



BIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

We, the graduate students of the Drexel University Department of Biology, through the establishment of this Constitution on the 1st day of June 2005, do hereby empower the officers of the Biology Graduate Student Association to work on our behalf in order to encourage a constructive relationship between the students, faculty, staff and administration of the department of Biology at Drexel University; to represent the diverse interests and needs of graduate students within the department and to the Drexel community; to provide a channel for the communication of graduate student ideas; and to provide services that will benefit and protect the interests of Drexel's graduate students in the Department of Biology.

ARTICLE I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Drexel University Department of Biology Graduate Student Association, hereinafter referred to as the BGSA.

ARTICLE II: Object

The Association will:

1. Provide a forum for information exchange between graduate students and faculty and administration, such as but not limited to, issues regarding course development, teaching and research assistant responsibilities, departmental research environment and activities, and expectations for degree fulfillment.
2. Encourage an active social environment among existing, new, and prospective graduate students.
3. Elevate the academic experience for both graduate and undergraduate students in the Biology Department, advance the research environment, and set the stage for high-quality graduate student and faculty recruitment.

ARTICLE III: Membership

Membership in BGSA is open to all full- and part-time graduate students in the Department of Biology regardless of degree program, race, religion, national origin,

gender, sexual orientation, or ability as long as they are enrolled at the university. Attendance at one general meeting or participation in a scheduled event or election per year is required to be considered active. Active Members will be used to determine quorum and total active membership for voting procedures.

Undergraduate students, research technicians, staff, and faculty will be encouraged to participate in meetings and activities, but will not receive privileges of membership.

ARTICLE IV: Students Rights

1. All graduate students that are current members of the BGSA have the right to vote in the BGSA elections and referendums.
2. All graduate students have the right to speak and be heard at the General Meetings.
3. All graduate students have the right to serve on BGSA committees.
4. All graduate students have the right to reasonable access to official BGSA information and records. This means, but not limited to, official meeting records and candidate applications for election or appointment.
5. All graduate students have the rights and responsibilities defined in the University's Student Handbook and these rights cannot be impeded by the BGSA.

ARTICLE V: Officers

The offices of President, Vice President, and Treasurer are reserved for full-time graduate students. Other offices and positions may be held by any graduate student in the Department of Biology.

Terms will be yearly and mirror the academic calendar beginning in the fall term.

All offices must be actively fulfilled at all times. In the event that the President, Vice President, or Treasurer amends his or her status from full-time to part-time during the term or if any officer leaves the Department or University, the vacant office will be filled by open election. If two people are running for the Social Chair and/or the Academic Chair positions, they can propose splitting the position. A majority vote among graduate students would be needed to approve this split, upon which the two students would be co-chairs.

Elections

1. Elections will be by anonymous ballot and will occur in the following order, allowing one person to run for multiple offices based on outcome of each election: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Social Chair, Academic Chair and Service Chair.
2. Elections will take place during the final meeting of the Spring term, as scheduled by the acting Executive Board.

3. Election meetings will be considered mandatory and must be scheduled at such a time and location as to guarantee election by popular vote by two-thirds quorum of Active membership at meeting or by absentee vote to Secretary prior to meeting.
4. A member wishing to run for an office must submit his or her name to the Executive Board no later than one week prior to the election, and must state the following: name, degree status, intended graduation date, all offices of interest, and a short summary to the specifications of the Executive Board generally stating why the individual is interested and a suitable candidate for a preferred office.
5. All candidates who want to be considered for an Executive Board Office must be in good academic standing with the University during the term in which elections are held and must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Each candidate must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average.
 - b. Each candidate must be a full-time graduate student
 - c. Each candidate may not have a standing judicial sanction.Eligibility will be verified by the Advisor in consultation with the Department Head.

President

1. The President shall be the official representative of the Biology graduate student body.
2. The President will be responsible for organizing and overseeing both General and Executive Board meetings.
3. He or she will directly interact with the Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Social Chair, and Academic Chair to fulfill the obligations of the Executive Board to the general membership.
4. He or she will be responsible for interaction with the University. The President will also establish and dissolve ad hoc committees to meet the changing needs and goals of the Association.

Vice President

1. The primary responsibility of the Vice President will be to act as the Association liaison to the Faculty and Staff of the Department of Biology.
2. The Vice President will be a member on the Graduate Committee, thus being required to attend all of their meetings or send a representative in his or her place.
3. The Vice President will also fulfill all duties in the absence of the President.

Treasurer

1. The Treasurer will be fully responsible for organizing the financial resources of the organization, allocating funds, and maintaining a workable budget which is to be approved by the Executive Board.

2. As a result of these responsibilities, the Treasurer will work closely with the President, the Faculty Advisor, and the Office of Campus Activities.

Secretary

1. The Secretary will be responsible for organized information exchange within the organization, such as but not limited to, recording and maintaining minutes of meetings, maintaining an updated membership roster, contact information, web site, and list-serve.
2. The Secretary will schedule rooms as needed, post meeting times and locations, and maintain an attendance record and minutes of all meetings.
3. The Secretary will be responsible for determining active membership and a two-thirds quorum for general elections and will receive absentee ballots and excuses for inability to attend the mandatory events.

Social Chair

1. The Social Chair will organize and advertise social events for Members on a regular basis.
2. The activities of the Association will reflect the diverse backgrounds and interests of its Members. No social events will be considered mandatory.

Academic Chair

1. The Academic Chair will organize and advertise activities to increase the academic and research-oriented experience in the Department of Biology. Academic activities may include regular journal clubs, tutoring services for undergraduates, seminars, exhibitions, bulletin board displays, and departmental events.
2. The Academic Chair will be responsible for disseminating information on learning opportunities within and outside of the Department and University that may be of interest to Members.
3. The Academic Chair will oversee the activities of the Standing Committees.

Service Chair

1. The Service Chair will organize and advertise service events for Members on a regular basis.
2. These events may focus on service within or outside the Drexel community.

ARTICLE VI: Advisors

A full-time tenure track or tenure Faculty Advisor must be in place at all times. The Advisor will be expected to attend Executive Board meetings and will be invited to attend all other events. A candidate for Advisor must display interest in the position and be chosen by the Executive Board. The term of Advisor will not be limited by academic year and the position will only be filled when necessary by resignation or removal by the

Executive Board. The BGSA may appoint secondary advisors, if necessary, from within the Department of Biology to assist the Faculty Advisor. The secondary advisor must be full-time faculty or staff of the department.

ARTICLE VII: Executive Board

The primary function of the BGSA Executive Board shall be to ensure that the BGSA functions properly and effectively. Executive Board will consist of the Faculty Advisor, President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Social Chair, and Academic Chair. The Executive Board will be responsible for addressing the demands, concerns, and interests of Members. The Executive Board will determine meeting agendas, schedule all meetings and events, and determine if a particular event should be considered mandatory. Mandatory status, as determined by the Executive Board, will be reserved for meetings or events where full participation is considered essential for the future of the organization, such as elections. Consequences for not participating in mandatory events will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Board and may include impeachment proceedings, suspension from active membership, suspension from an event, or other such measures.

ARTICLE VIII: Standing Committees

Standing committees will be available to focus activities, both social and academic, on specified disciplines within the diverse interests of the Department of Biology. The standing committees will include: Nutrition, Molecular/Cell Biology, and Environmental Science

A Member is not limited to participation with only one committee, but may be involved in any committee of interest. Standing Committees will consist of Members, non-members, and a Committee Chair that will report to the Academic Chair. The Committee Chair will be elected by the Committee Members under the direction of the Academic Chair.

ARTICLE IX: Meetings

1. General meetings will not be mandatory, while Executive meetings and elections will be considered mandatory.
2. All general meetings of the BGSA are open to all graduate students. All those in attendance shall be permitted to debate.
3. All Officers of the BGSA shall be required to attend all BGSA meetings or send a representative in his or her place. Attendance will be taken at each meeting.
4. Any Active Member of the BGSA may initiate legislation.
5. All legislation and resolutions, within the limitations of this Constitution, shall be final and binding and may only be amended by approval of the Executive Board

- and a two-thirds vote of the total BGSA membership. If necessary, absentee ballots may be submitted to the Secretary by email prior to the scheduled meeting.
6. There will be at least one 20 minute period during each General Meeting to allow students to express their ideas and concerns to the BGSA.

ARTICLE X: Impeachment

Upon the initiation of the impeachment process, the Executive Board shall inform the respondent of the impeachment at least five calendar days before the hearing. At this time all evidence should be available to the respondent upon request, for the formulation of their defense. The impeachment hearing will take place at the next scheduled General Meeting. Impeachment will be accomplished by a popular vote by a two-thirds quorum of Active Members at meeting or by absentee vote to Secretary prior to meeting.

ARTICLE XI: Vacant Positions

1. A vacant position shall be made public by the Executive Board through meetings, advertisements, etc. no more than one week after the position becomes vacant.
2. Vacant positions shall be filled by using the appointment process or the elections process.
3. All candidates will be interviewed by the Executive Board and attend an information session.
4. All candidates will be presented to the Membership for election by plurality vote.
5. If the election process is chosen, all regular elections procedures shall be employed.

ARTICLE XII: Alternatives and Representatives

1. A substitute is someone who is sent to a single meeting by a standing officer who is unable to attend that meeting. This person may not vote or introduce legislation. He/She is there solely to give and receive information.
2. A representative is someone who is appointed by a standing officer when he/she cannot attend at least two Executive Board Meetings in a row. The representative will have all the rights and responsibilities of the officer he/she is representing that pertain to Executive Board meetings once a memo stating this intention from the original officer is received by the Secretary. This is a temporary appointment and cannot last for more than one term. An approval from the Executive Board and Faculty Advisor is necessary to extend this appointment.

ARTICLE XIII: Ratification

Ratification of this Constitution will be accomplished by a majority vote by Active Membership.

ARTICLE XIV: Amendments

Proposed amendments must be submitted to Executive Board at least two weeks before discussion at General Meeting. Amendments will be adopted by a majority vote of Active Members at meeting or by absentee vote to Secretary prior to meeting.

ARTICLE XV: Dissolution

Dissolution of the Organization may be accomplished by order of the Office of Campus Activities or voluntarily by a popular vote by a majority vote of Active Members at meeting or by absentee vote to Secretary prior to meeting.