

Bylaws of the Student Governance
Organization at the School of Biomedical
Informatics at The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Houston
(Revised, August 2014)

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Preamble

The bylaws establish the Student Governance Organization at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHSC-H) School of Biomedical Informatics (SBMI) and the procedures for the conduct of its business.

ARTICLE 1: Name

The organization shall be known as the Student Governance Organization (hereinafter referred to as SGO).

ARTICLE 2: Mission Statement

The purpose of SGO shall be to improve the student experience at SBMI by providing a unified voice to faculty and administration, representation in all affairs of students to administration in decision and policy changes that affect students, and to promote social exchange of students.

ARTICLE 3: Membership

All SGO officers shall be duly elected and in good standing at SBMI at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

Section 1. Faculty Advisor

A faculty advisor must be appointed by the officers of SGO at the beginning of their term to serve a one-year renewable term. He/she functions to facilitate and maintain communication between the dean, SBMI administration and faculty. Furthermore the faculty advisor will work to assist with and provide administrative support and direction as necessary to forward the cause of the SGO.

Section 2. School Representatives

The elected officers of the SGO shall be president, vice president, and secretary with representation beginning the first day and to last one year.

- a. The president shall: be the primary spokesperson for the SBMI student body and preside over SGO meetings. At the end of his/her term, the president is also responsible for compiling all pertinent information and correspondence during his/her term of office and conveying this information to the president elect by June 1.
- b. The vice president shall: assume the duties of the president in his or her absence, prepare the agenda for SBMI meetings, and assist in all duties as necessary to contribute to the work of SGO.
- c. The secretary shall: assist in recording, preparation, and distribution of meeting minutes, be responsible for maintaining records of attendance at SGO meetings and events, and assist in all duties as necessary to contribute to the work of SGO.

The student body will elect 3 representatives into the UTHealth Student Inter-council with special terms: One representative shall be elected for a 2 year term and two representatives shall be elected for a one year term. Students can run for both SIC representation and SGO officer presentation concurrently.

Section 3. Election of Officers

SGO and SIC general election shall be held no later than the first week of April to decide new Officers and Student Inter-council representation. Such elections shall be administered by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in accordance to the voting procedures outlined in these bylaws. Voting in general elections may be by either written or electronic ballot but not in combination. The election outcome for each position shall be determined by a plurality vote (the candidate receiving the most favorable ballots).

Section 4. Vacancy & Resignation

When a vacancy occurs in the office of president, the vice president shall fill the unexpired term. When a vacancy occurs in any office of the SGO, the president shall call a special election to fill the office. In the event SIC representation becomes vacant, the SGO will hold a special session to appoint representation.

Any member of the SGO may resign by submitting a letter to the Dean of SBMI, Faculty Advisor, and SGO. Members who graduate or leave school during their term of office are expected to tender their resignation within thirty (30) days.

Section 5. Grievances

Grievances against a member of the Executive Board may be presented in written form by any student member of the Student Association at any time. Copies are presented to: President of SGO and the faculty advisor. In the event that the President is named in the grievance issue, it should be presented to the highest-ranking member of SGO not named in the grievance who will also chair that portion of the meeting at which the issue is acted upon. Grievances shall be distributed to all members of the Executive Board at least five days prior to the regularly scheduled meeting at which the issue is to be acted upon. Should a grievance be presented less than five days before the next regular meeting of

the Executive Board, the issue will not be acted upon until the first regular meeting following. While Executive Board members named in a grievance issue are encouraged to attend this meeting, their presence is not necessary for action to be taken. The unnamed members of the Executive Board may impose any lesser penalty or take other appropriate action in lieu of removal from office where deemed warranted.

ARTICLE 4. Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held monthly from June to April at a time specified during the first regular meeting each June.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the SGO president or by written request, but must be scheduled at least 72 hours in advance and on a regular school day. Attendance at special meetings is recommended.

Section 3. Agenda

The agenda for regular meetings shall include call to order, introduction of guests, and determination of the presence of a quorum, review and approval of minutes of previous meetings, SIC reports, unfinished business, new business, announcements, and adjournment.

The vice president of the SGO shall be responsible for preparing the agenda for each meeting. The president of the SGO shall be responsible for final approval and distribution of the agenda.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum shall be called when the majority of all voting eligible SGO representatives are present or if the rules of order are suspended. Meetings may be held without quorum but no motions may be introduced or passed.

Section 5. Voting

Voting may be by voice or by written ballot.

Section 6. Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority, but may be suspended by the SGO president with a two-thirds vote of concurrence by the representatives present.

Section 7. Minutes

The SGO secretary shall keep record of meeting minutes and distribute them after the meeting to council for review and approval in a timely manner. If the secretary is not present, he/she may appoint someone to record the minutes in his/her place.

Section 8. Visitors

Visitors may attend meetings, make presentations, and have the privileges of the floor (except the vote) upon invitation of the SGO. Visitors wishing to present or to propose a motion as well as those requesting privileges of the floor must be included on the agenda, and have made a written request 5 business days prior to this meeting.

ARTICLE 5: Finance and Budget

Operating funds for the SGO shall come from a portion of the Student Services Fee collected each term through the registration process. The portion designated for use by the SGO shall provide the source of funds for the budgetary planning and fiscal operation of the SGO. No financial obligations shall be incurred by any officer or committee except as authorized within annual budgets, or under authority of special interim action, approved by the SGO. The fiscal year shall conform to the academic year.

At a time no later than the first regularly scheduled meeting, the SGO president shall present the proposed budget to the general membership. The budget shall be accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the representatives. Any proposed event should be accompanied with a budget for approval by the presiding SGO.

ARTICLE 6: Student Referendums

An SGO representative, or any student through his or her representative to the SGO, may request a referendum on issues pertaining to students. The issue of a referendum shall be placed on an SGO agenda and a majority of the voting representatives present shall vote to hold the referendum. The referendum will then be held in accordance with the procedures for a general election. Referendum shall be passed if approved by a two-thirds majority of those students voting.

Article 7: Jurisdiction

The SGO shall be advisory to the dean of SBMI. It may elaborate a position or positions on matters within the school, including regional campuses, or on matters generated within the SGO. Its recommendations, if any, shall be forwarded to the dean of the SBMI or appropriate designate in writing.

ARTICLE 8: Amendments and Adoptions

Proposed amendments to the bylaws must be submitted for inclusion on the agenda and for distribution to all SGO members prior to the meeting in which they are considered. Amendments to the bylaws shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the SGO membership.