

# Biological Undergraduate Students' Association Constitution

Revised: May 2020

## Article 1: Name

The name of this student group shall be Biological Undergraduate Students' Association herein after referred to using the acronym BUGS.

## Article 2: Mission

Since enrollment in the undergraduate program of the department of Biological Sciences is so robust and includes students with a variety of general and professional interests, we believe that it is necessary to provide the student body with a sense of community on campus. We aim to enrich the undergraduate students' experience both academically and socially to promote further interest in the life sciences.

## Article 3: Membership

Membership is open to any student of the University of Manitoba. A valid membership shall be recognized for the term September to August. At all times, the BUGS will have a minimum of 10 members, 2/3 of which are University of Manitoba undergraduates.

## Article 4: University of Manitoba Students' Union

The BUGS acknowledges and will abide by the Students' Union By-laws and Policies unless otherwise approved by the Student Group Promotions and Affairs Committee (SGPAC). We are aware that the BUGS will no longer remain a recognized student group if a Policy or By-law is contravened without SGPAC ratification.

## Article 5: Executive Responsibilities

### **A. President (Committee Chair)**

The President acts as an **impartial facilitator of the student committee**. The President acts as Chair to direct meetings and activities of the BUGS committee for the student body. This role is only open to candidates with a minimum of two semesters (excluding intersession) of involvement in the student group. The President provides direction for advancement and promotion of group objectives, but **shall not vote to pass motions** unless a tie should arise. Subject to any other provisions in the Bylaws, the president shall be responsible to:

- Act as a spokesperson for the group
- Keep committee meetings on task and provide strategic direction for the group
- Stay informed of all committee activities
- Help resolve conflicts within the committee and serve as a moderator during debates; allow different sides of issue to be presented
- Vote on committee motions in the event of a tie

- Serve as a signing authority of the committee alongside the Director of Finance
- Take the authority to request checks on behalf of the committee in accordance with the rules in the student group handbook, in the absence of the Director of Finance
- Ensure that all Executive Members are adequately fulfilling their duties and enact the Three Strike rule if not (see Article 6)
- Call meetings of the council and prepare the agendas
- Work with the Director of Finance on budget and calendar
- Approve the distribution of student membership fees
- Monitor monetary intake and expenditures
- Oversee all external communication, including press releases and external campaigns in conjunction with the Director of Communications, Director of Student Services and Director of Social Engagement
- Oversee that the Exam Bank is up-to-date and all exams being distributed are with allowance of author
- Ensure all programs of the council are implemented in accordance with all articles of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and Policies of UMSU
- Attend Department of Biological Sciences Council meetings as the Undergraduate Representative
- Attend the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Meetings as the Undergraduate Representative
- Attend Departmental Outreach Council Meetings alongside the Outreach Coordinator

## **B. Vice-President**

The Vice President (VP) shall be responsible for assisting the President and will act as the Chair in case the president is absent. The VP will also assume the role of President in the event that the current President can no longer perform their duties or will be absent for an extended period of time. This role is only open to candidates with a minimum of two semesters (excluding intersession) of involvement in the student group. Subject to any other provisions in the Bylaws, the VP shall be responsible to:

- Act as a spokesperson for the group alongside the President
- Attend council meetings as proxy of the President as necessary.
- Stay informed of all committee activities
- Sign off on recorded minutes and ensure they are uploaded promptly into the Google Drive
- Ensure all programs of the council are implemented in accordance with all articles of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and Policies of UMSU
- Attend Board of Student Groups Meetings alongside the Executive Assistant
- Attend any UMSU meetings that pertain to BUGS
- Organize any philanthropic events and volunteer opportunities

## **C. Executive Assistant**

The Executive Assistant (EA) is responsible for assisting all council members. If any member will be absent for the long-term foreseeable future, the EA will assume the vacant role and delegate the tasks of the assumed and vacant roles as appropriate. If necessary, a new committee member (outside the

existing council) will be appointed to the role of EA. Subject to any other provisions in the Bylaws, the EA shall be responsible to:

- Oversee the proper operation of group services
- Assist with tasks delegated to any executives when necessary
- Complete clerical tasks such as printing, group space organization, and maintaining the Google Drive
- Attend UMSU student group council meetings when necessary and regularly report activities to the student group.
- Submit all committee reports to UMSU
- Maintain detailed minutes of BUGS meetings and ensure these minutes are made available in the Google Drive
- Attend Board of Student Groups meetings alongside the Vice-President

### **C. Director of Communications**

The Director of Communications (DC) shall serve as a **liaison between the student group and students, as well as external organizations**, enhancing and maintaining the student groups' positive image. Subject to any other provisions in the Bylaws, the DEC shall be responsible to:

- Oversee all group communications via Email
- Forwarding emails and communications to the appropriate committee members as necessary.
- Provide the student group with a viewpoint of persons and groups outside of the University, including (but not limited to): Prairie Wildlife Rehabilitation, Wildlife Haven, Nature Manitoba, Wildlife Society and the University of Winnipeg
- Coordinate BUGS merchandise and logo designs from external sources
- Send out monthly newsletter emails to the members of BUGS

### **D. Director of Social Engagement**

The Director of Social Engagement (SE) maintains the groups online presence as well as promoting events and group services.

- Oversee all promotional materials (posters), in conjunction with the Director of Student Services, EA, and Special Events Coordinator
- Assist with the development and implementation of all student campaigns in conjunction with the DSS
- Oversee the promotion of student group events within the University and outside of campus, in conjunction with the EA, Director of Student Services and Special Events Coordinator
- Maintain, oversee, and operate the social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) including but not limited to:
  - Provide up-to-date information and promotion of social events through the BUGS social media accounts
  - Encourage the participation and involvement of new and old members through social media
  - Provide information on other science-related academic opportunities within the Faculty and Department as well as elsewhere
  - Connect and communicate with members and other organizations through online

social media, responding to concerns and questions of members and the public at large

- Relay online interest and support as well as criticisms and comments detailed by BUGS members and the public at large regarding BUGS posts, upcoming or past events, etc. in order to improve the quality of student involvement of BUGS

## **E. Director of Finance**

The role of the Director of Finance (DF) is to **keep track of the groups' expenditures**. The Director of Finance must keep accounts up to date, make purchases, and provide full information about the committee's finances whenever the committee wishes to see it. Subject to any other provisions in the Bylaws, the DF shall be responsible to:

- Approve the distribution of Student Association fees in conjunction with the President
- Oversee all financial management of the group including preparing and maintaining the budget
- Make deposits, transfer funds and request checks
- Keep an accurate account of all income and expenditures
- Present a monthly financial statement to the Executive Council
- Inquire about internal and external sources of funding alongside the DC and SEC
- Reimburse individual committee members, sponsors and/or other associated committees for student council related expenditures
- Discuss costs with committee and sponsors
- Retrieve the float prior to committee events, with the accompaniment of one other BUGS executive
- Answer any questions regarding previous expenses (pertaining to last year's records)
- Fill out tax reports
- Prepare a year end financial document showing all incoming and outgoing funds

## **E. Director of Student Services**

The Director of Student Services (DSS) acts as a **liaison between BUGS members and the executive committee**. The DSS shall advocate on behalf on the student body in financial, social and academic matters. Subject to any other provisions in the Bylaws, the DSS shall be responsible for overseeing all programming activities of the group and shall be responsible to:

- Bring information regarding academic and financial concerns from students and faculty to the attention of the student council, in conjunction with the DC
- Oversee all student group services, including (but not limited to): workings of the lounge and exam bank contents
- Make announcements across all in the form of mass emails
- Advertise upcoming events and activities through the form of posters and social media, in conjunction with the Special Events Coordinator, Outreach Coordinator, DC, and EA
- Oversee BUGS programming events, ensuring they cater to the academic, cultural, financial and social interests of biology students, in conjunction with the Special Events Coordinator and DC

## **F. Special Events Coordinators (2 or 3)**

Subject to any other provisions in the Bylaws, the Special Events Coordinator (SEC) shall be responsible for **logistics, planning and execution of BUGS events**, and shall be responsible to:

- Develop, coordinate and execute fundraising, information and social events, in conjunction with other Executive members
- Contact potential guest speakers, secure locations/refreshments for events, organize carpooling and acquire permits when necessary
- Work with BSGSA to **plan the Halloween social**, in conjunction with the DC and DF
- Planning the annual **BUGS Mixer and Research Talks**
- Planning **monthly food giveaways**
- Advertise events in conjunction with other Executive members
- Communicate with other BUGS Executives regarding event planning, set-up, etc.
- Work with the Outreach Coordinator to recruit members at large for assistance
- Make proper logistical arrangements for receiving and purchasing event supplies and equipment
- Keep track of all legal documents regarding BUGS events, especially those pertaining to alcoholic refreshments or liability waivers
- Brainstorm, implement, and improve existing event marketing and advertising

## **G. Outreach Coordinator**

Subject to any other provisions in the Bylaws, the Outreach Coordinator (OC) shall be responsible for **overseeing all outreach and volunteer activities** of the group and shall be responsible to:

- Encourage student involvement and improve student participation in departmental and faculty wide events such as Science Rendezvous
- Oversee and advertise all outreach and volunteer activities in conjunction with the DSS, DSM, DC, and SEC
- Communicate directly with the departmental outreach coordinator
- Attend Departmental Outreach Council Meetings alongside the President
- Recruit and coordinate all members at large, in conjunction with the executive council
- Represent BUGS at all departmental outreach events, including (but not limited to): SSA Science Fair, Evening of Excellence, Open House and tabling during Frosh week.

## **H. General Responsibilities of All Committee Members**

Members of the Executive may request to delegate responsibilities to other Executive members to perform as needed. These requests must be approved by the individual to whom the responsibility is being delegated, as well as the majority of the Executive and Committee Chair. The delegated authority can be revoked at any time by vote. Subject to other provisions in the Bylaws, all Executive members share the responsibility to:

- Assist with the development and implementation of all campaigns and events of the group
- Respect all students, faculty and administration

- Represent BUGS in a respectful and professional manner
- Participate in all BUGS events
- Participate in all advertisement initiatives including, but not limited to, class talks
- Work within the Executive members' agenda and budget planning
- Submit all motions verbally or in writing before all Executive members
- Maintain a good working relationship with all other Executive members
- Participate as a voting member of the student group
- Allot one hour per week for office hours in 111 Biological Sciences
- Maintain acceptable standards of cleanliness in the BUGS lounge, including (but not limited to): sweeping floors, cleaning tables, cleaning microwaves, replacing broken furniture and dusting
- Perform any other duties and responsibilities as directed by the Bylaws, the Chair or the committee majority

#### Article 6: Members at Large

A. The Members at Large are non-voting members who are selected via application for access to the BUGS lounge after hours. These members are those who spend significant time in the lounge and are trusted to uphold the lounge in absence of an executive member.

B. These members will be given the code to the door, which is subject to change if it is found that these members are not fulfilling their duties.

C. One member at large will be chosen to attend the meeting to select the new executive council and will act as a nonpartisan chair of the meeting.

- i. As chair the selected member at large will be in charge of overseeing the meeting and reading through closed ballot results.

#### Article 7: Executive Terms of Office

A. The term of office for all executive positions shall commence May 1st and end on April 30th of the following academic year.

B. All council members are expected to fulfill both their specific responsibilities as well as the general responsibilities shared by all council members, to the best of their ability.

C. Executive members may not hold a position in student governance, in which that position (or the executives' membership to that governance) may affect or create bias which could impact the Biological Undergraduate Students' Association.

- i. If at anytime an executives' membership negatively impacts the Biological Undergraduate Students' Association that executive can be removed from council by a closed ballot vote by the rest of the council members.

D. Attendance is expected at all BUGS meetings and events, unless the President is notified at least 24 hours in advance, or with valid excuse thereafter.

E. Failure of an individual to meet said executive terms of office three or more times will invoke the 'Three Strike' rule regarding the individual.

- i. The Three Strike rule grants the President the capacity to initiate a vote of no confidence as voted on by all other current executives, regarding the affected individual.
- ii. If the vote is passed, the affected individual will be removed from the BUGS executive council on all levels, effective immediately.
- iii. The specific responsibilities of the removed individual will then be either distributed amongst current executive members, or passed on to a new executive member selected by the remaining BUGS council from available applicants (see Article 7).

#### Article 8: Selection of Incoming Executive Council

- A. The selection of a new student group Executive must take place before the final exam period of each academic year to ensure a smooth transition from old Executive to new Executive.
- B. Applicants must submit an application to the executive council to be reviewed by the deadline indicated on the application.
- C. All applications will be subject to review and deliberation. Those successful applicants selected for the upcoming executive council will be chosen based on a unanimous executive consensus.
- D. Those executive members reapplying for a position will be subject to a closed ballot vote by the remaining council members.
- E. In the case that the executive council cannot achieve a unanimous decision on the disputed position an interview may be used as a tiebreaker.
- F. In the event that an interview process is needed all executive council members are required to be present.
- G. Members applying for the position of president and vice-president must have been a member of the Biological Sciences Undergraduate Students' Association for a minimum of six months of regular session. All other executive positions require a minimum of 3 months of membership to apply.

#### Article 9: Transition of the Executive

- A. During the period from the end of the second week of April until the first day of May, when the new Executive will assume office, it is the responsibility of the departing executive to orient the newly elected executive officers to their jobs. During this transition period, the input of all members of the old and new executive will be considered equally. This includes teaching the incoming executive about student group and Students' Union policies and procedures, transitioning custodianship of club records and materials (including office and mailbox keys, locker combinations and all passwords to all student group email accounts), and preparing the new executive to be effective in their roles for the next year's work.
- B. It is the responsibility of the departing President to ensure that all student requirements to the Students' Union, including submission of a complete annual report are submitted and all materials are transferred over to the incoming executive.
- C. It is the responsibility of the departing President and Director of Finance to bring all accounts up

to date to the end of the fiscal year, and to prepare any required financial statements of the club. In addition, the outgoing President and Director of Finance must arrange with the respective incoming executive for the transition of the student group bank accounts into the incoming President's and Director of Finance's names. These tasks are to be completed and their outputs delivered to the new executive no later than the last day of April.

D. It is the responsibility of the incoming executive to assume custody of all student group records and materials and accountability for all financial activities of the student group (as outlined in Article 5) and for all club requirements to the Students' Union commencing with the first day of May.

#### Article 10: Meetings

The Biological Sciences Undergraduate Students' Association will hold 8 meetings (approximately once per month) throughout the academic year, as well as additional meetings if the executive council deems so necessary. The President may call an executive meeting at any time, on at least 48 hours notice. There shall be at least one executive meeting per month during the academic year (September to April). Attendance is expected as per Article 6C.

#### Article 11: Amendments

This constitution shall comprise the operating basis of the Biology Undergraduate Students' Association. All amendments to this document must be approved by a majority vote of the executive council.

A copy of the amended constitution must be submitted to the Students' Union within two weeks of the proposed amendment(s).