

## **GEOBIOLOGY AND GEOMICROBIOLOGY DIVISION**

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**Article I**  
***Organization, Name, and Purpose***

1. This division of The Geological Society of America, Inc., is organized in accordance with Article IX, *Divisions of the Society*, of the bylaws of that Society and is governed by the provisions of that article.
2. *Name.* The name of the division is the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology (GBGM) Division of The Geological Society of America, Inc.
3. *Definition.* The Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division is defined as the division for all Geological Society of America members who combine geological research with some aspect of biology. Fields currently within this Division include: biogeochemistry, biomineralogy, microbiology, geochemical ecology, paleontology, micropaleontology, origins of life and co-evolution of planets and life, paleobiology and paleoecology, molecular paleontology and ecology, systems modeling and informatics, and astrobiology.
4. *Purpose.* The Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division is concerned with the interface of biology and geology and the integration of these disciplines through time and across space. The interests of the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division focus on geology and its relationship to life (on Earth and potentially other planets) today, in the future, and through geological time. The Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division will work to:
  - Unite biologists and geologists from a broad spectrum of subdisciplines.
  - Promote both the broad scope and detailed disciplinary work demanded of rigorous interdisciplinary research.
  - Foster this emerging spectrum of fields by active encouragement and mentoring of students and early career scientists.
  - Encourage the development of a geobiology community, which supports its members of all cultures (scientific and non-scientific), ages, genders, sexual orientations, races, and ethnicities.
  - Advise and assist the officers and committees of GSA in matters related to geobiology and geomicrobiology.

**Article II**  
***Membership***

1. *Categories:* Any Member, Fellow, Honorary Fellow, or Affiliate of the Geological Society of America who is in good standing may become a member of the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division. To effect division membership, an applicant shall express his/her desire on the GSA application or membership renewal forms or in writing to the secretary of the division or the executive director of the Society. All division members in good standing are eligible to vote and to hold office in the division.

2. *Voting Rights:* Individual Members in the Division, in good standing, all have full and equal voting rights and are entitled to one vote on Division matters, except as outlined in the Bylaws and in the Rules and Regulations of the Division as described and outlined in Article VIII. An individual whose current dues to both the Division and Society have been paid is in good standing.
3. *Expectation of Ethical Behavior:* The Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division expects all its members to practice ethical behavior and to follow the GSA code of Conduct ([www.geosociety.org/GSA/Membership/Code\\_of\\_Conduct/GSA/Membership/Code\\_of\\_Conduct.aspx](http://www.geosociety.org/GSA/Membership/Code_of_Conduct/GSA/Membership/Code_of_Conduct.aspx)) at all GSA-related functions and throughout their professional life. Any member that does not adhere to this code of conduct will not be welcome in the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division. Further, inappropriate behavior will be immediately reported to GSA.

### **Article III** ***Finances***

1. *Responsibility:* The Society shall be financially responsible for normal expenses of the Division. All other financial obligations or commitments of the Division must have prior approval of the Council. The Division General Fund is managed by the Society.
2. *Dues:* The Division may collect annual dues or special assessments from Division members when recommended by its management board and approved by a majority vote of the voting Division members at the Annual Business Meeting or by ballot.
3. *Contributions:* The Division may solicit and accept contributions of funds to be used and expended under supervision of its management board and subject to Council approval.
4. *Bequests:* Any future bequests to the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division, and all subsequent donations to such funds are to be kept intact, and only the proceeds will be used in accordance with standard procedures of the GSA Foundation, except that the management board will have the power to utilize portions of the principal in the case of a clear emergency and only by unanimous vote of the management board, or by amendment of the bylaws in accordance with established procedure.

### **Article IV** ***Officers, Management Board, and Advisory Board***

1. *Officers.* The officers of the division shall be a chair, a vice-chair, a past chair, a treasurer, and a secretary. All officers shall each be elected for terms of two years. The terms of office shall begin immediately following the annual business meeting at which the results of the election are announced.

2. *Management Board.* The management board shall consist of the chair, the vice-chair, the treasurer, the secretary, and the immediate past chair of the division.

The management of the affairs and the property of the division shall be the responsibility of the management board of the division. The management of the division shall be in accordance with the bylaws of the Society.

At the annual business meeting, the management board shall submit a report of the preceding year's activities of the division, which shall include the reports of the chair and treasurer as well as reports of the various committees. This report shall be submitted before September 15 of the following year by the secretary of the division to the executive director of the Society. The report will be presented to the affiliates of the division in the division's newsletter or via online communications.

3. *Election of Officers.* Every two years, any candidate can self-nominate for the division positions of the office of vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary. When approved by the division management board, these nominations shall become the regular ticket and shall be submitted by the secretary of the division to the executive director of the Society, who shall have prepared and distributed to the voting members of the division a ballot which shall also have space for write-in nominees.
4. *Student representative, Ex-Officio.* The Division may elect, or the Management Board may nominate and appoint, two student representatives as ex-officio non-voting members of the Division Management Board. The student representatives can be undergraduate or graduate students and shall advise on matters concerning GSA student and early career issues, as well as Division outreach to a young audience including social media. The student representative shall serve a two-year term and nominations are staggered (one each year) so there is always an experienced student representative to advise and assist the incoming student representative.
5. *Removal of a Management Board Officer, Impeachment.* Any officer of the division who fails to perform the duties prescribed in the bylaws, or who is convicted of a felony, or who brings discredit to the GSA or the Division in any way, may be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the other members of the management board of the division. Any officer of the division may make a motion for the impeachment of any other officer of the division. The officer who is the subject of an impeachment must be provided an opportunity to present arguments against the impeachment prior to any vote on the motion.
6. *Qualifications.* Nominees and officers must be members in good standing of the Society and the Division.
7. *Election Procedures.* The election of officers shall be in accordance with the election procedures of the Society and shall be under the supervision of the Society. All provisions governing the election of officers of the Society which are applicable to the

division shall govern the election of officers of the division. In the event of a tie vote for elected office, the management board shall decide the winner.

8. *Re-election.* No person shall be eligible to serve more than one consecutive term as chair or vice-chair of the division, except in extreme emergency and with the unanimous approval of the management board and the president of the Society. The secretary and treasurer shall be permitted to serve for consecutive terms if approved by the management board. The normal progression in office is from vice-chair to chair to past chair. Normally, these offices are only held once by any person. In accordance with Article VI, Section 3 of the bylaws of the Society, the chair and vice-chair shall not be eligible for re-election to their respective offices until at least three (3) years have elapsed from the expiration of their terms of office.
9. *Vacancies.* Any vacancy occurring during the term of any elected officer of the division shall be filled by appointment of the management board, and such appointee shall serve until the next annual business meeting of the division.
10. *Expenses of the Management Board.* No member of the management board may be reimbursed from the funds of the division for their traveling expenses when attending meetings of the division. The management board may authorize expenses for attendance of any member of the division, including members of the management board, for attendance at the annual division chairs' meeting of the Society or other functions of the Society or division as deemed appropriate. Travel expenses may be paid for by the division for any special function of the division, such as a distinguished lecture series, or any meeting or function deemed in the best interest of the division by the management board. These travel expenses must be authorized by the management board (either by vote of the board or through consensus of the chair, vice chair, and treasurer).
11. *Appointed Members of the Management Board.* Each Adhering Associated Society shall be permitted to appoint one Representative to the Management Board. These need not be Geological Society of America members. A Council Liaison to the division is appointed by the President of the Geological Society of America.

## **Article V**

### ***Powers and Duties of Officers (Management)***

1. *Management Board.* The property and affairs of the division shall be managed by the management board as defined in Article IV.

At the annual business meeting, the management board shall submit a report of the preceding year's activities of the division, which shall include the reports of the chair and treasurer as well as reports of the various committees. This report shall be submitted at least one month before the annual meeting by the treasurer of the division to the executive director of the Society. The report shall be made available to the members of

the division. All actions of the management board are subject to the bylaws of the Geological Society of America.

2. *Chair.* The chair shall preside at the annual meetings of the division and meetings of the management board. The chair shall submit a report to the management board of the activities of the division during his/her term of office and on future plans.
3. *Vice-Chair.* The (first) vice-chair shall assume the powers and duties of the chair in the event of the absence or disability of the chair. Such absence or disability is to be determined by a majority vote of the Management Board.

The vice-chair works with the division representative on the Joint Technical Program Committee (JTPC) for the Annual Meeting Program. The vice-chair will coordinate the appointing of representatives to organize technical sessions for section meetings (typically members of the Division Management Board).

4. *Second Vice-Chair.* Currently the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology division does not have a second vice chair. Should the division grow to the point where the management board believes a second vice chair is necessary, the following would be the responsibility of the second vice chair (until such times, these duties will be handled by the vice chair). The second vice-chair shall assume the chair whenever both the chair and the first vice-chair are not available. Such absence or disability is to be determined by a majority vote of the management board. The second vice-chair serves as a member of the Program Committee for the annual meeting and works with the division representative on the JTPC for the annual meeting. The second vice-chair will assist the editor in preparing a newsletter.
5. *Treasurer.* The treasurer shall maintain liaison with Geological Society of America headquarters and shall serve, ex officio, as a member of all committees. The treasurer shall collect and disburse all funds of the Division and shall keep records of all receipts and disbursements and other financial transactions of the Division. The treasurer shall account to the Geological Society of America Council for all funds advanced by the Geological Society of America.
6. *Secretary.* The secretary shall act as secretary of the management board and shall keep and archive the records of the division. The secretary shall notify the officers and the members of the committees of their election or appointment and shall arrange for issuance of notices of all division and management board meetings and of election results. He/she shall maintain liaison with Geological Society of America headquarters and shall serve, ex officio, as a member of all committees.
7. *Past Chair.* The past chair shall serve as an advisor to the chair, forms some of the corporate memory of the division, and chairs the Nominations Committee.
8. *Joint Technical Program Committee (JTPC) Representative.* The JTPC representative is responsible for coordinating the Program Committee for the annual meeting, including

but not limited to: communicating with session advocates regarding Division sponsorship; overseeing session timing in the general program; and acting as a liaison for session chairs in organizing speakers. The vice-chair shall supervise planning for the division technical sessions or symposia to be held at the Annual Meeting of the succeeding year.

9. *Representatives of Each Adhering Associated Society.* Each Adhering Associated Society to the Division appoints one representative to the management board who both represents those societies and acts as a liaison back to their respective society.
10. *Student Representatives (2).* The Division Management Board may nominate and appoint, two (undergraduate or graduate) student representatives as an ex-officio non-voting members of the Division Management Board. The student representatives shall advise on matters concerning GSA student and early career issues, as well as Division outreach to a young audience including social media. The student representative shall serve a two-year term (staggered). Student representatives are also charged with coordinating the judging of student presentations at the annual Geological Society of America meeting. The student representatives will serve on the Student Advisory Council.

## **Article VI**

### ***Committees and Division Representatives***

1. *Formation of Committees.* The chair of the division, with the concurrence of the management board, shall establish whatever committees are required to help the division function effectively. All committee members, including the committee chair, shall be appointed by the chair of the division with advice of the management board, unless required otherwise in these Bylaws. Only the chair of the committee need be a member of the Division, but all committee members must be members of either the Geological Society of America or an Adhering Associated Society. The division secretary shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of every committee. Members of the management board are not normally appointed as committee members.
2. *Program Committee.* The Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division Management Board is, for the time being, the *de facto* program committee. The program committee will plan and arrange for the technical sessions of the division at the annual meeting and such other programs as may be directed by the management board.

The program committee is responsible for the technical sessions of the division at the annual meeting and such other programs as may be directed by the management board.

3. *Publications Committee.* At this time the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division does not have a Publications Committee.

4. *Nominating Committee.* The Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division Management Board functions as the Nominating Committee.
5. *Award Committees.* The Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division Management Board functions as the Awards Committee.
6. *Other Committees.* The Division Chair, with the approval of the Management Board, may appoint other committee chairs. Appointment of committee members will be the responsibility of the respective committee chairs.
7. *Responsibility.* Reports, recommendations, or other actions by appointed committees, other than the Nominating Committee, shall be subject to the approval of the Management Board. After such approval, the Secretary of the Division shall report appropriately to the Executive Director of the Society if the attention or action of the Council is required. Appointed committees shall present annual reports which shall be summarized in the annual report of the Management Board.
8. *Tenure.* Committee appointments shall expire at the close of the next annual meeting of the Division, unless otherwise specified. Vacancies on committees may be filled by interim appointment at any time by the committee chair. Committee members may be reappointed to serve a maximum of three years.
9. *Committee Vacancies.* Vacancies on committees may be filled by interim appointments at any time by the committee chair, with the approval of the division chair. Vacancies of committee chairs may be filled by appointment of division chair.
10. *Division Representatives.* In order to facilitate effective communication and interaction between the division and other components of the Geological Society of America and (or) other related scientific societies, the chair may appoint, at his/her discretion, with advice of the management board, members in good standing of the division, to serve as representatives to these other entities. The responsibilities and the terms of these division appointees shall be defined when created and recorded in guidelines in the Division Rules and Procedures Handbook. Individuals serving in these posts shall serve at the pleasure of the division chair.

## **Article VII**

### ***Meetings***

1. *Annual Business Meeting.* The annual business meeting of the division shall be held during the annual meeting of the Society. Awards or other special recognition by the division shall be presented at this meeting.
2. *Special Meetings.* In addition to the annual business meeting, the chair, with the concurrence of the management board, may call a special meeting of the members of the division at any time and place, provided such meetings shall be held in conjunction with a



function of the Society and have received GSA Council approval. The purpose of a special meeting may be to conduct any business affecting the welfare of the division, except that the installation of new officers must occur at the annual meeting of the Society.

3. *Standing and ad hoc Committee Meetings.* While in-person meetings of these committees are desirable, meetings may be conducted in person, by telephone, by fax, by correspondence, by e-mail, or by any combination of means of communication that the committee chair may direct.
4. *Special Meetings.* In addition to the annual business meeting, the chair, with the concurrence of the management board, may call a special meeting of the members of the Division at any time and place, provided such meetings shall be held in conjunction with a function of the Society and have received Geological Society of America Council approval. Meetings may also be conducted over conference call, Skype, or a similar means of electronic communication. The purpose of a special meeting may be to conduct any business affecting the welfare of the Division, except that the installation of new officers must occur at the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America.
5. *Quorum.* A simple majority of the officers of the division shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the membership of the division or of the management board. At any meeting of any committee, the committee members present shall constitute a quorum. Any meeting may proceed or be adjourned without the presence of a quorum, but any vote or action taken during or as a result of any meeting shall be considered legal and binding only if a quorum is present.
6. *Technical Sessions.* Technical sessions of the division shall be held during the annual and regional meetings of the Society. Cooperative meetings with other societies, or other special programs, may be held at any time, subject to the approval of the management board. The participation of non-members of the Society who are engaged or interested in the relationship and engagement of the geological sciences with the broad interests of general society shall be encouraged at all technical sessions.
7. *Symposia.* Research symposia of the division are encouraged and may be held during the annual meeting of the Society or during regional meetings. The division's program committee will appoint symposia chairs. The symposia chairs and the program committee will determine symposia topics.
8. *Informal Meetings.* The management board and program committee may schedule informal research meetings during the annual and regional meetings of the Society.
9. *Open Meeting Rule.* All in-person meetings of the board or committees of the division shall be open to division members who wish to observe all or part of the proceedings. Observers may participate in the proceedings only upon invitation of the person presiding over the meeting.

10. *Scientific Sessions.* Technical sessions, research symposia, or other types of special programs of the Division can be held during both the annual and section meetings of the Geological Society of America and meetings of the Adhering Associated Societies or other societies at any time, subject to the approval of the Management Board. The participation of non-members of the Society who are engaged or interested in relevant areas shall be encouraged at all scientific sessions.
11. *Meetings of the Management Board.* The annual meeting of the management board shall be held in the month prior to the annual business meeting of the division. Special meetings of the management board may be called at any time by the division chair or by a majority of the officers. Meetings of the management board may be conducted in person, by telephone, by fax, by Skype (or similar service), by correspondence, by e-mail, or by any combination of means of communication that the chair may direct. Ideally, the annual meeting of the management board should be an in-person meeting held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Society; however, if this is not feasible, a special meeting may be held instead (i.e., a virtual meeting or conference call).

### **Article VIII** ***Division Awards***

1. *Primary Award.* The Division shall sponsor no more than one professional award to be presented at the annual GSA meeting. At the current time, the division does not award a “Primary Award”. The final award recipient names will be sent to GSA (for ratification at the GSA Spring Council meeting), no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. *Other Awards.* The Division may sponsor other awards, recognitions, and grants as approved by the Management Board. Currently, these constitute the Pre-Tenure Excellence Award, the Post-Tenure Excellence Award, and the Distinguished Career Award, as well as four Student Presentation Awards (described below). The nominations for the Distinguished Career, Pre-Tenure, and Post-Tenure Awards will be solicited from current division members and be based, specifically, on sustained excellence in research, mentoring, service, and leadership for the geobiology and geomicrobiology community that is appropriate to the candidate’s position. From these nominations, the Division management board and appointed Division committee of awards will come to a consensus on the awardees. The awards will consist of both a plaque as well as an honorary membership to the division should the awardee not be a current member. The final award recipient names will be sent to GSA no later than August 1<sup>st</sup>.
3. *Student Presentation Awards.* Four Student Presentation Awards will be made to student presenters that participate in the annual Geological Society of America Meeting (two awards for oral presentations and two awards for poster presentations). Awardees will be selected by an ad-hoc committee of presentation judges that are division members at the postdoctoral or professional level (e.g., professors, researchers, etc.). This committee will be coordinated by the GBGM student representatives. All students that volunteer to be judged will receive the judges’ written feedback on their presentations. Winners will

receive a “field appropriate” book (or similar award), typically donated by a division member.

4. *Research Grants.* The Division does not currently sponsor any research grants.

## **Article IX**

### ***Division Communications: Newsletter, Website, and Online Outreach***

1. *Communications.* The Division will need to communicate not only to reach its own members, but also to members of the Adhering Associated Societies as well as other Geological Society of America members. Communication of the Division shall be structured in such a manner so that the Adhering Associated Societies can easily indicate the activities of the division to their members.
2. *Newsletter.* The division currently has a blog *in lieu* of a newsletter. The blog will be updated on a regular basis as prescribed by the management board (see below), which shall be distributed to all division members by means determined by the management board. If, in future, a newsletter is made, the newsletter editor shall be appointed by the management board and shall serve at the discretion of the management board.
3. *Website.* The division shall maintain a website linked to the Geological Society of America’s division web page. The management board may, at its discretion, appoint a division web manager to maintain the division website, or the secretary (or other board member) may take on the role. If the management board appoints a web manager, the web manager shall serve at the discretion of the management board.
4. *Blog and Social Media.* Currently the Geobiology and Geomicrobiology Division hosts a Blog (<https://gsageobiology.blogspot.com>), a Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/GSAGEobiology/](http://www.facebook.com/GSAGEobiology/)) and a Twitter account ([https://twitter.com/GSA\\_Geobio](https://twitter.com/GSA_Geobio)). These social media accounts (and any additional accounts set up in future) are primarily the responsibility of the student representatives, although any member of the management board or the web manager may also post on these forums.

## **Article X**

### ***Rules and Amendments of the Bylaws***

1. *Rules and Regulations.* The management board of the division, by a majority vote, may adopt, rescind, or amend rules supplementing the bylaws. These are contained in a written Division Rules and Procedures Handbook. Changes in the Handbook, other than those proposed and adopted by the management board, may be proposed by any committee or member of the division. These proposed changes must be received electronically or in writing by the secretary of the division at least sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting to be considered by the management board.

2. *Bylaws.* Subject to ratification by the Council, bylaws of the division may be adopted, rescinded, or amended by majority vote of the voting affiliates of the division. A ballot vote proposing a change of the bylaws shall be held if favored by a majority of the management board or if petitioned by ten percent of the voting affiliates of the division. Such vote shall be supervised by the Society and held in accordance with the procedures of the Society.

*May 17, 2001: Established by Council.*

*Oct. 21, 2006: Bylaws amendments approved by GSA Council (2-yr officer terms; officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer).*

*October 2007: Language amended to conform with the new GSA policy on who can vote and hold office.*

*October 2010: Article VIII, Division Awards, item 1 rewritten, added item 2.*

*February 2019: revised and edited Bylaws, as requested by GSA Council.*