VIMS Graduate Student Association
Leadership Catalog

Duties of Appointed and Elected Officers, Committees, and Representatives

Updated: May 2018

http://www.vims.edu/gateways/currentstudents/index.php
http://wmpeople.wm.edu/site/page/marsci
Executive Committee

Co-president

ELECTED

Duties: To preside over all meetings of the GSA Executive Board and All-Hands; to serve as the main contact for VIMS students surrounding issues regarding the larger VIMS community and the W&M community; to coordinate with the Associate Dean of Academic Studies surrounding issues involving the graduate student community; to appoint a representative body of GSA members to serve as an Honor Council to investigate and try cases involving VIMS students. This includes a Chief Justice and an Associate Chief Justice of the Honor Council; to appoint a Representative to the Student Senate in the event that position is vacant; and to call special meetings of the GSA as deemed necessary. The co-president is a 24 month position held by two students, with elections held every year in May such that the newly-appointed co-President always serves with a returning co-President.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact: VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner, http://www.vims.edu/people/schaffner_lc/index.php

Vice President

ELECTED

Duties: Acts as the primary point of contact for issues concerning graduate students at VIMS only (i.e. those that do not involve the broader W&M graduate student body, VIMS community, or W&M community); performs the duties of the Co-Presidents in the absence of one or both Co-Presidents or in the event that one or both Co-Presidents resign, are incapacitated, or otherwise fail to fulfill the Co-Presidential duties. The Vice President also organizes and directs social functions of the GSA/entire VIMS community, which may include (but are not limited to): VIMS Community Yard Sale (August), VIMS Community Fall Party (October), Silent Auction (VIMS Community Holiday Party, December), VIMS Community Chili Cook-Off (February), VIMS Community Spring Party (March/April), and graduate student Halloween Party and Winter Formal. This person is expected to oversee the marketing and outreach of events held by the VIMS GSA. This may include maintaining the VIMS GSA web pages.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact: VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner, http://www.vims.edu/people/schaffner_lc/index.php
Secretary
ELECTED
Duties: Records minutes at regular VIMS GSA Executive meetings and VIMS GSA All-Hands Meetings and ensures their timely publication on the GSA website and Facebook page; works with Webmaster to develop and update the VIMS GSA website; maintains the list of VIMS GSA student positions and the corresponding faculty/administrative contacts for those positions (i.e., this catalog); communicates any changes/corrections to this catalog to the Executive Assistant to the Director of VIMS, who maintains the administrative list of representatives and committees, which includes VIMS GSA obligations – see this page for list of committee leaders:
http://wmpeople.wm.edu/site/page/marsci/committeeleaders

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts: VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner, http://www.vims.edu/people/schaffner_lc/index.php

Treasurer
ELECTED
Duties: Coordinates proper spending procedures with assigned GSA student representatives, ensuring state & GSA spending guidelines are followed; coordinates with VIMS GSA Conference Funding and Mini-Grant chair people to acquire and distribute funds for awards; works with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the VIMS Director of Planning and Budget to secure funding for all GSA events and oversees the budgets for those events; manages money earned from GSA fundraisers and balances monthly bank statements.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts: VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner, http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/

VIMS Academic Studies Business Manager, Cathy Cake, http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/

VIMS Director of Planning and Budget, Carol Tomlinson, http://www.vims.edu/admin/people.html

First Year Representative
ELECTED
Duties: Serve as a liaison between the first year class and the Executive Board relaying information and concerns between the two groups. The First Year Representative must assume an active role in the Executive Board and assist with GSA events and projects. The First Year Representative is elected in September/October of each year following new student orientation. The First Year Representative is a voting member of the Executive Board.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts: VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner, http://www.vims.edu/people/schaffner_lc/index.php
Representatives to the SMS Academic Council and its Standing Committees

Academic Council Representatives
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: Attend meetings of the Academic Council (AC; http://www.vims.edu/education/ac/) on behalf of the VIMS GSA. The AC is a representative body of the School of Marine Science (SMS) faculty and provides for the development, maintenance, and advancement of the academic and degree programs. The AC evaluates academic issues and formulates academic policy recommendations. These recommendations are made to the Dean of the SMS and implemented by the Dean of Graduate Studies (DoGS). Council membership consists of the elected AC chairman, a representative from each academic department, the Dean of the SMS, the DoGS, the SMS Registrar, and two student representatives. Student representatives are non-voting members of the committee, but they are expected to participate fully in discussions. The AC makes most of the critical decisions affecting graduate students in the SMS, so active participation by the student representatives is important. However, representatives must be aware that discussions and decisions of the AC are not for public dissemination. Representatives should not disclose such items to the graduate student body until notified that it is permissible to do so. The AC is not typically the end of the decision line and actions of the AC must go “up the chain” before final decisions are made. Meetings are held monthly. Primary issues of concern to the graduate student body include stipend levels, health insurance, graduate course offerings, and opportunities for graduate student involvement in the academic program outside of taking courses (e.g., teaching).

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts: VIMS SMS Academic Council Chair, Mark Brush, http://www.vims.edu/education/ac/

VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner, http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/
Educational Policy Committee Representatives

*Volunteer/Appointed*

Duties: Attend meetings of the Educational Policy Committee (EPC, a committee of the Academic Council; [http://www.vims.edu/education/ac/epc.html](http://www.vims.edu/education/ac/epc.html)) on behalf of the VIMS GSA. All activity of the EPC is reported to the AC. The EPC is charged by the AC with reviewing the graduate academic program, and specifically reviews recommendations and requests for changes to educational policy or the graduate curriculum. Such recommendations and requests may originate from the DoGS, the EPC members, or the academic departments. The EPC can approve or disapprove any changes in the curriculum that do not alter existing policy, and the most common activity of the EPC is the review of changes to the graduate course offerings. Separate procedures are employed for reviews of courses that are part of the SMS Graduate Course Catalog and those that are not (e.g., MSCI 697/698 courses). The two student representatives are non-voting members of the committee but are expected to participate fully in committee discussions, such as reviews of proposed course offerings. Meetings are held approximately annually. A fair amount of committee work occurs via email for most issues.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts:
VIMS SMS Academic Council Chair, Walker Smith, [http://www.vims.edu/intranet/councils_and_committees/academic_council/index.php](http://www.vims.edu/intranet/councils_and_committees/academic_council/index.php)

VIMS SMS AC Educational Policy Committee Chair, Eric Hilton, [http://www.vims.edu/intranet/councils_and_committees/academic_council/committees/educational_policy/index.php](http://www.vims.edu/intranet/councils_and_committees/academic_council/committees/educational_policy/index.php)

VIMS SMS Dean of Graduate Studies, Linda Schaffner, [http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/](http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/)

Quantitative Skills Committee Representative

*Volunteer/Appointed*

Duties: The primary function of the Quantitative Skills Committee is to provide input on School of Marine Science quantitative course offerings as requested by the Academic Council and the Associate Dean of Academic Studies. The role of the student representative is to offer the student perspective when the committee is charged with a task. In addition to addressing curriculum needs, recent committee business included making recommendations on the design of the recently completed Watermen’s Hall Technology Classroom.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts:
VIMS Quantitative Skills Committee, Marjy Friedrichs
VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner, [http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/](http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/)
Admissions Committee Representatives
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: Attend meetings of the Admissions Committee (AdC, a committee of the Academic Council; http://www.vims.edu/intranet/councils_andcommittees/academic_council/committees/graduate_admissions/index.php) on behalf of the VIMS GSA. Approximately 6-10 meetings are held during late winter and spring of each year. The two student representatives are expected to participate in discussions of applicants for the upcoming fall semester, but their primary responsibility is to rank the undergraduate or graduate institutions that the applicants attended. Instructions and procedures for ranking schools have been documented and the rankings are updated by the student representatives each year. The office of the Associate Dean of Academic Studies compiles information on all applicants to the graduate program and provides the application materials to the AdC for review and ranking via Blackboard.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts:
VIMS SMS AC Admissions Committee Chair, Rob Hale
VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner,
http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/

Awards Committee Representatives
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: The Awards Committee (AwC) representatives are technically appointed by the Dean and Director, though the VIMS GSA elects people and they are confirmed. Appointments are for at least two consecutive years to ensure continuity within the committee. The representatives attend regular AwC meetings that occur on three or four occasions during the spring semester in preparation for the awards banquet. Ten to twelve awards are given out each year. All representatives to the committee read the nominations, participate in discussions, and vote. The committee also makes preparations for the banquet (e.g., decides on the lunch menu, gets the gifts, invites the families of the award winners to come to the banquet), but the student representatives do not really have to get involved in the banquet preparations.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts:
VIMS Awards Committee Co-chairs, Emily Hein & Scott Lerberg
http://www.vims.edu/about/directory/staff/index.php

Best Student Paper Award Committee
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: Appointments are for at least one year. The representative attends meetings that occur on three or four occasions during the spring semester in preparation for the awards banquet. All representatives to the committee read the nominations, participate in discussions, and vote on the best student paper. One award is given out each year.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts:
VIMS Best Student Paper Award Committee chair, Ryan Carnegie,
http://www.vims.edu/people/carnegie_rb/
**Seminar Chair**

*VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED*

The Seminar Chair meets with the VIMS SMS Seminar Committee during the summer to decide what speakers will be invited during the coming academic year. The chair also solicits nominations from the students for a student-invited speaker. The chair organizes lunch meetings for the students with the speaker and sets up the reception that precedes the actual seminar. The seminars and lunch meetings typically occur on three or four Fridays during each semester. The chair gets paid three hours of workshop for each seminar.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact:
VIMS SMS Seminar Committee Chair, David Johnson,
http://www.vims.edu/events/science.html?

**Diving Control Board Representative**

*VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED*

Duties: The representative is the voice to the other members of the Diving Control Board (DCB; faculty and staff) with regards to issues of primary importance to students, such as user fees and who pays them, diving insurance and who pays for it, ensuring that students are “sponsored” to dive and thus incur no financial burdens, or other concerns. The representative is expected to attend regular meetings of the DCB as announced (every two or three months) and may be given an “action item” to report back to the board on. The representative is also one of the members of the DCB authorized to contribute one of the two required signatures to approve dive plans. This is technically a position appointed by the VIMS Dean and Director (procedure outlined in the guide for Diving Safety). The DCB makes the recommendations for appointment to the Dean and Director, and follows the guideline published by OSHA – the DCB must consist of a majority of active scientific divers. The DCB recommends that the VIMS GSA representative be someone actively involved in diving.

Primary Administrative Contacts:
VIMS Diving Safety Officer, Wayne Reisner
http://www.vims.edu/intranet/safety/dive_team/index.php

**Library Advisory Committee Representative**

*VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED*

Duties: The representative is the voice of the students to the other members of the Library Advisory Committee on issues related to material acquisition (e.g. journals, books) and access. The representative is technically appointed by the VIMS Dean and Director, but the VIMS GSA selects the person and they are confirmed. Solicits and presents graduate student input on various decisions to be made by the library staff regarding services.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts:
VIMS Library Director, Carol Coughlin, http://www.vims.edu/library/mainstaff.html
Parking Committee Representative
*VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED*

Duties: The representative is the voice of the students to the other members of the VIMS Parking Committee on issues related to parking at VIMS. The representative solicits and presents graduate student input on various decisions to be made by the Parking Committee regarding parking access and services and also relays information decided on by the Parking Committee to the graduate student body.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts:

Parking Committee Chair, George Vadas,
http://www.vims.edu/about/directory/staff/vadas_g.php
Representatives to W&M College-Wide Entities

Graduate Council Representatives
APPOINTED

Duties: Attend meetings of the Graduate Council of the W&M Student Assembly (held on main campus; http://sa.wm.edu/graduate/) on behalf of the VIMS GSA. The two representatives are appointed by the VIMS GSA President and should include at least one member of the VIMS GSA Executive Committee. The Graduate Council includes representatives from each of the W&M graduate schools.

Primary Contacts:
President of the Graduate Council of the W&M Student Assembly, Kate Miller, http://sa.wm.edu/graduate/

President of the W&M Student Assembly, Ryan Scofield, http://sa.wm.edu/executive/ W&M

Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Virginia (Ginger) Ambler, http://www.wm.edu/studentaffairs/

Honor Council Chair
ELECTED/APPOINTED

Duties: The duties of the Honor Council Chair are dictated by College policy in the College Handbook (http://www.wm.edu/deanofstudents/handbook/14HonorSystem.pdf). The chair is required to attend Council of Chair meetings (usually once a month) and communicate with the W&M Dean of Students Office about honor council issues. He or she also attends certain training sessions, makes him or herself familiar with the Honor Code in the Student Handbook, gives a short talk at the beginning of each academic year to new VIMS SMS students, and keeps all honor code files (including the forms that new students sign). The chair also requests nominations for class representatives from each new cohort of students at VIMS SMS. He or she keeps a list of these representatives and makes their names available to the main campus personnel as a class contact. In addition, the chair participates in discussions concerning changes to the student handbook, attends open Honor Council trials, and deals with any possible honor code violations by students at VIMS SMS. All activity of the Honor Council remains confidential. Even though we do not have many honor violations at VIMS, working with the Honor Council keeps us connected with the traditions of main campus and reminds students of VIMS that: (1) they are part of a larger community; and (2) even though they do many take-home tests and work independently, they are expected to be honest and will be judged by their peers if they are not.

Primary Administrative Contact:
W&M Dean of Students, Patricia Volp, http://www.wm.edu/deanofstudents/staff.php
Student Conduct Council Representatives

APPOINTED

Duties: The duties of the Judicial Council representatives are dictated by College policy in the College Handbook (http://www.wm.edu/deanofstudents/handbook/13AdminStudLifePol.pdf). Each graduate school must have three trained representatives on the Judicial Council, and one of the representatives must be designated to serve as chair for hearings involving members of that graduate school. In any case that comes before the Judicial Council, the hearing body must include graduate student members from the school of the accused student (i.e., trained VIMS students have to sit on the Judicial Council in order to hear a case involving a VIMS student as the accused). Training is conducted in the Fall semester or as needed and is coordinated through the Office of the Dean of Students by the Assistant Dean for Judicial Affairs. Graduate student representatives are rarely called into service because graduate student judicial cases are uncommon. Therefore, the time commitment of appointed students typically involves only training.

Primary Administrative Contacts:
W&M Assistant Dean of Students for Judicial Affairs, Dave Gilbert,
http://www.wm.edu/deanofstudents/staff.php

W&M Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Virginia (Ginger) Ambler,
http://www.wm.edu/studentaffairs/

Honor/Student Conduct Appeals Committee Representatives

APPOINTED

Duties: The honor/student conduct appeals committee reads honor and student conduct cases for which the student has been found guilty of a violation or offense, and the student has appealed the result. This committee reads the case and decides an appropriate course of action based on the facts of the case, after an appeal has been made. Graduate student committee members are only called upon to serve on cases from their particular graduate school. Therefore, the time commitment of appointed students typically involves only training.

Primary Administrative Contacts:
W&M Assistant Dean of Students for Judicial Affairs, Dave Gilbert,
http://www.wm.edu/deanofstudents/staff.php

W&M Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Virginia (Ginger) Ambler,
http://www.wm.edu/studentaffairs/
GSA Committee Chairs and Representatives

**Travel Grant Chair**

*VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED*

Duties: The chair solicits, evaluates, and processes requests for VIMS GSA travel grant funds (http://www.vims.edu/sms/students/funding.html). The job is based around two funding cycles per year with associated deadlines for applications (1 each semester). Prior to these deadlines, a reminder email is sent out to grads@vims.edu requesting applications. The applications are then evaluated for completeness and checked to be sure that the applicant has not received a grant before (only one award is allowed during a student’s tenure). At this point, if funding is insufficient for the number of applicants, applications are prioritized. In general, applicants giving oral presentations are given priority over poster presenters and presenters are given priority over non-presenting attendees. Prioritization has not been necessary in the past as funding has been adequate to award all applicants. The VIMS GSA Executive Committee along with the Conference Fund Chair determines the number of travel grants that can be approved and the GSA Treasurer processes the reimbursements (i.e., writes the checks). The chair has the ability to form an ad-hoc committee in the event that the number of travel grant requests exceeds the available funds and funding prioritization is required. It would not be fair for one individual to decide who gets funding in that case.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact:
VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner,
http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/

VIMS Planning and Budget Analyst, Carol Tomlinson,
http://www.vims.edu/admin/accounting.html
**Research Grant Chair**  
*VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED*

Duties: Solicits, evaluates, and processes requests for annual VIMS GSA Mini-Grant awards (http://www.vims.edu/sms/students/funding.html). Application deadlines and funding timelines are published on the VIMS GSA website, along with criteria for submission and evaluation of applications. The chair is responsible for gaining funding as well by soliciting the heads of each academic department to donate money (usually $500 per department and some from the DoGS, though the more the chair can recruit the better). A VIMS Planning and Budget Analyst handles the deposits of the funds from the department heads and the reimbursements to the awardees. Applications are evaluated for completeness and scientific merit by an ad-hoc committee formed by the chair (reviewers). The chair does not participate in the evaluation of applications. The committee ranks the applications according to criteria developed by a previous chair and the top applications are granted funds (usually not to exceed $500 per applicant). The chair is also responsible for contacting the applicants to let them know whether they were successful. Successful applicants are required to submit a report after funds are used. Subsequent awards are allowed, but a student cannot receive more than one award in an academic year (including summer semester) and all reports must be submitted prior to or with any additional applications for funds. It has been recommended that this be expanded to include a full committee (3-5 people) rather than soliciting reviewers ad-hoc and that application procedures be streamlined via the web.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact:

VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner,  
http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/  
VIMS Planning and Budget Analyst, Carol Tomlinson,  
http://www.vims.edu/admin/accounting.html

**Spring and Fall Party Chairs**  
*VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED*

The Spring and Fall Party Co-chairs are responsible for organizing the VIMS-wide Spring and Fall Parties, which are substantial tasks. The job requires recruiting volunteers for setup, cooking, ticket taking, beer truck servers, and clean-up, as well as planning entertainment (e.g., DJ, inflatable bounce house). The chairs must be in touch with various segments of administration throughout the process. The other chairs on the Social Committee should help out when needed with organizing these parties.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact(s): None
TGI(F) Co-chairs
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: The TGIF Co-chairs organize the socials at ‘Page’ House (aka GSA student house) that follow VIMS seminars on mostly Fridays. Some light food (e.g., pizza, chips) as well as drinks, including beer, are provided. These socials are intended to be an opportunity for students to network with VIMS faculty and with visiting seminars speakers and are not considered “parties.”

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact(s): None

Green Team Chair
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: The Green Team Chair is responsible for organizing and planning activities that promote sustainability on VIMS campus. In order to maintain continuity in sustainability activities, the position is two years.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact(s): None

Professional Development Committee Co-chairs
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: The PDC Co-Chairs are responsible for coordinating and promoting professional development activities for VIMS graduate students. The Co-Chairs must coordinate among GSA and the Dean of Graduate Studies regarding funding as well as VIMS outreach depending on the public nature of the planned development activities. The Co-Chair positions are held for at least one year with opportunity to maintain the position longer if desired.

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contact(s):
VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner,
http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/

VIMS Director of Outreach, Susan Maples,
http://www.vims.edu/about/directory/staff/maples_s.php

Chesapeake Bay Foundation Oyster Pick-up Coordinator
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: This person is responsible for soliciting volunteers from the VIMS graduate student body to collect oyster shells from York River Oyster Company and transporting them to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation shell recycling facility located at the VIMS Boat Basin. This position is held at least for one year.

Primary Administrative Contact(s): None
International Student Representative
VOLUNTEER/APPOINTED

Duties: The representative is the voice of the international students on issues that specifically concern them, such as health insurance, visa permits, international travel, and Department of Homeland Security policies. The representative could organize regular, compulsory meetings with W&M Office of Multicultural Affairs to update students on key items related to above. The representative should also work to integrate the international students into the student community, including announcing opportunities for them to become involved with W&M campus events and organizations (e.g., see http://www.wm.edu/revescenter/iss/).

Primary Faculty/Administrative Contacts:
VIMS Associate Dean of Academic Studies, Linda Schaffner,
http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/
W&M Office of Multicultural Affairs, http://www.wm.edu/multiculturalaffairs/
W&M Reves Center for International Studies, http://www.wm.edu/revescenter/