

# The Constitution of the Physics Department Graduate Student Association

This constitution was ratified on February 9<sup>th</sup> two thousand and four.

## Article I Name

The Physics Department Graduate Student Association (PDGSA).

## Article II Purpose

The purpose of PDGSA is to provide a forum for the graduate students of the Tulane University Physics Department to exchange ideas pertinent to the physical disciplines. The PDGSA will provide a mechanism for the Physics graduate students to voice opinions and concerns, in a structured manner, regarding departments, administrative, graduate, and undergraduate issues.

## Article III Membership

All matriculated graduate students in the Physics Department are automatically given membership unless prohibited by any other Article contained herein.

## Article IV Officers

### Section I: Number and Method of Election

The general membership of the PDGSA will nominate and elect a Speaker, a Treasurer and a number of Academic representatives to an executive committee which will coordinate the activities of the group as described in the Purpose. The number of Academic representatives will be equal to the number of Graduate School Student Association (GSSA) representatives as specified under GSSA bylaws. The Academic members will be members-at-large. Officers will be elected by nomination and selected by anonymous ballot. Nominations for the PDGSA representative positions will be accepted one week prior to the first spring meeting. Elections for the new officers will be held at the first spring meeting and the results will be announced at that time.

## Section II: Duties of Officers

- Speaker:** The speaker will be responsible for coordinating and leading all PDGSA meetings and bringing up issues to the general membership. It will also be the speaker's responsibility to arrange a location and time for all meetings. The speaker will be responsible for all PDGSA correspondence and presenting any resolutions to the appropriate entities.
- Treasurer:** The treasurer will be responsible for keeping track of all financial records, preparing accounting reports and filing necessary paperwork with the GSSA. This financial officer will maintain a record of all important written documents.
- Academics:** The Academic will be responsible for soliciting views and opinions of the Physics graduate students regarding any and all academic issues affecting the members of the department. As concerns are raised, the Academic representatives will bring these matters to the attention of the speaker who will raise the issues at general and executive PDGSA meetings. When needed the representatives will survey the general membership for a consensus on the subject.

## Section III: Anonymity

All concerns, complaints, etc. expressed to the committee members are considered anonymous. Representatives must get a student's permission before using his or her name.

## Section IV: Terms of Office

Representatives will serve one-year terms and can be re-elected to the same office. Each term of office begins June 1<sup>st</sup> and ends May 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. In the event the Speaker should need to step down from office, the Treasurer will assume the Speaker's position. Likewise, should the Treasurer resign, one of the Academic representatives will be designated as a temporary appointee by vote among members of the executive committee whether nominations should be reopened for the position or wait for next spring's elections.

## Section V: Impeachment

Any representative who does not fulfill their responsibilities will be subject to removal from their position by a two-thirds majority vote of the general membership. The motion for impeachment must be brought by one of the other representatives. In the event a representative is impeached for betraying a graduate students anonymity, that representative will additionally lose general

voting privileges and will no longer be eligible to be a GSSA representative or PDGSA executive committee member in the future.

#### Section VI: GSSA Representatives

The executive committee will appoint a number of GSSA representatives, as specified under GSSA bylaws, from the executive committee to serve on the GSSA. If an insufficient number of committee members can fulfill the obligations necessary to serve as GSSA representatives then the positions will be opened for a general vote.

#### Article V Meetings

The PDGSA will hold a meeting at least two times a semester and whenever the executive committee deems necessary. The first meeting must be held after the first week and no later than the fourth week of the semester. The last meeting must be held prior to the last four weeks of the semester. Not all votes will require a meeting to be called. Some issues will be decided by ballot distributed in departmental mailboxes and returned within a specified time.

#### Article VI Voting

Before any official resolutions or policy statements are offered on behalf of the PDGSA to the department faculty, GSSA or other entity, a vote shall be held to reach a consensus on the matter from the general membership. Each PDGSA member will be allowed only one vote. Only members who will be continuing students six (6) months following the date a proposed resolution will become effective shall vote on that issue.

#### Article VII Amendments

All amendments to this constitution must be made in writing to the executive committee and voted on during a scheduled meeting of the membership. At least two thirds of the entire membership must be present before a vote on an amendment can take place. For an amendment to be ratified, two thirds of those voting on the amendment must agree to the change. Proposed amendment changes will be announced at least one week in advance of the vote, and written copy of the amendment will be distributed to the general membership. Anyone who cannot be present for a vote on an amendment can do so in writing to the Speaker and that vote will count toward the two-thirds necessary attendance requirement for a vote.