

# Stanford Biosciences Student Association (SBSA) | Constitution

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## Article I: Name of Organization

Stanford Biosciences Student Association (SBSA)

## Article II: Statement of Purpose

It is the belief of SBSA that each student is valuable and capable of realizing a self-defined vision of success, which is facilitated by a cohesive community.

Therefore, the mission of SBSA is to create an inclusive community that promotes student belonging, wellness, and happiness.

SBSA is committed to supporting students throughout their graduate careers by facilitating mentorship, student-led programming, and advocacy in conjunction with Stanford leadership.

## Article III: Activities and Scope

SBSA is responsible for representing the ideas and missions of the Stanford School of Medicine Biosciences graduate student population. SBSA organizes a multitude of events and initiatives with the aim of maintaining and improving graduate student wellness and community. The following activities are the basic undertakings of SBSA:

### A. Monthly Meetings

- a. SBSA organizes monthly general meetings where we discuss graduate student issues and connect with students in other programs

### B. Program Proposals

- a. Through our quarterly proposal system, students propose events and programming that improve graduate life in the Biosciences to be funded by SBSA.
- b. Each home program is represented in SBSA by their Home Program Representative, who aids communication and votes on our quarterly student proposals. Each home program is represented in SBSA by their Home Program Representative, who aids communication and votes on our

quarterly student proposals.

#### C. Social Events

- a. To promote community building, SBSA organizes monthly happy hours, spring and fall barbeques, holiday parties, and other events year-round.
- b. SBSA organizes the first year camping trip (POWR) in September with funding provided by the Stanford Medicine Alumni Association (SMAA), which is a great opportunity for first years to meet their peers in other Biosciences home programs.

#### D. Mentorship

- a. First Year Mentorship Program: First years are paired with upper year graduate students, and SBSA organizes lunches/meet-ups to facilitate the transition to graduate school.
- b. Fellowship Mentoring: Incoming students applying to fellowships such as NSF or NDSEG can get feedback and advice from previous fellowship recipients. Activities are often done in collaboration with the Grant Writing Academy.
- c. Career Development: Each year, SBSA will work together with SMAA and BioSci Careers to bring career development opportunities to Biosciences students, including but not limited to an annual dinner event with Biosciences Alumni (SOAR), coffee chats with industry partners, and career resources and counseling.

#### E. Wellness

- a. To promote healthy practices and build wellness across the Biosciences, SBSA will bring wellness-focused workshops, such as to increase resilience and mindfulness, including collaborations with Wellness Matters and the Office of Graduate Education (OGE) at the School of Medicine.

#### F. Advocacy

- a. SBSA advocates for Biosciences graduate students in the Biosciences OGE, the Biosciences Committee on Graduate Admissions and Policy (CGAP), the School of Medicine Faculty Senate, and the Stanford Graduate Student Council (GSC).

## **Article IV: Membership Requirements**

All students in the Stanford biological sciences are invited to take an active part in the administration of the group. Masters and PhD students in the Biosciences are automatic members of SBSA. The group's membership is open to other programs on an adjunct basis as outreach to other departments can be mutually beneficial to Biosciences students, including the Schools of Business and Law.

## **Article V: Leadership Structure/Officers**

#### A. Job Descriptions

- a. President/Co-Presidents
  - i. In charge of organizing monthly SBSA meetings.
  - ii. Makes primary decisions about directions for the group that are then approved or denied based on meeting participants.
  - iii. Must be a graduate student in one of the Biosciences programs.
  - iv. Will be elected by simple majority vote and announced at the end of the year meeting and will serve for one academic year.
  - v. Can be reelected for up to two years.
- b. Financial Officer
  - i. Works with GSC funding sources to support varied events.
  - ii. Reports to monthly meetings with upcoming events, budgetary status, etc.
  - iii. Will be elected by simple majority vote announced at the end of the year meeting and will serve for one academic year.
  - iv. Can be reelected an unlimited number of times.

- c. Other elected officials
  - i. Specific roles will be filled at the time of yearly officer elections and on an as-needed basis.
  - ii. Bring viewpoints from diverse groups at monthly meetings.
- d. Home Program Representatives
  - i. Represent their Home Program by providing direct input to the President or SBSA at large at General Meetings along with representing SBSA within their Home Programs in a manner decided on by them and the President.
  - ii. Review Program Proposals and vote on proposals to fund at Program Proposal meetings.
  - iii. Each Home Program Representative (HPR) will be elected by members of their Home Program during annual elections.
  - iv. HPRs are eligible for re-election.
  - v. HPRs will be apportioned between the Home Programs as follows:
    - 1. Biochemistry - 1 Representative
    - 2. Bioengineering - 1 Representative
    - 3. Biology CMOB - 1 Representative
    - 4. Biology Eco/Evo - 1 Representative
    - 5. Biology Hopkins - 1 Representative
    - 6. Biomedical Informatics - 1 Representative
    - 7. Biophysics & Structural Biology - 1 Representative
    - 8. Cancer Biology - 2 Representatives
    - 9. Chemical and Systems Biology - 1 Representative
    - 10. Developmental Biology - 1 Representative
    - 11. Epidemiology and Clinical Research - 1 Representative
    - 12. Genetics - 2 Representatives
    - 13. Health Research and Policy - 1 Representative
    - 14. Immunology - 1 Representative
    - 15. Microbiology and Immunology - 1 Representative
    - 16. Molecular and Cellular Physiology - 1 Representative
    - 17. Neurosciences - 2 Representatives
    - 18. Stem Cell Biology - 1 Representative

## B. Elections

- a. All graduate students are eligible to run for elected positions regardless of prior experience in the organization with the exception of CGAP Representative, which is recommended that a member who has held an elected position take the role.
- b. Terms begin in July and last one year.
- c. Elections are determined by a majority vote of the general membership.
- d. Elections will be overseen by the President/Co-Presidents.
- e. If there are positions that remain unfilled after the nomination process, general members may submit written nominations on the online voting ballot. Write-in nominees are also given the option to accept/reject their positions.
  - i. If a position is not filled by the end of the election period, the President/Co-Presidents may appoint a student to that unfilled position.
- f. Election Timeline
  - i. Nominations for officers will occur during Spring Quarter (recommended in early May)
  - ii. Nominees will then accept/reject their nominated positions. If they accept, they will be provided an opportunity to present their platform at the May general body meeting.
  - iii. Voting will be done online and be open for one week.

## C. Officer and Member Removal

- a. Individuals subject to removal must be provided an opportunity to state their case either vocally or in writing to the executive officer board.
- b. Removal must be decided by a unanimous vote of the executive board.

#### D. Transition

- a. The outgoing President/Co-Presidents are responsible for organizing the annual Leadership Transition Dinner in June. The dinner should invite outgoing and incoming officers to chat about and share materials needed for their positions.
- b. The outgoing President/Co-Presidents are responsible for organizing a new leadership retreat before the start of the fall quarter to provide an opportunity for new leadership to chart priorities for the upcoming year
- c. The outgoing and incoming President/Co-Presidents are responsible for ensuring that new officers obtain all necessary materials to execute the responsibilities of their role

## **Article VI: Decision-making Process**

For each topic publicly announced to be on a meeting's agenda, anyone present for the discussion can call for a vote, to be decided by simple majority. All meeting attendees are eligible to vote. Under extenuating circumstances, the President may call for an "override" vote by the SBSA Officers. The outcome of that vote supersedes the general vote.

## **Article VII: Dissolution of Organization**

Upon dissolution of the organization, unspent funds from the Graduate Student Council will be returned. Unspent funds from entities other than the Office of Graduate Education will be returned to their respective sources. The remainder of funds and property will become the property of the Stanford School of Medicine Office of Graduate Education.

## **Article VIII: Procedure to Amend Constitution**

The Constitution can be amended by a simple majority at any SBSA monthly meeting. Amendments will be considered for approval for one month from their first introduction, except when three-quarters of the meeting attendants agree that there is urgency in the decision.

## **Article VIII: Event Guidelines and Program Proposals**

To facilitate responsible, well run, and safe SBSA events and ensure SBSA represents its funding sources in the best possible manner, Event Guidelines will be created that:

- A. Lay out the duties and responsibilities of all SBSA event organizers.
- B. Give information on necessary activities for events to meet Stanford rules.
- C. Provide methods and rules for submitting and tracking event success and financial outlays.

To ensure Event Guidelines are proper and accurate, each year at the beginning of their tenure, the President will review and update the Event Guidelines, which will be presented at a General Meeting of their choosing. The Event Guidelines can be updated and modified as needed throughout the year. The President is expected to send out the Event Guidelines each academic quarter to all SBSA officers and event organizers and confirm that they have read and understood the guidelines.

The Program Proposal system will fund all Biosciences graduate student run activities not previously allocated in the annual budget. The system will be open for proposal submissions once a quarter at a time set by the President and announced to the community at least one month in advance.

To ensure that the Program Proposal system properly represents the entire Biosciences community and equitable programming amongst the Home Programs, the President and the Home Program Representatives will review at least once a year the criteria for eligible proposals. These criteria must be made publically available and included in announcing the opening of proposal submissions. Final approval from OSE is required.