

## **SSE Graduate Student Advisory Council Structural Plan**

The main goal of the SSE Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC) is to represent the interests of SSE's graduate student membership to the SSE Council and vice versa. Graduate students represent 40% of SSE's membership, and as such, have a vested interest in SSE's overall direction and planned initiatives. GSAC members network with SSE student members, liaise between Council and graduate student membership, and facilitate interactions between SSE faculty and graduate student members. The GSAC will provide a sense of community, and a source of information, for graduate students and postdocs in evolutionary biology during their graduate career and upon making career transitions.

### **GSAC Structure**

- The GSAC will consist of 6 members, with two new members added each odd-numbered year, and three members added each even-numbered year.
- Each regular member will serve a two-year term, beginning and ending January 1. Members selected to act as Chair will serve a three-year term.
- A senior GSAC member will serve as GSAC Chair. A junior member will be selected to be the Chair-Elect and serve as Chair during their second year. Former Chairs will serve one year as Past Chair to provide institutional memory and help train new members.
- The GSAC Chair and Past-Chair will serve as voting members on SSE Council [pending November 2017 amendment to the SSE constitution]. Two votes are given to GSAC to better approximate the proportion of SSE graduate student members on SSE's Council. When possible, the GSAC voting members will confer with the rest of GSAC before voting to best represent graduate student voices.
- The GSAC should hold their own meetings, whether in person or through Skype or similar electronic communication, as often as they deem necessary.

### **GSAC member application and selection process**

- A call for GSAC applications will be emailed to graduate student membership and posted on SSE social media no later than March 1 of each year.
- To be considered for GSAC membership, applicants will submit a maximum one-page statement of interest and a CV to [GSAC@evolutionsociety.org](mailto:GSAC@evolutionsociety.org) by April 15 of each year.
- The GSAC will choose new members. With several criteria in mind (listed below in "GSAC member requirements"), new members will be selected based on enthusiasm, experience, and novel ideas proposed in their statements of interest. Skype or in-person interviews at the Evolution meeting may be requested in order to decide between top candidates and assess potential fit.

- GSAC members cannot serve consecutive terms. However, former GSAC members shall be eligible to serve a second term one year after the expiration of their previous term.

### **GSAC member requirements**

- GSAC members must be graduate students or postdocs.
- GSAC members must be graduate students at time of application, at least one year into their PhD program.
- GSAC members should be outgoing, organized, and have demonstrated leadership skills. GSAC members are expected to respond to SSE and GSAC communication within a reasonable period of time.
- GSAC members must be able to respectfully communicate with graduate students from diverse locations and diverse backgrounds.
- GSAC members will make a reasonable effort to attend both summer meetings during their terms.
- GSAC members will make every effort to represent diversity in the following categories:
  - institution rank/size
  - locality (North American/non-North American)
  - ethnicity/gender
  - research focus/career stage
- Although their official term doesn't start until January 1st, all new members will be included on GSAC internal correspondence starting after the summer meeting.

### **Guidelines for GSAC interaction with SSE Council**

- The Chair, Past Chair, and Chair-Elect will attend SSE Council mid-year and summer meetings. Expenses for the annual meeting will be paid up-front by individuals and reimbursed after the annual meeting by the EVP. SSE will reimburse coach-class travel, lodging, registration, and banquet ticket. Travel and lodging expenses for the midyear meeting are reimbursed by the publisher of Evolution.
- SSE Council will cover the meeting registration fee for all regular GSAC members attending the summer meeting in addition to a \$500 travel reimbursement.
- The GSAC Chair will act as the locus of communication between SSE Council and the GSAC.
- To facilitate GSAC participation and understanding of SSE's long-term objectives, all GSAC members will receive meeting documents from SSE Council meetings.
- GSAC should review this structural document every January, and revisions must be approved by a majority vote of GSAC. If the document is revised, it will be presented at the mid-year meeting for SSE Council comments.

## Guidelines for GSAC interaction with SSE student members

- GSAC members should always bear in mind that they represent SSE to the SSE membership.
- GSAC members must be open and available for communication with SSE membership.
- GSAC members should convey SSE news to SSE student members in a timely manner.
- GSAC members should provide, maintain and encourage activity in electronic and in-person forums that facilitate communication among SSE student members and prospective SSE members.
- SSE student member newsletters will be sent through the SSE Membership Coordinator (currently Heather Cacanindin).

Regular newsletters, drafted by the GSAC Chair and edited by the GSAC, should be sent to SSE student members. Content should include, for example, upcoming award application or conference deadlines, SSE news items, reminders to vote in SSE Council elections, and social or professional opportunities. It is recommended that the GSAC develop a regular student member newsletter schedule. Newsletters should be sent at least quarterly, at the following times:

- 1) **Winter**: immediately following the mid-year meeting, announcing news items or new initiatives undertaken by SSE Council during the mid-year meeting, and reminding students of upcoming award application deadlines;
- 2) **Spring**: upcoming conference registration deadlines and social/professional opportunities;
- 3) **Summer**: prior to the June Evolution meeting, reminding students of the SSE Student-Mentor mixer, workshops, and other opportunities during the meeting;
- 4) **Fall**: thanking students for a great Evolution meeting, any survey results, new initiatives, news items, professional/social opportunities, encouragement to vote in upcoming SSE officer elections.

## Suggested roles for GSAC members

- The Chair, Past Chair, and Chair-Elect will represent student interests during attendance of SSE Council meetings (both mid-year and June).
- The GSAC Chair's duties include: drafting and facilitating communication between the GSAC and SSE graduate student/postdoc membership; facilitating communication between the GSAC and SSE Council; drafting proposals for yearly meetings; organizing new GSAC initiatives; and attending SSE Council meetings. The Chair-Elect is expected to shadow and assist the Chair in these activities in preparation for assuming the role in the following year. The Past-Chair will assist the Chair and Chair-Elect as needed.
- GSAC members should be willing to participate in SSE Teaching or Professional Development workshops, as fits with their interests and abilities to attend these events.

- At least one student will be responsible for organizing and operating the Evolution meeting SSE Student-Mentor Mixer, as well as any other networking events of the GSAC's choosing.
- Three GSAC members will assist in reading Rosemary Grant Award applications. Prior to application submission, these students are responsible for notifying the SSE North American Vice President of their intention to contribute.
- Two GSAC members will be responsible for maintenance and contribution to SSE and GSAC Twitter and Facebook accounts.
- The GSAC will support the Diversity Committee's work to organize an event focused on diversity in science at the yearly Evolution meeting.
- Other GSAC roles may be defined as determined by either SSE Council or the GSAC itself.

### **Rules of Succession**

GSAC members must be actively enrolled in a graduate program or employed as postdoctoral associates, and are expected to carry out the duties outlined in this structural document. Should a GSAC member resign or be found by a majority decision of the other GSAC members to be severely negligent of their duties as outlined in the GSAC member requirements above, the following procedure will go into effect:

- Should a Chair be unable to perform their duties, the Chair-Elect and Past Chair will act as co-Chairs.
- Should a Chair-Elect be unable to perform their duties, another member of the Chair-Elect's cohort will be named Chair-Elect.
- If a non-Chair leaves GSAC with a year or more remaining on their term, GSAC can decide to hold either a special application process to fill the vacancy, or add an additional member through the regular April application process as appropriate.

Should a dispute arise in the course of a negligent member being removed from GSAC, the SSE EVP will act as an arbiter to come to a resolution.