

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCES
GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

November 2013

(Amended September 21, 2023)

CONSTITUTION OF THE SPHS GSA

For the purposes of this constitution, 'on campus' and 'online' is defined and determined based on the program status assigned by UW's registrar's office.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the organization shall be the "School of Public Health Sciences Graduate Students' Association" (or SPHS GSA) of the School of Public Health Sciences, University of Waterloo, hereafter referred to as the "Association".

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Association shall be:

1. To unite, for their mutual benefit, on-campus graduate students of the School of Public Health Sciences, University of Waterloo;
2. To acquire and make available information to assist on-campus students in their sojourn in the School and at the University;
3. To nominate and elect representatives to School and Faculty Committees;
4. To act as the unifying body of the graduate students of the School for academic and administrative purposes;
5. To undertake actions of common interest to graduate students of the School of Public Health Sciences at the University of Waterloo.

The Association objectives will be annually re-evaluated at the Annual Online General Meeting (AOGM).

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

1. All Graduate students registered with the School of Public Health Sciences, University of Waterloo and subject to service fees as outlined by the University of Waterloo, are automatically members of the Association.
2. All members of the Association whose registration status is "full-time" shall contribute for each term, a membership fee of \$5.00 which will be assessed by the administration and included on their term fee statements.
3. All members of the Association whose registration status is "part-time" shall contribute for each term, a membership fee of \$2.50 which will be assessed by the administration and included on their fee statements.
4. All Graduate students of the School of Public Health Sciences, whose registration status is "inactive", are not required to pay membership fees so long as their registration status remains unchanged.
5. Student members who do not pay SPHS GSA fees are not voting members of the Association. In 2022, the Masters of Public Health and Masters of Health Informatics

professional students voted to become fee-paying members of the Association beginning Fall 2023. The Masters of Health Evaluation professional students did not obtain a majority vote. MHE students may choose to join the Association in future via opting in to pay fees by holding a majority vote sanctioned by the UW GSA.

ARTICLE IV: EXECUTIVE

1. The Executive Committee of the Association is comprised of the President, Chief of Staff, Vice-President Finance, Vice-President Communications.
2. The election of all executives shall take place early in the fall term, prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the executive shall take office immediately following the AGM. Any voting member of the SPHS GSA may nominate themselves by expressing interest in a vacant position to sphs.gsa@uwaterloo.ca.
3. Elections will be hosted by the UW GSA. A member of the GSA will act as the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) for elections of the executive.
4. The Executive Committee of the Association shall be responsible for reviewing annually the policies and procedures of the Association.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

1. The Association Officers will consist of a Faculty of Health Representative, a School Representative, a UW GSA Council Representative, and the Social Coordinator.
2. The election of all officers shall be hosted by the SPHS GSA and take place prior to the AGM. The officers shall take office immediately following the AGM.
3. Executive (Chief of Staff) will serve as CRO for officer elections.

ARTICLE VI: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The Chief of Staff will open nominations for the officer positions of the Association which may be sent via email to sphs.gsa@uwaterloo.ca. The Executive Committee will ensure all voting information is posted online and available to every member of the Association. The executive will set the voting date.
2. All positions must be filled at the time of the AGM. At the discretion of the Chair of the AGM, positions may be filled, in the absence of sufficient nominees, either by:
 - a. Acclamation of previous officer for an additional one-year term; or
 - b. In the event that a position is vacant after the election or is made available by any reason during the year in progress, the Executive Committee may appoint a new officer to that position.

ARTICLE VII: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

1. ***President:***

- a. Supervise all affairs and activities of the Association.
 - b. Call and chair all Executive Committee meetings as well as the AGM.
 - c. Represent the Association when required and be responsible for appointing other representatives when necessary.
 - d. Report to the Executive Committee and the general assembly at the AGM and/or any special meetings of the Association.
 - e. Has signing authority, along with the VP Finance and Chief of Staff, as one of the co-signees of the Association's bank account.
 - f. Act as ombudsperson for the Association and serve as a liaison between graduate students and faculty/staff in any individual disputes, disagreements, conflicts, and so on, at the direct request of the graduate student(s) involved..
 - g. Work in consultation with Department Graduate Chair to address issues pertaining to program streams and collaborative programs.
 - h. Maintain, in an orderly fashion, the Constitution of the Association.
2. **Chief of Staff:**
- a. Assume all duties and responsibilities of the President in their absence.
 - b. Serve as a resource person regarding rules of order at meetings, and be aware of all departmental, faculty, and university policies and procedures affecting the Association.
 - c. Distribute "Meeting Minute Summary" forms (online) to committee coordinators and representatives, and ensure that form is completed and returned in time to be included with meeting agendas; prepare agenda from summary forms.
 - d. Maintain in an orderly fashion, the files of the association, memoranda, agendas, and Association correspondence.
 - e. Serve along with the President to address issues relevant to graduate students with the department administration.
 - f. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Committee.
 - g. Serve as CRO for officer elections.
 - h. Will keep the GSA up to date with our Association member list.
 - i. Assist all other officers with their duties when warranted
3. **Vice-President Finance:**
- a. Maintain, in an orderly fashion, financial records and reports.
 - b. Make available, at the request of any member of the Association, any of the financial statements, provided the request is in writing and is submitted to the VP Finance no sooner than five days before such request is to be fulfilled.
 - c. Be responsible for application to the Graduate Student Association, or any other administrative body, for available funding for operating budgets, special event funds, and so on.
 - d. Shall be in charge of receiving from the Graduate Student Association all membership dues from Association Members.
 - e. Shall update all external funding sources with current financial information.
 - f. Serve, along with the President and Chief of Staff, as one of the co-signees of the Association's bank account.
 - g. Shall report any financial statements two times a term to the executive committee.
 - h. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Committee.

- i. Assist all other officers with their duties when warranted
4. ***Vice-President Communications:***
- a. Submit photos and description of activities to department (Administrative staff) for end of term newsletter.
 - b. Coordinate the production and distribution of a newsletter for students as required to share relevant and upcoming events (e.g., monthly),
 - c. Record the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings as well as the general meetings of the Association.
 - d. Maintaining website for the SPHS GSA.
 - e. Maintain/update social media with event listings
 - f. Assist all other officers with their duties when warranted

ARTICLE VIII: OFFICERS

1. *Faculty Representative*

- a. Attend all meetings of the committee to which they have been selected.
- b. Notify sphs.gsa@uwaterloo.ca promptly should they be unable to attend any meeting and provide the name of a SPHS GSA member (e.g., alternate) who will be representing him/her at the meeting of that committee.
- c. Maintain his/her respective committee documentation in good order and be able to submit copies of such documentation to the Executive Committee at its request.
- d. Report activities to SPHS GSA by completing a Minute Meeting Summary Form (online).
- e. If issues from a particular meeting require immediate student input then it is the duty of the Representative to work in conjunction with the executive to solicit student input.
- f. Failure to comply with the aforementioned duties may result in removal from the elected post, at the discretion of the SPHS GSA executives, and another Representative will be appointed by the SPHS GSA executives.

2. *SPHS School Representative*

- a. Attend all meetings of the committee to which they have been selected.
- b. Notify sphs.gsa@uwaterloo.ca promptly should they be unable to attend any meeting and provide the name of a SPHS GSA member (alternate) who will be representing him/her at the meeting of that committee.
- c. Maintain his/her respective committee documentation in good order and be able to submit copies of such documentation to the Executive Committee at its request.
- d. Report activities to SPHS GSA by completing a Minute Meeting Summary Form (online)..
- e. If issues from a particular meeting require immediate student input then it is the duty of the Representative to work in conjunction with the executive to solicit student input.
- f. Failure to comply with the aforementioned duties may result in removal from the elected post, at the discretion of the SPHS GSA executives, and another Representative will be appointed by the SPHS GSA executives.

3. GSA Council Representative

- a. Attend all meetings of the committee to which they have been selected.
- b. Notify sphs.gsa@uwaterloo.ca promptly should they be unable to attend any meeting and provide the name of a SPHS GSA member (alternate) who will be representing him/her at the meeting of that committee.
- c. Maintain his/her respective committee documentation in good order and be able to submit copies of such documentation to the Executive Committee at its request.
- d. Report activities to SPHS GSA by completing a Minute Meeting Summary Form (online).
- e. If issues from a particular meeting require immediate student input then it is the duty of the Representative to work in conjunction with the executive to solicit student input.
- f. Represent the SPHS GSA (online) students, and maintain communication with the President of the SPHS GSA (online) regarding pertinent issues.
- g. Failure to comply with the aforementioned duties may result in removal from the elected post, at the discretion of the SPHS GSA executives, and another Representative will be appointed by the SPHS GSA executives.

4. Social Coordinator

- a. Be responsible for informing VP Communications and sphs.gsa@uwaterloo about events
- b. Liaison with guest speaker(s) and provide introduction at each event
- c. Shall be in charge of organizing food and beverages for social events
- d. Organize, obtain, and deliver gifts to guest speakers
- e. Shall be responsible for developing applications for additional funding for student social events
- f. Be responsible for coordinating social events with the help of the members at large
- g. Must aim to increase the social network amongst SPHS graduate students by creating events and environments that encourage social interaction
- h. Work with the Professional student representatives to coordinate online or hybrid events to serve the entire SPHS GSA graduate student population.
- i. Aim to have a minimum of one departmental social event per term
- j. Report activities to SPHS GSA by completing a Minute Meeting Summary Form (online).

5. Ad Hoc Committee Coordinators

- a. Be responsible for informing VP Communications and sphs.gsa@uwaterloo about events and activities
- b. Report activities to SPHS GSA by completing a Minute Meeting Summary Form (online).

Ad Hoc committees include or have included: Mental Health and Wellbeing; and, Taskforce on Antiracism.

ARTICLE IX: COMMITTEES

1. The Executive Committee shall have the power to appoint any "special task committee" or "ad hoc committee" as necessary.

2. In addition, the President, acting alone or in concert with other Executive Committee member(s), may also appoint any such committee as is deemed necessary.
3. These committees will generally have a definite term to execute their task no longer than one year, and will report to the Executive Committee on or before any agreed upon termination date.

ARTICLE X: MEETINGS

1. Rules of Order:
 - a. All meetings shall follow an amended version of Robert's Rules of Order
2. Annual General Meeting (AGM):
 - a. Written notification of the AOGM shall be given to each member at least two weeks in advance of the date set for the AGM.
 - b. AGM will be held online or in hybrid fashion to allow all members to participate
3. Special General Meetings:
 - a. Special general meetings of the Association may be called at any time by the President in consultation with the Executive Committee or may be called by the Executive Committee at the written request of at least five members of the Association.
 - b. Notification of special meetings shall be given to each member of the Association at least three days in advance of the date set for the meeting, unless unanimously agreed upon by each member of the association.
 - c. Notice of special general meetings of the Association shall state the business for which the meeting is called.
4. Executive Committee Meetings:
 - a. The quorum for the Executive Committee meetings shall be a simple majority of the members of the Executive Committee.
 - b. All Association officers must meet at least once per term.
 - c. Executive Committee meetings are open to all members of the Association.

ARTICLE XI: LIASION

The SPHS GSA has 2 major affiliations:

Affiliation #1: The UW Graduate Student Association

Affiliation #2: Online Programs of SPHS (Professional programs)

The members of the SPHS GSA will maintain a relationship with students in online programs in SPHS so as to build a cooperative working relationship with all students affiliated with SPHS and to provide a voice on campus for online students.

1. Liaison with the University of Waterloo Graduate Student Association and online programs of SPHS shall be maintained current.

2. The SPHS Councillor or alternate, or the President of the Association shall be responsible to attend the annual general meeting and any special meetings of the Graduate Student Association.
3. The Association recognizes the position of the Graduate Student Association as the official representative of the graduate students to the University.

ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

1. Amendments to the Constitution may be approved at any general meeting of the Association.
2. Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by the Executive Committee and/or ten (10) members of the Association, and all proposed amendments must be made available to the members of the Association at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting and in the following form:
 - a. in written form, showing the current Article/Section(s) and the proposed amendment;
 - b. a short note must be included outlining the rationale behind the proposed amendment.
3. Voting on amendments shall be a simple majority of votes cast provided a Constitutional quorum of twenty (20) votes is received.
4. Failure to obtain either a Constitutional quorum or a simple majority shall result in the failure of the proposed amendment.

Article XIV: RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. All concerns and/or issues not addressed herein shall be managed within and at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Where the Executive Committee cannot be impartial or is unable to reach a solution internally, technical assistance from the university GSA shall be sought.

Appendix A: Tasks Supplementary to SPHS GSA Executive Procedure

- AGM minutes will be posted online to ensure all membership can view
- Financial reports will be posted online annually
- The Executive Committee of the SPHS GSA will be responsible for constructing a hand-over tool to supplement the constitution and to explain how information and authority shall be competently passed to a successive Executive Committee
- Executive procedures can be reviewed and amended by the Executive and reported back to SPHS members