

The Constitution of
Chemistry Graduate Student Organization
Michigan State University



Article I. Name

The name of the organization shall be Chemistry Graduate Student Organization (CGSO) at Michigan State University.

Article II. Purpose and Objectives of the Organization

The purpose of CGSO is to foster communication of chemistry graduate students within the chemistry department and the university as a whole, and promote intellectual and professional development of graduate students. Additionally, it seeks to cultivate an awareness of the responsibilities and challenges within the STEM fields.

The objectives for CGSO includes:

- Fostering communication between graduate students and the department.
- Enhancing student success.
- Promoting scientific excellence and intellectual stimulation from pursuing chemistry research.
- Instilling professional pride in the chemical sciences.
- Organizing social and networking events for professional development.
- Assisting the department and university with graduate affairs.
- Giving back to the department and MSU community.

Article III. Membership

All graduate students enrolled in the chemistry program at Michigan State University shall be considered members of CGSO. Any member of the CGSO that satisfies the criteria in the CGSO elections Bylaws is eligible to be an officer of the CGSO and may serve on any CGSO committee. All members of the CGSO are eligible to vote in officer elections, referenda, and other organization-wide ballots. All members of the CGSO vote equally. The CGSO does not collect any dues from its members.

This organization will abide by Michigan State University Non-Discrimination Policy: The organization shall not discriminate on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight.

Article IV. Executive Board/Officers

Executive Board

The Executive Board shall:

1. Not hold office for more than 3 years (President and Vice-President are restricted to 2 academic years)
*The term of each officer shall begin August 1st of each year and ends July 31st of the following year.
2. Uphold and amend (if necessary) the Constitution.
3. Have the power to make decisions on re-election to replace an officer who no longer fulfills his/her duty.
4. Be fair and lawful when making decisions.
5. Provide outstanding leadership.
6. Advocate for graduate students in the chemistry department at MSU.
7. Be available to hold a position in a responsible, timely, and professional manner.
8. Always maintain the highest of standards of conduct and ethics.
9. Have access to documents, information, and the official website of the CGSO as necessary to efficiently function within the organization in accordance with the law.
10. Not make public, any information which is confidential or exempt, without the consent of the CGSO executive board and the Graduate Advisor, nor will any executive member divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than an executive member and/or faculty advisor entitled to know it.
11. Have the right to establish a special committee to perform certain duties associated with the organization or department.

President

The President shall:

1. Chair meetings of the Executive Council, except where delegated.
2. Settle disputes when it comes to decision making.
3. Represent CGSO in the faculty (FAC) meetings.
4. Act as a spokesperson for the CGSO in the presentation of its positions and enunciation of its policies.
5. Appoint and remove members of all CGSO committees in accordance with the bylaws of their respective committees.
6. Inform the faculty advisor of any new appointments.
7. Have the power to interpret this Constitution. In the President's absence, this power devolves upon the Vice-President.
8. Been in the department for at least one year before holding office.
9. Be elected yearly.

Vice-President

The Vice-President shall:

1. Assist the President in the execution of her or his duties.
2. Fulfill the responsibilities and duties delegated to her or him by the President.
3. Perform all duties of immediate concern required from the President in his/her absence.
4. Keep the updated list of all CGSO committee members and CGSO representatives to university committees.
5. Report at each Senate meeting a summary of her or his relevant activities.
6. Coordinate with the other organizations in the department.
7. Be nominated and voted at the end of summer semester.
8. Been in the department for at least one year before holding office.

Senator

(COGS rep)

The Senator shall

1. Amend the constitution, as deemed fit by the majority (75%) of the board members.
2. Represent CGSO at the Council of Graduate Students (COGS)
3. Call votes to change laws.
4. Be elected yearly.

Election Commissioner

The Election Commissioner shall

1. Conduct elections and count votes.
2. Know who is nominated and roles that are up for election.
3. Conduct impromptu elections when an executive board member cannot fulfill their duties.
4. Be elected yearly.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall

1. Chair the budget committee.
2. Be responsible for the management of all CGSO revenues and expenditures.
3. Prepare the organization's budget in conjunction with the budget committee and the Executive Council for the following academic year.
4. Provide an oral and written update on the state of the CGSO finances at least once every semester.
5. Report at each Senate meeting with a summary of her or his activities which may be of interest to the CGSO members.
6. Perform other duties as assigned by the President.
7. Be elected yearly.

Social Coordinator

The Social coordinator shall:

1. Develop original content and suggest creative ways to coordinate social events in the chemistry department.
2. Be among the committee presiding over student orientation and other social events.

3. Select venues for events.
4. Coordinate with the treasurer to determine event budgets and arrange event services.
5. Contact potential speakers for career discussions/seminars.
6. Be elected yearly.

Historian

The Historian shall

1. Gather historical data from various sources.
2. Keep records of the council and the department.
3. Analyze and interpret historical information to determine its authenticity and significance.
4. Keep track of graduating students from the department.
5. Collect the secretary's notes and attendance.
6. Manage the students' concerns and relay them to the council.
7. Be elected yearly.

Secretary (or secretaries)

The Secretary shall:

1. Record, publish, and report the minutes of Senate and Executive Council meetings.
2. Assist the President with the dissemination of CGSO related matters to the public.
3. Keep and maintain the CGSO inventory as recorded in the executive committee minutes.
4. Keep and maintain a current listing of active committees and committee assignments.
5. Perform other duties as assigned by the President.
6. Be elected yearly.

Public Relationships Officer(s)

The Public Relationship Officer shall

1. Spread word about the council's events.
2. Manage the website and any other social media accounts.
3. Plan publicity strategies and campaigns.
4. Write and produce presentations and flyers.
5. Organize and attend promotional events.
6. Be elected yearly.

Undergraduate Outreach Office

The Undergraduate Outreach Officer shall

1. Relay information between graduate students and undergraduates in the department
2. Coordinate with other organization in organizing undergraduate-oriented career/social events

For general membership requirements

see Article III: Membership

Article V. Election Procedures

Eligibility to vote

1. All members of the CGSO as set forth in Article III of this constitution will be granted the privilege to vote.

Nominations

1. The positions to be occupied in the CGSO are described in article IV above. Any eligible member interested in serving on the executive board can nominate themselves or can be nominated by other members of the CGSO. For the presidential nomination, candidates should be a part of CGSO for at least a year. Nominations are due two weeks before the election date as stated in section 3 below and shall be completed via an online form. No member may be nominated for more than one position unless no other eligible member is willing to serve.

Voting Procedure

Elections will take place every year in the last week of July. Voting shall take place by secret ballot or by a digital voting method. Ballot counting shall commence immediately after votes have been cast. The vote shall be counted, and the winner declared by the election commissioner.

Officers shall be elected based on votes of approval as follows:

1. For each position, members shall be eligible to cast a single vote for any candidate they deem acceptable or shall turn in a blank ballot if they disapprove of the candidate in question.
2. Newly elected representatives are expected to assume their positions immediately after elections. They should accept the position in front of the board and promise to fulfill their duties.
3. Each position is valid for one year from August 1st to July 31st of the following year. Should anyone have to leave their position, it shall be immediately filled by another candidate decided by the board members.
4. All candidates can hold the same position for two years if there is no other alternative.
5. Candidates nominated for a position but are not elected may opt to run for a position below the position they were initially nominated.
6. In cases where no nominee is available for a position, the board can declare an open position available to the general CGSO members (graduate students).

Removal

1. Removal of, or suggestion for the discharge of an elected representative may only be considered if requested by at least two members of the executive board of CGSO. Two-third majority of votes are required to remove an officer. The candidate who is under question will have a chance to put forth their defense in front of the executive board.

2. Request for removal of an officer shall be submitted to the secretary providing reason for such action. After getting at least two requests, the procedure mentioned above will be followed.
3. If more than three consecutive meetings are missed by an officer without notifying the president or vice president, the officer in question will be removed from their position.
4. If the office of the Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer is vacant, the President shall nominate a candidate for that office. The nomination, if possible, shall be made known to the executive board no less than ten days prior to the next meeting. The nominee shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the organization. Should the nominee fail to be confirmed, the President may nominate another candidate.
5. If the office of President is vacant, the Vice President shall assume the office and nominate a new Vice President. The nominee shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of the organization.
6. Should the offices of President and Vice President be vacant simultaneously, the executive board shall meet to elect a new President. If necessary, a special executive board meeting can be scheduled with the purpose to elect a new President. Nominations shall be accepted from the floor and are open to any member eligible for the office in question. The candidate receiving a plurality of the votes cast shall be elected and shall assume the office immediately.

Article VI. Finances

1. CGSO sponsored activities and other cost burdening requirements/changes are financed through funding received from the budget request submitted every August to the chemistry department and other funding bodies such as ACS Local Section. All financial expenses are coordinated and supervised by the Treasurer and President for the CGSO. The concluded budget would be presented to the department chair and faculty advisor.

Article VII. Events/Committees

1. Membership of all CGSO committees is open to all CGSO members. Committee members must be nominated by the President and confirmed by a majority vote of the executive board.
2. Meetings of all CGSO committees must be open to all CGSO members. The times and places of all committee meetings shall be made publicly available through the CGSO shared folder.
3. Committees shall keep the executive board apprised of their activities and deliberations. Committees shall also periodically present reports to the executive board.
4. All committee actions and resolutions are subject to review by the executive board.
5. Any committee member may be removed upon the recommendation of the President and a two-thirds vote of the executive board.
6. All committees help plan events. Event planning must be approved by a majority of CGSO members and approved by the executive board.

Article VIII. Amendments

1. Amendments to the CGSO Constitution may be proposed by any CGSO member. Proposed amendments require approval by at least 75% of the executive board to be approved.

- a. Should a member of the executive board fail to approve the proposed amendment, it shall be put to a vote of the membership.
2. Ratification of a proposed amendment requires a two-thirds vote of the membership.
3. After a new amendment has been approved or ratified, the president shall email a new constitution to everyone in the organization.

Article IX. Bylaws

The bylaws here will contain detailed procedures to conduct business of the CGSO in an orderly manner. When a bylaw is in contradiction with the constitution, the constitution shall override the bylaw.

Specific bylaws may be passed, amended, suspended, or rescinded by a majority vote of the members of the executive board in a meeting of the CGSO. Language which will be passed, amended, suspended, or rescinded must be submitted to the Rules and Constitution Committee and the CGSO Senate in writing for review at least five calendar days prior to the meeting in which the language will be voted upon.

1. If the executive board unanimously votes against the language proposed to be passed, amended, suspended, or rescinded, a supermajority of two-thirds of the CGSO membership is needed in order to accept the proposed language.
2. Should the CGSO executive board fail to approve language to pass, amend, suspend, or rescind a bylaw, it may be put to a vote of the membership upon presentation of a petition signed by 50% of the CGSO members.
3. A proposed bylaw amendment approved by petition shall be put to a vote during the membership-wide election for CGSO officers unless the President convenes a special membership-wide election.
4. Ratification of a proposed amendment requires a majority vote of the membership.
5. The passage of any change to the bylaws shall be regarded as the ratification of a new set of bylaws composed of the standing bylaws except deletions and new passages as approved. The new bylaws thus created shall bear the date of its latest change in its heading. This organization prohibits its members, both individually and collectively from committing any acts of hazing i.e. any willful act or practice by a member or associate member, directed against a member or associate member, which, with or without intent, is likely to: cause bodily harm or danger, offensive punishment, or disturbing pain, compromise the person's dignity; cause embarrassment or shame in public; cause the person to be the object of malicious amusement or ridicule; cause psychological harm or substantial emotional strain; and impair academic or social efforts.

Article X. Order of Business

1. Meetings of CGSO officers are conducted informally. The President organizes the meeting time and place in addition to an agenda prior to the meeting. This agenda is then presented at the meeting.
2. Officers can bring any topics of interest to the meeting where the Executive board discuss student-related issues and improvement measures, as well as plan for any upcoming CGSO sponsored events.

3. The President usually presides over this meeting to introduce a forum in which students can ask questions directly to the Graduate Director.

Amended January 2024