

Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine
American Physician Scientists Association Local Chapter

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the American Physician Scientists Association Chapter do hereby establish this Constitution in order that our purpose be realized to its fullest extent.

ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be known as the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM) Local Chapter of the American Physician Scientists Association Chapter and will hereinafter be referred to as the Rowan-Virtua SOM APSA Chapter.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The APSA Chapter understands and is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities of abiding by Rowan-Virtua SOM policies. In extension of the purpose of the National APSA Chapter, the Rowan-Virtua SOM APSA Chapter has been established for the purpose of Rowan-Virtua SOM.

More specifically, the APSA Chapter will allow its members to:

- a. Extend training program initiatives for aspiring physician-scientists to professional programs at Rowan-Virtua SOM where they will be beneficial, but may not be currently highly available or formalized, including but not limited to the Virtua Health College of Medicine and Life Sciences, School of Osteopathic Medicine, School of Translational Biomedical Engineering and Sciences (TBES), School of Nursing and Rowan University.
- b. Acquire a better understanding of medical research and related principles in order to better pursue a career in research and medicine.
- c. Meet, network with, and build collaborative relationships with other aspiring physician-scientists in training.
- d. Acquire knowledge and skills necessary to become successful physician-scientists.
- e. Interact with and network with experienced and successful physician-scientists.
- f. Provide vertical mentorship to those who are at a less advanced stage in their training.
- g. Better understand the challenges, pitfalls, and opportunities in the training and career of a physician-scientist.
- h. Create a partnership between our medical school students and research faculty.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section A. Eligibility

All students currently enrolled at Rowan-Virtua SOM (DO and DO/PhD), Rowan-Virtua TBES DO/PhDs are eligible to be general members of this organization. TBES students (MBS, MS, PhD), Our Lady of Lourdes School of Nursing, and Rowan University premedical students are to be “associated” members with no position on the executive board. No student may be denied membership on the basis of race, creed, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, parental status, or disability.

Section B. Terms

Membership in Rowan-Virtua SOM APSA shall be at least for one year starting in September and ending in September of the following year and a member shall be entitled to all of the benefits available from Rowan-Virtua SOM APSA during that time period. All active members are contingent on having paid APSA Membership Dues at the indicated cost(s)—dues, if any, will be determined by the Executive Board at the beginning of each year.

Section C. Requirements for Membership

Members of Rowan-Virtua APSA must be in good academic standing (passing grades and not on leave for unexcused purposes) to both join and remain as a member. General members are considered those on the membership roster, receive chapter communications (via ListServ), and are eligible but not required to attend meetings and events. Active members are general members who meet certain minimum requirements which make them eligible to run for officer positions and guaranteed access to chapter benefits such as sponsored activities. Minimum requirements include: attending two events and two chapter meetings per semester, and having an active role in helping to plan/organize at least one event/activity per semester.

The Rowan-Virtua SOM APSA Chapter openly admits students to its membership and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, personal appearance, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

The APSA chapter will be governed as follows:

The officers of the APSA Chapter shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Webmaster, and the School of Medicine Liaison. The APSA officers will constitute the executive committee. The officers of the APSA Chapter should be DO students and/or DO/PhD students, with the majority of leadership consisting of SOM students. They should also be active members of the Rowan-Virtua SOM APSA Chapter and in good standing in their program of

study at the Rowan-Virtua SOM. Officers of the APSA Chapter will be charged with the assigned duties described herein:

President/Institutional Representative (hereby referred to as President) - The President is charged with the overall operation of the APSA Chapter. The president must ensure the continuance of programs that benefit the student body. Furthermore, the president must communicate frequently with the members and the national APSA organization. The president must promote the interests of the APSA Chapter within the university. An elected President (or other chapter officer) will preside at all chapter meetings. The President will serve as the Institutional Representative (IR) for Rowan-Virtua SOM at the National APSA level or work closely with this individual, if and IR is already in place. The President will maintain the power to appoint all committee chairpersons, shall present all motions to the body present and shall be present at 90% of chapter meetings. The president shall also make every effort to attend the Annual Meeting of the American Physician Scientists Association, or appoint a person such as the Institutional Representative to attend in their place.

Vice President - The Vice President is charged with ensuring the smooth election and transition of the officers after election, helping to provide continuity to the chapter. The vice president is charged with maintaining a current e-mail list of chapter membership, and with serving as the Acting President when the President deems necessary. Furthermore, in the event the President resigns or is removed from office, the Vice-President must assume the responsibility of President until the officers and advisory members can meet to vote for a new President.

Secretary - The secretary will take minutes of all chapter meetings. These shall include a timeline of activities and programs, and any notes or suggestions submitted by the officers or chapter members in attendance. The Secretary shall also oversee the committees in charge of organizing individual events. These committees shall be composed of one chairperson and at least 2 – 3 general members who will plan and execute APSA-sponsored events. The Secretary will maintain contact with the committee chair to ensure that adequate progress is being made such that the event will be ready by its planned date.

Treasurer - This person will record and maintain the records of expenditures for the APSA Chapter, including submission of forms necessary to request funds.

Webmaster- This person will be responsible for maintaining the APSA chapter webpage.

Faculty Advisor - The faculty advisor must be a full-time member of the Rowan-Virtua SOM faculty, selected by the membership of the APSA Chapter. The Faculty Advisor is responsible for generating ideas, serving as a resource person, and providing continuity to the organization.

To complement the stated goals of the APSA Chapter, the Faculty Advisor will be an established physician-scientist who has significant experience in mentoring aspiring physician-scientists.

School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM) Liaison

The SOM Representative is a position established to ensure stable and substantial communication between the APSA Chapter and the SOM. This position will be filled by an APSA Chapter member (see article III) actively enrolled in the SOM, but not the TBES DO/PhD program. The representative will be charged with the duty of ensuring that APSA maintains a strong relationship with the SOM and is a visible organization for all aspiring physician-scientists at Rowan-Virtua SOM. The SOM Representative will be elected from the Chapter's membership according to Article VI and is a member of the executive committee. This person is charged with promoting the mission of the APSA Chapter within the SOM by advertising events, recruiting additional members, and spreading information about the chapter. Electing two APSA members to the SOM Liaison positions is allowable, so long as one is in the MS1-2 (pre-clinical) years of training while the other is in the MS3-4 (clinical) years.

ARTICLE V- COMMITTEES

As a chapter, APSA will sponsor regular events that are specifically developed to meet the training needs of aspiring physician-scientists (See article II). The following committees will be chaired by an officer or active member and will include, but not be limited to, the following:

Professional Development

This committee will be chaired by the APSA Chapter Secretary and will act to provide members with opportunities for career advancement and development. Particular emphasis will be placed on learning how to write thoughtful emails to prospective Principal Investigators, creating resumes geared toward a research position, and establishing expectations as a student researcher.

Career Planning

This committee will be managed by the APSA Chapter Vice President and will act to provide active members with opportunities to explore, plan, and discuss career options and paths available to physician-scientists. This committee will organize activities where past alumni will come to campus to share their successes and experiences as physician-scientists and will provide options for shadowing local physicians.

Outreach

The APSA Chapter President will chair this committee, which will be responsible for developing and coordinating service projects for APSA members, with an emphasis on vaccine clinics, health screenings in the local community and teaching high school students about science.

ARTICLE VI – CHAPTER OPERATIONS

1. Voting Eligibility

Those members meeting active membership requirements (See Article III: Section C) are eligible to vote in Rowan-Virtua SOM Elections.

2. Election Process

Section A. Elections - Executive Board positions

1. Only DO students and DO/PhD students are eligible for nomination or self-nomination. General members are eligible to nominate active members for the APSA Chapter Officers Board. Current APSA Chapter Officers are eligible to re-run for the same or different positions after each term year.
2. Nominees will be required to provide a statement of interest/intent as well as their vision for the Chapter if elected. Nominees are eligible to vote.
3. Executives shall be selected by the immediate past APSA Chapter Officers through an application process and subsequent internal vote at a monthly Chapter meeting held in December. The appointment of each position must be fulfilled in January of each academic year.
4. One of the APSA Chapter Officers appointed by the President shall count the votes and the President will announce the results.

Section B: Appointments

1. The APSA Chapter Officers shall have the ability to appoint new committee positions as deemed appropriate.

Section C. Vacancies

1. When a position is vacant, resulting from termination, resignation, or no nomination, it shall be filled by application from another DO student and/or DO/PhD student. Election procedures will be followed. The APSA Chapter Officer shall be elected by a simple majority vote cast by the Board members of the Chapter at an official meeting. The APSA Chapter Officer(s) elected shall complete the unexpired term, however, still viable to removal if duties are not fulfilled appropriately. If there are no applications for a vacant officer position, the President and Vice president will share the role of the position.

Section D. Order of Succession

1. In the absence of a President, the Vice President will take over with the assigned duties. For the absence of a Vice President or any other Board member, the President will share/coordinate those responsibilities amongst (1) the rest of the Board and (2) general members if necessary. All positions shall be promptly filled by an internal application process and voted upon by the existing APSA Chapter Officers by (2/3) majority vote.

Section E. Attendance

1. A maximum of three discretionary absences will be permitted in an academic year.
2. All absences must have a valid reason such as: medical/family emergencies, religious holidays, and other circumstances at the discretion of the advisor(s).

3. Term Limits

An officer may not hold office for more than one year (January-January).

4. Removal

An officer may be removed for not fulfilling APSA Chapter Officer duties.

Any officer of the APSA Chapter in violation of the chapter's purpose or constitution may be removed from office by the following process:

- a. A written request by at least three members of the chapter.
- b. Written notification to the officer of the request, asking the officer to be present at the next meeting and prepared to speak.
- c. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote is necessary to remove the officer.

5. Meetings

Section A. General Chapter Meetings

General Chapter Meetings should meet a minimum of once per month during the academic school year. Any member of the APSA Chapter Officers Board may call for additional meetings if necessary.

Section B. Quorum

1. A quorum for APSA Chapter Officers Board or General Chapter Meeting shall be a majority of the current membership of the Board members, Chapter, or general members, respectively. Two-thirds of active members are required to be present prior to voting on an official or final action regarding a matter before Rowan-Virtua SOM APSA.

Section C. Operating Procedure

1. Meetings shall be structured according to an agenda agreed upon by the Board and formatted by the chapter Secretary. New matters from the general members, as allowed by the Board, shall take place at the end of the meeting.
2. Example of chronological meeting structure:
 - Attendance
 - Meeting agenda by the President
 - Research presentation by a chapter member
 - Committee reports

- Vote on all committee motions and decisions
- Upcoming events announcements
- Any other business put forward by the members of the club
- Dismissal by the President

Section D. Minutes

1. Minutes of Board meetings and General Chapter meetings shall be recorded, processed, and circulated to their respective members by the end of the respective calendar day. This is to be executed by the chapter Secretary.

Section F. Voting

1. Each member who is able to vote and who is present at any meeting shall be required to cast one vote on each matter introduced, unless that member states a conflict of interest.

6. APSA Chapter Officers Executive Board Meetings

Board meetings will be held preceding the membership meeting to discuss the meeting agenda, attend to the items outlined in Article IV (Officer expectations and assigned duties), and to discuss the progress of committee activities (Article V). Attendance is mandatory for all Members except with valid excuse. A maximum of one unexcused absence will be permitted in an academic year.

ARTICLE VII – FINANCES

The APSA Chapter will finance the activities it engages in by the following means: applying for funding through Rowan-Virtua SOM medical (Student Council funds and Research Office Funds) and graduate schools (TBES Student Activity fee), hosting fundraisers, and applying for grants available through the national APSA chapter.

ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS

The constitution is binding to all members of the APSA Chapter. But the constitution is not binding unto itself. Any member in good standing may submit proposed constitutional amendments to the APSA Chapter Officers Board. The Board will disseminate the proposed amendment in writing to the members at least 30 days prior to voting at the next scheduled association meeting. A two-thirds membership majority is required for amendment approval. Upon membership authorization, the amendment must be presented to the APSA Chapter Officers Board for final approval.

Following elections of new officers, the outgoing and incoming officers will review the constitution. Any proposed changes or amendments will be presented to the membership at the

next monthly meeting and will be voted on. A two-thirds membership majority is required for approval.

ARTICLE IX- Status within the Rowan-Virtua School of Osteopathic Medicine

- General membership is open to DO students, DO/PhD students, and TBES students, Rowan University undergraduate students and/or premedical students and Our Lady of Lourdes nursing students will be acknowledged as “associate” members with no ability to join the executive office.
- However: only DO students and DO/PhD students are eligible for Executive Board positions. This is due to funding being provided by Rowan-Virtua SOM Student Council funds, Rowan-Virtua TBES student activity fees, and Rowan-Virtua SOM Research Office funds.