

*The Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Graduate Student Association (EGSA) represents the graduate students across all three University of Toronto campuses and the Royal Ontario Museum in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB).*

### **EGSA Membership**

The entire EEB graduate student body shall be members of the EGSA and shall be represented by an elected executive body called the EGSA Executive Committee.

### **Mission Statement**

The purpose of the EGSA Executive Committee shall be:

1. To create unity among the graduate students of the EEB Department
2. To promote dialogue between the graduate students within the EEB Department, and with the graduate students in our sister department, the Department of Cell and Systems Biology
3. To act as a liaison between the graduate students and departmental staff for discussions, planning, and general communication
4. To represent the graduate student perspective on issues that will directly impact their graduate school experience, such as funding, hiring, and space allocation
5. To keep the graduate students informed about events in the EEB Department, both intra-curricular and extra-curricular, particularly events that directly concern them
6. To assist in the planning of social, recreational, and other events in the EEB Department
7. To participate in and encourage any activity which will further these aims and enrich the graduate student experience as a whole

### **EGSA Executive Committee**

The EGSA Executive Committee shall be comprised of one President or two Co-Presidents, one Secretary, one Treasurer, one Graduate Student Union (GSU) Representative, one CUPE Representative, two Ombudspersons (one male, one female). These positions are to be elected for one calendar year, and must be filled by current EEB graduate students.

The EGSA President or Co-Presidents **must** be elected. If two or more EEB graduate students are nominated to the position of the President of the EGSA, they can either (a) run against each other in the subsequent election, or (b) chose to share the position and run to be elected as Co-Presidents. The Treasurer, GSU Representative, CUPE Representative, and Ombudspersons may be appointed by the President or Co-Presidents if:

1. No EGSA members are nominated for this position, and
2. No EGSA members oppose the appointment. (If there is opposition, then an election must be held for the position.)

Executive officers may be recalled by two-thirds majority of the student body.

The EGSA Executive Committee shall meet at frequent intervals through the year, as found necessary.

The duties of the members of the EGSA Executive Committee shall be:

**1. Presidents or Co-Presidents**

- Organize(s) and chair(s) the EGSA meetings
- Ensures that all EGSA meetings are advertised at least four days in advance to all EGSA members
- Act(s) as principal liaison between the EGSA and the departmental administration and faculty
- Organize(s) the annual EGSA elections
- Help(s) organize and coordinate all EGSA activities
- Have/has signing authority along with the Treasurer (the signature of the Presidents or one of the Co-Presidents and the Treasurer are mandatory for legitimate signing authority)
- Ensure(s) that all EGSA members are informed of all EGSA activities through meetings and email correspondence

**2. Treasurer**

- Ensures that all EGSA money is deposited in the EGSA bank account
- Ensures that petty cash is balanced and accounted for
- Has signing authority along with the President or Co-Presidents
- Presents budget proposals at the EGSA general meetings, to be approved by the majority (51%) of a quorum assembly of the EGSA
- Presents an annual financial statement at the end of his/her term of the membership

**3. Secretary**

- Keeps written minutes for EGSA meetings
- Sends minutes to EEB graduate students following EGSA meetings
- Assists with organizing EGSA and departmental events
- Attends faculty meetings, when necessary

**4. GSU Representative(s)**

- Attends the monthly GSU meetings
- Keeps the EGSA membership informed of GSU issues and developments through EGSA meetings and email correspondence

**5. CUPE Representative(s)**

- Attends the CUPE union meetings
- Keeps the EGSA membership informed of CUPE issues and developments through EGSA meetings and email correspondence

**6. Ombudspersons (*one male, one female*)**

- Contact person for students who wish to confidentially address a serious conflict between him/her and his/her supervisor, fellow lab member, or other member of the department
- Confidentially help the student obtain support from appropriate groups, such as the EEB Graduate Coordinator, SGS, CUPE3202, GSU, etc., as required

#### **7. ROM, UTM & UTSC Representatives**

- Link to co-presidents and social representatives on campus activities
- Help to plan, organize, and advertise tri-campus social events
- Help to organize student seminars
- Help to provide connectivity between the campuses via video-conferencing
- Encourage intra-departmental interaction, especially among new students

#### **8. Social Representatives**

- Helps to plan and organize departmental parties with co-presidents
- Plans, organizes, and advertises monthly social events
- Coordinates parties and social events with those occurring in the EEB department, and help to plan, organize and advertise cross-departmental social events, as necessary
- Attends GSU sports meetings, and organize sports teams and events, as desired by the EGSA membership

#### **9. Student Seminars & Journal Club Representative(s)**

- Organizes the EEB student seminars and journal club for the fall and winter terms (the two alternate on a biweekly schedule)
- Ensures that there is a presenter lined up at the beginning of each term
- Runs the listserv (with a faculty sponsor)

#### **10. Good Food Box Representative(s)**

- Organizes the Good Food Box program for the year (a food share program)
- Collects the order and money weekly in the fall and winter terms (biweekly in the spring/summer)
- Ideally, one representative from ESC and one representative from RW

#### **11. Information Technologies Representative(s)**

- Updates the EGSA webpage, as required
- Attends Information Technology Committee meetings
- Answers students IT-related questions

#### **12. Fundraising Representative(s)**

- Organizes EGSA fundraising activities, particularly Holiday Charity Raffle
- Assists Interdepartmental Representatives in planning and organizing cross-departmental fundraising initiatives

#### **13. Graduate Studies Representative(s)**

- Attends and represents the interests of graduate students at departmental Graduate Studies Committee meetings.

- Keeps the EGSA membership informed of issues and developments regarding graduate funding, course requirements, conference funding, caps on graduate student numbers, via EGSA meetings and email correspondence
- Informs the EGSA membership of helpful academic resources outside of EEB (e.g., SGS workshops)
- Attends departmental space committee meetings pertaining to graduate student space, and voices popular opinion of graduate student body for space needs
- Provides graduate student with general meeting minutes

#### **14. Health and Safety Representative(s)**

- Attends annual departmental safety meeting and reports
- Organizes annual departmental safety meeting

#### **15. Undergraduate Affairs Representative**

- Attend meetings of Undergraduate Affairs Committee (about six 1.5-hour meetings Sept to Apr; three each in fall and winter terms)
- Provide student input on undergraduate issues such as courses, programs, policies and procedures.

### **Departmental Seminar Representatives**

If a graduate student representative is needed on a departmental committee, ad hoc representative positions can be created for up to one year. New standing representative positions must be created via Constitutional Amendment.

### **General Meetings**

General meetings shall be held:

1. Monthly from September through April, with at least one weeks notice to EGSA members
2. At times and locations convenient to EGSA members, determined by the members of the EGSA Executive Committee

Quorum shall consist of 15% of the EGSA members or 20 members, whichever is the lesser. Voting majority shall be defined as 51% or more of the EGSA members present.

### **Elections Process**

The EGSA President or Co-Presidents will call EGSA elections in April of each year. The elections process is as follows, with the duration of each stage in ().

1. Nominations for EGSA Co-Presidents and Treasurer are mandatory via anonymous online survey. Graduate students are allowed to nominate either themselves or their fellow colleagues. To nominate, each individual will be asked to provide a short description as to why they think the nominee should be elected for the position. These

(anonymous) comments will then be used during the elections as background information on each nominee. (One week)

2. After nominations, the current Co-Presidents will inform the nominees but will not be approaching each individual to ask if they would like proceed/withdraw at this stage. If a nominee feels extremely strongly against being in the elections (e.g., writing dissertation), they can contact the current Co-Presidents to withdraw. (Three days)
3. Elections are mandatory via anonymous online survey. Background information on each nominee will be provided (see Step 1). Elections will occur via preferential voting/ranked ballots. (One week)
4. After elections, the current Co-Presidents will then approach the nominees with the highest number of votes moving down the list until the positions are filled. At this stage, the nominee can either accept or refuse the position.
5. A final meeting will be held to announce the new EGSA Co-Presidents and Treasurer.

All EGSA members are eligible to be nominated for any elected position. Nominations and elections shall be held by online secret ballot, with details accessible only by the EGSA President or Co-Presidents.

### **Endorsement Process**

EGSA does not endorse academic, financial, or social matters that do not directly affect EGSA and/or Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.

EGSA can endorse academic, financial, or social matters that directly affect EGSA and/or Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, provided the endorsement is put forward by an EGSA member.

Endorsements put forward by EGSA members to EGSA executives will be handled in the following manner, with the duration of each stage in ().

1. Proposed endorsements will be voted on via anonymous online survey as soon as possible or within a week, if permitted (One Week)
2. If 2/3 majority of those participating are in favour of the endorsement, EGSA as a whole will publicly endorse the item put forward.

CUPE and GSU representatives have full discretion in voting on matters that affect EGSA and Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at their respective meetings.

### **Atwood Lecturer Selection**

All graduate students are able to nominate potential speakers (any senior scientist in the field of ecology and evolution) to the Atwood Lecturer Committee Chair(s) and/or the EGSA President or Co-Presidents. Nominations should be accompanied with a short description of the candidate and why they would make a good Atwood Lecturer.

The Atwood Lecturer selection process involves appointment of an Atwood search committee (6-8 members, voluntary appointment) to vet the nominated candidates.

The following is a list of criteria developed and used by the selection committee to generate the Atwood shortlist. For each nominee, the committee considers:

1. Seminar delivery quality
2. Whether she/he was easy to talk to, in student meetings and otherwise
3. General appeal to both ecologists and evolutionary biologists
4. Whether she/he was actively publishing
5. Major academic awards
6. Authorship of scholarly books
7. Citation record
8. Seniority and perspective
9. Whether the nominee recently gave a talk to our department

This will lead to a shortlist of candidates and their associated career profiles. Then all graduate students will then be asked to vote for their favourite candidate from the search committee's shortlist.

The issue of gender quality in selecting the Atwood Lecturer shall be raised each year prior to the selection process. Current EGSA members shall determine how to proceed in rectifying potential gender-bias annually.

### **Funds**

The EGSA funds, which include a head grant from the GSU and profits from fundraising activities, shall be used only in a manner that benefits the majority of the EEB graduate students, according to the discretion of the EGSA and subject to its approval. Should the EGSA at any time cease to exist, the future of funds shall be decided upon at a general meeting. Any corruption discovered in the EGSA will result in immediate elimination of the entire EGSA Executive Committee and the calling of elections of a new EGSA Executive Committee.

### **Constitutional Amendment**

The constitution of the EGSA may be amended at any time by a two-thirds majority of the EGSA members attending a general meeting. Any changes to the constitution must be reported to the GSU for ratification. Both amendments and ratification can be processed through email, as long as all correspondences are forwarded to the EGSA Executive Committee.

*Written: March 1, 2006*

*Last Amended: August 23, 2012*