Welcome to the Baylor Graduate Student Association! Thank you for committing your time and energy to this organization. GSA exists to foster good citizenship among Baylor graduate students and to promote a holistic, integrative approach to graduate education. Your involvement as a representative is crucial to turning this vision into a reality. Over the past few years GSA has achieved increasing visibility and influence on the Baylor campus, and with your help we can continue this growth in the coming academic year. By supporting GSA programs, promoting events, and serving as departmental advocates, you will demonstrate to the Baylor community that graduate students are caring and committed individuals who are eager to invest in our university. Thank you for your willingness to serve, and we look forward to working with you!

- The GSA Leadership Team

Elise Leal, President
Ph.D. Candidate, History

Jeff Strietzel, Vice President
Ph.D. Student, Higher Education Studies & Leadership

Channing Cochran, Director of Operations
PsyD Student, Clinical Psychology

Courtney Kurinec, Director of Outreach
Ph.D. Student, Psychology/Neuroscience

Nicole Bouchard, Policy Committee Chair
Ph.D. Student, English

Tom Millay, Social Committee Chair
Ph.D. Student, Religion

Erica Swindle, Service Committee Chair
Ph.D. Student, Math

Kevin Singer, Academic Committee Chair
Ph.D. Student, Higher Education Studies & Leadership

GSA Advisory Team

Chris Rios, Faculty Advisor
Baylor Graduate School, Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies

Katie Robbins, Graduate School Liaison
Ph.D. Student, Higher Education Studies & Leadership
GSA Mission Statement

The Baylor University Graduate Student Association is a community that strives to enrich the quality of academic and social life for students of each graduate program of Baylor University as well as advocate the rights of these students and voice their concerns. GSA fulfills this mission by pursuing events, programs, and initiatives in keeping with the vision statement, given below.

Vision Statement

An excellent graduate experience takes a holistic, integrative approach to graduate education that invites engagement in compelling scholarship and research, facilitates enriching careers, nourishes personal well-being, and cultivates a culture of belonging and collegiality.

Representative Responsibilities

Primary Representatives:
The GSA constitution stipulates that primary representatives must attend three-fourths of the monthly Assembly meetings. On dates you cannot attend the Assembly, you should ensure that your Alternate is in attendance. Please inform the President if you or your alternate will be unable to attend meetings due to scheduling conflicts, so that a new representative can be appointed immediately.

Regarding specific roles, you are required to serve on one of the four GSA committees, and to assist with any activities or events planned by your committee. You are responsible for voting on motions proposed at the Assembly, and electing GSA officers. You are primarily responsible for ensuring that your department’s needs are represented within GSA and to the Baylor administration.

One of your main responsibilities is serving as a conduit of communication between your department and GSA. You will frequently receive emails from the President about GSA events or announcements. You are required to forward these emails to your departmental colleagues within 36 hours of receiving the email. You are also required to copy the President and Vice President onto these emails.

Alternate Representatives:
Alternate representatives are not required to attend Assembly meetings except in the absence of the primary representative. However, you are encouraged to come as often as possible and to actively participate on one of the committees. In the absence of the Representative, you are required to attend the Assembly and vote on behalf of your department.

Joint Responsibilities:
Primary and alternate representatives share responsibility for ensuring that their department’s needs and concerns are being represented within GSA. Representatives serve as the most direct way for the Baylor graduate student body to advocate for their needs and wants. Therefore, we ask that you remain attentive to conversations occurring within your programs about the quality of life among Baylor graduate students. When appropriate, bring these conversations to GSA and the Baylor administration for further consideration. Your roles as advocates not only ensure that GSA represents all graduate students effective, but also enables you to take the lead in developing creative solutions to problems.
GSA Committees

Social Life Committee
The Social Life Committee organizes and plans events that encourage community among Baylor graduate students. This includes GSA’s four largest events: Grads on the Water in the summer, the Football Tailgate Mixer in the fall, and the bi-annual Graduate Student Days at the Waco Downtown Farmers Market.

Academic Affairs Committee
The Academic Affairs Committee deals with matters directly affecting the academic life of the graduate student body. In an effort to support and promote graduate student research, the Committee organizes the 3 Minute Thesis Competition in the fall and the Graduate Student Appreciation Picnic & Research Showcase in the spring. The Committee also seeks to enhance graduate students’ academic experience by providing a variety of academic and professional development opportunities, such as the Life on the Grad Line workshops.

Policy Committee
The Policy Committee works to enhance Baylor University policies in order to better serve the interests of graduate students and advocate for their unique needs. This Committee has worked on a wide range of issues, including health insurance, parental leave, spousal and childcare benefits, and support for international graduate students. The Policy Committee also takes the lead in refining and applying GSA’s Strategic Vision, originally known as the Paradigm Project.

Service Committee
The newly-established Service Committee seeks to create and promote opportunities for graduate students to serve the university and local community, thereby helping to foster a more rounded and holistic graduate student experience. This currently includes organizing and maintaining the Graduate-Undergraduate Mentorship Program (GUMP). The committee will seek to discover what service looks like specifically at the graduate student level, and will work to facilitate new ways for graduate students to engage in philanthropic activities within the Baylor and Waco communities.
Main GSA Events

Dates marked with an * are subject to change

**Grads on the Water** – August 6, 2016

**New Graduate Student Orientation** – August 17, 2016

**Fall Graduate Student Day at the Waco Downtown Farmer’s Market** – August 20, 2016

**GUMP Kickoff Dinner** – September 26, 2016

**3-Minute Thesis Competition** – October 18, 2016

**GSA Tailgate** – November 5, 2016

**Fall GUMP Workshop** – TBD

**Dialogue with Baylor Leaders** – November 28, 2016

**Spring Graduate Student Day at the Waco Downtown Farmer’s Market** – February 11, 2017*

**Spring GUMP Workshop** – TBD

**Graduate Student Appreciation Picnic and Research Showcase** – April 6, 2017

Additional events will be added throughout the academic year, so look for email announcements from Elise and keep an eye on the GSA Facebook page!

GSA Assembly Dates

All GSA Assemblies are held from 12:30-1:30pm. Most are held in the Student Union Building, with some exceptions. Watch for emails from Elise and Assembly updates on Facebook for more details.

**August 17, 2016 (during New Graduate Student Orientation)**

**September 6, 2016**

**October 4, 2016**

**November 1, 2016**

**January 10, 2017**

**February 7, 2017**

**March 21, 2017**

**April Assembly TBD**