

Doctoral Student Organization:

Constitution

School of Social Work

University of Pittsburgh

**NAME:**

This organization shall herein be called "Doctoral Student Organization" and abbreviated "DSO" in all further correspondence and representation.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this DSO is to support and enhance the academic achievement of social work doctoral students throughout their tenure at the University of Pittsburgh by providing a forum for scholarly presentations, collegial support, free exchange of ideas, and discussion of critical issues related to the social work doctoral program.

**ACTIVITIES:**

DSO will consist primarily of bimonthly meetings, where discussion will ensue surrounding programmatic issues with the social work doctoral program, recent advances in scholarly work produced by the membership, and current obstacles and problems the membership is facing in contributing to the social work scientific knowledge base. No less than four (4) times a year, scholars in the field of social work and related disciplines will present to the membership critical issues in social work science and practice, to facilitate the academic growth of the membership.

**MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS:**

Full members of DSO are required to be currently enrolled in either the full-time or part-time University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work doctoral program. Requirements of associate members are described below. As per the University of Pittsburgh, the DSO will not engage in discrimination of membership on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a disabled veteran.

**FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS:**

There are no financial obligations of current DSO members, nor are there any financial requirements for joining DSO.

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP:**

Social work faculty and alumni of the University of Pittsburgh may participate in the meetings and activities of this organization but may not vote, hold office, or serve in formal leadership positions. No more than two (2) faculty at the School of Social Work may serve as associate members during any given academic year. Associate members are required to be present during at least one (1) membership meeting throughout the course of the academic year.

## **MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES:**

Recruitment of membership will be done by informing new social work doctoral students of DSO, its purposes, and meetings through pamphlets provided to new doctoral students during student orientation. Members will be able to join throughout the year. All social work doctoral students who express interest in becoming a member of DSO will be accepted into the membership.

Membership privileges will cease upon the following conditions: (1) graduation or termination of the social work doctoral program, (2) violation of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, or (3) any scientific misconduct including but not limited to falsification of data, purposeful misrepresentation of scientific findings, or plagiarism. In the case of the first condition, members will be given the option of automatically becoming associate members of the DSO.

## **VOTING PRIVILEGES:**

Voting privileges are limited to active student members in good standing with DSO. Only full members will have voting privileges. Voting privileges will be revoked upon termination of membership following the circumstances described above.

## **OFFICERS:**

The DSO will contain the following three officers, each with their respective functions. The president of DSO will be responsible for directing the activities of DSO based on feedback and input from other officers and the membership. The vice president of DSO will be responsible for assisting the president in directing the activities of DSO and obtaining input from the membership about the activities of DSO. During the absence of the president, the vice president will assume full presidential authority over the organization. The business manager will be responsible for maintaining and managing funding from the university and budgeting those funds for DSO activities.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

Officers will be elected at the end of each fall term. Individuals of the membership who are interesting in becoming officers for the future term will be required to submit their name to the president or vice president in order to appear on the electoral ballot no later than October 31 of each year. Individuals from the membership will receive ballots at second DSO meeting in November, and will be asked to return the anonymous ballots to the president or vice president prior to the next meeting. Each member will have only one vote, and may not vote for themselves. Members will not be required to vote. Simple majority will determine the outcome of the election. In the case of a tie, the president will make the final decision for the election. The outcome of the election will be announced at the first DSO meeting in December. Only full members in good standing with DSO will have voting privileges. Only full members in good standing will be eligible to run for office. No officer may hold more than one DSO position in a given academic year. Absentee ballots may be cast by mail or email, but voting may not be performed by proxy.

**TERMS OF OFFICE:**

Officer terms run from January 1 to January 1 of the following year. Officers may not be elected for a second term for the same officer position.

**REMOVAL OF OFFICERS:**

Officers may be removed either by consensus of the membership (excluding officers), or by consensus of the current officers. In the event of disagreement between the membership and the current officers, the vote of the membership will be favored.

**VOTING POWERS OF OFFICERS:**

All officers will have the same voting privileges as full members. However, any ties during voting procedures will be resolved by the president's vote.

**VACANCIES:**

Vacant officer positions will be filled by ad hoc elections following the same election process described above. Officers who are elected mid-term will be allowed to compete for future officer positions for the following term.

**COMMITTEES:**

Ad hoc committees will be created as needed, and will consist of full and associate members interested in the purpose and function of the committee. There will be no standing committees of DSO.

**MEETINGS:**

DSO will meet on a bimonthly basis. This meeting may be attended by full and associate members only. Quorum for conducting business will require that all officers be present. Special meetings may be called by the president, provided that at least a weeks notice has been issued to the membership. The president will act as chairperson for the meetings. In the absence of the president, the vice president will resume the responsibilities of chairperson. No formal rules of order will be adopted for the meetings.

**FINANCES:**

The business manager retains complete control over the finances of DSO, and purchases on behalf of DSO may only be made by the business manager and the president. DSO funds may only be appropriated for activities facilitating the purposes of the organization outlined above.

**ADVISOR:**

DSO will have two advisors, who will serve as associate members and facilitate the direction and activities of DSO. The first advisory position will be filled by the head of the School of Social Work Doctoral Program, and be responsible for advising DSO on structural and programmatic issues related to the doctoral program. The second advisory will be elected by consensus of the membership, and will be responsible for advising DSO on professional and academic issues.

**AMENDMENTS:**

Amendments to this document may be made either by the president or by consensus of the membership.