

NEUROSCIENCE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

Mission

The Neuroscience Students' Association (NSA) (est. January 2006) exists to foster the burgeoning undergraduate neuroscience community at the University of Alberta by acting as a resource base, organizing group activities, and providing academic opportunities for its members within the framework allowed by the University of Alberta and Students' Union. NSA activities include, but are not limited to: regular socials and study groups; volunteer opportunities; biannual publications which include course reviews and professor interviews; annual NSA clothing orders; a graduation banquet; promotion of research and scholarship opportunities; laboratory tours; and seminars to provide information regarding further education and careers. In sum, the NSA exists as a social and academic support for its members, and is driven by a mandate of promoting a strong, vibrant undergraduate Neuroscience community.

Article I: Name

The official name of this organization is the Neuroscience Students' Association, University of Alberta Student Group.

The abbreviation NSA will be used more commonly.

Article II: Membership

Membership is open to all undergraduate Honors Neuroscience students at the University of Alberta.

There are two classes of membership: Executive Members and General Members.

Two-thirds of General Members and all Executive Members must be full members of the University of Alberta Students' Union. (Full members of the Students' Union are those undergraduate students who have paid Students' Union fees for both semesters of the given academic year.)

Members must be full-time undergraduate students.

All students registered in the undergraduate Honours Neuroscience program at the University of Alberta are automatically General Members of the NSA.

Membership is valid for the duration of the individual's registration in the undergraduate Honours Neuroscience program.

Membership may be revoked at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Reasons grave enough for membership to be revoked include but are not limited to embezzlement of NSA funds or severe misconduct at official NSA events. The member that has had their membership revoked may apply for an appeal.

Article III: Membership Dues

There is no annual or other membership fee.

Article IV: Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the NSA must consist of at least the following positions: President, Vice-President (Academic), Vice-President (Internal), Vice-President (External) and Vice-President (Finance). In years when there are enough interested students, the following executive positions are recommended: Vice-President (Social/Grad), Vice-President (Fundraising), Vice-President

(Communications), Vice- President (Recruitment), and Vice-President (First-Year Representative).

Every executive member must volunteer at NSA events. Events include, but are not limited to, fundraising, academic, and recruitment events. All executive members are responsible for completing at least one course review per semester. All executive members are responsible for the promotion, via social media, email and/or postering, of events which they organize.

The specific duties of each Executive Member are outlined below. Duties and responsibilities are subject to change at the discretion of the Executive Committee depending on number of Executive Members present for given year or specific need at said time.

(A) President

Shall ensure the club remains actively involved in a variety of projects that promote the club and its vision.

Shall be responsible for planning meetings.

Shall act as the chair for all meetings of the NSA. Shall prepare the agenda for each regular meeting.

Shall assign duties and responsibilities to Executive Members and Coordinators (if applicable) and shall exercise supervision to ensure that assigned tasks are satisfactorily completed.

Shall have signing authority on the club's cheques.

Shall be responsible for monthly updates (by e-mail or other medium) to the General Membership as to the NSA's activities.

At the end of the term, shall compile a record of the NSA's activities for the year, in which must be kept copies of all records and documents pertaining to NSA operations. (Such documents include publications, agendas, minutes, event reports, etc.)

(B) Vice-President (Academic)

Shall carry out the duties of the President in the absence of the President.

Shall be responsible for promoting Neuroscience research internships, laboratory open days.

Shall be responsible for promoting the Honors Neuroscience undergraduate program to prospective students.

Shall work with the President to keep undergraduate Neuroscience professors and department informed as to the activities of the undergraduate Neuroscience students.

Shall organize and execute the annual Neuroscience Mixer as specified by previous templates.

This position should be filled by the Vice-President (Internal) in years where no Vice- President Academic is elected.

(C) Vice-President (Internal)

Shall record attendance and minutes during NSA meetings and later send these to each member via email.

Shall act as media coordinator to ensure that event announcements and updates are sent out to all neuroscience students via email and/or social media.

(D) Vice-President (External)

Shall be the official representative of the club in communications and negotiations with all external, faculty and departmental organizations. Shall initiate and maintain communication and collaboration with other science student groups at the University of Alberta. Said groups include, but are not limited to, the Neuroscience Graduate Students' Association, the Interdepartmental Science Students' Association, the Biochemistry Students' Associations and the Undergraduate Physiology Students' Association. Shall arrange and attend meetings with these groups as appropriate. Shall initiate and maintain communication and collaboration with neuroscience students' associations at other universities. Shall organize one service project per academic year, be it international and/or local.

(E) Vice-President (Finance)

Shall monitor the NSA's bank account and shall maintain the NSA's record of Financial Affairs, which must hold a record of all financial transactions, bank statements, receipts, budgets, grant reports, and other documents. Shall report on the financial situation of the club once a month. Shall prepare an annual budget and shall ensure that the club's financial activities adhere to this budget. The annual budget is to be approved at the NSA General meeting no later than October 15 in the academic year for which it is prepared. The budget may be declined by a majority vote. Shall have signing authority on the club's cheques.

(F) Vice-President (Social and Grad)

Shall be responsible for organizing and promoting an annual graduation event for senior undergraduate Neuroscience students in conjunction with other health sciences related student groups. Shall be responsible for the organization and promotion of a minimum of one social event per term for undergraduate Neuroscience students.

(G) Vice-President (Fundraising)

Shall organize and promote at least two fundraising events per semester. Promotion shall include both print (i.e. posters) and digital (i.e. Facebook postings) advertisements. Shall design, order, and organize sales of merchandise, including but not limited to, t- shirts once per academic year or as is appropriate.

(H) Vice-President (Communications)

Shall be responsible for regular updates to the website. Shall compile and send out via email a newsletter, containing course reviews and professor interviews, once per semester. Shall create and send out via email, calendars of NSA events. Shall be responsible for organizing NERD seminars, which are presentations regarding neuroscience to high schools.

(I) Vice-President (Recruitment)

Shall be responsible for promoting the Honors Neuroscience undergraduate program and the Neuroscience Students' Association to prospective students. Promotional events shall include, but not be limited to, neuroscience orientation in September and Open House in October.

Shall organize and promote an information session for the purpose of high school recruitment to be held during the winter semester.

Shall be responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of a mentor system that will match first year students with students in later years.

Article V: Elections

Members must be informed via social media and email one month prior to elections. This information will contain available positions, election date, and ask for abstracts of a maximum 250 words.

Executive positions will be granted by a simple majority (50% + 1) vote of all members present at the Election meeting. Voting will be conducted by secret ballot. The outgoing President and Vice-President (Academic) shall count the votes. In the event that the outgoing President and/or the Vice-President (Academic) is/are running for another position, the Vice-President (Internal) and/or the Vice-President (External), in that order, shall take over vote-counting duty for the individual with the conflict of interest. The President shall not vote, except in the event of a tie.

One election will be held yearly. The election, in which all positions will be filled, will be held in March of the previous academic year. The executive members shall serve a term from April 1 to March 31.

New positions may be created at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

General Members may run for any Executive position, however, a first year Neuroscience student may not serve as President.

In order to run for president, the candidate must have a minimum of 1 year experience as a NSA executive

An Executive Member may seek re-election in his or her current position or in an alternative position for the following academic year.

Should an Executive position become vacant during the year, it may be reassigned according to the above protocol to ensure that all members may vote for the new executive member.

Article VI: Meetings and Procedures

(A) Executive Meetings

Executive Committee meetings will be held at a minimum frequency of twice per month during the academic year, with the exceptions of December and April.

Quorum for Executive Committee meetings is (50% + 1) Executive Members.

Decisions passed in meetings where quorum is not met are not valid.

Executive Members will be notified of Executive Meetings at least three business days in advance of the meeting date.

An Executive majority vote is required for any expenditures exceeding \$50.00 or 5% of the NSA's total account, whichever is less.

(B) General Meetings

In each academic year, two General Meetings (GM) will be held: the first in September to inform new student of our services; and the second in March to elect the new executive committee.

Quorum for GM consists of at least ten General Members, or 33% of the total membership of the NSA, whichever is less.

Members will be notified of the GM and NSA elections by email or by phone at least two weeks before the proposed meeting date.

General Meetings may be called throughout the academic year to make changes to the constitution, call a new election, inform General Members of undergraduate Neuroscience-related business, or for any other purpose for which the Executive Committee sees fit.

Article VII: Amendments to the Constitution

This constitution should serve as a guideline for the organization. Executive members may use their discretion in handling situations not described above. Amendments to the constitution may be proposed at any Executive Meeting. The proposed change will be discussed and voted on given that quorum is met. Changes may be passed by a simple (50% + 1) majority.

Article VIII: Dissolution Process

The NSA may be dissolved by a 2/3 majority vote at a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose of dissolution. Notice must be given 30 days prior in writing. The NSA can be dissolved in the case where membership drops below 15 students or when the Neuroscience Honours program is no longer present at the University of Alberta. Upon dissolution, the Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring that any remaining financial resources are donated to the Centre for Neuroscience or to another neuroscience-related organization and the bank account is closed down. Any resources or group assets will also be donated to the Centre for Neuroscience or another neuroscience-related organization where appropriate and cannot be distributed to individual members.
Last Revised: April 9, 2020.