

A Constitution of the Graduate Music Forum of the Harvard University Department of Music

ARTICLE I: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Harvard Graduate Music Forum (henceforth GMF) shall be to provide a space for graduate students to gather and advocate for our collective and individual needs (including but not limited to curriculum, teaching, facilities, social life, and mental health), and when so decided upon, to communicate those concerns to the faculty and administration of the Music Department.

The GMF strives to build a community of care where all students in the Music Department feel that they can bring thoughts, ideas, and concerns to the group and be met with support and solidarity. The members of the GMF commit to treating each other with respect and to caring for the well-being of one another. The GMF does not tolerate harassment, discrimination, or bullying of any form. To foster a nourishing community, the GMF must advocate for justice and equity.

The GMF acknowledges its role in perpetuating systems of oppression (including white supremacy, settler colonialism, anti-Black racism, capitalism/racial capitalism, sexism, homophobia, heteronormativity, ableism, patriarchy, among many others) and its positionality within the Music Department, Harvard University, our academic fields, and our broader communities, to ensure we are continually working toward justice.

The GMF commits to prioritizing equity and justice and supporting marginalized members of our graduate student and professional community via concrete actions in the form of increased representation of marginalized peoples in programming and the distribution of funds toward that programming and those individuals. These include, but are not limited to: planning the GMF Conference, professional development programming, and advocacy work. We express solidarity with fellow organizing bodies, specifically the Southern Pian Society (SPS). The GMF recognizes the work and priorities of SPS and are committed to supporting them and their activities whenever possible.

The GMF recognizes that the struggle for justice is not limited to the Music Department and thus offers itself to the purpose of recognizing inequalities, power differentials, and the work that remains to be done to create a more equitable and just society. The GMF commits to regularly re-evaluating its approach to dismantling such systems and creating a space in which graduate students of the Music Department can thrive.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 2.1: Regular Members

All music department graduate students, special students, and visiting fellows, including those joint with other departments, shall be considered GMF members.

Sec. 2.2: Active and Inactive Members

Unless they request otherwise, members in residence shall be considered active, while those not in residence shall be considered inactive. Members may choose to become active or inactive at any time by submitting a request to the Secretary in writing.

ARTICLE III: MEETINGS

Sec. 3.1: Regular Meetings

GMF meetings shall be held monthly, preferably within the two weeks before the monthly faculty meeting. Whenever possible, the meeting shall immediately precede a GMF-sponsored social event. All meetings of the GMF shall be announced to the active membership at least two days in advance.

Sec. 3.2: Quorum

Quorum for GMF meetings shall be eight members, including officers. Decisions may be made at any meeting of the GMF at which attendance is less than eight pending later approval by the active membership. The Secretary shall notify, via the meeting minutes, the active membership with a list of decisions made at any such meeting no more than three days following that meeting; the message shall state that any active member may reply and object to a decision within five days of receiving the list to table the decision and revisit it at the next meeting.

ARTICLE IV: ELECTIONS

Sec. 4.1: Eligibility

Any member of the GMF, except for special students and visiting fellows, may run for GMF office.

Sec. 4.2: Unopposed Candidates

In the event that a candidate should seek an open position unopposed, that candidate may gain office by majority approval.

Sec. 4.3: Opposed Candidates

In the event that two candidates should seek a single position, the election shall be conducted by secret ballot by majority vote.

Sec. 4.4: Instant Runoff Voting

In the event that three or more candidates should seek a single position, the election shall be conducted by secret ballot. Instant Runoff Vote: all voters shall rank the candidates in order of preference, and each ballot shall be credited toward its first choice candidate; if no candidate should receive a majority of votes, the last place candidate shall be eliminated and ballots credited to that candidate redistributed to their respective next eligible choices. This procedure continues until one candidate receives a majority.

Sec. 4.5: Vacancies

Should a seat remain open at the end of an election meeting or otherwise become vacant, an election shall be held at the following GMF meeting to find an officer to fill out the term.

Sec. 4.6: Combination and Sharing of Offices

Offices may be shared or combined, e.g. in the event that candidates cannot be found to fill all positions.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

Sec. 5.1: Chair

The Chair shall be elected at the last regular GMF meeting of the semester before their term begins and shall serve for one year. The office shall preferably be held by a student who has passed general exams.

The Chair shall:

(a) act as general representative of the GMF.

(b) call and preside over GMF meetings.

(c) organize new faculty and graduate student recruitment in cooperation with administration and faculty

(d) maintain the GMF budget

Sec. 5.2: Secretary

The Secretary shall be elected at the first regular GMF meeting of the spring semester and shall serve for one year. The Secretary shall:

(a) take minutes at GMF meetings and distribute them to the active membership in no more than three days after they occur.

(b) maintain files of all documents produced by the GMF in past and current years.

Sec. 5.3: Past Chair

The Past Chair shall attend meetings of the GMF whenever possible and act as advisor to the Chair.

Sec. 5.4: Faculty Meeting Representative(s)

Faculty Meeting Representative(s) shall be elected at the first regular GMF meeting of the fall semester, and another at the first of the spring semester; both shall serve for one year. The offices shall preferably be held by one pre-generals and one post-generals student. The Faculty Meeting Representatives shall:

(a) attend all monthly meetings of the Graduate Student Council, where they shall represent the GMF.

(b) take minutes at faculty meetings to be distributed to the GMF active membership in no more than three days after they occur.

Sec. 5.5: Graduate Student Council Representative

The Graduate Student Council Representative shall be elected at the first regular GMF meeting of the fall semester and shall serve for one year. The Graduate Student Council Representative shall attend all monthly meetings of the Graduate Student Council, where they shall represent the GMF.

Sec. 5.6: Social Officers

At least two Social Officers shall be elected at the first regular GMF meeting of the fall semester and shall serve for one year. The Social Officers shall:

(a) organize a weekly social hour for the department.

(b) assist with other social events (such as outings) sponsored by the GMF.

Sec. 5.7: Chain of Command

In the event that the Chair shall be temporarily unable to perform his or her duties, those duties shall be filled by the officer listed highest in this article who is able to perform them.

Sec. 5.8: Proxies

In the event that any officer other than Chair should be temporarily unable to perform their duties, that officer shall appoint a proxy to fulfill those duties.

Sec. 5.9: Conference Program Chair

The GMF Conference Program Chair shall be responsible for organizing a graduate student conference in the spring of each year. Early in the fall semester, the Program Chair will convene a meeting(s) of the GMF in order to select a conference topic and solicit suggestions for the language of the Call for Papers (CFP) and possible keynote speakers. Responsibilities will include creating and distributing the CFP; inviting and “hosting” a keynote speaker and/or workshop facilitator for conference; collecting submitted abstracts and facilitating their anonymous review by a committee of interested GMF members (the “Program Committee”); and compiling the conference program. The Program Chair will solicit the help of Conference Coordinators when necessary, and offer their own help with the tasks described in Section 5.10. If at all possible, the Conference Program Chair should have served on the Program Committee for the previous year’s conference.

Sec. 5.10: Conference Coordinator(s)

One or more Conference Coordinator(s) shall help to run the GMF conference, assisting the program chair with tasks such as petitioning Harvard’s Graduate Student Council or other

organizations for funding; coordinating the catering; and publicity. The Conference Coordinators will also offer to help with any of the tasks described in Section 5.9.

Sec. 5.11: Public Service Coordinator

The Public Service Coordinator shall: organize service opportunities (broadly defined) for members of the GMF, and work to forge long-term relationships with the university at large and with public institutions in the larger Boston-area community.

Sec. 5.12: Lunch Talk Coordinator

The Lunch Talk Coordinator shall convene the music department's "Friday Lunch Talks" series, in connection with the GSAS graduate workshop program, and shall handle all duties related to scheduling and catering. Because of GSAS requirements, it may be necessary to elect this position before the end of the spring semester.

Sec. 5.13: Wellness Coordinator

The Wellness Coordinator shall be elected at the last regular meeting of the Spring Semester. The Wellness Coordinator shall:

(a) Solicit and propose ideas for activities to provide for the wellness of GMF members.

(b) Organize and attend wellness activities in coordination with the other GMF officers.

ARTICLE VI: BYLAWS AND AMENDMENTS

Sec. 6.1: Bylaws

Bylaws to this constitution may be added or repealed at any meeting of the GMF by approval of more than half (and no fewer than five) of the members present.

Sec. 6.2: Amendments

Amendments to this constitution may be made at any meeting of the GMF by approval of over two thirds (and no fewer than six) of the members present. To propose an amendment, a member of the GMF must send an electronic copy of the proposed amendment to the Secretary at least one week in advance of the GMF meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon; the Secretary must send this proposal to the active membership no less than three days in advance of that meeting.

ARTICLE VII: RATIFICATION

Sec. 7.1: Ratification Frequency

The Constitution must be ratified annually at the first meeting of the GMF of the academic year. In order for the constitution to be ratified, Article I must be an agenda item for discussion at this first meeting at which time the GMF must set goals and intentions for realizing the priorities of the purpose of the GMF.

This constitution was lovingly ratified on Valentine's Day, 2003 by unanimous decision of the GMF.

Amended February 2, 2010.

Further amended December 5, 2014.

Further amended September 17, 2018.

Further amended May 7, 2021.