

Applied Physical Sciences Graduate Student Association Constitution and Bylaws

Ratified: _____, 2022 - Version 1

Article I - NAME AND AFFILIATION

Section 1: Name

The Applied Physical Sciences Graduate Student Association (APS GSA)

Section 2: Affiliation

Department of Applied Physical Sciences (APS) - The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH)

Article II - PURPOSE

The APS GSA has two main purposes: 1) we aim to build the APS graduate student community (consisting of all current and incoming students enrolled in the APS department or studying under APS research faculty) through academic, professional, and social activities, 2) we will serve as a communications hub to deliver departmental opportunities. We will also support graduate students in research and teaching responsibilities by:

- I. Fostering professional relationships between students and faculty,
- II. Acting as a liaison for graduate students with APS faculty, representing and advocating for graduate student interests and
- III. Striving for an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students in the APS community.

Article III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Active Members

Currently enrolled UNC-CH students earning a Materials Science Ph.D or conducting research under APS faculty can be active members with the right to vote and hold office.

Section 2: Associate Members

Associate membership is open to faculty and interested community partners outside the University setting, i.e. the Research Triangle Park area, UNC-affiliate community, etc. Associate members may not vote or hold office.

Section 3: Alumni Members

Alumni membership is open to former APS GSA members. Alumni members may not vote or hold office.

Section 4: Membership Rules of Order

Each APS GSA member is considered a representative of the Department of

Applied Physical Sciences and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Members are expected to follow the [UNC-CH Graduate School Handbook](#) including academic integrity and upholding required academic standings. Moreover, members of the APS GSA will abide by all rules outlined by this constitution and bylaws, including the expectations outlined in Article III, Section 5. Members should be willing to promote the welfare of all APS graduate students by listening actively as others express themselves and respecting all viewpoints.

Section 5: Non-Discrimination Statement

The organization abides by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Non-Discrimination Policy for Student Organizations, which states the following:

(A) Membership and participation in the organization must be open to all students without regard to age, race, color, national origin, disability, religious status or historic religious affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Membership and participation in the organization must also be open without regard to gender, unless exempt under Title IX.

(B) Student organizations that select their members on the basis of commitment to a set of beliefs (e.g., religious or political beliefs) may limit membership and participation in the organization to students who, upon individual inquiry, affirm that they support the organization's goals and agree with its beliefs, so long as no student is excluded from membership or participation on the basis of his or her age, race, color, national origin, disability, religious status or historic religious affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or, unless exempt under Title IX.

Section 6: Duties of Members:

Active participation in APS GSA sponsored events.

Section 7: Dues

Dues are not currently required for membership.

Section 8: Removal of Members

All rules for participating members are written clearly in this constitution and bylaws. Any member who does not directly follow the guidelines set by Article III can be removed from the APS GSA by a majority vote in a special hearing. To remove a member or officer, a written notice at least 7 days prior to the removal must be provided to the individual before officially removing them from the organization. Removal procedures will follow due process, including the right to speak on one's behalf, and right to an appeal. Removal disallows members from future participation in academic, professional or social events sponsored by the APS GSA and bars

members from participation as an alumnus.

Article IV – ELECTED OFFICERS

Section 1: Executive Board

The following officers will lead the APS GSA:

- President/Co-presidents
- Vice president
- Secretary/administrative officer
- Treasurer
- Social events coordinator
- Lab liaisons.

A vacancy in an officer role shall be declared when an officer leaves the institution, resigns, or is removed from office. The Vice President will fill by appointment any vacancy which may occur, pending ratification at the next group business meeting. This executive board will consist of only active APS GSA members. At least the President and Treasurer officer roles must be filled for the APS GSA to be considered active.

Section 2: Duties of Officers

President/Co-president:

1. Serves as a liaison to the faculty and communicates regularly with the department chair, the director of undergraduate studies, director of undergraduate labs, and the director of graduate studies in regard to issues related to specific concerns of graduate students.
2. Should initiate (and enjoy) regular conversations with the faculty and students about issues that directly impact graduate students.
3. The president can be asked to speak at GSA meetings and at faculty meetings on the graduate student body's behalf, represent the GSA to prospective and new students, and/or attend social functions to interact with and/or represent APS graduate students.
4. Motivate GSA members and APS graduate students to participate in the work of the department that impacts graduate students, including admissions/recruitment processes and events. .
5. Jointly responsible with other GSA officers for brain-storming GSA-organized professional and social events for graduate students and assist in procuring events

Vice President:

1. Assist the President on all the above tasks.
2. If the President cannot fulfill any tasks in his/her role, the VP will step in as the temporary replacement for the duration of absence or until the next officers' election cycle.

Secretary/Administrative Officer:

1. Maintain all official records of the GSA in a digital repository , including creating and maintaining minutes of GSA meetings, officer appointments, and faculty meetings in which the GSA takes part.
2. In particular, the secretary may be responsible for sending GSA information to the department via email and keeping a GSA calendar
3. Maintain a Social media presence for the GSA
4. Jointly responsible for brain-storming GSA-organized social events for graduate students.
5. Maintain the Shared Google Drive available to the other GSA Officers

Social Events Coordinator:

1. Curate external and internal resources that will support social and professional events (i.e. coordinating with units to schedule and organize event-related material).
2. Poll/communicate with GSA members to schedule and organize events and make events accessible for interested parties.
3. Send out advertising and communications regarding GSA events to APS student body and other appropriate departments.
4. Jointly responsible for brain-storming GSA-organized social events for graduate students.

Treasurer:

1. Responsible for updating the GSA budget for each bimonthly meeting.
 - a. Track all transactions involving existing GSA funds and fundraising activities.
 - b. Maintain an accessible file of finances recorded each semester via the APS GSA shared drive (digital repository). Files will be backed up on a physical hard drive held by the treasurer
 - c. Maintain financial security of the organization's transactions through password management of physical and digital assets (documents and receipts).
2. Responsible for secure physical possession of Pcard.
3. Work with the President and the VP to look for ways to increase the GSA budget.
4. Coordinate with the APS GPSG senator if outside funding via GPSF is desired.
5. Jointly responsible for brain-storming GSA-organized social events for graduate students.

Research Group Liaisons/ Social Officers (ideally one from each lab group):

1. Represent graduate students in their respective research group at GSA meetings and voice any concerns from their research group.
2. Encourage their research group participation in GSA and departmental social events.
3. Convey GSA-related information and events to their research group.

Section 3: Election of Officers

Commented [1]: This answers my question above. I wonder, though, if there is a need to maintain the records on a University-sanctioned drive like our APS shared drive? Particularly for sustainability through officer transitions.

Commented [2]: Does vendor mean internal and external resources that will support social and professional events?

Commented [3]: add section for applying for special projects grants?

Officers will be voted in via an annual election during the Spring semester. The annual election will be coordinated by the GPSG senator. Each person running for office is required to announce their intent to run for office and submit a personal statement via Google Form. Voting will take place over the course of the week after the intent to run deadline has passed, during which the candidates, corresponding officer position and personal statement will become available to APS GSA members. Voting will be open to APS GSA members by Google Form. Each position will be assigned to the individual who receives a majority of the votes. Eligibility: The election will be open to the entire APS graduate student body.

Section 4: Removal of Officers

One written warning will be issued by the President to an officer if said officer is not following rules of the UNC-CH Graduate Student Handbook and Officer duties mandated by this constitution, signed by at least 3 of the 5 officers. A meeting between the Officer(s) and Vice President will be held if actions continue. The APS GSA advisor will be contacted before any action is taken. All removal procedures should follow due process, including adequate written notice - 7 days minimum, the right to speak on one's behalf, and right to an appeal.

Article V – MEETINGS

Section 1: Executive Board Meetings:

Executive board meetings will occur monthly and are open to all officers. President/co-presidents will arrange a meeting time and the secretary will document meeting notes and minutes.

Structure: A quorum of officers must attend. The meeting agenda shall include order of business, a disposition of the minutes, new agenda items, and upcoming events.

Proxy voting: Officers are allowed to vote on the business of the organization by submitting a vote in writing to the Vice President or President(s), acting as a proxy. The proxy must state the name of the voter.

Section 2: Open Public Meetings:

All general meetings of the organization and its committees shall be open and public, and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meetings except when in violation of conduct policies. Meetings will be held every other month.

Quorum: Quorum in a general meeting of the organization shall constitute a minimum of three officers.

Commented [4]: Are these meetings different than GSA activities? Or could meetings be incorporated into some activities?

Commented [5R4]: Meaning - make it sound like a more interactive meeting. Will there be speakers? Business: upcoming events, goals, etc.; maybe add a GSA section to the water cooler; coffee with a senior graduate student (specifically for first-year students)

Article VII - ADVISOR

Section 1: Qualifications

The officers of APS GSA are free to select any eligible employee to serve as the advisor to the organization. Upon selection, the advisor must be approved by the Dean of Students. GSA will have an advisor who is a full-time faculty or staff member of UNC-Chapel Hill, UNC Hospitals, or an affiliated department; an emeritus UNC-Chapel Hill faculty or staff member; or a campus minister. The advisor does not have the right to vote. The advisor may be confirmed yearly by the general membership of the APS GSA. Should the APS GSA choose not to confirm the advisor, the APS GSA executive board must select another employee to serve as the advisor and have the advisor approved by the Dean of Students. The advisor may resign by submitting a letter to the Dean of Students if prior to yearly confirmation or by asking to have his/her name withdrawn from confirmation.

Section 2: Duties

1. The advisor shall assist the group in their execution of roles and responsibilities.
2. The advisor shall provide feedback to the organization regarding its operation and functioning.
3. The advisor shall serve as a resource.
4. The advisor should provide advice upon request, and also should share knowledge, expertise, and experience with the group.
5. The advisor will be a nonvoting member of the organization.

Article VIII – FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

The treasurer shall deposit allotted funds for the APS GSA and will be the primary officer designated to handle the organization's finances. The treasurer will coordinate with the organization's advisor for signature authorization of funds.

In the event this organization dissolves, all monies left in the treasury, after outstanding debts and claims have been paid, shall be donated to _____.

Digital records will be kept on a secure external harddrive possessed by the treasurer. Physical records will be kept within the office of the APS GSA advisor. All records should be kept following chronological order and redundantly accounted for on a spreadsheet stored on the external hard drive. Signatures will be authorized through signature authorization forms kept by the treasurer. All financial transactions must comply with university policy and state law on appropriate use of UNC-CH organizational funds. All funds will be allocated according to specific needs outlined by the APS GSA executive board. Treasurer will execute allocation of funds according to a written, signed agreement by the APS GSA executive board.

Commented [6]: Is there a need for an annual budget?

Commented [7]: I'm curious about where the funds are deposited. Does each UNC-CH official student group get a bank account? Or is this something that APS GSA seeks on its own?

Commented [8]: Let's talk about this. I think it would make sense to keep this in a folder for GSA in the APS shared drive.

Commented [9R8]: There is an APS drive; Heidi has to look at permissions for adding a GSA folder, but not giving access to other faculty-facing folders

Commented [10]: Per my comment above, this sounds to me like an annual budget process. We should think through if there is a formal process/form to allocate funds.

Article IX - RATIFICATION

This Constitution shall become effective upon its ratification by a two-thirds majority of the ballots cast in a general election by APS graduate students. Upon ratification of this Constitution, all prior constitutions shall be null and void.

Article X - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this constitution may be made at any general meeting provided notice of the proposed amendment was given one week prior to a vote. The constitution may be amended at any regular business meeting of the organization by a two-thirds vote of active membership, provided the amendment has been submitted to members in writing at least one week prior to the business meeting.