

Graduate Women in Science (GWIS)

Constitution

Article I – Purpose

The purpose of GWIS is to further women's interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, be a support and networking group for women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics both at Penn State and nationally, and to provide a vehicle for women's recognition as scientists, engineers, and mathematicians. This organization consists of graduate students, post-docs, and faculty who are involved in technology, engineering, mathematics, and the physical, natural and social sciences.

Article II – Membership

Section A: The membership shall be divided into active and associate members. Only active members may vote, preside, officiate, or solicit funding on the organization's behalf.

1. Active Members An active chapter member must be a full-time, officially registered graduate student. An active member attends three events during the semester or is a dues paying member.

2. Associate members are those who are not currently registered students (e.g., professionals, PSU faculty and staff, or those interested in advancing the purpose of this organization). At any time, at least 50% +1 of the members must be graduate students. If at any time this threshold is not met, the most recently admitted non-graduate student active members shall be demoted to associate status. At all times there shall be at least 10 active student members for undergraduate or graduate organizations.

Section B: Dues are collected annually on October 1 for all officers. During the summer, additional dues may be collected from members currently residing in the area to fund an event if the membership approves. The Executive Committee shall decide the dues rates before the beginning of the spring semester. Dues paid by new members during the spring semester will count towards the next fiscal year.

Section C: New Membership and Recruitment

1. Any and all new members will be given full disclosure during recruitment, including but not limited to the disclosure of:
 - i. New Membership Manual
 - ii. Schedule of New Member Events and Activities
 - iii. A list of responsibilities
 - iv. A copy of the University Hazing policy, prescribed by Policies and Rules for Student Organizations (This documents will be available upon request by the Office of Student Activities).
2. All members, including but not limited to new members and recruits, reserve the right to refrain from participating in any activities without consequence,

based upon personal/religious beliefs, personal values, or moral reserve as defined by the member.

3. Any and all interaction/activity between members and/or new members will be limited to guidelines stated by university policy, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

Section D: Membership Removal

1. The club reserves the right to expel a member who is not following the policies of the organization. Officers may resign following policy in Article III, Section D, heading 2.

Section E: Mediation

1. In the case of violations of constitutional policies and/or a conflict between members within the organization the highest ranking officer that is not involved in the conflict, with the assistance from the advisor (if applicable), will facilitate an informal mediation procedure.

A. The mediator shall:

- i. Arrange for a mediation meeting outside of the regular organization business meeting
- ii. Explain their role as the impartial party and the objectives of the mediation
- iii. Set ground rules
- iv. Allow each party to express their views by allowing the conversation to go where the parties wish it to go
- v. Collect any available resources that might assist in the resolution (financial documents, emails, photos, etc.)
- vi. As a third party, do not suggestion resolutions but rather leave the responsibility for the resolution with the parties involved
- vii. Facilitate goal setting to reach a win-win resolution

Article III – Officers

Section A: Only active members as described in Article II, Section A, shall be eligible to serve as appointed or elected officers. Those who serve should have an interest in furthering the purpose of the organization as described in Article I.

Section B. Officer Qualifications

1. A candidate for a position in the Executive Board must be an officially registered full-time graduate student that is in good academic standing according to University regulations.
2. A candidate for a committee chair position can be an Active or Associate member. (See Article II, Sections A.1 and A.2).

Section C: The Officers shall be President, Vice President/President-elect, Secretary, Treasurer,

Public Relations Manager, Executive Mentor(s) and Advisor(s)

1. The officers shall constitute the *Executive Committee*, which will be the governing body of the chapter.
2. The *President* of GWIS shall be the main contact person for this chapter both within Penn State and outside the university, preside over meetings, be responsible for notifying the membership of upcoming meetings and events, appointing heads of committees, ex-officio a member of all committees, keeping contact with their work to the extent that may be advisable, may authorize the withdrawal of funds for the treasury for the payment of obligations incurred by the chapter for such other purposes as the Executive Committee may approve, responding to the GWIS email alias, and conducting the activities of GWIS with consent of the membership. The president, in collaboration with the Advisor, shall compose a report of the activities of the chapter during the past year, and send it to the National Secretary 30 days before the Grand Chapter meeting. The *President* is filled by the succession of the *President-Elect* to the position. In the case there is no *President-Elect*, a candidate for president must have served or is currently serving in any position of Executive Board. If there is a qualified committee chair, this graduate student may also be considered a candidate by majority agreement of the Executive Board. The *President* shall serve for a term of one (1) academic year, and until his/her successor has taken office.
3. The *Vice-President/President-Elect* shall organize and run elections (unless the Vice President is running for office, see Article VII, Section D); be responsible for membership issues such as recruitment, social events and concerns of the membership; may authorize the withdrawal of funds; assist the President with correspondence duties; and assume the duties of the President when absent. The Vice-president/President-elect shall serve for a term of one (1) academic year, and until his/her successor has taken office.
4. The *Secretary* shall take minutes at all meetings and distribute them to the membership, keep a current membership list, and keep all information generated by the organization and make it accessible to all GWIS members. The secretary shall maintain a list of the new members, to be checked against records from the National office, assist a member who moves to another area and wishes to transfer to another chapter by forwarding a copy of the data card and the completed transfer from to the new chapter and report the transfer to the National Secretary, and send the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of newly elected chapter officers to the National Secretary no later than 30 days after chapter elections. The secretary may also communicate meeting or event scheduling to the membership. The secretary is responsible for maintaining event information and collecting it from the designated chair. The secretary is responsible for creating an agenda for the monthly meetings from the event information and updates obtained from the chairs and executive officers. Furthermore, the *Secretary* will be in charge of maintaining the GWIS email list-serve.

5. The *Treasurer* shall be authorized to withdraw money from the ASA account for the payment of financial obligations incurred by the chapter, keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures, make a full account at each annual business meeting and on request at other meetings, (the accounts shall be audited annually), complete and submit the IRS form 990-N annually, and collect chapter dues by October 1st. The Treasurer must be actively involved in all major financial decisions, fundraising and budget requests. The treasurer must collect budget requests for all events and approve them with the input of the executive board within the first month of the academic year. The budgets should be approved within two weeks of submission.
6. The *Public Relations Manager* shall maintain the GWIS website hosted by Penn State at <http://www.clubs.psu.edu/up/gwis/> and www.psugwis.weebly.com. The Public Relations Manager is responsible to oversee that the advertising intern is following the responsibilities described in Article III, Section D.3.J and that the intern receives the information necessary for carrying out his/her responsibilities. The Public Relations Manager shall be in touch with the executive board to make sure that the information about the different GWIS events is flowing from the chairs to the executive board to the intern.
7. The *Executive mentor(s)* is responsible to directly oversee the operation of the GWIS Nu Chapter and its officers, may be responsible for providing counsel to the President and Vice-President/President-elect of the chapter directly and facilitating officer and co-chair transitions between years. The *Executive mentor(s)* will provide a source of knowledge of previous chapter activities. This position is an optional position for all Nu Chapter previous officers.
8. See Article VII for duties of the *Advisor(s)*.

Section D: GWIS Program Committees

1. *Program Co-chair Responsibilities.* The members that take the co-chair positions in these GWIS-sponsored programs are responsible for preparing yearly budgets and raising the funds to cover the events during the summer semester following their election in April. The proposed budgets are to be turned in to the executive committee on a date within the first month of the beginning of the academic year as set by the executive committee; the executive committee will review the budgets, make suggestions and edits, and return the reviewed budgets. The approved budgets will be returned within two weeks of submission. Furthermore, co-chairs are required to attend all monthly general meetings and officially join the Nu Chapter by paying the membership dues to the National GWIS organization. After each completed event, a post-event evaluation must be completed and sent to the Secretary within one (1) week of the event.
2. *Resignation policy of co-chair position.* Any person that holds a co-chair position in GWIS will be resigning of their position upon failure to attend two (2) general

meetings per semester without a pre-approved excuse by the Executive Officers, effective immediately after missing the second meeting. If the co-chair wishes to appeal the termination, he/she must write a 1-page essay detailing the reasons for missing the meetings, projected events/fundraising for the rest of the year and why he/she is suited to continue working with the program.

3. *GWIS-sponsored programs: Descriptions and responsibilities*

A. Girl Scout Workshop:

Description: The Girl Scout Workshop presents a unique opportunity for graduate women scientists to serve as mentors and to encourage middle-school girls to feel excited about science. The event is well attended by over 20 volunteer graduate students from across campus and 50+ Girl Scouts from the surrounding area.

Number of positions: 2

Duration: 1 year

Occurrence: 1 per semester

Responsibilities:

- Recruit volunteers (activity leaders, day-of volunteers, etc.) and Girl Scout participants (troops)
- Choose badge(s), date of events and venues
- Book venue and/or instrument(s) needed
- Plan event: supplies, food, activities, evaluations, taking pictures
- Coordinate reimbursements for volunteers through the Treasurer. Only amounts in accordance to the proposed and approved budget will be reimbursed.
- Update all information related to the event on ANGEL
- Recruit/nominate prospective co-chairs for the following year

B. Inside the Scientists Studio (ISS):

Description: Inspired by Inside the Actor's Studio, Inside the Scientists Studio (ISS) is a monthly seminar series of lively, interactive interviews with two guests from faculty, industry, or government professions in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. The interviews are general and discuss the life experiences of the interviewees: family-work balance, graduate life and communicating with one's advisor, career decisions and challenges, and plans for the future.

Number of positions: 2

Duration: 1 year

Occurrence: Monthly

Responsibilities:

- Recruit speakers (faculty, post-docs, industry, research-related staff, etc.)

- Order food and prepare lemonade and coffee services from the internal GWIS supplies
- Request room reservations in advance through correspondence with the Secretary
- Coordinate reimbursements through Treasurer. Only amounts in accordance to the proposed and approved budget will be reimbursed.
- Coordinate advertising with the GWIS Marketing Intern
- Keep track of participants (on the GWIS sign-up sheet)

C. Brown Bag Discussion Series:

Description: Participants including graduate and undergraduate students in the sciences and in non- science disciplines have attended and benefited from monthly lunch-hour informal discussions of a broad range of issues of concern to graduate students. Past topics included “Get ready to FINISH your Dissertation,” “Career Issues for Women,” and “Stress Management and Relaxation on a Grad Students Budget.” Brown Bag Discussions are teleconferenced to the GWIS Chapter at PSU Hershey when possible.

Number of positions: 2

Duration: 1 year

Occurrence: Monthly

Responsibilities:

- Recruit speakers (faculty, post-docs, industry, research-related staff, etc.)
- Prepare lemonade and coffee services
- Coordinate reimbursements through Treasurer. Only amounts in accordance to the proposed and approved budget will be reimbursed.
- Coordinate advertising with the GWIS Marketing Intern
- Request room reservations in advance through correspondence with the Secretary
- Keep track of participants (on the GWIS sign-up sheet)

D. Fundraising:

Description: The fundraising chair is responsible for helping out and communicating with all program co-chairs in the process of requesting and collecting donations for all GWIS-sponsored events. She/he will play an important role in analyzing the requests made in the proposed budgets in the beginning of the school year.

Number of positions: 2

Duration: 1 year

Occurrence: as needed throughout the year, involves regular correspondence through email, phone, or in person

Responsibilities:

- Initiate contact with potential benefactors
- Be aware of all the budget requests of all GWIS programs
- Based on the projected budgets, prepare donation request letters for companies, departments and individual faculty
- Communicate in a frequent and timely manner with potential benefactors
- Arrange all donations with the Treasurer
- Plan creative fundraising opportunities

E. Women in STEM:

Description: A week to support and acknowledge women and their achievements in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) held the week leading up to the Voices Conference. During Women in STEM, GWIS will support and acknowledge women and their achievements in the STEM fields. Green ribbons will be sent out through the mail to various STEM departments to be worn during the week. Flyers will also be sent out highlighting significant women in STEM in addition to the upcoming GWIS events and socials. Members and friends come together for a range of activities during the week with at least 1 event/week. These can include a book club meeting, article presentation and discussion on a current article related to women in science, social activities, and presentations by invited speakers. Often, ISS or BBDS will occur during this week, as well.

Number of positions: 2

Duration: 1 year

Occurrence: First week of February (daily events)

Responsibilities:

- Coordinate all daily events for the week (Monday – Friday)
- Coordinate reimbursements through Treasurer. Only amounts in accordance to the proposed and approved budget will be reimbursed.
- Coordinate advertising with the GWIS Advertising Intern
- Request room reservations in advance through correspondence with the Secretary
- Keep track of participants (on the GWIS sign-up sheet)

F. Community Outreach:

Description: Members of the GWIS Nu Chapter plan and/or volunteer for science and engineering outreach programs aimed to inspire scientific interests among children and youth. In the past, members have carried out science demonstrations at local schools including Westerly Elementary School and Park Forest Middle School and also participated in this year's Material Research, Science and Engineering Centers (MRSEC) outreach program. GWIS Nu Chapter's science

demonstration booth was a popular attraction for young audience at the Children and Youth day at the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts (ArtsFest).

Number of positions: 2

Duration: 1 year

Occurrence: varies

Responsibilities:

- Coordinate with the different outreach offices in Penn State's campus for GWIS involvement in their individual outreach efforts
- Coordinate with the schools around the State College area to assess and determine when outreach events can be done on-site
- Coordinate yearly events, e.g. ArtsFest and Exploration Day
- Recruit volunteers
- Coordinate reimbursements through Treasurer. Only amounts in accordance to the proposed and approved budget will be reimbursed.

G. Voices Conference:

Description: GWIS Nu Chapter's largest conference focuses on networking and professional development, which attracts over 100 participants annually. The conference involves breakout sessions, poster sessions, and discussion groups, which offer time to share ideas, successes, and struggles. A panel consisting of professionals following different career paths (government, industry, academia, self-employment) gives great advice to future PhDs and young professionals.

Number of positions: 2

Duration: 2 years

Occurrence: once a year in February

Responsibilities:

- Weekly planning meetings with OSE and GSA representatives to plan the entire event:
 - Prepare a budget for the event
 - Coordinate venue for event
 - Invite speakers and panelists
 - Coordinate the travel arrangements for all invited speakers
 - Plan itinerary and schedule for the event
 - Fundraise all of the budget for the event through UPAC and donations
 - Advertise for the event throughout the year

H. Advertising Intern:

Number of positions: 1

Duration: 1 semester with option for renewal to following semester

Occurrence: as needed

Description: Unpaid internship opportunity for public relations and marketing for the local branch of a national non-profit organization at Penn State. Internship position may be offered for class credit if desired by the intern and a professional supervisor is committed to providing guidance.

Responsibilities:

- Coordinate with chapter leadership and committee chairs to plan, manage, and implement marketing for all professional, social, fundraising, and outreach events for the organization
- Assist with branding and logo; may include redesigning promotional materials
- Initiate and follow-up conversation with multiple departments at Penn State UP, local businesses in the private sector, and nearby educational institutions
- Develop GWIS social networking presence through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Maintain contact with executive board and Penn State Supervisor

Qualifications:

- Self-starter, organized, creative, enthusiastic
- Can work on a diverse team to help strategize marketing and PR plans and ideas
- Can initiate asking for information and follow-up
- Majors within the College of Communications at Penn State

Skills to be developed

- Design and implement a marketing and advertising strategy in a supportive environment
- Foster a rapport with educational administrators, STEM departments, business professional, and a diversity of students (graduate, undergraduate, post-graduate) in the STEM fields
- Enhance written and oral communication skills

Section E: Vacancies

1. Nominations are taken at the meeting following the vacancy. Elections may also occur at this meeting following the rules for voting outlined in Article V. When nominations are being taken to fill unexpired terms, any member of the organization may nominate another member of the organization by simply raising his/her hand and indicating such when recognized or through electronic communication prior to the meeting.
2. If the President leaves office, the President-Elect is expected to assume the presidential duties and an election will be held to fill the President-Elect position. If

the Advisor(s) leaves, the Executive Committee will choose a replacement.

3. In the event of a vacancy at election time for the Treasurer, the Secretary may assume this position for the academic year.

Article IV – Meetings

Section A: Meetings shall be held at least once a month as permitted by the academic calendar according to a schedule agreed upon by the Executive Committee through the entire calendar year.

Section B: Members shall be notified of meetings, regular and special, by the President or Secretary via email (or campus mail if the member does not have access to email) at least two days before the meeting.

Section C: An annual business meeting shall be in the spring semester.

Section D: Special meetings may be called by the Executive Committee. Any member with voting privileges as defined in Article V Section A may make a request to the Executive Committee to hold a special meeting.

Article V – Voting

Section A: All active members are eligible to vote.

Section B: 40% of those eligible to vote constitute a quorum.

Section C: If a quorum is reached, a plurality vote of those present shall be sufficient to decide an issue before GWIS. If a quorum is not reached, the Executive Committee may elect to call a special meeting, or the issue may be decided via email voting.

Article VI – Finances

Section A: The Fiscal Year shall be that of the National Organization (July 1 to June 30 of the next year).

Section B: All funds of GWIS shall be deposited and handled through the Office of Associated Student Activities (ASA).

Section C: Expenditures in excess of \$50 over the approved budget must be presented to the executive board for approval prior to expenditure. All other expenses shall be approved by the Treasurer and the President. Failure to abide by this procedure may result in inability to approve of reimbursement above the budgeted amount.

Section E: Dues

1. Dues for Active Members

- a. National and Local dues for new members may be submitted online through the National website.
 - b. The executive Committee will decide the amount of Chapter dues previous to the beginning of the fall semester.
 - c. A retired member may pay one-half the annual National dues and enjoy all the rights and privileges of full membership, both local and National.
 - d. A member may become a National Life Member by paying a designated amount in one lump sum, as determined by the National Organization, and thereby enjoy Life Membership in the local chapter.
2. Associate Member
 - a. Local members who decide not to pay National and Local dues become Associate Members.
3. Honorary Local Membership
 - a. National Honorary Members are not required to pay dues to either the National Organization or the local chapter. They shall have all the privileges of active membership.
 - b. Chapter Honorary Members who are active members of Sigma Delta Epsilon, Graduate Women in Science, Inc. need not pay chapter dues and shall have all the privileges of active chapter membership. If the honorary member wishes to vote he/she must contact the executive board for a ballot. They are required to pay national dues in order to have full national membership.
4. Dues for Transfers
 - a. If a member transfers to another chapter and has paid dues for the current year, there is no additional charge to be paid for that year.
5. Contributions
 - a. Sigma Delta Epsilon, Graduate Women in Science, Inc. is organized and operated exclusively for educational and scientific purposes. Therefore, the Internal Revenue Code ruling states that “Donors may deduct contributions to you and your exempt subordinate units (chapters) as provided by Section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devices, transfers or gifts to or for your use or to or for the use of your exempt subordinate units are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes under Sections 2055, 2106 and 2522 of the Code.”

Article VII – Advisor

Section A: This organization must retain an advisor at all times. The advisor will be a full-time Faculty or Staff member of The Pennsylvania State University, University Park campus and will be chosen by the organization. The executive board shall appoint one or more advisors to serve for a one or two year term. The advisor(s) shall be chosen from the Penn State faculty or staff and are defined as associate members. Concerning chapter interests include:

1. Attending officer meetings whenever possible, or receiving an update from the President if conflicts prohibit meeting attendance.

2. Reading and responding, as appropriate, to officer and National emails.
3. Providing assistance dependent on the current needs of GWIS, which may include contributing ideas for fundraising, for fostering membership, for strengthening connections with faculty and staff, or other relevant issues. However, the advisor(s) shall not be expected to provide administrative advice on programmatic activities.

Section B: The advisor(s) shall also be the liaison officer to the University, ensuring the chapter remains compliant with University guidelines. Correspondingly, the advisor shall confirm that all University and chapter policies are abided by and that the officers are maintaining the chapter in an effective and conscientious manner.

Article VIII – Elections

Section A: Elections will be held in April or at least 30 days before the National Grand Chapter Meeting. Elections may either be held at a meeting, by email, or if decided by the Executive Committee, the elections may be held by secret ballot e-mailed to the head of the elections committee using external voting software.

Section B: The President, President-Elect, Secretary, Public Relations Manager and Treasurer shall each be elected to serve for a term of one academic year. The term of office shall begin on the first day of the fall semester. A current officer can run for office and may be re-elected to serve an additional term or terms as determined to be in the best interests of the chapter. Candidates for executive positions may be interviewed by the current executive board prior to elections.

Section C: Nominations for officers shall be accepted beginning at least two weeks before the elections and will close immediately prior to elections.

Section D: An election committee may be selected prior to the elections with the Vice President as head unless the Vice President is running for office. No individual involved in conducting elections may be a potential candidate. In such a case for which this proves difficult, an advisor may take responsibility for collecting ballots.

Section E: A quorum, as defined in Article V, Section A, shall be required to conduct elections and a simple majority of those present shall be sufficient to elect a candidate. The elections meeting or sending of ballots will be publicized to members via email or campus mail at least one month prior to the election. In the event no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast or if there is a tie, there will be a runoff election of the top two candidates held immediately.

Article IX – Amendments to the Constitution

Section A: Any chapter member with voting privileges may propose an amendment to these Bylaws.

Section B: If approved by the Executive Committee, the amendment shall be voted on by the members with voting privileges.

Section C: A quorum, as defined in Article V, Section A, of active members shall be required to vote on amendments to the constitution. Affirmative votes of two thirds of the votes cast are necessary for adoption.

Section D: Amendments are subject to the approval of the Judiciary committee of the Graduate Student Association and the Office of Student Activities.

Section E: Approved amendments will go into effect immediately upon approval. The membership will also be informed of the approval by the executive board.

Article X – Parliamentary Authority

Procedures and other items not specified in these Bylaw or by the rules of the National Organization shall be in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

Article XI – Accessibility of this Constitution

Copies of this constitution are available to anyone upon request.