

**2020-2021  
Constitution**

**Bennett**  
Graduate Research  
**Society**

*The Ohio State University  
College of Medicine*

...promoting and recognizing  
excellence in graduate research and  
education for over 30 years

## 2020-2021 Constitution and By-Laws of Bennett Society

### **Article 1- Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy of the Organization**

#### Section 1: Name

The Bennett Graduate Research Society at the Ohio State University (“The Bennett Society”)

#### Section 2: Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the Bennett Society is to promote and recognize excellence in graduate research and education, create a community of graduate students connected to the College of Medicine, and enhance communication between graduate students and faculty within the College of Medicine.

The objectives of Bennett Society include sponsoring (or co-sponsoring) up to two events a semester to enhance the research, education, and fellowship of the graduate students affiliated with the College of Medicine. At least one event is focused on career development through mentoring of communication skills, education of career opportunities after graduate school, or other such focuses. Other events will include opportunities like guest speakers, faculty and student “mixers”, or social events. The Bennett society also is involved in planning the annual research day held in the spring at the University Medical Center, which provides an opportunity for graduate students to present their original research and interact with scientists in an encouraging environment. While the Bennett Society will maintain a focus on graduate students affiliated with the College of Medicine, any graduate student with an interest in the sciences is welcome to attend any open event and apply for membership.

#### Section 3: Non-Discrimination Policy

Members of the Bennett Society shall not discriminate against any individuals for the following reasons: race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, handicap, military service, etc. as per the University’s policy. Accordingly, although the purpose and objective of Bennett Society are to better the graduate experience for graduate students affiliated with the College of Medicine, Bennett Society and its members follow the University’s policy by allowing access to any and all who wish to participate in Bennett Society-sponsored events (see The Ohio State University Code of Student Conduct and Nondiscrimination Policy in the University Operating Manual and Article 1 Section 2 of the Bennett Society Constitution).

### **Article 2- Membership: Qualifications and Categories of Membership**

#### Section 1: Organizational Structure

The Bennett Society has 4 categories of membership as follows:

Advisory membership: This position is held by one or more faculty who acts as a sponsor to the Bennett Society. This member may also be referred to as faculty sponsor or advisor. They must complete all OSU Student Activity requirements and attend at least one Executive Committee meeting per school year to set goals for the year. Unless explicitly stated, this member has no voting power but is welcome and encouraged to attend executive committee meetings.

Executive membership: This position is to be held by a student that must be currently enrolled in a graduate program, be affiliated to the College of Medicine through their advisor and/or their Graduate Program, and a general member in good standing. This position may also be referred to as executive committee member. This position is an elected position and holds full voting rights on the executive committee. This membership type is reserved for those who are elected to the executive committee in one of the roles described in Article 3 Section 2.

General membership: This position is to be held by a graduate student currently enrolled in any degree program affiliated with the Ohio State University. A graduate student may be working towards a master, doctoral, medical, or other higher degree. This position may be in active or inactive status. Active status has voting rights in constitutional amendments and any other issues the executive committee may bring to the general membership for a vote. An active member also counts toward quorum. General members hold no voting rights on the executive committee.

Honorary membership: This position may be held by any individual who does not qualify for any other type of membership, including individuals not affiliated with the Ohio State University. Honorary membership may be given through a three quarters majority vote of the active member body. This position holds no voting rights on the executive committee.

### Section 2: Eligibility

Members must be currently enrolled graduate students whose primary advisor has an appointment in the College of Medicine and/or whose graduate program is part of the College of Medicine. Any graduate student who fits the above description is automatically eligible to a member.

Any Graduate student affiliated with the Ohio State University and currently enrolled in a graduate degree program may petition to become eligible to be a member. This petition must be submitted in writing to an Executive Committee member and will consist of the individuals interest in biomedical sciences and why they believe they will benefit from being a member of the Bennett Society. The executive committee member will share this petition with all Executive Committee members within two days. The committee will vote on whether to approve the eligibility of the petitioner within one week of the original petition submission. A simple majority of the executive committee will approve the petition for eligibility. In the case of a tie, the advisor shall be the deciding vote. The petitioner will be notified of the executive committee's decision within one week of the submitting the petition.

### Section 3: Obtaining Membership and Good Standing

If eligible, the student must sign in at any of the events hosted by the Bennett Society and inform an Executive Committee member in writing of their interest of being a member of the Bennett Society. The individual remains a member until they inform an Executive Committee member of their desire to leave the organization or they leave their studies at the Ohio State University. To be a general member in good standing, a member must have attended an event within the last 6 months, or the last event the Bennett Society hosted if that date was more than 6 months prior. Failure to meet these criteria will cause a general member to become inactive until the next event they attend.

## **Article 3 - Organization Leadership**

### Section 1: Standing Bodies

The membership categories make up two bodies, the executive committee, and the general membership. The executive committee includes the executive members and advisory members as non-voting members. The general membership includes the active members, and the executive members as well as the inactive, honorary, and advisory members as non-voting members who do not count toward quorum.

### Section 2: Executive committee

The executive committee will consist of a minimum of four positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These leadership positions are to be held for one year starting the first week of August and the positions are renewable through unanimous votes during elections. Elections take place during May for the following academic year following the protocol outlined in the Bylaws. June 1<sup>st</sup> through the first week of August will be used as an executive member transition period as described in Article 6 of the Bennett Society Bylaws.

The President is responsible for organizing and leading executive committee meetings and Bennett Society sponsored events, attending Student Organization meetings to ensure the Bennett Society's right to funding, registering the organization in the fall, ensuring that funding is attained, and ensuring the minutes and finances are in order.

The Vice-President is responsible for helping the President complete all the President's duties and promoting Bennett society events.

The Secretary is responsible for taking minutes at meetings, checking the email weekly, and being the main point of contact digitally for the society.

The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that funding is attained, attending the appropriate Student Organization meeting for the Treasurer, budgets are sent for approval on time, the checkbook is balanced, and the reimbursements are done in a timely manner.

### Section 3: General Membership in Good Standing

The general membership in good standing is made up of all active members including the executive committee. This body is used to decide quorum, vote on constitution amendments, and to elect executive members. All members shall present themselves professionally, hold high ethics, and be in good standing with their respective college and department.

## **Article 4- Standing Committee**

The executive committee reserves the right to organize standing committees for particular events, such as the annual research day, should the need arise. A standing committee may consist of any combination of general members, executive members, advisory members, and honorary members. Standing committees will report back to the executive committee and request permission to contact individuals outside of the society, use funds, and host events from the executive committee.

## **Article 5 – Method of Selecting and/or Removing Members**

If a member of the executive committee is to step down from their elected position and responsibilities detailed in Article 3 section 2, the executive member has failed to carry out their responsibilities as detailed in Article 3 Section 2, or the executive member no longer meets the qualifications of active membership detailed in Article 2, the procedure for dismissal is as follows:

1. Any member may bring the situation to the attention of an Advisor.
2. If the advisor believes that the individual can no longer successfully serve as a member of the executive committee or as a member of the society then the individual will be asked to resign from their executive committee position or as a member of the society.
3. If an executive member is removed from office or from membership, a call for nominations will go out to the general membership within one week and remain open for one week. Each nominee will be contacted and asked to provide a short statement in support of their election within one week. The election will be held at the next Bennett Society hosted event. In the event no nominations are received, the advisor may choose the member to fill the position and no election will take place. This change in leadership will be documented in the Bennett Society's Organization Management system through The Ohio Union website. A change will also be made to the membership roster if a member is dismissed.

## **Article 6- Advisor Qualification Criteria**

An advisor must be a full-time member of the Ohio State University faculty and be appointed directly, or through an affiliated graduate program, to the College of Medicine. The advisor is responsible for attending the appropriate Student Organization advisor training session, monitoring the checkbook and finances, attending executive committee meetings, and when possible, attending Bennett Society sponsored seminars.

## **Article 7 - Meetings of the Organization**

There will be at least two meetings per semester of the general membership which may be held concurrently with the Bennett Society hosted event. The executive committee will hold meetings no less than monthly.

## **Article 8 - Method of Amending Constitution: Proposals, Notice, and Voting Requirements**

The proper procedure for amendments includes:

1. Proposed amendments should be in writing and submitted to the executive committee via email.
2. The executive committee may correspond with the individual to clarify the amendment for up to two weeks.
3. Proposed amendments will be sent to the membership via email or read at the next Bennett Society-sponsored seminar or meeting, whichever is most appropriate.
4. To approve a proposed amendment, two thirds majority of quorum which is defined as one half of the general membership in good standing.

### **Article 9 -Method of Dissolution of the Organization**

The requirement for the dissolution of The Bennett Society shall be two thirds majority vote the general membership in good standing in favor for dissolution. In the event of dissolution, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The Treasurer and Advisor must return unused funds to the University though the Student Affairs office.
2. Executive and advisory members must be involved in filling the necessary paperwork through the Student Affairs office.

