

# **University of British Columbia Biomedical Engineering Graduate Association (BMEGA) Constitution**

## **Revision History**

Original Version Ratified:                      October 19, 2011  
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## **Definitions**

In this document:

- "UBC" refers to the University of British Columbia.
- "SBME" refers to the School of Biomedical Engineering at UBC.
- "BMEGA" refers to the Biomedical Engineering Graduate Association.
- "Membership" refers to all persons defined in Article III.
- "Graduate Student" refers to M.Eng, M.A.Sc and Ph.D students.
- "Executive" refers to the elected body representing BMEGA's members

## **Article I – Name**

The name of the Association is "Biomedical Engineering Graduate Association" or BMEGA.

## **Article II – Purpose**

1. To act ethically as an autonomous group, in the service of and accountable to the students in the Membership. In this, we recognize the diversity of Biomedical Engineering at UBC and the graduate students studying it. BMEGA will strive to equally represent everyone studying towards MEng, MASc, and PhD degrees, in numerous sub-fields of Biomedical Engineering, on several campuses in the Vancouver area.
2. To improve the quality of the academic, professional, and social experience of the Membership while at UBC.
3. To provide an official channel of feedback and communication between SBME faculty and administration at UBC and the students enrolled in the same program.
4. To officially represent and advocate the interests of the Membership to various university and external organizations. In addition to the SBME, this includes (but is not limited to) SBME-affiliated engineering departments at UBC, the Faculty of Applied Science and Faculty of Medicine at UBC, the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at UBC, the Graduate Student Society at UBC, the Alma Mater Society at UBC, and the Biomedical Engineering Industry in the Greater Vancouver Area.
5. To encourage awareness, collaboration, and sharing of resources between students working on Biomedical Engineering research.
6. To provide opportunities for our Membership to give back to the community, particularly in ways that use our skills and knowledge in Biomedical Engineering.

7. To provide awareness and support of Biomedical Engineering as a distinct, multi-disciplinary field, where our Membership is united not only in interest, but also the values and objectives that compel us to undertake these studies.

### **Article III – Membership**

1. Ordinary Members
  - a. All full-time and part-time graduate students in the SBME are automatically granted Membership to BMEGA.
  - b. Membership is discontinued when a Member is no longer a registered full-time or part-time graduate student in the SBME.
2. SBME-Affiliated Members
  - a. Graduate students in all departments of UBC who self-identify as working on Biomedical Engineering related projects/research can be a SBME-Affiliated Member upon registering with BMEGA.
  - b. SBME-Affiliated Membership must be renewed annually.
  - c. SBME-Affiliated Members can be from the Departments of Mechanical, Electrical, Chemical and Biological, and Materials Engineering. Members from other programs may be admitted at the discretion of the BMEGA Executive.
  - d. Membership fees may be collected from SBME-Affiliated Members at the discretion of the Executive and SBME Program Director to complement funding the SBME program gives for Ordinary Members.
3. External Members
  - a. External Members are Members of BMEGA who are not graduate students at UBC, such as representatives from industry or academia.
  - b. External Membership should be reviewed annually, and can be revoked at the discretion of the BMEGA Executive.
  - c. External Members do not have voting privileges.
  - d. External Members are invited to participate in selected BMEGA events and services. Participation may be restricted at the discretion of the BMEGA Executive, particularly to subsidized events.
  - e. External Members are not eligible to vote for or be elected to the Executive.

### **Article IV – Executive**

1. The Executive comprises of the President, the SBME Program Liaison, and Council (comprising of six Councillors).
  - a. Executive Members are expected to attend meetings and assist with events of the BMEGA whenever possible.
  - b. Executive Members are encouraged to not seek re-election for the same position if another Member is running for that position.

- c. Elections for the Executive are by preferential ballot, where the order of election is President, SBME Program Liaison, then Council.
- 2. President:
  - a. Eligibility: Due to the duty of the BMEGA as official representation of SBME students and in recognition of SBME funding the BMEGA, the President must be a SBME student.
  - b. Process: The President is elected by preferential ballot with first priority. All Ordinary and SBME-Affiliated Members are eligible to vote for the President.
  - c. Duties:
    - i. Coordinate all business of BMEGA.
    - ii. Maintain and uphold the Constitution of BMEGA.
    - iii. Represent the interest of BMEGA to all external groups, or appoint a representative on BMEGA's behalf.
    - iv. Call and chair meetings of BMEGA.
    - v. Call elections annually.
    - vi. Be responsible for or delegate responsibilities for any business deemed important to the interests of the BMEGA that is not otherwise assigned in Article IV of this Constitution, including appointing a Member to perform the duties of a vacant position.
    - vii. Have signing authority to make financial agreements in the interest of the BMEGA (two signatures required on financial agreements).
- 3. SBME Program Liaison
  - a. Eligibility: Due to the duty of the position as official representation of SBME students to the SBME, the SBME Program Liaison must be a SBME student.
  - b. Process: The SBME Program Liaison is elected by preferential ballot with second priority (after the President). Only Ordinary Members (enrolled in the SBME) are eligible to vote for the SBME Program Liaison.
  - c. Duties:
    - i. Chair meetings when the President is absent.
    - ii. Act as President in the event the President position is vacated or in prolonged absence of the President.
    - iii. Elicit feedback from graduate students in the SBME on issues such as curriculum and facilities available to SBME Program students.
    - iv. Present this feedback from SBME graduate students to the BMEGA Executive and the SBME administration.
    - v. Attend faculty feedback sessions. Coordinate and encourage meetings between students and the SBME administration to make issues known.
    - vi. Inform the BMEGA Executive and BMEGA Membership of updates from the SBME administration.
- 4. Council
  - a. Eligibility: Ordinary and SBME-affiliated BMEGA Members are eligible to run for Council.

- b. Process: The council is an elected body of five Councillors by Ordinary and SBME-Affiliate Members, in addition to any elected Members-at-Large. Positions within the Council shall be decided amongst the Council. Disagreements among position assignment shall be settled by the President.
  - c. In the event of resignation or prolonged absence of both the President and SBME Program Liaison, the Council shall appoint a SBME Graduate Student to act as President.
5. Positions of the Council
- a. Secretary, who shall:
    - i. Coordinate communications of the BMEGA, including maintaining the BMEGA's website, membership/ mailing list, and new student handbook/ wiki
    - ii. Keep meeting minutes.
    - iii. Have signing authority to make financial agreements in the interest of the BMEGA (two signatures required on financial agreements).
  - b. Treasurer, who shall:
    - i. Maintain BMEGA finances, including reporting of these finances to the BMEGA Executive.
    - ii. Be responsible for the BMEGA annual budget.
    - iii. Arrange BMEGA purchases, reimbursements, and payments.
    - iv. Have signing authority to make financial agreements in the interest of the BMEGA (two signatures required on financial agreements).
  - c. Social Coordinator, who shall:
    - i. Plan and coordinate events of a social and community-building nature for the BMEGA membership, and delegate volunteer work for these events.
    - ii. Seek to engage both SBME and SBME Affiliated students, and possibly other allied health groups including, but not limited to Medical students, Occupational Therapy students, and Biomedical/Pre-Med Engineering Undergraduate students.
  - d. Industry Liaison, who shall:
    - i. Plan and coordinate events where industry is invited (in collaboration with Social Coordinator).
    - ii. Develop and maintain contacts between BMEGA and industry.
    - iii. Seek opportunity for industry sponsorship of BMEGA and BMEGA events.
  - e. Undergraduate Liaison, who shall:
    - i. Develop and maintain communication between the Executive and undergraduate Biomedical Engineering organizations at UBC to further entities' interests as described in their respective constitutions or equivalentents.
    - ii. Maintain and facilitate contact between BMEGA and the undergraduate SBME student council (here known as BMEUSA).
    - iii. Facilitate and seek opportunity for collaboration between BMEGA, BMEUSA, and other Biomedical Engineering enterprises.

- f. Member-At-Large, who shall:
  - i. Assist other Executives with their profiles, when required.
  - ii. Hold a particular position and title (ie Sports Rep, Webmaster) with agreement of the Executive in response to changing needs of the BMEGA.

## **Article V – Elections**

1. Elections for the Executive positions shall be called annually by the President, with no more than fifteen months passing between general elections.
2. Transfer of position to the newly elected Executive shall be two weeks after the date of election.
3. Call for nominations of candidates to the Executive shall be made at least two weeks before the election.
4. The deadline for nominations shall be at least one week before the election date to allow planning for online ballot preparation.
5. An existing Member of the Executive may be re-elected, but are encouraged to seek a new position.
6. The President shall appoint a Member to administrate the election. This Member must not be running for any position.
7. Effort shall be made to recruit candidates representative of the diversity of the Membership, as per Article II Item 1 and Article III.
8. There must be an opportunity to vote at both at UBC's Point Grey campus and Vancouver General Hospital, unless the election is held through online ballot.
9. The candidate for a position shall be selected by preferential ballot, as implemented by the UBC AMS voting platform, for the position they have been nominated for. Each position must include the option to abstain or reject the nominees.

## **Article VI – Meetings**

1. The Executive should meet at least monthly.
2. All meetings are open to attendance by the Membership, and it is encouraged to invite representative students of SBME should issues or concerns pertaining to BMEGA arise.
3. Only Executive Members may vote on issues debated in Executive meetings.
4. A motion is considered to have passed if there are no objections to it.
5. Objections to a motion leads to a vote, a 50% plus 1 majority of the Executive present at the meeting will allow it to pass, unless another value for the motion is stated in this Constitution (for example, for Executive Removal). The meeting chair person does not vote except to settle a tie.

## **Article VII – Formal Removal from Executive**

1. Executive Members are expected to act with honesty, integrity, and in the best interest of the Membership.
2. A motion may be put in place to remove an Executive Member from his or her position, on grounds such as, but not limited to, theft from the BMEGA, excessive unexcused absence, or failure to fulfill his or her Executive duties.
3. This motion requires a 70% majority of the Executive to pass.
4. Any Executive can be recalled through a petition signed by 30% of the Membership.

#### **Article VIII – Amendments**

1. This Constitution may be modified by 70% agreement of the BMEGA Executive and approval of the SBME Program Director.
2. If six of the BMEGA Executive cannot agree on a proposed amendment, a referendum with the membership can be held.
3. For the referendum to pass, a 2/3rd majority of voters and a quorum of 20% of the voting-eligible Membership is required for the motion of amendment.
4. In the exceptional case that the Constitution has not been updated over the course of the past three years, only parts 1. and 2. of this article must apply. An update invoking this rule must be consistent with the principles in Article IX.

#### **Article IX – Interpretation of this Constitution**

1. Any issues not defined by or deemed ambiguous within this constitution shall be decided by vote within Executive, with a 67% majority required to accept a proposed interpretation of the Constitution.
2. No part of this Constitution may be construed in a sense that is against the objectives of the BMEGA, including but not limited to items in Article II of this Constitution.
3. BMEGA Executive and Members are expected to abide by and defend the principles and spirit of this Constitution.