

Constitution and Bylaws

Climate, Meteorological, & Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Students' Organization (CliMAS GSO)

Revision History

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Mission Statement

The Climate, Meteorology, & Atmospheric Science (CliMAS) Graduate Students' Organization (GSO) is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and thriving graduate student community to aid the Department of Climate, Meteorology and Atmospheric Sciences' mission: *Conducting world-class research, providing a world-class education, and guiding students to be leaders and exemplary citizens.*

Towards this end, we:

- 1. Strive to be the voice of CliMAS graduate students.**
 - i. Bring forth student concerns and needs to faculty members.
- 2. Offer social and cultural events to foster community and bring members of the CliMAS graduate student organization together.**
 - i. This includes annual potlucks, fall and spring picnics, payday lunches/dinners, and trips to local parks and attractions (list is not exhaustive).
- 3. Provide mentorship activities for new and existing graduate students.**
 - i. Facilitate a mentorship program to help assimilate new graduate students into the graduate department and address their concerns.
- 4. Promote academic cohesion with graduate students**
 - i. Coordinate departmental events, both for graduate students and occasionally with faculty, staff, and undergraduates, and issue feedback surveys to graduate students.
- 5. Facilitate holistic development of graduate students.**
 - i. Organize professional development workshops and maintain a list of useful resources on the graduate student organization page on the department website that are relevant for graduate students.

Membership

- To be eligible for membership for the full academic year, graduate students in the CliMAS department must pay a **\$30.00 annual membership fee** (except in extenuating financial circumstances), which is accounted for by the CliMAS GSO Treasurer. Membership dues are requested by mid-September of each academic year, and to remain a member, membership dues must be paid annually. Membership is optional for CliMAS graduate students. **Both members and non-members of the CliMAS GSO are welcome to attend all GSO-sponsored events throughout the year. All GSO-sponsored events are optional for CliMAS graduate students, and attendance is never required for both members and non-members.**
- Payment of the annual membership fee by the due date grants membership until the due date the following year, except in extenuating financial circumstances. Late payments grant membership from that date until the due date the following year. A typical membership lasts from the current September until next September. To remain a member of the CliMAS GSO, the annual membership fee must be paid once each year, except in extenuating financial circumstances.
- To participate in CliMAS GSO elections, which includes 1) candidacy for a position on the GSO Executive Board and 2) voting for candidates in elections, CliMAS graduate students must be a member of the CliMAS GSO. The only stipulation for CliMAS GSO membership is payment of the annual \$30.00 membership fee, except in extenuating financial circumstances.

CliMAS GSO Dues and Finances

- As outlined in the above paragraph, CliMAS GSO dues are **optional** for all CliMAS graduate students, but **required for those who wish to participate in elections and announce candidacy for a position.**
- These funds will be used to support and sponsor student organization activities coordinated by the organization (holiday parties, semester picnics, bowling night, etc.).
- As of August 2026, the annual CliMAS GSO fee for membership is \$30.00.
 - All organizational purchases must be recorded and the documentation saved for a minimum of 7 years in accordance with University of Illinois policy.
- CliMAS GSO dues can be used at the discretion of CliMAS officers as long as they use the funds to promote the welfare of the members of the graduate students organization.
- CliMAS dues **may not** be used for personal expenses or non-CliMAS GSO-sanctioned activities. Misuse of CliMAS GSO funds by a board member will result in immediate termination of their position and membership.
- The Treasurer is responsible for collecting dues and dispersing funds as necessary.
 - Dues can be collected via Venmo, PayPal, or cash. Personal accounts may be used to collect CliMAS GSO dues, as long as they are transferred to the CliMAS GSO official bank account.
- Upon taking office, the Treasurer should contact the prior treasurer & prior president to initiate transfer of names on the external bank account.
- All officers are permitted to conduct transactions on behalf of the CliMAS GSO.
 - After making a purchase, officers should submit expenses to the Treasurer who will reimburse them accordingly.

CliMAS GSO Executive Board

The CliMAS GSO Executive Board is composed of all officers. All members of the Executive Board **must be active members** (i.e., must be involved with and attend all CliMAS GSO events, unless permission for an absence is granted) **and** remain in good academic standing. The board is responsible for fulfilling CliMAS GSO's purpose of promoting the welfare of graduate students.

A **term** for an officer position defined as **one full year of service** in the graduate student organization. Specifically, this is defined as the start date of the position and lasts until the next elected official formally transitions into the role.

Term Limits:

- **Maximum two-term limit:** An officer can only serve in a given position for two years.

Special Note:

- *When registering this student organization with Illinois Student Engagement, the position internally referred to as Student Affairs Chair is called Membership Director for all intents and purposes of operations and registration.*

The following are the main responsibilities of elected CliMAS GSO officers:

President:

- Oversees CliMAS GSO operations.
- Conducts weekly board meetings.
- Provides feedback to other officers regarding their respective initiatives.
- Acts as main contact for CliMAS GSO.
- Collaborates with the CliMAS department to find innovative ways to provide a community between the academic department and the graduate student organization.
- Attends monthly faculty meetings, acting as a liaison between the faculty and CliMAS GSO officers/graduate students.

Vice-President:

- Oversees 1st year graduate student mentorship program.
- Collaborates with the First Year Student Chair to help foster inclusivity for new students.
- Serves as president pro tem in the absence of the president.
- Attending monthly Department Affair Committee meetings

Secretary:

- Maintains the CliMAS GSO webpage on the CliMAS Department website and associated materials.
- Maintains the CliMAS GSO associated materials and file drive
- Assists with coordinating social events and other projects.

Treasurer:

- Collects and manages departmental dues and assets.
- Helps provide budgetary insights on expenses for future events.
- Facilitates in reimbursements to CliMAS GSO board members for GSO expenses
- Assists with coordinating social events and other projects.

The following position is **formally elected** by CliMAS GSO members, typically **in early November** of each year:

Student Affairs Chair (StAC) (The Membership Director for Student Organization Registration):

- Responsible for fostering inclusivity of all graduate students regardless of national origin, race, ethnicity, gender identity, ability status, or sexual orientation.
- Attend CliMAS Department Affairs Committee (DAC) meetings on behalf of the CliMAS GSO.
- Administer annual CliMAS graduate student survey (see resources in CliMAS Google Drive).
- Main point of contact for prospective graduate students, as well as the main lead for the annual Prospective Graduate Student Webinar, which is held every November.
- Monitor the Graduate Ambassadors' email account.

The following position is **appointed** by the CliMAS GSO Executive Board **at the beginning of the fall semester**:

First Year Student Chair:

- Serves as the representative (liaison) for first-year graduate students.
- Disseminates information about upcoming events to first-year students.
- Can assist with coordinating CliMAS GSO events/initiatives to gain experience serving in a leadership position.

Elected CliMAS GSO officers will take office during the summer semester, following the elections that are held in April (besides the Student Affairs Chair, who is elected in November). Officers will begin their term at the point of transition from the previous officer until the position is officially transferred to the next elected officer. The transition typically occurs in May or June.

Graduate Student Feedback

- Graduate student feedback will be solicited via a Google form available in the email signature of all CliMAS GSO emails. All CliMAS graduate students, member or non-member, are able to submit feedback at any time.
- At least once per month, officers should review and address feedback.
 - Feedback should be addressed, at a minimum, on the last weekly board meeting of each month.
- The CliMAS GSO may disseminate feedback to the department head or university officials as needed.

Elections

- Elections occur approximately **2-6 weeks** before the last day of spring semester classes, typically in **April**.
 - This includes the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.
 - This does not include the Student Affairs Chair (StAC), who is elected in **November**.
- Announcement of Candidacy:
 - All candidates shall be encouraged to submit, in writing, a personal statement of interest that shall be disseminated **1 week** prior to elections.
- Nominations:
 - A candidate may be self-nominated and/or nominated by their peers. In order to appear on the ballot, a candidate must accept their nomination.
 - **Candidates must be CliMAS graduate students who are members of the CliMAS GSO.** Membership is completed by payment of the annual membership fee, except in extenuating financial circumstances.
 - **Those nominated for President have a requirement of serving on CliMAS GSO as an officer for at least one full term, *unless* there are no nominees for that position.**
- Voting Protocol:
 - The candidate receiving the most votes for a position will win the election.
 - Ballots will be sent out electronically (i.e. via an anonymous Google Form).
 - The election will remain open for at least one week in order to ensure everyone has enough time to cast their ballot.
 - In the event of a tie between candidates, the CliMAS GSO Executive board will vote to select the candidate. If a tie occurs among all six CliMAS GSO Executive Board members, the President will select the candidate.
 - Specific election data, such as the number of votes per candidate, will not be released (unless requested by faculty or administration) nor will they be discussed outside of the CliMAS GSO Executive Board.
- Special Elections:
 - Should an officer resign or leave the university prior to the end of the spring semester, their position will be filled via a special election.
 - All of the voting protocols for the normal officer elections shall apply to the special election.
 - Should the vacancy occur after elections for the next term have occurred, the officer-elect will assume the position early and no special election be held.

Transfer of Power

After election of new officers, the departing Executive Board members are to initiate officer position transfer procedures necessary to maintain the CliMAS GSO, and to guide new officers so that it is a smooth transition. All organization-related documents, both paper and electronic, are to be disseminated to the appropriate incoming officers upon transfer of position. If a current officer on the Executive Board is no longer willing or able to execute the assigned duties of their position for the remainder of the academic year for which they were elected, then a new election for that abandoned officer position must be conducted by all active members following the procedures outlined in “Officer Elections” above as soon as is prudent.

Removal of a CliMAS GSO Executive Board Member

A CliMAS GSO Executive Board member may be terminated for the following reasons, including, but not limited to:

- 1) refusal to pay the annual membership fee, except in extenuating financial circumstances,
- 2) not attending weekly meetings without an excused absence,
- 3) leaking private CliMAS GSO Executive Board information (e.g. election data or private information between the Executive Board and faculty members),
- 4) routinely avoiding required officer duties,
- 5) misusing CliMAS GSO funds, and
- 6) being disrespectful, crass, offensive, or discriminatory toward other Board members, CliMAS faculty, or CliMAS graduate students.

If other CliMAS GSO Executive Board members find a member is in violation of any of these stipulations or public feedback/reports indicate as such, a special meeting will be called. All other Executive Board members must unanimously approve removal of an officer.

In the event an Executive Board member violates conduct described herein, a meeting will be called to address behavior of the offending board member to allow remaining board members to correct behavior. If violations persist, the remaining board members shall write statements detailing the following:

- 1) Offense(s),
- 2) Date of meeting where behavior was addressed to offending Board Member,
- 3) Recommendation for removal (if applicable).

If the remaining Executive Board members' recommendation for removal is unanimous, the offending Board Member's position shall be terminated effective immediately.

Collaboration

Collaboration of the GSO board is a valuable part of this organization's goals. Such entities of collaboration may be the undergraduate student organization associated with the department of CliMAS, namely the *Illinois Student Organization of Meteorology (ISTORM)*, or in addition, directly with the department of CliMAS at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In the event of collaborations, the wellbeing of the members of this CliMAS GSO organization should be of top priority for this organization.

Amending the Constitution

This section briefly outlines a policy on how to amend this constitution in the future, as the needs of this graduate student organization may require edits or changes. No member of the graduate student organization may be allowed to change the constitution without one of the following actions taken place:

- A unanimous decision by **all members** of the CliMAS GSO Executive Board.

A stipulation to the above routes to amend this constitution is that this constitution may be edited without these authorizations in order to meet guidelines or guidance imposed by Student Engagement Offices from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

When amending this constitution, edits should not infringe on the rights of any student(s), policies imposed by the University, or deviate from the mission statement of this constitution. Should the mission statement change, it should be enhanced, opposed to an alteration. In the case that the constitution is amended, a copy should be communicated and given to all CliMAS graduate students, denoting the changes made. Additionally, the constitution should be updated on the corresponding department website for this organization, and be updated to the office of student engagement for the registration of this organization.

CliMAS Events & Initiatives

Typical CliMAS sponsored events/initiatives each semester that are organized collaboratively by CliMAS officers (**bold indicates activities solely or partially funded by the CliMAS GSO**):

- Both Semesters:
 - **Weekly Coffee Hour**
 - Monthly Payday Lunches
 - Happy Hours (impromptu)
 - Coordinating visits for prospective graduate students
- Fall:
 - **Fall Picnic (Sep./Oct.)**
 - **Holiday Party (Dec.)**
 - **Student vs. Faculty Volleyball (Sep.)**
 - New student orientation (Aug.)
 - Hiking at Turkey Run with Purdue Atmospheric Science Department (Sep.)
 - Apple Picking (Oct.)
 - Prospective Graduate Student Webinar (Nov.)
 - Corn Maze (Nov.)
- Spring:
 - **Spring Picnic (Apr.)**
 - **Bowling Night (Feb./Mar./Apr.)**
 - **First-Year Student Event (Feb.)**
 - Multicultural Potluck (Feb.)

CliMAS GSO page on CLiMAS Department Website:

<https://climas.illinois.edu/academics/student-life/climate-meteorology-atmospheric-science-climas-graduate-student-organization>