COLLEGES OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Charter of the Great Salt Lake Argumentation Conference (GSLAC)

Article I: Name, Purpose, and Affiliation

Section 1. Name

This document constitutes the charter (the "Charter") of the Great Salt Lake Argumentation Conference, referred to herein as "GSLAC" or "the Conference."

Section 2. Purpose

GSLAC is a biennial conference held within the state of Utah. The purpose of GSLAC is to advance the study of argumentation through humanistic, social scientific, and aesthetic methods. GSLAC serves the scholars, teachers, and practitioners of argumentation by facilitating publication of the Conference's selected works and by enabling student participation in a formative conference.

Section 3. Affiliation with the Center for Civic Discourse & Debate

GSLAC is sponsored by the University of Utah's Center for Civic Discourse & Debate (the "Center"). This affiliation situates GSLAC within the Center's broader mission to advance research, teaching, training, and community engagement in constructive civic discourse, while preserving GSLAC's independent academic identity and history. Nothing in this Charter shall be construed to subordinate GSLAC's academic program to the Center's general programming, except as expressly provided herein with respect to administrative sponsorship. Further, scholarly organizations, such as the American Forensic Association and National Communication Association, that support scholarly research in argumentation, may serve a co-sponsors of the conference and be represented on the steering committee of the conference. Co-sponsoring organizations will not participate in the governance of the conference, except through their representatives on the steering committee. All sponsorships by third-party entities are subject to the provisions of Article 6, Section 4 of this document.

Article II: Governance Structure

Section 1. Division of Authority

GSLAC is governed through a partnership between the GSLAC Steering Committee (the "Committee") and the Center. The Committee holds primary responsibility for the academic and intellectual direction of the Conference. The Center serves as the Conference's institutional home, providing administrative infrastructure, logistical support, and potential limited financial support as described in Article V.

Section 2. Guiding Principle

This Charter is intended to formalize, not alter, the longstanding working relationship between the Committee and the Conference's host institution. This Charter governs the relationship between the Committee and the Center, including the division of responsibilities described in Articles IV through VII. Matters of Committee composition, succession, and internal procedure not addressed by this Charter remain within the Committee's own governance.

Article III: The Steering Committee

Section 1. Composition

The Steering Committee shall consist of the following positions:

1. The Chair
2. The immediately preceding Chair (Past Chair)
3. The Director of the next Conference
4. The two immediately preceding Directors of the Conference (Past Directors)
5. The President of the American Forensic Association (AFA), or their designee
6. A representative elected by the National Communication Association (NCA) Argumentation and Forensics Division
7. The Treasurer
8. The Local Host
9. The Historian
10. The Conference Web Manager
11. The Graduate Student Representative

Section 2. The Local Host

The Local Host is the representative of the University of Utah designated by the Center, and is the only Committee position whose designation is made by the Center. The Local Host is a permanent position held by the Director of the Center, or the Director's designee, and is not subject to the term limits described in Section 3. The Local Host serves as the primary point of contact between the Committee and the Center and is responsible for administering the Center's responsibilities under Article V of this Charter.

Other Committee positions may also be held by University of Utah faculty or staff, selected through the Committee's own processes as described in Section 4. Such positions remain subject to the term limits and selection processes applicable to those roles, and their being held by University of Utah personnel does not alter those terms or processes.

Section 3. Terms of Service

Except for the Local Host (Section 2), Committee members serve two-year terms, renewable indefinitely at the discretion of the Committee, with the following exceptions:

(a) Positions whose tenure is defined by a prior or concurrent service role — including the Director of the next Conference, the two immediately preceding Directors of the Conference, the President of AFA or their designate, the representative elected by the NCA Argumentation and Forensics Division, and the Past Chair — are held for as long as the member holds the underlying role, and are not independently renewable.

(b) The Chair's term is governed by Section 5.

Section 4. Selection and Succession

The Committee is self-perpetuating. New members are nominated and selected by the Committee in accordance with Section 6. The Center has no role in the nomination, selection, or

removal of Committee members, with the sole exception of the Local Host, whose designation is made by the Center.

Section 5. Chair

The Chair is selected by the Committee and serves a six-year term. The Chair presides over Committee meetings and serves as the primary point of contact for matters of academic direction and Conference planning. A chair may be appointed for additional terms as determined by the Committee.

Section 6. Decision-Making

The Committee operates by consensus whenever possible. When consensus cannot be reached, decisions are made by majority vote of Committee members present, provided a quorum is met. A quorum consists of at least 70% of Committee members. Where not otherwise specified by this Charter or by the Committee's own practices, the Committee observes Robert's Rules of Order. Decisions within the scope of Committee authority as described in Article IV and Article VII are binding and shall be respected by the Center.

Section 7. Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are held every quarter. The meetings are typically announced one month in advance and held virtually.

Article IV: Responsibilities of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee commits to provide:

1. **Financial accounting.** Stewardship of Conference funds (e.g., registration fee revenue and related Conference accounts), consultation with the Center on registration fees, and coordination on other financial needs related to Conference administration, as further described in Article VI.
2. **Conference administration.** Oversight of all elements of academic planning for the Conference, including the call for papers, paper submission, paper review, and scheduling of panels.
3. **Editorial oversight of publication.** Facilitation of a publication of selected works from the Conference, including any printed publication of those selected works.
4. **Establishment and Administration of Conference Awards.** The Committee will be responsible for defining the eligibility criteria for, and the administration of, any awards established by the Conference.
5. **Free conference registration for University of Utah graduate students**, as a benefit extended in recognition of the Center's sponsorship.

Article V: Responsibilities of the Center for Civic Discourse & Debate

The Center will provide:

1. A registration portal and payment interface for the Conference.
2. Conference logistics, including but not limited to conference programs and badges.
3. A web domain hosting the Conference's webpage.

4. A digital platform to publish the Conference's selected works.
5. Access to meeting space on the University of Utah campus before and/or after the Conference for pre- and post-conference activities related to GSLAC.
6. Contract responsibility — including signature authority and any required deposit — for the Conference hotel or meeting site.
7. Potential limited financial support for the Conference, the scope of which shall be discussed and agreed upon by the Center and the Committee in advance of each biennial Conference.
8. Volunteer support during the biennial Conference, assisting with registration and other clerical tasks.

Article VI: Financial Stewardship and Boundaries

Section 1. Three Streams of Funding

The Conference's finances consist of three distinct streams:

(a) Conference operating funds (e.g., registration revenue and related Conference accounts), which are held by the University and utilized with input from the Committee, with all transactional activity conducted by Center staff; and

(b) Center-provided support, consisting of the limited financial support, contract/signature authority, and in-kind administrative resources described in Article V.

(c) Support/Endowment funds held by third-party entities, which may be established by other academic entities (e.g., the National Communication Association, the American Forensics Association), and held outside the University of Utah and the Center, and separate from the conference operating funds or center-provided support. The use of such funds must comply with Article 6, Section 2-4 below.

Section 2. Limits on the Committee's Financial Authority

The Committee does not hold signature or contracting authority on behalf of the University of Utah and shall not enter into contracts, leases, or financial commitments in the Center's or University's name. All such commitments, including those related to the conference hotel or meeting site, remain the responsibility of the Center under Article V(6). All transactions involving Conference operating funds described in Section 1(a) are executed by Center staff with the Committee's input.

Section 3. Limits on the Center's Role

The Center's financial role with respect to its own contribution is limited to the items described in Article V. With respect to Conference operating funds described in Section 1(a), the Center's role is limited to holding the funds and executing transactions as described in this Article VI; the Center does not direct the use of those funds, except as mutually agreed for matters such as registration fee structure.

Section 4. Additional Sponsorship and Third-Party Funding

From time to time, other organizations or institutions may wish to provide limited supplemental funding for the Conference (e.g., to support graduate student attendance). The Committee may engage in informal discussions to cultivate such interest. However, any formal sponsorship arrangement, and the terms under which such funds are received, held, or used, must be

reviewed and approved by the University in accordance with the applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations of the University of Utah and the State of Utah.

Article VII: Academic Direction and Boundaries

Section 1. Committee Authority Over Academic Content

The Committee has sole authority over the academic and intellectual direction of GSLAC, including but not limited to: the call for papers, review criteria and process, panel composition and scheduling, selection of works for publication, and the editorial direction of any resulting publication.

Section 2. Limits on the Center's Role

The Center shall not direct, veto, or otherwise influence the academic content of the Conference, including paper selection, panel topics, speaker invitations, or publication decisions. The Center's role is limited to the administrative, logistical, and financial functions described in Article V.

Section 3. Limits on the Committee's Role Regarding the Center

The Committee shall not direct the Center's use of University resources, staffing, or facilities beyond what is specified in this Charter, nor commit the Center to obligations beyond those described in Article V without the Center's separate agreement.

Section 4. Compliance with University and State Requirements

No decision of the Committee regarding academic direction, Conference rules, or Conference policy — and no amendment to this Charter — may conflict with the federal or state laws, rules, or regulations of the University of Utah or the State of Utah. The Committee's authority under this Article is exercised subject to that limitation.

Article VIII: Dispute Resolution and Final Authority

Section 1. Informal Resolution

In the event of a disagreement between the Committee and the Center, the Chair and the Director of the Center (or their designees) shall first attempt to resolve the matter informally through direct discussion. This informal resolution period shall not exceed 60 days from the date the disagreement is first raised in writing by either party, after which either party may proceed under Section 2.

Section 2. Final Authority

If a dispute cannot be resolved informally:

(a) For matters that intersect with the laws, rules, or regulations of the University of Utah or the State of Utah, the Director of the Center is the final authority.

(b) For matters of academic direction within the scope of Committee authority described in Article VII, the Committee — through its decision-making process described in Article III, Section 6 — is the final authority, subject always to Section 2(a) and Article VII, Section 4.

Article IX: Amendments

This Charter may be amended by mutual written agreement of the Committee and the Center. Amendments require approval by the Committee through its decision-making process described in Article III, Section 6, and sign-off by the Director of the Center. No amendment to this Charter, and no Conference rule or policy adopted under it, may conflict with state or federal laws, rules, or regulations of the University of Utah or the State of Utah.

Article X: Sponsorship Continuation and Discontinuation

Section 1. Renewal Intervals

This Charter operates on renewal intervals corresponding to its review periods described in Article XII (every four years / every two Conference cycles).

Section 2. Discontinuation at Renewal

Either the Committee or the Center may decline to continue the sponsorship relationship at the time of a scheduled renewal, upon written notice provided at least 12 months in advance of the renewal date.

Section 3. Discontinuation for Cause

Outside of a scheduled renewal, the sponsorship relationship may be discontinued only for cause — that is failure by either party to perform its responsibilities under this Charter. The party alleging cause shall provide written notice describing the conduct at issue. Except where the conduct at issue is incapable of cure, the party against whom cause is alleged shall have 90 days from the date of that notice to cure the conduct before discontinuation takes effect. Any dispute as to whether cause exists, whether conduct is capable of cure, or whether a cure has been adequately effected, shall be resolved through the process described in Article VIII.

Section 4. Conferences in Progress

If the sponsorship relationship is discontinued under Section 2, any Conference for which contracts have already been signed under Article V(6) at the time of discontinuation shall be completed under the terms of this Charter, and the Center's contractual obligations for that Conference shall remain its responsibility until completion of that Conference. A Conference for which contracts have not yet been signed at the time of discontinuation is treated as the first Conference under the new arrangement (if any). Where discontinuation occurs for cause under Section 3, the treatment of any Conference in progress shall be determined case by case.

Section 5. Standing Obligations at Discontinuation

Upon discontinuation of the sponsorship relationship, obligations incurred prior to the effective date of discontinuation remain the responsibility of the party that incurred them. Before any transfer of Conference operating funds under Section 6, such funds shall first be applied to outstanding Conference-related obligations (e.g., vendor invoices, honoraria, and in-progress publication costs) incurred prior to the effective date of discontinuation.

Section 6. Transfer of Conference Operating Funds

Upon discontinuation of the sponsorship relationship, any remaining Conference operating funds described in Article VI, Section 1(a), after application under Section 5, shall be

transferred, upon formal request by the Committee, to the Committee's designated successor sponsoring institution, provided that institution is a recognized non-profit organization. Any such transfer is subject to the applicable laws, rules, and regulations of the University of Utah and the State of Utah.

Article XI: Intellectual Property and Ownership

Section 1. The GSLAC Name

The name "Great Salt Lake Argumentation Conference" and the GSLAC name and identity belong to the Conference. If the sponsorship relationship between the Committee and the Center ends, the name is transferable to the Committee.

Section 2. Archives and Publications

All archives and publications produced under an active Charter belong to the University of Utah.

Article XII: Effective Date and Review

This Charter takes effect as of July 2026. It shall be reviewed every four years, with the first review occurring in July 2030. This Charter shall be signed by the Chair of the Steering Committee and the Director of the Center for Civic Discourse & Debate.

Effective Date: July 2026

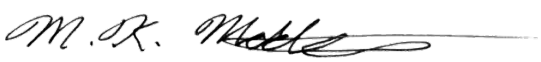
First Review: July 2030

On behalf of the GSLAC Steering Committee:



Robert Rowland
Chair, GSLAC Steering Committee

On behalf of the Center for Civic Discourse & Debate:



Michael K. Middleton
Director, Center for Civic Discourse & Debate