

# Graduate Nursing Student Organization Constitution

## **Name of Organization:**

The name of the organization created by these Bylaws shall be The University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing Graduate Nursing Student Organization (GNSO).

## **Acceptance and Compliance to Registration Requirements and Limitations:**

The Graduate Nursing Student Organization and its membership accept and will fully comply with the requirements and limitations of registration.

## **Limits of Registration:**

The organization and members accept and will comply with the following limits of certification: Certified student organizations are student associations and are not official components of the University. Certification does not permit a student organization to use or act in the name of the University, to represent the University, engage in any contractual obligation in the name of the University nor represent the organization as being an official part of the University. While certified student organizations are permitted to have external affiliations, may be part of an incorporated external organization or may be individually incorporated. Certification expressly permits certified student organizations to only operate on campus. Off campus activities of certified student organizations are the sole responsibility of the organization, officers, and members, unless expressly approved in advance by the University. Membership in a certified student organization and participation in its activities are voluntary and all risks of personal injury, property damage or other losses incidental to membership or participation in activities are assumed solely by the student organization and/or individual member(s) or participant(s).

## **Annual Re-registration:**

The Graduate Nursing Student Organization will submit its re-registration application once a year during the defined re-registration process.

## **Purpose:**

This organization shall strive in all reasonable and deliberate ways to achieve the following objectives and/or purposes:

- A. To develop and encourage among graduate nursing students of the School of Nursing a spirit of unity, cooperation and democratic self-government.
- B. To coordinate activities between graduate nursing students and the faculty of the School

of Nursing.

- C. To provide a channel of communication and representation between students and the faculty of the School of Nursing.

#### Activities:

The GNSO sponsors donation drives for a variety of functions such as blankets for the homeless, food shelters, or holiday donations.

The GNSO provides funding for educational growth such as conferences, volunteer work, and other encounters deemed to be educational by the board.

#### **Membership Requirements:**

1. Membership is open to currently enrolled Pitt students as defined herein.
2. All members must accept and comply with all of the requirements and limitations of certification as a condition of membership.
3. Membership in the (name of organization) is voluntary and all risk of personal injury, property damage or other losses that occur incidental to membership or participation in activities are assumed solely by the student organization and/or individual member(s) or non-member participant(s). Accordingly, the University of Pittsburgh, its officers and agents shall not be responsible nor liable for any claims or causes of action for damage or loss of property or personal injury of any kind or nature which may arise out of or are incidental to the conduct of any organization's activities or that of any individual's participation in any group-related activity. It is further understood and agreed that it is the responsibility of the officers of the organization to assure that all of the organization's members and non-member participants in all activities sponsored by the Graduate Nursing Student Organization are fully informed and advised of this ASSUMPTION OF RISK, and in the event any individual member or participant should express or indicate non-acceptance, the organization's officer shall forbid participation and/or membership of such individual. In regard to the organization member and nonmember participant Assumption of Risk, the (name of organization) acknowledges that the University recommends that the organization members and non-member participants make every effort to arrange for the acquisition of liability insurance sufficient to protect all participants against those risks being assumed. For sport-related organizations the University recommends that each individual have insurance sufficient to allow for any risks by participation, accident or by deficiencies in physical health.
4. No illegal discriminatory criteria may be used as criteria for membership including those listed in the University of Pittsburgh's non-discrimination policy. These factors include race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, disability, or status as a veteran. All groups, except those exempt by law, must permit male and female membership. Sport clubs involving physical contact or in which participation is based on competitive skill

may limit participation in competition to one sex; provided that, for any for any such sport club engaged in a non-contact sport, unless there is a sport club available for members of the opposite sex, the club must permit try-outs for each sex. Membership can be limited by factors unrelated to status or beliefs and which are also not illegal. Membership can be limited by school, college, department, major and grades, etc. No hazing or illegal discrimination will be used as a condition of membership in the organization.

5. Membership is limited to graduate students enrolled in a nursing program.
6. No financial obligations are required my members.

**Membership Procedures:**

All graduate students enrolled in graduate degree-seeking program from the University of Pittsburgh, School of Nursing shall be voting members of this organization.

The Assistant Dean for Student Services will serve as an ex-officio member of the organization and as faculty advisor.

**Voting Privileges:**

Voting privileges are limited to currently enrolled Pitt student members in good standing with the organization.

Voting privileges are lost when the student is no longer enrolled in a graduate nursing degree. Privileges are maintained by remaining in good academic standing within the graduate school of nursing.

**Officers:**

The organization shall have the following officers:

President

Vice-President

Secretary

Treasurer/Business Manager

Student Liaison (One liaison from each nursing concentration)

Faculty, staff, alumni and external affiliates may NOT serve as officers.

## **Terms of Office:**

The terms of office follow one calendar year. The elections are held in December/November of the previous year and the new board takes control in January of the new semester. If no election is held, the officers currently serving will continue to serve for one calendar year.

## **Officer Responsibilities and Duties:**

### A. President

- 1) Calls and conducts regular and special meetings.
- 2) Accepts agenda items from members and prepares an agenda for meetings; disseminates agenda in advance or at the beginning of each meeting.
- 3) Assigns responsibilities to executive officers and establishes ad hoc committees as needed.
- 4) Will attend all GPSG meetings or must delegate another officer to attend in their absence.

### B. Vice President

- 1) Assumes duties of the President in absence of the President, or in the case of resignation.
- 2) Assists President in matters as necessary.
- 3) Attends all regular and special meetings.

### C. Secretary

- 1) Records minutes of all regular and special meetings.
- 2) Conducts correspondence of the organization.
- 3) Notifies members of the meeting schedule.
- 4) Makes available copies of minutes to regular and ex officio members.

### D. Treasurer

- 1) Keeps a complete record of all financial transactions.
- 2) Handles all financial matters.
- 3) Keeps the financial records up-to-date and open for inspection by members.
- 4) Submits annual budget to membership for approval, if requested.

### E. Student Liaison

- 1) Ensure all nursing students are informed about GNSO's mission and resources.
- 2) Strengthen the relationship between GNSO and the student body by actively relaying information between the two.
- 3) Act as a voice for GNSO to the nursing concentration he/she is a part of.
- 4) Represent the voice for his/her nursing concentration within GNSO.

## **Election of Officers:**

Nomination: Any graduate nursing student can be nominated by any other graduate nursing student for a specific officer position. They may not nominate themselves.

Eligibility: A candidate for office must be a graduate nursing student in good standing in the School of Nursing Program and plan to enroll for the next academic year.

Election Process: Officers will be elected via online survey in the fall semester (November-December) and begin serving their term in the spring semester (January), serving for a minimum one-year term. In the case of a resignation, a special election will be held, and the graduate students will vote for the replacement officer. Until the vacated seat is filled, the other officers will assume the vacated position.

In an attempt to be inclusive, all members of GNSO will be encouraged to run for office. No more than two officers may be elected from one program, unless the third member is running unopposed. In the event that more than two candidates from one program obtain the highest percentage of votes for their respective positions, the two candidates who receive the highest percentage of votes will be declared the winners. The other positions will be filled by those who receive the highest percentage of votes and are not members of the same program as the other two individuals.

Eligibility for Voting: Any student enrolled as a student in the graduate school of nursing.

Vote Required to Elect an Officer: Simple majority is used in the election process.

Officer Positions: The officer can only hold one position per term year.

Absentee or Proxy Ballots: Absentee or proxy ballots are not able to be casted during the election process.

Contest of Results: Contests of election results will be resolved by a second popular vote.

### **Voting Powers of Officers:**

Regular business motions will require a majority vote of officers voting (3/4).

Motions regarding Bylaws, and other key matters will be submitted to all officers of the organization for vote. In the absence of quorum, the faculty advisor will determine the outcome.

Parliamentary Guide for all meetings is the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

### **Removal of Officers:**

Officers may be removed by a vote of the board. A vote can be called by any of the other officers if they feel as though the officer is not fulfilling their duties.

**Vacancies:**

Should an officer resign or be removed, the vacancy position will be offered to the runner up of the popular vote. The new officer will fill the remainder of the term only. Should the runner up not accept the position, the remaining officers will divide the duties and cover them.

**Committees:**

Any student is eligible to serve as graduate student representative on committees as designated by the Total Faculty Organization Bylaws.

Terms of representation shall be for one academic year, beginning with the Spring Term.

Any graduate student may volunteer to be a representative to a faculty committee. If the representative is unable to fulfill the responsibility, the GNSO board will appoint a replacement.

**Responsibilities shall include**

- A. Attendance at all regular and special meetings of the committee to which elected
- B. Presentation of student perspectives, concerns, problems, and feedback to the committee to the faculty committee
- C. Reporting to the graduate student organization on faculty committee discussion and action

**Meetings:**

- A. This organization will hold in-person meetings at a minimum of twice per year. Additional meetings may be held in person, via conference call or electronically, if appropriate.
- B. Additional meeting dates, time, and place will be sent via email.
- C. Meeting dates will be set by the Executive Officers.
- D. At least three officers must be present at each meeting.
- E. Any officers of the GNSO can call special meetings when deemed necessary.

**Finances:**

Funds for this organization will come from the graduate student activity fees. Money may be added to the funds through donations and fundraising. Requests for funding of program events, academic projects, conferences and presentations will be made directly to the Treasurer by students, or faculty on behalf of students. Students must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program. Graduate students are eligible for a maximum of two travel grants during their enrollment at the University of Pittsburgh. The organization will not maintain an outside bank account if it receives funding from the Graduate and Professional Student Government.

**Publications Code:**

In compliance with the Publications Code for Student

Organizations, all the publications of the organization will comply with current copywriter laws, be distributed according to policies and procedures, refrain for expressions that are considered obscene or libelous according to current statute, advocate or insight the material interference or physical disruption of the educational process or the peace, order and decorum of the campus, or that advocate or insight imminent, lawless action or the violent overthrow of the government and identify the organization as publisher and specify that the group is a certified student organization at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Advisor:**

The advisor is self-selected from a full-time Pitt faculty or staff advisor in the school of nursing. If no staff member volunteers, the board can then approach a staff member that is selected by the board to become the advisor.

**External Affiliations:**

No external affiliations.

**By-Laws:**

The adoption of these Bylaws will require a majority vote of officers (3/4) and will become effective immediately.

**Amendments:**

Any officer of the organization may propose an amendment. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the president prior to any discussion or vote by the organization. Proposed amendments will be communicated via email distribution. A majority vote of the officers is necessary (3/4 officers).

Amendments shall become effective immediately upon acceptance, unless otherwise stipulated. All constitution additions, revisions and deletions must be reported to the SORC.

4.28.24: Amendments approved to increase travel grant funding.

- Student presenting either individually or on a panel: from \$200 to \$250.
- Student attending a national meeting as an elected officer: from \$80 to \$100.
- Student attending an academic conference: from \$80 to \$100.
- Student attending an academic conference in Allegheny County: from \$50 to \$80.