



الجامعة العربية المفتوحة  
Arab Open University

## **Graduates Club and Council Bylaws at the Arab Open University**

**Approved by University Council No. 63**

**July 11, 2018**

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## **Introduction**

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Communicating and strengthening relations with the Arab Open University (AOU) graduates is one of the strategic objectives of the University's Fourth Strategic Development Plan (2017-2022), which emphasized: "The opening of communication channels with University graduates and enhancing their role in developing it."

Based on this, AOU prepared the bylaws for founding the University Graduates Club, which shall be represented by a council composed of representatives whom are graduates from all AOU branches. Strengthening communication and relations with AOU graduates has several positive aspects for both the University and its graduates, and helps achieve the following:

- Allowing graduates to partake in improving the University image, and to disseminate its educational message in the establishments and communities in which they are employed. In addition, offering different forms of support for the University, most importantly of which being feedback from the graduates concerning the teaching curriculum, practical training, and employment of graduates.
- The University provides its graduates with continuing educational opportunities in the form of developmental workshops or higher education programmes. Moreover, they shall be offered the opportunity to represent the University at local, regional and international conferences, as well as representing AOU in the communication with private and public establishments in order to gain support for the University's different activities. The University shall also invite its graduates to attend graduation celebrations and to partake in its academic, sport and cultural activities.

Undoubtedly, the use of modern communication technology to enhance relations between the University and its graduates, and between the graduates of the different branches themselves, shall have different positive effects on Arab communities, the University and its graduates. The University is proud of its graduates, and extends its best wishes of further success and distinction in their diverse jobs and activities.

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## **Article 1: Title**

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The present bylaws shall be named: "Graduates Club and Council Bylaws at the Arab Open University."

## Article 2: Definitions

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the following words and expressions shall have the meanings specified hereunder:

University	The Arab Open University
President	The University President
Director/Rector	The Director/Rector of an Arab Open University branch or campus
Branch	An Arab Open University branch or campus
HQ	The Arab Open University Headquarters
Club	An Arab Open University graduates club in a branch/country
Graduates Council	The AOU graduates council based in HQ and composed of the heads of graduates clubs in the branches
General Assembly	The graduates of a certain branch registered as active members in the club
Administrative Board	Persons chosen according to the current bylaws to run the graduates club in an AOU branch
Chairman	Head of the administrative board
Deputy Chairman	The deputy chairman of the graduates club
Secretary	Club secretary
Treasurer	Club treasurer
Culture and Training Committee Secretary	Coordinator of a club's culture and training committees
Community Development Committee Secretary	Coordinator of a club's social, volunteer and sports committees
Communication and Support Committee Secretary	Coordinator of a club's funding attraction, material and in-kind support committees
HQ Graduates Bureau	A bureau in charge of following-up with the activities undertaken by the graduates club in AOU branches, which undertakes the secretarial functions of AOU's graduates council

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## **First: Graduates Clubs**

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### **Article 3: Graduates Club Establishment**

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In each AOU branch, a graduated club is established under the title of: “Arab Open University Graduates Club - Country Name”. The aforementioned establishment is subject to the University Council’s approval in the branch country, and the issuance order is carried out by the Director/ Rector.

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### **Article 4: Graduates Club Goals**

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Each club shall achieve the following goals in compliance with these bylaws and the laws of the branch country while under the supervision of the Graduates Committee in the respective branch:

- Build and develop an ongoing relationship between the University and the graduates through the varied activities undertaken by the club.
- Support the role of graduates in achieving greatness and presenting a variety of services to their communities.
- Provide a cultural and social center, and an environment that incubates excellent vocational development for University graduates.
- Incentivize the graduates to give back to the University, and motivate them to partake in activities that support AOU development, and enriching its role in communicating with the local community and job market.
- Inform the local community about the University, its noble message and the various services it provides. Additionally, reinforce a positive AOU brand image in society and in the media.
- Organize and hold cultural, academic, social, sportive, artistic and voluntary activities aiming to develop solid ties between the University and the Arabic communities.
- Benefit from the graduates and their expertise in developing the University.
- Achieve continuous growth in graduates’ skills and expertise via organizing workshops and training courses in collaboration with the Continuing Education and Community Service Center units at AOU.
- Guide graduating students toward better understanding of the job market by communicating with them, arranging visits and field activities in prospective workplaces, and organizing training courses to develop the necessary skills and expertise required by the job market. This is also done in collaboration with the Continuing Education and Community Service Center units at AOU.
- Solicit funds and invite any type of moral or material support for the University and its developmental projects.

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### **Article 5: Graduates Club Membership**

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Club membership is open to:

- 1) University graduates.
- 2) Students expected to graduate after one semester at most.
- 3) Honorary-certified AOU graduates.
- 4) Whoever is granted club honorary membership by the University.

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### **Article 6: Membership Termination**

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A graduates club membership ends by resignation, by demise, or by a decision from the Administrative Board.

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### **Article 7: Disciplinary Action**

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For any member that violates this bylaw, its annexes, its amendments, the local legislations in the branch country, decisions adopted by the General Assembly or the Administrative Board, or University good conduct, The Administrative Board may engage the following procedures by a simple majority:

- Send a written warning to the offending member.
- Restrict the offending member's right to participate in some or all club activities.
- Freeze membership, voting right or election right for a period considered appropriate by the Administrative Board.
- Final dismissal from the club. This measure requires approval by the General Assembly in its first meeting following the dismissal decision, if the member to be dismissed is an honorary member.

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### **Article 8: Membership Restoration**

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Any person whose membership has been terminated has the right to request membership reinstatement by requesting the club Secretary in writing. The Administrative Board shall look into on this matter and make an appropriate decision.

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## **Second: The General Assembly**

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## **Article 9: General Assembly Composition and Meetings**

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- A) All active club members are members of the General Assembly.
- B) Any General Assembly member can apply for an Administrative Board membership. Unless an Administrative Board decision prevents him/her, the member can exercise their right to elections.
- C) The General Assembly meeting is normally held once every year, not later than two months following the end of the club's fiscal year. The meeting looks into the Administrative Board's financial and administrative reports. In accordance with the articles herein, it is possible to hold an extraordinary meeting at any time.
- D) The Administrative Board calls for the General Assembly's ordinary meeting in writing, and containing the meeting agenda. It is sent to all members at least 14 days before the date of the meeting. The meeting shall be headed by the Chairman of the club's Administrative Board.
- E) The General Assembly's annual ordinary meeting shall be held in quorum if the majority attends (half the registered members + one). If the number of the attendees is less, it shall be deferred for one week. The new meeting shall be held irrespective of the number of the present members, even if some members of the General Assembly or the Administrative Board withdrew from it.

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## **Article 10: General Assembly Specialization**

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In the meeting, the General Assembly shall discuss the following topics, and approve, reject, or amend them:

- The Administrative Board's annual report about its work in the previous year.
- The Administrative Board's action plan for the upcoming year.
- The annual budget, annual club closing accounts, and auditor report.
- Administrative Board members' quittance from the decisions, transactions, and actions done in the previous year.
- The estimated annual budget for the new fiscal year.
- Choosing the upcoming year's Administrative Board members, in accordance with the present bylaws.
- Any other item listed in the meeting agenda.



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### **Article 11: Emergency General Assembly**

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- A) The Administrative Board may call the General Assembly for an emergency meeting if need be. The General Assembly members ought to be informed in advance, and the invitation must include the meeting agenda. Quorum is met as noted in Article 9, Clause E. If quorum is not met, the meeting shall be deferred for 14 days, and the new meeting shall be held irrespective of the number of present members.
- B) Most General Assembly decisions require a majority vote, with the exception of the following, which require two-third votes:
- A recommendation to the University Council in the branch country to disband the club.
  - A recommendation to the University Council in the branch country to amend the current bylaws.
  - A decision to lay off one or more members of the Administrative Board.

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### **Article 12: General Assembly Special Provisions**

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- A) Ordinary General Assembly meetings shall be attended by the respective branch Rector or his/her representative, the head of the Financial Affairs Department and the chartered accountant, the legal consultant (if any), as well as members from the Graduates Committee in the branch. None of the above have a voting right, but they do have discussion rights.
- B) If the Administrative Board fails to call for a General Assembly meeting for any reason, the branch Rector can do so in the capacity he/she feels fit for the circumstances prevailing at that time. In this case, he/she is entitled to nominate any member of the Administrative Board to head the meeting.
- C) Major decisions adopted by the General Assembly shall be announced through the University's official website.

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### **Third: Branch Graduates Committee**

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### **Article 13: Branch Graduates Committee Formation**

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- A) The Graduates Committee in the branch calls on the branch graduates to form and declare a Graduates Club, and helps in its activities.
- B) The branch Rector forms the Graduates Committee as follows:
- Chairman: Assistant Director/Rector for Academic Affairs
  - Members:
    - Head of Admission, Registration and Examination Department in the branch country
    - Head of Student Affairs Department in the branch country

- Head of Quality Assurance and Accreditation Department in the branch country
  - An Academic Programme teaching staff (by rotation)
- C) The branch Rector forms the Graduates Committee at the start of each academic year, and the committee continues its activities in accordance with the bylaws herein, until a decision to reconstruct it is issued.
- D) The following are Graduates Committee tasks:
- Establish the Graduates Club in the branch country. The aforementioned committee nominates a number that should not exceed 50 distinguished graduates who are invited to a meeting to form The Temporary General Assembly for the Club. The meeting is headed by the Rector or his/her representative, and attended by the aforementioned members of the Graduates Committee. Quorum is obtained if at least 15 of the invited graduates attend the meeting.
  - Attend and partake in the Graduates Club's General Assembly meetings.
  - Receive election applications to the Administrative Board, and supervise the election.

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### **Fourth: The Administrative Board**

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#### **Article 14: Administrative Board Structure**

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The Administrative Board is composed of seven members chosen in accordance with the articles stated herein. They shall occupy the following positions:

- Chairman of the Administrative Board
- Deputy Chairman of the Administrative Board
- Administrative Board Secretary
- Administrative Board Treasurer
- Secretary of the Culture and Training Committees
- Secretary of the Communication and Support Committees

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#### **Article 15: Administrative Board Members Election**

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- A) Board members are elected according to the present bylaws. They ought to meet the conditions set for nomination, election and voting.
- B) Nominations shall be open 15 days before the election date. The elections are held during the General Assembly's annual meeting under the supervision of the Branch's Graduates Committee and two other members chosen by the General Assembly. Nominees must send their applications to the Branch's Graduates Committee.
- C) In the case of equal votes, the election is repeated in the same meeting. If the same occurs again, a draw takes place under the supervision of the Branch's Graduates Committee and

the General Assembly representatives. This is in case the number of candidates with equal votes exceeds the seven members' vacancies in the Board.

- D) On the other hand, if the number of candidates is less than the seven vacant posts, the Graduates Committee members and the General Assembly representatives shall nominate the remaining members to fill the vacant posts, under the condition that the nominees meet the membership and voting requirements for the vacant posts to begin with.
- E) The Administrative Board shall elect, amongst themselves, their Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Secretaries of club committees by secret ballot or any other method they see fit.
- F) The Administrative Board shall remain in office for one fiscal year. However, in case some or all members give up their duties within the fiscal year, they shall continue to occupy their positions until the end of the fiscal year. They shall also continue to do their work until a decision by the General Assembly is issued to this effect.

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### **Article 16: Administrative Board Specialization**

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The Administrative Board shoulders the task of achieving the Graduates Club goals, in accordance with the present bylaws. The Board also undertakes the responsibility of following-up the club's administrative, financial, sportive, social, cultural and artistic affairs including:

- Implement the General Assembly resolutions.
- Issue the necessary instructions and decisions for the Club to properly function, including the supervision of the various committees' formation.
- Review membership applications and nominate honorary members.
- Review warning or dismissal notices, and adopt suitable decisions against those who violate the provisions of the present bylaws.
- Review membership reinstatement applications.
- Cooperate with the Branch's Graduates Committee in membership affairs, different activities, and General Assembly meetings.
- Organize the General Assembly meetings in any capacity.
- Adopt resolutions concerning all aspects of financial matters, in line with the present bylaws and with the University's current fiscal bylaws and instructions.
- Prepare the annual administrative report that contains all aspects of the Club's various activities, to be shown to the Club's General Assembly.
- Prepare the Club's annual fiscal report, final accounts of the ending year, and the following year's budget, to be reviewed by the auditors and the General Assembly.

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## **Article 17: Administrative Board Special Provisions**

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- A) In case one seat or more becomes vacant in the Board for any reason, the vacancies shall be filled by the losing candidates, starting with the most-voted candidate and going downwards, until all the vacancies are filled. These candidates should have been club members since the previous elections, Moreover, they ought to not have any disciplinary actions taken against them by the Administrative Board or any other body. The Branch's Graduates Committee shall supervise the selection of replacements from the aforementioned candidates.
- B) If the aforementioned candidates are unavailable, a General Assembly emergency meeting can be held to select the person(s) who would fill in the Administrative Board vacancies.
- C) If the emergency meeting could not be held for any reason or for the proximity of the fiscal year's end, the Branch's Graduates Committee shall select person(s) to temporarily fill in the vacancies until the next elections are held.
- D) The Administrative Board shall meet at least once a month to deal with club affairs and make appropriate decisions accordingly.
- E) The Administrative Board shall issue its decisions by a majority vote. If the votes are equal, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.
- F) An Administrative Board member shall be considered resigned if they fail to attend three consecutive or five interrupted meetings in a period of six months without reasonable justifications.

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## **Article 18: Administrative Board Members Responsibilities**

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- A) Administrative Board Chairman Responsibilities**
- 2) The Chairman of the Administrative Board has the following responsibilities:
  - Represent the Club in front of AOU bodies and official establishments in the branch country.
  - Supervise all of the Club's activities and affairs.
  - Sign contracts and commitments, after obtaining the General Assembly and the Rector's approval.
  - Call for, and chair, the Administrative Board and the General Assembly's ordinary and extraordinary meetings.
  - Sign financial documents in accordance with the present bylaws.
  - Assume membership of the AOU Graduates Council at HQ.
  - Coordinate with the aforementioned AOU Graduates Council and with the Graduate Clubs in the various AOU branches.
  - Coordinate with the Rector of the branch hosting the Club.
- 3) If absent, the Deputy Chairman shall act on the Chairman's behalf.

- 4) The Chairman may delegate some powers to the Deputy Chairman or he/she may cancel some delegations, so long as this is done in writing and in public.

**B) Administrative Board Deputy Chairman Responsibilities**

- 1) Deputize for the Chairman in his absence.
- 2) Exercise the powers delegated by the Chairman.
- 3) Coordinate with Club Committee Secretaries to support and enhance their activities.
- 4) Supervise the Board's reports writing.
- 5) Act on behalf of the Club's Secretary, if absent.

**C) Club Secretary Responsibilities**

- 1) Taking minutes for the Administrative Board and the General Assembly meetings.
- 2) Organize and maintain the Club's records.
- 3) Do the work assigned by the Administrative Board.
- 4) Supervise the work of the Club's employees and workers, as well as its administrative affairs.
- 5) Act on behalf of the Club's Treasurer, if absent.

**D) Club Treasurer Responsibilities**

- 1) Prepare the annual budget for the ending year and the draft budget for the upcoming year. Present them to the Administrative Board for discussion and approval prior to presenting them at the General Assembly.
- 2) Sign financial documents including disbursement orders and payment receipts together with the Chairman, in accordance to the present bylaws.
- 3) Keep financial books and documents pertinent to the Club in its branch quarters to be viewed by the relevant bodies whenever requested.
- 4) Receive incoming sums according to what is customary by signing sealed receipts with the Club's seal.
- 5) Deposit all sums addressed to the Club in its private bank account, in accordance with the current bylaws.
- 6) Keeping a cash advance in agreement with the Chairman and with the branch Rector, in order to pay for miscellaneous items needed for the Club.

**E) Culture and Training Committees Secretary Responsibilities**

- 1) Supervise the Culture and Training Committees formation and determine their goals in accordance with the current bylaws and the Club establishment goals.
- 2) Participate in drafting action plans for the committees, estimating their budgets, determining the financial and support resources, and following-up with the activities they undertake to achieve the Club's objectives.

- 3) Coordinate both committees, in order to eschew redundant activities or conflicting schedules.
- 4) Ensure correct handling of committees' revenues by collaborating with the Club Treasurer and the Administrative Board Chairman, in accordance with the present bylaws.
- 5) Present a by-semester basis report about the work of the committees in addition to the annual report on their activities to the Administrative Board.

**F) Community Development Committees Secretary Responsibilities**

- 1) Supervise the formation of the Club's various social, volunteering, and sports committees.
- 2) Participate in drafting the different development committees action plans, which aim for developing the community, determining the financial and support resources, following-up with the activities they undertake to achieve the Club's objectives.
- 3) Coordinate the different community development committees to be tabulated in an efficient way that achieves the maximum benefit.
- 4) Ensure correct handling of committees' revenues by collaborating with the Club Treasurer and the Administrative Board Chairman, in accordance with the present bylaws.
- 5) Present a by-semester basis report about the work of the committees in addition to the annual report on their activities to the Administrative Board.

**G) Communication and Support Committees Secretary Responsibilities**

- 1) Supervise the formation of the committees that attract funding and support.
- 2) Participate in drafting action plans for the communication and support committees, estimating their budgets, determining the financial and support resources, and following-up with the activities they undertake to achieve the Club's objectives.
- 3) Coordinate both committees, in order to eschew redundant activities or conflicting schedules.
- 4) Ensure correct handling of committees' revenues by collaborating with the Club Treasurer and the Administrative Board Chairman, in accordance with the present bylaws.

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**Fifth: Graduates Club's Financial Affairs**

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**Article 19: Club Income**

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- A) The Club's income consists of members/others donations, revenues from various activities, and other types of income from the University/others approved by the Club's Administrative Board and the respective branch administration, with audit reports submission to HQ.
- B) The funds of the club are the property of the University. They cannot be spent in full or in part except in accordance with the provisions of the statute of the club, its annexes and its amendments.

- C) All the monetary revenues of the Club shall be deposited in the bank recognized by the University's administration.

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### **Article 20: Club Expenditures**

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- A) Spending and transactions are done through cheque payments issued in the name of the Club – respective Branch by the accredited University bank, approved by the Administrative Board members and the respective branch administration, in accordance with the financial procedures adopted by the University.
- B) The only persons authorized to sign all documents of cash and disbursement orders are:
- The Administrative Board Chairman
  - The Treasurer
- C) A copy of all documents is sent to the Financial Affairs Department at the relevant branch via the branch Rector to take the necessary measures including expenditure of cash and cheques.

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### **Article 21: Club Records and Fiscal Year Reports**

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- A) All financial records, books and securities are kept by the Administrative Board in the Club quarters, in accordance with recognized accounting principles.
- B) The Club's Treasurer keeps a cash advance determined by the Administrative Board Chairman, in collaboration with the branch Rector, with an indication of the aspects and limits of using this cash advance. Audit reports shall be sent to HQ.
- C) The Administrative Board shall submit a periodic financial report, a detailed annual financial report that contains final accounts, the general budget of the ending fiscal year, and the estimated budget for the upcoming year to the branch administration and the General Assembly of the Club not later than 30 days after the end of the fiscal year.
- D) The Club's fiscal year shall coincide with the fiscal year of the University.
- E) Under the supervision of the Rector, the Financial Affairs Department at the branch shall audit the Club's accounts in a period not exceeding 30 days following the receipt of any financial report from the Club. Its report shall be submitted to HQ.

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## **Sixth: The Graduates Council**

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### **Article 22: The AOU Graduates Council**

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- A) The AOU Graduates Council shall comprise the Administrative Boards Chairpersons of the Graduates Clubs in AOU branches. The AOU President issues the decision of forming this council in accordance with the current bylaws.
- B) The AOU Graduates Council shall be structured as follows:
- The Chairman.
  - The Deputy Chairman.
  - The Secretary.
  - Council members.
- C) Formation takes place within the principle of rotation among AOU branches and at the discretion of the AOU President.

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### **Article 23: The Graduates Council Tasks**

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- A) It is the supreme body which represents all of AOU branches' graduates to the University administration, the University Council, and the Board of Trustees.
- B) The Council coordinates the activities of all Graduates Clubs in the different branches in a manner that seeks to achieve the best feasible results.
- C) The Council shall represent the University's graduates in AOU celebrations, occasions, and general activities. It shall also represent them in regional and international forums.
- D) The Council shall meet annually at HQ or through a video conference. The Chairperson and members may be invited to attend the meeting of the University Council by rotation.

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### **Article 24: The Alumni Office**

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- A) The Alumni Office, which undertakes the secretarial tasks of the Council, shall be in HQ.
- B) The Alumni Office shall coordinate the activities of all graduates' clubs and their events under the supervision of its Chairperson or whoever deputizes for him/her.
- C) The Alumni Office shall follow-up on the activities of the Graduates Clubs in the branches through the periodic reports received from the branches and through communication with the Graduates Council.



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### **Article 25: The Graduates Council's Financial Affairs**

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- A) The Council's activities and events are financed by the HQ budget allocation, the revenues of its activities, and the donations received and approved by the AOU President.
- B) The Council's revenues shall be placed in a separate bank account known to the Finance Department at Headquarters. Disbursements shall be made through the aforementioned department based on disbursement permissions approved by the Council Chairman and Secretary, or whoever deputizes for them both.
- C) The Council shall present a financial report about its revenues and expenses during the fiscal year not later than 30 days following the end of the University's fiscal year.
- D) The Council's revenues and expenses shall be subject to scrutiny, as applicable to the University's administration.

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### **Article 26: The Graduates Council's Special Provisions**

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- A) Council membership lasts one year, starting after Administrative Boards across the branches are formed and ending when the new Administrative Boards are going to be formed.
- B) If a member of the Council loses his position as Chairman of the Administrative Board of the Graduates Club in his/her branch, then he/she automatically loses the membership of the Graduates Council. He shall be replaced by the new Chairman of the Graduates Club in his/her country's branch.
- C) If it was not possible to form the Council in whole or in part, the Alumni Office shall recommend a number of graduates from whom the University President will chose the number needed to fill in the vacancies, or to form the whole council at his/her own discretion. The council shall be temporary until the obstacles are removed for the formation of the Council as described in Clause A herein.
- D) The Council's decisions are made by a majority vote. If the votes are equal, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.
- E) The Alumni Office shall call for the meetings of the Graduates Council by sending the agenda as directed by its Chairperson. It shall also take the meeting minutes and follow-up on the implementation of council decisions.
- F) All decisions adopted by the Council ought to be in line with the provisions of these bylaws.

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### **Article 27: Solving Disputes**

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If there were any disputes in the implementation of the current bylaws, the matter ought to be brought to the attention of the branch Rector to be discussed at the Branch Council for adopting an appropriate action. If opinions clash in interpreting the regulations, the issue shall be brought to the attention of the University Council whose decision shall be final and binding to all sides,

and it is not permissible to resort to any judicial body except with the consent of the University Council.

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**Article 28: General Provisions**

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- A) The current bylaws herein shall override any previous bylaws relating to or having the same title or subject matter.
- B) AOU Rectors are responsible for the implementation of the provisions issued under these regulations.
- C) Any regulations issued by the designated authorities in the branch country shall apply to these bylaws and shall be considered as advisory and applied flexibly according to the circumstances of the country and the University in the country concerned.
- D) The University Council shall deal with all matters not stipulated in these bylaws.