

Constitution

Article I

Name

The name of this organization shall be the Chemistry Graduate Student Association, herein referred to as CGSA.

Article II

Mission Statement

It shall be the goal of the CGSA to facilitate the education, fellowship, and professional development of the graduate student body of the Mississippi State University Chemistry Department. This organization shall uphold the belief that by funding opportunities for graduate students to pursue professional speaking and presentation engagements; attend technical, research-related seminars; and organize and fellowship as a single body that the educational experience for these graduate students is enhanced and they shall be better positioned to pursue their chosen career goals. This support of and provision for the holistic education of the graduate student body is the mission of the CGSA.

Article III

Location and Government

- A. The location of this organization shall be Mississippi State University.
- B. This organization shall be governed by this constitution.
- C. The authority over this organization shall be wielded by the General Assembly.
- D. This organization shall be managed by the officers of the Executive Council.

Article IV

Membership

- A. Membership shall be limited to graduate students in the chemistry department who are currently enrolled full-time or part-time.
- B. Members shall be labeled by status as “active” or “inactive.”
 - a. Members shall be graduate students in the chemistry department for at least one semester before being labeled with a status.
 - b. Status assignments shall occur at the end of a semester.
 - c. Status shall apply to the semester immediately following the semester that the status is assigned and not before.
 - d. Each member’s status shall be reevaluated at the end of each semester.

C. An Active Member

- a. Shall be a member who
 - i. Attends all mandatory meetings per semester.
 - ii. Participates in at least two thirds of the CGSA sponsored events.
 1. Participation shall include but is not limited to
 - a. Cleaning up after fellowship gatherings.
 - b. Organizing and implementing fellowship gatherings.
 - c. Serving in good attendance on CGSA committees.
 - d. Serving as an elected officer.
 - e. Attending non-mandatory CGSA meetings
 2. Participation shall be evaluated by the Vice-President and the Treasurer as described in Article VI.
- b. Shall be eligible for the funding opportunities described in Article IX.

D. An Inactive Member

- a. Shall be a member who
 - i. Does not fulfill completely the requirements for active membership.
- b. Shall have the right to petition the General Assembly to change their status to “active member.”
- c. Shall not be eligible for any funding provided by the CGSA.

E. Members without an assigned status

- a. Shall be limited with respect to funding as described in Article VIII.
- b. Shall have all rights assigned to active members, excepting funding limitations and any limitations described in Article VII.

Article V

General Assembly

A. Shall be defined as the assembly of the membership of the CGSA.

B. Meetings of the General Assembly

- a. Shall be called by any member by petitioning the Executive Council to call for a General Assembly meeting.
 - i. The meeting shall be held within 14 days of the request.
- b. Shall be called by the Executive Council once in the fall semester at a time of its choosing and once in the spring semester as is prescribed for elections in Article VII.
- c. Shall be presided over by the highest-ranking officer in attendance.
- d. Shall be held as physical meetings or via email.
 - i. Physical meetings
 1. Shall be required for
 - a. Any meeting called for by a non-officer member of the CGSA. “Non-officer member” is defined as any member who is not an officer-elect nor a member of the Executive Council.

- b. Any meeting requiring a vote to veto an Executive Council or individual officer's decision.
 - c. Meetings called to hold elections.
 - d. Meetings called to impeach or remove an individual from office as described in Article VI.
 - ii. "Meetings" via email
 - 1. Shall be called if physical meetings are not required as described herein and as deemed by the Executive Council.
 - 2. Shall be presided over by the President or the Secretary as described in Article VI.
- C. Powers and Responsibilities of the General Assembly
 - a. Shall include the power to veto decisions made by the individual officers and/or the Executive Council by a majority vote of the present and voting members.
 - b. Shall include the responsibility of approving purchases and transactions with CGSA funds totaling more than \$500.
 - c. Shall include holding elections for officers in April every year.
 - d. Shall include the power to impeach and remove an officer who neglects his/her responsibilities as described in Article VI.

Article VI

Officers

- A. All executive power not allocated to the General Assembly in this constitution shall be rested in the Executive Council constituted by the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers shall be elected in April of each year and shall take up service to their offices in August of each year as described in Article VII of this constitution.
- B. In the case of succession and when presiding over meetings, the officers shall be ranked in order from highest to lowest as the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer.
- C. Duties and Powers of the Officers as Individuals
 - a. The President
 - i. Shall have the authority to assume the power of any other officer if
 - 1. The officer is absent and
 - a. Known by the graduate student body to be out of town.
 - b. Cannot be found by the Executive Council nor by the Advisor for seventy-two hours.
 - c. Has requested in writing that the President assume his/her duties and powers.
 - 2. An officer is removed from office.
 - ii. Shall preside over any CGSA general or committee meeting in which he/she is in attendance.
 - iii. Shall preside over General Assembly meetings held via e-mail.

- iv. Shall have the authority to sign financial ledgers in the absence of the Treasurer.
 - v. Shall have the authority to make purchases with CGSA funds in the absence of the Treasurer.
 - vi. Shall organize and oversee CGSA fundraising activities.
 - vii. Shall present an annual report during the spring General Assembly meeting each year.
 - viii. Shall assign a member to take the minutes of any meeting for which the Secretary is absent.
- b. The Vice-President
- i. Shall have the authority to assume the power of the President if
 - 1. The President is
 - a. Known by the graduate student body to be out of town.
 - b. Cannot be found by the other members of the Executive Council nor by the Advisor for seventy-two hours.
 - c. Has requested in writing that the Vice-President assume his/her duties and powers.
 - d. Is removed from office.
 - ii. Shall organize fellowship gatherings with the Secretary.
 - iii. Shall organize elections each April with the Secretary as described in Article VII of this constitution.
 - iv. Shall organize the Distinguished Speaker Series with the Secretary.
 - v. Shall assist the Treasurer in keeping count of member participation at CGSA functions.
- c. The Secretary
- i. Shall succeed the Vice-President if the vice-presidency is vacant at any time.
 - ii. Shall maintain the records and documents of the CGSA. This shall include all documentation that is not specifically assigned to another officer herein.
 - iii. Shall store all documents of the CGSA.
 - iv. Shall make available to the General Assembly and Executive Council any requested documents.
 - v. Shall preside over General Assembly meetings held via e-mail at the request of the President.
 - vi. Shall assist the Vice-President in organizing fellowship gatherings.
 - vii. Shall take the minutes for all meetings for which he/she is in attendance.
 - viii. Shall assist the Vice-President in organizing elections as described in Article VII herein.
 - ix. Shall assist the Vice-President in organizing the Distinguished Speaker Series.
- d. The Treasurer
- i. Shall succeed the Secretary if the secretariat is vacant at any time.
 - ii. Shall have the authority and primary responsibility to sign financial ledgers.
 - iii. Shall have the authority and primary responsibility to make purchases with CGSA funds.

iv. Shall have the primary responsibility of keeping count of member participation at CGSA functions.

v. Shall have the primary responsibility of overseeing the CGSA budget.

D. Duties and Powers of the Executive Council.

a. The Executive Council shall be defined a body composed of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer only.

b. The Executive Council

i. Shall convene at least two times per semester without the General Assembly.

ii. Shall convene a meeting with the Advisor in August and May each year, contingent upon the Advisor's schedule.

iii. Shall review and approve or reject applications from members for funding.

iv. Shall discuss and set the budget each semester.

v. Shall compile the annual report for the President to present as described under the duties of the President.

vi. Shall appoint

1. a Webmaster

2. CGSA Ambassadors from each country, which is represented by the membership body.

E. Duties and Powers of the Officers-elect.

a. Officers-elect shall be those officers who are elected in April but have not taken up office as described in Article VII.

b. Officers-elect shall reserve no rights belonging to the officers of the Executive Council.

c. Officers-elect shall reserve only those rights of active members.

F. Duties and Powers of the Advisor

a. The advisor shall facilitate communication between the CGSA and the faculty and administration of the Department of Chemistry and the University administration.

b. The advisor shall tally and report the vote count at elections as described in Article VII. The Advisor may invite the assistance of another non-member of the CGSA to help him/her tally the votes.

c. The Advisor shall be asked to vote in the event of a tie.

G. Impeachment Procedures

a. Impeachment procedures shall apply to the removal of any officer, officer-elect, or the Advisor.

b. Impeachment procedures shall be initiated at the discretion of the General Assembly only.

c. The impeachment and removal of an individual from office shall proceed as follows.

i. The individual targeted for impeachment shall be notified that a meeting of the General Assembly will be held to determine what action shall be taken.

ii. The individual shall be allowed to defend himself/herself at the meeting before the General Assembly without interruption for no more than one hour.

iii. The President shall present the case for the individual's removal from office. In the even that it is the President being impeached, the highest-ranking officer not being impeached shall present the case for removal.

- iv. The voting taking place during the impeachment and removal process may be tallied and reported by the Advisor or any member of the Executive Council. The result and the number tallies shall both be reported to the General Assembly.
- v. The impeached individual shall then leave the meeting while a vote for removal is taken. A three quarters quorum vote of present and voting members is required for removal.
- vi. If the quorum vote for removal is reached, the removal is immediate, and a special election to replace that individual will begin at that meeting as described in Article VII.

Article VII

Elections

A. Oversight of Elections

- a. Elections shall be organized and coordinated by the Secretary. If the Secretary is unavailable, the Vice-President shall take up all the duties and powers of the Secretary with respect to organizing and coordinating the elections.
- b. Votes shall be tallied by the Advisor and, if the Advisor chooses, an assistant who shall not be a CGSA member. The Advisor shall only report the names of those elected to the General Assembly. The Advisor shall not report the vote count to any CGSA member, officer, or officer-elect.
- c. Elections shall be held at a mandatory, physical meeting of the General Assembly.

B. Timeline and Deadlines

- a. Before April 1st, the Secretary shall announce to the membership that he/she is currently accepting nominations for the election of the Executive Council. Nominations shall be taken through April 15th.
- b. The Secretary shall notify the membership the number of nominations for each office on April 10th.
- c. Elections shall be held every April on a date between April 17th and April 30th as determined by the Secretary.
- d. The Secretary shall announce the date of the election and the nominations for office to the entire CGSA membership on April 16th. The Secretary shall make a point of stating that at the meeting of the General Assembly for elections attendance is mandatory.

C. Nomination Guidelines

- a. Running for any office
 - i. No member shall run for office one year before his/her graduation. Officers shall be expected to remain in the graduate program until June 31st of the year of his/her term of office.
 - ii. No member who is accepted into the graduate program after September 1st of the semester immediately before the election shall be eligible for office.

- iii. No member shall be elected to the Executive Council in the same position more than twice.
 - b. Running for the President's Office
 - i. Members who have been in the graduate program less than eight months shall not be eligible for the President's office.
 - ii. Members who have not served on the Executive Council shall not be eligible for the President's office without fulfilling additional obligations described herein.
 - iii. Members who are ineligible to run for the President's office because he/she has not served on the Executive Council may
 - 1. Petition in writing the Executive Council to be allowed to organized and oversee the major fall or spring fundraiser, under the supervision of the President, in an effort to demonstrate a commitment to the personal responsibilities required of the President's office. Thereafter, that member may run for the President's office in the April election.
 - c. Members shall not nominate themselves for office.
 - d. All members who are nominated shall be eligible to be on the ballot.
 - i. A nominated member shall have the power to withdraw his/her nomination by requesting the withdrawal in writing to the Secretary.
 - e. Nominations shall be accepted by the Secretary via email only from the university-regulated, NetID email addresses of those members making nominations.
- D. Officers-Elect
- a. Shall be known collectively as the "officers-elect" and individually as "President-elect", "Vice-President-elect", "Secretary-elect", and "Treasurer-elect" until they take office on August 1st of the year they are elected.
 - b. Shall have no duties or responsibilities beyond those of active members until August 1st. There shall be no meeting requirement for these officers-elect to take up office.
- E. Special Elections
- a. If a member of the Executive Council is removed from office, leaves the graduate program, or is otherwise unable to continue as a member of the Executive Council, the remaining officers shall reorganize by the orders of succession described in Article VI.
 - b. After any succession a special election shall be announced immediately by the Secretary on as soon a date as possible to fill the vacant office.
 - c. For a special election, the Secretary shall allow time for nominations and announce a date for the election as his/her discretion.
 - d. An officer chosen in a special election shall take up his/her office immediately.
 - e. If a member of the Executive Council leaves office after officers-elect have been elected, the Treasurer-elect will take up office as Treasurer immediately after the Executive Council reorganized with respect to the succession order.

Article VIII

Emergency Spending

- A. If the CGSA has less than \$3000 in its account, no money shall be spent apart from buying inventory for the purpose of raising money.
- B. If the CGSA has less than \$10,000 in its account,
 - a. The CGSA shall not make any purchases that are not described in Article IX.
 - b. The CGSA shall suspend the Distinguished Speaker Series as described in Article IX.

Article IX

Budget

- A. Funding for CGSA initiatives, scholarships, and other projects shall receive priority-based funding. Monies assigned to specific initiatives described herein shall be fungible if the membership need for those funds is none. Monetary needs for initiatives shall be evaluated at the beginning of each semester by the Executive Council after requested funds have been allocated to scholarship applicants.
- B. The Executive Council shall consider awarding funds to those members who do not otherwise have applicable funding sources (i.e. fellowships, scholarships, etc.) first. The General Assembly shall have the power to overrule funding decisions upon appeal.
- C. Each year the CGSA shall fund
 - a. Scholarships
 - i. To graduating members.
 - ii. To members presenting at regional and national conferences.
 - iii. To members attending regional and national research-related workshops.
 - iv. To members traveling to regional and national research institutes for the purpose of furthering and enhancing their research.
 - b. Fellowship Gatherings
 - i. In the fall semester before September 15th to welcome new members to the CGSA and the chemistry department.
 - ii. In the spring semester at a time to be determined by the Vice-President.
 - c. The Distinguished Speaker Series
- D. Scholarships
 - a. Graduation Scholarships
 - i. Shall be awarded to a member only once.
 - ii. Shall be valued at a \$100 maximum for each member.
 - iii. Shall be awarded to members during their graduating semester after their applications have been approved by the Executive Council or the General Assembly.
 - iv. Shall be assigned the highest priority in the budget.
 - v. Shall be allotted 54% of the budget if the budget is less than \$10,000.
 - b. Conferences, Workshops, and Off-Campus Research

- i. Shall be awarded to members after their applications have been approved by the Executive Council of the General Assembly.
 - ii. Shall be awarded for no more than a combined total of \$300 for any member per year.
 - iii. Shall not be awarded for applications received more than a month and a half after the start of the semester during which the travel takes place.
 - 1. Shall not be awarded *ex post facto*.
 - iv. Shall receive 10% of the budget if the budget is less than \$10,000.
 - v. Funding for conferences
 - 1. Shall be assigned less priority than graduation scholarships but greater priority than all other funding.
 - 2. Shall be limited to a \$100 maximum per member per conference for regional conferences.
 - 3. Shall be limited to a \$200 maximum per member per conference for national conferences.
 - vi. Funding for workshops and off-campus research
 - 1. Shall be assigned less priority than graduation scholarships and conferences but greater priority than all other funding.
 - 2. Shall be limited to \$100 per workshop or research trip.
- E. Fellowship Gatherings
 - a. Shall be assigned less priority than all scholarships but greater priority than all other funding.
 - b. Shall receive 6% of the budget if the budget is less than \$10,000.
 - c. Shall be held a minimum of twice per year.
- F. The Distinguished Speaker Series
 - a. Shall not be funded if the budget is less than \$10,000.
 - b. Shall be organized by the Vice-President and the Secretary.
 - c. Shall be held once a year if the budget allows.

Article X

Amending Procedure

- A. Amending shall be defined as the addition of any new articles to this constitution.
- B. Amendments to this constitution shall be proposed in writing at least two weeks prior to the time they are to be voted upon.
 - a. An announcement in writing shall be made to the membership by the Secretary before the meeting during which the amendment shall be voted on.
 - i. The announcement shall contain language detailing the proposed amendment.
- C. Adoption of the amendments shall be adopted if approved by three quarters of the present and voting members.

Article XI

Revision

- A. Revision shall be defined as **any** changes made to the existing articles of this constitution.
- B. Revision of this constitution shall be initiated by a vote of the General Assembly.
 - a. An announcement shall be made at least one month previous to the vote to revise that alerts all members to the pending vote to revise the constitution.
- C. Revision of this constitution shall be undertaken only if a motion of revision is approved by three quarters of the present and voting members of the General Assembly.
 - a. If such a revision is approved, the revision shall be undertaken by a committee appointed by the President of the CGSA. The President shall appoint a member to serve as Chairperson of the Revision Committee.
 - i. An announcement must be made at least one month previous to the vote to ratify the revised constitution that alerts all members to the pending vote to ratify the new constitution.
 - 1. This announcement must contain a copy of the new form of the constitution to be voted on.
- D. The revision of this constitution shall be adopted or rejected by ballot and shall require a three quarters majority vote of the present and voting members for adoption.

Article XII

Non-Discrimination Policy

CGSA shall follow strictly the Mississippi State University non-discrimination policy. “MSU formally reiterates and reaffirms its commitment to the principles of equal opportunity, affirmative action, and diversity. Discrimination based upon race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status is a violation of federal and state law and MSU policy and will not be tolerated. Discrimination based upon sexual orientation or group affiliation is a violation of MSU policy and will not be tolerated. This nondiscrimination policy applies to all programs administered by the University. The University community should be guided not only by what is legally required, but also by fairness, working together to ensure that the University clearly and unequivocally demonstrates commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, values the contributions of every individual, and benefits from its diversity.”