

SAMPLE CHAPTER CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

(Revised: April 2010; Approved April 2011)

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS OF _____ CHAPTER of SIGMA DELTA EPSILON, GRADUATE WOMEN IN SCIENCE

CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of _____ Chapter of Sigma Delta Epsilon, Graduate Women in Science, Inc. is that of the National Organization of Sigma Delta Epsilon, Graduate Women in Science, Inc.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualification.

A woman is eligible for membership in _____ Chapter if qualified for membership in Sigma Delta Epsilon, Graduate Women in Science, Inc. as specified in the National Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2. Rights of Membership.

- a. To vote and hold office.
- b. To petition the National Council in writing on matters of concern to the National Organization; and
- c. To attend all meetings of the Chapter and organization to gain a hearing.

Section 3. Categories.

Note: National dues for the following members are listed in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

- a. A *Full Member* is one who meets the requirements as stated in this Article, Section I and who pays full National SDE/GWIS dues. Full members are those listed in the National SDE/GWIS Policies and Procedures Manual, Section I.H.
- b. A *Graduate Student Member* is one who is registered for an advanced degree as described in Article II, Section 3 of the National Bylaws. She shall pay not more than one-half the annual chapter dues and shall have all rights of membership.
- c. *Emeritus Member*. A full member may become an Emeritus Member for reasons of health or age. She shall pay not more than one-half the annual chapter dues and shall have all the rights of membership.
- d. A *Chapter Honorary Membership* may be conferred upon a member of _____ Chapter. She shall pay National dues according to the National Bylaws (Article II, Section 3).
- e. Affiliates

There may be non-voting Affiliate members as described in the National Bylaws (Article II, Section 3c).

- (1) Undergraduate science majors
- (2) Non-Scientists designated by the National President (i.e., science journalists, etc.)
- (3) Science Teachers

f. Inactive Members

A member who has resigned or has allowed her membership to lapse by nonpayment of dues for one (1) year shall be inactive. She may be reinstated without payment of back National dues only once by payment of the current year's National and Chapter dues.

g. Transfer of Membership

A member may transfer to another Chapter. If dues have already been paid to _____ Chapter, the new

Chapter shall waive dues for the current year.

ARTICLE II. GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Officers.

- a. The officers shall be President, Vice-President (*or President-Elect*), Secretary, Treasurer and Liaison Officer.
- b. The officers shall constitute the Executive Committee (or Executive Board, etc.), which will be the governing body of the chapter.

NOTE: You may designate other officers such as Directors—from 1–3 is usual—, Historian, etc. All officers must be elected. Alternatively, non-officer, non-elected positions could also be ‘Historian, Editor, Archivist, ‘ etc. In this case, they could be appointed by the President or the Executive Committee. Their duties would be specified in Article V.

Section 2. Committees.

- a. There shall be Standing Committees (such as Membership, Program, Fund Raising, etc.) as cited in Article VII. Members of Standing Committees shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.
- b. Ad hoc or special committees (except the Nominating Committee) are temporary and may be appointed by the President or Executive Committee as needed.

OR

Ad hoc or special committees may be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Disbandment.

- a. The chapter may elect to disband.
- b. Upon disbandment of the chapter, the assets must be distributed in a manner according to the amended Certificate of Incorporation and Article VII, Section 5 of the National Bylaws. A full report shall be made to the national Treasurer.

ARTICLE III. MEETINGS

Section 1. Business and Chapter Meetings.

- a. General meetings shall be held according to a schedule agreed upon by the chapter members.
- b. An Annual Business Meeting shall be held as the last regular meeting of the fiscal year.
- c. Meetings of the Executive Committee (or Board, etc.) shall be held from time to time when deemed necessary by the President.
- d. Induction of new members may be held at any meeting.

Section 2. Proxies.

Any member of the organization entitled to vote may vote by proxy. A proxy is not required, but when done shall be in writing and for a specific meeting.

Section 3. Quorum.

- a. A quorum for the transaction of business at any general meeting shall be (here, you must specify, e.g., “at least six (6) members, three of whom must be officers, and at least one of whom must be either the President or the Vice-President”; or you could require at least eight (8) members, etc.).
- b. A quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the Executive Committee (or “Board “) shall be four (4) (or whatever number seems right for the size of your executive committee: a usual quorum is at least one-half of the number of members. Also, at least one member should be one of the highest officers, i.e., president or vice-president).

Section 4. Voting.

At any meeting, questions shall be decided by a majority vote, unless otherwise prescribed, by the voters present in person or by proxy. (*“by proxy” is included only if you have allowed for proxy votes -Article III, Section 2*).

ARTICLE IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

Section 1. Elections.

The chapter officers for the next fiscal year shall be elected by a majority vote of the votes cast at an election meeting to be held at least 30 days before the national Grand Chapter meeting.

Section 2. Officers.

The President-Elect, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer shall each be elected to serve for a term of one fiscal year and until her successor shall be elected and installed. These officers may be re-elected to serve an additional term or terms as determined to be in the best interests of the chapter.

Section 3. Liaison.

The Liaison Officer shall be elected for a term of up to five years as determined by the Executive Committee (or Board) and may be re-elected to serve an additional term.

Section 4. Directors.

Directors (include only if part of Art. II, Section 1) shall be elected for a term of _____ year(s). (state whether the Director(s) may be re-elected to serve more than one consecutive term) Add more sections describing the election and terms for any other officers mentioned in Article II. Government, Section 1. Number the sections in sequence.

Section 5. In the event that a vacancy occurs in any office, the Executive Committee shall make an appointment for the unexpired term.

ARTICLE V. DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS AND MANAGEMENT

(The signing authority for checks should be spelled out under the appropriate officers ‘duties).

Section 1. Officers.

The powers and duties of the officers of this organization shall be those usually vested in their respective positions. In addition:

a. The President

(1) shall be ex-officio a member of all committees, except the nominating committee, keeping contact with their work to the extent that may be advisable

(2) may call a meeting of the Executive Committee as required for efficient operation of chapter business.

(3) may authorize the withdrawal of funds from the treasury for the payment of obligations incurred by the chapter for such other purposes as the Executive Committee may approve.

(4) shall send to the National Secretary, 30 days before the Grand Chapter meeting, a report of the activities of the chapter during the past year. (*if you wish, the president can be designated as an alternate signing authority here*).

b. The Vice-President (*or President-Elect*)

(1) shall act in the absence of the President, assuming all her duties and obligations.

(2) shall serve as chairman of the _____ committee.

(if any standing committees are put into Article II, Section 2, the VP could be made chair of any of them, or given a general job description such as: “the VP shall perform those duties as the President from time to time may direct”).

- c. The Secretary shall act as recording and corresponding secretary and shall:
 - (1) send a list of the new members, their National dues (see Article VI, Section 3b) and the date of their induction to the National Secretary promptly after the induction meeting.
 - (2) assist a member who moves to another area and wishes to transfer to another chapter by (*forwarding a copy of the data card and the completed transfer form to the new chapter.*) reporting the transfer to the National Secretary and to the recipient chapter secretary or president.
 - (3) send the names, addresses and telephone numbers of newly elected chapter officers to the National Secretary no later than 30 days after chapter elections.
- d. The Treasurer shall:
 - (1) be authorized to withdraw money from the treasury for the payment of financial obligations incurred by the chapter.
 - (2) keep a full and accurate account of receipts and expenditures and shall make a full account at each annual business meeting and upon request at other meetings. The accounts shall be audited annually.
 - (3) collect chapter dues at the beginning of the fiscal year.
- e. The Liaison Officer shall:
 - (1) work for effective participation of chapter members in the business of the National Organization, seeking out capable members who may be recommended for office or for national committees.
 - (2) be the chapter consultant on the National Constitution and Bylaws.
 - (3) if possible, attend the Grand Chapter meeting and assist the chapter president in obtaining chapter delegates to Grand Chapter.
- f. The Director(s) shall (assign duties such as “will serve on such & such committee “ or “shall perform those duties assigned to them by the President”).

Note: continue this list of duties for each elected officer mentioned in Article II, Section 1a.

Section 2. The Executive Committee

- a. shall be empowered to conduct business as requires attention between meetings of the chapter. Such business shall be reported to the members at the next general chapter meeting.
- b. may confer Honorary Chapter membership upon a woman in recognition of outstanding achievements in science or science education.

Section 3. The duties of any appointed positions such as Historian, Editor, etc. will go here; a new section for each position.

ARTICLE V. FINANCE

Section 1. Fiscal Year.

The Fiscal Year shall be that of the National Organization, i.e., July 1 to June 30 of the next year.

Section 2. Chapter Dues.

The amount of chapter dues shall be determined at the Annual Business meeting.

Section 3. Payment of Dues.

- a. National dues are paid directly to the National Office upon receipt of the annual dues notice at the beginning of the fiscal year.
- b. National dues for new members may be given to the chapter treasurer before induction into the chapter.
- c. Chapter dues are paid with the National dues and sent to the National Membership Secretary. She will sent a check to the chapter equal to the total chapter dues for the month.

Section 4. Full Members.

Full members shall pay full chapter dues (see this article, Section 2) and shall have all the rights and

privileges of chapter membership.

Section 5. Graduate Student Members.

Graduate Student members shall *pay (indicate some fraction, if desired, of the full amount)* of the established chapter dues and shall have all the rights and privileges of chapter membership.

Section 6. Emeritus Members.

Emeritus members shall pay *(some fraction of)* the established chapter dues and shall have all rights and privileges of chapter membership.

Section 7. Non-voting Affiliate Members.

Non-voting affiliate members shall *pay (indicate some fraction; it could be 'full' or 'one-half, etc.)* of the established chapter dues.

Section 8. National Life Members.

A member may become a National Life Member by paying a designated amount in one lump sum, as determined by the National Organization.

Section 9. Honorary Members.

- a. National Honorary Members are not required to pay dues to either the National Organization or to the local chapter. They shall have all the rights and privileges of full chapter membership.
- b. Chapter Honorary Members who are active members of Sigma Delta Epsilon, Graduate Women in Science, Inc. need not pay chapter dues and shall have all the rights and privileges of chapter membership. They are required to pay national dues.

Section 10. Contributions.

Sigma Delta Epsilon, Graduate Women in Science, Inc. is organized and operated exclusively for educational and scientific purposes. SDE/GWIS has 5013c status with the Internal Revenue Service. Therefore, the Internal Revenue Code ruling states that "Donors may deduct contributions to you and your exempt subordinate units (chapters) as provided by Section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devices, transfers or gifts to or for your use or to or for the use of your exempt subordinate units are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes under Sections 2055, 2106 and 2522 of the Code."

ARTICLE VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

Any standing or permanent committees that you want to have and that are mentioned in Article II. Government, Section, Committees, should be described here. Make a new Section for each committee. You must say how many members each committee will have, the term, and, briefly, the duties of the committee, e.g.:

Section 1. Membership.

The committee

- a. shall consist of three members, each serving for a term of one year.
- b. The function of this committee shall be to promote the recruitment of new members and the retention of current members.

ARTICLE VIII. PROCEDURES

Procedures and other items not specified in these Bylaws or by the Policies and Procedures of the National Organization shall be in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

An amendment to these bylaws may be proposed by the Executive Committee or any member in good standing:

- a. It shall be presented to the chapter membership at least ____ days before the Annual Business Meeting.
- b. Affirmative votes of the majority of the votes cast by members present or by proxy (*if you have allowed proxy voting*) at the Annual Business Meeting are necessary for adoption of the amendment.
- c. A member in good standing consists of a life member, an honorary member, or paid-up Chapter member.
- d. Amendments to Bylaws must be more difficult to approve than simple meeting questions or motions (a majority approval). A “majority” vote means 50% plus one. There is no such thing as a ‘2/3 majority.’ Therefore it is customary to require at least 2/3 approval of motions to amend the Bylaws. Also, Constitutional amendments must be more difficult to approve than Bylaw amendments, thus:

Item before a meeting for approval	Vote required for approval
simple question or motion	simple majority
Bylaw amendments	2/3 approval
Constitution amendments	3/4 approval

It is also necessary to put a “Notice of Motion to Amend the Bylaws” before the chapter membership a certain number of days before the meeting at which the amendment will be voted on. This gives everyone a chance to consider the motion which will affect the running and functioning of the chapter. So, you can designate “21 days” or “30 days”, etc. It is also customary to vote on Bylaw amendments at the Annual Business Meeting.