

Constitution
Society of Biology Graduate Students of the University of Western Ontario
August 2021

1 Name

1.1

5.1.15 SOBGS Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Representative(s)

5.2 Duties for these positions are described in Section 12.

6 Meetings

6.1 Decorum

- 6.1.1 Responsibility for maintaining decorum and preparing the agenda will normally rest with the Chairperson. If the Chairperson is not present, then the responsibility will pass to the Principal SOGS Representative.
- 6.1.2 Society members shall conduct themselves honourably and respectfully at all times.
- 6.1.3 The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order may be proposed at any time by a Society member and will then be invoked upon being seconded by another Society member, in a manner consistent with the Constitution of the Society.

6.2 General Meetings

- 6.2.1 General Meetings may be called at an Elected Representatives Meeting (Section 6.3), by any Elected Representative, and the call will succeed if seconded.
- 6.2.2 The Chairperson shall ensure that a General Meeting of the Society occurs at

Representatives.

- 6.3.2.1 A request for an Elected Representatives Meeting, communicated to the Chairperson from an Elected Representative, will obligate the Chairperson to call a meeting within 4 weeks' time.
- 6.3.2.2 Any other Society member may attend and speak at a meeting, providing that the individual is recognized through a simple majority vote (greater than 50%) of Elected Representatives in attendance.

defined in Section 9.

8.5 A Society member may be barred from membership on a SOBGS subcommittee if they are unable to take part in the business of the SOBGS subcommittee due to conflict of interest frequently occurring.

9 Complaints against an elected representative

9.1 Filing a complaint

- 9.1.1 Any Society member may file a formal complaint about an Elected Representative.
- 9.1.2 Complaints about the Chairperson shall be addressed to the Principal SOGS Representative and complaints about any other Elected Representative shall be addressed to the Chairperson.
- 9.1.3 The person who receives the complaint shall be identified as “the Recipient”, the person submitting the complaint shall be identified as “the Appellant”, and the person who is the subject of the complaint shall be identified as “the Subject”.
- 9.1.4 Society members may file a formal complaint by sending a letter to the appropriate representative with the reason for their complaint. Reasons for complaint include, but are not limited to, failure to perform duties as described Section 12, actions considered offensive to a Society member, and voting while in a conflict of interest.

9.2 Investigation of the complaint

- 9.2.1 Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Recipient shall perform the following actions:
 - 9.2.1.1 Within one week, the Recipient shall inform the Subject that a complaint has been lodged against him or her, and that the process of investigation as described in Section 9 has been initiated. The Subject shall be given a reasonable amount of time (no more than one week) to respond to the Recipient and address the problem described in the formal complaint. The Recipient shall immediately inform the Appellant of the response of the Subject, and ask the Appellant if this response is satisfactory.
 - 9.2.1.2 If the Appellant is unsatisfied by the response of the Subject, the Appellant may inform the Recipient of his or her intention to pursue impeachment of the Subject, as described in Section 9.3. At this time, the Appellant must explain why his or her complaint impinges on the ability of the Subject to perform his or her duties as an Elected Representative.

9.3 Impeachment

- 9.3.1 The Recipient shall inform the Subject that a decision was made to pursue impeachment proceedings.
- 9.3.2 If the Recipient believes that the complaint may be spurious, he or she may, at his or her discretion, organize an ad hoc committee comprised of three Elected Representatives, chosen by random draw, to discuss the merits of the complaint against the Subject (within no more than one week). If the complaint is considered merited, the Recipient proceeds with impeachment. If the complaint is considered unmerited, the Recipient shall inform the Appellant of the ad hoc committee’s decision.
- 9.3.3 The Recipient shall call, organize, and chair a General Meeting within two weeks of the Recipient informing the Subject of the decision to pursue impeachment. The Recipient shall inform the Society membership by the biology graduate student electronic mailing list and describe the nature of the complaint against

the Subject, while not using the name of the Subject and being tactful to the nature of the complaint.

9.3.4 The Recipient shall write a motion to impeach the Subject, which will be presented at the General Meeting. This motion will describe the nature of the Appellant's complaint, and only the Subject of the complaint is permitted to be named in the motion.

9.3.5 At the General Meeting, the motion to impeach the Subject shall be read and discussed. A vote by secret ballot shall be taken at the meeting. If two-thirds or greater majority vote for impeachment, then the position shall be declared vacant and a by-election shall be declared as described in Section 7.

10 Finance

10.1 The Society shall only use its funds towards the best fulfilment of the purpose of the Society, as described in Section 2.

10.1.1 The Society shall only use its funds in a manner consistent with the purpose for which they were collected or earmarked.

10.1.2 The Society shall use its funds for events and initiatives in a manner proportionately equitable among streams of the department.

10.2 The Chairperson and Principal SOGS representative will administer the finances of the Society, working in collaboration with the Biolog

- 12.3.1.1 Those among the six Elected Representatives that did not assume a SOGS councillor position will be assigned the position of Alternate SOGS SOBGS Representatives.
- 12.3.1.2 In case of a tie in the number of votes received by the SOGS SOBGS Elected Representatives, the Chairperson, the Principal SOGS SOBGS Representative and the SOGS SOBGS Elected Representatives

- 12.6.1 Attend all PSAC Local 00610 steward meetings.
- 12.6.2 Perform the work of a steward as defined by PSAC Local 00610.
- 12.6.3 Liaise with the Chairperson when relevant information may need to be presented at faculty meetings.
- 12.6.4 Communicate PSAC Local 00610 business at Society meetings.
- 12.6.5 Has voting rights at SOBGS Elected Representative Meetings (1 vote).
- 12.6.6 Required to volunteer for at least one fundraising event per year as organized by the Social Committee. These fundraising events can include (but are not limited to) helping run food sales, setting up for fundraising events, and cleaning up after fundraising events.

12.7 Graduate Education Committee SOBGS Representative – 2 positions

- 12.7.1 Elected through the formal election process of the Society.
- 12.7.2 From among the Graduate Education Committee SOBGS Representatives, one will be selected by those representatives as the spokesperson at Society meetings.
- 12.7.3 Attend all Graduate Education Committee meetings
- 12.7.4 Work towards the goals of the Graduate Education Committee as defined by the committee itself. These duties may include:
 - 12.7.4.1 Selection of biology graduate students for admission. Representatives may not serve on the admissions committee of current students who are re-applying to the department as a PhD student after completion of their MSc, or for transfer of MSc to PhD,
 - 12.7.4.2 Setting and implementing all biology departmental graduate policy,
 - 12.7.4.3 Organization of the biology graduate curriculum,
 - 12.7.4.4 Organization of qualifying exams,
 - 12.7.4.5 Appointment of members of advisory committees,
 - 12.7.4.6 Arranging for the defense of theses,
 - 12.7.4.7 Ranking of post-graduate scholarship and post-doctoral fellowship applications,
 - 12.7.4.8 Consideration of requests for extensions of biology departmental financial support,
 - 12.7.4.9 Assist the yearly update and publication of the Biology Graduate Student Handbook.
 - 12.7.4.10 Communicate Graduate Education Committee business at Society meetings.
- 12.7.5 Have voting rights at SOBGS Elected Representative Meetings (1 vote each).
- 12.7.6 Required to volunteer for at least one fundraising event per year as organized by the Social Committee. These fundraising events can include (but are not limited to) helping run food sales, setting up for fundraising events, and cleaning up after fundraising events.

12.8 Seminar Committee SOBGS Representative

- 12.8.1 One Fall Representative will be elected in September, with the remaining Winter Representative(s) (*in a number allocated by the Seminar Committee*) elected in January, through the formal election process of the Society (Section 7.2.1).
- 12.8.2 From among the Seminar Committee SOBGS Representatives, one will be selected by those representatives as the spokesperson at Society meetings.
- 12.8.3 Attend all Seminar Committee meetings.
- 12.8.4 Follow the SOBGS Graduate Student Seminar Hosting Guidelines, available

on the Biology Department website.

12.8.5 Work towards the goals of the Seminar Committee as defined by the committee itself. These duties may include:

12.8.5.1 Assist in the invitation and reception of speakers for the biology departmental seminar series held weekly during the fall, winter, and spring terms,

12.8.5.2 Facilitate the annual election of a biology graduate student-nominated speaker(s).

12.8.6 Communicate Seminar Committee business at Society meetings.

12.8.7 Have voting rights at SOBGS Elected Representative Meetings (1 vote each).

12.8.8 Required to volunteer for at least one fundraising event per year as organized by the Social Committee. These fundraising events can include (but are not limited to) helping run food sales, setting up for fundraising events, and cleaning up after fundraising events.

12.9 Undergraduate Education Committee SOBGS Representative

12.9.1 Elected through the formal election process of the Society, *in a number allocated by the Undergraduate Education Committee.*

12.9.2 From among the Undergraduate Education Committee SOBGS Representatives, one will be selected by those representatives as the spokesperson at Society meetings.

12.9.3 Attend all Undergraduate Education Committee meetings.

12.9.4 Communicate concerns received from the outreach representatives, who

- 12.10.8 Have voting rights at SOBGS Elected Representative Meetings (1 vote each).
- 12.10.9 Required to volunteer for at least one fundraising event per year as organized by the Social Committee. These fundraising events can include (but are not limited to) helping run food sales, setting up for fundraising events, and cleaning up after fundraising events.

12.11 Outreach Committee SOBGS Representative

- 12.11.1 Elected through the formal election process of the Society, *in a number allocated by the Outreach Committee.*
- 12.11.2 From among the Outreach Committee SOBGS Representatives, one will be selected by those representatives as the spokesperson at Society meetings.
- 12.11.3 Update the SOBGS section of the Biology Department website.
- 12.11.4 Attend all Outreach committee meetings.
- 12.11.5 Maintain and publish content on applicable Society social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others as authorized by the Society.
- 12.11.6 Work towards the goals of the Outreach Committee as defined by the committee itself. These duties may include:
 - 12.11.6.1 Marketing the Biology Department for the purpose of attracting new students,
 - 12.11.6.2 Educating the public on recent research, particularly from within the Biology Department.
- 12.11.7 Required to receive weekly email updates from BUGS (Biology

- 12.12.6 Communicate Social Committee business at Society meetings.
- 12.12.7 Have voting rights at SOBGS Elected Representative Meetings (1 vote each).
- 12.12.8 Required to volunteer for at least one fundraising event per year as organized by the Social Committee. These fundraising events can include (but are not limited to) helping run food sales, setting up for fundraising events, and cleaning up after fundraising events.

12.13 SOBGS Sustainability Representative

- 12.13.1 Elected through the formal election process of the Society.
- 12.13.2 Start and work to improve environmental sustainability within the Biology Department.
- 12.13.3 Liaise between biology graduate students and the SOGS Sustainability Committee.
- 12.13.4 Seek membership on the SOGS Sustainability Committee.
- 12.13.5 Work with SOBGS event coordinators to ensure SOBGS events are conducted sustainably.
- 12.13.6 Run the organic compost program within the Biology Department.

12.15 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Representatives – 2 elected positions

12.15.1

Change Log:

Please add to this list if any minor typos or numerical errors have been fixed by the chair as outlined in section 12.1.11. Major changes to the Constitution require a vote during the AGM and are not to be included in the change log.

Change	Date	Personal
1. Section 12.6 - Changed numbering to 12.7 and adjusted subsequent section numbers.	August 2019	Ryley
2. Formatting of number system fixed.	August 2019	Ryley
3. Section 5 – Added 5.1.15 to include newly formed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee	August 2021	Emma