

Building Researchers and Innovators in Neuroscience and Society CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 1. NAME

Section 1.

The name of this Texas A&M University student organization shall be, Building Researchers and Innovators in Neuroscience and Society (BRAINS), hereafter referred to as BRAINS.

ARTICLE 2. CHARTER

Section 1.

The Building Researchers and Innovators in Society and Neuroscience was organized on May **, 2015.

ARTICLE 3. PURPOSE AND MISSION

Section 1.

The BRAINS is organized as an association of students for the exclusive purpose of providing advancement to students in the interdisciplinary field of neuroscience.

Section 2.

The Mission of BRAINS is:

To serve as a unifying body promoting collaboration between neuroscientists, to increase neuroscience awareness, and to provide for the professional advancement of Texas A&M neuroscientists.

ARTICLE 4. EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1.

The voting members of the Executive Board shall consist of the President, Vice President, Symposium Chair, Outreach Chair, Extracurricular Chair, Treasurer, SfN Representative TAMU Chapter, TAMIN Delegate to GPSC and Web Master.

Section 2.

Each voting member of the Executive Board also serves as a voting member of the Fiscal Board and Membership Board.

Section 3.

All Executive Board voting privileges from the previous Executive Board are relinquished to the new Executive Board upon the date of transition as specified by the sitting Executive Board. This date shall be no later than the date of the last general meeting of the academic year.

Section 4

New officers will be selected during the spring semester, through an initial nomination process and a final vote. All active BRAINS members will be allowed to nominate and vote to select the new executive board.

Section 5.

The officers of this organization must meet the following requirements:

(a) Have a minimum cumulative and semester grade point ratio (GPR) as stated below and meet that minimum cumulative and semester GPR in the semester immediately prior to the election/appointment, the semester of election/appointment and semesters during the term of office.

1. For undergraduate students, the minimum cumulative and semester GPR is 2.00. In order for this provision to be met, at least six hours (half-time credits) must have been

taken for the semester under consideration. In one limited circumstance, summer semester hours may be applied to this provision. In order for summer coursework to qualify toward a grade point ratio prior to election/appointment, at least six credit hours must have been taken during the course of either the full or two summer session(s).

2. For graduate level students the minimum cumulative and semester GPR is a 3.00 and for first professional students the minimum cumulative and semester GPR is 2.50. In order for this provision to be met, at least four hours (half-time credits) must have been taken for the semester under consideration. In one limited circumstance, summer semester hours may be applied to this provision. In order for summer coursework to qualify toward a grade point ratio prior to election/appointment, at least four credit hours must have been taken during the course of either the full or two summer session(s) unless fewer credits are required as they complete the final stages of their degree.

(b) Be in good standing with the university and enrolled:

1. at least half time (six or more credit hours), if an undergraduate student (unless fewer credits are required to graduate in the spring and fall semesters) during the term of office. Students enrolled in the Blinn TEAM program are also eligible to hold an office, as long as the student is meeting all applicable Blinn TEAM requirements and is in good standing with the program.

2. at least half time (four or more credits), if a graduate level student (unless fewer credits are required in the final stages of their degree as defined by the Continuous Registration Requirement) during their term of office.

(c) Be ineligible to hold an office should the student fail to maintain the requirements as prescribed in (a) and (b)."

Section 6.

Failure to maintain duties of executive board membership is grounds for review by the executive board. Notice will be served to board member, indicating violations. Executive board members may be removed from their position in case of violations per majority vote of the executive board.*

*In the event an executive board member requires a disciplinary vote, the member in question relinquishes their vote to BRAINS advisor.

Section 7.

Purpose of the President:

The president of BRAINS must serve as the primary representative and spokesperson for BRAINS. President will coordinate with executive board of BRAINS and faculty executive committee for TAMIN to ensure proper function of BRAINS and adherence to the founding purpose and mission of the organization.

The responsibilities of the President are to:

- (a) Ensure that the purpose and mission of BRAINS are followed and upheld.
- (b) Report to Executive Committee of the Texas A&M Institute for Neuroscience (TAMIN) as the graduate student representative.
- (c) Establish schedule and call meetings (Executive Board & General meetings).
- (d) Oversee and assist Committee Chair's in specialized projects for BRAINS.
- (e) Assist in planning and hosting of new graduate student recruits for TAMIN.
- (f) Secure speakers for graduate student seminars for TAMIN.
- (g) Attend TAMIN business meetings and relay information to students.

- (h) Organize and Orchestrate new graduate student bootcamp and orientation for TAMIN.

Section 8.

Purpose of the Vice President:

Ensure that lines of communication within BRAINS are maintained and that all official documentation or materials are organized and accounted for.

The responsibilities of the Vice President are to:

- (a) Attend both officer and general meetings, recording minutes for documentation.
- (b) Serve as primary source of notifications to BRAINS members, sending meeting notes and official messages on behalf of officers.
- (c) Receive and manage all emails to BRAINS.
- (d) Ensure all records are organized and accounted for in BRAINS.
- (e) Serve as an assistant to the President as needed.

Section 9.

Purpose of the Symposium Chair:

Plan and coordinate the Annual Neuroscience Symposium which features research from Texas A&M University and the surrounding Universities. Providing events like this is important for helping foster collaborations and innovation across different areas and disciplines. Further, it provides opportunities for undergraduates, graduate and post doctoral student to present their research and hear about the exciting research happening across Texas.

The responsibilities of the Symposium Chair are to:

- (a) Coordinate with BRAINS advisor, Sylvia Bernal, and TAMIN executive Committee to secure funding for and establish event date for annual neuroscience symposium.
- (b) Poll BRAINS members for keynote speaker nominations and ensure that keynote speaker is secured for annual symposium.
- (c) Serve as liaison to keynote speaker, arranging travel accommodations and hosting while in town.
- (d) Establish symposium-planning committee and execute all aspects necessary for planning the event.

Section 10.

Purpose of the Outreach Chair:

The outreach committee was established within BRAINS with the goal of increasing TAMIN participation in the community. As scientists, we have the moral obligation to educate the general public, for the betterment of mankind. To this end, the members of BRAINS generously donate their time and resources in various community outreach events.

The responsibilities of the Outreach Chair are to:

- (a) Ensure BRAINS is visible within the community through positive outreach.
- (b) Organize events to promote education and increase awareness of the broadening field of neuroscience.
- (c) Providing assistance to non-profit organizations (although the Chair may choose any organizations to assist, those related to neuroscience should be given priority).
- (d) Providing assistance within the local scientific community (i.e. helping at local conferences, student research week, gradeschool science fairs, Texas Brain and Spine Institute, Brazos Valley Dementia Conference, local Society for Neuroscience events etc.).

Section 11.

Purpose of the Extracurricular Chair:

Establish a strong social network within BRAINS, fostering an environment where students feel invited to interact outside of their academic pursuits and laboratory responsibilities.

The responsibilities of the Extracurricular Chair are to:

- (a) Plan and organize end of semester banquets and other social functions.
- (b) Maintain social calendar.
- (c) Inform members of nearby events and activities.

Section 12.

Purpose of the Treasurer:

The responsibilities of the Treasurer are to:

- (a) Oversee Fiscal Board meetings.
- (b) Manage all BRAINS financial accounts.
- (c) Organize the overall BRAINS budget based on previous year expenditures.
- (d) Oversee all financial transactions for BRAINS.

Section 13.

Purpose of the Webmaster:

The Webmaster position is intended to keep visibility of BRAINS/TAMIN high and reflecting current information using official websites and social media platforms.

The responsibilities of the Web Master are to:

- (a) Coordinate with executive board and other members to keep the BRAINS/TAMIN websites current.
- (b) Update and edit website.
- (c) Manage social media platforms.

ARTICLE 5. MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Section 1.

Representatives from Texas A&M University shall be selected to fill member-at-large positions through an application/interview process. The maximum number of positions to be filled shall be determined by the Membership Board.

Section 2.

The member-at-large positions should be filled at the beginning of each academic year, no later than four weeks after the first class day.

Section 3.

The Membership Board will determine the application/interview process and choose the new members-at-large.

Section 4.

The Membership Board will ensure confidentiality of the applications during and after the review process.

Section 5.

The responsibilities of members-at-large are:

- (a) To attend mandatory general meetings, not missing more than 2 consecutive meetings in a row,
- (b) To actively participate in at least 60% of BRAINS-sponsored events,
- (c) To refrain from engaging in behavior that reflects unprofessionally on BRAINS,

- (d) And to know and abide by the BRAINS bylaws and constitution,
- (e) To pay the annual membership dues.

Section 6.

Failure to meet the responsibilities of members-at-large may result in loss of BRAINS membership. The member of issue will be provided written notification via e-mail, including the date and time at which the individual's status will be discussed by the Membership Board. At this time, the member will be able to share his perspective with the Board and request probation, as opposed to removal. Loss of membership will be voted upon by the Membership Board.

ARTICLE 6. MEETINGS

Section 1.

General meetings are to be held the first Thursday of every month following TAMIN Seminar series unless otherwise specified by the Executive Board.

Section 2.

Regular meeting dates will be set by the Executive Board.

Section 3.

In order to be considered active members, members may not miss more than two consecutive general meetings. Excused absences will not count towards "missed" meetings. The validity of an excuse is determined by the Membership Board via vote.

ARTICLE 7. FISCAL POLICY

Section 1.

Each BRAINS-sponsored event shall submit a budget by the organizing chair prior to the event. The Fiscal Board shall then amend the budget and allocate funds as necessary.

Section 2.

Budgetary amendments (e.g. requests for additional funding) shall be submitted to the Fiscal Board for approval.

Section 3.

Approval of budgetary amendments by the Fiscal Board requires a majority vote. A Fiscal Board Member may not vote on his/her own budget.

ARTICLE 8. FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

Section 1.

All monies belonging to this organization shall be deposited and distributed through a bank account established for this organization at the Student Organization Finance Center (SOFC), the Texas A&M Foundation, and the TAMU Fiscal Office. All funds must be deposited within twenty-four (24) hours after collection. The advisor to this organization must approve each expenditure before payment.

ARTICLE 9. ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUG POLICY

Section 1.

BRAINS members are to abide by the Alcohol Policy established by Appendix VIII, Section II, of the University Student Rules for Student Organizations.

Section 2.

BRAINS is not to be affiliated with alcohol or illegal drugs in any way whatsoever (exceptions listed in Section 4).

Section 3.

Alcohol and illegal drug affiliation includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) The promotion, advertisement, or distribution of alcohol or illegal drugs at any BRAINS-related event,
- (b) The provision of alcohol to a minor at any BRAINS-related event,
- (c) And the wearing of official BRAINS-affiliated apparel while consuming alcohol or illegal drugs.

Section 4.

BRAINS members of legal drinking age may consume alcohol responsibly during social events after formal BRAINS business and responsibilities are completed. Temporary Alcohol Policies for additional events not explicitly outlined in these exceptions must fall within University Student Rules and be submitted to the Executive Board for approval at least one week prior to the event or event registration, where applicable; any event that has alcohol use identified as a risk through the Student Activities Risk Management "Pre-Event Planning Form" should submit a policy.

Section 5.

BRAINS-related events include:

- (a) BRAINS-sponsored events,
- (b) Personal events discussed or promoted at BRAINS events or meetings, or on the BRAINS listserv/email/website.

Section 6.

Violation of the Alcohol and Illegal Drug Policy, as determined by the Executive Board, could result in the following:

- (a) Immediate loss of BRAINS membership
- (b) Report to University and local police (when applicable)

ARTICLE 10. MEMBER DUES

Section 1.

BRAINS members dues are to be \$10 per academic year regardless of the collection date.

Section 2.

Members have to pay the annual membership dues to be considered active BRAINS members.

Section 3.

Member dues may not be increased, decreased, or otherwise changed without a bylaws amendment.

ARTICLE 11. BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

Section 1.

All amendments to the Bylaws shall be conducted on a one-vote-per-member basis with a two-thirds majority necessary to pass all changes. Only active members are considered for official voting purposes. To be considered active, members must not have missed more than 2 consecutive meetings in a row without valid excuse, must have paid their annual membership dues, and must have participated in 60% or more of BRAINS sponsored events.

Section 2.

The Bylaws act as the BRAINS constitution with respect to the Department of Student Activities. The BRAINS constitution is reviewed annually by and subject to approval of the Department of Student Activities.

ARTICLE 12. ADVISOR EXPECTATIONS

Section 1.

An advisor for BRAINS must be a full or part-time faculty or staff employee at Texas A&M or a local system agency and affiliated with Texas A&M Institute for Neuroscience in order to serve in the advisor role. Once selected and approved through STUACT the advisor will need to complete the annual advisor training (which includes the completion of the Acknowledgement of Advisor Expectations).

Section 2.

The Advisor for BRAINS is responsible for providing council and assisting in directing organizational functions and activities in accordance with the mission and purpose of BRAINS. Other duties entail but are not limited to:

- a) Monthly review and reconciliation of BRAINS spending and SOFC account.
- b) Reviewing and acknowledging required forms with signature of approval.