Gay Straight Alliance at CU
By-Laws

Adopted April 28, 2007

Article I. Formation, Beliefs, and Mission of the Organization

Section 1 – Name: The full name of this organization shall be the Gay Straight Alliance at CU. The short form of the organization’s name shall be the GSA or the GSA at CU.

Section 2 – Mission: The mission of the Gay Straight Alliance at CU is to fight homophobia/transphobia on campus and in the larger community by raising awareness, advocating for equal rights, and creating social and leadership opportunities for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex individuals, and their allies. The GSA is open to all and values multiple dimensions of identity.

Section 3 – Diversity Clause: The GSA strongly believes in, honors, and respects diversity in all forms and therefore shall not discriminate on the actual or perceived basis of sexual or gender identity or orientation, race, color, creed, sex, religion, marital status, personal appearance, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, or on the basis of the exercise of rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and/or any other categories as defined by university policy, regulation, or law. In addition, we do not discriminate on the perceived or actual status of HIV and/or AIDS.

Section 4 – Neutrality Clause: The GSA strongly believes in neutrality towards all and therefore shall remain politically or otherwise neutral in all matters not related to the effective operation of this organization and shall never make an official stance as an organization in favor of, in agreement with, or opposed to any external proposal, policy, regulation, law, or similar issue. The GSA shall furthermore never endorse or oppose candidates for office on any level, and shall never make a financial contribution of any amount towards any person, business or organization, commercial or otherwise, that is for-profit or is lobbying for a candidate, position, proposal, policy, regulation, law or similar issue.

Section 5 – Anti-Hazing Clause: The GSA strongly believes that hazing of any kind is wrong and therefore, any action or situation that recklessly or intentionally endangers the health, safety, or welfare of an individual for the purpose of initiation, participation, admission into, or affiliation with the GSA shall be forbidden. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any abuse of a mental or physical nature, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drugs, or substances, or any forced physical activity that could adversely affect the health or safety of any person. Hazing also includes any activity that would subject the individual to embarrassment or humiliation, the willingness of the participant in such activity notwithstanding.

Section 6 – Duration: The GSA shall maintain itself as an independent student organization with the University of Colorado at Boulder perpetually until dissolved by a two-thirds vote of the organization’s voting membership or when voting membership falls below three voting members for ten or more consecutive weeks.

Section 7 – Compliance: The GSA shall never operate, conduct itself, or hold activities in violation of University guidelines, policies, regulations, and laws. The GSA also agrees to the affiliated student organization agreement on file with the Student Organization Financial Office (SOFO) found online at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/sofo/forms/affiliatedAgreement.pdf.

Article II. Membership and Leadership of the Organization

Section 1 – Membership Definition: Voting membership shall be open to all current students (part-time, full-time, or continuing education) of the University of Colorado at Boulder. Non-
voting membership shall be open to all faculty, staff, alumni, and former students of the University of Colorado at Boulder. All individuals qualify under this definition for membership unless they have had their membership status altered as part of the grievance process outlined in these By-Laws.

Section 2 – Voting: Any voting member present at a GSA general meeting has the right to vote on any GSA topic or issue except elections. To be eligible for an election vote, you must be physically present during the general meeting held during week three of the election timeline outlined in these By-Laws. The Chair and/or Vice-Chair responsible for conducting elections shall remain unbiased in the election and receive no vote in any election voting. For all other votes to occur, there must be a consensus to vote on an issue or topic by the voting members present at the general meeting in question.

Section 3 – Leadership: The leadership of the organization and the management of the organization’s affairs shall be handled primarily by the Board of Officers, consisting of not more than four official members elected at-large from and by the voting membership of the GSA, and one ex officio member selected by the Board.

Sub-section A – Makeup of the Board: The four members of the Board of Officers consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, and Public Relations/Outreach Coordinator (PROC). The one ex officio member shall be the faculty or staff sponsor of our organization as filed with SOFO and selected by the Board of Officers.

Section 4 – Leadership Authority: The Board of Officers shall have the authority to establish and administer policies for the GSA that lead to an effective organization.

Sub-section A – Membership Veto/Limitation of Authority: The voting members of the GSA have the authority to vote on any action taken by the Board of Officers at any time to effectively nullify said action, or reduce the authority of the Board of Officers. This vote may take place during any general meeting provided notice of said vote is announced and given to all members of the GSA a minimum of two weekdays in advance of the general meeting.

Sub-section B – Veto/Limitation Voting: A vote to nullify an action of the Board, or to reduce the authority of the Board requires a simple majority of voting members present for the vote in question.

Section 5 – Term of Office: The term of office for any member of the Board of Officers shall be seven months for those elected for the Fall Board of Officers and five months for those elected for the Spring Board of Officers.

Sub-section A – Term of Office Dates: The Fall Board of Officers shall be elected prior to May 14 of the year in question and take office on May 15 with their term ending on December 14. The Spring Board of Officers shall be elected prior to December 14 of the year in question and take office on December 15 with their term ending on May 14 of the following year.

Section 6 – Election to Office: Members of the Board of Officers are elected at-large by receiving the highest number of votes from the voting members voting via e-mail. The exception shall be by the Faculty or Staff Sponsor of our organization who shall be selected by the members of the Board of Officers in a manner the Board determines.
Sub-section A – Election Timeline: Elections shall be generally held in November and April of each year. The timeline shall be established and announced by the Chair and/or Vice-Chair as follows:

**Week 1:** The Chair and/or Vice-Chair shall announce the timeline with corrected dates as necessary.

**Week 2:** The Chair and/or Vice-Chair shall take nominations of candidates for officer positions at the general meeting held during week two of the election timeline. Nominations shall come from all the members except the nominee in question. Nominations are to be seconded by an additional member, and then accepted by the nominee. At the end of this general meeting, a ballot of candidates shall be announced.

**Week 3:** During the general meeting held on week three of the election timeline, the candidates shall give a brief speech about their qualifications, goals, and why they want the position in question. The Secretary shall take a written record of those voting members present during this meeting to establish who is eligible to vote. Voting is to be conducted by e-mail during the remainder of week three of the election timeline. E-mailed votes shall be sent to the Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the GSA as well as the Faculty or Staff Sponsor of our organization.

**Week 4:** The Chair and/or Vice-Chair and the Faculty or Staff Sponsor shall tally the e-mail votes and cross-reference the eligibility list generated during week three. The highest vote getter wins. In the event of a tie vote for any position, the candidates of said position are to be notified and during the general meeting of week four, a tie-breaking secret-ballot vote shall occur with the lowest vote getter dropped from the ballot until the tie is resolved. Once all ties have been resolved, the Chair and/or Vice-Chair and the Faculty or Staff Sponsor shall announce the winner of each position.

Sub-section B – Filling Vacancies Outside of Elections: Vacancies in any position shall be filled by majority vote of the voting members present at the next general meeting following said vacancy and the term of office shall be the remainder of the term vacated.

Section 7 – Removal from Office: Any member of the Board of Officers can be removed from office with a two-thirds vote of the voting membership present during the general meeting that this vote is called for. The position is to be immediately vacated and any property, keys, or other GSA-related materials shall be returned to the GSA forthwith.

Section 8 – Resignation from Office: Resignations from any position shall be sent to the Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the organization. The position is to be immediately vacated upon acceptance of the resignation by the Chair and/or Vice-Chair and any property, keys, or other GSA-related materials shall be returned to the GSA forthwith.

Section 9 – Transitioning: Members-elect of the Board of Officers will begin transitioning with the current office holder immediately following the election to that position, up until their term of office begins.

**Article III. Duties of the Board of Officers**

**Section 1 – Makeup, Election, and Duties of the Board:** The makeup of members of the Board of Officers shall be defined and elected/selected in the manner described in Article II of these By-Laws. The Board shall all be responsible for maintaining a minimum total of 20 hours each week within the GSA office. The Board shall also be responsible for knowing, following, and overseeing organizational compliance with applicable University guidelines, policies, regulations, and laws.
Section 2 – Duties of the Chair: The duties of the Chair of the GSA include, but are not limited to, presiding over general meetings, signing on the GSA account maintained with SOFO, acting as the representative of the organization in external matters, acting as the spokesperson of the organization, delegating actions needed to be taken to the other Board members, and running of the elections in conjunction with the Vice-Chair and Faculty or Staff Sponsor. The Chair shall also set the agenda of the general meetings in consultation with the Vice-Chair.

Section 3 – Duties of the Vice-Chair: The duties of the Vice-Chair include, but are not limited to, acting as the Chair of the organization when requested by the Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, assisting in the duties of the Chair, managing the daily operations of the GSA, it’s office and assets, planning social activities for the GSA including, but not limited to, movie nights, potlucks, game nights, and other events as needed, and signing on the GSA account maintained with SOFO.

Section 4 – Duties of the Secretary/Treasurer: The duties of the Secretary/Treasurer include, but are not limited to, recording minutes of each general meeting, handling any information technology accounts at the University and across the internet, maintaining any correspondences pertaining to the GSA, assisting in making arrangements for meetings spaces, keeping a record of all finances of the organization, maintaining a budget for the organization, and signing on the GSA account maintained with SOFO.

Section 5 – Duties of the Public Relations/Outreach Coordinator (PROC): The duties of the PROC include, but are not limited to, making connections to other student groups, offices, communities, and organizations at the University, maintaining the GSA website, and coordinating all GSA membership drives, organization fairs, group event advertising, and the distribution of flyers, brochures, and other materials as necessary.

Section 6 – Duties of the Faculty or Staff Sponsor: The duties of the Faculty or Staff Sponsor include, but are not limited to, those duties determined by the Board of Officers to be necessary to the effective operation of the GSA, and shall include any duties as outlined by SOFO, UCSU, the University Student Affairs Division, and/or other entities at the University.

Article IV. Activities of the Organization

Section 1 – General Meetings: General meetings shall be held weekly at a time and place designated by the Board of Officers in agreement with the voting membership during the Fall and Spring semesters each school year. These meetings are to be facilitated by the Board of Officers of the GSA. The time, location, and dates of these meetings shall be posted on the GSA website, in organizational literature, and on the exterior of the GSA office. These meetings are open meetings that anyone can choose to attend. There is no minimum quorum count for these meetings, and the voting membership shall consist of those present at said meeting.

Sub-section A – Public Forum: At or near the start of each general meeting, there shall be an allotted time for a public forum to occur where announcements from the membership can be made, and for external persons to address the GSA. The public forum shall be time limited to three minutes per speaker, modifiable by a simple majority vote of the voting membership present at said meeting.

Section 2 – Board of Officers Meetings: The Board of Officers shall meet as needed and necessary to effectively operate the organization. Meetings shall be open to any member of the organization and member of the Board. These meetings need not be announced in advance of them happening, but in response to queries, the date, time, and location of any scheduled meetings of this type shall be given to those making a query. These meetings need not be recorded, by minutes or other method unless deemed necessary by the Chair.
Section 3 – Events: Events of the GSA shall be held as necessary for the effective operation of the organization. The members of the Board of Officers shall be the official representatives of the GSA in all matters related to obtaining funding, proposing activities, and partnering with other organizations. All funds sought and obtained for special events are to be used only for those special events and shall be budgeted, audited, and maintained by the Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 4 – Committees: As the situation arises, by a simple majority vote of the voting membership, the GSA may form ad-hoc committees. The voting membership will also designate a committee chairperson at the time of voting to form an ad-hoc committee. Any and all committees can be dissolved at any time by a simple majority vote of the voting membership. All committees will be automatically dissolved after May 15 of any year unless renewed by a simple majority vote of the voting membership to continue the operations of said ad-hoc committee. Membership on the committee is open at any member of the GSA.

Section 5 – Admission Fees: No activity of the GSA shall charge an admission fee to members of the GSA except in circumstances where participation in said activity is voluntary with membership opting-in, and a person, organization, or business external to the GSA is imposing the admission fee. In those excepted cases, the admission fee charged to GSA members shall never be more than the amount imposed on the GSA itself.

Section 6 – Alcohol and Drug Clause: All activities of the GSA shall be drug and alcohol-free at all times for all activities conducted under the auspices of the GSA.

Section 7 – Liability Clause: All activities of the GSA are voluntary participation with the participant opting-in at all times. All activities made under the auspices of the GSA carry certain risks and dangers that may include, but are not limited to, the hazards of mountainous or wilderness terrain, accident, or illness, the forces of nature and travel by automobile or other conveyance and other hazards foreseen, or not foreseen. In consideration of the right to participate in any activity arranged under the auspices of the GSA, the participants certify that they carry student medical insurance offered through the University, or that they are insured by a private insurer for themselves or through their parents; and the participants have assumed all the risks associated with participation on their own, and hold the GSA, its officers and membership, and other entities of the University of Colorado, the Board of Regents, its officers and administrators harmless from any and all liability, actions, causes of action, debts, claims, and demands of every kind and nature whatsoever which the participant now has or which may arise of or in connection with the participants participation in any activity arranged under the auspices of the GSA. By participating, the participant agrees to this clause and their participation serves as a release under these terms, and the participant assumes their own risk on their behalf and on the behalf of their heirs, executors, and administrators, and/or all members of their family, including any minors.

Section 8 – Special Funds: The Chair and/or Secretary/Treasurer are authorized to review and receive contributions or specially obtained funds from any individual or institution to be applied to the operations of the organization so long as they comply with University guidelines, policy, regulations, and/or applicable law. These funds are to be deposited into the GSA’s SOFO account as soon as received. If the Chair and/or Secretary/Treasurer determine that the funds are unneeded or unwanted, the Chair and/or Secretary/Treasurer shall have the authority to respectfully reject the contribution on behalf of the organization.

Section 9 – Asset Control: All assets, including the office, of the GSA shall be controlled on behalf of all members of the organization. In the event that an asset of the organization is damaged, the Chair and Secretary/Treasurer of the organization shall pursue the responsible parties for the damage and attempt to collect restitution for said damage. In the event that an asset of the GSA is to be loaned, borrowed, and rented to an external person, organization, or
business, the external parties are responsible for the safe use, transportation, security, and damage of the GSA asset. Assets of the GSA are to be stored at all times not in use, in a locked, secure area unless alternate arrangements have been made with the consent of the Board of Officers. External parties wishing to use the assets of the GSA shall propose their use to the Board of Officers who shall accept or deny the external use.

Section 10 – Allocation of Funds: Funds of the GSA shall always be allocated with the consent of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and/or the Secretary/Treasurer in agreement with the Board of Officers. All funds must be allocated in accordance with the procedures established by SOFO with a minimum balance of $25.00 always remaining in the GSA’s SOFO account at all times. The GSA shall never make a financial contribution of any amount towards any person, business or organization, commercial or otherwise, that is for-profit or is lobbying for a candidate, position, proposal, policy, regulation, law or similar issue. Funds of the GSA shall never be used for the purchase of alcohol or drugs, and shall never be allocated in a manner that violates University guidelines, policies, regulations, and laws.

Section 11 – Conduct of Members and Officers: The members of the GSA and members of the Board of Officers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with all university guidelines, policies, regulations, and laws. In order to create, preserve, and protect a safe environment for the effective operation of the GSA, all members agree to conduct themselves in a manner that guards the safety of GSA members when one or any number of members is threatened in any manner that is inappropriate in a sexual, physical, or ideological manner. All members also agree not to personally attack, haze, or condemn any other person during any activity of the GSA. In the event that the safety or security of any member is threatened, the person causing the threat will be warned on a first violation, and asked to leave the activity of the GSA on a second and any subsequent violations. If a second violation occurs, the threatened member(s), or any member of the Board of Officers, can initiate a grievance process against the person causing the threat.

Sub-section A – Grievance Process: If a grievance is initiated, a committee consisting of three people will be formed. Members of the committee shall include one officer of the GSA not be directly involved in the grievance, one witness, and one non-biased member not directly involved in the grievance. A special grievance committee meeting will be called, at which the committee members, the witness(es), the complainant(s), and the accused must be present. Viewpoints of both complainant(s) and accused must be presented and considered. A decision and course of action, based on the testimony of the witness(es), complainant(s), and accused, shall be rendered by members of the committee. The course of action can be up to or including dismissal from the group, exclusion from GSA activities, and/or revocation of membership privileges for any length of time, and/or restitution to the group for physical asset damage up to or including full replacement costs.

Article V. Adoption and Amendments of the By-Laws

Section 1 – Adoption of the By-Laws: Adoption of these By-Laws shall take affect after a reading of the By-Laws to the voting membership present at the general meeting via a simple majority vote by the voting membership. Upon adoption, all other Constitutions, By-Laws, or organizational structure materials shall be null and void.

Section 2 – Amendments to the By-Laws: Amendments to these By-Laws may be proposed in writing and given to any member of the Board of Officers by any member of the organization at any general meeting. Amendments are to be read to the voting membership present and accepted on first reading via a simple majority vote by the voting membership. At the following weeks meetings, a second vote shall take place in which a simple majority vote of the voting members present at said meeting allows the amendment to take affect.