

# **University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine**

## **American Physician Scientists Association Chapter**

### **CONSTITUTION**

#### **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the American Physician Scientists Association Chapter do hereby establish this Constitution in order that our purpose be realized to its fullest extent.

#### **ARTICLE I – NAME**

This organization shall be known as the American Physician Scientists Association Chapter and will hereinafter be referred to as the APSA Chapter.

#### **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The APSA Chapter understands and is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities of abiding by UAB School of Medicine policies (UASOM). In extension of the purpose of the National APSA Chapter, the APSA Chapter has been established for the purpose of promoting medical research and its principals, assisting aspiring physician-scientists in furthering their careers, and providing educational opportunities to both our institutional and local community. More specifically, the APSA Chapter will allow UASOM students to:

- a. Acquire a better understanding of medical research and related principles.
- b. Acquaint members with persons and associations involved with medical science and/or clinical research at local, national, and international levels.
- c. Develop professional skills in order to assess and meet patient needs on an individual basis.
- d. Extend service to UASOM by developing and organizing programs of interest to the student body and the faculty.
- e. Sponsor, promote, and encourage educational programs dealing with medical research and associated fields.
- f. Advance the knowledge and understanding of medical science and clinical research.
- g. Develop collegial interactions between aspiring physician-scientists enrolled in the UASOM and the UAB Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP).

#### **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

Active membership shall be limited to persons officially connected with the UASOM such as faculty, staff or registered students. The existing chapter officers may grant exceptions on an individual basis upon review. Any actively enrolled or voluntary Leave of Absence medical student may be a member. Students can participate as their schedule allows and in accordance with either scholastic or financial constraints. Active membership will be earned by those students with a two-thirds (2/3)-attendance rate at all APSA monthly meetings and participation in one additional sponsored event per year.

Membership to the National APSA Chapter is encouraged but not required for members of the APSA Chapter. Membership dues will not be collected, and thus, are not required for active membership or voting.

The APSA Chapter openly admits students to its membership and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, personal appearance, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

## **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

The APSA chapter will be governed by the following means:

The officers of the APSA Chapter shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Webmaster. The APSA officers will constitute the executive committee. The officers of the APSA Chapter should be actively enrolled or voluntary Leave of Absence medical students at the UASOM. Officers of the APSA Chapter will be charged with the assigned duties and adhere to the special considerations outlined in the “Student Organization Officer Expectations” form provided by the UASOM. Additionally:

**President/Institutional Representative (hereby referred to as President)** - The President is charged with the overall operation of the APSA Chapter. He or she must ensure the continuance of programs that benefit the student body. Furthermore, the president must communicate frequently with the members and the national APSA organization. The president must promote the interests of the APSA Chapter within the university. An elected President (or other chapter officer) will preside at all chapter meetings. The President will serve as the Institutional Representative for UAB at the National APSA level. The President will maintain the power to appoint all committee chairpersons, shall present all motions to the body present and shall be present at 90% of chapter meetings.

**Vice President** - The Vice President is charged with ensuring the smooth election and transition of the officers after election, helping to provide continuity to the chapter. He or she is charged with maintaining a current e-mail list of chapter membership, and with serving as the Acting President when the President deems necessary. Furthermore, in the event the President resigns or

is removed from office, the Vice-President must assume the responsibility of President until the officers and advisory members can meet to vote a new president.

**Secretary** - He or she will take minutes of all chapter meetings, and submit the required monthly report to the office of Student Life. These shall include a timeline of activities and programs for the previous year, and any notes or suggestions for future officers submitted by the officers.

**Treasurer** - This person will record and maintain the records of expenditures for the APSA Chapter, including submission of forms necessary to request funds.

**Webmaster**- He or she will be responsible for maintaining the APSA chapter webpage.

**Faculty Advisor** - The faculty advisor must be a full-time member of the UAB School of Medicine faculty, selected by the membership of the APSA Chapter. The Faculty Advisor is responsible for generating ideas, serving as a resource person, and providing continuity to the organization. To complement the stated goals of the APSA Chapter, the faculty advisor will be an established physician-scientist at UAB who has significant experience in mentoring aspiring physician-scientists.

## **ARTICLE V- COMMITTEES**

As a chapter, APSA will sponsor regular events that are specifically developed to meet the training needs of aspiring physician-scientists (See article II). The following committees will be chaired by an officer or active member and will include, but not be limited to, the following:

### **Professional Development**

This committee will be chaired by the APSA Chapter President and will act to provide members with opportunities for career advancement and development. Particular emphasis will be placed on skills that are uniquely important to physician-scientists, such as translational medicine, career and personal life balance, as well as traditional seminars on topics such as data communication skills and preparation for residency and/or research fellowships.

### **Career Planning**

This committee will be managed by the APSA Chapter Vice President and will act to provide active members with opportunities to explore, plan, and discuss career options and paths available to physician-scientists. It will organize activities where members can advance their readiness for entering the professional work place and learn how best to prepare for this transition. The committee will also organize events to foster networking between APSA Chapter members and physician-scientists on faculty at academic medical centers.

## **Outreach**

The APSA Chapter Treasurer will chair this committee, which will be responsible for developing and coordinating service projects for APSA members, with an emphasis on science and health education within the greater Birmingham area.

## **School of Medicine Representative**

The APSA Chapter Secretary will chair this committee. The SOM Representative is a position established to ensure stable and substantial communication between the APSA Chapter and the SOM. This position will be filled by an APSA Chapter member (see article III) actively enrolled in the UASOM, but not the MSTP. The representative will be charged with the duty of ensuring that APSA maintains a strong relationship with the SOM and is a visible organization for all aspiring physician-scientists at UAB. The SOM Representative will be elected from the Chapter's membership according to Article VI, but is not a member of the executive committee.

# **ARTICLE VI – OPERATIONS**

## **1. Voting Eligibility**

Those members meeting all requirements of active membership, as set forth in Article IV will be granted voting privileges.

## **2. Election Process**

All officers shall be elected by a majority vote of eligible voting members. All elections will be held on an annual basis during the month of April, or when the school of medicine requires student organization elections. The President will take nominations from all active members. The current executive board will slate the nominees. The nominated parties will be allowed to vote.

The position of President and Vice President will be open exclusively to prior executive board members. If a President and Vice President cannot be chosen from the current executive board, only then can the position be offered to a member of the APSA Chapter that is in good standing. In the event that current members cannot fill these positions, the positions can be offered to any actively enrolled or voluntary leave of absence medical student.

All voting shall be done by secret ballot to be collected and tabulated by the Secretary and one voting member of the chapter appointed by the outgoing President.

## **3. Term Limits**

An officer may not hold office for more than two consecutive years. Following the two-year limit, the officer may run for a different executive position.

## **4. Removal**

An officer may be removed for failing to fulfill the responsibilities of the office, Honor Code violation, refusal to resign if no longer qualified as a member or an officer, or other egregious acts. Any officer of the APSA Chapter in violation of the chapter's purpose or constitution may be removed from office by the following process:

- a. A written request by at least three members of the chapter.
- b. Written notification to the officer of the request, asking the officer to be present at the next meeting and prepared to speak.
- c. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is necessary to remove the officer.

## **5. Meetings**

All meetings will occur on a monthly basis or other regular basis at a time selected by the APSA Chapter and will follow the procedure set forth below:

- Attendance
- Report by the President
- Committee reports
- Vote on all committee motions and decisions
- Any other business put forward by the members of the club
- Dismissal by the President

Monthly officer meetings will also be held preceding the membership meeting to discuss the meeting agenda, attend to the items outlined in Article IV (Officer expectations and assigned duties), and to discuss the progress of committee activities (Article V).

## **ARTICLE VII – Finances**

The APSA Chapter will finance the activities it engages in by the following means:

The APSA Chapter will submit a budget to the Office of Student Success Programs on an annual basis and request funding appropriate to the effective operation of the organization for each year. Additionally, funds for local chapter activities are also provided by the national APSA organization.

## **ARTICLE VIII – Amendments**

The constitution is binding to all members of the APSA Chapter. But the constitution is not binding unto itself. Any member in good standing may submit proposed constitutional amendments to the executive board. The executive board will disseminate the proposed amendment in writing to the members at least 30 days prior to voting at the next scheduled association meeting. A two-thirds membership majority is required for amendment approval. Upon membership authorization, the amendment must be presented to the UAB School of Medicine Student Council for final approval.

Following elections of new officers, the outgoing and incoming officers will review the constitution. Any proposed changes or amendments will be presented to the membership at the next monthly meeting and will be voted on. A two-thirds membership majority is required for approval.

## **ARTICLE IX- Registration Renewal**

The APSA Chapter will register for renewal with the Office of Student Success every May.

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