

Center for Computational and Integrative Biology

Student Organizing Committee Constitution

This document cancels and replaces the Student Organizing Committee Constitution of August 30, 2018.

Article I

Representation of the Body

- I. The name of this organization shall be the Student Organizing Committee, referred to in this document as "the SOC."
- II. This organization exists within the Rutgers Center for Computational and Integrative Biology, referred to in this document as "the CCIB."
- III. The designation of a research lab as experimental or computational in this document will match its current designation by the CCIB.

Article II

Purpose of the Body

- I. The purpose of the SOC Representative Board is to serve the students and Postdoctoral Associates in the CCIB as well as the Center, Graduate School, and University. All currently enrolled graduate students in the CCIB automatically become full members of the SOC. Full SOC members receive all communications from the Representative Board, have full voting power in all elections, and maintain eligibility to attend all SOC-sponsored events. All Postdoctoral Associates and currently enrolled undergraduate students will automatically become limited members of the SOC. Limited SOC members receive all communications from the Representative Board, have limited voting power in certain elections as defined in Article V, and maintain eligibility to attend all SOC-sponsored events.
- II. The SOC Representative Board makes beneficial decisions for the graduate student body of the CCIB to give back to the University community, Graduate School, the CCIB as a whole, and the graduate students that they represent.
- III. The SOC Representative Board provides a link between the graduate student body of the CCIB and the leadership, undergraduate students, and Postdoctoral Associates of the CCIB; Rutgers American Association of University Professors-American Federation of Teachers (AAUP-AFT) union; Graduate School administration; University leadership; and surrounding community.
- IV. All members of the SOC Representative Board will advocate for the vision and concerns of the graduate student body of the CCIB to the Director and Graduate Program Director of the Center, Graduate School, and University administrations, the AAUP-AFT union, and other authoritative offices, as appropriate.

Article III

Authority & Responsibility

I. Campus-wide initiatives related to graduate student interests

- a. At least one (1) member of the SOC Representative Board will attend campus meetings pertinent to the shared values of graduate students in the CCIB, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Meetings of the Rutgers Graduate School-Camden Student Advisory Council. The council aids in open houses, student orientations, and other Graduate school events as needed.
 - ii. Meetings of the AAUP-AFT as relevant to issues that affect teaching assistants (TAs) and graduate assistants (GAs) within the CCIB

II. CCIB Journal Club

- a. The SOC Representative Board will oversee selecting and organizing papers for the CCIB Journal Club.

III. Graduate Hour with invited speakers of CCIB Seminar

- a. The SOC Representative Board will attend, promote, and publicize the Graduate Hour after the CCIB Seminar when it occurs.
- b. Post-qualifying members of the SOC Representative Board will take attendance at each Graduate Hour at the request of the Director of the CCIB.

IV. CCIB student-elected speaker

- a. The SOC Representative Board will oversee organizing the CCIB Student Elected Speaker, including the curation of nominees, the organization of elections amongst eligible members of the CCIB, and acting as hosts for the speaker on their visit to campus.

V. Events supporting prospective and incoming students of the CCIB

- a. The SOC Representative Board will attend and play an active role in events supporting prospective and incoming students to the CCIB. This responsibility may include involvement in the recruitment and retention efforts related to undergraduate students in the CCIB, as requested by the Director of the CCIB or CIB Undergraduate Program Coordinator.

VI. Student activities

- a. The SOC Representative Board will oversee selecting and organizing student activities, including social events and community outreach initiatives. It is the responsibility of the SOC Representative Board to consult with the CCIB Director and Graduate Program Director to check on fund availability and approval.

VII. Town Hall meetings with the graduate student body of the CCIB

- a. The SOC Representative Board will hold at least two (2) Town Hall meetings per semester to relay information about ongoing initiatives and receive input from the graduate student body of the CCIB.

Article IV

Organization of the Representative Board

The SOC Representative Board will consist of four (4) positions:

I. **One (1) Chair position**

- a. The Chair will create a list of topics for and lead all meetings of the SOC Representative Board.
- b. The Chair must attend all events sponsored by the SOC. They must designate an alternate within the SOC Representative Board when they know that they will be absent or otherwise unable to fulfill this duty.
- c. The Chair will serve as the Student Representative on the Center's Events Committee, which coordinates such special events such as the Annual Retreat, as requested by the Director of the CCIB.
- d. The Chair will as a representative for the graduate student body of the CCIB at meetings held by authoritative offices on campus, including but not limited to, the AAUP-AFT union, Graduate Student Advisory Council, and the Graduate School-Camden. They must designate an alternate within the SOC Representative Board when they know that they will be absent or otherwise unable to fulfill this duty. The Chair must compile a summary of learned information and distribute this summary to the rest of the Representative Board.
- e. The Chair has the ultimate authority for speaking on behalf of the entire Board. The Chair will direct communications with and serve as a liaison to leadership within the CCIB and other authoritative offices within and related to Rutgers University and Graduate School-Camden.
- f. The Chair must consult with the Director and Graduate Program Director of the CCIB at least one (1) time per semester.
- g. The Chair will convey announcements of events and elections as well as any relevant information obtained from the leadership of CCIB or other authoritative offices to the entire graduate student body of CCIB by means including, but not limited to: Slack announcements, emails, and Town Hall meetings.
- h. The Chair will keep accurate records related to the SOC Representative Board's annual budget.
 - i. At meetings of the SOC Representative Board, they must give reports of funds remaining in the budget, as well as any changes to the budget (i.e., budget increases and expenditures).
 - ii. The Chair will compile a report at least one (1) time per semester for verification by the Business Manager of the CCIB. Upon verification, the Chair will post the report on the SOC Representative Board's website.
 - iii. The Chair will work with the Business Manager of the CCIB to manage the budget allotted to the SOC Representative Board annually.
 - iv. The Chair will handle and maintain a record of all receipts for reimbursement for SOC-sponsored activities.
 - v. The Chair will direct all fundraising efforts for the SOC after approval by the rest of the SOC Representative Board.
 - vi. The Chair will collaborate with the other members of the SOC Representative Board to develop a preliminary budget for each fiscal year based on estimated revenue and expenses.
 - vii. The Chair is ultimately responsible for balancing the annual budget.
- i. The Chair will collaborate with the Vice-Chairs and MS Representative to:
 - i. Oversee the initiatives undertaken by the SOC and its Representative Board
 - ii. Finalize a viable budget proposal for presentation to the Director and Graduate Program Director of the CCIB

- iii. Finalize a list of topics before Town Hall meetings
- j. The Chair will lead Town Hall meetings and initiate activities of the SOC.
- k. The Chair will be responsible for maintaining the current iteration of the SOC Representative Board's website with up-to-date information.
- l. The Chair must participate to the best of their ability in Center-wide events such as the Annual Retreat and weekly Seminar series.

II. **Two (2) Vice-Chair positions**

a. **Experimental Vice-Chair**

- i. Any currently enrolled graduate student in the CCIB who is a member of an experimental lab is eligible to run for the Experimental Vice-Chair position.
- ii. The primary responsibility of the Experimental Vice-Chair is to represent the interests of graduate students in the CCIB, both MS and doctoral, that work in experimental labs. The Chair may assign full or partial responsibility for other initiatives as needed.

b. **Computational Vice-Chair**

- i. Any currently enrolled graduate student in the CCIB who is a member of a computational lab is eligible to run for the Computational Vice-Chair position.
- ii. The primary responsibility of the Computational Vice-Chair is to represent the interests of graduate students in the CCIB, both MS and doctoral, that work in computational labs. The Chair may assign full or partial responsibility for other initiatives as needed.
- c. The Vice-Chairs are responsible for chairing Town Hall meetings and initiating activities of the SOC and its Representative Board in the absence of the Chair.
- d. At least one (1) Vice-Chair must attend all events sponsored by the SOC.
- e. The Vice-Chairs will publicize events sponsored by the SOC by means including, but not limited to: posters hung in buildings containing labs that are part of the CCIB, Slack messages, and emails.
- f. A Vice-Chair may act as a representative for the SOC Representative Board at meetings held by authoritative offices on campus at the request of the Chair, including but not limited to: the AAUP-AFT union, Graduate Student Advisory Council, and the Graduate School-Camden. In these circumstances, the Vice-Chair must compile a summary of learned information, distribute this summary to the rest of the Representative Board, and relay any further meeting dates announced and other reminders to the Chair.
- g. The Vice-Chairs will work with the other members of the SOC Representative Board to develop agendas for Town Hall meetings for approval by the Chair.
- h. The Vice-Chairs will keep an accurate and organized record of all meeting agendas, minutes, and summaries.
 - i. The Vice-Chairs will maintain a repository of agendas, minutes, and summaries that is accessible to all members of the SOC Representative Board.
 - ii. The Vice-Chairs will record minutes for Town Hall meetings for the SOC Representative Board repository and prompt publication on Slack and the current iteration of the SOC Representative Board website.
 - iii. The Vice-Chairs will record minutes for meetings of the SOC Representative Board for the SOC Representative Board repository and prompt distribution to all members of the SOC Representative Board.
- i. The Vice-Chairs will assist in drafting correspondence to the leadership of the CCIB and other authoritative offices as requested by the Chair.
- j. The Vice-Chairs will take attendance at all Town Hall and SOC Representative Board meetings.
- k. The Vice-Chairs will collaborate with the Chair to:

- i. Oversee the initiatives undertaken by the SOC and its Representative Board
- ii. Finalize a viable budget proposal for presentation to the Director and Graduate Program Director of the CCIB

III. **One (1) MS Representative, as needed**

- a. The primary responsibility of the MS Representative is to represent the interests of MS students in the CCIB. The Chair may assign full or partial responsibility for other initiatives as needed.
- b. If the SOC Representative Board election cycle results in the election of an MS student in the CCIB to the Experimental or Computational Vice-Chair position, the SOC MS Representative position will remain vacant. The vacant position will remain empty until the next election cycle, upon which new candidates will be eligible to run for the position.
 - i. If no MS student runs for the Vice-Chair positions in the next cycle, the SOC Representative Board ballot will automatically include candidates for the MS Representative position.
 - ii. If one or more MS students run for the Vice-Chair positions in the next cycle but does not earn a place on the SOC representative board, the SOC representative board will initiate an election in the following fall semester for the MS Representative position.
 - iii. The MS student(s) filling the Vice-Chair role(s) will have the responsibility to perform the duties assigned to the position to which the student body elected them, as well as spearhead initiatives related explicitly to MS student body issues.
- c. The MS Representative will assist the Vice-Chairs with their assigned duties, as defined in Article IV, Sections II(c-k).

Article V Elections

I. **Elections for the SOC Representative Board Chair and Vice-Chairs**

- a. Elections for the SOC Representative Board will take place each April.
- b. Any post-qualifying doctoral student in the CCIB is eligible to run for the Chair position. However, preferred candidates will have previously held office as a Vice-Chair or MS Representative.
- c. Any currently enrolled MS student in the CCIB is eligible to run for the MS Representative position.
- d. Only currently enrolled graduate students in the CCIB will be eligible to vote in these elections. A majority (>55%) of graduate students in the CCIB must cast a vote in the annual election for the SOC Representative Board to constitute a valid election.
- e. The SOC Representative Board is responsible for executing the election process, including but not limited to: putting out a call for nominees for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions, creating and distributing the ballot, publicizing the ballot open and close dates, and informing the graduate students, Director, Graduate Program Director, Business Manager, and Secretary of the CCIB of the winners.
- f. The sitting Representative Board will announce the election winners within 24 hours of the ballot closing time unless announced otherwise. The number of votes cast for each candidate will only be available to the sitting Representative Board.
- g. In the event of a vacant position on the ballot, the SOC Representative Board will offer the runner-up from another position the opportunity to fill the position. If the runner-up

declines the offer to take the vacant position, the position will remain vacant until the next election cycle.

- h. In the case of a tie in the SOC Representative Board election, the sitting SOC Representative Board will initiate a new election with the candidates in the tie. In the event of a re-vote resulting in deadlock, the sitting SOC Representative Board members will have sole power in breaking the deadlock.
- i. Terms for Representative Board members elected in April run from May 1 to April 30.
- j. If the Chair position becomes vacant before April 30, a Vice-Chair should presume the Chair position, as eligible. If both sitting Vice-Chairs are MS students, the remaining members of the Board will hold an election for interim Chair. If a Vice-Chair position becomes vacant before April 30, the remaining members of the Board will determine whether they will appoint an interim member, hold a new election, or leave the position unoccupied until May 1.

II. Elections for SOC Representative Board MS Representative

- a. Elections for MS Representative will take place in April when no MS students are on the ballot for Vice-Chair positions or in October if no MS student assumes the position of Vice-Chair on May 1.
- b. Any currently enrolled MS student is eligible to run for the MS Representative position.
- c. Any currently enrolled MS students in the CCIB will be eligible to vote in these elections. A majority (>50%) of MS students in the CCIB must cast a vote in the election for MS Representative to constitute a valid election.
- d. The SOC Representative Board is responsible for executing the election process, including but not limited to: putting out a call for nominees for MS Representative positions, creating and distributing the ballot, publicizing the ballot open and close dates, and informing the graduate students, Director, Graduate Program Director, Business Manager, and Secretary of the CCIB of the winner.
- e. The sitting Representative Board will announce the election winners within 24 hours of the ballot closing time unless announced otherwise. The number of votes cast for each candidate will only be available to the sitting Representative Board.
- f. In the event of a vacant position on the ballot, the SOC Representative Board will offer an MS student of their choosing the opportunity to fill the position. If the appointee declines the offer to take the vacant position, the position will remain vacant until the next election cycle.
- g. In the case of a tie in the MS Representative election, the sitting SOC Representative Board will initiate a new election with the candidates in the tie. In the event of a re-vote resulting in deadlock, the sitting SOC Representative Board members will have sole power in breaking the deadlock.
- h. Terms for MS Representatives elected in April run from May 1 to April 30. Terms for MS Representatives elected in October run from November 1 to October 31.
- i. If the MS Representative position becomes vacant before April 30, the position will remain unoccupied until the next election cycle if an MS Student is acting as Vice-Chair. If no MS student is acting as Vice-Chair, the remaining members of the Board will determine whether they will appoint an interim member, hold a new election, or leave the position unoccupied until the next election cycle.

III. Elections for the CCIB student-elected speaker

- a. Elections for the CCIB student-elected speaker will take place approximately halfway into the fall semester (October or November).
- b. Any currently enrolled student (graduate or undergraduate) or Postdoctoral Associate in the CCIB may nominate a scientist whose work relates to computational and integrative biology to be on the ballot for the CCIB student-elected speaker.
- c. All currently enrolled students (graduate or undergraduate) and Postdoctoral Associates in the CCIB will be eligible to vote in these elections. A majority (>50%) of undergraduate students, graduate students, and Postdoctoral Associates in the CCIB must cast a vote in the annual election for the student-elected speaker to constitute a valid election.
- d. The SOC Representative Board is responsible for executing the election process, including but not limited to: putting out a call for nominees for speakers, creating and distributing the ballot, publicizing the ballot open and close dates, and informing the graduate students, Director, Graduate Program Director, Business Manager, and Secretary of the CCIB of the winner.
- e. The sitting Representative Board will present the name of the chosen speaker to the Director and Graduate Program Director for approval within 24 hours of the ballot closing time unless announced otherwise. The number of votes cast for each candidate will only be available to the sitting Representative Board. Upon approval, the Board will announce the election winner to the student (graduate and undergraduate) and Postdoctoral Associate members of the CCIB.
- f. In the event of a tie in the student-elected speaker election, the SOC Representative Board will initiate a new election with the candidates in the tie.
- g. In the event of a redundant re-vote (i.e., only two candidates in the first election), the power of selection falls to the SOC Representative Board.
- h. If the elected speaker declines the offer to visit the campus, the SOC Representative Board will extend the offer to the runner-up. If only one speaker is on the ballot, the SOC Representative Board will repeat the nomination and election process to find a new candidate.

IV. Elections for amendments to the SOC Constitution

- a. Elections for the amendments to the SOC Constitution will take place as necessary.
- b. All currently enrolled graduate students in the CCIB are eligible to vote in ballots for amendments to the SOC Constitution. A supermajority (>67%) of graduate students in the CCIB must cast a vote in the election for amendments to the SOC Constitution to constitute a valid election.
- c. The SOC Representative Board is responsible for executing the election process, including but not limited to: holding an information session about the proposed amendments, creating and distributing the ballot, publicizing the ballot open and close dates, and informing the graduate students about the election outcome.
- d. The sitting Representative Board will announce the election winners within 24 hours of the ballot closing time unless announced otherwise.
- e. If the vote results in a tie, the SOC Representative Board must present a new proposal for an immediate vote by the eligible student body.
- f. In the event of the new proposal resulting in a tie, the power of ratifying the new amendment is granted solely to the current SOC Representative Board.

Funding and Allocation of Resources Granted to the SOC

I. SOC Funding

- a. The responsibility of presenting the SOC budget proposal to the Center Director and Graduate Program Director falls to the SOC Chair, upon the following requirements:
 - i. Each member of the SOC representative board viewed and approved the proposal with unanimous consent.
 - ii. Any changes to the budget proposal by either Director will need to be re-approved by the entire SOC Board with unanimous consent and re-proposed.
 - iii. The Chair does not bar Co-Chair or MS representatives from proposal hearings and negotiations.

II. Allocation of Resources

- a. The power of appropriations for the SOC Budget for the fiscal year falls to the entire SOC Board, with final approval and ratification by the sitting Chair.

Article VII

Non-Performance of Duties

- I. Any member of the SOC Representative Board may undergo review for the non-performance of duties by submitting a written request to the Board including the name of the Board member and details about specific neglected responsibilities, including at least one of the following criteria:
 - a. Inadequate performance relating to duties described in Article IV
 - b. Attendance of Board meetings or Board-sanctioned events
- II. If the remaining Board members unanimously find the accusations in the written request to meet the criteria in Article VII, Section I, they may opt for a Call of Resignation for the Board member in question.
- III. Call of Resignation (COR)
 - a. In a COR, a closed-door meeting is held with all sitting Board members to discuss the allegations against the Board member under review.
 - i. The COR meeting must take place within 30 calendar days of receipt by the Board of the written request for review.
 - ii. The member nominated for review shall receive notice of the COR meeting at least two weeks in advance.
 - iii. Before the COR meeting, the remaining Board members may have closed-door discussions at their discretion with the person requesting the review or any other people who may have information regarding the allegations, both in favor of and against the Board member under review. The Board member under review may recommend people who may have information in their favor for four days after notification of the COR.
 - iv. At the COR, the Board will discuss the attendance record of the Board member under review as well as the reasons listed in the written request. The Board member under review will have the opportunity to speak on their behalf at this time.

- v. It is at the discretion of the member in question to resign their position at this time if they feel obligated to do so, although it is not required.
- vi. If the member does not resign their position, the remaining three Board members will vote for one of the following outcomes:
 - 1. Place the member under review on a probationary evaluation status for one month.
 - 2. Leave the Board member in their position

b. Probationary evaluation

- i. The member in question has 30 calendar days after the COR meeting to rise to a standard deemed appropriate to the duties of their position outlined in Article IV
- ii. After 30 calendar days post-COR, a board meeting is held to evaluate the member in question, and the remaining Board members will have a Vote of Confidence.

IV. Vote of Confidence (VOC)

- a. Pending evaluation during the probationary period, the remaining Board members will hold a VOC to determine whether to remove the member under review from the Board.
- b. For the removal of the board member, the VOC must be unanimous.
 - i. If the remaining Board members unanimously vote for removal, the Board member in question shall leave their position on the SOC board immediately. The vacancy and duties therein will be completed as outlined in Article V, Section I(g).
 - ii. In the event of a non-unanimous vote of removal, the Board member will no longer have probationary status, and they cannot undergo a second review during the remainder of their term.