

Tech American Society for Microbiology

Constitution and By-Laws

Article I: Organization Name

This organization shall be known as the “Tech American Society for Microbiology” which can be abbreviated as “TechASM”.

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the organization shall be

1. Promote student interest and further improve the quality of the microbiology program at Texas Tech University.
2. Promote high school students' interest in microbiology and their attendance at Texas Tech University.
3. Provide aid for students in microbiology at Texas Tech with respect to academic curriculum, research and job applications
4. Promote student participation in state and national ASM meetings

Article III: Membership

Section 1: Full Membership Requirements

Full members must (1) be a member of the American Society for Microbiology or the Texas Branch of the American Society for Microbiology (2) participate in at least two TechASM sponsored function per year (3) complete 5 hours of approved volunteer, university or community activities (examples include but not limited to: tutoring, recycling, fundraising activities) per academic year and (4) participate in 5 hours of manual sales per academic year with at least 2 in the fall. Acceptable activities will be determined by the officers and faculty advisor of TechASM. **Full members** may (1) vote (2) hold office and (3) have access to travel/publication funds. Graduating Full members will retain full privileges of Full membership up to 1 academic semester after graduation from Texas Tech University.

1. Checkpoints for Full Membership Assessment:

- All members shall be considered Full members until 1 week after Fall lab sales. Full members must have attended Fall general meeting and 2 hours of lab sales to maintain Full Membership status.
- Full membership will be assessed 1 week after the end of the Fall semester. Full members must have met all previous checkpoint requirements and 2 hours of community service to maintain Full membership status.
- Full membership will be assessed 1 week after Spring lab sales. Full members must have met all previous checkpoint requirements, attended the Spring general meeting and at least 2 additional lab sale hours, if the full five-hour requirement was not met in the Fall, to maintain Full membership status.

- Final Full membership will be assessed 1 week after Summer lab sales. Full members must have met all membership requirements stated in **Article I section 1.**
- Excuses for missing meetings and lab sales must be submitted to the Secretary at least 1 week prior to missing an event. Extraneous circumstances like hospitalization etc. are exempt and, in these circumstances, submit an excuse to the Secretary within 1 week of returning to campus. Excuses will allow Full members to pass the checkpoints until such time the event/requirements can be reasonably made up.
- The Secretary shall conduct all full membership assessments and will make updated membership statuses available within 1 week of checkpoint.

2. Community Service Circumstances:

- The Board of Officers shall decide what in-service and community-service activities are eligible to be used as qualification for Full Membership.
- Elected Officers of the Association or Members serving in elected leadership positions in the Student Government Association (SGA) shall be exempt from all service requirements during their term.
- Committee chairpersons shall receive 4 hours of in-service and committee members shall receive 2 hours of in-service for each semester of service.
- A form for service hours needs be filled out by members and sent to the secretary for said hours to count towards the membership requirements.

Section 2: Associate Membership Requirements

Any member who has not completed the requirements for Full Membership will be considered an Associate Member. Associate Members may not (1) vote (2) hold office and (3) have access to travel/publication funds.

Section 3: Anti-discrimination Statement

Tech American Society for Microbiology does not deny or define membership on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Section 4: Selection Procedures

Membership in TechASM shall be open to any graduate student (full or part time) on the main campus Texas Tech University. Members must be enrolled in the University and in good standing with the University and their prospective department. Special circumstances concerning membership and disciplinary actions against members not considered in the Constitution shall be addressed by the Officers and, if warranted, the faculty advisor.

Section 5: Accountability and Removal Process

A member (full or associate) may be removed from membership because their conduct is detrimental to the objectives/purposes of TechASM or is affecting its reputation adversely.

Only a single recall proceeding may be initiated against a member in one academic year.

Removal or recall proceedings against a member (full or associate) may be initiated at the request of at least 20% of the full members. Written charges by a member should be presented to the Board of Officers

(President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) and the Faculty Advisor. The President will then notify the member in question. Sufficient opportunity will be given for the members to respond to the charges at a meeting.

All members will be informed of this pending action at least 1 week prior to the removal decision. Voting for this action must be done by secret ballot. Any member (full or associate) may be removed from membership by a two-thirds vote of the quorum present. The member in question must be immediately notified of the result of the vote. If the final vote count is less than two-thirds of the quorum present, then the member in question will not be removed from TechASM membership.

All associate and full members are representatives of the organization at any school or organization-sponsored event. Any member who willfully breaks any state or federal law (e.g., driving under the influence, soliciting illegal paraphernalia, etc.) during a school or organization-sponsored event will be subject to the process elicited in Section 5 (Accountability and Removal Process). These ramifications further apply to any individual at any external conference if funded through organizational travel funding.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1: Titles

The officers of the chapter shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer

Section 2: Officer Duties

President: The President serves as the chief executive of TechASM. The President will organize meetings, coordinate with faculty adviser, other officers and chairs of any special task committees. The President will represent TechASM members to the department and the university. The President will prepare the annual progress report of the TechASM with the help of the adviser and send it to national ASM, will register the organization with SGA every year, and will attend SGA meetings when necessary. The President will approve or appoint members of standing Committees.

Vice President: The Vice President will share the roles with the President, and in the absence of the President will be responsible for the President's tasks. In addition, the Vice President will keep travel records for the guest speakers that TechASM will invite as a part of the Biology departmental seminar and will organize accommodation, food and itinerary for the guest speaker. The Vice President will also attend SGA meetings when necessary and will serve as chairman of any Ad Hoc committee.

Treasurer: The Treasurer oversees the purchasing materials needed for lab sales. The Treasurer will keep organized financial records (receipts, invoices, balance checkbook, etc.) and prepare the financial statement at the end of the year. The Treasurer will prepare the funding applications to the SGA and submit them every academic year. The Treasurer will attend the funding meetings and other required meetings with the President or other assigned officer when necessary. It is the Treasurer's responsibility to keep records of all the lab manuals and supplies sold. The Treasurer serves as the Association's chief operating officer regarding management of member travel requests and determination of the amounts of travel awards for members.

Secretary: The duties of Secretary include maintaining all records of TechASM, which includes meeting minutes, membership records and all other business of TechASM. The Secretary will be responsible for coordinating with SGA and make appointments for the funding interviews and will attend these meetings when necessary. The Secretary also works with the Treasurer to keep the lab manual and student travel/membership records. The Secretary shall develop and maintain a list of all the current members of the organization and will be responsible for contacting members prior to their obligation of in-service activities, sending out letters, emails, updates, and/or announcements.

SORC Representative: The Student Organization Representative Council (SORC) Representative shall be an officer of Tech ASM and will represent TechASM at Student Organization Representative Council meetings. The SORC Representative will also serve as TechASM's representative to the Student Government Association (SGA).

Section 3: Incentive Scholarship for Officers

- During Summer meeting, the active body shall vote on whether incentive scholarships should be awarded.
- Officers can apply for \$500 at the end of their term (August 1-July 31). Applications would be due July 15th and performance will be evaluated by the Faculty Advisor and the President. Scholarships can be used for travel, research, or tuition expenses.
- In the event an officer does not complete their term or responsibilities, no funds will be disbursed.

Section 4: Incentive Scholarship for Standing Committee Chairperson

- The chairperson of standing committees can apply for up to \$250 at the end of their term (September 1-August 31). Applications will be due June 15th and performance will be evaluated by current officers. Scholarships can be used for travel, research, or tuition expenses.
- In the event a committee chair does not complete their term or are not full members, no funds will be disbursed.
- Should a member of the Board of Officers also hold a chair position; they cannot apply for this incentive scholarship.

Section 5: Conditions for Incentive Scholarship for Officers and Standing Committee Chairperson

- In the event that incentive scholarships to officers and committee chairs would result in a net deficit for that organizational year, no incentive scholarships will be awarded.
- If funds are not sufficient for all officers and committee chairs to receive the incentive scholarships, no incentive scholarships will be awarded for that organizational year.
- Approval of funds for committee chairs will be based on a simple majority vote by the Board of Officers. In the event of a tie during the committee chair incentive vote, advisors will make the final decision.

Article V: Officer Elections and Removal Process

Section 1: Officer Elections Process

1. All officers shall be elected by printed ballot in the spring semester preceding their term. The elected officers will assume their responsibilities with the first fall meeting of the following year.
2. The officers may be reelected for a total of two consecutive terms, after which they shall become ineligible for re-election to the same office for a period of one year following termination of their service in the particular office. However, they may be elected to a new office immediately subsequent to termination of a former office.
3. In the event of a vacancy of any of the above officers, a replacement shall be appointed by the President to fill the office until the next election. In the event of the President's resignation, the Vice President shall succeed to the presidency and appoint a replacement for the vacated office.

Section 2: Board of Officers Term

New Officers shall take office at the beginning of the upcoming year (start date: August 1st; end date: July 31st). During the summer session, new Officers shall serve as President(s)-Elect, Vice President-Elect, Treasurer-Elect, and Secretary-Elect, and will serve as voting members on the Board of Officers in this capacity. All executive powers are still held by the outgoing Officers until the completion of their term. Prior to the new membership year, the outgoing Officer for each position shall advise the new Officer on the duties required for said position.

Section 3: Officers Removal Process

An officer may be removed from office for the following reasons:

- (a) Failure to perform duties mentioned in the TechASM constitution (Article IV, Section 2)
- (b) Mismanagement of Tech ASM funds
- (c) Actions which violate the objectives/purposes of TechASM.

Removal or recall proceedings against an officer may be initiated at the request of at least 40% of full members. Only a single recall proceeding may be initiated against an officer in one academic year. Written charges must be presented to the Faculty Advisor with signatures of at least 40% of full members on a separate sheet. The Faculty Advisor will notify the Board of Officers (excluding the officer being recalled). All members (including the officer being recalled) will be informed of this pending action by the Board of Officers (excluding the officer being recalled) at least 1 week prior to the removal decision.

A hearing will be conducted at a general meeting for presentation of evidence from concerned parties. The Faculty Advisor will present the written charges to the rest of the members. The officer (whose removal has been requested) will have 20 minutes to respond to the charges presented against him/her. Full members will then be allowed to question the officer being recalled for 20 minutes. Voting for recall/removal of an officer must be done by secret ballot.

The officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the quorum of full members voting at the end of the hearing. The officer in question will immediately be notified of the result of the vote. If the final vote count is less than two-thirds of the quorum present, then the officer in question will not be recalled.

A special election to fill the officer position will be held within 30 days of the removal of an officer. The previously removed officer will not be eligible for re-election as an officer in the future at any TechASM election.

Article VI: Relationship with other Organizations

Section 1: Departmental Relationships

Tech American Society for Microbiology collaborates with the Texas Tech University Association of Biologists (TTUAB) to host social events, such as the New Graduate Student Reception/Wine Social and the Texas Tech Annual Biological Sciences Symposium (TTABSS).

Section 2: External Relationships

The Tech American Society for Microbiology or “TechASM” is a Student Chapter of the American Society for Microbiology (ASM). We are one of only 161 student chapters in the United States and one of 16 Texas chapters to be recognized by the American Society for Microbiology (ASM), the largest single organization devoted to the life sciences in the world. ASM currently has over 40,000 members.

Article VII: Finances

Section 1: Travel Funding Limitations Based on Length of Time in a Texas Tech Graduate Program

Full members may apply for travel /publication funding. Funding will be provided to students for work that is primarily focused in a field of microbiology (bacteriology, mycology, protozoology, phycology, parasitology, immunology, and / or virology). Full members must submit a request including a short summary of their research for reimbursement of travel funds subject to approval by the officers. Funding decisions will be made by the Treasurer, with the remaining Board of Officers serving as advisors. The Treasurer reserves the right to provide less funding than requested pending student involvement and available funds. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, they can appeal within 5 days of the final decision. After the appeal, a final decision will be made by the faculty advisor.

a. Full Member Graduate Students in their first year of their graduate program

Any graduate student in their first year pursuing their graduate degree may receive funding to travel to a meeting, conference, or workshop at which they are not required to present research information.

b. Full Member Graduate Students beyond their first year of the graduate program

Any graduate student who has been in their program for more than a year must present research information at the meeting or conference in order to obtain travel funding.

Any graduate student that has been in their program for more than a year may request funding for travel to an in-person workshop or for registration of an online workshop. Requests should include a summary of the content they will be learning from the workshop and how it will promote the advancement of their research. The major advisor for the member should also write a letter of support stating why the workshop is necessary for the student’s development.

Section 2: Travel Funding Limitations Based on Traveling Distance

a. Traveling and conferences

Any full ASM member traveling to a conference, meeting, or workshop shall receive up to \$1250 reimbursement for travel, food, registration fees, etc.

Section 3: Publishing Funding

Any full ASM member may receive up to \$1250 for publishing expenses of scientific articles in microbiology-related (as noted above) research and study. Applications for publication funds will not be accepted until the article has reached the “accepted with revisions” or “accepted” stage of publication as confirmed by notification from the editor or the journal. Funds will not be disbursed until the article is fully accepted (no revisions necessary) and invoice for publication fees has been received, or receipt of payments for publication fees can be provided for reimbursement. The member must be first or second author on the publication.

Section 4: Travel Funding Limitations Based on Fulfillment of Requirements

1. **Full Member Graduate Students** are required to complete 5 hours of lab sales, 5 hours of volunteer activities, and attend at least 2 meetings **per academic year** in order to be considered for travel funding. However, if the requirements for full membership are not met within the fiscal year of application and approval of travel funding, the student will no longer be eligible for travel funding for the following fiscal year.
2. **Graduating Full Member Graduate Students** expecting to graduate in the fall semester of the fiscal year will be expected to fulfill half of the requirements before graduation (3 hours of lab sales, 3 hours of community service, and attend the fall general meeting). Students graduating in the spring semester are expected to fulfill all requirements before graduation.

Section 5: Travel Funding Allocated for Officer Attendance at Texas ASM for Branch Updates

The organization will set aside funds for one officer to attend a Texas ASM branch meeting once per officer term to provide a branch update, should it prove relevant to an organized session of the conference (for example: the Young Leaders Session). This attendance can be during the fall or spring Texas ASM branch meeting, with the fall meeting being prioritized over the spring as that is the Texas branch meeting aimed more at graduate students. Funds will only be allocated from the organization if the officer provides a branch update in an organized session of the conference, presents their own research at the conference, and provides an update to TechASM members at the next general meeting. Travel funds for the meeting will not count against the officer’s personal travel funds, as branch updates are a crucial part of maintaining relationships with our sister branches. If there is no organized session in which the officer can give an update, the funds will not be allocated that officer term. Priority for officer travel to the Texas branch meeting shall go to the president. If the president is unable to attend the conference, funds will then be allocated to the vice president, then secretary, then treasurer, so long as the officer attending fulfills the duty of providing a TechASM branch update. Expenses covered by these funds shall include transportation, lodging, parking, conference registration, and any other travel expenses approved by the president, treasurer, and faculty advisor (the attending officer must fill out and submit a travel request form, even though the funds will not count against their personal travel funds). If travel funds are split between an officer and another person, TechASM will only fund the percentage allocated to the officer (example: in the case of 2 people sharing expenses, TechASM will pay 50%). Any concerns about misuse of these funds, or issues determining how these funds should be allocated should be brought to the president, treasurer, and faculty advisor for discussion and decision. In the unlikely event that the session including branch updates is cancelled after travel arrangements and conference registration has been paid for, the attending officer may still use nonrefundable arrangements without their personal TechASM travel funds being penalized.

Article VIII: Meetings

The chapter shall hold regular meetings as necessary. Members must be notified of upcoming meetings at least ten days in advance. The time and place of meetings shall be arranged by the officers.

Article IX: Faculty Advisor

Section 1: Selection Process

The Faculty Advisor will not have any voting privileges and will be an ex-officio member. The Faculty Advisor shall be a full-time faculty member at Texas Tech University and a member of American Society for Microbiology.

The process of selection of a new Faculty Advisor will only begin when the current Faculty Advisor informs the TechASM President of their intent to step down.

The Board of Officers will then discuss a suitable faculty member to replace the current Faculty Advisor. The current Faculty Advisor may also suggest candidate(s). The President will enquire of the faculty if they may be interested in serving as the new Faculty Advisor of TechASM. If the faculty member agrees, then they will be appointed the new Faculty Advisor of TechASM by the Board of Officers. If no faculty member agrees to serve as the next Faculty Advisor, the current Advisor may appoint a new Faculty Advisor.

Section 2: Responsibilities of the advisor

Each academic year, the newly elected officers must write a letter to the Texas Tech Federal Credit Union to add new officers and remove former officers from TechASM's bank account. This letter must be approved and signed by the Faculty Advisor.

In case of an appeal of a decision for travel/publication funding request, the Faculty Advisor will make the final decision.

The Faculty Advisor will oversee member and officer removal proceedings at a Tech ASM meeting.

Article X: Legal Agreement

Tech American Society for Microbiology agrees to abide by all federal, state, and local laws; and by Texas Tech University Policies and Procedures.

Article XI: Tax Exempt Status

Section 1: The society shall operate exclusively as a scientific and educational organization. No part of the net income to the Society shall inure to the benefit of or be distributed to, its elected officers or other private personas, except that reasonable compensation may be paid to employees for services rendered in furtherance or the objectives listed in article II of the constitution.

Section 2: The Society shall engage only in those activities permitted by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c)3 of Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal revenue law.

Article XII: Amendments

Any proposed amendment to this constitution may be submitted by any member in writing to the Secretary. The proposed amendment shall be presented to the members for review and recommendation to the Chapter. A two-thirds majority vote of a 60% quorum of the full members shall be required for ratification.

Item 1: Amendments

These by-laws may be amended or suspended at any business session of the chapter by a two-thirds majority vote of 60% quorum of the full members.

Item 2: Ad Hoc Committees

The President shall have the authority to appoint ad hoc committees to deal with matters pertaining to operation and activities to the chapter. The Vice President shall serve as the chairperson for any Ad Hoc committees and have no more than 4 other members. The Vice President will report the progress of any Ad Hoc committee to the organization's members at the end of each academic semester. Ad Hoc committees shall function for no longer than the President's term, at which time the organization shall vote to promote an Ad Hoc committee to a standing committee (Article XII; Item 3) in accordance with organizational voting procedures. In the event an Ad Hoc committee is not promoted to a Standing committee, the President immediately must dissolve the committee.

Item 3: Standing Committees

Standing committees shall form in one of two ways: (1) the promotion of an Ad Hoc committee or (2) established by active members during a general meeting following in accordance with Article XIII and shall remain active indefinitely until dissolved in accordance with Item 4. Duration of term in committee, committee purpose and size of committee shall be defined in Item 2 part b.

a. Standing Committee Chairperson

The Vice President will notify the organization of any openings within a standing committee at least 2 weeks prior to the next general meeting. Any member interested in becoming a chairperson of a standing committee shall notify the President 1 week prior to the general meeting. The President will appoint a chairperson during a general meeting. Standing committees.

b. Current Standing Committees

1. Outreach Committee

The outreach committee shall monitor and inform the organization of any opportunities outside of the organization that may pertain to the active body. The committee will be made up of 1 chairperson and 1 additional member. The term of appointment will last 1 full academic year.

Item 4: Dissolving a Standing Committee

Any standing committee can be dissolved in one of two ways: (1) A majority vote by the Board of Officers will trigger a vote by the active body, in which case, half of two-thirds of active members is needed to dissolve a committee or (2) a unanimous decision among the Board of Officers and organization's advisor. Any dissolved standing committee shall be removed from Item 3 part b.

Article XIII: Voting

During a regular meeting, the members can vote by raising hands and any decision may be amended or suspended at any business session of the chapter by a two-thirds majority vote of a 60% quorum of the full members.

Article XIV: Parliamentary Authority

Tech American Society for Microbiology agrees to use Robert's Rules of Order for all its parliamentary procedures.