ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Article 1: Name and Association

Section 1: The name of this organization shall be the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (SJGS) Graduate Student Association (GSA).

Section 2: The GSA is recognized as a student organization affiliated with the SJGS.

Section 3: Any graduate student enrolled in a SJGS degree-seeking program is a member of the GSA.

Article 2: Objectives and Purposes

Section 1: Purpose

A. The GSA, guided by the GSA Constitution, is intended to support SJGS graduate students and the best interests of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.
B. The GSA acts as an advocate for the needs of the SJGS graduate students.
C. The GSA facilitates engagement among SJGS students, faculty, staff, and employees of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. In collaboration with these groups, the GSA acts in support of student needs both on and off campus.

Section 2: This organization supports student interests, contributes to maintaining an optimal graduate school culture, offers professional development opportunities, advocates for student needs and provides opportunities for leadership.

Section 3: This organization serves as a forum for communication and the active exchange of ideas among students and the Graduate School staff, faculty, Graduate Council, and Board of Trustees.

Section 4: This organization's elected Executive Board Officers will be tasked with voting as representatives of their respective constituencies on matters pertaining to the GSA.

Section 5: The GSA holds itself and those it works with responsible for improving and maintaining high standards of accountability and transparency.

Article 3: Membership, Qualifications, and Executive Board

Section 1: Membership

St. Jude - Confidential

A. Any student in a SJGS degree program, regardless of the degree, is considered a graduate student and has an equal voice in the GSA.

Section 2: Executive Board

A. The GSA Executive Board Officers comprise:
    a. President
    b. Vice President
    c. Secretary
    d. Treasurer
    e. Class Representatives from each program
B. There are positions reserved for each program to have two class representatives on the Executive Board.
    a. PhD Programs are encouraged to have one representative post-qualifying exams (3rd year or above) and one representative pre-qualifying exams (2nd year, representing 1st and 2nd year).
    b. Master's Programs are encouraged to have one representative per cohort.
C. Unfilled class representative positions will be represented by the VP with guidance from the Graduate School.
D. Positions may be added, removed, or altered by a majority vote of the current Executive Board.

Section 3: Qualifications

A. Candidates eligible to be Executive Board Officers shall be students enrolled and in good standing in a the SJGS degree program, as confirmed by the Registrar.
    i. Officers must maintain good standing throughout their time on the Executive Board. If an officer loses good standing during their term, they will be removed from the board (See Article 4, Section 6: Removal of Elected Positions).
B. The position of President is limited to a rising third-year doctoral student OR second-year master's student in good academic standing (Article 3, Section 3A) and who has served on the GSA Executive Board for at least one year.
C. The position of Vice President is limited to a rising 2nd-year doctoral student OR 1st-year master's student in good academic standing (Article 3, Section 3A). No prior GSA Executive Board experience is required.
D. The positions of Secretary and Treasurer are open to any graduate student across the SJGS programs regardless of year and no prior GSA Executive Board experience is required.
E. Class Representatives are elected by their peers. Any student is eligible to run for the position of a representative of their program. No prior GSA Executive Board experience is required.

Article 4: Elections

Section 1: Voting

A. All student body members may participate in Executive Board elections for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
B. Elections will occur within each program for Class Representatives.

Section 2: Nominations

A. Candidates for the Executive Board Office may be identified by self-nomination or by acceptance of a nomination during the first two weeks of May each year for all positions.
B. Candidates will submit confirmation of "good standing" status (Article 3, Section 3A) and a platform statement of 100 to 500 words to the current President, who will share them with the applicable cohorts.
    a. Virtual forms will be utilized for the election unless otherwise stated.
C. The current President will create a ballot to be circulated to the applicable cohorts during the third week of May.
D. Votes will be cast and counted by the current President before the end of May.
E. The current President will collect election results and announce the newly elected Executive Board Officers.

Sample Election Timeline	
May 1-14	Candidates submit and/or accept nominations for Executive Board positions along with platform statements and "good standing" status
May 14-21	President curates and circulates platform statements and ballot to all students
End of May	Votes are cast, counted, and given to the President. Executive Board Officers are announced

Section 3: Transition

A. Transition from current to newly elected Executive Board Officers will occur annually during the month of June.
B. Newly elected Officers will attend a training event organized by the outgoing Executive Board to provide information about roles and responsibilities, scheduled in early June prior to the transition. The training event for newly elected officers (Article 4, Section 3) will allow new board members to be given the opportunity to meet with their outgoing counterparts and become acquainted with the other elected Executive Board Officers. During this time, the previous board will instruct the new board about their responsibilities and offer any resources that will help them.

Section 4: Term Limits

A. President and Vice President are limited to one (1) one-year term each through the duration of a student's tenure, except for students serving as an interim President/Vice President who may run for either of these positions at the conclusion of their interim term. Previous Presidents and Vice Presidents, having not served in an interim position, may run for a

different position (i.e. Secretary, Treasurer, Class Representative) at the conclusion of their term.
    a. If there is no candidate for President or Vice President, a President or Vice President who has prior service may step into an interim Presidency or Vice Presidency until the position can be filled.
B. Secretary, Treasurer, and Class Representatives may be re-elected and have no term limits.

Section 5: Special Elections
A. Special Elections may be held in the event of a vacancy, extended absence, withdrawal, or any other circumstance leaving a need for an election outside of the standard election cycle.
B. Standard election procedures (outlined in Article 4, Section 1 and 2) apply.

Section 6: Removal of Elected Positions
A. An officer may be removed from the Executive Board due to academic or professional issues.
    a. These may include (but are not limited to) academic probation and professional disagreement beyond what can be aided by the Graduate School.
B. An officer may withdraw from an elected position after finding a replacement.
C. In the case of vacancies due to removal from the position, a special election (Article 4, Section 5) may be held.

Section 5: Co-chairs
A. Any position may accommodate two individuals who run together ("co-position"). For example, two people may run for class representative as "co-representatives", so long as they announce their intent to run together.
    a. Co-representative candidacy must be specified on the platform statement and ballot.

Article 5: Elected Executive Board Officer Responsibilities

Section 1: The President and Vice President
A. The President and Vice President serve as primary contacts between the Graduate School staff and the GSA.
B. Duties of unfilled roles in the executive board are to be shared between the President and Vice President.
C. The President and Vice President will:
    a. Plan and preside over all GSA meetings.
    b. Meet periodically with Graduate School staff to discuss and effectively address issues and information regarding the student body.
    c. Represent the Graduate School student body when necessary (i.e. meet with applicants and academic visitors, speak at events).
    d. Work with the Treasurer to plan and oversee the yearly (FY) budget for the GSA alongside staff (current contact: Jim Keith).
    e. Draft communications to staff and the student body.
D. Responsibilities of the President:

a. Prepare the GSA meeting slides.
b. Prepare the monthly newsletter with the Secretary.
c. Draft the monthly meeting agenda.
d. Lead the monthly meetings.
    i. General Session
    ii. Executive Board session

E. Responsibilities of the Vice President:
    a. Communicate with committee Chairs to provide assistance if needed and ensure that tasks are being completed efficiently.
    b. Serve as substitute if the President is not available for a meeting, event, or is unable to finish their term.
    c. Maintain a record of all GSA events.
    d. Lead the monthly meeting for the Committee Head session.

Section 2: The Secretary and Treasurer

A. Responsibilities of the Secretary
    a. Take GSA meeting minutes and disseminate to appropriate parties (cohorts, committees, Executive Board).
    b. Work with the President and Vice President to draft communications to staff and the student body, including sending the monthly agenda drafted by the President.
    c. Monitor and maintain the GSA email address.
    d. Work with the President to prepare the monthly newsletter.
B. Responsibilities of the Treasurer
    a. Work with the President and Vice President to plan and oversee the yearly (FY) budget for the GSA alongside staff (current contact: Jim Keith).
    b. Communicate with the committee heads to manage budgets, events, and needs.
    c. Maintain a document detailing the expenses of the GSA.

Section 3: The Class Representatives

A. Responsibilities of the Class Representatives
    a. Communicate matters pertaining to their classes to the GSA.
    b. Act as the representative voice for their cohort.
    c. Emphasize relevant information from the GSA to their cohort.
    d. Schedule meetings between their cohort and their program's Deans when necessary; record minutes at these meetings and report to their cohorts.

Section 4: Vacancy

A. If a President cannot complete their term of office, the Vice President will serve as interim President for the remainder of that term. In the event that the Vice President is unable or ineligible to serve as interim President, another member of the Executive Board with at least one year of Executive Board experience will be elected to the position of interim President by the Executive Board.
B. If the Vice President cannot complete their term of office, a replacement will be elected by the Executive Board from the eligible student body to serve as interim Vice President for the remainder of the term.

Section 5: No Executive Board Officer is authorized to incur any obligation, financial or otherwise, binding upon the Graduate School or St. Jude or in their names unless they are authorized in writing by the Graduate School and St. Jude.

Article 6: Committees

Section 1: Composition and Leadership

A. Each GSA standing committee is composed of one Committee Chair OR Co-Chairs and additional Activity Heads for individual activities as deemed necessary by the Chair(s).
B. All students enrolled in a Graduate School on-campus program are strongly encouraged to serve on at least one committee during their tenure as a graduate student.
C. Each committee will elect its Chair by nomination or acclamation at the first meeting and subsequently elect the Activity Heads.
D. Election timelines for committees are dependent on the committee.

Section 2: Responsibilities

A. Each committee will have minimum expectations set by the Executive Board and will be assigned a budget by the Vice President and Treasurer.
B. Each committee will be responsible for documenting expenses and sending reports to the Vice President and Treasurer.

Section 3: Record Keeping

A. Committee Chairs are encouraged to submit a monthly progress statement before the 1st of the month to keep the Executive Board informed of meetings and events.
B. Committee Chairs should document events (i.e. with pictures) and send them to the President or Secretary to be included in the Newsletter.

Section 4: Standing Committees

- Community Service / Outreach: The Community Service Committee must hold two community service events (i.e. St. Jude Trick or Treating, Tri Delta Place Dinners) and communicate volunteer opportunities to the student body as they arise (i.e. Marathon water stations, MLK day community service). The Outreach Committee must hold one event that interacts with each of the following groups: APO Graduate Students, Post-Docs, and Graduate Faculty. This can be a social event or a constructive interaction (i.e. Career development, poster session, guest speaker)
- Social Events: The Social Events Committee must hold two social events per semester. Social events must be scheduled and announced to the Student Body at least one month prior to the event.

Section 5: Participation

A. Signing up for committees will be available during the special election period in the fall when new students matriculate.

Section 6: Activity Heads

A. The Activity Heads are responsible for communicating regularly with their Chairs.
B. Following the conclusion of events, Activity Heads will complete a template report documenting the event details. The committee chair will file the report with the GSA Vice President, and it may be used as items in the GSA newsletter.

Section 7: Addition and Subtraction of Committees

A. Committees will be added, altered or removed based on the needs of the student body.
B. Committees can be added through Executive Board approval so long as a chair/co-chair is available and willing to serve. A SJGS Staff Sponsor is highly encouraged for each committee.
C. Committees can be altered through a proposal to the executive board and SJGS Staff Sponsor (if applicable).
D. Committees can be removed with Executive Board approval.

Section 8: SJGS Staff Sponsor

A. Each committee is highly encouraged to have a SJGS Staff Sponsor to assist with the planning and execution of the committee-sponsored events.
B. The SJGS Staff Sponsor must agree to be the sponsor and may attend committee meetings.
C. The SJGS Staff Sponsor is NOT responsible for the planning and execution of committee sponsored events, and is only there to provide limited assistance in their field of expertise.

Article 7: GSA Meetings

Section 1: GSA meetings are conducted utilizing the proper parliamentary procedures as defined by Robert's Rules of Order. GSA meetings shall conform to the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order at the discretion of the President. Meetings shall be informal without objection.

Section 2:

A. The GSA will meet monthly during the academic year or more frequently as needed.
B. Meeting Schedule is determined by the President.
C. GSA meetings will be coordinated with Graduate School events.

Section 3:

E. Any Executive Board Officer may call meetings of the GSA. The purpose of the requested meeting should be described in advance in writing, and the addition of a meeting shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the Officers.
F. Special meetings of the GSA may be called by the President or by formal petition of at least twenty-five percent of the GSA membership with at least 48 hours written notice to the Executive Board Officers.

Section 4: Faculty and Guests

A. Members of the Graduate Faculty or other invited guests may attend GSA meetings as non-voting observers.
B. Deans, Directors and Program Specialists are encouraged to attend and offer advice and input.

Section 5: Students of the Graduate School may raise concerns to Class Representatives in advance of a GSA meeting and request additions to the agenda. A student who wishes to remain anonymous may ask their Class Representative to present their matter.

Section 6:

A. Each Executive Board Officer has one vote in the GSA.
B. All matters will be decided by a simple majority vote by those present at the meeting.
C. Motions with tied votes will be rejected.
D. Voting matters shall be announced to all Officers upon distribution of the upcoming agenda.
E. Should an Officer be unable to attend a meeting, they may submit their vote to the President prior to the meeting at which the vote is to be held.
F. Any Officer may make motion to table a vote if that Officer believes more discussion is needed to make an educated decision.
    a. Motion to Table requires a Second, and the motion must be passed by a simple majority.

Article 8: Amendments

Section 1: The GSA Constitution should be regularly reviewed and, after discussion, may be amended by GSA vote.

Section 2: Amendments may be suggested by any Executive Board Officer or GSA member at any point during the academic year. Proposed amendments must be circulated in writing to the Officers at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the amendment will be considered. Amendments will require a Second and be considered only after a 2/3 anonymous ballot vote of the Executive Board.

Section 3: Amendments that pass Executive Board consideration shall then be circulated to all GSA members two weeks prior to holding a vote for acceptance and ratification. Amendments will require a quorum of at least 20 GSA members and 2/3 affirmative vote by the GSA members participating in the vote.

Article 9: Ratification

Section 1: The Constitution and Bylaws shall be ratified after a discussion based upon a motion by an Executive Board Officer to ratify, a second from another Officer, followed by a 2/3 vote to approve the motion to ratify by the Graduate Student Association members in attendance.

Section 2: The newly adopted Constitution or Constitution and Bylaws Amendments shall supersede any previous Constitution and Bylaws and shall be the sole Constitution and Bylaws of the GSA.

St. Jude - Confidential