The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization Constitution

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**Founding Members:**

Keri Knowles, Founding Advisor
Christopher Wier, Founding President
Jessica Marbourg, Founding Treasurer
Elizabeth Stone, Founding Vice-President
Chloe Page
Sarah Light
Josh Rieskamp
Kyle Sullivan
Yasmine Cissé
damon DiSabato
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Luke Russel
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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article I</td>
<td>Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article II</td>
<td>Qualifications and Categories of Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article III</td>
<td>Titles, Terms of Office, Type of Selection, Qualifications and Duties of the Leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article IV</td>
<td>Standing Committees: Names, purposes, and composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article V</td>
<td>Method of Removing Officers and Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article VI</td>
<td>Meetings of the Organization: Required meetings and their frequency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article VII</td>
<td>Method of Amending Constitution: Proposals, notice, and voting requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article VIII</td>
<td>Method of Dissolution of Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article IX</td>
<td>Constitutional Amendments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Article I - Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy of the Organization.

Section 1 - Name
The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization (NGSO). Once the student organization has been in good standing with the Ohio State University for two years the committee may vote to change the name to include, “At the Ohio State University.” This shall be treated as an amendment (Article VII).

Section 2 - Purpose
The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is a student organization whose primary purpose is to promote the advancement of its members in and out of the classroom. The committee will speak on behalf of its members, organize academic, career and social events and strive to improve the overall graduate experience within the Neuroscience Graduate Program. This student organization will serve as an opportunity for our students to connect and forge networks for personal and career interactions.

Section 3 - Non-Discrimination Policy
This organization and its members shall not discriminate against any individual(s) for reasons of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Article II - Membership: Qualifications and Categories of Membership.

Section 1 - Student Memberships
The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is open to all graduate students enrolled within the Neuroscience Graduate Program. Those students in good academic standing consisting of a grade point average no lower than 3.0 will have full voting rights within the program.

Section 2 - Honorary Memberships
The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization will also hold two honorary memberships. These positions will be reserved for the Program Director and Program Coordinator of the Neuroscience Graduate Program. Honorary memberships allow the individuals to participate in committee meetings and student events, but will not hold voting rights.

Article III - Organization Leadership: Titles, Terms of Office, Type of Selection, Qualifications and Duties of the Leaders.

The primary duty of all committee members is to work together in a collaborative environment for the benefit of the entire NGSO. The committee members are encouraged to think of themselves as equals in voting and idea generation.

Section 1 - President
Section A - Terms of Office
The president of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is an annual term. A student may serve as president for a maximum of two terms. The presidential terms will begin on the first of August and will terminate on the thirty-first of July.
Section B – Selection
See Election procedures in Article III, Section 7A.

Section C – Qualifications
The president of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization must be enrolled within the Neuroscience Graduate Program. The student must have completed his/her entire first year of study, chosen a lab to conduct their dissertation research, and maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Finally, the student must have advanced to candidacy to be nominated for president.

Section D – Duties
The president will call meetings, initiate the next year’s elections, sign appropriate paperwork, attend university training and vote on necessary matters. The president will attend and participate in committee meetings. The president is responsible for completing the annual paperwork required for the continued operation of the student organization within the Ohio State University. The president will actively participate in the recruitment of students and will serve as a mentor for first year Neuroscience Graduate Program students.

Section 2 - Vice President
Section A - Terms of Office
The vice president of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is an annual term. A student may serve as vice president for a maximum of two terms. The vice presidential terms will begin on the first of August and will terminate on the thirty-first of July.

Section B – Selection
See Election procedures in Article III, Section 7A.

Section C – Qualifications
The vice president of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization at The Ohio State University must be enrolled within the Neuroscience Graduate Program. The student must have completed his/her entire first year of study, chosen a lab to conduct their dissertation research, and maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Finally, the student should have advanced to candidacy to be nominated for vice president.

Section D – Duties
The vice-president will attend and participate in committee meetings and fulfill the roles of the president if the latter is unable to perform those duties.

Section 3 – Treasurer
Section A - Terms of Office
The treasurer of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is an annual term. A student may serve as treasurer for a maximum of two terms. The treasury terms will begin on the first of August and will terminate on the thirty-first of July.

Section B – Selection
See Election procedures in Article III, Section 7A.

Section C – Qualifications
The treasurer of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization must be enrolled within the Neuroscience Graduate Program. The student must have completed his/her entire first year of study, chosen a lab to conduct their dissertation research, and maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0. Finally, the student should have advanced to candidacy to be nominated for treasurer.

**Section D - Duties**
The treasurer will balance, maintain and direct the finances of the student organization. This position will also attend and participate in committee meetings. The treasurer must attend university sanctioned training. The treasurer will request all funds and complete audit forms.

**Section 4 – Secretary**

**Section A – Terms of Office**
The secretary of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is an annual term. A student may serve as secretary for a maximum of two terms. The secretarial terms will begin on the first of August and will terminate on the thirty-first of July.

**Section B – Selection**
See *Election procedures in Article III, Section 7B.*

**Section C – Qualifications**
The secretary of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization must be enrolled within the Neuroscience Graduate Program. The student must have completed his/her entire first year of study, chosen a lab to conduct their dissertation research, and maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0.

**Section D – Duties**
The secretary will attend and participate in all committee meetings. The secretary of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization will work with the committee members to schedule future meetings. The secretary will also take notes and send a follow up email to the committee summarizing the minutes of the meetings. The secretary will also help the president organize student elections.

**Section 5 – Social Chair**

**Section A - Terms of Office**
The social chair of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is an annual term. A student may serve as social chair for a maximum of two terms. The social chair terms will begin on the first of August and will terminate on the thirty-first of July.

**Section B – Selection**
See *Election procedures in Article III, Section 7B.*

**Section C – Qualifications**
The social chair of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization must be enrolled within the Neuroscience Graduate Program. The student must have maintained a grade point average no lower than 3.0.

**Section D – Duties**
The social chair will attend and participate in all committee meetings. The social chair will organize social events for the members of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization.

**Section 6 – Advisor**
Section A - Terms of Office
The advisor position of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is an annual term. There is no restriction on the number of terms, consecutively or nonconsecutively, an individual may serve as advisor. The advising terms will begin on the first of August and will terminate on the thirty-first of July.

Section B – Selection
The student committee, program director and program coordinator will compile a list of candidates for advisor during the month of July. These nominees will be discussed at a committee meeting and voted on by the elected students, program coordinator and program director. Once a unanimous vote has been recorded the committee will request the nominee to serve a one year term. If the individual refuses such offer, the voting and presentation will continue until the committee has found an advisor.

Section C – Qualifications
The advisor must attend university sanctioned training and be a current faculty or staff of the Neuroscience Graduate Program.

Section D – Duties
The advisor must attend university sanction training at least every three years, but may attend training annually if desired. The advisor will approve the organization’s registration annually, approve all funding requests and serve as co-signer on the organization’s bank account. The advisor will attend all committee meetings. If the advisor is not the NGP Director, he or she will coordinate with the director and treasurer to approve funding requests.

Section 7 – Election Procedure
Section A – President, Vice President and Treasurer

1. Nominations: In the first week of July, the president will initiate the selection procedure by requesting student nominations for the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization president. Students may nominate themselves or another student that they feel exemplify the criteria and meet the constitutional qualifications.

2. Campaign Essays: After two weeks, the president and secretary will compile a list of all nominees and request each candidate to write a short essay describing why they are qualified to serve as the next Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization president. The essay should not exceed one page (Times New Roman, font size 11, single spaced with one inch margins). Candidates will have one week to complete their campaign page.

3. Voting: The secretary will organize these essays into a single document and email it to all voting members within the student organization. Students may cast one vote and have one week in which to do so. The students will not vote for vice president and treasurer.

4. Accepting Positions: The nominee receiving the most votes will be awarded the presidential position. If the student does not wish to serve as president he or she may defer to vice president or treasurer. The student receiving the second highest votes will be named vice president. He or she may defer their position to treasurer, or accept the presidential appointment if the position had been passed upon. The nominee receiving the third most votes shall be the next year’s treasurer. The student may waive their right to serve on the committee, or may
accept the president or vice president position if they have been passed upon. The process will continue until all positions have been filled.

**Section B – Secretary and Social Chair**

1. **Nominations:** In the first week of July, the president will initiate the selection procedure by requesting student nominations for the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization secretary and social chair. Students may nominate themselves or another student that they feel exemplify the criteria and meet the constitutional qualifications.

2. **Campaign Essays:** After two weeks, the president and secretary will compile a list of all nominees and request each candidate to write a short essay describing why they are qualified to serve as the next Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization secretary or social chair. The essay should not exceed one page (Times New Roman, font size 11, single spaced with one inch margins). Candidates will have one week to complete their campaign page.

3. **Voting:** The secretary will organize these essays into a single document and email it to all voting members within the student organization. Students may cast one vote for each position and have one week in which to do so.

4. **Accepting Positions:** The nominees receiving the most votes for secretary and the most votes for social chair will serve on the following year’s committee in that capacity.

**Section C – Extraneous Positions**

It shall not be in the best interest of the committee to turn willing students away from participation. Students who have been nominated, but not selected to serve on the committee will be offered the title, “Committee Member.” These students are encouraged to attend and participate in committee meetings.

**Article IV - Standing Committees: Names, purposes, and composition.**

**Section A – Recruiting Committee**
The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization will participate in recruitment each year. All elected members that serve on the committee will be required to serve on the recruitment committee. The President, Vice-President, treasurer and secretary of the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization will also enlist the help of any student from NGP willing to participate. The role of this committee will be to create and distribute posters promoting the program, volunteering during recruitment weeks, and may be asked to visit local colleges and universities.

**Section B – Career Day Committee**
The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization will participate in the Life Science Career Day every other year. The president and treasurer will be required to participate in meetings and act as a liaison between the NGP director, students and the Career Day Committee.

**Section C – Interdisciplinary Graduate Program Symposium Committee**
The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization will participate in the annual Interdisciplinary Graduate Program Symposium. The president and treasurer will be required to
participate in meetings and act as a liaison between the NGP director, students and the Integrated Graduate Program Committee.

**Article V – Method of Removing Officers and Members.**

**Section A – Removing Officers and Advisors**
Officers and advisors will remain active on the committee assuming they remain in good academic standing, represent the student organization positively, and regularly attend and participate in committee meetings and events. If a student serving on the committee allows his or her grade point average to drop below a 3.0, he or she will lose voting privileges for the following quarter. If the student is in poor academic standing for two consecutive quarters, attends less than half of the committee meetings, or fails to promote and represent the student organization in a positive light, he or she may be removed permanently from the committee. In order for such action, the entire voting committee (officers, coordinator and advisor) must unanimously agree on the individual’s removal. Once a committee member has been removed from office, they may not run in future elections for any position.

**Section B – Removing Members**
Members of Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization will only be removed under the most serious offences. Removing members from the organization will be dealt with on a case by case basis and will require a unanimous vote from all committee members and honorary members. If a student is removed from the program they may reenroll one year later, but their reentry will likewise require a unanimous vote from the committee. During said dissolution, the student will not be allowed to participate in program events.

**Section C-Self Removal from the Committee**
If a committee member wishes to step down at any point during their term their request will be granted. If the committee member steps down after the first of April the position will remain unfilled until the July elections of that year. If a student wishes to be removed prior to the first of April, his or her position will be filled by hierarchy within the committee. That is, the vice president may fulfill the presidential role, the treasurer may fulfill the vice-presidential role, the secretary may serve as treasurer and the social chair may serve as secretary. The current students may maintain their original position if desired, in which case the next hierarchical position may fill the role. Once the committee has promoted within, a midterm election will be conducted to fulfill any unoccupied positions. The committee will follow the same protocol outline in **Article III, Section 7, Section A**.

**Article VI – Meetings of the Organization: Required meetings and their frequency.**

The Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization will meet every other month. Meetings may be cancelled, or extra gatherings may be called as necessary. The president of the organization is responsible for calling the meetings which will be scheduled by the secretary. These meetings will be required for committee members to remain in good standing.
Article VII – Method of Amending Constitution: Proposals, notice, and voting requirements.

Section A – Initial Proposal to Amend the Constitution
In the event that a committee member, advisor or program coordinator wishes to amend the constitution they should verbally announce their proposal at an official committee meeting. The secretary will make a note of such request. If the request comes from a student within the organization, they must present it to a committee member, who will present it to the committee. The student initiating such request is encouraged to attend the meeting.

Section B – Written Proposal to Amend the Constitution
The committee will ask the committee member (and student member if appropriate) initiating the request to type and present a one page document detailing the merits of his or her position. The document should not exceed one page (Times New Roman, font size 11, single spaced with one inch margins.) At the next meeting the committee will receive the proposal; it will be read out loud by the student initiating it. The committee will have from that date to the date of the next meeting to take the proposal under advisement.

Section C – Voting
At the next meeting, the committee will vote on the proposed amendment. A committee member may vote one of three ways: “In favor”, “against”, or “majority vote by the student organization body.” The results of this vote must be unanimous. If the committee remains divided, there will be no amendment to the constitution. If the voting is deferred to the student body organization, the vice president will contact the student organization and hold voting, which will last for one week. The students shall receive a copy of the written proposal to take under advisement. The students will vote “in favor” or “against.” Under these circumstances the proposal will be approved if 50 % +1 of the student organization votes and 50 % + 1 vote “in favor.” If the majority of the organization fails to report for voting, or less than half of the students vote “in favor” the constitution will not be amended. If a proposal is rejected, the topic may not be voted on for at least one year from the final voting date.

Section D – Amending the Constitution
Only Article IX of the constitution may be rewritten or amended. If a proposal passes, it will be outlined and dated in Article IX. The language should be clearly written and the constitutional article it addresses should be clearly referenced. Amendments to the constitution should themselves be difficult to amend in the future.

Article VIII – Method of Dissolution of Organization

Section A – Dissolution of the Organization
Dissolution of the student organization shall be approved as a constitutional amendment and will undergo the same protocol.

1. Initial Proposal to conclude the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization:
In the event that a committee member, advisor or program coordinator wishes to close the program they should verbally announce their proposal at an official committee meeting. The secretary will make a note of such request. If the request comes from a student within the organization, they must present it to a committee member, who will present it to the committee. The student initiating such request is encouraged to attend the meeting.
2. Written Proposal to conclude the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization:
The committee will ask the committee member (and student member if appropriate) initiating the
request to type and present a one page document detailing the merits of his or her position. The
document should not exceed one page (Times New Roman, font size 11, single spaced with
one inch margins.) At the next meeting the committee will receive the proposal; it will be read
out loud by the student initiating it. The committee will have from that date to the date of the next
meeting to take the proposal under advisement.

3. Voting:

At the next meeting, the committee will vote on the proposed amendment. A
committee member may vote one of three ways: “In favor”, “against”, or “majority vote by the
student organization body.” The results of this vote must be unanimous. If the committee
remains divided, there will be no dissolution of the program. If the voting is deferred to the
student body organization, the vice president will contact the student organization and hold
voting, which will last for one week. The students shall receive a copy of the written proposal to
take under advisement. The students will vote “in favor” or “against.” Under these circumstances
the proposal will be approved if 50 % +1 of the student organization votes and 50 % + 1 vote “in
favor.” If the majority of the organization fails to report for voting, or less than half of the students
vote “in favor” the program will not be terminated. If a proposal is rejected, the topic may not be
voted on for at least one year from the final voting date.

4. Amending the Constitution:

If the dissolution amendment has passed, the president will file
the appropriate paperwork to terminate the student organization with the university. The
committee will be disbanded and relieved of their duties.

Section B – Assets and Debt

1. Assets:

If the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization is terminated while still
possessing assets, those assets will be donated to a student organization within the Ohio State
University. The committee will vote which program(s) and how to distribute said funds. A
onetime majority vote will be used within the committee.

2. Debts:

All financial decisions must be approved by the Neuroscience Program Advisor. As
such, the Neuroscience Graduate Program will be responsible for settling any and all debts
accrued by the Neuroscience Graduate Student Organization.

Article IX – Constitutional Amendments

Constitutional amendments must be written in the same formatting as the original
constitution and should begin below this text.