
GRADUATE BIOSCIENCES SOCIETY CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

As Amended Through 05/14/2019

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Constitution of the Graduate Biosciences Society at the University of Virginia

- (a) The following Constitution shall govern the operations of the Graduate Biosciences Society at the University of Virginia.

Article II. General

Section 2.01 Name

- (a) The Graduate Biosciences Society (hereafter “GBS”) shall be the name of the student organization at the University of Virginia that represents the students in all degree-granting programs outlined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a) (i).

Section 2.02 Statement of Purpose

- (a) The purpose of the GBS shall be to enrich the academic, professional, service, and social aspects of graduate student life for those who fall under its membership. The purpose of the Council shall be to represent and promote the interests of the GBS and to foster the relationship between the GBS members and the University administration, faculty, alumni, and students, as well as the outside bioscience community. The Council shall strive to create a fellowship amongst the bioscience disciplines represented by its membership as defined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a). The Council shall accomplish this fellowship by promoting engagement and collaboration between these disciplines through academic, professional, social, and service opportunities.

Section 2.03 Statement of Non-Discrimination

- (a) The GBS shall not restrict membership and/or activity by reason of age, citizenship, skin color, disability, medical condition, pregnancy, gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, race, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or military status. The GBS Council shall promote a welcoming and inclusive environment free from harassment, sexual or otherwise, and discrimination of any kind. All members of the GBS, as defined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a), are eligible to run for and serve on the GBS Executive Board and to volunteer for all other Council positions.

Article III. Council Structure

Section 3.01 Executive Board

- (a) Executive Board Structure
 - (i) *The GBS Council shall be led by the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.*
- (b) Executive Board Term and Term Limits
 - (i) *The GBS Executive Board shall be elected by the GBS members as outlined in the GBS Bylaws Article IV. Section 4.01.*

- (ii) Executive Board members shall serve for a term of one academic year.*
- (iii) The new term shall commence with the election of Executive Board members, at which time the tenure of the previous officers terminates.*
- (iv) An individual may only hold the same executive office for a total of two terms, whether consecutive or non-consecutive.*

Section 3.02 Committees

(a) General Committee Policies

- (i) Committee Chair(s) shall be a volunteer position. Committee Chair(s) shall be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.*
- (ii) In the event that there are more than two Committee Chair volunteers, only two shall be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.*
- (iii) The composition of any standing committee shall depend upon the number of individuals considered necessary to carry out the duties of that committee, with the exception that no more than two people can chair a committee.*
- (iv) Committee Chair(s) shall serve a term of one year.*

(b) Standing Committees

- (i) The GBS Council shall include the following Standing Committees: the Social, Service, and Outreach Committee, the Academic Committee, the Professional Committee, the Communications Committee, and the Budget Committee.*
- (ii) Each Standing Committee shall have one or two Chairs except for the Budget Committee which is chaired by only the GBS Treasurer.*

(c) Other Committees

- (i) The GBS may establish any other standing or special committees as deemed necessary by the GBS Council.*
- (ii) The establishment of a new committee must be agreed upon by majority vote of the Council.*

Section 3.03 Representatives

(a) General Representative Policies

- (i) Representatives shall be a volunteer position. Representatives shall be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.*
- (ii) In the event that there are more than two Representative volunteers (or more than one Inter-Organization volunteers for a given Organization), only two Representatives (or one Inter-Organization representative) shall be confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.*
- (iii) Representatives shall serve a term of one year.*

(b) Department Representatives

- (i) Each degree-granting program that falls under the membership of the GBS as defined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a) shall have one or two representative(s) on the Council.*

(c) First Year Representatives

(i) At most two representatives from the first year class in any degree-granting program that falls under the membership of the GBS defined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a) shall be confirmed at the beginning of the spring semester to act as voting representatives until the time of the Executive Board elections.

(d) Inter-Organization Representatives

(i) GBS shall have one representative dedicated to representing GBS in interactions with (and at the council meetings of) each of the following organizations:

- 1) Mulholland Society
- 2) Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Council (GSASC)
- 3) Graduate Professional Council (GPC) Representative
- 4) UVA Graduate Recruitment Initiative Team (GRIT).

(ii) The GBS president may add Inter-Organization Representative positions at their discretion.

Article IV. Voting

Section 4.01 Voting Meetings

(a) Voting meetings shall be open meetings and advertised at least one week prior to the meeting so that any member of the GBS at-large may attend, in addition to the Council.

(b) Voting meetings shall be held during the next scheduled meeting after any GBS Council member submits an impeachment statement in writing, or any member-at-large submits a proposal, constitution amendment proposal, bylaws amendment proposal, impeachment statement in writing.

Section 4.02 Voting Members

(a) The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall each have one vote, which shall reflect the best interests of the GBS as a whole.

(i) If an individual assumes the duties of a second executive position, that individual shall receive only one vote.

(ii) If there are Co-Presidents, each Co-President shall receive one vote.

(b) Each committee Chair shall have one vote. If there is only one Chair on a given committee, that Chair shall have one vote.

(c) Each degree-granting program shall have one vote, which shall reflect its interests and be cast by its respective representative(s). If the representative position is unfilled for any degree-granting program, that vote is forfeited. If there are two representatives for a given degree-granting program, only one representative vote shall count.

(d) Each of the two representatives from the first year class shall have one vote, which shall reflect the best interests of their class. If there is only one First Year Representative, that representative shall have one vote.

Section 4.03 Voting

- (a) A majority vote of voting members shall be required to pass any proposal or GBS Bylaws amendments presented at a given GBS voting meeting with the exception of Committee Chair or Representative confirmations (see Constitution Article II. Section 2.02 (a)), Constitution amendments (see Constitution Article V. Section 5.01 and Bylaws Article VI. Section 6.01), elections (see Constitution Article III. Section 3.05 and Bylaws Article IV. Section 4.01), and impeachments (see Constitution Article IV. Section 4.01 and Bylaws Article V. Section 5.01).
- (b) All GBS members present at an election meeting or a meeting at which constitution amendments are presented may cast a vote.

Section 4.04 Quorum definition

- (a) Quorum is required in order to make voting decisions.
- (b) Quorum shall consist of one more than half of the number of voting members on the Council.

Section 4.05 Elections

- (a) An individual shall be elected to the Executive Board by majority vote of all GBS members present at the annual election.
- (b) Election procedures are outlined in the GBS Bylaws Article IV. Section 4.01.

Article V. Impeachment Removal of Council Members

Section 5.01 Requirements for Impeachment

- (a) Any elected or confirmed member of the Council can be impeached and removed from office for gross and continued failure to perform the duties outlined in the GBS Constitution or the GBS Bylaws or for gross breach of the GBS Constitution or the GBS Bylaws.
- (b) Impeachment Procedures are outlined in the GBS Bylaws Article V. Section 5.01.

Article VI. Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws and Ratification

Section 6.01 Proposal of Amendments

- (a) Any GBS member can propose amendments to the GBS Constitution or the GBS Bylaws.
- (b) Amendment Procedures for the GBS Constitution or the GBS Bylaws are outlined in the GBS Bylaws Article VI. Section 6.01.

Section 6.02 By-laws

- (a) The Council shall have the right to develop By-laws to facilitate the implementation of the Constitution.
- (b) The By-laws may address issues not specifically covered by the Constitution.

Section 6.03 Ratification

- (a) The Constitution of the GBS at the University of Virginia must be ratified by three quarters of members present at a voting meeting.
- (b) The Constitution of the GBS at the University of Virginia shall take effect upon its ratification.
- (c) The ratification of this Constitution shall relinquish all previous Constitutions of the GBS at the University of Virginia.

Bylaws of the University of Virginia Graduate Biosciences Society

The following Bylaws shall govern the operations of the Graduate Biosciences Society at the University of Virginia.

Article I. General Policies

Section 1.01 Membership

(a) Society Membership:

(i) *Graduate students in the biomedical and biological sciences degree-granting programs offered under the heading of the University of Virginia School of Medicine, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and School of Engineering are members of the GBS (hereafter "GBS members")*

(b) Council Membership

(i) *The governing body, consisting of elected positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer (hereafter "Executive Board") and volunteer positions: Committee Chairs, Department Representatives, and First Year Representatives shall be called the GBS Council (hereafter "Council").*

Section 1.02 Meetings

(a) Council Meetings

(i) *The President has the right to call for meetings of the Council. The President shall set the Council meeting agenda. The President shall make reasonable public notice of the date, time, and location of all council meetings and distribute an agenda to the Council in advance. The Vice President and Secretary have limited rights to call meetings, as detailed in Article II. Section 2.01.*

(ii) Council Meeting Attendance Policy

1) Excused Absences

- a) The Council member must be prevented from attending the meeting because of illness, a family or personal emergency, extreme and unforeseen circumstances, a test or other official academic commitment, or participation as an athlete in a scheduled intercollegiate competition; social and extracurricular commitments shall not be considered legitimate reasons for absence.
- b) The Council member must notify the President of their absence at least twenty-four hours before the start of a meeting, or as soon as practically possible in the event of extreme and unforeseen circumstances.

2) Unexcused Absences:

- a) A Council member who is absent without meeting all of the criteria described in Article I. Section 1.02 (a) (ii) (1) shall receive an unexcused absence.
- b) A Council member may accumulate no more than two unexcused absences per semester.
- c) Consequences for Unexcused Absences

- i) A Council member who accumulates more than two unexcused absence in a single semester shall be considered to have resigned from the Council at which point the President may declare the seat vacant by resignation seek a replacement from the appropriate degree-granting program.*

(b) Committee Meetings

- (i) Committee Chairs may call and hold meetings of their respective committees. The Chair of the meeting shall set the meeting agenda. The Chair shall adjourn meetings.*

Section 1.03 Email and Social Media Communications

(a) Communications with GBS members

- (i) The Secretary shall update the GBS listserv (gbs-members@virginia.edu) with incoming GBS members' (i.e. 1st year graduate students in the degree granting programs outlined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a) (i)) virginia.edu email addresses and as needed throughout the year.*
- (ii) The President and Secretary shall be the privileged owners of the GBS listserv. The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be moderators of the GBS listserv.*

(b) Communications with the Council

- (i) The President shall update the GBS Council Collab site email list (gbscouncil@collab.its.virginia.edu) as needed (i.e. when Council members join or leave the Council). The president shall update the GBS Representatives listserv (gbsreps@virginia.edu) as needed.*

(c) Social Media Communications

- (i) The Communications Committee Chair shall maintain GBS social media accounts including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. In the event that there is no Communications Committee Chair, the Secretary shall assume social media responsibilities.*
- (ii) The Communications Committee Chair and the Secretary shall maintain a list of all social media account user names and passwords.*

Article II. Council Eligibility, Responsibilities, and Authority

Section 2.01 Executive Board Positions

(a) President

(i) Eligibility

- 1) The President must be a member of the GBS as defined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a) (i).
- 2) Two individuals may serve as Co-Presidents of the GBS.
- 3) The President is required to be a third year or above within three months of the election meeting at which they are elected.

(ii) Responsibilities

- 1) The President shall be responsible for the proper functioning of the Council in fulfilling its purposes as stated in the GBS Constitution Article I. Section 1.02 (a).

- 2) The President shall be the external spokesperson of the Council and represent the Council to university faculty, administration, alumni, and students, as well as the outside community.
- 3) The President shall represent the Council on any outside committees requiring a member of the GBS student body and have the authority to cast a vote on behalf of the Council.
 - a) The President shall be the Graduate Organization Representative for the Graduate Professional Council (GPC). In the case that the President is unable to attend a GPC meeting, the President shall select an alternative GBS Council Member to attend in their place. In the case that the President is unable to serve as the GPC Representative, the GBS Vice President shall serve as the GPC Representative, followed by the GBS Secretary, followed by the GBS Treasurer.
- 4) The President shall chair the Council and preside over its meetings.
- 5) The President shall determine a meeting schedule and a meeting place, in consultation with the Council.
- 6) The President shall be responsible for keeping the schedule of the Council, including the announcement of meetings.

(iii) Authority

- 1) The President shall be an ex officio member of all Council committees.
- 2) The President shall have the authority to form Council committees as the need arises.
- 3) The President shall appoint, in the event of a vacancy, a Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer, subject to the approval vote of two-thirds of the Council.
- 4) The President shall be a voting member of the Council.

(b) Vice President

(i) Eligibility

- 1) The Vice President must be a member of the GBS as defined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a) (i).
- 2) The Vice President is required to be a third year or above within three months of the election meeting at which they are elected.

(ii) Responsibilities

- 1) The Vice President shall assist the President by performing any and all additional executive duties that may be required.
- 2) The Vice President shall represent the GBS, along with the President, in any outside committees requiring a second voting member of GBS.
- 3) The Vice President shall be responsible for the GBS student leadership award, first year mentorship program, and GBS graduation.

(iii) Authority

- 1) The Vice President shall be an ex officio member of all council committees and preside over the organization of all Council committees.

- 2) The Vice President shall have the power to appoint committee members and chairs, in the event of such a vacancy, subject to the approval of the Council by majority vote.
 - 3) The Vice President shall assume the duties of President in their absence and become the President in the event of such a vacancy.
 - 4) The Vice President shall have the ability to call a meeting if the President is unwilling or unable to do so.
 - 5) The Vice President shall be a voting member of the Council.
- (c) Secretary
- (i) *Eligibility*
 - 1) The Secretary must be a member of the GBS as defined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a) (i).
 - (ii) *Responsibilities*
 - 1) The Secretary shall maintain and update the records of the Council.
 - 2) The Secretary shall keep attendance and minutes at all meetings and distribute the minutes to the Council members in a timely fashion.
 - 3) The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the GBS Google Calendar and any other event and resource sharing platforms updated.
 - (iii) *Authority*
 - 1) The Secretary shall have the ability to call a meeting with consent from 25% of the Council.
 - 2) The Secretary shall assume the duties of the President in the event of a simultaneous absence of the President and Vice President and become the President in the event of such a simultaneous vacancy.
 - 3) The Secretary shall be a voting member of the Council.
- (d) Treasurer
- (i) *Eligibility*
 - 1) The Treasurer must be a member of the GBS as defined in the GBS Bylaws Article I. Section 1.01 (a) (i).
 - (ii) *Responsibilities*
 - 1) The Treasurer shall preside over the Budget committee.
 - 2) The Treasurer shall, in conjunction with sponsors where appropriate, maintain all financial records of the Council and report the current financial status at all meetings.
 - 3) The Treasurer shall be responsible for the disbursement of funds in payment of legitimate debts incurred by the Council, including the reimbursement of Council members who have paid money in advance for any budget-approved expenses.
 - 4) The Treasurer shall be responsible for coordinating requests for funding from outside sources.
 - 5) The Treasurer shall request increases in the GBS budget.

- 6) The Treasurer shall manage GBS slush funds & money raised by GBS bake sales or other GBS fundraising events

(iii) Authority

- 1) The Treasurer shall assume the duties of President in the event of a simultaneous absence of President, Vice President, and Secretary, and become the President in the event of such a simultaneous vacancy.
- 2) The Treasurer shall be a voting member of the Council.

Section 2.02 Committees

(a) General Committee Policies

- (i) All committees shall be under the advisory of the President.*
- (ii) All events are subject to the Council approval by majority vote.*

(b) Standing Committees

(i) The Social, Service & Outreach Committee

- 1) The SS&O Committee shall develop plans for volunteering efforts and social events that support the purpose of the GBS as outlined in the GBS Constitution Article I. Section 1.02 (a) that shall take place throughout the year.
- 2) The SS&O Committee shall consult with the President and Treasurer when developing these plans.

(ii) The Academic Committee

- 1) The Academic committee is responsible for planning academic events including, but not limited to, the annual Spring Symposium.

(iii) The Professional Committee

- 1) The Professional committee is responsible for planning professional events including, but not limited to, Career Panels, and other potential events such as Webinars and the NIH Career day.

(iv) Communications Committee

- 1) The Communications Committee is responsible for maintaining and updating the GBS website and social media accounts including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

(v) Budget Committee

- 1) The Budget Committee shall be responsible for proposing the annual budget to the Council.
- 2) The Budget Committee shall make recommendations and advise should budget changes including, but not limited to, adding or removing events, altering the amount spent on given events, or fundraising, be required or requested.

Section 2.03 Department and First Year Representatives:

- (a) Department and First Year representatives shall be the liaison between the GBS and their Department or First Year class, respectively. This includes, but is not limited to, informing the GBS Council of Department-specific events of general interest to the GBS and issues affecting students within their Department or First Year class.

Section 2.04 Inter-Organization Representatives

- (a) Inter-Organization Representatives shall be required to be GBS members as well as a member of the organization in which they are representing the GBS.
- (b) All Inter-Organization Representatives of the GBS shall attend the Council meetings of both the GBS and the respective organization for which they serve as a representative. Each Graduate Organization Representative must give an official report of updates from their other Council meeting.
- (c) The Mulholland Representative shall establish communication with the Mulholland Honor Society (hereafter "Honor") and University Judiciary Committee (hereafter "UJC") representatives to ensure adequate representation of the Biomedical Science degree-granting programs in the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Honor and UJC.

Article III. Budget and Appropriations

Section 3.01 Dues

- (a) There shall be no membership dues.

Section 3.02 Sources of Funding

- (a) Funds may be acquired independently through fundraisers held by the GBS Council (hereafter "GBS Slush Fund"). University of Virginia affiliated offices, groups, and organizations may allocate portions of their budget for use by the GBS Council (hereafter "GBS Account"). These funds shall be subject to restrictions stipulated by the sponsors.

Section 3.03 Beneficiary

- (a) In the event that the GBS account (separate of the GBS Slush Fund) remains inactive for twelve consecutive months or the organization is dissolved, the following beneficiary shall receive the balance of the organization's funds:

(i) Beneficiary Name: University of Virginia School of Medicine Graduate Programs Office

Beneficiary Address: 1102 Jordan Hall Box 800738

Beneficiary Contact: Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies

Phone: 434-924-2181

In the event the beneficiary receives funds, the funds should be used for activities consistent with the purpose of the Council.

Article IV. Elections

Section 4.01 Election Procedures

- (a) The GBS President shall make reasonable public notice of the date, time, and location of the council meeting at which elections shall take place.
- (b) After the announcement of an Elections Meeting, the GBS President shall solicit bids from individuals who wish to run for each of the Executive Board positions and present the candidates to GBS members present at the election meeting.

- (c) At the election meeting, each candidate shall be allowed to present their qualifications to the GBS members present at the election meeting, after which a vote moderated by the President shall proceed.
- (d) Candidates who receive a majority vote of approval of all GBS members present at the election meeting shall be deemed elected.
- (e) In the event that more than one candidate runs for the Executive Board, the voting procedure shall proceed as follows:
 - (i) *All candidates for a given position shall be asked to leave the room.*
 - (ii) *Individually, candidates shall return to the room to present their qualifications and take part in a brief Q&A, after which they shall leave the room.*
 - (iii) *The winner will be determined by a majority vote of GBS members present at the election meeting.*
 - (iv) *If three or more candidates are nominated for the same position and no candidate receives a majority vote, a run-off vote shall take place between the top two candidates.*
- (f) In the case of conflict with an academic event such as a course/module, required seminar, or research/scholar's day or department retreat, any member of the GBS at-large may vote by emailing the GBS Secretary within 2 (two) hours of the election.
- (g) In the event of a simultaneous vacancy of the entire executive board, a special election shall be held and shall follow the same procedure as the annual elections.

Article V. Impeachment

Section 5.01 Impeachment Procedures

- (a) A Council Member may initiate impeachment by presenting, in writing, the case against the Council Member meeting the requirements for impeachment to the President and the Secretary.
- (b) Within one week of receiving the written impeachment statement, the President shall move to impeach said individual from their position.
- (c) The GBS Council shall have the power to impeach a member of the GBS Council by approving a written statement of charges by a three-quarters vote. A two-thirds vote of the Executive Board is required for impeachment.
- (d) The impeached individual must be notified of the impeachment, in writing, within one week of the impeachment vote and shall be allowed to prepare and present a defense of their actions at the next scheduled GBS Council meeting.
- (e) After a full hearing of the charges, or lack thereof in the case that the impeached individual declines or fails to present a defense, a three-quarters vote of the GBS Council shall be necessary to vacate the office of the impeached member.
- (f) Impeached members shall have no vote in the removal proceedings.

Article VI. Amendment and Ratification

Section 6.01 Constitution Amendments

- (a) Amendments should be sent in writing to the Secretary ten (10) days prior to the scheduled voting meeting.
- (b) Amendments must be made public for all GBS members seven (7) days prior to the scheduled vote.
- (c) A copy of the amendments shall be recorded in the meeting minutes so that all GBS members are aware of amendment proposals.
- (d) The Secretary may make changes only to the general formatting and grammar of the proposed amendments prior to its presentation at the voting meeting.
- (e) The Executive Board does not have the authority to change the language (choice of words) or intent of the proposed amendment.

Section 6.02 Bylaws Amendments

- (a) Proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be made in writing at least a week prior to a scheduled meeting.
- (b) Upon submission of a proposed amendment, the President or the Secretary shall circulate the amendment to the Council to allow for comments.
- (c) The Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members present or casting their vote by email to the President or the Secretary before the commencement of a vote.
- (d) The Bylaws of the GBS at the University of Virginia shall take effect upon its ratification.
- (e) The ratification of these Bylaws shall relinquish all previous Bylaws of the GBS at the University of Virginia.