify all members of the election date and candidates for office, by communication methods chosen at the discretion of the Elections Committee.

Section 9. At least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the election, the Elections Committee shall prepare and send prepaid ballots by U.S. Mail to all members in good standing as of the date twenty (20) days prior to the date of the election.

Section 10. The Elections Committee shall tabulate the ballots returned before the closing of the vote as determined based on the postmark date, and a majority of the ballots cast shall be sufficient for a candidate to take office. Candidates will assume office at the next regularly scheduled general membership meeting.

Section 11. For offices in which no candidate earns a majority of votes cast, the Elections Committee shall conduct a run-off election between the two candidates who have received the most votes for the office in question. The Elections Committee shall prepare and send ballots by first-class U.S. Mail to the last known home address of all members who were eligible to vote in the initial election, in such manner as to ensure the secrecy of the ballot. The period between the mailing and return date for the ballot shall be no less than twenty (20) calendar days. Candidates elected by run-off election shall assume office within thirty (30) days of the run-off count.

Section 12. Challenges and objections to an election must be submitted in writing, with a statement of supporting reasons that includes specific facts as well as any documentation, to the Elections Committee within five (5) days of the count. The Elections Committee shall issue its written opinion regarding the objections no later than ten (10) days after receipt of such objections.

Section 13. The election results will be published and distributed to the membership within thirty (30) days of a count. All elections materials, including the ballots, will be kept in a secure location for one (1) year.

Section 14. With the exception of the President, or in case of a recall, the Executive Board will have the power to fill vacancies in its membership until the next general election of officers.

Section 15. An elected officer may be removed from office, and a new election held, due to specific cause, generally limited to violation of the Constitution, misconduct, improper election, or abuse of the powers of office. A petition signed by a majority of the membership shall be sufficient to require a recall election for any sitting officer. The Elections Committee shall supervise the recall election.

Article V – Duties of Officers

Section 1. The President shall:

- a. Be the principal executive officer of the organization;
- b. Be the presiding officer at all general membership meetings, executive board meetings, and the Stewards Assembly;
- c. Be an ex-officio member of all standing committees except the Elections Committee;
- d. Appoint, with the approval of the Executive Board, members to serve on all standing and special committees except the Elections Committee;
- e. Receive, report, and respond to correspondence of the organization;
- f. Supervise all employees of the organization;
- g. Be one of the responsible financial officers of the organization and shall be authorized to co-sign financial instruments and make regular and usual disbursements of funds;
- h. Represent the organization before the public and before Brown University management;
- i. Be, by office, a delegate to the Providence Central Labor Council, the Rhode Island AFL-CIO, the convention of the American Federation of Teachers, and meetings or conventions of the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals;
- j. Make an annual report to the organization's membership;
- k. Sign all official documents of the Organization;
- l. Be able to delegate the responsibilities of the office except where otherwise specified by the Constitution.

Section 2. The Vice President shall:

- a. Assume any of the duties of the president in the event of absence, illness, or death of the President;
- b. Be the chair of the Grievance Committee;

- c. Co-sign financial instruments in the absence of the President or Treasurer.

Section 3. The Secretary shall:

- a. Maintain the non-financial files and records of the organization and internal records of memoranda of understanding reached with Brown University management;
- b. Create written records of verbal agreements reached with Brown University management in bargaining sessions and labor-management meetings;
- c. Maintain records of grievances and their outcomes;
- d. Be the custodian of the seal and charter of the organization;
- e. Shall take minutes at general membership meetings, executive board meetings, and the Stewards Assembly;
- f. Receive and certify the reports of the Elections Committee;
- g. Be an ex-officio member of the Grievance Committee;
- h. Perform duties of the office as required by the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act;
- i. Onboard new officers to administrative practices.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall:

- a. Be the principal financial officer of the organization;
- b. Receive, record, and deposit all dues, monies, and other income in the name of the organization;
- c. Maintain accurate membership records;
- d. Issue membership cards and notices of delinquency;
- e. Be one of the responsible financial officers of the organization and be authorized to co-sign financial instruments and make regular and usual disbursements of funds;
- f. Maintain all financial records;
- g. Arrange for an independent audit of finances annually and make same available to the Executive Board, Stewards Assembly and membership;
- h. Transmit per-capita payments on a regular basis to the Secretary-Treasurer of the AFT and similar officers of all other bodies with which the organization is affiliated as set forth in Article XI;
- i. Perform duties of the office as required by the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, and the guidelines developed by the AFT.

Section 5. The Political Director shall:

- a. Be the chair of the Political Committee;
- b. Develop a political agenda for the organization at the municipal, state, and federal level;
- c. Maintain an internal institutional history of the organization's political culture and practices, including commitments to the values of anti-racism and feminism, for the onboarding of future elected officers;
- d. Maintain a public history of the organization and its values;
- e. Organize onboardings and training for officers, organizers and the general membership on issues that pertain to building and using labor power.

Section 6. The Coordinator for Social Justice and Accountability shall:

- a. Be the chair of the Committee for Social Justice and Accountability;
- b. Meet regularly with campus affinity groups, University offices tasked with inclusivity and coalition-building, and community groups beyond campus;
- c. Ensure that the organization's values of feminism and anti-racism, as well as the aspirations set forth in Article III, Section 2, are upheld;
- d. Stay apprised of the needs and demands of affinity and community groups as well as University policies towards them, and organize coalitions for the advocacy of their needs;
- e. Develop transformative justice procedures for response to internal disputes;
- f. Mediate internal disputes and, if a satisfactory resolution to a dispute is not reached by the parties via transformative justice, manage disciplinary procedures per Article III, Section 3;
- g. Help organize social events that build community within the organization, with the broader community, and with the labor movement in accordance with the organization's goals and values as set forth throughout this document.

Section 7. The Coordinator for Communications shall:

- a. Be the chair of the Communications Committee;
- b. Assist the President in handling the incoming correspondence of the organization;
- c. Handle all mass communications to membership and the public.

Section 8. The Coordinator for Organizing shall:

- a. Commit to follow and implement consciously anti-racist, feminist and anti-exclusionary organizing practices within the organization. This understanding shall be achieved and maintained through close collaboration with the Political Director and Coordinator for Social Justice and Accountability.
- b. Be the chair of the Organizing Committee;
- c. Assist Lead Organizers in their duties;
- d. Ensure all organizers are trained and supported;
- e. Communicate with the Treasurer to ensure up-to-date information about graduate workers and membership in all constituencies;
- f. Manage internal organizing data.

Section 9. A Lead Organizer shall:

- a. Commit to follow and implement consciously anti-racist, feminist and anti-exclusionary organizing practices within the organization. This understanding shall be achieved and maintained through close collaboration with the Coordinator for Organizing, the Political Director, and the Coordinator for Social Justice and Accountability;
- b. Attend Organizing Committee meetings to build campaigns around issues that matter to their constituency and connect these campaigns to the concerns of other constituencies;
- c. Organize the general membership of their constituency to take part in these campaigns;
- d. Hold at least one meeting per term with all stewards in their constituency to review the organizing goals, issues and needs of stewards;

- e. Assist departments without stewards in hosting worksite meetings, and act as interim steward in disseminating information to same worksite;
- f. Recruit members, organizers, and candidates for Stewardship in their constituency;
- g. Be an ex-officio member of the Stewards Assembly;
- h. Be an ex-officio member of the Organizing Committee;
- i. Represent their constituency in labor-management meetings relevant to their constituency;
- j. Communicate needs of their constituency to the Bargaining Committee;
- k. Ensure grievances against the Employer are filed and carried out properly in their constituencies, in coordination with the Vice President.

Article VI – Executive Board

Section 1. The Executive Board, which consists of the officers enumerated in Article IV, Section 4, shall meet every two weeks during the academic year and once per month during the summer, or at the call of the President, for the purpose of initiating, overseeing, or revising the program of the organization and to conduct other business of the organization that is within its authority. A quorum for the Executive Board shall be at least one-half of its members. The President shall notify Executive Board members in advance of each meeting.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall prepare an annual budget in the month prior to the beginning of the fiscal year, which shall be established by the Executive Board. The budget shall be presented to and discussed by the Stewards Assembly and returned to the Executive Board with suggestions, if any, before the Board votes on its approval.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall employ all professional, technical, clerical, and support staff of the organization, and shall establish the salary, benefits, and expense guidelines of any employee of the organization.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall be empowered to make contracts and incur liabilities including the purchase of services, equipment, and real property, to borrow money, to secure such obligations by mortgage or other instrument, and to otherwise engage in financial transactions to the extent permitted by applicable law or statute. The Executive Board shall have the power to sue, complain, and defend on behalf of the membership.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall be responsible for adherence to and enforcement of the Constitution of the organization.

Section 6. The Executive Board shall approve the chairperson and membership of all special committees of the organization. The Executive Board shall also receive regular reports from standing and special committees.

Section 7. Five absences from an Executive Board meeting within a calendar year, counted from the date of assumption of office, shall be grounds for a vote of the Executive Board to decide if that Executive Board member should be replaced. Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14,

the Executive Board shall have the authority to appoint an eligible member to take the seat of an Executive Board member who was suspended or replaced under the terms of this section.

Article VII – Committees

Section 1. The standing committees of the organization shall be:

- a. Elections;
- b. Grievance;
- c. Political;
- d. Communications;
- e. Social Justice and Accountability;
- f. Organizing.

Section 2. The Executive Board may form special committees, on its own initiative or at the direction of the Stewards Assembly.

Section 3. The chairs of the standing committees, except the Elections Committee, shall be the appropriate officers of the Executive Board, pursuant to Article V.

Section 4. Upon assuming their positions, chairs of standing committees shall have twenty (20) days to select committee members and present their names to the Executive Board. Chairs may solicit committee members on a rolling basis, or remove members from committees, by providing notice of the change to the Executive Board.

Section 5. The Elections Committee shall be responsible for elections, pursuant to Article IV.

Section 6. The Grievance Committee:

- a. Shall work with Stewards and officers in the resolution of contractual and non-contractual disputes between graduate employees and the University;
- b. Shall be responsible for the processing of grievances and disputes beyond the immediate work location;
- c. The grievant may appeal the final decisions of the Grievance Committee to the Executive Board. The Executive Board shall develop and adopt a policy that governs how it shall approach grievances not referred to arbitration or mediation, as well as other litigation and/or administrative appeals. The Grievance Committee shall follow this policy.
- d. A majority of the committee shall be Bargaining Unit Members.

Section 7. The Political Committee, Committee for Social Justice and Accountability, Communications Committee, and Organizing Committee shall assist their respective chairs in their duties, as enumerated in Article V.

Section 8. The Bargaining Committee:

- a. In advance of contract negotiations, including reopeners, a special committee called the Bargaining Committee (BC) shall be formed. The BC shall represent and advocate for the diverse interests of membership at the negotiation table;
- b. The BC shall consist of Bargaining Unit Members in good standing. There shall be fifteen (15) seats on the BC. The seats for each constituency shall be filled by appointment by the corresponding Lead Organizer:
 - i. Humanities: three (3) seats
 - ii. Life Sciences: three (3) seats
 - iii. Social Sciences: three (3) seats
 - iv. Physical Sciences: three (3) seats
 - v. Master's Workers: one (1) seat
 - vi. International Graduate Workers: two (2) seats
- c. Every effort shall be made to ensure representation of diverse interests and backgrounds on the Bargaining Committee, particularly with respect to the identities and categories named in Article III, Section 2.
- d. The BC shall have a Chair or two (2) Co-Chairs, to be selected by the BC;
- e. At least monthly, the BC shall provide the Coordinator for Communications with updates to be shared with the membership;
- f. A member of the BC who is absent for six (6) meetings or four (4) consecutive meetings shall be eligible for replacement by an eligible member selected by the corresponding Lead Organizer, subject to approval of the BC Chair or Co-Chairs.

Article VIII – Stewards and Stewards Assembly

Section 1. The purpose of the Stewards Assembly is to debate and make recommendations on the organization's policy agenda as well as organize its membership. Stewards are not officers of the organization and shall not have a role in the governance of the organization. The Stewards Assembly shall consist of members of the organization in specific constituencies as follows:

- a. There shall be elected one Steward for each specific worksite. Worksites are to be determined by the Executive Board such that every member has a worksite, based on networks of co-working relationships (e.g. department, building floor) ;
- b. Worksites with more than forty (40) members will be represented by an additional Steward, with full rights and duties. For each additional forty (40) members or major fraction thereof at the worksite, another Steward shall be elected;
- c. Any member in good standing is eligible to serve as a Steward for their worksite;
- d. In addition to worksite Stewards, Lead Organizers, according to terms outlined in Article V, section 9, will serve as ex-officio members of the Stewards Assembly.

Section 2. Supervision of Steward Elections:

- a. In the case of the first election, the Elections Committee shall open a period of nominations for worksite Steward positions after the election of the organization's officers. For all subsequent elections, the Elections Committee shall open a period of

nominations for worksite Steward positions at the last spring semester General Membership Meeting. The Executive Board shall provide the annual schedule of regular meetings of the Stewards Assembly, to be announced along with this call for nominations;

b. Nominees must accept or reject their nomination in writing within 7 days of notice of nomination and submit nomination petitions to the Elections Committee with no less than five (5) members of the affected worksite as signatories; said petitions must be received no later than thirty (30) days following the opening of nominations;

c. A petition signed by five (5) members of the affected worksite is sufficient to elect a steward for that worksite if no other petitions are submitted.

d. If multiple petitions are submitted for that worksite, the Lead Organizer who represents that worksite, with help from the Elections Committee, will run an election for that worksite consisting of all nominees who have submitted a petition with at least five (5) signatories. This election will be run, at the Lead Organizer's discretion, online or at an in-person meeting, and a plurality of votes shall decide the winner. Records of the election's outcomes are to be submitted to the Secretary;

e. The Election Committee shall settle any challenges and objections associated with this procedure.

f. A Steward may be removed from their position, and a new election held, due to specific cause, generally limited to violation of the Constitution, misconduct, improper election, or abuse of power. A petition signed by a majority of the worksite membership shall be sufficient to require a recall election. The Elections Committee shall supervise the recall election.

Section 3. Meetings of the Stewards Assembly:

a. All meetings of the Stewards Assembly shall be announced to all members and open for any member to observe;

b. The Stewards Assembly shall have two regular meetings per academic semester, and once during summer;

c. The business of Stewards Assembly meetings shall be to set goals for, and receive and review the reports on the progress toward those goals by, the President, Executive Board, and Committees; review and make suggestions on the budget submitted by the Executive Board; appoint members of the Elections Committee in accordance with Article IV, Section 6a; initiate referenda in accordance with Article XIV; and initiate and take other such actions as the body deems necessary in accordance with relevant articles of this Constitution. A majority of its members shall be a quorum for the Stewards Assembly;

d. The Stewards Assembly may also meet in a special meeting called by the President, by the Executive Board using the procedures outlined in Article XII, or by petition of twenty-five percent (25%) of stewards, with seven (7) days notice to stewards and officers. The agenda for a special meeting will be limited to the specific subject for which the meeting was called, and no other business may be transacted except by unanimous consent;

e. The President shall be the presiding officer of the Stewards Assembly, in accordance with Article V, section 1, and may vote only in the event of a tie.

Section 4. Duties of Stewards shall be:

- a. organizing members of the work site that they have been elected to represent, in coordination with the Lead Organizers for their constituencies;
- b. monitoring potential contract abuses and grievances in the worksite and reporting to the Lead Organizer and the Vice President;
- c. assisting or representing a graduate worker on work-related matters, including disputes and, when appropriate, formal grievances, when so requested by a graduate worker;
- d. posting and circulating notices, minutes, information fliers, and other communications from the organization and its affiliate organizations;
- e. maintaining the union's bulletin board in the worksite;
- f. mobilizing members to become active in the union;
- g. attending the union's General Membership meetings and a mandatory one-time Stewards' orientation to be led by the Political Director;
- h. gathering member input via meetings and surveys in order to represent the members in their worksite at Stewards Assembly meetings.

Article IX – General Membership Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings

- a. The regular membership meetings of this local shall be twice per academic semester and once during summer. The schedule of planned General Membership Meetings shall be published no later than 3 weeks from the start of the academic semester or summer. Regular meetings will be at a time and place scheduled by the Executive Board.
- b. Any member may request an item on the agenda of a General Membership Meeting by submitting that item to the Executive Board before the meeting. Notice of the agenda for a General Membership Meeting shall be sent to each member no later than seven (7) days prior to the meeting. Additional agenda items published agenda may only be added with approval of the Executive Board prior to the meeting. Meetings shall feature a period of up to 15 minutes for brief questions, comments, and suggestions from members.

Section 2. Special Meetings

- a. The Executive Board using the procedures outlined in Article XII, or by petition of twenty-five (25) members in good standing, may call a special meeting with at least seven (7) days notice to the members.
- b. The agenda for a special meeting will be limited to the specific subject or purpose for which the meeting was called. Announcements of such meetings shall be sent to members, and the meeting agenda shall be included.

Article X – Revenues

Section 1. Dues shall be collected from all members. Dues will be assessed at 1.65% of monthly stipend.

Section 2. Bargaining Unit Member dues shall be collected in a manner described in the Membership Dues policy, and the dues rate may be amended by a referendum of Bargaining Unit Members pursuant to Article XIV.

Section 3. Non-Bargaining Unit Member dues must be paid for a full semester or summer, or longer, and are due by the fifteenth of the month following the beginning of the summer or semester (October 15th, February 15th, or June 15th). Non-Bargaining Unit Member dues must be paid before Non-Bargaining Unit Members are eligible to participate in union functions that require good standing status.

Section 4. The dues amount for Alumni Members shall be determined and communicated by the Executive Board. Alumni Member dues must be paid for a full term, or longer, and are due by the fifteenth of the month following the beginning of the term (October 15th, January 15th, or April 15th).

Section 5. Fair share fees shall be determined by a formula based on the percentage of annual union expenditures for bargaining unit representation. Fair share fees shall be adjusted within 45 calendar days of completion after each audit of the organization's finances.

Article XI – Affiliations

Section 1. This organization shall maintain affiliation with, and wherever possible, send delegates to the following organizations: The American Federation of Teachers, The Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals, The Rhode Island AFL-CIO, and The Providence Central Labor Council. The organization, to the best of its ability, shall be active in the affairs of affiliated organizations.

Section 2. The number of delegates and alternates to be elected must be determined by the Executive Board in advance of the election for those delegates and alternates.

Section 3. Candidates for delegates and alternates will be ranked according to the number of votes received, with the exception of the President who shall be the highest-ranking delegate. The highest ranked candidates will be delegates, and the next highest ranked candidates will be alternates, according to the number of delegates and alternates previously determined by the Executive Board.

Section 4. The Secretary shall certify the election and promptly forward the credentials of all delegates and alternates to the convention authorities.

Section 5. Delegates shall provide a report to the Executive Board on meetings attended.

Article XII – Rules of Order

Section 1. The following values and considerations shall guide discussions and decision-making by all bodies of the Union:

- a. Commitment to consensus-based decision making as an egalitarian and inclusive method of reaching agreement based on the active participation and consent of group members to collectively reach a decision.
- b. Commitment to continuously developing across all members of the union an understanding that consensus-based decision-making alone does not dismantle societal systems of power and oppression.
- c. To facilitate the Union's adherence to subsections a and b, every meeting agenda shall include a reminder that:
 - i. Marginalized voices, both present and absent, will be centered in discussions and decisions.
 - ii. Discussions and processes will attempt to minimize the impact of interlocking systems of oppression including but not limited to racism, sexism, classism, queerphobia, transphobia, fatphobia, ableism, ageism, and xenophobia.
 - iii. Broad participation of all interested parties will be encouraged and every individual's time, labor and capacity will be respected.
 - iv. Any discussion or decision-making process will further the Union's goal of community-building and collectivity, as set forth in Article II, Section 3.

Section 2. In light of the aspirations set forth in Section 1, meetings of all decision-making bodies of the Union shall be governed by the following Rules of Order:

- a. The President shall facilitate the meetings of the Executive Board and the Stewards Assembly. Committee meetings shall be facilitated by the committee Chair, where appropriate.
- b. The facilitator shall determine the regular time for meetings based on members' expressed availability at the beginning of each academic semester and at the beginning of the Summer period.
- c. When not able to attend a meeting, members may name a member proxy by writing to the facilitator of the meeting body before a meeting. The proxy does not count as a member of the body. The proxy's participation in the meeting shall be limited to presenting the elected officer's opinion and does not include the right to vote in that officer's place. An officer using a proxy shall not be considered "present". The meeting body shall have the authority to determine limits on the number of times a proxy may be named in a given time interval.
- d. The quorum shall be one half of the body's members. In meetings of the Executive Board and Stewards Assembly, the Secretary shall determine if quorum is reached and record attendance of Executive Board members in the meeting minutes.
- e. At least three (3) days in advance of any meeting, the facilitator shall solicit input from members of the Board concerning proposals to be discussed and decisions to be made. The facilitator shall create an agenda for the meeting at least one (1) day in advance of the meeting.
- f. Each meeting shall include a minimum of ten (10) minutes of open floor, during which members may introduce topics of discussion relevant to the purposes of the body that are not otherwise included in the agenda. The facilitator may decide where in the agenda this time is allocated or if a certain issue has been noted

- and held for a future meeting, but they shall not appropriate it for other agenda items unless no members wish to speak.
- g. During discussions, the facilitator will maintain a list of the order of speakers, and may implement a time limit on all speakers for the agenda item. The order of speakers shall allow those who have not yet spoken or plan to provide direct responses to speak first, but otherwise allow members to speak on a first-come basis.
 - h. In-person voting on proposals shall be governed by the following rules:
 - i. Before attending their first meeting, members will be trained on the Rules of Order outlined in this article in accordance with Article V, section 5e.
 - ii. To be considered for the voting, proposals shall include a written draft document outlining a general plan of action, the number of people needed to feasibly execute the plan, and a time frame for voting and completion. Only drafts submitted to the facilitator prior to the distribution of the agenda shall be included in a meeting.
 - iii. When a member interested in the development or discussion of a given proposal is unable to attend a meeting, they may communicate their stance on the issue to the meeting body, who will consider the input during discussion and voting.
 - iv. Before calling a vote, the facilitator shall allow for a period for reflection lasting five minutes or fewer, if members of the decision-making body signal that they are ready to begin voting.
 - v. The decision-making body will use five-degree voting. Degrees may be communicated through hand signals or any other method accessible to members.
 - 1. Five degrees signals a pause. A pause signals a conflict with the values outlined in Article II and Article XII, Section 1, Part III.
 - 2. Four degrees signals a “no” vote on the basis of insufficient capacity.
 - 3. Three degrees signals a “no” vote on the basis of a disagreement not on grounds of capacity or values
 - 4. Two degrees signals assent.
 - 5. One degree signals the participant’s support for the proposal.
 - 6. The proposal passes if a majority vote 1 and there are no 5s. If on a first vote, a proposal results in one or more “pause” signals and/or more than 50% of participants voting with two, three, or four degrees, then the proposal is revisited. Those bringing the proposal can decide whether to modify the proposal or not. Then the proposal is voted on a second time according to the rules listed above. If the proposal does not pass, those bringing the proposal can decide whether to modify the proposal or not. Then the proposal is voted on for a third time, and this time the result of the vote is determined by a simple majority using the four lowest degrees, where the proposal passes with a majority of 1s and 2s and the proposal fails with a majority of 3s and 4s. Ties are to be broken by the President.

Section 3. Meeting bodies shall develop procedures for equitable participation based on the accessibility needs of members, including but not limited to asynchronous participation in discussion and voting prior to the meeting. These procedures shall be explained to members by

the facilitator before their first meeting. Any member may participate remotely but must notify the facilitator before the start of the meeting and provide a method of communication. Any member who is not able to participate in synchronous discussion for a given proposal will be considered absent. Pause votes cannot be registered *in absentia*.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall have the authority to make changes by consensus vote to aspects of Rules of Order not expressly covered in this document.

Section 5. The Secretary shall produce at the earliest possible time a written record of any changes to procedures, including but not limited to those described in Sections 3 and 4 of this article, and shall coordinate with the Political Director to ensure that newly elected officers and representatives of the Union are familiarized with the Rules of Order, accommodations for accessibility, and related policies within two weeks of induction into the organization.

Section 6. Committees may modify by consensus vote the Rules of Order outlined in this article for the purposes of their meetings. Committees shall communicate any such changes to the Secretary as soon as possible.

Article XIII – Availability of this Constitution

Section 1. The Secretary shall submit one (1) digital copy of this Constitution and all subsequent amendments to the office of the Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers, and to the similar officer of each organization with which this organization is affiliated;

Section 2. The Secretary shall maintain a digital copy accessible to the public.

Article XIV – Referenda

Section 1. Procedures

- a. A referendum may be called on any matter pertaining to the union, including but not limited to amendment of this document, contract ratification, dues, and policy, through a vote of the Executive Board, Stewards Assembly, or through a petition signed by at least twenty-five percent of membership. The Coordinator for Social Justice and Accountability shall have the authority to call for a vote of the Stewards Assembly or Executive Board on initiating a referendum.
- b. The Elections Committee shall oversee voting on referenda and shall provide a minimum of five days for voting, with extensions possible at the discretion of the Elections Committee, Executive Board, or Stewards Assembly. The Elections Committee shall determine the manner and delivery of secret ballots in such a way that, to the extent feasible, every eligible voter is able to participate.
- c. The Elections Committee and Communications Committee shall make every effort to communicate the nature and timing of the referendum to eligible voters. When a referendum concerns contract ratification, there shall be an informational meeting at

- least one week in advance of voting. A summary of the tentative agreement shall be provided at this meeting and made available to all graduate students online.
- d. Eligibility to vote in a referendum shall be an exclusive right of members in good standing.
 - i. The electorate for the referendum shall be limited exclusively to Bargaining Unit Members in cases of constitutional amendment, contract ratification, strike authorization, and any other cases of referenda which the Elections Committee determines must be limited to Bargaining Unit Members in order to comply with prevailing U.S. labor regulations.
 - ii. In cases where the Executive Board or a petition of membership calls a referendum for a topic not covered in Section d.i. above, the Executive Board shall have the authority to define the electorate for a referendum.
 - iii. In cases where the Stewards Assembly calls a referendum for a topic not covered in Section d.i. above, the Stewards Assembly shall have the authority to define the electorate for a referendum.
 - e. During the bargaining of a contract, all graduate students shall be consulted on the contract at least once per academic semester and summer period throughout bargaining, and at least once during the ratification process. The consultation period shall be at least two weeks during the bargaining process and at least four weeks during the ratification process.
 - i. The Communications Committee shall notify graduate students of the consultation period at least three (3) days before it begins to the extent feasible.
 - ii. Results of bargaining consultations that do not oppose the Union's values and aspirations shall be considered in the bargaining process.
 - iii. The Bargaining Committee shall collaborate closely with the Communications Committee to share the results of the consultation period and related decisions by the Bargaining Committee with the graduate student body.
 - f. A referendum shall pass if it receives a majority of votes in support and at least 20% of eligible voters participate. The sole exceptions to this standard shall be as follows:
 - i. An amendment to this document shall pass if it receives at least 70% of votes in support and at least 25% participation.
 - ii. A strike authorization vote shall pass if it receives at least 75% of votes in support and at least 30% participation.