Center of Microbiome Science Graduate Student Union (CoMS GSU) Constitution

# Article I - Name, Purpose and Non-discrimination policy

## Section 1 - Name: **Center of Microbiome Science Graduate Student Union (CoMS GSU)**

The Center of Microbiome Science (CoMS, <https://coms.osu.edu/>) is a cross-college University-level research “Center” that was established in November 2020 and is a part of the Microbiome Centers Consortium (<https://microbiomecenters.org/>). As a research center, its goal is to empower researchers with community, compute, capabilities, and curriculum so that they are equipped to face the challenges related to the interdisciplinary study of microbial communities across different environments and/or within plant, animal, and human hosts.

## Section 2 - Purpose

Since its launch, CoMS has cast a broad net towards its mission to empower researchers across campus, but there has been a recognized and growing need to connect early career researchers - especially graduate students, to build a strong community, professional network, and cross-lab interactions serving as learning opportunities.

The purpose of the Center of Microbiome Science Graduate Student Union (CoMS GSU) is to bridge primarily graduate students and keen undergraduate researchers from their own lab spaces and research programs to cutting-edge work across campus - spanning multiple colleges and many different departments.

The primary goals of the CoMS GSU are to:

* Connect early career researchers (focus on graduate students) with each other through social and professional networking opportunities to build a Microbiome Science graduate student community
* Increase exposure of Microbiome Science research at the Ohio State University to graduate students across campus to foster organic collaboration
* Serve as a medium to connect graduate students with complementary skills and knowledge to encourage cross-lab/disciplinary learning opportunities

## Section 3 - Non-discrimination policy

The CoMS GSU does not discriminate on the bases 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 lab, in its activities, programs, admission or employment.

As a student organization at The Ohio State University, the CoMS GSU expects its members to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains an environment free from sexual misconduct. All members are responsible for adhering to University Policy 1.15, which can be found here: <https://policies.osu.edu/assets/policies/Policy-NDH-Sexual-Misconduct.pdf>

If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at the <https://equity.osu.edu/title-ix> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator at [titleIX@osu.edu](mailto:titleIX@osu.edu)

# Article II - Membership: qualifications and categories of membership

## Section 1 - Definition of voting members

Voting members of the CoMS GSU must be current students at The Ohio State University. Other members such as post-doctoral fellows, faculty, alumni, professionals, etc. are encouraged to participate in events and activities as members, but on a non-voting basis or as honorary members. There is no formal application for membership.

## Section 2 - Qualifications of voting membership

To be eligible to vote in club leadership, all voting members must be formally added to the club’s roster.

# Article III - Methods for removing members and executive officers

## Section 1 - Violation of student conduct

If a member engages in behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, violates the organization’s constitution or by-laws, or violates the Code of Student Conduct, university policy, or federal, state or local law, the member may be removed through a majority vote of the officers in consultation with the CoMS GSU’s advisor.

## Section 2 - Elected officer removal with cause

Any elected officer of the chapter may be removed from their position for cause. Cause for removal includes, but is not limited to: violation of the constitution or by-laws, failure to perform duties, or any behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, including violations of the Student Code of Conduct, university policy, or federal, state, or local laws. The Executive Committee may act for removal upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the executive board in consultation with the CoMS GSU’s advisor.

## Section 3 - Suspension

In the event that the reason for member removal is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or cannot otherwise be shared with members (e.g., while an investigation is pending), the executive board, in consultation with the organization’s advisor, may vote to temporarily suspend a member or executive officer.

# Article IV - Organization leadership

The CoMS GSU, as of October 2024, will have 3 leadership positions open to anyone eligible as a voting member. These positions include:

* **President:** In this role, the President (1 member) will serve as the primarily leader of the CoMS GSU. They will oversee the executive board in which they will lead the executive board, CoMS GSU’s general meetings, and ensure that the CoMS GSU is adhering to its purpose and meeting its objectives. The President, in consultation with the executive board will amend the constitution as the needs of the organization evolves.
* **Vice-President:** In this role the Vice-President (1 member) will assist the President in overseeing the executive board as well as assisting in the smooth operations of the CoMS GSU. If the President were to step down, the Vice-President would become the president and the executive board would vote on a replacement for the Vice-President.
* **Treasurer:** In the role of the Treasurer (1 member), they will oversee all financial transactions made by the student organization and serve as a contact for all financial logistics for events and programming co-hosted by the Center of Microbiome Science and the CoMS GSU. They will serve as the administrative aid to book rooms for events as needed, and communicate with the executive board on how to work within the club budget.
* **Advisor:** The advisor will be appointed by the executive board every two years from any full-time faculty or administrative staff at The Ohio State University or Wexner Medical Center with an affiliation with the Center of Microbiome Science. The executive board will work closely with CoMS to ensure that the advisor has the capacity and enthusiasm to assist the CoMS GSU in its purpose, smooth operations, and conflict resolution.

# Article V - Election/Selection of organizational leadership

Elections will be conducted every end-of-Summer term of the academic year for the executive board. Each candidate must only run for one position and members cannot double vote. Voting will take place in a hybrid format where members can choose to vote in-person or through Zoom. The advisor will aid the CoMS GSU in any discrepancies during the voting process.

# Article VI - Executive committee size and composition

The executive committee comprises all organizational leadership and any future leadership positions included in the amendments to this constitution. They will report the state of the organization and its actions to the general body of membership. The executive committee also holds the responsibility of communicating with the Center of Microbiome Science on any relevant activities that would require collaborative resources.

# Article VII - Method of amending the constitution: proposals, notice and voting requirements

Any proposed amendments should be presented to the CoMS GSU in writing and should not be acted upon when initially introduced. Upon initial introduction, the proposed amendments should be read in the general meeting, then read again at a specified number of subsequent general meetings and the general meeting in which the votes will be taken, and should either require a two-third or three-quarter majority of voting members (a quorum being present) or a majority or two-thirds of the entire voting membership of the organization, present or not. The constitution should not be amended easily or frequently.