

Constitution of the CMU-Pitt Computational Biology Graduate Student Association

Carnegie Mellon University – University of Pittsburgh
(rev. April 8, 2022)

Article 1 – Name

The official name of the association shall be “The Carnegie Mellon University – University of Pittsburgh Computational Biology Graduate Student Association” hereinafter referred to as CPCBGSA.

Article 2 – Object

The object of the CPCBGSA shall be:

2.1 to provide a link between its members and the faculty and administration of CPCB, industry, and the Graduate Student Assemblies of Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh.

2.2 to represent and promote the views of its members, and to implement academic, cultural, educational, professional, social, and other programs of interest to its members.

2.3 to coordinate with the wider graduate student communities at the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University to promote and defend our common interests.

Article 3 – Membership

The regular members of the CPCBGSA shall be students currently registered at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh in the Carnegie Mellon University – University of Pittsburgh Computational Biology joint PhD program. These members shall constitute the CPCBGSA constituency.

Article 4 – Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the CPCBGSA shall be from the day after the program retreat until the final day of the retreat the following academic year.

Article 5 – Members of the Governing Board

5.1 The Governing Board shall consist of:

i. the President

ii. the Vice President

- iii.* the Treasurer
- iv.* two (2) Graduate Student Assembly representatives (1 for each Pitt and CMU)
- v.* the Student Seminar Coordinator
- vi.* the Social Media Manager
- vii.* Outreach/volunteer coordinator
- viii.* four (4) Senate members

5.2 The terms of office for the Governing Board shall coincide with the fiscal year of CPCBGSA.

5.3 Any member of the Governing Board may resign from their position by presenting the Governing Board with a letter of resignation.

5.4 Upon leaving the CPCB graduate program, a member of the Governing Board automatically resigns their position.

5.5 The Governing Board shall consist of at least two (2) members from each university and at least one (1) senator from each university.

Article 6 – Powers and Duties of the Governing Board

6.1 The Governing Board shall, to the best of its ability, fulfill the objective of the CPCBGSA, as described in section Article 2.

6.2 The Governing Board shall meet on a monthly basis to discuss previous and upcoming events, receive updates from each position of the Governing Board, and discuss other issues relevant to the CPCBGSA constituency. A quorum is defined as half ($1/2$) of the Governing Board and must include at least two (2) voting members from each university. A quorum is required to be present to vote on constitutional amendments and ratification, votes regarding events, or other decisions may be voted on with whomever is present at the monthly Governing Board meeting. These meetings of the Governing Board shall be open to any member of the CPCBGSA constituency and a formal announcement of the meeting agenda shall be sent out to the CPCBGSA constituency at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

6.3 The President shall:

- i.* be elected from the CPCBGSA constituency in accordance with election procedures described in section Article 7, shall have served as a member of the Governing Board the previous year, and shall not be a first year student nor a student with preconceived plans to forfeit membership as outlined in section Article 3 or otherwise vacate the position prior to the prescribed term of office defined in section Article 5.

- ii.* be charged with the general management and supervision of the affairs of the CPCBGSA.
- iii.* be charged with all duties relating to public relations on behalf of CPCBGSA.
- iv.* be charged with arranging regular Governing Board meetings whose dates will be chosen upon the discretion of the Governing Board, and preside over the meetings.
- v.* be limited to a maximum term of two (2) years.

6.4 The Vice President shall:

- i.* be elected from the CPCBGSA constituency in accordance with election procedures described in section Article 7 and shall not be a first year student nor a student with preconceived plans to forfeit membership as outlined in section Article 3 or otherwise vacate the position prior to the prescribed term of office defined in section Article 5.
- ii.* be charged with increasing and improving relations between the CPCB graduate students and Faculty/Staff.
- iii.* be charged with taking minutes during CPCBGSA meetings and ensuring electronic communication of CPCBGSA matters to and from the constituency.
- iv.* assume, in the absence of the President, all of the duties of the office of the President.

6.5 The Treasurer shall:

- i.* be elected from the CPCBGSA constituency in accordance with election procedures described in section Article 7, shall have served as a member of the Governing Board the previous year, and shall not be a student with preconceived plans to forfeit membership as outlined in section Article 3 or otherwise vacate the position prior to the prescribed term of office defined in section Article 5.
- ii.* be in charge of keeping track of the CPCBGSA budget through both Pitt and CMU
- iii.* ensure reimbursements are fulfilled in a timely manner
- iv.* serve as liaison between university business managers and the Governing Board of the CPCBGSA

6.6 The Graduate Student Assembly representatives shall:

- i.* be elected from the CPCBGSA constituency in accordance with election procedures described in section Article 7 and consist of a representative from each university in accordance with the requirements of the GSA for each university. The Pitt representative will need to be elected to their position in the BGSA at the start of the academic year.
- ii.* be charged with representing CPCBGSA in the Graduate Student Assemblies of both the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University.

- iii.* be charged with ensuring, in conjunction with the GSA of each respective university, that their constituency is up to date regarding current GSA events, policies, and benefits.
- iv.* be charged with attending monthly GSA meetings as well as attending meetings of their respective sub-committees within GSA.

6.7 The Student Seminar Coordinator shall:

- i.* be elected from the CPCBGSA constituency in accordance with election procedures described in section Article 7, shall not be a first year student, and shall not be a student with preconceived plans to forfeit membership as outlined in section Article 3 or otherwise vacate the position prior to the prescribed term of office defined in section Article 5.
- ii.* organize at least one (1) student seminar for students to present and receive feedback on their research per semester.
- iii.* organize professional development panels for the constituency with at least one (1) happening per semester.

6.8 The Social Media Manager shall:

- i.* be elected from the CPCBGSA constituency in accordance with election procedures described in section Article 7 and shall not be a student with preconceived plans to forfeit membership as outlined in section Article 3 or otherwise vacate the position prior to the prescribed term of office defined in section Article 5.
- ii.* be in charge of the various CPCBGSA social media accounts (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
- iii.* ensure GSA events are advertised to the CPCBGSA constituency through social media
- iv.* advertise student accomplishments via social media
- v.* ensure that all CPCBGSA events are documented on social media

6.9 The Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator shall:

- i.* be elected from the CPCBGSA constituency in accordance with election procedures described in section Article 7 and shall not be a student with preconceived plans to forfeit membership as outlined in section Article 3 or otherwise vacate the position prior to the prescribed term of office defined in section Article 5.
- ii.* be in charge of hosting one (1) outreach or volunteering related event per-semester. This is up to the interpretation of the Coordinator, but could include organizing a day to work at a food bank or encouraging more engagement with CMU/Pitt ongoing outreach activities.

6.10 The Senate members shall:

- i.* be elected from the CPCBGSA constituency in accordance with election procedures described in section Article 7 and shall not be a first year student nor a student with preconceived plans to forfeit membership as outlined in section Article 3 or otherwise vacate the position prior to the prescribed term of office defined in section Article 5 unless the first year student has received approval from the program directors.
- ii.* be comprised of at least one (1) student from each university.
- iii.* be charged with organizing themselves to perform the following tasks:
 - a.* increasing and improving relations between the CPCB graduate students and undergraduate/masters students at both universities.
 - b.* organizing social events for the CPCB constituency.
 - c.* organizing CPCB intramural sporting teams through the CMU intramural athletic program.
 - d.* ensuring the proper functioning of the CPCBGSA website(s).
 - e.* maintaining the CPCB events and seminar calendars on the CPCBGSA website.

Article 7 – Elections of the Governing Board

7.1 Elections for the Governing Board shall be held at a meeting open to all members of the CPCBGSA constituency, at the annual CPCB retreat.

7.2 The current president shall serve as moderator for the election and remain impartial during the voting. In the event that they will be running for a position, they will name an impartial replacement from the CPCBGSA constituency.

7.3 A Quorum for elections is defined as half ($1/2$) of the total current CPCBGSA Constituency

7.4 The order of elections is as follows:

- i.* the President
- ii.* the Vice President
- iii.* the Treasurer
- iv.* the Graduate Student Assembly representatives
- v.* the Student Seminar Coordinator
- vi.* the Social Media Manager
- vii.* the Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator
- viii.* the Senate representatives

7.5 Nominations shall be conducted as follows:

- i.* Any member of the CPCBGSA constituency may be nominated for a Governing Board position by any member of the CPCBGSA constituency, including themselves, if the nominee is eligible for the position as stipulated in section Article 6.
- ii.* Members may be nominated for multiple positions, but may only be elected to a single position on the Governing Board.
- iii.* Prior to the election nominees will be informed of their nomination(s) and may accept or decline at their discretion.

7.6 Voting at the annual CPCB retreat shall be conducted as follows, excluding the senators:

- i.* Each nominee is permitted to give a brief (30 seconds) speech with respect to their nomination.
- ii.* All nominees will then leave the room and the moderator will open the floor for discussion.
- iii.* After the moderator closes discussion, a blind vote of the CPCBGSA constituency, excluding the nominees, will be held.
- iv.* In the event that only one (1) person is running for a position, a second option "reopen nominations" shall be present on the ballot. If this option wins, self-nominations will be reopened immediately and another round of voting will be held. If no one self-nominates, the person originally running for the position will win the vote.
- v.* The nominee with the majority of votes will be elected to the position in the Governing Board.
- vi.* In the event no one receives a majority, the moderator will hold a runoff vote between the top two (2) candidates.
- vii.* In the event that the retreat takes place virtually, the above election procedure will be conducted in a virtual meeting and the nominees will be moved to a separate virtual room during the discussion.

7.7 Senate elections shall be conducted as follows:

- i.* Each nominee is permitted to give a 30 second speech and then shall leave the room.
- ii.* The constituency, including the nominees, will then select their top four (4) candidates.
- iii.* The four (4) nominees with the highest number of votes will be selected as senators.
- iv.* In the event that the top four (4) nominees with the highest number of votes does not include a student from each university, then there will be a separate election amongst only the students from the left out university to decide the final senator. This secondary election will take place before the results of the initial election are announced.

7.8 Special Elections

In the event that a CPCBGSA Governing Board position is empty mid-term, any member of the CPCBGSA constituency may be nominated by a member of the Governing Board to fill a vacancy. Upon acceptance of the nomination and a vote of $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of the CPCBGSA Governing Board during a monthly meeting, the nominee may assume the powers and duties of the position for the remainder of the fiscal year. The Governing Board may choose to hold a mid-term election to fill the position operating under the procedures of section Article 7 if the CPCBGSA Governing Board is not able to nominate another member of the CPCBGSA constituency.

Article 8 – Members at large

8.1 The Members at large shall:

- i.* be defined as any member of CPCBGSA constituency who attends a Governing Board monthly meeting.
- ii.* be charged with assisting the rest of the Governing Board with tasks outlined above.
- iii.* be allowed to vote on any items for which a vote of the Governing Board is called.

Article 9 – Invited Speaker Liaison

9.1 The Invited Speaker Liaison shall:

- i.* be elected annually by the CPCBGSA constituency through an online vote during Spring semester organized by a current member of the Governing Board.
- ii.* not be a first year student nor a student with preconceived plans to forfeit membership as outlined in section Article 3 or otherwise vacate the position prior to the prescribed term of office defined in section Article 5.
- iii.* request speaker nominations from the CPCB graduate students. Nominees must satisfy the following criteria:
 - a.* be in North America if the seminar is to be in-person.
 - b.* must not have been a CPCB seminar speaker within the last 3 years.
- iv.* organize a poll for CPCB graduate students to vote on the eligible nominees, and use the results to rank them.
- v.* submit the top three to five (3-5), along with two to three (2-3) sentences describing why they are being nominated and their field of research, to the two (2) faculty members organizing CPCB Seminar.

- vi.* once approved, invite one (1) nominee to speak during the normal time slot for the CPCB seminar series. Continue to invite one (1) speaker at a time from the list until someone accepts.
- vii.* aid in hosting the speaker and give an appropriate introduction at seminar. If they are unable to perform this task they must ensure another student is able to host the speaker.
- viii.* ensure that there is at least one (1) student-invited speaker at CPCB seminar per year. It is at the discretion of the Invited Speaker Liaison to invite and host one (1) additional student-invited speaker for the other semester.
- ix.* be charged with informing the Governing Board of the approved speaker list and when a nominee has accepted an invitation to speak at the CPCB seminar series.

Article 10 – Constitutional Amendments

10.1 Formal proposals of constitutional amendments must be approved by a simple majority of the Governing Board at the meeting one (1) month prior to holding a vote on said amendment.

10.2 Once approved by a simple majority of the Governing Board, proposed amendments must be announced to the CPCBGSA constituency one (1) month in advance of the ratification.

10.3 The Constitution may be amended by a super majority ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of members of the Governing Board and the present CPCBGSA constituency.

Article 11 – Constitutional Rewrite

11.1 The Governing Board can hold a vote by simple majority to rewrite the CPCBGSA constitution. At time of voting a Governing Board member must accept the role of leading the rewrite.

11.2 The rewritten constitution must be provided to the constituency at least one (1) month before the ratification vote, to take place during a CPCBGSA meeting.

11.3 A super majority ($\frac{2}{3}$) of members of the Governing Board and the present CPCBGSA constituency is required for ratification to pass.