

# **BYLAWS OF THE BIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

Department of Biological Sciences, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
(Virginia Tech), Blacksburg, Virginia, USA

*Revised: 3 January 2019*

## **I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Biology Graduate Student Association (BGSA) is to consolidate and coordinate representation of the Biology Graduate Students. The BGSA provides for the orderly communication of information and opinions between the Biology Graduate Students, Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), the Department of Biological Sciences, and the greater University community. Furthermore, the BGSA aims to create a united, cohesive, collaborative, and friendly community among the Biology Graduate Students despite our varying sub-disciplines and physical locations on campus.

## **II. MEMBERSHIP**

Any registered Biology Graduate Student is automatically a member of the BGSA, unless they request to not be a member.

## **III. FACULTY ADVISOR**

The BGSA will communicate directly with the department head as the primary faculty advisor. Required faculty responsibilities are minimal (providing authorization in accordance with university policies), but additional support is welcome.

## **IV. ELECTION PROCEDURES**

1. Annual elections will take place prior to the end of the spring semester, or as needed.
2. Elections will consist of an open nomination period followed by an electronic and anonymous voting period.
3. The official election ballot will be finalized at a General Meeting of the BGSA (general meeting) prior to distribution to the entire biology graduate student body for voting.
4. Nominations will be open for a period of at least two weeks and will be collected by the current president.
5. Eligibility:
  - a. All currently enrolled graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences (the department) who will be enrolled for both semesters of the upcoming academic year are eligible to be nominated and elected for

any position (excluding BGSA President). Graduate students cannot run for a position if they plan to be gone for a significant part (6 weeks or more) of either semester (excluding summer).

- b. Only those who have been a graduate student for a year or more and who have served as an elected officer of the BGSA are eligible for the position of BGSA President.
- c. Only those who have been a graduate student for a year or more and who have served in a committee of the BGSA are eligible for the position of BGSA vice President.
- d. Graduate students can nominate either themselves or one other person per position
- e. Graduate students need to accept only one position and have to accept the nomination in order to be on the ballot
- f. Nomination acceptance email will be formal and non-biased
- g. All nominated students should provide a picture and a paragraph description stating why they are interested in this position and what makes them a good fit for this position. This information will be distributed to voters before they vote.
- h. All currently enrolled graduate students in the department are eligible to vote.

6. At the end of the voting period, the current president will announce the election results to the biology graduate student body, the faculty advisor and the department head.

7. The outgoing administration is responsible for training the incoming administration. This training includes a meeting between the outgoing and incoming presidents with the faculty advisor and/or department head, the transfer of the financial accounts from the outgoing to the incoming treasurer, and the transfer of the written and electronic records from the outgoing to the incoming secretary.

## V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

**All officers should attend both the board meetings and the general meetings**

- 1. President
  - a. Attends appropriate administrative meetings outside the department

**b.** Presides over general meetings, and any other BGSA related meetings

**c.** Attends the faculty retreats

**d.** Prepares General meeting agenda

**e.** Runs the elections for the next year

2. Vice President

**a.** Temporarily takes the office of President during General Meetings and other BGSA events if the President is unavailable.

**b.** Organizes food for the General Meetings and other BGSA events

**c.** Supports the President in planning and BGSA administration

**d.** Prepares a sheet with everyone running for a position with name, paragraph, and picture to distribute before the vote takes a place

3. Treasurer

**a.** Organizes budget and maintains financial records of the BGSA

**b.** Petitions at appropriate funding groups

**c.** Coordinates fundraising committees and events

**d.** Presents an itemized budget every semester at a general meeting

**e.** Attends the Registered Student Organization Budget Board meeting

4. Secretary

**a.** Takes minutes of general meetings and distributes them to the Biology Graduate Student listserv

**b.** Maintains paper and electronic copies of the agendas of past meetings, treasurer's reports, and election ballots.

5. GSA Delegate #1 & 2:

**a.** Reports the proceedings of the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) at the General Meetings

**b.** Attends GSA meetings (or sends proxy)

5. Professional Development:

**a.** Organize professional events for graduate students.

Events include

but are not limited to workshops, discussions, and invited

talks.

**b.** Email the biology graduate students about professional development opportunities around the university and outside.

**c.** Should organize at least one event per semester.

**d.** Coordinator of social media accounts on

6. At-large Members

**a.** Attend General Meetings of the BGSA

**b.** Head up committees

- c.** Assist with event planning and fundraiser events
- d.** Share information from the General Meetings to students who could not attend
- e.** Raise concerns and ideas at the General Meetings or to the Executive Board