

# Constitution of the Physics Graduate Student Organization

## 1 Name

The name of this organization shall be the Physics Graduate Student Organization, officially and hereafter abbreviated "PhysicsGSO".

## 2 Purpose and Goals

### 2.1 General Purpose

The general purpose of PhysicsGSO is to provide professional and social support for graduate students in the Physics Department at Iowa State University. This will be accomplished by providing ways for graduate students to communicate with the administration of the Physics Department, connect with other graduate students, and further their education and careers by creating a strong collaborative environment.

### 2.2 Compliance

The Physics Graduate Student Organization abides by and supports established Iowa State University policies, as well as all state and federal laws, and follows local ordinances and regulations. Iowa State University and PhysicsGSO do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information or status as a U.S Veteran.

## 3 Membership and Types of Members

There will be two different types of PhysicsGSO members: General members and Council members.

### 3.1 General Members

All graduate students who are enrolled in the Department of Physics at Iowa State University or who are officially connected in some way with that department are eligible general members. They may confirm membership by voting in general elections, attending any meeting, contacting the Secretary, or following instructions given during new student orientation.

General members may bring proposals to the group, and help plan and participate in group activities. Any member may leave the PhysicsGSO for any reason by notifying the Secretary.

### 3.2 Council Members

The council will consist of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and the GPSS representative. Upon election, council members will be contacted by the Student Activities Center and must confirm their elected positions.

## 4. The Council

### 4.1 Requirements

The Council members of PhysicsGSO must meet the following requirements:

- A. Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 in the semester of election/appointment and during their term of office.
- B. Be in good standing with both the university and the Department of Physics.
- C. Must be enrolled as at least a half time student.

- D. Have passed both qualifying exams (Modern and Classical) prior to being elected to serve as the President or Vice President.
- E. Have a reasonable expectation of being able to serve out their term before graduating.
- F. Have a reasonable expectation that they will not be away from Iowa State University for a period of more than three months during their term excluding university holidays.

Any Council member will be ineligible to hold an office should they fail to maintain the requirements as prescribed above.

## 4.2 The Regular Election

The PhysicsGSO Council election will be held during the Spring semester of each year, after March 1st, and before Dead Week. Voting will be done electronically, and will be open for at least a full week. This election is meant to fill the seats on the Council being vacated by members whose appointments will or have expired. The Council members selected through this election are referred to as elected Council members.

### 4.2.1 Nominations

All graduate students meeting the criteria outlined in Section 4.1, with the exceptions outlined herein, are eligible to run for election to a position on the PhysicsGSO Council.

Candidates may be nominated by any graduate student, including themselves. All candidates nominated by students other than themselves should be informed of their nomination in a timely manner, and may decline the nomination if they so choose.

Any nominated candidate, including self-nominated candidates, may choose to revoke their nomination at any time prior to the start of the voting period.

Nominations must be made at least two weeks prior to the election process. After all nominations have been submitted, the Vice President shall offer a list of the nominees to the members of the PhysicsGSO for consideration. If a position has no nominees by the election process then that prior notice may be suspended.

## 4.2.2 The Ballot

Each nominated candidate who is eligible and willing to run for a Council position will be listed on the ballot for their nominated position. Council members who are running for re-election should be identified as such.

## 4.2.3 Election Process

A PhysicsGSO meeting shall be held for the purpose of electing Council members for the following year. This meeting will happen exactly two weeks prior to the end of the election period. This meeting and the verification of ballots/electronic election will be carried out by the Advisor and a member who is not running for any position for the following term.

The nominee for a position who obtains the most votes for will be elected to the council for the following year.

If a candidate fails to receive a majority of votes, a run-off election will be held between the two candidates who received the most votes. In the case of only two candidates, the choice will be passed on to the elected incoming council members.

## 4.3 Length of Appointment

The length of appointment will be one year, beginning August 1st and officially ending July 31st.

There are no mandatory term limits.

## 4.4 Impeachment and Replacement

Members of the council may be impeached by a majority vote of 75% or more of all general members not counting abstainers. If this happens, a special election will take place no more than one month after impeachment.

## 4.5 Duties of the Council

### 4.5.1 Meetings

It is the responsibility of the council to organize and hold meetings at least once a semester. This includes determining times, obtaining locations, and announcing said information to all PhysicsGSO members.

Meetings will provide opportunity for the Council members to update PhysicsGSO members on activities, allow the group to vote on business, and provide a forum for general member input and discussion.

### 4.5.2 Communication with the Physics Department Administration

One responsibility of the PhysicsGSO will be to facilitate communication between the student body and the administration. This will be accomplished by meetings in the fall and spring semesters with the department chair, which will be open to all graduate students.

Additional communication between the Department Administration and PhysicsGSO will be undertaken as necessary for the organization of department events and to facilitate smooth collaboration between the two groups.

PhysicsGSO is intended to represent the majority of ISU physics graduate students as a collective. If major issues are raised to be presented to the administration as the position of PhysicsGSO, they must be approved by 75% of the physics graduate student body, not counting abstainers.

### 4.5.4 Communication with the Physics Graduate Student Body

Communication between graduate students and with the graduate student body as a whole will be facilitated by monthly meetings and social events. If somebody wishes to make an announcement during a PhysicsGSO meeting they will contact the vice president to be added to the agenda. If someone not on the council wishes to send an announcement to the entire PhysicsGSO they can notify the Secretary and their e-mail will be sent or they will be added to the schedule at an appropriate meeting.

### 4.5.5 Organize Social and Educational Events

It will be the duty of the council to organize various social and educational events for the physics graduate student body, including but not limited to the yearly department picnic, the preparatory course for the qualifying exam, and surveying graduate students to gauge interest for departmental colloquium topics, as well as a new graduate student only social outing.

### 4.5.6 Assignment of Peers and Mentors for Incoming First-year Students

One responsibility of the physics graduate student organization is to facilitate the academic, and emotional success of incoming graduate students, and to foster a feeling of community within the department. Towards this end, PhysicsGSO will be responsible for assigning peers and mentors to incoming graduate students.

## 5. Elected Council Member Positions

### 5.1 President

The President's duties will include:

- A. Presiding over the PhysicsGSO Council meetings. If the president is unavailable the next council member in seniority will preside.
- B. Setting the agendas of the PhysicsGSO Council meetings.
- C. Presiding over any general meetings of the physics graduate student body.
- D. Supervising normal operations of the PhysicsGSO.
- E. Attending annual President's training in compliance with student organization regulations.
- F. Representing the physics graduate student body during faculty meetings
- G. Handling risk management responsibilities as outlined by the Student Activities Center

### 5.2 Vice President

The Vice President's duties will include:

- A. Assuming the responsibility of the President in the case of the President's absence.
- B. Presiding over PhysicsGSO meetings or designating a chair with approval by a simple majority of those present.
- C. Setting and distributing the agenda of PhysicsGSO meetings with the aid of the rest of the Council at least seven days before the meeting. This includes any speakers, bills, or reports from the Council/departement, and announcements to the PhysicsGSO.
- D. Reserving meeting venue locations on campus.
- E. Organizing the Graduate Learning Community (GLC). This includes scheduling meetings with the entire GLC as well as coordinating the creation of mentor/mentee groups in which senior students are assigned to groups of first year students in order to help ease their transition into the department.

## 5.3 Treasurer

The Treasurer's primary duties will include:

- A. Keeping an accurate and complete record of the money and expenditures of PhysicsGSO.
- B. Collecting and safekeeping the money of PhysicsGSO.
- C. Disbursing money as approved by PhysicsGSO or according to other procedures.
- D. Attending annual Treasurer's training in compliance with student organization regulations.

## 5.4 Secretary

The primary duties of the secretary include:

- A. Taking notes during the meeting with the department chair.
- B. Recording and archiving the result of all PhysicsGSO votes.
- C. Creating ballots and administering elections.
- D. Once per year, during the fall semester, recording the names and email addresses of active members
- E. Sending out minutes from meetings to all general members.
- F. Recording and filing records of activities of PhysicsGSO and the PhysicsGSO council.

G. Handle and maintain a record of all PhysicsGSO correspondence.

## 5.5 Social Chair

The primary duties of the social chair include:

- A. Coordinating with the Physics Department to plan and organize the department picnics and preparatory courses for the qualifying exam, and other social events.
- B. Gauging interest for departmental colloquium topics and presenting the results to the faculty.
- C. Organize graduate student colloquia in order for graduate students to talk about their research.
- D.

## 5.6 GPSS Representative

The duties of the GPSS representative include:

- A. Acting as the GPSS Physics Department representative with all attendant duties.
- B. Attending all GPSS meetings or arranging for a substitute to attend.
- C. Signing up and participating in at least one GPSS committee.

## 5.7 Selection

All council members will be selected by nomination, followed by general election among all members.

# 6 Additional Council Members

## 6. Temporary Council Members

Temporary council members may be added as necessary with a 75% vote during a PhysicsGSO meeting organized by the council with at least 2 weeks notice for members. These temporary members' positions will be eliminated at the end of each term, or may be added as permanent positions by amending this charter.



## 6.2 Modern Qual Exam Teacher

The PhysicsGSO Council will identify an individual who is willing and able to teach the modern qual class during the Fall semester. This person should be selected by the end of the first week of September and is required to have passed but is preferred to have scored well on the modern exam.

## 6.3 Classical Qual Exam Teacher

The PhysicsGSO Council will identify an individual who is willing and able to teach the classical qual class during the Fall semester. This person should be selected by the end of the first week of September and is required to have passed but is preferred to have scored well on the classical exam.

# 7 Advisor

## 7.1 Requirements

The Advisor of PhysicsGSO must be a faculty member in the Physics Department.

Their primary duties include:

- A. Maintaining communication with the President of PhysicsGSO
- B. Approving and overseeing financial expenditures
- C. Ensuring that the organization is operating in accord with the standards set forth by Iowa State University and the Student Activities Center
- D. Completing the annual Advisor Training as required by Iowa State University

## 7.2 Selections

The advisor will be chosen concurrently with the council. Any current physics faculty may be nominated for this position. There are no mandatory term limits.

If an advisor must leave their position during any point of their term, a temporary advisor must be appointed by the council with a 75% vote. This must be done within a reasonable time frame, or one set by the Student Activities center, such that the organization remains in good standing. A new advisor will be elected during the next council election.

## 7.4 Removal

The Advisor of PhysicsGSO can be removed by a vote of 75% of the general members not counting abstainers, and 50% of the council. In the case that the Advisor is removed, a temporary advisor may be appointed by the council with a 75% vote. A new advisor will be elected during the next council election.

## 8 Finances

The finances of PhysicsGSO will be administered by the Treasurer in coordination with the PhysicsGSO Advisor for the benefit of the physics graduate student body.

### 8.1 Accounts

All money belonging to PhysicsGSO will be deposited and dispersed through a bank account established for this organization at the Campus Organizations Accounting Office, and/or through an institution or office authorized by the Campus Organizations Accounting Office.

All funds must be deposited within 48 hours of collection.

The Advisor to this organization must approve and sign each expenditure before payment.

### 8.2 Dues

No dues will be required of either General or Council members.

### 8.3 Dissolution

In the event that PhysicsGSO dissolves, any remaining funds shall be donated to the Iowa State University Department of Physics so that they may be used for the benefit of graduate students.

## 9 Amendments and Ratification

This Constitution may be amended, and subsequently ratified, at any time, with the unanimous approval of the Council members and with a simple majority of the remaining physics graduate student body, not counting abstainers. Students will be given two weeks to consider amendments. Ratified amendments to this Constitution must be submitted to the Student Activities Center within ten (10) days of ratification.