



# Brock University Graduate Students' Association

## Document 070A

### Position Policy Regarding Positionality of the Graduate Students' Association

#### Name

1. This Document shall be known as the "Position Policy – Regarding Positionality of the Graduate Students' Association"

#### Jurisdiction

2. The Graduate Students' Association, in accordance with Document 010 – Graduate Students' Association Legislative Framework Policy, may enact legislation known as "Position Policies", which shall:
  - a. Be the responsibility of the Executive Committee, who may create, uphold, and pursue them but Board of Directors reserves the authority to review and advise on all Position Policies,
  - b. Provide a statement, stance, or position relating to an issue that affects graduate students, that is requires a more comprehensive approach then a motion by either the executive committee or the board of directors,
  - c. Act as statement, stance, or position held by the GSA on any issue that falls within its mandate, as outlined by the GSA Bylaw and any other relevant legislation,
  - d. Support the mission, vision, and values as well as the goals of the organization as outlined in Document 007 – GSA Strategic Plan,
  - e. Be reviewed on an ongoing basis, but remain in effect until they are amended or redacted by the Executive Committee, and,
  - f. Automatically expire three (3) years after initial approval but may be renewed in accordance with Document 010.

#### Commitments

3. This Position Policy shall replace the GSA's previous commitment to a policy of neutral as it relates to the issues facing the graduate student community at Brock University and within the broader community.
4. This Position Policy recognizes the privileged nature of neutrality, and its very conception highlights the lessened impacts that are faced by members of their community because of a position of privilege.
5. This Position Policy shall guide the GSA in the development of all future position policies, ensuring that their development and usage are inclusive of the needs of the GSA's members, and reflective of the organization's commitment to the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.
6. The GSA commits, through both its position policies but through all aspects of its advocacy and service, to using the organization's position and privilege to improve the experiences of all members.

#### Statement

**Enacted:** March 2022

**Last Review:** March 2022

**Expires:** February 2025



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7. The GSA is a not-for-profit organization that represents all graduate students of Brock University both on campus and in the broader municipal, regional, provincial and federal landscapes. From time to time, it may be necessary for the GSA to use its position to address issues involving Brock University graduate students that may concern education, research, physical and mental health, recreation, social activities, funding, intellectual property, identity, and other aspects of the graduate student experience.
8. The GSA recognizes the diverse interests, practical concerns, and political views held by our members, and strives to build an open and inclusive graduate student community.
9. The GSA operates in the interest of all its members and aims to engage in efforts that benefit all members equally. However, the GSA recognizes that from time to time it must engage in efforts focused on the addressing and improving the experiences of specific members to ensure that they are free of discrimination and harassment and are consistent with the principles of Justice as well as those of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).
10. The GSA welcomes the diversity of its membership and associated differing opinions and perspectives. The GSA recognizes that all members experience privilege differently and must correspondingly use the organization's position and privilege to raise the voices of others and address these inequities. This approach will better ensure that graduate student spaces and experiences are welcoming, supportive, accommodating, and reflective of the needs of graduate members as well as keeping the GSA's advocacy and service focused, representative and reflective. It is therefore understood that the GSA shall develop political policies, advocacy, and services that are consistent with the following principles:
  - a. Normally focused on university related policies or concerns, but may include positions on relevant governmental policy or political issues that directly relate to the GSA or its members;
  - b. Limit statements, stances, or positions on political issues, conflicts or situations that do not directly relate to the GSA or its members;
  - c. Align with organizations whose views, interests and goals are consistent with GSA's Mandate, Mission, Vision and Values;
  - d. Shall not join or merge with any municipal, provincial, federal or international political party, pressure group, partisan or lobbying organization, and;
  - e. Seek to ensure that its student representatives are not elected based on their partisan political views, if any.
  - f. Such positions shall be formalized only after appropriate consideration and discourse is undertaken by the GSA Executive. Pursuant to



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Document 010, the GSA Board of Directors may review and advise on any position policies developed by the executive committee.

11. In addition, the GSA may take a stance on any other relevant issues, whether they be local, provincial, national, or international if they have impacts on members and graduate student life at Brock University or its affiliated campuses. The GSA should endeavor to ensure that any statement, stance, or position is relevant to the University, GSA, and its students and are consistent with GSA's Mandate, Mission, Vision and Values.