

**Graduate**

**Evolution and**

**Ecology**

**Students**

## **Organization Constitution and By-Laws**

### **Table of Contents**

#### **Constitution**

**Article I** – Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy

**Section *i*** – Name

**Section *ii*** – Purpose

**Section *iii*** – Diversity Policy

**Article II** – Membership

**Article III** – Organization Leadership

**Section *i*** – GEES Officers

**Section *ii*** – GEES Representatives to Departmental Committees

**Section *iii*** – Other Representatives

**Article IV** – Executive Committee

**Article V** – Standing Committees

**Article VI** – Advisor(s)

**Article VII** – Meetings of the Organization

**Article VIII** – Method of Amending the Constitution

**Article IX** – Method of Dissolution of the Organization

**Article X** – Removal of Members

**Bylaws**

**Article I** – Parliamentary Authority

**Article II** – Membership

**Article III** – Election/Appointment of Government Leadership

**Article IV** – Executive Committee

**Article V** – Standing Committees

**Article VI** – Advisor Responsibilities

**Article VII** – Meeting Requirements

**Article VIII** – Method of Amending the Bylaws

## **Constitution of the Graduate Evolution and Ecology Student Organization**

**Article I** – Name, Purpose, and Non-Discrimination Policy

**Section *i*** – Name

Graduate Evolution and Ecology Student Organization (GEES)

**Section *ii*** – Purpose

The purpose of GEES shall be (1) to promote the professional, educational, and intellectual advancement of the graduate students in the Department of Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology (EEOB) at The Ohio State University, (2) to provide a mechanism for students to express and address their concerns about the programs and policies of the EEOB department,

and (3) to provide a forum that will encourage the interaction between students of the diverse backgrounds and disciplines within the EEOB department.

### **Section *iii* – Diversity Policy**

In principle and practice, GEES values and seeks a diverse membership. GEES embraces The Ohio State University's position that promoting and supporting diversity among the student body is central to the academic mission of the University. A diverse student body enriches graduate education by providing a multiplicity of views and perspectives that enhance research, teaching, and the development of new knowledge. A diverse mix of students promotes respect for, and opportunities to learn from, others with the broad range of backgrounds and experiences that constitute modern society. Higher education trains the next generation of leaders of academia and society in general, and such opportunities for leadership should be accessible to all members of society. GEES is therefore committed to providing support programs that promote diversity, foster successful academic experiences, and cultivate the leaders of the next generation. There shall be no barrier in this organization to full participation for reasons of race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, gender identity, family status, age, handicap, or veteran status.

### **Article II – Membership**

The general membership of GEES shall consist of all graduate students currently enrolled in the Graduate School at The Ohio State University whose advisors are members of the Graduate Faculty in the Department of EEOB, as well as any faculty, staff, alumni, or undergraduate student of the Department of EEOB. The voting membership is limited to graduate student members of the organization. Non-graduate student members of GEES will be considered as honorary members without voting privileges.

### **Article III – Organization Leadership**

The GEES Leadership shall be composed of three groups: (1) Officers responsible for the operation and maintenance of the GEES Organization, (2) Representatives of GEES to Departmental Committees as required by the Department of EEOB's Pattern of Administration, and (3) Representatives to

University, College, Department, or other organizations. All leadership positions are subject to election and all position tenure duration is one year. All active voting members of GEES are eligible for leadership positions

### **Section i – GEES Officers**

The GEES Officers are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the GEES Organization and are ultimately responsible for meeting the purposes of GEES listed above. These Officers include: President, Secretary-Treasurer, Fundraising Chairperson, and GEES Facilitator.

The President will act as the President-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as President, beginning with the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The President shall be elected from current GEES officers, representatives to Departmental Committees, or Representatives to University, College, or representative to Council of Graduate Students. This arrangement ensures institutional memory in the GEES Organization. The President is the primary spokesperson of GEES and is the representative to faculty meetings of the Department of EEOB. As such, the President must voice the current active graduate student opinion on relevant matters and keep the active graduate student body informed about issues arising in faculty meetings that directly affect graduate students. The President may, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, appoint special committees and take such actions as deemed appropriate to accomplish goals as President of GEES and to further the interests of GEES. The President will chair all official general and Executive Committee meetings of GEES. The President is also the chief fiscal policy officer of GEES and in this capacity is responsible for the development of fiscal policy, the annual budget, and oversight of business, finances, and management of GEES funds in addition to chairing the Budget Committee.

The Secretary-Treasurer will act as the Secretary-Treasurer-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as Secretary-Treasurer, beginning with the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Secretary-Treasurer is elected by popular vote. The Secretary-Treasurer records the proceedings of GEES, maintains close contact with all members of the Executive Committee, and prepares, in consultation with the President, agendas for all official general and Executive Committee meetings. The Secretary-Treasurer will conduct the daily business, finances, and subject to the approval of the President, management of GEES funds in addition to serving on the Budget Committee. In the absence of the President, the Secretary-Treasurer will chair all official general and Executive Committee meetings of GEES and attend all the appropriate faculty meetings.

The Fundraising Chairperson will act as the Fundraising Chairperson-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as Fundraising Chairperson, beginning with the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. This Chairperson is responsible for implementing the fundraising activities of GEES to help GEES achieve its goals. Goals are set by the active membership of GEES and may include (but are not limited to): purchase of new community technology, provide funds to sponsor a guest speaker, support the Departmental, College, or University community, etc. In this capacity, the Fundraising Chairperson shall chair the Fundraising Committee and maintain close contact with the Executive, Budget, and Seminar Committees in addition to the active membership of GEES.

The GEES Facilitator will act as the GEES Facilitator-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as GEES Facilitator, beginning with the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The GEES Facilitator will act as the Keeper of the GEES Constitution, Elections Chairperson, GEES Office and Computer Coordinator, and will assist the President and Secretary-Treasurer on maintaining the institutional memory of GEES. This position is crucial to the continued success of the GEES Organization in attaining its purposes listed in Article I, Section *ii*.

#### **Section *ii* – GEES Representatives to Departmental Committees**

The GEES Representatives to Departmental Committees are responsible for representing the interests of the active members of GEES to standing departmental committees as required by the Department of EEOB's Pattern of Administration. The departmental committees that require graduate student representatives are (the number of representatives needed is listed in parentheses after the committee): Graduate Studies Committee (**2**), Advisory Committee (**2**), Curriculum Committee (**1**), Diversity Committee (**2**), Seminar Committee (**2**), Social Committee (**1**), Award Committee (**1**), Communication Committee (**1**) and The Museum of Biological Diversity Committee (**1**).

The Graduate Studies Representatives will act as the Graduate Studies Representatives-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as Graduate Studies Representative beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Graduate Studies Representatives are elected by popular vote. The Graduate Studies Representatives will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Graduate Studies Committee (EEOBGSC). The representatives are to act as a liaison between the EEOBGSC and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the EEOBGSC. At times when the EEOBGSC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the

representatives should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate.

The Advisory Committee Representatives will act as the Advisory Committee Representatives-elect during the Summer Semester and serve one-year terms as Advisory Committee Representatives beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Advisory Committee Representatives are elected by popular vote. The Advisory Committee Representatives will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Advisory Committee (AdC). The representative is to act as a liaison between the AdC and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the AdC. At times when the AdC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representative should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate.

The Curriculum Committee Representative will act as the Curriculum Committee Representative-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as Curriculum Committee Representative beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Curriculum Committee Representative is elected by popular vote. The Curriculum Committee Representative will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Curriculum Committee (CuC). The representative is to act as a liaison between the CuC and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the CuC. At times when the CuC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representative should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate.

The Diversity Committee Representatives will be **two** graduate students and will act as the Diversity Committee Representatives-elect during the Summer Semester and serve one-year terms as Diversity Committee Representatives beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Diversity Committee Representatives are elected by popular vote. The Diversity Committee Representatives will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Diversity Committee (DC). The representative is to act as a liaison between the DC and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the DC. At times when the DC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representatives should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate.

The Seminar Committee Representatives will act as the Seminar Committee Representatives-elect during the semester before the one-year terms as Seminar Committee Representatives.

The Seminar Committee Representatives are elected by popular vote. The Seminar Committee Representatives will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Seminar Committee (SeC). The representative is to act as a liaison between the SeC and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the SeC. At times when the SeC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representative should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate. Additionally, the Seminar Committee Representatives are responsible for managing presentation technology for weekly departmental seminars and for making appropriate arrangements for lecturer-graduate student interaction after weekly departmental seminars. One of the two Seminar Committee Representatives will be appointed by the President to serve as the GEES Seminar Committee Chairperson for the duration of their term.

The Social Committee Representative will act as the Social Committee Representative-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as Social Committee Representative beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Social Committee Representative is elected by popular vote. The Social Committee Representative will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Social Committee (SoC). The representative is to act as a liaison between the SoC and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the SoC. At times when the SoC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representative should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate.

The Award Committee Representative will act as the Award Committee Representative-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as Award Committee Representative beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Award Committee Representative is elected by popular vote. The Award Committee Representative will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Award Committee (AwC). The representative is to act as a liaison between the AwC and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the AwC. At times when the AwC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representative should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate.

The Communication Committee Representative will act as the Communication Committee Representative-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as Communication Committee Representative beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Communication Committee Representative is elected by popular vote. The

Communication Committee Representative will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Communication Committee (CoC). The representative is to act as a liaison between the CoC and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the CoC. At times when the CoC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representative should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate.

The Museum of Biological Diversity Committee Representative will act as the Museum Committee Representative-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as Museum Committee Representative beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The Museum of Biological Diversity Committee Representative is elected by popular vote. The Museum Committee (MBDC) Representative will represent GEES in the Department of EEOB's Museum of Biological Diversity organizational committee. The representative is to act as a liaison between this committee and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the MBDC. At times when the MBDC is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representative should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate. Additionally, the MBDC Representative is responsible for assisting in planning the annual MBD Open House and organizing EEOB graduate student volunteers for this event.

### **Section *iii* – Other Representatives**

Other Representatives are responsible for representing the interests of the active members of GEES to the organizations to which they serve. Permanent leaders in this group include the GEES Representative to the Council of Graduate Students (CGS). Other Representatives that are appointed during the Academic Year to new or non-permanent committees also fall into this category of leadership. Examples of this second type of representative include the GEES Representative to College Library Committee, Departmental Search Committees, or other College or University Committees. The CGS Representative is EEOB's voice in the Council of Graduate Students, is requested by CGS, and is a permanent position filled by election each year while Representatives to new or non-permanent committees are filled by special election as needed and serve until the Committee is dissolved or a new election cycle begins (whichever comes first). Upon completion of service to new or non-permanent committees, the Representative will report the results of the committee at a general meeting or will submit a written report to the Executive Committee to be read at the next general meeting.

The Council of Graduate Students (CGS) Representative will act as the CGS Representative-elect during the Summer Semester and serve a one-year term as CGS Representative beginning the first day of classes of the Autumn Semester. The CGS Representative is elected by popular vote. The CGS Students Representative will represent GEES in the CGS, attend the meetings of the council, and participate in the activities of the CGS. The representative is to act as a liaison between the CGS and the graduate students, keeping the GEES membership informed on the activities of the CGS. At times when the CGS is dealing with matters that will impact a significant number of graduate students, the representative should bring the topic(s) before the Executive Committee and then the general membership, seeking input on how to act on the matter when appropriate.

#### **Article IV – Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee will consist of the President, Secretary-Treasurer, GEES Facilitator, Fundraising Chairperson, Graduate Studies Committee Representative, the two Advisory Committee Representatives, and one at-large member elected by and from the remaining GEES Leadership. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that GEES is serving the purposes listed in Article I, Section *ii*.

#### **Article V – Standing Committees**

##### **Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee is composed of the President, Secretary-Treasurer, and one volunteer at-large member from the active voting members. This Committee is charged with conducting the daily business, finances, and budgetary affairs of GEES. During the transitional period after an election cycle, the President-elect and Secretary-Treasurer-elect will become members of this Committee.

##### **Fundraising Committee**

The Fundraising Committee is chaired by the Fundraising Chairperson and is composed of as many volunteers as needed to accomplish its goals. The Fundraising Committee is charged with designing and implementing the fundraising activities of GEES to help achieve its goals. Such goals may include (but are not limited to): purchasing new technology, sponsoring a guest lecturer, supporting Departmental, College, or University activities, etc.

#### Seminar Committee

The Seminar Committee is chaired by one of the Seminar Committee Representatives appointed by the President and is composed of volunteers whose main activity is to arrange a guest speaker to visit the Department during the following academic year.

#### **Article VI – Advisor(s)**

The advisor(s) of GEES must be full-time members of the University Faculty or administrative/professional staff. If a person is serving as an advisor who is not a member of the above classifications, a co-advisor must be chosen who is a member of these University classifications.

#### **Article VII – Meetings of the Organization**

At least two regular general meetings will be conducted each academic semester excluding Summer Semester. Emergency or other general meetings will be conducted as needed during the academic year. All GEES committees will meet as deemed necessary by the chairpersons of such committees or as determined by the President of GEES.

#### **Article VIII – Method of Amending the Constitution**

Proposed amendments to the GEES Constitution should be submitted to the GEES Facilitator, who will review the proposal and assist the proposer in preparing a draft of the amendment. The written proposal will be read, but not acted on, in the next general meeting. The proposed

amendment shall be posted for review by the general membership, after which a vote may be called. Amendments must be approved by ballot by a two-thirds majority of the voting membership. The vote must be conducted two weeks after the last meeting to discuss the amendment is held.

## **Article IX – Method of Dissolution of the Organization**

In the case that the purposes, objectives, and/or participation of graduate students is not achieved, GEES shall be dissolved, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee. In the event of dissolution all assets and property shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities and obligations of GEES and for the necessary expenses thereof be turned over to the Department of EEOB to be used exclusively for the student services as determined by the EEOB Graduate Studies Committee.

## **Bylaws of the Graduate Evolution and Ecology Student Organization**

### **Article I – Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order (Modern Edition) shall govern GEES in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with the bylaws of this organization.

### **Article II – Membership**

All graduate students whose advisors are members of the Graduate Faculty in the Department of EEOB will be considered voting members of GEES, provided that they are enrolled and in good standing with the Department. Graduate students that wish not to be considered

members of GEES may request termination of membership by written letter to be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer.

Any faculty, alumnus, staff, or undergraduate student may become an honorary member of GEES by petitioning the Secretary-Treasurer.

### **Article III – Election/Appointment of Government Leadership**

All voting members of GEES are eligible for leadership positions, with the exception for president as individuals must have held at least one previous leadership position . A nomination period will be announced in the beginning of the Spring Semester each year, no later than the third week of the semester. Solicitations for nominations will be made available to all voting members. Individuals may nominate themselves and/or other members for leadership positions. During the week following the nomination period, each nominee shall approve or disapprove their candidacy. Immediately after the confirmation period, a seven-day election session will be held. Voting will be by ballot. Officer positions for which no candidate was nominated will be left open for write-in vote during the election. After all received ballots have been tallied, a list of all newly-elected officers will be posted.

Special Committee Chairs are appointed by the President, subject to approval of the Executive Committee.

If a newly elected officer were to be absent during any one or more semesters during their term, they shall find an adequate replacement to fill the position during that period. Replacements must be approved by the Executive Committee. In the case that an adequate replacement is not recommended by such officer, the Executive Committee reserves the right to appoint a new officer for that position. In the case that the President were to be absent or resign, the Secretary-Treasurer shall take over the duties of the President, and a new Secretary-Treasurer will be appointed by the Executive Committee. GEES officers, except for Special Committee Chairs, failing to perform their duties as described in the GEES Constitution and Bylaws may be impeached. The impeachment process can be initiated by any voting member of GEES. In order to begin the impeachment process, the member initiating the impeachment must submit a letter to the Executive Committee describing the reasons why an impeachment is sought. The Executive Committee will hold a review meeting

with the potentially impeached officer and the member initiating the impeachment within two weeks of receiving the letter of initiation of impeachment. If the Executive Committee finds grounds for impeachment, the final decision will be made through secret ballot by the voting membership. The impeachment must be approved by two-thirds of the voting membership. In the case that any elected officer, except for the President, were impeached, a new officer will be appointed by the Executive Committee. In the case of the President being impeached, the Secretary-Treasurer will succeed and fill the office for the remainder of the term.

Special Committee Chairs failing to perform their duties satisfactorily can be relieved of their position by the Executive Committee.

In cases where a new officer is appointed the new officer will serve until the end of the original term.

#### **Article IV – Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee is the governing body of GEES. It shall meet as necessary to conduct the affairs of GEES. The Executive Committee is empowered to act on behalf of GEES on all matters except final approval of changes in the Constitution or Bylaws and any matters expressly forbidden or assigned exclusively to the general membership in the Constitution or Bylaws. Its additional responsibilities include, but are not limited to: (i) consideration of proposals from any member of GEES, (ii) receipt of and action on reports from the Officers, Representatives, and Chairs, (iii) designation of the time and place of the general meetings, and (iv) performing an annual revision of the EEOB Graduate Student Orientation Manual in order to update or add to its contents with new information relevant to present and newly admitted graduate students.

#### **Article V – Standing Committees**

Budget Committee

The Budget Committee is responsible for conducting all the daily business, finances, and budgetary affairs of GEES. It will develop the fiscal policy and annual budget of GEES. Its duties include, but are not limited to, disbursement of funds associated with all purchases of goods and services for GEES, maintaining financial records, and preparing a monthly report to be presented to the Executive Committee. The committee is also responsible for preparing the GEES annual budget during the transitional period following elections. The chairpersons of the following committees must report upcoming matters to the Executive Committee prior to their discussion in a meeting of the general membership. Each committee shall hold meetings as deemed necessary by the committee chair.

### Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee is responsible for raising funds for GEES through any means deemed appropriate by the GEES Constitution and by The Ohio State University. This committee is also responsible for notifying the appropriate University authorities prior to these activities when necessary. The committee is required to conduct one major fundraising activity per Academic Year.

### Seminar Committee

Each year the Seminar Committee will establish a list of potential guest speakers (to be the GEES invited speaker) nominated by the active membership. The vote for the GEES invited speaker must be completed in the spring semester for the following year. Seminar representatives will be expected to commit time during the summer immediately following their election to begin communication and planning, as well as work with the GEES president and treasurer during the academic year to secure OUAB funding for speaker costs. Potential speakers will be ranked by popular vote. It is the duty of this committee to attempt to schedule a seminar with the first-choice guest speaker. If this cannot be accomplished then the next proposed speaker by rank should be contacted. This process shall continue until a speaker has been scheduled. Following the successful arrangement with the guest speaker, the committee shall announce the seminar to the general membership. The committee will be responsible for making all of the necessary arrangements for the visiting speaker. Arrangements shall include, but are not limited to scheduling transportation, making hotel reservations, and scheduling all appropriate social activities. The Seminar Committee shall designate a person or persons to coordinate the GEES lunches with guest speakers and acquisition and operation of audio-visual equipment at weekly Departmental seminars during each academic semester. The Representatives from this committee will attend all Departmental Seminar Committee meetings.

## **Article VI – Advisor Responsibilities**

The advisor to GEES shall provide support to the newly-elected officers during the transitional and initial periods of the new leadership. They will also advise GEES with respect to any University policy that could have implications in the activities of GEES. The Advisor(s) will be expected to participate in both general and Executive Committee meetings when appropriate.

## **Article VII – Meeting Requirements**

A quorum for both general and special meetings shall be one-third of the voting membership present either in person or by a signed proxy. If a quorum were not present for a vote during a general or special meeting, decisions required on any issue shall be reached by ballot to be conducted during the week following the meeting. In the case that a decision on any issue were needed immediately, such a decision shall be reached by a majority of those voting members present in person or by signed proxy.

## **Article VIII – Method of Amending the Bylaws**

Proposed amendments to the GEES Bylaws should be submitted to the GEES Facilitator who will review the proposal and assist the proposer in preparing a draft of the amendments. The written proposal will be read, but not acted on, in the next general meeting. The proposed amendment shall be posted for review by the general membership, after which a vote may be called. Amendments must be approved by ballot by a two-thirds majority of the voting membership. The vote must be conducted two weeks after the last meeting to discuss the amendment is held.

## **Article IX - Removal of members**

If a member conducts themselves in such a manner deemed detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization or is in violation of the OSU Student Code of Conduct, they can be removed through a majority vote of the other voting membership or unanimous vote of the officers, with the consultation of the advisor.

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