ARTICLE I. NAME & PURPOSE

Section A. This organization shall be named The Biology Graduate Student Organization (BGSO).

Section B. The Biology Graduate Student Organization is a Graduate student-led organization that performs multiple services for the Department of Biology graduate students while providing opportunities for non-biology graduate and undergraduate students at large, and the University of Miami (UM). The Biology Graduate Student Organization shall be independent of organizations not affiliated with the University of Miami and shall not share bylaws, articles of incorporation or boards of directors with such other groups.

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES, PURPOSE, & ACTIVITIES:

Section A. The objectives of The Biology Graduate Student Organization shall be to:

1. Help support the academic mission of the University of Miami by providing opportunities for scholarship to graduate students in the Department of Biology.
2. Foster connections between Departments by inviting other undergraduate and graduate students to social events held by the Biology Graduate Student Organization.
3. Encourage participation in outreach events that teach other students and the public about the natural world using the expertise of biology graduate students.
4. Provide an avenue for Biology graduate students to improve the Department’s graduate program and the graduate students’ lives.

Section B. The Purpose shall be to:

1. Hold seminars and symposia that highlight the research of graduate students in the department of biology to a broad range of undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Miami.
2. Foster connections and networking both within the UM biology department, and with other schools and departments.

Section C. Activities shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Scheduling, designing, and conducting an annual research symposium that highlights contemporary results of research carried out by biology graduate students.
2. Collaborating with the Graduate Student Association and other graduate departments to foster interdepartmental connections between students.
3. Partnering with the Alumni office to host research demonstrations in laboratories in the Department of Biology. Such demonstrations are open to alumni and generate interest in biology as well as providing examples of contemporary biological research.
4. Engaging in advocacy to improve the general state of scientific, and specifically biological, knowledge of all individuals.
5. Planning and implementing social activities for biology graduate students and other affiliates of the organization to promote a healthy work/life balance.
ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION STATEMENT:
This Organization shall be affiliated with the Graduate Student Association.

ARTICLE IV. RESPONSIBILITY:
The Biology Graduate Student Organization shall comply with all University of Miami policies and procedures, including but not limited to those policies set forth in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, The Student Organization Handbook, IRB, the Hippocratic Oath, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP:

Section A.
General Membership is open to all UM graduate students considered in good standing (according to the criteria in Section B), who must comprise no less than 75% of the General Membership.

Section B.
Members are considered in good standing when: (1) they have paid the Graduate Activity Fee; (2) are considered to be full-time Graduate students by their academic department (typically enrolled in 9 credits or more, but may also include 1-credit doctoral candidates in the dissertation writing phase); (3) Have no Incompletes in their Academic Record (or are actively working to convert an Incomplete into a final grade); (4) Have no disciplinary adjudications against them.

Section C.
Associate Membership shall be available to faculty, staff, administration, and graduate alumni registered with the University of Miami Alumni Association. Students enrolled on a part-time basis should be assigned associate membership. Associate members are; (1) not required to pay dues; (2) cannot hold an Executive Board position; (3) not afforded voting privileges. All University of Miami undergraduate full-time students may be afforded Associate Membership, but they must comprise no more than 25% of the total membership. Associate members will not have voting rights in the organization.

Section D.
The Biology Graduate Student Organization shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, handicap, age, sexual orientation, political or national origin, religious affiliation, etc. in any of its policies, procedures or practices.

ARTICLE V. QUORUM:
A quorum of membership for voting purposes shall be reached when 40% of the general members are present.

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS, QUALIFICATIONS, AND DUTIES:

Section A. Officers:
The Executive Board shall consist of the following officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Additional BGSO positions include GSA senator, GAAC representative, DVP committee, Friday seminar coordinator(s), Monday seminar coordinator(s), webmaster, computer accessibility
manager, good news liaison, bad news liaison, biology graduate student symposium committee, diversity, equity, and inclusion committee, special events coordinator(s), and peer mentoring coordinator(s).

**Section B. Executive Board:**
All Executive Board members must be enrolled Graduate students at the University of Miami, have at least a G.P.A of 3.0., and be in good standing (according to Section B of Article IV).

**Section C. Executive Board Responsibilities:**
The general responsibilities of the Executive Board include, but are not limited to:
- Holding bi-monthly meetings.
- Reporting on a semester basis to the members of the Biology Graduate Student Organization.
- Overseeing daily administrative needs of the organization
- Keeping financial reports, submitting these reports to the Chair of the Department of Biology on a semi-annual basis, and having these available for periodic review by the GSA Treasurer.
- Abiding by The Biology Graduate Student Organization’s constitution and Advisor’s Guidance.

**Section D. All Position Responsibilities:**
The specific responsibilities of the following officers include, but are not limited to:

1. President (1 person)
   - Overseeing general meetings of The Biology Graduate Student Organization and meetings of the officers of The Biology Graduate Student Organization.
   - Providing a voice for graduate students in the department of biology at faculty meetings.
   - Participating in the bi-monthly meeting with other Executive Board members.
   - Keeping track and moderating the organization’s goals & values.
   - Appointing and dismissing board members as necessary, after due process which will include a vote from the rest of the Executive Board and consultation with the Organization’s advisor.
   - Seeing that the organization is abiding by the organization’s constitution.
   - Participating in the advising of the organization through his/her participation in meetings with the Executive Board and with the Organization’s Advisor(s).

2. Vice President (1 person)
   - Assisting the President in all facets of the organization.
   - Stepping into the President’s role whenever necessary.
   - Organizing and assigning graduate students on teaching assistantships to proctor exams as requested by the faculty.
   - Participate in the bi-monthly meeting with other Executive Board members.
   - Seeing that the organization, including the President, is abiding by the organization’s constitution.

3. Treasurer (1 person)
   - Participate in the bi-monthly meeting with other Executive Board members
   - Authoring, updating, disseminating and archiving written records of the budget, bank accounts, and all monetary transactions.
• Keeping track of legal and financial issues with the organization.
• Authoring, updating and archiving the list of all donors and sharing this list updated list every year to the Secretary.
• Providing any and all financial records to the GSA Treasurer upon request for review and potential amendment.

4. Secretary (1 person)

• Participate in the bi-monthly meeting with other Executive Board members.
• Authoring, disseminating and archiving written records of all meetings.
• Providing copies to the Advisor.
• Authoring, disseminating and archiving written records of members’ participation in meetings and all activities. Participation, including attendance at events, membership lists, outreach efforts, etc will be used to document participation rates and categories in order to adhere to Graduate Student Association organization’s membership requirements.
• Authoring, disseminating and archiving agendas for each meeting (this includes getting feedback from the Executive Board for additions to the agenda a week before the meeting).
• Authoring, disseminating and archiving newsletters and documents to hand out to all members as needed.
• Authoring, disseminating and archiving an annual newsletter to send out to possible donors and alumni of the organization.
• Keeping track of donors from the list received by the Treasurer and send out an annual letter inviting donors to any events local to them, information on nearby chapters, a newsletter with updates about the overall organization and a donation form.
• Authoring, dissemination and archiving photos, articles, publications and manage social media (e.g. Facebook site, etc).
• Ensure consent forms and other legal documents needed are in place for every activity and event done.

5. GSA Senator (1 person)

• Attend senator retreat in the fall (optional)
• Attend GSA meetings (every other week)
• Report information that affects graduate students

6. GAAC Representative (1 person)

• Review graduate student applications
• Sit in and vote during 2-3 meetings with committee
• Represent graduate students in all other decisions made by GAAC

7. Distinguished Visiting Professor (DVP) Committee (3 persons)

• Coordinate nominations
• Organize election of DVP for the coming year
• Assist with DVP visit and organize scheduling

8. Friday seminar coordinator(s) (1-2 persons)

• Work with faculty head of Friday seminars
• Plan and schedule Friday seminars (according to guidelines)
• Send email reminders (weekly)

9. Monday seminar coordinators (2 persons)

• Coordinate lunches with Monday seminar speaker and graduate students
• Send reminders, collect RSVPs, order food, coordinate with faculty in charge
• Pick up food from appropriate vendor and deliver it to the graduate lunch
• Clean up items/ replace drinks following the lunch
10. Webmaster (1 person)
   • Run and update BGSO website

11. Computer accessibility manager (1 person)
   • Maintain minimal upkeep of graduate computer lab computers
   • Ensure that requested programs are up to date
   • Clean off unnecessary files and programs monthly

12. Good news liaison (1 person)
   • Send reminder emails for good news submissions by department members (ie. paper acceptances, grant recipients, conference awards)
   • Collect good news and present them at the beginning of weekly Monday seminars

13. Bad news liaison (1 person)
   • Send reminder emails for bad news submissions by department members (ie. paper rejections, grant rejections, and other miscellaneous misfortunes in research) for the purpose of commiseration and acknowledgment that things don’t always go as planned.
   • Collect bad news and present them at the beginning of weekly Friday seminars

14. Biology Graduate Student Symposium Committee (4-6 persons)
   • Organize the annual biology graduate student symposium during recruitment weekend in January
   • Coordinate with faculty representatives to ensure proper scheduling and reservations
   • Order all food and beverages for the event
   • Design and create the event program
   • Print posters for graduate students presenting
   • Responsible for all set up and clean up before and after the event
   • Symposium committee members must attend the symposium

15. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee (3-4 persons)
   • Organize and execute a graduate school application workshop to be held in the spring semester
   • Organize and host one Friday seminar DEI workshop/information session in the fall semester
   • Submit a letter each year to the department chair reviewing DEI progress and requesting actions that promote DEI
   • Follow-up with the chair on any actions BGSO wishes to see the department take to promote DEI
   • Meet bimonthly with the full DEI Committee

16. Special Events Coordinator (1-2 persons)
   • Send reminder emails about social events
   • Set up and cleanup of social events

17. Peer Mentoring Coordinator (1-2 persons)
   • Assign each incoming graduate student a more advanced graduate student to be a mentor
   • Organize an introductory lunch during graduate student orientation week
   • Organize 1-2 other events throughout the year with mentors/mentees

Section E. Length of Term:
The length of the term of office for Executive Board officers shall be for one academic year, beginning August 1 of each Fall.

The length of the term of office for all positions listed above shall be for one academic year, beginning in September 1 of each Fall, with the exceptions of the following positions:
DVP Committee
DVP representatives serve a 3-year term to ensure there is a constant rotation of experienced students on this committee.

Biology Graduate Student Symposium Committee
Symposium committee members serve a 2-year term to ensure that each year has both experienced and novel representatives. This allows for training in the position.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee
DEI committee members serve a 2-year term to ensure that the committee can follow through with any DEI initiatives in progress.

Term Limits: Representatives may run for re-election in their current positions for all positions. However, GAAC and Executive Board representatives may only run for re-election in their current position in the case that no other member is nominated to the position. The floor for nominations for GAAC and Executive Board members will always be opened to new nominees first, and then to the current holder of the position only if no one else is nominated and if the current holder wishes to re-run.

Section F. Installation:
After installation of the inaugural Executive Board, installation of new Executive Board members will occur in the Spring semester and is to be facilitated by the exiting Executive Board and/or advisor.

ARTICLE VII. ELECTION OF ALL POSITIONS:

Section A. Facilitation:
Elections will be facilitated by the President of the Executive Board.

Section B. Timeline:
Annual election of The Biology Graduate Student Organization Executive Board officers shall occur during the Spring semester, no later than the middle of May of each Spring semester, at a place determined by the Executive Board.

Annual election of Friday seminar coordinator(s) and peer mentoring coordinator(s) shall also occur during the Spring semester, during the same election as that for the Executive Board officers. Early election of these positions is necessary because these positions must begin planning for their events prior to the start of the Fall term.

Annual election of all other BGSO positions shall occur during the Fall semester, no later than the middle of September of each Fall semester, at a place determined by the Executive Board.

Section C. Eligibility:
For executive board positions, all University of Miami Graduate students in the Department of Biology who have been active for at least one semester are eligible to run for office; except for President, which requires at least two semesters of active involvement.

For GAAC, all University of Miami Graduate students in the Department of Biology who have been active for at least two semesters are eligible to run for office.

For all other positions, any University of Miami Graduate student in the Department of Biology may run for office (including 1st semester students).
Section D. Nomination:
(1) Nominations for all positions will take place in a general member meeting or via online public forum available to all members. Candidates must be nominated by active Graduate members of the organization. Graduate candidates may be nominated for more than a single office, however, once elected to a position, they may not run for an additional position unless no other members are running for that position. The nominee must accept their nomination either in person, or in writing to the President, by a time and date determined by the current Executive board.

Section E. Counting of Votes:
Votes shall be counted by highest ranking officer not running for a position. The Advisor may supervise and validate results.

Section F. Voting Procedures:
(1) All graduate members in the BGSO will be given the opportunity to vote or nominate.

(2) Elections are held by secret ballot, with the winner determined by majority vote, defined as 50% of those members present at the election meetings +1. A winner will not be required to receive the popular vote, defined as the candidate that receives the most votes.

(3) Executive Board Officers will be elected in the following order: President; then Vice-President; then Secretary; finally Treasurer. The GAAC representative will be the first position elected in the Fall, followed by GSA senator. The order may vary according to the facilitator for all other positions.

(4) A candidate for office need not be present at the Election, but must accept the nomination prior to being assigned to a position.

(5) All voters, including candidates running, shall be permitted to cast votes in writing prior to the election.

(6) If more than two candidates are running for any office, successive votes shall be taken until one candidate receives a majority vote. In successive votes, the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be asked to run next Fall, if they will remain enrolled and in good standing the semester following that vote.

(7) Secure virtual voting is allowed (and encouraged to maintain anonymity) if the goals of transparency, fairness, and timeliness related to the above conditions are embodied through this platform.

Section G. Special Elections:
(1) Special elections shall be held if a vacancy occurs between the installation of a representative and the first nomination date of the subsequent Fall semester.

(2) The nominations should occur within 21 days of the known vacancy.

(3) Elections should occur within 21 days after the nominations have been announced.

ARTICLE VIII. ADVISOR:
(1) The Advisor(s) of The Biology Graduate Student Organization shall be a full-time faculty, administrator(s), or staff member(s) at the University of Miami.
(2) If more than 2 Advisors are desired, the GSA Parliamentarian will be provided with a reason in writing, which includes the designation of the primary Advisor to be held accountable to the University of Miami regarding any issues of concern.

(3) The Advisor is expected to work with an organization for the entire tenure of each Executive Board.

(4) The advisor serves as an ex-officio member and does not vote.

(5) The Advisor may be renewed or changed each year upon installation of each new Executive Board with written notice to the GSA, and to each/the Advisor(s) involved.

ARTICLE IX. IMPEACHMENT AND VACANCIES:
The process of impeachment of an officer, committee chairs, and filling vacancies should be stated and reviewed on an annual basis.

Section A. Impeachment of Officers:

(1) Charges may be brought against an officer by any member of the organization.

(2) An impeachment will only be executed upon a unanimous vote of the Executive Board, excluding the accused officer.

(3) The impeached officer shall then be provided due opportunities for defense within 14 days of impeachment.

(4) A 2/3 vote of the voting body is then required to affect the resignation of the officer.

Section B. Filling Vacancies:

(1) All vacancies in elected positions shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(2) If one or more officers are unable to assume or continue with their duties, the remaining officers shall hold a special election to fill those vacancies under the guidelines for elections in this document. In the event that such an election cannot be held within a reasonable amount of time due to the University not being in session, the remaining officers shall appoint the replacement with the advice and counsel of the Advisor.

ARTICLE X. DUES:

No dues shall be required by The Biology Graduate Student Organization.

ARTICLE XI. MEETINGS:

(Provisions for setting regular meetings times, stipulations for calling special meetings, and the officer which has the authority to call special meetings should be included.)
ARTICLE XII. MEETINGS:
The executive board shall announce all progress of events related to The Biology Graduate Student Organization.

ARTICLE XIII. ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER:
Robert’s Rules of Order shall be used as a guide by the presiding officer in all situations not covered by the provisions of the constitutions.

ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION:
(1) Proposed amendments to this constitution shall be submitted to the Executive Board in writing.

(2) Executive Board to submit amendment proposal to Advisor(s) for consultation.

(3) Notification of the proposed changes to the constitution must be made at least 1 month before voting occurs.

(4) Agreement among 75% of the Executive Board or 2/3 of active, voting general members is needed for adoption of the amendment. For potentially controversial amendments, every attempt will be made by the executive board to open up the amendment to voting by the general membership.

(5) Amendments must be presented to the GSA Parliamentarian and the GSA Committee on Student Organizations for approval prior to implementation.

ARTICLE XV. DISSOLUTION OF THE ORGANIZATION:

Section A. Dissolution Process:
The Biology Graduate Student Organization may be dissolved after dissolution is approved by the Executive Board and Advisor(s) or by a vote of 3/4 active members, provided that a notice of the vote on dissolution is furnished to all active members at least 60 days prior to the vote.

Section B. Dissolution Obligations:
Upon dissolution, the Executive Board will utilize assets of the organization to pay all obligations and expenses of the organization.

Section C. Approval:
Notice of dissolution must be presented in writing to the Advisor(s), GSA President, and Chair of the GSA Committee on Student Organizations. A specific reason of dissolution must be included.