**Biomedical Sciences Graduate Student Association Constitution**

***Article I – Organization Name***

The name of the organization shall be the “Biomedical Sciences Graduate Student Association” at the Florida State University (FSU) College of Medicine (COM) or “Biomed SGSA.”

***Article II – Purpose***

The FSU COM Biomed SGSA is an organization of students, post-doctoral professionals, and faculty/staff that seeks to provide a forum for professional development in which members can gain invaluable knowledge to advance their scientific careers. We provide educational workshops, seminars by leading scientists, career development opportunities, and an open environment for members to present ideas and receive feedback from fellow scholars. We believe that outreach and the sharing of ideas among members and colleagues will elicit positive collaborations and communication among scientists in present and future endeavors. Creating positive, long-lasting, working relationships and connections among fellow researchers allows us to broaden our impact and is vital to our future careers in science.

All events, affairs, and aspects of the Biomed SGSA will be in direct compliance with University, local, state, and federal laws.

***Article III – Membership***

Section 1: Membership Statement

Membership is open to all higher education students, post-doctoral professionals, faculty, and staff affiliated with FSU.

The Biomed SGSA will comply with the rules enforced by the University: “No hazing or discrimination will be used as a condition of membership in this organization. Information regarding hazing can be found at <http://hazing.fsu.edu>. This organization agrees to adhere to the University non-discrimination statement: No university student may be denied membership on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, veterans’ or marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other protected group status.”

Section 2: Recruitment

The Biomed SGSA accepts new members at any time throughout the year.

New graduate students in the Biomedical Sciences Department (and those from outside departments (e.g. Neuroscience) functioning in the Biomedical Sciences Department) are highly encouraged to join upon entering the program.

Section 3: Membership Cancelation or Revocation

Members requesting a membership cancelation should notify the President and/or Advisor in writing and also cancel their membership on Nole Central.

Membership will be immediately revoked if the student does not comply with University, local, state, and federal laws. The revoked member will be contacted in writing within 72 hours.

Membership may also be revoked by a simple majority vote of the leadership with support of the Faculty Advisor. Revocation of membership will be enforced for a duration of five (5) years.

Section 4: Revocation Appeal Process

A revoked member has seven (7) calendar days from the date of receiving the revocation letter to notify the President and request to plead his/her case to the organization. Reinstatement of the revoked member must be approved by an anonymous, majority vote of the members. The member will be notified of the final decision within 24 hours of the vote.

***Article IV – Officers***

Section 1: Eligibility

All officers of the Biomed SGSA must be graduate students functioning in the Department of Biomedical Sciences and maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0. If an officer’s grade point average falls below 3.0 (academic probation), his/her position will be automatically revoked and the position will be filled as outlined in Article VI, Section 2.

Section 2: Titles and Duties

There will be a total of six (6) elected student officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Social Media Coordinator, and Outreach Coordinator.

Students representing the Biomedical Sciences Department or Biomedical PhD students on other FSU COM organizational boards (e.g. Medical School Council) are welcome to participate as honorary members of Biomed SGSA leadership.

All officers are allowed to vote.

It is the responsibility of all outgoing officers to train new, incoming officers.

President (required):

1. Supervise activities of the RSO (Registered Student Organization).
2. Call meetings to order.
3. Approve all documents (including, but not limited to, finances, publications, logos, flyers, T-shirts) prior to duplication and distribution.
4. Coordinate all Biomed SGSA Committees.
5. Enforce the constitution.
6. Assign projects/duties as appropriate.
7. Keep meetings under order.
8. Ensure that ballots in all elections (except presidential elections) are counted accurately in conjunction with the Vice President.

Vice President (required):

1. Assist the President.
2. Fulfill the duties of the President when the President is absent.
3. Count election ballots in conjunction with the President or Secretary.

Treasurer (required):

1. Keep accurate records of funds.
2. Provide financial and budget records/updates.
3. Organize fundraising activities.
4. Submit Purchase Orders for planned events.
5. Work with University faculty and staff to secure funding and apply for additional funds.
6. Work with Outreach Coordinator to secure funding and/or donation requests for outreach activities.

Secretary (optional):

1. Notify members of any updates.
2. Keep accurate records (minutes) of all meetings.
3. Maintain accurate roster (including yearly updates) and database with members’ contact information.
4. Contact new students each academic year to join the organization and Nole Central.
5. Keep track of all documents and forms.
6. Assist the Vice President in counting presidential election ballots.
7. Approve all publications, shirts, flyers, etc. prior to duplication and distribution and ensure that they comply with University guidelines.

Social Media Coordinator (optional):

1. Keep Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc. feeds up to date (e.g. announcing events, news etc.)
2. Maintain RSO Google account (biomedsgsa@gmail.com).
3. Respond to member tweets, posts, emails etc. as needed.
4. Maintain and provide oversight of Biomed SGSA websites (Nole Central, department webpages, etc.)
5. Approve all publications prior to duplication and distribution on social media.
6. Organize and manage social events for the RSO.
7. Work with the Biomed SGSA leadership, Medical School Council, faculty/staff, and/or other groups to coordinate social and/or networking opportunities and events for the Biomed SGSA.

Outreach Coordinator (optional):

1. Coordinate all Biomed SGSA community outreach events.
2. Create outreach information (web designs, flyers, etc.) to be approved by the Secretary.
3. Solicit volunteers for outreach events but, if none can be found, to be prepared to facilitate the event by himself/herself.
4. Work with Treasurer to secure funding and/or donation requests.

***Article V – Selection of Officers***

Section 1: Nomination Process

All Biomed SGSA members in good standing have the right to nominate a candidate(s) for the officer position(s), including himself/herself. All nominations must be submitted to the President in writing at least 48 hours prior to the election. Only graduate students functioning within the Department of Biomedical Sciences are eligible to be nominated per Article IV, Section 1.

Section 2: Election Process

Elections will be held during the Fall semester at a time amenable to COM regulations and Student Government Association (SGA) requirements.

Information regarding the candidates and election proceedings (including rules and format of the election) will be sent out at least 24 hours prior to a vote available to the membership.

Candidates have the right to address the membership (either electronically or in person) to lobby support under SGA guidelines. The leadership will determine the proper format for candidates to express this right in advance of the election.

The election may take place electronically or by an anonymous vote of the assembly present at a General Body Meeting. Candidates will be successfully elected to office by a majority vote available to the membership.

If not seeking another term, the outgoing President and Vice President will ensure that ballots are counted accurately. In the event that he/she has chosen to run for another term, the individual must recuse himself/herself and another outgoing member of leadership not seeking office will count the ballots with the Faculty Advisor.

In the case of a tie, the incumbent President and Faculty Advisor will break the tie, or in case of a tie in a presidential election, the incumbent Vice President and Faculty Advisor will break the tie.

The membership will be notified of the results of the election within 48 hours of the closing of the polls.

Section 3: Eligibility to Vote

The Faculty Advisor and all members in good standing are eligible to vote once per election.

Section 4: Terms in Office

The office shall be held for one year as defined by the COM and/or SGA.

Newly-elected officers shall assume their duties immediately following the announcement of election results.

***Article VI – Officer Vacancies***

Section 1: Required Positions

In order for the organization to remain active, the Faculty Advisor, President, Vice President, and Treasurer positions must be filled at all times. Other positions may be filled as needed.

Section 2: Resignation or Removal from Office

An officer may choose to resign from his/her position at any time. All resignations must be submitted in writing to the Faculty Advisor and President. Before a resignation is finalized, the officer is obligated to turn in all relevant Biomed SGSA documents in their possession as well as finish out any reasonable functions previously delegated to them (e.g. event coordinating, Purchase Order completion, etc.).

Should an officer fail to maintain the appropriate grade point average (3.0 or above) or if there is confirmed evidence of misconduct against University, local, state, or federal laws, they will be removed from office. An individual bringing forth or providing truthful evidence of office misconduct will be protected from retaliation and adverse action that may or may not occur as a result of his/her actions in this matter.

An officer may also be removed from office with just cause by an anonymous, majority vote of the membership with the support of the academic advisor.

Section 3: Addressing Officer Vacancies

President Mid-Term Vacancy – If the office of the President becomes vacant during the term, the Vice President will have the option to assume the position and duties of the President. Should he/she choose to assume the duties of the President, the position of Vice-President will be filled with a timely election per Article V, Section 2. Should he/she choose to remain as Vice President, an election per Article V, Section 2 will take place in a timely manner to appoint a new President to fill the vacancy.

Vice President and Treasurer Mid-Term Vacancy – If the office of Vice President and/or Treasurer becomes vacant during the term, an election per Article V, Section 2 will take place in a timely manner to appoint a new officer to fill the position.

Mid-Term Vacancy for All Other Positions – If any other office becomes vacant during the term, the membership will be solicited for nominations per Article V, Section 1. Should a student express interest in filling a vacant position, an election per Article V, Section 2 will take place to elect a member to fill the position for the remainder of the term. If, however, there is no interest in filling the position(s), the position(s) may remain vacant without impacting the functioning or existence of the organization, per Article VI, Section 1.

***Article VII – The Faculty Advisor***

Section 1: Nomination and Eligibility

The Faculty Advisor will be chosen by the President and Vice President upon suggestions from the membership.

To be eligible, the Faculty Advisor must be a faculty/staff member functioning in the Department of Biomedical Sciences at the FSU College of Medicine.

Section 2: Duties

Faculty Advisor:

1. Serve as a mentor to the group.
2. Ensure that incoming officers are properly trained and informed about all rules and regulations.
3. Monitor the Biomed SGSA meetings and serves as an advising authority to link the University and the Organization.
4. Ensure that meetings are held in a safe environment for the participants.
5. If possible, attend all meetings and ensure that meetings are conducted in compliance with University rules.
6. Establish a working relationship with the members.
7. Encourage the organization to participate in various activities outside of science-related fields.
8. Approve all documents (including, but not limited to, finances, publications, logos, flyers, T-shirts) prior to duplication and distribution.
9. Resolve disputes among the members of leadership by acting as arbitrator.
10. Count ballots per Article V, Section 2.

Section 3: Resignation or Replacement of the Faculty Advisor

Should the Faculty Advisor decide to resign, the resignation must be presented to the President at least two weeks prior to the final resignation date.

A new Faculty Advisor will be selected in a timely manner according to Article VII, Section 1. He/she will and resume his/her duties immediately upon selection.

Should the leadership find it necessary to replace the Faculty Advisor, the individual will be notified in writing. He/she has seven (7) calendar days from the date of receiving the letter to notify the President of their acceptance of resignation or to request to plead his/her case to the membership. Retainment or dismissal of the Faculty Advisor must be approved by an anonymous, 2/3 supermajority vote of the members in attendance. The individual will be notified of the final decision of the membership within 24 hours of the vote.

The Faculty Advisor position may be filled at any time throughout the year. Should the position become vacant, the steps as outlined in Article VII, Section 1 will come into effect.

The Faculty Advisor position is not subject to a term limit.

***Article VIII – Committees***

Section 1: Rationale

The leadership may choose to form a committee(s) dedicated to a specific need or task, including, but not limited to, anything that directly affects or pertains to the students in the Department of Biomedical Sciences or any new task/responsibility given by the FSU COM leadership to the Biomed SGSA.

A committee(s) may be formed or disbanded at any time throughout the year with no effect on the functioning or existence of the organization as a whole.

Section 2: Selection Process

The membership will be informed of open positions on a committee(s) as the need arises. All Biomed SGSA members in good standing, including those already on leadership, have the right to serve on one or more committees.

Interested students will assume the duties of the committee(s) immediately upon approval of the leadership and/or Faculty Advisor.

Section 3: Removal of a Committee Member

A student may be removed from a committee(s) with just cause by a simple majority vote of the leadership. The leadership will notify the student in writing within 48 hours of their vote.

Section 4: Revocation Appeal Process

A revoked committee member has seven (7) calendar days from the date of receiving the revocation letter to notify the President and request to plead his/her case to the Faculty Advisor, who will make the final ruling on whether to support the decision of the leadership or to reinstate the committee member.

***Article IX – Meetings***

Members will be notified at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting, except for emergency cases.

There must be a meeting of the membership at least once every semester in order for the RSO to remain active.

***Article X – Finances***

Section 1: Membership Dues

The organization does not require membership fees.

No university student may be denied membership due to inability to pay dues. If a member is not able to pay dues, other arrangements will be made.

Section 2: Management of Financial Resources

To assure financial integrity, all financial documents must adhere to the signature requirements dictated by the applicable funding entity.

Funding may be obtained from within the University or external sources. Donations from outside organizations will be solicited and accepted on a case-by-case basis.

Funds may be spent on items such as incoming speakers, travel expenses, conferences, events and activities, supplies, etc. Funds may not be used to fund any illegal activities prohibited by University, local, state, and federal laws.

Section 3: Records Keeping

The data and budget information are to be kept up to date at all times and passed on to incoming personnel. It is recommended that an online repository (e.g. Nole Central, Google Docs, Dropbox) be employed so that access to pertinent documents is maintained from year to year.

Section 4: Dissolution of the Organization and Return of Funds

Should the Biomed SGSA cease to exist, all funding supplied by the University will be returned to the SGA. Miscellaneous funds have the option of being donated to a charity or non-profit as decided by a majority vote of the members prior to the dissolution of the organization.

***Article XI – Publications***

Section 1: Compliance

All advertisements of the organization must comply with the University Posting Policy (<http://posting.fsu.edu>).

Section 2: Approval

The Advisor, President, and Secretary are responsible for approving all publications, shirts, flyers, etc. prior to duplication and distribution.

The Social Media Coordinator is responsible for approving all publications to be posted online or on social media sites.

***Article XII – Changes to the Constitution***

This document is a working constitution. Changes in the form of amendments are welcomed and may be submitted in writing to the President.

Proposed amendments will be presented to the membership and will be subject to debate. Proposed amendments may be approved by an anonymous, 2/3 supermajority vote of the members.

***History***

Proposed: Friday the 13th of August in the year 2010

Revised: Friday the 20th of August in the year 2010

Revised: Monday the 23rd of August in the year 2010

Revised: Wednesday the 25th of August in the year 2010

Revised: Thursday the 26th of August in the year 2010

Revised: Tuesday the 30th of August in the year 2010

Revised: Friday the 3rd of December in the year 2010

Updated: Adopted, Monday the 1st of April in the year 2019