

Constitution of *Machine Learning at SJSU*

Recognized
Student
Organizations

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY



Effective Date: November 10th, 2019

Article I - Name

This organization shall henceforth be named *Machine Learning at SJSU* (more commonly known as *ML@SJSU*).

Article II - Purpose

ML@SJSU aims to bring together a community of dedicated individuals to inspire collaboration and exploration in the field of machine learning. Many machine learning courses focus heavily on theory and place less emphasis on practical application. This organization provides interested participants with an environment to pursue knowledge of how to implement what they have learned. We aspire to help newcomers over this initial learning curve, conduct extracurricular group projects, and cover breakthrough advances in machine learning.

Equally important, this community creates an opportunity for members to share knowledge. Many have interests in different subfields of machine learning, including computer vision, natural language processing, reinforcement learning, and more. Through the club, members may teach each other skills from the broader array of machine learning.

ML@SJSU has four official components in its mission statement:

1. Create an **open and supportive community** for machine learning at SJSU.
2. Prepare students with practical machine learning skills.
3. Promote diversity in the field to solve problems relevant to our community.
4. Increase the machine learning credibility of our university.

Article III - Meetings

This club aims to create an open, transparent, and supportive *community*. As such, meetings are *always* open to all SJSU affiliates (student, professor, lecturer, staff, friends, etc.), provided these affiliates participate positively.

Meetings are held weekly on the university campus. Special meetings may be called by the president as the need arises. Officer meetings are also called by the president. Members are notified of any meeting schedule changes through the online discussion community (*Slack*) and the organization website.

Article IV - Official Membership

While club meetings are open to all SJSU affiliates, **official members** gain access to additional club benefits. These benefits include being officially listed on the club website for recruiters to see, priority access for RSVP and special events, and ability to apply for club funding for projects.

Membership is on a semesterly basis, meaning members must consistently meet membership criteria each semester. There are four possible routes to official membership; meeting any of the below qualifies a participant for official membership:

1. **Active Involvement:** Starting from one's first attendance, a participant must attend two-thirds of remaining club meetings in the semester, for at least three total meetings. Attendance is tracked at every meeting.
2. **Content Contribution:** One may work with the officer team to plan club meetings, contribute a tutorial, film a video, reach out to guest speakers, promote diversity, solicit sponsors, etc. Any significant action that supports the growth of members in our community is acceptable, as long as it is agreed upon between the contributor and the officer team.
3. **Club Project:** One may lead or join a club project to maintain throughout the semester. A one-person team is permitted, but project leads are highly encouraged to recruit club participants to join the project. A club project *must* be open to recruiting at least one other club participant to qualify for official membership.
4. **Membership Dues:** If the attendee cannot meet any of the above criteria, they may choose to contribute through a \$20 membership fee, since funding helps our community acquire resources. However, those who choose membership through this route are still expected to participate in occasional meetings and in our online discussion community.

Upon meeting the membership criteria, the member should submit a profile picture, and optionally *LinkedIn* and *GitHub* links, to the officer team to obtain official listing on the club website.

While official membership lasts for one semester, members have the flexibility of half the following semester to reinstate membership. If no membership criteria are met after half the semester, the member may be recategorized to "inactive" or "alumnus" status.

Should a member violate any terms or rules set for by SJSU student conduct, they may have their membership withdrawn or revoked. The club will prohibit illegal discrimination based on age, race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression, marital or veteran status, and physical or mental impairment.

Article V - Decision Making Process

Generally, the officer team decides club activities and publishes upcoming events on the club website. However, club participants are highly encouraged to engage with the officers to plan events. Because a community relies on its constituents, we aim to emphasize initiative on the part of community members. A participant may suggest or ask to lead a particular event at any

time. The club shall always maintain a public feedback/suggestions form for transparent decision making.

If (1) the majority of official members support a particular direction, (2) the majority of the officer team agrees with the direction, (3) the direction meets at least half (currently two) of the club's mission statement components, and (4) the direction follows university guidelines; then the club will commit to that direction.

Article VI – Officers and Duties

The officer team is a group of active planners and organizers for club events. Qualifications for holding office include keeping good standing within the university, as well as regularly and actively participating in club meetings. Officers are expected to attend weekly officer meetings to plan for upcoming events. Members may apply for officership at any time by contacting the president and officer team. Officers shall be appointed by the standing president.

Description of Duties

- The **president** shall lead the club, inspire members and officers, and represent the club to the university and others. The president holds the primary vision and direction for the club.
- The **vice president** shall assume the duties of the president in his/her absence and serve as a secondary or co-leader in the club.
- The **treasurer** shall keep all records of official business and financial transactions.
- All officers, mentioned above or otherwise, shall contribute to creating club content, and may include creating workshops, contacting guest speakers, creating flyers and advertisements, maintaining the website, tracking membership, and more.

Choosing the Next President

At the end of each semester, the officers shall vote for the next semester's president. Because the president is expected to closely interact with and inspire the officer team, and because officers have an agreed-upon commitment to work with the president, presidential voting is only open to officers. However, official members are allowed to voice their input to the voting officers.

To run for president, each candidate should explain (1) why they want to be president, and (2) what they plan to do as president. Presidential candidates are allowed to cast their own votes. The candidate who receives the majority of votes wins the presidency for the next semester.

The existing president's voting power counts for one-fourth the total number of officers in the club (including themselves). For example, if there are 8 officers, the existing president's vote counts as 2. The reasoning is that the current president has the best understanding of what the presidential commitment entails, and so should hold slightly, but not exceedingly, more influence in the final tally.

Article VII - Advisor

The advisor should be someone knowledgeable in machine learning who can provide advice on machine learning topics if needed. Faculty/staff advisors are elected and appointed by the officer team by a simple majority vote. Removing the advisor follows the same procedure.

Article VIII – Dues/Fees

A *optional* \$20 semesterly membership fee is an accepted avenue for official membership, as discussed in Article IV.

Article IX – Amendments

Amendments to the club constitution may be proposed by members and are ratified via a three-fourths majority vote by official club members.