



GATORMUN XXIII

**Rewriting Music's Biggest Night: The Grammys
Board of Trustees
Background Guide**

Elizabeth Insuasti

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Letter from the Director:

Dear Delegates

Welcome to *The Grammys in Crisis: Rewriting Music's Biggest Night*—a specialized committee that dives headfirst into the glitz, drama, and dysfunction of one of the world's most iconic award shows. My name is Elizabeth Insuasti, and I am honored to serve as your Director.

I'm currently a senior at the University of Florida, double majoring in History and Media Production. I've been involved in Model UN since high school, and this is my second time directing a GatorMUN committee. I'm thrilled to bring this intersection of cultural politics and crisis negotiation to the committee room and can't wait to see what creative solutions you all bring to the table!

This committee will be a hybrid of structured resolution writing and surprise crisis updates. You'll represent figures from across the music industry, pop stars, producers, journalists, execs, and be tasked with saving the Grammys from total collapse. Your challenge? Draft real reforms: fix the voting process, ensure representation, and confront decades of bias. But be warned, celebrity tweets, viral scandals, and leaked documents might shake things up at any moment.

I can't wait to see the energy, creativity, and chaos you all bring to this committee. If you have any questions before the conference, don't hesitate to reach out.

Warmly,
Elizabeth Insuasti
einsuasti@ufl.edu

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Rules of Procedure

Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as "Present" or "Present and Voting."

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus

This motion must include three specifications

- Length of the Caucus
- Speaking Time
- Reason for the Caucus

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus in a Crisis committee should not exceed fifteen minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure
- To question relevance of debate to the current Topic
- To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

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Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any further questioning time.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure. Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director's discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.

Directives

Directives act as a replacement for Draft Resolutions when in Crisis committees, and are the actions that the body decides to take as a whole. Directives are not required to contain operative or preambulatory clauses. A directive should contain:

- The name(s) of the author(s)
- A title
- A number of signatories/sponsors signatures' necessary to
- introduce, determined by the Director

A simple majority vote is required to introduce a directive, and multiple directives may be introduced at once. Press releases produced on behalf of the body must also be voted on as Directives.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that all Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor's agreement both verbally and in writing.

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Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must be the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories. The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and non-substantive Unfriendly amendment proposals.

Plagiarism

GatorMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the GatorMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.

Crisis Notes

A crisis note is an action taken by an individual in a Crisis committee. Crisis notes do not need to be introduced or voted on, and should be given to the Crisis Staff by sending the notes to a designated pickup point in each room. A crisis note should both be addressed to crisis and have the delegate's position on both the inside and outside of the note.

Motion to Enter Voting Procedure

Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors.

- No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures.
- Each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Directive will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Directive as a whole is put to a vote.
- Delegates who requested to be noted as "Present and Voting" are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.
- The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background-guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures.

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Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: "For," "Against," "Abstain," or "Pass." During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, "Pass," reserves his/her vote until the Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to "Passing" Delegates, they must vote: "For" or "Against."

Accepting by Acclamation

This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.

Tech Policy

Technology will not be allowed throughout the course of the committee. Delegates are prohibited from using their technology inside the committee room. However, they are encouraged to do research before and during assigned breaks.

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Introduction to Committee

The Grammys are under fire, again. Accusations of rigged votes, genre snubs, and favoritism have gone viral, and now the Recording Academy has called a high-stakes emergency summit. In this specialized committee, delegates will take on roles like pop stars, indie producers, academy execs, and rogue music journalists. You'll work together to draft real reform, new voting systems, better representation, and genre recognition, while handling unexpected crises like leaked ballots, social media scandals, and celebrity walkouts. Can you save music's biggest night... or will it crash in flames on live TV?



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Committee Background (1959-Present)

1959–1970s: Origins and Establishment

The first Grammy Awards were held in 1959, born from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) as a way to preserve “high standards” amid the rise of rock ‘n’ roll. Early ceremonies favored mainstream pop and adult contemporary artists such as Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald, positioning the Grammys as an elite counterweight to youth culture. Yet by the late 1960s, as countercultural and Black musical movements gained momentum, the Grammys faced accusations of cultural conservatism. Landmark performances—like Aretha Franklin’s early wins and the Beatles’ later recognition—illustrated a slow institutional adaptation to changing musical landscapes.

1980s: The MTV Generation and Commercial Expansion

The 1980s saw the Grammys transform into a global television spectacle. MTV’s rise reshaped pop music, but the Academy struggled to keep pace with the new visual and youth-oriented culture. The launch of the televised “Grammy Moments” segment, pairing unexpected artist collaborations, boosted ratings but drew criticism for prioritizing entertainment over artistic integrity. Hip-hop’s exclusion from early broadcasts, such as the 1989 boycott led by DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince, underscored racial and generational divides within the institution.

1990s: Genre Tensions and Globalization

During the 1990s, the Grammys expanded in scope, adding categories for world music, Latin music, and rap, reflecting a more global industry. Yet these additions also entrenched genre hierarchies—non-English and nonwhite artists were frequently relegated to niche categories. The rise of artists like Lauryn Hill, Santana, and Shakira symbolized both progress and tokenism, as mainstream recognition often came with rigid cultural expectations. The Grammys’ televised format solidified its dual identity: an award show and a brand.

2000s: Scandal, Commerce, and Credibility

By the 2000s, the Grammys were both a barometer of mainstream taste and a lightning rod for controversy. Critics accused the Academy of favoring legacy acts and commercial success over innovation. The 2004 “Album of the Year” win by Ray Charles’s Genius Loves Company over Kanye West and Green Day epitomized the Academy’s nostalgic leanings. As digital sales transformed the industry, the Grammys’ credibility hinged on its ability to balance artistry with market realities—an equilibrium it struggled to achieve.

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2010s: Diversity Reckonings and Digital Disruption

The 2010s brought intensified scrutiny over race, gender, and representation. Beyoncé's repeated losses in top categories (notably to Taylor Swift in 2010 and Adele in 2017) reignited debates about systemic bias. Meanwhile, the dominance of streaming platforms altered how success was measured: Billboard charts no longer dictated cultural relevance. The Grammys attempted modernization through social media integration and younger membership drives but continued to face backlash for appearing out of touch with contemporary music ecosystems.

2020–Present: Crisis and Reform

The 2020s marked an era of institutional upheaval. The ousting of CEO Deborah Dugan in 2020, following her accusations of corruption and sexual harassment, shattered the Academy's public image. In response, 2021 reforms eliminated secret nominating committees in most categories. Yet even as these changes were hailed as historic, controversies persisted—most notably The Weeknd's boycott and public criticisms from artists like Halsey, Drake, and Bad Bunny. As of 2025, the Grammys stand at a crossroads: balancing reform and survival in an age where artists wield more direct influence over fans than any awards institution ever could.

Major Scandals and Turning Points

The Grammys' history is punctuated by controversies that have defined its evolution. Each scandal reveals not only internal dysfunction but also broader cultural tensions over power, representation, and authenticity in the music industry.

The 1989 Hip-Hop Boycott: When the Grammys introduced the Best Rap Performance category but refused to televise it, hip-hop artists—including DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince—boycotted the ceremony. Their protest highlighted institutional racism and the Academy's reluctance to validate emerging Black art forms. The incident forced the Academy to gradually expand recognition for hip-hop, though it would take decades for rap to gain consistent visibility in major categories.

The 2011 Category Consolidation: In 2011, the Academy controversially slashed its number of awards from 109 to 78, merging numerous genre categories. Critics argued that the move erased diversity, disproportionately affecting Latin, Indigenous, and regional artists. The backlash underscored a recurring theme: efficiency and inclusivity were often treated as mutually exclusive within Grammy governance.

Deborah Dugan's 2020 Whistleblower Complaint: CEO Deborah Dugan's abrupt suspension exposed systemic corruption within the Academy. Her complaint cited vote manipulation, conflicts of interest, and sexual harassment by senior executives. The scandal not only led to lawsuits and leadership turnover but also marked the most public reckoning in Grammy history. For many, Dugan's ouster symbolized the Academy's resistance to meaningful change.

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The Weeknd Boycott (2021): The Weeknd's *After Hours*—one of the most commercially successful albums of the decade—received zero nominations. His accusation that the Grammys were “corrupt” gained international attention and prompted other artists, including Drake, to question the show's legitimacy. The ensuing fallout pressured the Academy into accelerating transparency reforms.

Gender and Representation Crises (2018–2023): After former president Neil Portnow told female artists to “step up” in 2018, public outrage fueled the creation of a DEI Task Force. Subsequent years saw incremental gains in representation but continuing disparities at the top. Artists such as Beyoncé, Nicki Minaj, and SZA have since used their platforms to critique the Grammys' failure to reward women—particularly women of color—in major categories.

The Streaming and Algorithmic Era: By the mid-2020s, algorithm-driven consumption reshaped the definition of success in music. The Grammys' traditional structures—genre boundaries, category hierarchies, and “peer voting”—increasingly appear obsolete in a world governed by data analytics and global fan bases. The tension between institutional tradition and digital democratization defines the current crisis: can an award born in 1959 survive in the age of TikTok virality and AI-generated music?

Committee Mechanics

This committee will operate as a **specialized, hybrid format** combining structured policy debate with frequent crisis updates. Delegates will assume the roles of **Recording Academy executives, Board of Trustees members, chapter leaders, industry executives, and journalists**.

Primary Objective – Draft a comprehensive reform plan for the Recording Academy to restore public trust, ensure equitable representation, and address systemic flaws in voting and category assignment.

Secondary Objective – Manage real-time crises that threaten the integrity of the upcoming Grammy broadcast. Delegates will have to balance long-term reforms with short-term crisis management to prevent reputational and financial disaster.

Flow of Committee:

- **Formal Debate:** Delegates discuss reform proposals, negotiate category changes, and design voting system safeguards.
- **Crisis Interventions:** Timed updates will introduce breaking scandals (e.g., leaked ballots, viral artist boycotts, sponsor withdrawals). Delegates must submit directives or public statements in real time.
- **Resolution Goal:** By the end of the session, produce a “Grammy Reform Charter” addressing voting transparency, representation, and industry relations.

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Topic A: Reforming the Grammy Voting Process and Representation

The Grammy voting process has long served as both the engine and Achilles' heel of the Recording Academy. While its purpose is to reward artistic excellence, the method by which winners are chosen has been persistently opaque. Historically, nominees were filtered through secret "review committees," small groups of insiders who could override the broader voting membership. Although these committees were dissolved in 2021 after widespread criticism, the perception of bias remains.

The voting body itself—approximately 12,000 industry professionals—is drawn primarily from members of the Recording Academy, a pool historically dominated by older, male, and U.S.-based voters. Despite recent recruitment drives, demographic disparities continue to shape results. Major-label lobbying, informal networks, and "For Your Consideration" campaigns give disproportionate influence to those with institutional access. For many independent or marginalized artists, the Grammys symbolize not meritocracy, but an industry hierarchy resistant to change.

Today, the question of representation extends beyond demographics to methodology. As genres blur and global markets expand, the Academy's binary approach to category classification often marginalizes artists who defy Western or Anglocentric genre boundaries. Global music, K-pop, reggaetón, and Afrobeats—among the fastest-growing genres worldwide—rarely receive equitable placement in top fields. Reforming the voting process thus demands not only procedural transparency but also a philosophical reckoning with what the Grammys claim to value.

Questions to Consider

1. How can the Academy ensure that its membership genuinely reflects the diversity of the global music industry?
2. What structural safeguards can prevent conflicts of interest in the voting process?
3. Should genre boundaries be eliminated or reimaged to accommodate hybrid and globalized forms of music?
4. What mechanisms can guarantee transparency without compromising voter anonymity?

Key Issues

- **Voter Diversity and Demographics:** The Academy's membership remains disproportionately white, male, and concentrated in major urban centers like Los Angeles and Nashville. Lack of regional and international diversity skews outcomes toward familiar markets.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Voters with ties to record labels, management companies, or artists are often allowed to participate without adequate disclosure. These relationships can distort supposedly "peer-based" judgments.

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- **Genre and Category Misclassification:** Artists who cross traditional genre lines risk being sidelined or reclassified in ways that limit their visibility in top awards.
- **Opaque Vote Counting:** While ballots are verified by Deloitte, limited external oversight means results are trusted but rarely scrutinized.

Potential Solutions

- **Expand Membership Transparency:** Publish annual demographic breakdowns and voting statistics to reveal who holds institutional power.
- **Implement Blind Voting:** Introduce anonymized first-round ballots that emphasize artistic merit over name recognition or label influence.
- **Independent Oversight Board:** Create a third-party ethics committee to investigate conflicts of interest and oversee nomination review processes.
- **Global and Digital Inclusion:** Broaden membership eligibility to encompass non-U.S. professionals, digital producers, and streaming-based artists, reflecting contemporary industry realities.
- **Decentralized Category Panels:** Rotate expert panels annually to prevent gatekeeping and ensure evolving genre literacy.

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Topic B: Managing Public Perception and Industry Pressure

The Grammys are more than an awards ceremony—they are a televised cultural ritual, a stage where commerce, art, and identity converge. As such, the Recording Academy's survival depends as much on public trust as on artistic integrity. Yet in the last decade, that trust has eroded. Viral controversies, from The Weeknd's boycott to gender equity debates, have repeatedly overshadowed the ceremony's achievements. In an age of social media outrage and instantaneous global reactions, each perceived misstep is amplified into a reputational crisis.

Corporate sponsors and streaming partners now play critical roles in the Grammys' financial ecosystem, creating a delicate balance between artistic independence and commercial necessity. When the Academy mishandles controversies—such as Deborah Dugan's ouster in 2020 or public comments deemed sexist—it risks not only credibility but also millions in sponsorship revenue. Meanwhile, artists increasingly use their own platforms to bypass traditional media narratives, forcing the Academy to compete with the voices of those it seeks to honor.

Managing perception, therefore, is not simply a public relations challenge—it is a test of institutional legitimacy. The question facing delegates is whether the Grammys can reform their image without diluting their authority or pandering to virality..

Case Studies

- **The Weeknd Boycott (2021):** After receiving zero nominations, The Weeknd accused the Academy of corruption, igniting a global media firestorm and leading to major procedural reforms.
- **Beyoncé and the "Album of the Year" Debate:** Despite holding the record for most Grammy wins, Beyoncé has never won the top prize. This recurring pattern has become a symbol of systemic bias and selective recognition.
- **Deborah Dugan's Allegations (2020):** Her whistleblower complaint alleging corruption and sexual harassment severely damaged the Academy's reputation and prompted leadership overhaul.
- **Sponsor Influence:** Corporate backers such as Mastercard and CBS exert indirect influence over programming and branding, pressuring the Academy to preserve an image of inclusivity even when internal practices lag behind.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can the Academy rebuild credibility in an era dominated by social media outrage and influencer commentary?
2. What crisis communication practices should be standardized to prevent future reputational meltdowns?

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3. Should corporate partners have a say in the Academy's internal ethics policies, or does that undermine artistic autonomy?
4. In what ways can the Grammys leverage transparency to strengthen, rather than weaken, their cultural authority?

Key Issues

- **Crisis Communication and Media Strategy:** The Academy's responses to controversies often appear reactive or inconsistent, eroding confidence among both artists and audiences.
- **Balancing Integrity and Entertainment:** As the Grammys prioritize ratings and viral moments, critics argue that artistic recognition becomes secondary to spectacle.
- **Social Media and Misinformation:** Online discourse can rapidly distort facts or amplify conspiracy theories about vote manipulation.
- **Corporate Accountability:** Sponsors and broadcast partners wield substantial power in shaping the Academy's public persona, complicating reform efforts.

Potential Solutions

- **Proactive Crisis Teams:** Establish a standing crisis-communication unit trained to issue coordinated, transparent responses within 24 hours of emerging controversies.
- **Public Accountability Forums:** Host post-award season town halls with artists, voters, and journalists to address public concerns directly.
- **Ethical Sponsorship Agreements:** Require sponsors to adhere to Academy DEI standards and transparency expectations as a condition of partnership.
- **Digital Transparency Dashboard:** Publish real-time updates on Academy reforms, member demographics, and voting reforms to foster credibility.
- **Cultural Consultants:** Employ external advisors specializing in race, gender, and global culture to vet decisions with potential reputational implications.

Positions

Recording Academy Leadership

Harvey Mason Jr. – CEO, Recording Academy

Mason leads the Academy's day-to-day operations and is the chief spokesperson during crises. He is tasked with repairing the Academy's credibility while navigating pressure from members, artists, and the press.

Tammy Hurt – Chair of the Board, Recording Academy

As Board Chair, Hurt sets the Academy's governance agenda, leads strategic planning, and ensures member voices are represented in reform discussions. She is a key negotiator between leadership and the general membership.

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Ruby Marchand – Chief Awards & Industry Officer, Recording Academy

Marchand oversees the Grammy nomination, voting, and category review process. She must defend the integrity of the awards while confronting widespread accusations of favoritism.

Panos A. Panay – President, Recording Academy

Panay focuses on long-term initiatives including diversity, global outreach, and technological modernization. He is seen as a forward-thinker but must balance innovation with respect for tradition.

Valeisha Butterfield Jones – Former Co-President, Recording Academy

During her tenure, Butterfield Jones launched significant diversity and inclusion programs. Although no longer in the role, her influence and network give her leverage in shaping ongoing reforms.

National Trustees & Board Members

Leslie Ann Jones – Recording Academy Board of Trustees Member

An award-winning recording engineer, Jones champions representation for women and technical professionals in the Grammy process. She has been outspoken about expanding recognition for behind-the-scenes roles.

Terri Winston – Trustee, Recording Academy

Founder of the Women's Audio Mission, Winston pushes for gender parity in the technical and production categories. She has also lobbied for better outreach to underrepresented communities.

Jeff Greenberg – Trustee, Recording Academy

Owner of The Village Studios, Greenberg brings the perspective of a studio owner and veteran industry connector. He is focused on ensuring recording professionals have a fair say in Grammy reforms.

Maureen Droney – Managing Director, Producers & Engineers Wing, Recording Academy

Droney represents the producers, engineers, and mixers within the Academy. She works to make sure technical achievements receive proper visibility and respect in the awards process.

Chapter Leadership

Kati O'Toole – Executive Director, Recording Academy New York Chapter

O'Toole manages one of the largest Academy chapters, overseeing member engagement and representing local concerns in national decision-making. Her chapter often acts as a bellwether for reform sentiment.

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Laura Segura – Executive Director, Recording Academy Nashville Chapter

Segura oversees the Nashville chapter, which has significant influence due to country music's historical Grammy presence. She balances the chapter's traditional leanings with the Academy's diversity push.

Qiana Conley – Governor, Recording Academy Los Angeles Chapter

Conley is a respected music executive who brings a Los Angeles industry perspective to national board conversations. She advocates for equitable treatment across all genres.

Sean Glover – Governor, Recording Academy Atlanta Chapter

Glover represents one of the most influential hip-hop and R&B hubs in the country. He focuses on ensuring Southern artists and producers have a fair voice in Academy policy.

Tamara Coniff – Governor, Recording Academy Florida Chapter

Coniff is a former Billboard Editor-in-Chief turned executive, bringing both media and industry expertise to Grammy governance. She often mediates between public perception and internal decision-making.

Industry Executives with Grammy Influence

Sylvia Rhone – CEO, Epic Records

While not an Academy officer, Rhone's label has significant Grammy lobbying power. She is involved in behind-the-scenes negotiations over category placements and submissions.

Lyor Cohen – Global Head of Music, YouTube

Cohen's platform shapes music consumption and can influence Grammy exposure through streaming metrics. He is a powerful ally or opponent depending on Academy strategy.

Jimmy Jam – Former Chair, Recording Academy

A legendary producer and past Academy leader, Jimmy Jam brings historical perspective to current debates. He has the trust of many artist factions.

Christine Albert – CEO, The Albert Group

In addition to her past Academy chair role, Albert runs a strategic marketing firm. She often advises on Grammy PR strategy during times of crisis.

Portia Sabin – President, Music Business Association

Sabin advocates for fair industry practices and partners with the Academy on educational and networking programs. She is a bridge between independent music communities and Grammy leadership.

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Journalists & Critics

Jon Caramanica – Pop Music Critic, The New York Times

Caramanica is known for incisive, sometimes biting commentary on pop culture and the music industry. His critiques of the Grammys often shape the broader media narrative and can amplify calls for reform.

Jem Aswad – Deputy Music Editor, Variety

Aswad is a leading industry reporter who has broken major Grammy-related stories, from leaked ballots to internal disputes. His reporting holds the Academy accountable and often stirs public debate.

Gail Mitchell – Executive Director of R&B/Hip-Hop, Billboard

Mitchell is deeply embedded in the R&B and hip-hop communities, using her platform to spotlight systemic inequities. Her reporting and editorial work influence how these genres are perceived in the Grammy conversation.

Ann Powers – NPR Music Critic & Correspondent

Powers is respected for her thoughtful, historical approach to music criticism. She contextualizes Grammy controversies within larger cultural patterns, making her a key figure in framing reform debates.

Rob Sheffield – Senior Writer, Rolling Stone

Sheffield combines wit and pop culture fluency, reaching a wide audience with Grammy commentary. His coverage can sway fan sentiment and keep Grammy issues in the public eye

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