**Constitution and By-Laws Guidelines**

**for the**

**Graduate Organization for Vision Science**

**The Ohio State University**

**Constitution**

*Article l - Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy of the Organization.*

Section 1: Name: Graduate Organization for Vision Science (GOVS)

Section 2 - Purpose: To enhance the development of graduate students in the concentration of Vision Science in order to improve the quality of the graduate student experience.

Section 3 - Non-Discrimination Policy: *This organization does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, admission, and employment.*

*Article II - Membership: Qualifications and categories of membership.*

Any graduate student in Vision Science is eligible for membership in GOVS. Voting membership is defined as any currently enrolled Ohio State student in the graduate program for Vision Science. Vision Science faculty are eligible for membership but are not voting members.

*Article III - Organization Leadership: Titles, terms of office, type of selection, and duties of the leaders.*

GOVS shall have an Executive Committee with positions held on a volunteer basis unless multiple people want to hold a certain position. If multiple people want to hold a specific position, an election will then be held and the position holder will be elected from the general membership consisting of the following officers:

* President: (1 year term) The president shall be responsible for the general operations of GOVS and will preside over GOVS Executive Committee meetings as well as general meetings. The president is responsible for working with the GOVS Advisor and for acting as the student liaison to the Vision Science faculty. The president shall also serve as the CGS alternate delegate in the absence of the delegate. Vice-President: (1 year term) The vice-president is responsible for overseeing any Executive Committee or general meetings in the absence of the President. The vice-president shall also be responsible for assisting the President in the coordination of GOVS activities and for any additional responsibilities assigned by the President to aid in the general operation of GOVS.
* Treasurer: (1 year term) The treasurer shall be responsible for managing the financial account of GOVS and all other tasks associated with this responsibility. The treasurer shall also be responsible for any additional tasks as assigned by the President to aid in the general operation of GOVS.
* Delegate for Council of the Graduate Students (CGS): (1 year term) The delegate for CGS will be responsible for representing members of GOVS at the regular CGS meetings. The delegate will relay pertinent information from CGS meetings to GOVS members when applicable. This position may be held by the President, Vice President, Treasurer, or a member who does not hold one of those positions.

*Article IV - Executive Committee: Size and composition of the Committee.*

The GOVS Executive Committee shall include the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Delegate for CGS. If any additional officers are added to the organization, they shall also be a part of the Executive Committee.

*Article V – Method of Selecting and/or Removing Officers and Members.*

GOVS general members and elected leaders are expected to conduct themselves in a way that reflects well on the organization. In the event that members or leaders do not conduct themselves in a way that reflects well on the organization a majority of the Executive Committee, in consultation with the Advisor, may vote to place the member or leader on probationary status or remove the member or leader from GOVS. GOVS’s non-discrimination policy protects members from removal based on reasons of race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, age, handicap, or Vietnam-era veteran status.

*Article VI – Adviser(s) or Advisory Board: Qualification Criteria.*

The advisor of GOVS shall preferably be the Associate Dean for Research in Vision Science. In the event that the Associate Dean for Research is not available to be the advisor, the Executive Committee shall be responsible for selecting another Vision Science faculty member to be the GOVS advisor in consultation with the Dean of the College of Optometry.

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

There will at least one meeting per semester. The dates and times will vary by semester but attempts will be made to hold them in the evening in order to help guarantee that all graduate students are available and able to attend.

*Article VIII – Method of Amending Constitution: Proposals, notice, and voting requirements.*

Proposed amendments must be in writing, must be read in the general meeting in which they are proposed but not acted upon, must be read again at the next general meeting at which the votes will be taken, and requires a two-third majority of voting members (a quorum being present).

*Article IX – Method of Dissolution of Organization*

This organization shall only be dissolved in the event that there are no graduate students enrolled in the Vision Science program. Should this occur, the financial account shall be turned over to the advisor of the organization to be held until such time as there are Vision Science graduate students enrolled and the organization is re-established.

**By-Laws**

*Article 1 – Parliamentary Authority*

The rules contained in Robert’s Rule of Order shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the by-laws of this organization.

*Article II- Membership*

By enrolling in the graduate program in Vision Science, a person is considered a member of GOVS. Any dues structure deemed necessary shall be regulated and defined by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. A graduate student is eligible for membership as long as they are enrolled in the graduate program in Vision Science.

*Article III- Election / Appointment of Government Leadership*

With the exception of the office of President and Delegate for CGS, any student member is eligible for office in GOVS. The President must be a full-time, traditional graduate student in the Vision Science graduate program (i.e. not in the Combined OD/MS program). Executive Committee positions will be held by eligible volunteers, unless multiple people want to hold a certain position. If multiple people would like to hold a certain position, an election will be held. Elections will be conducted at the last meeting of the spring semester and will be conducted by ballot. The person receiving the most votes will be considered elected to the office for the next academic year. During the election, the names of all candidates running will be available to the voting membership and each candidate will be given ample time to speak before the election is conducted. Members will write the name of the candidate for which they wish to vote. Members must be present to vote. All votes will be counted under the direction of the Executive Committee and verified by the advisor if necessary. New officers will take office the first day of the summer semester. Meetings to hold elections must be announced at least one week in advance, no minimum number of members must be present in order to hold annual officer elections.

Should an officer choose to resign during the year, the President shall appoint a replacement until a member volunteers for the position, or a general election can be held to fill the position. Should the President resign, the Vice-President shall assume the role of President and a member will become Vice President, either by volunteering or through a general election.

*Article IV- Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the general operation of GOVS. The Executive Committee has the power to regulate dues for the organization should dues be deemed necessary and also is responsible for setting and conducting the meetings of GOVS.

*Article V - Adviser/Advisory Board Responsibilities*

The advisor shall act in a supporting role to GOVS. The advisor shall be present at GOVS meetings when possible.

*Article VII - Meeting Requirements*

Meetings will be held at least once per semester. All meetings must have at least half of the membership present to be considered a quorum for the purpose of voting on amendments to the constitution and by-laws. All meetings at which elections are to be held or amendments voted upon must be announced at least one week in advance.

*Article VIII - Method of Amending By-Laws*

By-laws may be amended by proposing in writing and reading the change at a general meeting of the membership. The proposed change shall then be brought up for a vote at the next general meeting with a simple majority necessary for an amendment to the by-laws to pass.