



CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Prospective Representative Information Packet



February 07, 2020



28th Congress of Graduate Students
Thagard, Rm 422
Student Government Association
Florida State University

Dear Prospective COGS Representative,

Thank you for your interest in serving the 28th Congress of Graduate Students. Through involvement with COGS, we hope that this experience will foster creative participation and leadership that benefits the graduate student community, COGS as an entity, and your personal desire to serve the Florida State community and sharpen your professional skills.

It is best that you read this packet to evaluate if COGS is best suited for your skills and time. If you see that The Congress of Graduate Students is a place that you will excel in service and professional development, PLEASE solicit graduate students from your college to sign your petition. Once your petition is completed correctly, you will be ready to become a member of COGS.

Included in this packet you will also find representative responsibilities and the standing committees of COGS.

Another way to join COGS is through the election process in the Fall SGA elections. Consult the SGA website for details.

Near the end of this packet, you will find names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses for our officers and professional staff. If you have any questions or concerns about this packet, becoming a representative, COGS, or Student Government, please contact COGS' Staff Advisor, Jacalyn Butts at jbutts@fsu.edu.

With thanks,

28th Congress of Graduate Students
Florida State University

So, what is COGS?

The Congress of Graduate Students (COGS) is the official representative body of all post baccalaureate, special, masters, specialist, professional, and doctoral students at Florida State University.

In accordance to the Student Government Constitution, COGS is a funding board of the Student Government Association solely responsible for allocating all of the A&S fees it receives from graduate students to graduate students each year.

Who will I be representing?

Each college and school of FSU is represented through liaisons (representative of COGS, hopefully you) to lobby and address needs of their prospective school. Representatives are not limited to just their college, school, or department, but represent SGA and the Florida State University as a whole.

What services and programs does COGS provide to graduate students?

COGS provides outstanding services and programs to enrich graduate student life. COGS provides funding for various registered student organizations, (RSOs) and graduate students who wish to engage themselves through research and professional exchanges (e.g., conferences). Furthermore, COGS funds projects throughout Florida State that assist graduate students.

What is time commitment?

General Assembly meetings are held twice every month on Mondays starting at 6:30pm.

Committee meetings and other special events are also part of a representative's service in COGS. COGS is systematically structured to not be a burden on graduate students. Many of our processes are productive, allowing graduate students time to focus on academics, research and family.

What are the perks?

Service to the graduate student community – DUH! Don't you want to serve your graduate student body? These students study just like you do and need support, and additionally we have some more perks for you below:

- ✓ Interdisciplinary relationships that will enhance your network
- ✓ Leadership and professional development
- ✓ A hands-on experience in academic and administrative budgeting and policy.
- ✓ Enhancement of your professional CV/Resume
- ✓ Allocate A&S fees to graduate RSO's from colleges, schools, and departments.
- ✓ Create policies and programs that will shift graduate students' lives in a forward direction.

Though COGS representatives are not paid, this small but impactful allocation of time bears huge significance to you and the FSU student body and community. It is also a great way to meet people and become involved in campus life.

General Duties and Responsibilities of COGS

- ✓ Defend the interests of graduate, special, masters, specialist, professional, doctoral and post-baccalaureate students in graduate student life, services, and academics.
- ✓ Manage the funds within its purview in a fiscally responsible manner.
- ✓ Work to ensure the greatest participation by graduate students in the immediate governance of, and policy development for, the Florida State University.
- ✓ Provide an official voice through which the opinions of the Graduate Student Body may be expressed.

Standing Committees

The Ways & Means Committee shall focus on the following areas:

- ✓ Compiling the annual budget for approval by the Assembly.
- ✓ Oversight of the expenditure of the COGS budget.
- ✓ Amendments to the COGS Code.
- ✓ Relations with the State and Federal Governments.
- ✓ Relations between COGS and all other entities of Student Government.
- ✓ All other areas in which the Chairman and the Speaker agree the committee should focus.

The Academics & Student Life Committee shall focus on the following areas:

- ✓ Healthcare and Insurance.
- ✓ Graduate Student pay and funding.
- ✓ Parking, Transportation, Housing, Childcare, and Academics.
- ✓ Relations with the University Administration and Graduate Assistants Union.
- ✓ All other areas in which the Chairman and the Speaker agree the committee should focus on.

The Internal Affairs Committee shall focus on the following areas:

- ✓ Oversight and Accountability for COGS Programs.
- ✓ Hear cases of impeachment and removal prior to the full Assembly.
- ✓ Maintain attendance records, and initiate removal proceedings for Members who are no longer in compliance with attendance requirements.
- ✓ Outreach to fill vacant seats in the Assembly.
- ✓ Organize, or select a group to organize, the annual Dialogues Conference.
- ✓ All other areas in which the Chairman and the Speaker agree the committee should focus on.

All representatives are expected to serve on a committee. Committee meetings are usually held once a month and are brief.

I am ready to serve as a COGS representative! Now what?

Completing the petition

You will need to find fellow graduate students that support your petition to become a COGS

representative. Your “Petition to Fill a Vacant Seat” will be attached to this packet. A PDF version is also available on the cogs.fsu.edu website.

Obtain 20 signatures from graduate/professional students in your college/school, or a number that represents 10% of your college's/school's graduate/professional population, whichever is less.

Or, if you are petitioning for an advocacy seat, obtain 20 signatures from any graduate/professional students at Florida State. They need not be students in your college/school.

Submitting your petition to COGS

The completed petition must then be taken to COGS Program Associate, Whitney Brown in the COGS Office at the Oglesby Union (Rm. A207). There, she will verify that everything is in order and let you know about the next meeting to which you will need to be present in order to be sworn in. You will also receive an e-mail or phone call from our Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs, or another COGS officer, to ensure that you are prepared.

What to expect at your first meeting

- ✓ First of all, relax! Being a Representative in COGS is not only a great professional experience, it is also very fun! You will meet many new people from across many different colleges and schools on the campus of FSU, so make sure you are prepared to make some new friends. Here are a few tips for preparing for your first meeting:
- ✓ You will be introducing yourself to the body so make sure you look nice. Business casual should be fine. You should be able to tell us what college you are from, any experience you have in student government here at FSU or at another institution, experience you have in service related activities, why you would be a good representative of COGS, and any other information you might want us to know. Keep in mind that you will only have a couple of minutes to do this.
- ✓ After your introduction the floor will be open to questions. Some typical questions that members of the body might ask include, but are not limited to:
 1. Do you know about our committees and do you know which one you would like to serve in? (You can find in the front of this packet and in our code, which is available on the cogs.fsu.edu website.)
 2. Do you know of any current issues in your college or at the university that you are looking forward to working on?
 3. How did you hear about COGS?
 4. Have you ever worked with COGS as a student?
- ✓ Most information about the COGS code, the internal rules of procedure, grant information, and past COGS minutes can be found on our website (<http://sga.fsu.edu/cogs>). We invite you to take a quick look to get yourself acquainted.
- ✓ At our meetings, we follow the internal rules of procedure as well as parliamentary procedure. Don't worry if you don't know about these, you will! We will help you throughout the meetings and pretty soon, you will be just as well versed as the governmental representatives on C-SPAN.
- ✓ You may want to "like" us on Facebook or "Follow" us on Twitter. Please tell your

- friends, too!
- ✓ ALWAYS, feel free to ask questions! We are so happy you are here to learn, teach, serve, and work hard!

See you at our next COGS meeting!

Important numbers and e-mails in COGS (in case you have further questions)

Caitlyn Blake-Hedges – Deputy Speaker of Finance

cogsdepspeaker@admin.fsu.edu

Michael J. Morgan– Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs

SGA-COGS-JA@fsu.edu

Jacalyn Butts

850-644-0036

jbutts@fsu.edu

Laurel McKinney

850-644-6914

lmckinney@fsu.edu



Congress of Graduate Students



Thagard, Rm 422
Student Government Association
Florida State University

Phone: 850.644.1814 E-mail: jbutts@fsu.edu

Web: sga.fsu.edu/cogs

PETITION TO FILL A VACANT SEAT

If you wish to represent your college or school in the Congress of Graduate Students, please complete this form and submit it to room Thagard 422 in the SGA Offices on the 4th Floor of the Thagard building. Questions may be directed to the contact information above, or to the contact information listed on the sga.fsu.edu/cogs website. Thank you very much for your willingness to serve your fellow graduate students in COGS!

Your name: _____ FSU SN#: _____
 Your College or School: _____ Major: _____
 Department address (including mail code): _____ Work phone: _____
 Home address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
 Home or Cell phone: _____ E-mail: _____

We, the undersigned graduate/professional students, assign the above-named person to serve as a representative in the Congress of Graduate Students, for our college/school of _____; or as an advocate for _____.

Name (printed):	Signature:	FSU ID: <small>(Blackboard username)</small>	Phone #:
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____	_____
8. _____	_____	_____	_____
9. _____	_____	_____	_____
10. _____	_____	_____	_____
11. _____	_____	_____	_____
12. _____	_____	_____	_____
13. _____	_____	_____	_____
14. _____	_____	_____	_____
15. _____	_____	_____	_____
16. _____	_____	_____	_____
17. _____	_____	_____	_____
18. _____	_____	_____	_____
19. _____	_____	_____	_____
20. _____	_____	_____	_____

(If your college/school (not department) has fewer than 200 graduate students, only 10% of the number of students is required to sign the petition.)