

# Department of Materials Science and Engineering Materials Science Graduate Society Constitution and Bylaws

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Ratified September 15, 2016

Governing Board of the MSGS 2017-2018:

President: Emily Aaldenberg

Seminar Chair/Secretary: Erik Milosevic

Social Chair/Treasurer: Aditya Prasad

Member at Large: Prateek Hundekar

## Preamble

These Bylaws supersede all previous versions of the Materials Science Graduate Society Bylaws immediately upon adoption by the Materials Science Graduate Society and approval by the Materials Science and Engineering Department Head. The language within shall be considered gender neutral.

## Purpose

The Department of Materials Science and Engineering (MSE) Materials Science Graduate Society (Hereafter, "the MSGS") represents and serves the MSE graduate students, addressing the needs of the graduate students both social and professional. The MSGS will be the consolidating body for discussing issues and bringing them to the attention of the MSE Department Head, institute-wide student organizations, and other relevant persons and entities when needed. The MSGS is an elected body by currently enrolled graduate students of the MSE Department.

The MSGS Governing Board shall comprise four members voted into position by the MSE graduate students. In addition, Advisory Board members may be invited to attend Board meetings upon approval of the Governing Board. The duties and functions of all titles are described in the following section.

Attendance to Board meetings shall be open to all MSE graduate students and shall take place in a publicly accessible venue on the RPI campus.

## Members of the MSGS Governing Board

President

Seminar Chair/Secretary

Social Chair/Treasurer

Member At Large

## Members of the MSGS Advisory Board

Undergraduate Liaison

## Duties of Members

### Governing Board

These members make up the voting members of the MSGS. Their presence is counted towards quorum.

The President

The President provides overall the leadership for the graduate students activities and initiatives. The President is the chair of the MSGS and will be primarily responsible for the communication between the MSGS and the Department Head. In cases of a tie on votes, the President shall be the tie breaker.

Seminar Chair & Secretary

The Seminar Chair shall be responsible for successful operation of MSE Graduate Student Seminars. Duties associated with the seminar involve securing speakers, scheduling, collecting abstracts, advertising, coordinating with the MSE staff to provide refreshment and drinks, and chairing the seminars.

In addition as Secretary, this position shall be responsible for taking notation during official meetings. This includes general meetings of the MSGS and forum events held as a part of the Seminar series.

Meeting minutes need not be dispersed but should be available upon request to any graduate student or faculty/staff of the MSE department. The secretary is responsible for email correspondence within the MSGS and newsletters to the department from the MSGS.

### Social Chair & Treasurer

The duties of the Social Chair are varied, and listed below. In summary, this chair shall be responsible for at least one social gathering per semester, as well as a summer day-getaway (“daycation”) in the summer semester. This chair also acts a liaison to Material Advantage and other relevant organizations and is responsible for cooperation and coordination with other social events. Specific duties of the Social Chair include:

- Organizing preliminary exam mentorship and guidance for first-year doctoral students in April-May and December-January
- Organizing the annual department summer daycation to a local picnic ground
- Acquiring an alcohol permit and securing funds and deliver the alcohol for MSGS social events

In addition, as Treasurer, this position shall be responsible for managing the budget and spending of official MSGS funds. This excludes funds that are utilized for other purposes, such as the budget for food for the graduate seminar series, which shall continue to be controlled by the department. This position will keep a ledger that shall be available upon request to any MSE graduate student or faculty/staff member.

### Member At Large

This position shall have no specific responsibility towards the function of the MSGS, except that they serve as an additional voice and vote. This position is intended to benefit the MSGS by providing a low-commitment title, such that otherwise encumbered students may have a chance to serve (eg. professional society presidents or final year doctoral students), or new graduates who are ambivalent about a role in the MSGS might try this role before running for a different position the following year.

### Advisory Board

These positions are nonvoting members of the MSGS. They are invited but not required to attend meetings, and shall not be considered part of the board for the purposes of meeting quorum for votes. It is intended that these members will be notified of upcoming discussions on relevant topics, so that they may plan to attend that meeting.

### Undergraduate Liaison

The purposed of this role is to advise the MSGS in issues that pertain to the relationship between Graduates and Undergraduates. This role shall not be elected by the graduate students, but appointed by the Material Advantage (the recognized undergraduate organization within the department) in whatever way they deem appropriate. This member must be an undergraduate student.

### Eligibility

Graduate students may only run for up to two positions. No MSGS member may hold more than one position at any given time. To be eligible for a position on the MSGS, a graduate student must have an anticipated 1 year left before their thesis defense and be a full-time student. In the event that a student passes their thesis defense before the end of their term, an election for that/those position(s) will be held within one month of the successful defense. That officer may continue to serve and vote until the

end of their term, the election of their replacement, their death or resignation, or their departure from the institute, whichever comes first. Term limits are one year.

## Elections

Elections will be held annually on the day following the April Graduate Student Seminar. The poll shall remain open for 24 continuous hours. Terms shall be Summer to Spring to cover the three semesters of the academic year. Thus, the last day of the term shall be May 31st, and the first day of the term shall be June 1st. To be elected to a position, a student must receive a majority of the votes. Elections will be valid as long as 30% of the MSE graduate population votes. Voting will be conducted by anonymous email survey (e.g., SurveyMonkey) on Election Day. Those wishing to be on the ballot must contact the Secretary at least one week before Election Day. Write-in votes are valid if the person written in is eligible and the vote legible.

The votes shall be counted by the President and again by the Member At Large to verify the tally. Counting of the votes need not be private, and all ballots shall be anonymous. In the event that no candidate receives a majority of the votes, a run-off election will be held the following week, and the ballot shall have the two candidates with the highest percentage of the vote for each position where a run-off is needed. In the event of a tie for second for a particular position, three candidates may be put on the run-off ballot for that position. Presentation/debate of the contested positions will be held during the April Seminar.

## Appointment

In the event of no candidate for a particular position, or if no candidate is able to receive a majority of the votes for a position, the newly elected MSGS may appoint an eligible student to fill the role by unanimous approval of the board and the prospective board member. The motion to appoint must be done by anonymous vote of the council. The appointee must accept their appointment before they are added to the council.

## Voting Rights

All graduate students of the MSE department who have not received their graduate diploma are eligible to vote for their MSGS members. This includes students with co-terminal status in their first or second year, master's students, and doctoral students, both part-time and full-time.

## Votes of the MSGS:

Motions of the MSGS must meet quorum of full attendance of the board. Motions will pass with a simple majority of the vote.

## Changing this document:

Bylaw changes will begin as proposals by the MSGS and will pass at a simple majority vote of the voting members of the MSE Department. Votes will be held by email survey. No change shall be made to this document without first hosting a forum on the proposed change at the appropriate monthly Graduate Student Seminar. The MSE Department head retains the power to veto any given change at their discretion.