

Constitution of the Graduate Association of Students in Physiology

Enacted March 10, 2004. Most recently revised September 16, 2015.

Article 1: Name

Section 1.

The name of the association shall be the “Graduate Association of Students in Physiology,” hereafter referred to as “GASP”.

Article 2: Definitions

Section 1.

The Department of Physiology at the University of Toronto (Toronto, Canada) shall hereafter be referred to as “the Department”.

Article 3: Purposes, Objectives and Beliefs

Section 1.

To serve as the official organization representing graduate students enrolled in the Department.

Section 2.

To develop graduate student participation in the Department and to promote the interests and welfare of its members.

Section 3.

To promote social, academic, athletic, and outreach activities and to further the purposes and objectives of GASP.

Section 4.

To improve involvement between GASP members and the graduate community with regards to social educational and university-wide collaborative activities.

Section 5.

GASP opposes all forms of discrimination and oppression, including those based on gender, ethnicity, race, class, ability, religion, spiritual beliefs, sexuality, sexual orientation, nationality, and age.

Article 4: Membership

Section 1.

All students actively registered in a graduate program through the Department shall be members, hereafter be referred to as the Membership.

Section 2.

There shall be no membership fee levied to members of GASP.

Section 3.

Members of GASP are also members of the Graduate Students’ Union at the University of Toronto

(Toronto, Canada).

Article 5: Officers

Section 1. Executive Committee

The administration of GASP will be the responsibility of an elected Executive Committee consisting of: President, one to three Vice President(s) (Vice President Logistics, Vice President Fundraising, Vice President External), Treasurer, and Secretary, as outlined in Article 6.

Section 2. The GASP Council

In addition to the Executive Committee, GASP will also be administered through a council consisting of: the GASP Executive Committee, one or two Social Coordinator(s), one or two Sports Coordinator(s), Graduate Students' Union (GSU) representative, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 3902 representative, Off-Campus Representative, three Outreach Coordinators (Undergraduate Mentorship Representative, Science Rendezvous Representative, Physiology Day Representative), and Website Coordinator as outlined in Article 7.

Article 6: Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

Section 1. General

- a) The Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring that the purposes and objectives of GASP are fulfilled.
- b) The Executive Committee is responsible for the oversight of all GASP activities coordinated by the GASP council.
- c) The Executive Committee is the main representative of the membership within the Department.
- d) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for communication between GASP and the Chair and Graduate Coordinators of the Department.
- e) The Executive Committee shall ensure that GASP executive and council meetings are held on a timely basis.
- f) The Executive Committee shall attend GASP executive and council meetings.
- g) The Executive Committee, in conjunction with the Graduate Coordinators, shall organize an annual orientation presentation and social event for new students in the Department to be held within the first two weeks of September during student orientation.

Section 2. The President

- a) The President shall have joint signing authority on all GASP financial accounts with the Treasurer.
- b) The President shall normally represent GASP on all bodies and committees, excluding those for which another representative has been appointed.
- c) The President shall chair all executive and general meetings or appoint a designate from the GASP executive in her/his stead.
- d) The President shall follow the duties/responsibilities as outlined in Article 6, Section 1.
- e) The President shall participate in Faculty of Medicine student meetings along with the GSU representative. These meetings will be directed by different department each year and will occur approximately monthly.

Section 3. The Vice Presidents

- a) The Vice Presidents shall assume the President's duties and privileges, in case of the President's absence.
- b) The Vice Presidents shall attend all general meetings of the Department, where possible.
- c) Collectively, the Vice Presidents shall organize aspects of Frontiers in Physiology (FIP), the annual research symposium for members of GASP and other interested members of the Department, including but not limited to fundraising, organization, logistics, and coordination of the day's events.
- d) Vice President Logistics will lead on duties involved in planning and organization of FIP
- e) Vice President Fundraising will lead on duties involved in applying and obtaining funds needed for the undertaking of FIP
- f) Vice President External will lead on duties involved with communication with external partners (e.g. caterers, sponsors, suppliers) needed for FIP
- g) Vice Presidents will fulfill their defined roles as well as provide significant support to the other two Vice Presidents in their duties.
- h) In scenarios where less than three Vice Presidents are elected, the duties outlined in (d) through (f) will be evenly distributed amongst the elected Vice Presidents.
- h) The Vice Presidents shall follow the duties/responsibilities as outlined in Article 6, Section 1.

Section 4. Treasurer

- a) The Treasurer shall have co-signing authority on all GASP financial accounts.
- b) The Treasurer shall maintain an electronic record of all monies received and expended and must attain the signature of any two GASP Executive Council members before any monies are processed.
- c) The Treasurer shall be responsible for preparing budgets for submission of requested funds.
- d) The Treasurer shall make available at least one financial report to the Membership per year.
- e) The Treasurer shall follow the duties/responsibilities as outlined in Article 6, Section 1.

Section 5. Secretary

- a) The Secretary shall be responsible for internal communications between the GASP council and GASP.
- b) The Secretary shall be responsible for the promotion of GASP events, excluding FIP.
- c) The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining accurate records of GASP decisions, motions, etc.
- d) The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining a GASP email account.
- e) The Secretary shall follow the duties/responsibilities as outlined in Article 6, Section 1.

Article 7: Duties and Responsibilities of the GASP Council

Section 1. General

- a) GASP Council members shall attend all GASP council meetings. Each member, including Executive Council members, is allotted three strikes, after which, removal of the member from the council will be discussed with the Executive Council. Insufficient notice (less than 24hrs prior to the start of the meeting) or failure to carry out the responsibilities of your position will result in another strike.
- b) GASP Council members shall participate in the organization of all GASP activities as determined by the GASP Executive Council and/or the GASP council.
- c) Coordinators are primarily responsible for the organization of events, however in general these duties can be delegated to other interested parties.

- d) GASP Council members will take turns running the weekly GASP coffee break, at a minimum of two per year.
- e) GASP Council members shall organize and participate in an entertainment piece for the annual Departmental Holiday Luncheon.
- e) GASP Council members must prepare a comprehensive document of their duties to be passed on to the next year's representative within five (5) days of elections.

Section 2. Social Coordinator(s)

- a) The Social Coordinator(s) shall be responsible for the organization and execution of all GASP social events. Events are to be held on a monthly basis.
- b) The Social Coordinator(s) shall actively promote events by providing detailed event information to the Graduate Programs Administrator for distribution to GASP at least one week prior to the event.
- c) The Social Coordinator(s) shall maintain communication with other departments in the Faculty of Medicine in order to participate in the organization of interdepartmental events.

Section 3. Sports Coordinator(s)

- a) The Sports Coordinator(s) shall organize GASP participation in such sporting, athletic, or recreational activities as the membership sees fit. Events are to be held on a monthly basis.
- b) The Sports Coordinator(s) shall maintain communication with other departments in the Faculty of Medicine in order to participate in the organization of interdepartmental events.

Section 4. Website Coordinator

- a) The Website coordinator shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate and current website that shall include the information important for the membership, including, but not limited to the advertisement and record of GASP events and archiving important GASP documents.
- b) The Website coordinator shall be involved in maintaining additional digital and social media, including but not limited to the Facebook page and events.

Section 5. Graduate Students' Union Representative(s)

- a) The number of Graduate Students' Union representatives allotted to GASP shall be determined by the Graduate Students' Union.
- b) One Graduate Students' Union representative shall be elected during council elections.
- c) In the event that GASP is allotted more than one representative, the elected President is, by default, the second Graduate Students' Union representative, however, she/he may chose to delegate this responsibility to a second elected Graduate Students' Union representative. In this case, this second representative shall also be elected at council elections.
- d) At least one Graduate Students' Union representative(s) shall attend at least three Graduate Students' Union meetings each semester.
- e) The Graduate Students' Union representative(s) shall have full voting rights at Graduate Students' Union meetings.
- f) The Graduate Students' Union representative(s) shall represent the interests of the membership.
- g) The Graduate Students' Union representative(s) shall inform the GASP council and GASP membership of Graduate Students' Union events, issues, etc.
- h) The Graduate Students' Union representative(s) shall participate in the Faculty of Medicine Student Meetings.

Section 6. Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3902 (CUPE) Representative

- a) Whenever possible, the CUPE representative shall be an individual currently holding a TA position within CUPE 3902
- b) The CUPE representative shall attend CUPE meetings.
- c) The CUPE representative shall represent the interests of the membership, especially those who are also members of CUPE.
- d) The CUPE representative shall inform the GASP council and GASP membership of CUPE events, issues, etc.
- e) Organize an informative event with the “Steward’s budget” for Physiology TAs

Section 7. Off-Campus Representative

- a) The Off-Campus Representative shall represent the interests of the membership, especially those situated in the various research institutes. Research institutes include any off-campus research facility wherein graduate students registered in the Department conduct a majority of their primary research. These may include (but are not limited to): Toronto General Hospital, Toronto Western Research Institutes, Hospital for Sick Children, St. Michael’s Hospital, Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, Mount Sinai Hospital, Best Institute, MaRS etc.
- b.) The Off-campus Representative shall answer emails and set-up meetings with students at off-campus research sites and answer physiology-department related questions or social events.
- c.) The Off-Campus Representative shall hold at least one meeting at each individual research off-campus institute per academic year.
- d.) The Off-campus Representative shall promote GASP events and make accessible to all graduate students.

Section 8. Outreach Coordinators

The Outreach Coordinators promote relations between the membership, the Department and the greater community.

8.1 Undergraduate Outreach Coordinator

- a) The Undergraduate Outreach Coordinator shall be responsible for maintaining communication between GASP, Undergraduate Physiology Student Association (UPSA) and the undergraduate community.
- b) The Undergraduate Outreach Coordinator shall organize two events (the Advisory Shadowing Event and the Academic Seminar)per academic year that is focused on promoting graduate student mentorship of undergraduate students.

8.2 Physiology Day Coordinator

- a) The Physiology Day Coordinator shall, in partnership with Let’s Talk Science, organize the annual Physiology Day event which provides high school students with hands on experience in university laboratories.
- b) The Physiology Day Coordinator shall promote interactions between graduate students, faculty, staff and participants.

8.3 Science Rendez-Vous Representative

- a) The Science Rendez-Vous Representative shall organize the the Department’s involvement in the University of Toronto St. George Campus Science Rendez-Vous event.

Article 8: Elections

Section 1. Executive Council Elections

- a) Executive Council elections shall be held on an annual basis, no earlier than the first week of July and no later than the second week of August.
 - b) Executive Council elections shall be held at an annual general meeting of the Membership.
 - c) Sufficient notice of this meeting and the elections must be given to the Membership at least one week in advance.
 - d) Quorum for this meeting shall be ten (10) members, not including the Executive Council, or one third of the Membership, whichever is less.
 - e) If quorum is not met, the election shall be rescheduled for the following week.
 - f) Elections shall be by simple majority of the members present at this meeting.
 - g) In the event of a tie, current members of the GASP Council who are present at the election shall decide the winner by a simple majority vote.
 - f) Elections shall be chaired by a member of GASP who is not standing for election.
 - g) Anyone who has been a GASP council member for at least one academic semester shall be eligible for election for President or Vice President
 - h) Anyone who is a member of GASP, as of the following September, shall be eligible for election for Treasurer or Secretary.
- Anyone who has held a position on the GASP Executive Council or general council may run for the same or a different elected position in a subsequent year so long as they are a member of GASP.
- i) Anyone who is a member of GASP or will be a member of GASP as of the following September shall have voting rights.

Section 2. Council Elections

- a) Council elections shall be held on an annual basis, no earlier than the first week of the academic term, in September, and no later than the second week of the term.
 - c) Quorum for this meeting shall be ten (10) members, not including the Executive Council, or one third of the Membership, whichever is less.
- If quorum is not met, the election shall be rescheduled for the following week.
- In the event of a tie, current members of the GASP Executive Council who are present at the election shall decide the winner by a simple majority vote.
- d) Sufficient notice of this meeting and the elections must be given to the Membership at three days in advance.
 - e) Elections shall be by simple majority of the members present at this meeting.
 - f) Elections shall be chaired by a member of GASP who is not standing for election.
 - g) Anyone who is a member of GASP shall be eligible for election.
 - h) Anyone who is a member of GASP shall have voting rights.

Article 9: Financial Accounts

Section 1.

GASP funds, not administered through internal University of Toronto accounts, shall be deposited under the name of “Graduate Association of Students in Physiology” or “GASP”.

Section 2.

Signing authority shall be the dual responsibility of the President and the Treasurer. Signing authority shall require only one signature, either that of the President or Treasurer. Additional internal documentation must have additional signatures as per Article 6 Section 4.

Section 3.

Upon election of a new Executive Council, signing authority shall be transferred to the new President and Treasurer within five (5) business days.

Section 4

The financial year shall begin on September 1st.

Article 10: Resignations, Non-performance and By-Elections**Section 1. Resignations**

Members of the Executive Council or general council shall indicate the desire to resign in writing to the President and/or Vice President. Resignations shall be effective immediately. In the event of a resignation, signing authority on any GASP account will also be terminated immediately.

Section 2. Non-performance

A GASP Executive Council or general council member may be removed from office for non-performance of duties or abuse of office. This decision shall be made by a two-thirds majority vote at a GASP council meeting. Quorum at this meeting shall be three (3) members of the Executive Council and five (5) members of the general council, excluding the Executive Council.

Section 3. By-Elections

In the event of the resignation or removal of any Executive Council or general council member, a by-election shall be held only if such resignation or removal occurred no later than October 31st of any academic year. Otherwise, positions will be filled through appointment at a GASP Council meeting. Should there be no interest, the duties associated with the position shall be delegated to the remaining members of the council.

Article 11: The Constitution**Section 1**

The constitution shall be reviewed by the GASP council on a yearly basis.

Section 2.

Amendments to the constitution shall be by a two-thirds majority vote of members present at a general meeting, the current and proposed section of the constitution having been circulated at least one week prior to such meeting.