

Constitution of  
Microbiology Graduate Student Association  
University of Georgia, Athens  
RATIFIED APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2020

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## Article I - Mission Statement

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The name of this organization shall be Microbiology Graduate Student Association (hereafter “MGSA”). The purpose of the MGSA shall be to represent the interests of graduate students of the University of Georgia Athens Microbiology Department. To fulfill this mission MGSA officers will be leaders in the student community, enhance the graduate student experience, and facilitate communication with the faculty and department. It is the responsibility of every MGSA officer to ensure that this purpose is fulfilled by MGSA and to assist each other in this endeavor. To identify the needs of the graduate student population, MGSA is to assess data collected from the Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey. MGSA officers are required to meet with the student body, either in town-hall- or focus group-style meetings to discuss survey results and create solutions to problems identified. MGSA shall represent these needs to the faculty in an annual report and adapt MGSA programming to meet these needs.

## Article II - Constitutional Guidelines

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The MGSA shall ratify this constitution by a simple quorum of officers at the beginning of their term.

The MGSA shall amend this constitution by a simple majority vote of present members on a proposal to amend and then a second simple majority vote of present members on the final amendment. All members shall be informed of the vote prior to the vote and shall have an opportunity to vote in absentia if the need arises.

## Article III - Membership

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Membership shall be limited to regularly enrolled (i.e., degree-eligible) University of Georgia graduate students in the Department of Microbiology. Any and all such students shall automatically be considered members. The MGSA shall not require any dues or payments from members.

- a. Membership and all privileges, including voting and officer positions, will be extended to all MGSA members without regard to race, color, sex (including pregnancy and past sexual harassment), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.
- b. Membership and all privileges, including voting and officer positions, will be extended to all MGSA members in accordance with the University of Georgia Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title VI protects people from discrimination based on race, color or national origin in programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states the following: No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits

of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

## Article IV - MGSA meetings and Communication

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Regular meetings of the MGSA shall be called to discuss current goals, projects, and plans with MGSA members. Special meetings of the MGSA can be called for by any officer anytime if a need arises. All members must be duly informed of any meetings of MGSA. MGSA members shall be informed of all MGSA events via e-mail and social media.

## Article V - Officer Selection and Terms

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MGSA Officers are required to be graduate students enrolled at University of Georgia, Athens Department of Microbiology during their tenure in office. MGSA officers shall serve at a minimum a one year term from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. Officers may serve more than one term in the same position or different position. Officers shall be nominated by other eligible members of MGSA or self-nominate by the election date. Elections shall be held on "Reading Day", as determined by the University of Georgia Academic Calendar of the Spring semester. Students present or absent during MGSA elections may be nominated for a position only if permission by said individual is granted to an attending MGSA officer. Officers shall be elected from the pool of nominees by public or online voting, with winners determined by simple majority of present members and a run-off in the case of a tie. If an officer's position is not filled by nomination and election, a second election will be held in two weeks from the original election. Failure to fill the vacant position by an eligible Graduate Student after the second election will result in the disbanding of MGSA.

MGSA officers are responsible for the recruitment and training of new members and must ensure the responsibilities for each position are clearly outlined and advertised for interested parties. MGSA is responsible for a successful turnover of MGSA materials and responsibilities to new MGSA officers. Officers who do not fulfill their required duties as stated by this constitution shall be voted out of office by a majority vote an officer quorum. Nominations with elections following two weeks after, shall be held to fill the vacant position.

## Article VI - Officer Positions

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The MGSA board shall be made up of the following officer positions: President, Co-Recruitment Chair, Treasurer, Social Chair and Peer Mentor Chair. The office of Co-recruitment chair shall be filled by two

individuals. It is also recommended that the offices of peer mentor and social chairs are each held by two individuals.

MGSA officers are encouraged to appoint ad hoc subcommittees/junior members to help in planning and execution of any MGSA sponsored events.

## Article VII - Quorum

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Participation in the organization is on a voluntary basis. However, a quorum of four (4) of the six (6) officers is required to transact MGSA business. If the quorum requirement of four officers is not met, the Microbiology Graduate Coordinator and/or Department Head must hold emergency elections within two weeks of falling below officer quorum to fill all vacant positions. If vacant positions cannot be filled, MGSA shall be disbanded.

## Article VIII - President

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The duties of the President shall be to represent the MIBO graduate student needs to the faculty, communicate faculty plans to the graduate student body, and guide MGSA officers to fulfill the MGSA Mission Statement.

To do so the president will 1) meet regularly with the head of the MIBO department, 2) communicate changes to the graduate students, 3) set and lead monthly MGSA meetings to discuss how to fulfill the MGSA mission statement with semesterly plans for each officer to coordinate, and 4) coordinate elections for the following years' officers and ensure thorough transition of duties to new officers.

The president shall also invite and introduce a student invited seminar speaker on behalf of the MGSA for upcoming departmental seminar series, ensure that MGSA officers are using Micro Grad Social Media accounts to facilitate e-mail communication, and to provide de jure assistance to other MGSA officers when fulfilling the duties required of them by this constitution.

Semesterly Tasks will include but not be limited to:

Summer

- July: Hold 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of new MGSA officers to ratify the constitution, discuss MGSA mission statement, clarify roles and discuss graduate student satisfaction survey (GSSS) results.
- July: Meet with head of the MIBO department to discuss MGSA plans and be informed about faculty plans. Draft a summary e-mail to communicate this information to the graduate student body.
- August: Meet with officers to discuss recommended program changes in response to GSSS results. Also discuss chairs' responsibilities, with focus on welcome retreat and budget creation.

## Fall

- August-December: Hold monthly meetings to ensure MGSA officers fulfill duties and fulfill mission statement
- August-December: Meet with head of department on a monthly to by-monthly frequency to discuss departmental news and MGSA plans. Draft a summary e-mail to communicate this information to the graduate student body.
- August/September: Assign graduate students to seminar speaker lunches
- September/October: Offer Official Recommendations to Graduate Affairs Committee in response to GSSS results
- September: Request nominations and poll students for MGSA invited speaker. Invite said speaker.

## Spring

- January-May: Hold monthly meetings to ensure MGSA officers fulfill duties and fulfill mission statement
- January-May: Meet with head of department on a monthly to by-monthly frequency to discuss departmental news and MGSA plans. Draft a summary e-mail to communicate this information to the graduate student body.
- January: Assign graduate students to seminar speaker lunches
- March: Coordinate April “Micro Matters” event with Head of Department and Social Chair.
- April: Assess GSSS for potential edits and request edits from faculty and students
- April: Coordinate new officer elections
- May: Submit GSSS to graduate students for participation
- May/June: Ensure current MGSA officers meet with newly elected officers to transfer positions.

## Article IX - Treasurer

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The office of Treasurer will be filled by one elected member (Treasurer) or two (Co-Treasurers). This officer shall be responsible for acquiring and managing funds to be used exclusively for MGSA business. The (Co)-Treasurer(s) shall have care of two official accounts (the “Student Activities Fee Account” and the “Lab Manual Account”) and one unofficial account (the “cash box”). The (Co-)Treasurer(s) will ensure that the funds in the two official and one unofficial accounts are spent in such ways, within the law and University policy, so as to bring the greatest professional and social benefits to the members of MGSA as defined in “Membership”..

Semesterly tasks will include but not be limited to:

## Fall

- July-August: Organize the sale of Fall lab manuals ordered in the previous fiscal year.

- August: Ensure that MGSA is registered with the Center for Student Organizations (CSO) unless the President takes this duty upon themselves.
- August: Apply for funds from Franklin College (the Student Activities Fund) for use as the “Student Activities Fee Account”, unless the President takes this duty upon themselves.
- August-September: Within one month after funds have been received from the Fall lab manual sales and the Student Activities fund, meet with the Department Business Manager (DBM) and the other MGSA officers to determine a budget for the expenditure of the funds in the two official accounts.
- October-November: Coordinate the ordering of the Spring lab manuals with the undergraduate lab lecturers, and coordinate pick up/delivery of the lab manuals.
- December: Discuss spring semester budget with MGSA officers

### Spring

- January: Within one month after funds have been received from Spring lab manual sales, meet with the DBM and the other MGSA officers to discuss the budget for expenditures from the two official accounts for the spring semester.
- March-April: Coordinate the ordering of the Summer and Fall lab manuals with the undergraduate lab lecturers and coordinate pick up/delivery of the manuals. April-May: Unless the Social Chair takes this responsibility upon themselves, poll the department to gather and vote on ideas for promotional items for the next year. Order promotional items using the Lab Manual account.

### Additional responsibilities

- Assess funds for the awarding of semesterly travel grants. MGSA officers may apply for said travel grants but must exclude themselves from selection of award recipients. Volunteers from the student body may be chosen to aid in selections of award recipients.
- Throughout the year and in coordination with the other officers, promote the good image of the department through the sale of promotional items purchased the previous year.
- At least once quarterly, meet/correspond with the DBM to discuss the status of the two official accounts and update the budget if necessary.
- Promptly communicate to the DBM any and all documents relating to expenditures from either of the official accounts (invoices, receipts, etc.), or verify that these have been communicated by others who receive funds from either of these accounts.
- Manage the unofficial account with honesty and in accordance with precedent.

## Article X - Recruitment Chair

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The office of Recruitment Chair shall be filled by two co-recruitment chairs. These co-recruitment chairs will be responsible for coordinating recruitment events to recruit students from the ILS program to the

MIBO department. It should be noted that these responsibilities do not fall SOLELY on the recruitment chair(s). Recruitment is important for our whole department, every MGSA member and graduate students at large are expected to contribute! Recruitment chairs will also be expected to help other MGSA officers with their duties.

Semesterly tasks will include but not be limited to:

Summer/ Early Fall

- Identify potential MIBO rotators within the ILS program
- August: Organize Retreat in collaboration with Social Chair, head of department, and graduate coordinator (purpose: to entice ILS students to rotate in the MIBO dept.) Publicize event via ILS List-Servs and social media channels (before and during)

Late Fall/Spring

- November: Meet with Graduate Coordinator in the fall to discuss Spring recruitment activities.
- December/January: Recruit volunteers for ILS and MIBO events (as applicable)
- December/January: Coordinate volunteers with ILS recruitment chairs
- January/February: Prepare itinerary to send out to recruits and MIBO department
- February: Publicize events on social media channels (before and during)
- March: Coordinate March Recruitment lunch. Can be carried out by recruitment chairs only.

## Article XI - Social Chair

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The Social chair is responsible for prompting discussion about monthly social and/or career events during MGSA meetings. It is expected that at minimum one event is held per month. For each event, the social chair is responsible for coordinating the location, proposing a budget, allocating the appropriate amount of food and types of food, and delegating any additional tasks to other MGSA members. It is the Social Chairs' responsibility that these events are adequately advertised through e-mail and MIBO Social Media accounts. In addition, the social chair will maintain the MGSA closet organized and stocked with the help of other MGSA officers.

Semesterly tasks may include but not be limited to:

Fall

- August- Welcome retreat planned in conjunction with recruitment chairs
- September - November: Monthly socials and/or career event of choice

Spring

- January: Welcome event for incoming class

- February: No event due to recruitment
- March – May: Monthly Social and/or career event of choice
- April: Micro Matters event (this event will be planned with the help of the President, and head of the Department)
- May: Coordinate REU ice cream social with REU Graduate Assistant and/or Coordinator

Social Media- The events listed above should be advertised through the different MIBO social media accounts, and the social chair is responsible ensuring that these events are advertised. The management of the accounts can be delegated to other members of MGSA including the President, the Peer Mentoring Chair(s), and Recruitment Chair(s).

## Article XII - Peer Mentor Chairs

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Peer Mentoring chair(s) will be responsible for overseeing the MIBO Peer Mentoring Program. The chair(s) will delegate tasks to mentors, recruit new members, arrange meeting times, and liaise between the mentor program, ILS, MGSA, and the MIBO department.

Semesterly tasks will include but not be limited to:

### Summer

- Discuss transition with mentees (1<sup>st</sup> years) to mentor roles
- Provide “How to be a good mentor training” to new mentors
- Contact ILS to advertise peer mentor program
- Identify first set or rotators

### Fall

- August & September: Select mentors who will carry out the coffee/donut socials for the first year rotators.
  - o 3 events (1 per rotation)
  - o Ensure mentors leading events will announce to dept/rotators the dates and times, get the snacks, recruit other mentors for Q&A panels
- November/December: Circulate survey to rotators & mentors to adjust to needs for Spring
- November – January: Plan events for the Spring semester and assign who is going to host the spring events.)

### Spring

- January- Circulate to other peer mentors who the incoming first years are and who the mentors are (an email list of both).
- January – Send out volunteer form to mentors for leading monthly meetings with first years.

- January-May – Coordinate the monthly or by-monthly events catered to first year needs. This includes supporting mentors who lead monthly events, maintaining regular communications with mentors and first years, and disseminating information to MGSA and the department at large.
  - o Can include social events, topic-focused workshops, and one-on-one meet-ups between mentors and mentees.
- April-June- Recruit new mentors for following year and delegate tasks to other mentors relating to recruiting and training
- May-Circulate survey to rotators & mentors to adjust to needs of mentoring program for the following Fall.

Social Media- The Peer Mentoring events listed above should be advertised using the MIBO social media accounts. The Peer Mentoring chairs are responsible for ensuring that the events listed above are advertised and can delegate these responsibilities to other MGSA officers including, but not limited to, the Social Chair(s), the President, and the Recruitment Chair(s).