

# Constitution of the Undergraduate Astrophysics Society

## *1. Name of Organization*

The name of this organization is the Undergraduate Astrophysics Society or abbreviated as the UAS. The UAS is affiliated with the University Of Florida Department Of Astronomy.

## *2. Purpose*

The UAS is a non-profit organization which has three primary purposes:

a) To prepare undergraduate astronomy and physics majors for a professional career in astronomy through:

- 1) Discussions.
- 2) Guest speakers, including presentations from faculty, graduate students, and outside professionals in astronomy, with topics such as current research as well as advice of career and educational planning.
- 3) Free tutoring in astronomy, math, and physics for members by members.
- 4) Informal interaction with the departmental faculty.
- 5) Formal attendance at departmental events (i.e. colloquia, journal clubs, etc.).
- 6) Participation/Volunteering in public nights at the teaching observatory.
- 7) Planned trips including visits to Rosemary Hill Observatory.
- 8) Preparation of undergraduate members for graduate admission applications by reviewing the requirements and studying for the physics GRE.

- b) To actively pursue new members to join the UF astronomy program through:
  - 1) Contact with high school students and community college transfers.
  - 2) Outreach to current UF students.
- c) To assist the Department of Astronomy in any way possible by:
  - 1) Volunteering and participating in department events.

The UAS and all its members will abide by the rules and regulations of the University of Florida.

### ***3. Membership***

Membership is open to all UF registered students, including graduate students and postbacs, faculty, staff, and student spouses. It is not limited to those planning to pursue professional careers in astronomy, but to all who have an interest in astronomy in general. Membership applications will be available from the club's secretary at any formal meeting of the UAS and also at the UAS web page. Conditions of membership are:

- a) Each membership lasts for one academic year beginning in the Fall-semester. Students who are attending school for only one semester of the academic year are not limited in membership acceptance.
- b) The UAS will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability.
- c) Members may have their membership revoked without a refund at any time, by a majority vote of officers, if they violate the rules of conduct stated in the student handbook or if they grossly misrepresent the constitution of the UAS.
- d) If a member does not renew their membership at the beginning of the following academic year it will be automatically canceled.
- e) Members will not be subjected to any form of hazing and/or sexual harassment, which is prohibited and punishable by state laws.

f) Any member wishing to leave or disassociate themselves from the UAS can do so without fear of retribution or harassment. Club dues will not be refunded.

g) Any member who meets the following requirements is considered in "Good Standing" with the UAS:

1) Has paid club dues in full.

2) Takes an active part in the astronomy department by attending colloquia and/or journal club, attending and/or volunteering at public nights, public outreach, tutoring, recruiting, etc.

#### ***4. Meetings***

Meetings will be held once every two weeks for about one-hour. Special meetings can be called in addition to the regular meetings if deemed necessary by the President. The procedure for a typical meeting will be as follows:

a) Refreshments will be served.

b) The meeting will be called to order by either the President or Vice-President.

c) There will be a brief 10-15 minute discussion on official business (finances, calendar of events, attendance, etc.).

d) One or more members, faculty, or guest speakers will then give a presentation on topics of particular interest to the undergraduate astronomy student.

e) Non-members who meet the criteria for membership and faculty are welcome to sit in on UAS meetings but cannot vote or take part in the business aspect of the meetings.

f) The dates and times of meetings will be established during the first meeting of each semester according to the officers' availability.

g) An officer meeting may be called to discuss a new amendment to the constitution. A final draft must be proposed at the next regular meeting for ratification.

h) An organizational officer meeting must be held prior to the first regular meeting of a new academic year.

## ***5. Finance***

The UAS will be funded by:

a) The Department of Astronomy.

b) Club dues:

1) The cost of club dues is \$5 per semester. However, during the fall semester, you can pay a maximum of \$10 for the full year.

2) Club dues are to be paid to the treasurer before the third meeting in order to stay in "Good Standing" with the UAS.

3) Other individual, optional, expenses may arise including the making/selling of hats and T-shirts, joining the American Astronomical Society, etc.

c) Club fundraisers.

d) Organizational and corporate sponsorship.

A projected budget for each semester is to be established by the second regular meeting of each semester by the President, Vice-President and Treasurer. Any requests for funds must be made in writing and turned in to the Treasurer. The Treasurer will keep the president informed of transactions. After purchases are made all receipts are to be turned in to the Treasurer for filing.

## ***6. Officers***

The officers of the UAS will be as follows:

a) President

1) Conducts all meetings.

- 2) Serves as head of the UAS.
- 3) Takes an active part in the functionality of the UAS.
- 4) Guides the other officers and members in a direction that upholds the overall purposes of the UAS.
- 5) Actively seeks new funding venues and sponsorship.
- 6) Keeps all records and notes.

b) Vice-President

- 1) Acts as President in the absence of the President.
- 2) Serves as President in the case of impeachment or resignation of the president for the remainder of the term.
- 3) Helps to oversee the general progress of the club's objectives.

c) Treasurer

- 1) Collects and holds all club dues as well as other monetary gains from fundraisers, donations, sponsorships, etc.
- 2) Keeps an accurate record of all financial transactions, including receipts, expenses, and bills outstanding.
- 3) The Treasurer will also keep an accurate record of members' dues status (paid, not paid, and partially paid).
- 4) Any requests for funds must be made in writing and turned in to the Treasurer. The Treasurer will keep the president informed of transactions. After purchases are made all receipts are to be turned in to the Treasurer for filing.

d) Secretary

- 1) Will keep and organize all paperwork related to the UAS.

- 2) Will record the minutes at each meeting and maintain all official UAS books.
- 3) Will summarize the previous meeting in a short description and submit it to the webmaster to be posted on the UAS web page.
- 4) Keep all phone numbers and email addresses relevant to the UAS current and accessible to all officers.
- 5) Oversees the clubs monthly/weekly newsletter.

e) Ambassador (Public Relations Officer)

- 1) Carries out all public relations duties on behalf of UAS.
- 2) Hosts guest speakers in conjunction with the President and Vice-President.
- 3) Communicates on behalf of the UAS with the University of Florida, the UF Department of Astronomy, and its faculty in conjunction with either the President or Vice-President.
- 4) Acts as contact person for the UAS in conjunction with either the President or Vice-President. He/She is to explain the UAS and its constitutional purposes to all new members or anyone interested in becoming a member.
- 5) Corresponds with High School and Community Colleges students who are interested in the undergraduate astronomy program at UF.
- 6) Represents the UAS to any group or organization the UAS may come in contact with.
- 7) Note: the Ambassador should have good people skills and be able to present a professional overall attitude and appearance. They should not be timid or hesitant to speak in front of a crowd.

f) Historian

1) Will take photographs at all events that UAS is a part of. All photos will be submitted either to the President or the Webmaster to be posted on the web page and stored in a secure place.

2) Will assist the Webmaster with the gallery on the UAS web page if needed.

3) It is not required but preferred that the Historian own a digital camera.

g) Webmaster

1) Will maintain and update the UAS web page as needed.

2) Must be familiar enough with computers to perform said maintenance and updates.

h) Faculty Advisor

1) There must always be at least one faculty advisor for the UAS.

2) The Faculty Advisor(s) must be from the Department of Astronomy and must hold the rank of professor, assistant professor, or associate professor.

3) In the case that a new Faculty Advisor is required, at any point-in-time, his/her election process is as follows:

a) The President will confer with the members and officers, and through a majority vote, decide which faculty member to issue an invitation to (along with one or two other possible requests).

b) An invitation will be sent out to the initially requested advisor, and if the request is approved then he/she will be appointed as the club advisor.

c) If the invitation request is denied, then the next requested advisor will be sent an invitation, until the request is accepted.

4) The faculty advisors term is at the discretion of the organization, with the desired minimum time to serve of one full academic year. But under

most circumstances the term served is at the discretion of the faculty advisor.

5) Advisors will help guide the club (via the officers) in the direction that is most beneficial for a professional degree in astronomy and astrophysics. The Faculty Advisor will challenge the members of the UAS by posing ideas and suggestions as well as mentoring their progress as students and astronomers. Faculty advisors council and serve the students, and the UAS, as a resource person as well as to assist in the area of program content and purpose.

6) An important role of the Faculty Advisor is to maintain the continuity of the group as members graduate. The Faculty Advisor provides consistency and communicates goals to future generations of members and officers.

7) Faculty advisors may withdraw their participation at any time. A replacement Faculty Advisor must be found immediately, following the same process as any Faculty Advisor election.

8) Note: the faculty advisor does not have to pay dues but can vote on business.

These positions are not mutually exclusive. The president can also be elected treasurer or secretary but not both. The vice president can likewise be elected treasurer or secretary but not both. In order to maintain UAS, the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Faculty Advisor positions must all be held. The Ambassador, Historian and Webmaster are important positions, but may be vacant for a term due to lack of participation. All officers must have a good understanding of the constitution as well as the UF student handbook, and must abide by the clubs said rules and requirements.

## ***7. Elections and Impeachment***

a) Elections are to be held during the last meeting of the academic year, through secret ballot by all eligible and present members.

b) All officers must be voted in by a majority vote of all members in attendance.

c) In the case that a new Faculty Advisor is required, at any point-in-time, his/her election process is as follows:

1) The President will confer with the members and officers, and through a majority vote, decide which faculty member to issue an invitation to (along with one or two other possible requests).

2) An invitation will be sent out to the initially requested advisor, and if the request is approved then he/she will be appointed as the club advisor.

3) If the invitation request is denied, then the next requested advisor will be sent an invitation, until the request is accepted.

4) If it is known that a faculty advisor is to be leaving at the end of the semester then the voting process will take place the week prior to officer elections or the last meeting of the given semester.

d) Non-members who meet the criteria for membership and faculty are welcome to sit in but are unable to vote.

e) The president must be a registered undergraduate astronomy major.

f) Officers will serve their term effective immediately after the election until the last meeting of the next academic year.

g) An officer may resign at any time in writing given to the President or Vice President. An election will be held at the beginning of the next regular meeting to replace that officer.

h) In the case of resignation of the President the Vice-President automatically takes over as president until the end of the term and an election is then held at the following regular meeting to fill the vacant position of Vice-President.

i) Any officer can be impeached by a 2/3-majority vote of all members only if he or she has violated one of the following:

1) Grossly misrepresented the UAS as stated in the club's constitution.

2) Grossly misrepresented the UF Department of Astronomy.

3) Violated civil, state, or federal laws while representing the UAS.

4) Violated UF laws and regulations as stated in the student handbook.

j) Should a position not be filled during the elections in the last regular meeting of the academic year, another election may be held during the first regular meeting of the academic year to fill that position.

k) After the election, the President will see that all (organized) UAS records are passed on to the new President.

## ***8. Committees***

a) Will be appointed as necessary by the acting President.

b) The members of each committee will be on a volunteer basis only.

c) Committees will have a chair and a Secretary, to be decided by the members.

d) The President or Vice-President must authorize all business proposed by a committee. The authorizing officer must notify the other officer immediately of any new committee business.

e) A committee must be comprised of at least two persons.

## ***9. Amendments***

a) Any member may propose an amendment to the constitution of UAS during a regular meeting as long as it meets a specific need for the club. Any formal amendment proposals must be written and submitted to the President.

b) An officer meeting may be called to discuss a new amendment to the constitution. A final draft must be proposed at the next regular meeting for ratification.

c) All proposals must be seconded for consideration and ratified by a majority vote of all members in the UAS.

d) If the amendment is ratified it will then be added to the constitution the next time it is updated.

e) The constitution should be reviewed once a year by the current officers and updated as necessary.

Voted on and revised last by the officers of the UAS on August 21, 2007