

The Constitution of the Chemistry Graduate Student Association
Chemistry Department - Georgia State University
Term:

Article I. Name of the Organization

Chemistry Graduate Student Association (CGSA)

Article II. Affiliation with other groups

Section 1. Local

Locally, we are affiliated with the Chemistry Department at Georgia State University (Department). Our members are graduate students of the department and CGSA-sponsored events are often joint efforts of the organization and the Department.

Section 2. State

We do not currently have any official state affiliations.

Section 3. National

We do not currently have any official national affiliations.

Article III. Purpose, aims, functions of the organization

The purpose of the Chemistry Graduate Student Association is to promote the interaction of graduate students with each other and faculty members of the Department. We assist members in the adjustment and orientation to program requirements, address graduate student concerns with the Graduate Director, Associate Graduate Director, or Graduate Coordinator, organize events and/or meetings promoting graduate research, involve students in academic and social events within the Department, and provide a smooth transition for students as they move into their graduate careers.

The aims of the officers are to build upon and further promote integration and collaboration between students within each of the Core Exam Areas and promote student development through seminars/lectures and other talks. Two of the main goals for the CGSA will be to (1) have guest speakers give talks and advise students on the many available but not necessarily known options that are available for Chemistry Graduate Students, to ensure that they are aware that their options after graduation are not limited to academia and industry and (2) promote openness, collegiality, and a sense of unity among the graduate students within the Department. Other goals may include applying for software and other tools that would be readily available to students to enhance their research and/or research presentations, and the establishment of a book loan/check-out program for students in need of required texts for their required courses.

The executive officers will function to organize and collaborate events that are often held in conjunction with the Department. These yearly events include but are not limited to the Fall Graduate Welcome, and Poster Day Research Presentation and Talks Recruitment Weekend. The organization functions as a strong and active link between the Chemistry graduate students and the Graduate Director to increase academic and professional opportunities, voice concerns and improve graduate student working conditions. Through town-hall meetings and via direct contact with each representative from each of the Core Exam Areas students can have their concerns addressed and may be advised on what may be taken in order to provide an efficient and improved environment that is most conducive to build, develop and enhance the academic and/or research progress for the department as a whole, all of which is overseen by the CSGA advisor.

The policies and procedures described herein comply with University policies and represent the Chemistry Graduate Student Association's collective decision as to the best means of achieving a balance between the scholarly, academic, and professional goals of graduate students within the Department.

Article IV. Membership requirements

Graduate students within the Department who are currently enrolled in a Chemistry Masters or Chemistry Doctoral degree are eligible for membership in the CGSA. This membership does not require any dues nor does it require any registration, because every currently enrolled Graduate student is an understood member of the CGSA. Members may be Ph.D. or Master's students associated with a research lab, or Master's students not associated with any research lab pursuing the non-thesis track. Membership in the CGSA does not take into consideration race, color, creed, nationality, sex, disability or sexual orientation.

Article V. Officers

The executive board of the CGSA has four nominated/voted in officers representing the Core Exam Areas of the Department of Chemistry: Analytical Chemistry, Biochemistry, Biophysical/Bioinformatics/Computational Chemistry, and Organic/Medicinal Chemistry. Of these four elected officers one representative will also assume the role of President and another representative the role of Vice President. The Graduate Director supervises the executive board of the CGSA and is responsible for overseeing all decisions, actions, amendments, meetings and/or events held by the CGSA and may take/relay any information he/she deems important to the Departmental Chair for the Department and other Chemistry Department Faculty.

Each member of the executive committee will:

- (i) Maintain the Constitution.
- (ii) Ensure lawfulness and fairness of decision making
- (iii) Collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and collaborative functions in conjunction with the advice and approval from the Graduate Director

- (iv) Develop and implement the vision, policies, priorities and values of the Association
- (v) Provide outstanding leadership
- (vi) Ensure the effective management of Services within the Association
- (vii) Represent their Core Exam Area and bring their views into the Association's decision making process; i.e. become the advocate of and for the students within the Core Exam Area they represent
- (viii) Effectively represent the interests of their Core Exam Area
- (ix) Balance different interests and concerns identified within the Core Exam Area they represent
- (x) Participate in the governance and management of the Association
- (xi) Be available to represent the Association to other bodies/groups/associations/councils, especially in situations when the President is unable to represent the Association under reasonable circumstances
- (xii) Maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics at all times.
- (xiii) Have such rights of access to such documents, information, and official web site of the CGSA as are necessary for them to efficiently function within the association in accordance with the law.
- (xiv) Will not make public, any information which is confidential or exempt, without the consent of the CGSA executive board and the Graduate Director, nor will any executive member divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than an executive member and/or faculty advisor entitled to know it.

Article VI. Operations

1. Voting Eligibility

Those members meeting all the requirements of membership as set forth in article IV will be granted voting privileges.

2. Election Process

The CGSA maintains a staggered election process whereby only two of the four officers are up for election each May. The officers are elected for two year terms. The newly elected officers are junior officers in name only. Effective April 1, 2011, of the two new members elected to the CGSA, one member will be nominated by the officers and assume the role of Vice President. The following year, the Vice President is automatically elevated to President as the two junior officers are elevated to senior officers. The position and/or title of the other three CGSA officers will be determined by the officers themselves. The Organic and Analytical Officers will be elected in even numbered calendar years, and the Physical and Biochemical Officers will be elected in odd numbered years. The representatives for each of the Core Exam Areas are nominated and elected by a tally of votes supervised by the Chemistry Graduate Director and/or the Chemistry Graduate Coordinator towards the end of the Spring semester (May) every year. All members

of the CGSA as outlined in Article VI are invited to participate in the nomination and election process. A Graduate member for their respective Core Exam Area may select nominees for each Core Exam Areas, or they may nominate themselves to represent their stated Core Exam Area. Nominees and the date for casting votes will be announced via e-mail and/or posted on flyers in and around the Department and their associated laboratories. All votes must be submitted in the Graduate office to be considered. In the case where only one individual from one or more Core Exam Areas is nominated, he/she will automatically be deemed the representative for their stated Core Exam Area.

Newly elected representatives are expected to assume their positions immediately after elections. The outgoing President should conduct the transitional process of all CGSA documents, forms, and other pertinent information to the incoming executive committee of the CGSA after the election process has been completed.

3. Removal

Removal of, or suggestion for the discharge of an elected representative may only be done in accordance with the code of ethics outlined for the University and in conjunction with the other members of the CGSA, the Graduate Director and the Departmental Chair for Chemistry, whilst ensuring lawfulness and fairness in the decision making process. This request must be supported by at least two members of the CGSA executive board and the Graduate Director. Two thirds of the majority vote and support by both the Graduate Director and Departmental chair is required to remove the officer. This process must also permit the representative being recommended for removal to defend his/her-self accordingly such that a written notification to the representative of the request, asking the officer to be present at the next meeting and prepared to speak must be done.

4. Meetings

The executive board will meet at least once a semester to discuss all CGSA related issues, plan upcoming events, follow up on concerns and discuss suggestions for improvement. Communication among the four officers for any additional meetings will be communicated via e-mail and/or telephone. General CGSA Town Hall meetings for all members as outlined in Article IV are held at least once a semester, in the Fall and in the Spring. These meetings provide an opportunity for all members of the CGSA to gather in a forum in which they can air concerns, make suggestions and/or ask questions directly to the Chemistry Graduate Director and the Graduate Coordinator. At these meetings a role will be taken to account for those Graduate students attending.

5. Member Rights

CGSA members have a number of rights in their dealings with the Executive Council of the CGSA.

CGSA members have the right to:

- (i) Vote at CGSA elections, Referendums and Recalls.
- (ii) Contact their Core Exam Area specific representative about any matters of concern to them.
- (iii) Obtain a copy of the Constitution.

- (iv) Petition to request a Referendum.
- (v) Find out, from their Core Exam Area specific representative what major decisions are to be discussed by the Executive Board or have been decided by the Executive Board.
- (vi) Complain to the Executive Board's President and have matters referred to the Faculty Advisor at the President's discretion.
- (vii) Complain to the Executive Board's President and/or the Core Exam Area specific representative if they have evidence that they think shows that a Councilor has not followed the GSU/CGSA Code of Conduct.
- (viii) Air grievances, concerns, and suggestions to any officer of the CGSA executive board.
- (ix) The right to participate in any CGSA sponsored event.

Article VII. Finances

CGSA sponsored activities and other cost burdening requirements/changes are financed through monies received from the budget request submitted every September to the Office of Administrative Services for Chartered Student Organizations. All financial expenses are coordinated and supervised by the Faculty advisor for the CGSA, the Chemistry Graduate Coordinator and the Department.

Article VII. Quorum

No quorum is required in order for the CGSA to conduct business, such that the participating members at a given meeting shall constitute a quorum for conducting business.

Article VIII. Referendum and Recall

Section 1: The Executive Board may conduct referendums and initiate recalls of officers and shall allow one month for consideration by Club members, discussion, and voting. Referendums and recalls of officers may also originate from the membership. The signatures of 34% of the CGSA members must support referendums and Recalls in order to be brought for discussion/consideration. Referendums and recalls cannot be submitted and will not be considered at the end of the Spring semester or at the beginning of the election process for new officers which is held in May every year.

Section 2: Referenda and recalls of officers shall be publicized in writing with each member personally receiving notice of the measure and the deadline for voting by

regular email, or hand-carry.

Section 3: The vote on a referendum or recall shall occur at a general membership meeting within three weeks upon receipt of the petition that has 15% of the CGSA members supporting the petition with their signatures. A referendum or recall of an officer must receive a majority of the participating voters to be approved.

Article IX. Amendments

Section 1: Amendment proposals to the Constitution must be submitted in writing. Amendment proposals may originate from the Graduate Director, Executive Board members, or CGSA membership via petition supported by 5% of the members of the CGSA.

Section 2: Proposed amendments to the Constitution require approval by 3 out of four members of the Executive Board to move to a general vote, or two members of the Executive Board and the support of the Graduate Director. Requests for this approval will be sent via email, allowing 10 days for each Executive Board member and / or Graduate Director 10 days to respond. Responses not received after the 10-day period for review are not considered and their vote/s will be considered as part of the general vote for the newly written/amended Constitution.

Section 3: Proposed amendments shall be sent via e-mail notification to the entire CGSA voting members. Email notification shall include the Amendment in its entirety, with an explanation of the rationale behind the proposal. Votes/approval of the constitution should be done via email allowing all voting members 10 days to reply. The amendment shall pass if at least 68% of the votes support the proposed amendment.

Article X. Anti-Hazing Policy

This organization prohibits its members, both individually and collectively from committing any acts of hazing i.e. any willful act or practice by a member or associate member, directed against a member or associate member, which, with or without intent, is likely to: cause bodily harm or danger, offensive punishment, or disturbing pain, compromise the person's dignity; cause embarrassment or shame in public; cause the person to be the object of malicious amusement or ridicule; cause psychological harm or substantial emotional strain; and impair academic or social efforts.

Article XI. Organization Agreement

The Chemistry Graduate Student Association (CGSA) agrees to abide by the Georgia State Code of Conduct. Furthermore, it agrees to abide by all Student Life and Leadership policies as outlined in the student handbook; to communicate via email upon request; to update the organization's records whenever there is a change and submit a re-charter application towards the end of each Spring semester.

Article XII: History of Constitution

This Constitution was created in March of 2009, and has not yet been amended.

The By-Laws of the Chemistry Graduate Student Association, 2009

Section 1. Membership

The only requirement of students in order to obtain membership to the CGSA is enrollment as a Master's or Doctoral student in a specific Core Exam Area in the Chemistry department. Members do not have to formally register in order to be considered an active member. The CGSA does not currently have any expulsion policies in place and any reason for expulsion should and would be directly considered and handled by the Graduate Director and Chair for the Chemistry Department. CGSA member rights are outlined in Article VI, Section 5 under Member Rights.

Section 2. Dues

The CGSA does not collect any dues from its members.

Section 3. Duties of Officers

Outlined in Article V.

Section 4. Executive Board

The Executive board consists of a member from each of the Core Exam Areas: Analytical Chemistry, Biochemistry, Biophysical/Bioinformatics/Computational Chemistry, Organic/Medicinal Chemistry.

Section 5. Committees

Committees organized/supervised under the CGSA will be considered and implemented as needed.

Section 6. Order of Business

Meetings of CGSA officers are usually conducted informally. Usually the President organizes the meeting time and place. Officers bring any topics of interest to the meeting where the four members of the Executive board discuss student-related issues, and improvement measures, as well as plan for any upcoming CGSA sponsored events.

Town Hall Meetings with CGSA members and the Graduate Director and / or Department Chair are announced via e-mail and posted flyers. The President usually presides over this meeting to introduce a forum in which students can ask questions directly to the Graduate Director. The Spring meeting is mandatory for all active student members and the Core Exam Area representatives are responsible for ensuring that CGSA members for that Core Exam Area attend.

Section 7. Amendment Procedures

Amendments can be made to this Constitution as outlined in Article IX under Amendments.