

CONSTITUTION OF BIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETY  
OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

**Article I- Name of Organization and Logo**

***Section 1: Name***

The name of this organization shall be the Biology Graduate Student Society hereafter referred to as BGSS.

***Section 2: Logo***

The official logo for The Biology Graduate Student Society is the primary University of Mississippi institutional logo with the words “Biology Graduate Student Society”.

**Article II- Purpose**

***Section 1: General Purpose***

The purpose of the Biology Graduate Student Society is to serve as the representative organization and voice of the graduate student body of the Department of Biology, College of Liberal Arts, at the University of Mississippi.

***Section 2: Focus***

In an attempt to support and improve all aspects of graduate education and graduate life in the Department of Biology and at the University of Mississippi, the Biology Graduate Student Society will consider any matter that affects Department of Biology Graduate Students.

***Section 3: Development***

This organization shall provide opportunities for professional development and foster social interactions necessary for the development of graduate students in the Department of Biology.

**Article III- Membership**

***Section 1: Eligibility for Membership***

All graduate students in good academic standing with the Department of Biology are eligible to become a member of the Biology Graduate Student Society. Undergraduate students may also be eligible for membership, but must be majoring in biology, in good academic standing, obtain sponsorship from a graduate student member, and also must have plans to enroll in graduate school to study biology or a related field. The Biology Graduate Student Society or its members shall not exclude any person on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, or sex.

***Section 2: Requirements for Membership***

Members are required to attend at least one meeting per semester.

**Article IV- Officers**

***Section 1: Officer Qualifications***

Any graduate student in good academic standing in the Department of Biology is eligible for candidacy to officer positions within the Biology Graduate Student Society.

***Section 2: Elected Officers***

The executive committee of the Biology Graduate Student Society consists of the president, vice-president, and treasurer.

Clause A: The outgoing executive committee shall pass all prior information and knowledge of positions and the society's activities to the incoming executive committee.

***Section 3: Duties of Officers***

All officers will have the term of one academic year (August-July). All officers of the Biology Graduate Student Society shall answer to and be responsible to the Biology Graduate Student Society at all times.

Clause A: The president shall schedule and conduct regular meetings. This includes preparation of an agenda, speaker, and/or event. The president is responsible for direct communications of the society to proper officials and coordination of society activities (such as fundraising, professional development, trips, events, and social activities). The president may designate a committee and/or chairperson at any time for necessary purposes. Additional responsibilities include maintaining membership records, preparing announcements and communications, keeping meeting minutes and documentation, informing members of relevant news and events, and maintaining the Biology Graduate Student Society website.

Clause B: The duties of the vice-president include any of those performed by the president (if requested) and may act as the president in his or her absence. Furthermore, it is his or her responsibility to communicate with the GSC representative about GSC meetings.

Clause C: The duties of the treasurer include maintaining an account for the society, maintenance of financial records, and management of all monetary issues, including all t-shirt sales.

Clause D: Graduate Student Council hereafter referred to as GSC. The duties of GSC representatives are at least one GSC representative will attend all GSC Representative meetings. They will report relevant information on news and events to Biology Student Members at the scheduled meetings, as well as contacting the executive committee concerning pressing matters. They will obtain opinions and votes as needed on important information prior to the vote at GSC meeting.

Clause E: Any member of the executive committee may also serve as the GSC representative

## **Article IV- Elections**

### ***Section 1: Nomination Process***

A meeting shall be held before the election to discuss pertinent information needed. If the election is related to the biology council, the BCGR shall coordinate a meeting time with the executive committee and gather the information needed for the vote.

Any graduate member can nominate oneself or another member in good standing for officer positions. Nominations and elections will be held early in the fall semester. Nominations will take place over a span of one week before elections will begin.

### ***Section 2: Election***

All votes shall be conducted by paper ballot with a no preference option. If the vote is related to biology council, the ballots shall be structured similar to the biology council ballots. The Biology Graduate Student Society faculty advisor will tally the votes. Any individual may serve multiple terms if re-elected at subsequent elections. Elections will take place every fall semester.

Clause A: Proxy or absentee votes must be written by the student who cannot partake in the vote. This can either be written on paper or by email but not by personal communication and should be submitted to the faculty advisor.

Clause B: If a tie is to occur during elections, the faculty advisor will serve as an additional vote to decide the election. The results of this tie and the faculty advisors vote are to remain confidential.

Clause C: In the case of any option receives an unacceptable vote(s), the unacceptable vote(s) shall be counted and noted on the BCGR votes.

## **Article VI- Advisor**

### ***Section 1: Selection***

Faculty Advisor will be invited to serve for the period of 1 year with no upper limit on number of years of service. The faculty advisor must be a faculty member in the Department of Biology with an active interest in graduate student affairs.

### ***Section 2: Duties***

The faculty advisor is responsible for signing all necessary documentation, being available as a professional counselor for members of the society, providing current information on professional fields, and inviting relevant speakers to society meetings.

## **Article VII- Meetings**

### ***Section 1: Regular Meetings***

There will be one required meeting each semester and additional meetings will be scheduled as needed. Members will be notified of each meeting via e-mail. All meetings will be held in a designated room in Shoemaker Hall, unless otherwise notified.

### **Article VIII- Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action**

The Biology Graduate Student Society or its members shall not exclude any person on the basis of race, creed, sexual orientation, religion, color, national origin, or sex.

### **Article IX- Amendments**

#### ***Section 1: Ratification***

The constitution may be amended through addition, deletion, or revision by a simple majority vote of a quorum. Amendments must be introduced at a regular meeting in writing. Voting on that amendment will take place at the next meeting, which may be specially scheduled in order to vote on that amendment, at least 3 business days later.

#### ***Section 2: Submittal to Office of the Dean of Students***

Any changes made to this constitution must be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Students within 2 weeks.

### **Article X- Quorum**

#### ***Section 1: Quorum Requirements***

Votes brought to the members of the Biology Graduate Student Society do not require a quorum in order for the vote to be valid. Issues requiring members to vote must be sent to members through email by an officer. Members shall cast their votes by sending an email message to the corresponding officer. Votes shall be pass by a simple majority (50% or more) of resident members.

Clause A: Resident members are members who are present on-campus on a regular basis. The number of resident members in the society will be determined by the executive committee at the beginning of every fall semester.

### **Article XI- By-Laws**

#### ***Section 1: By-Law Vote***

A by-law may be past at any regular business meeting of the organization by majority vote of those in attendance provided a quorum is present.

### **Article XII- Biology Student Society Funds**

#### ***Section 1: Fund regulations***

The funds of the Biology Graduate Student Society will be deposited with the university banking services and these will be audited yearly, preferably at the time a new treasurer is installed.

BYLAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF  
THE BIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT SOCIETY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

**Article I- Removal of Officers**

***Section 1: Removal Proceedings***

Removal of an officer shall require formal removal proceedings resulting in a vote of two-thirds of the Biology Graduate Student Society members in favor of removal. A quorum must be met for this vote. Removal proceedings shall occur in the following steps:

1. A written complaint must be presented to the president, except in the case where the complaint is against the president, in which case the complaint must be presented to the president or vice-president.
2. An Ad Hoc Committee of 5 members appointed by the Biology Graduate Student Society faculty advisor shall conduct inquiries regarding the complaint and, within two weeks, recommend to the executive committee, except for the officer against whom the complaint was filed, either 1) to present the complaint and the committee's findings to the Biology Graduate Student Society members at a scheduled meeting, or 2) to dismiss it and enter it into the records in accordance with the clauses below.
3. Upon receipt of the investigating committee's recommendation the executive committee must act. If the reporting committee, by a simple majority decision, recommends a vote by the Biology Graduate Student Society members then the matter must be placed on the agenda of the next meeting. If the reporting committee, by simple majority decision, recommends dismissal of the complaint then the executive committee must vote on whether to accept the committee's recommendation or to proceed with bringing the removal and the committee's findings before the Biology Graduate Student Society. If the investigating committee or executive committee recommends the matter proceed to The Biology Graduate Student Society members, the matter must be placed on the agenda of the next meeting.

4. Upon consideration of the removal complaint, if placed on the agenda, a two-thirds vote of the Biology Graduate Student Society members shall be required. A quorum must be met.

Clause A: Unless the person or persons who presented the complaint publicly identify themselves, all concerned in the handling of the complaint must keep the identity of those who brought the complaint confidential.

Clause B: If the complaint is dismissed, all documentation and the identity of the Officer against whom the complaint was filed must be kept confidential. The only records kept in this case will be that a complaint was filed and the appropriate steps were followed, resulting in dismissal of the complaint.

Clause C: The faculty advisor shall keep a permanent file of all the complaints and any documentation associated with the complaints.

## **Article II- Replacement of Resigned Officers**

### ***Section 1: Replacement Proceedings***

If an elected officer can no longer perform their duties for any reason, replacement of the officer should proceed as follows:

1. Replacement of president: Any current officer may nominate themselves for the vacant position of president. If a current officer declines the vacant position a new officer will be elected by simple majority vote of members.
2. Replacement of vice-president, treasurer, biology council graduate representative, or GSC representative: A new officer will be elected by simple majority vote of members.

### ***Section 2: Absent officer for meetings***

If any Biology Graduate Student Society officer cannot attend any meeting, for any reason, they will receive an email of the meeting agenda and minutes. Missing officers must state their dissent with any decisions made within three days of the scheduled meeting; after three days, lack of notification will be taken as consent to any and all decisions made in their absence.