**Constitution and Bylaws of the Liberty University Scientific Research Society**

Article I: Name

The name of this club shall be “Scientific Research Society.”

Article II: Purpose Statement

The Scientific Research Society exists to equip Liberty University students to become excellent scientists and researchers for the sake of Christ. The major goals of the Society are to provide Liberty University students with (1) information about research conducted within the Department of Biology and Chemistry and the Liberty University College of Osteopathic Medicine, (2) experiences designed to help develop specific skills required of student researchers, and (3) opportunities for network-building between faculty members, existing student researchers, and prospective student researchers. The Society also aims to provide leadership and resume-building opportunities to Liberty University students already engaged in research.

Article III: Membership

Section 1: Qualifications for Membership

Any interested undergraduate Liberty University student is eligible for membership in the Society. There is no academic requirement for membership, and students of any major or course of study are welcome to join. Liberty University graduate students and faculty members may join the Society as Associate Members. Associate Members may not run for office and cannot serve as committee members, with the exception of the club’s Faculty Chair, who shall be a member of the Executive Committee and may serve on the Election Committee if needed.

Section 2: Requirements for Maintaining Membership

Members of the Society will be expected to regularly participate in one or more programs or events organized by the Society every semester other than the monthly meetings in order to maintain membership. This includes service as a Committee Member or Officer, participation in the Society’s Mentorship Program as a Mentor or Mentee, presentation of useful information to the club at a monthly meeting, or any other activity approved by the Executive Committee. Prolonged absence at all club events and activities will be taken as intent to withdraw membership. An individual’s membership status can be reviewed by the Officers of the Society during any semester of membership.

Section 3: Application Process

Students interested in becoming members of the Society must fill out a Membership Application written by the Officers of the Society and posted to the club webpage. The Membership Application may be reused from previous semesters or may be altered at the discretion of Society Officers. Prospective members will submit completed applications to the Society’s Secretary. Applications will be reviewed by the Officers on a rolling basis throughout the Fall and Spring semesters.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1: Officer Roles and Duties

President

The President of the Society is primarily responsible for developing the vision and direction of the Society as he or she seeks to accomplish the goals of the club.

Other duties include:

1. Lead Society events and monthly meetings
2. Plan and implement new programs and events to further Society goals
3. Establish and/or dissolve committees to reflect the needs of the Society in a given semester
4. Appoint qualified individuals to chair committees
5. Make any final decisions on behalf of the Society
6. Serve as a representative of the Society to Liberty University faculty and administration when needed
7. Delegate tasks to other Officers as needed

Vice President

The Vice President is expected to assist the President in the planning, organizing, and leading of Society events, programs, and meetings as needed. He or she will also be responsible for scheduling guest speakers and/or research faculty members to speak at Society meetings.

Other duties include:

1. Coordinate with the Department of Biology and Chemistry’s webpage manager to keep Society online information current and accurate
2. Organize any advertisements for Society events and meetings
3. Chair a committee if asked to do so by the President, circumstances permitting

Secretary

The Secretary for the Society is responsible for keeping minutes at monthly club meetings and Officer meetings, as well as maintaining up-to-date membership records.

Other duties include:

1. Serve as the Society’s representative with SGA in all matters possible:
	1. Stay informed of SGA policy, especially any SGA policy or rule changes. Notify relevant Officers of any changes when needed
	2. Submit event requests at least 3 weeks prior to any unfunded meeting or event, 5 weeks prior to any funded event. Event confirmations must be forwarded to the President and Treasurer upon receipt.
	3. Communicate with the Society’s SGA representative about any club needs or problems
	4. Aid the President as needed in situations requiring his or her involvement with SGA
2. Notify the other Officers when an individual has not met the minimum requirements for membership
3. Maintain the Society’s email list and any social media accounts
4. Chair a committee if asked to do so by the President, circumstances permitting

Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for managing Society funds and overseeing any expenditures on behalf of the Society.

Other duties include:

1. Submit funding requests to SGA at least 4 weeks in advance of any funded meeting or event
2. Oversee the purchase of any items to be used at club meetings or events, or arrange for someone else to do so if needed
3. Maintain meticulous records of Society income and expenditures and be prepared to give a summary report if requested by any member of the Executive Committee
4. Aid the President and/or Committee Chairs in planning the budget for any events to take place during the semester
5. Chair a committee if asked to do so by the President, circumstances permitting

Section 2: Prerequisites for Office

All officers must have completed at least two semesters of coursework at Liberty University prior to taking office and must meet the minimum qualifications for membership. All officers must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher, and are expected to maintain such a standard throughout their service to the Society.

President and Vice President Officers must have completed a minimum of two semesters of research experience prior to taking office, and must be of Junior or Senior status.

Secretary and Treasurer Officers must be currently working on a research project\* relevant to their course of study and/or future career or education ambitions to be considered for office. Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors are able to fill these positions.

\*Participation in the mentorship program under a mentor from a certain lab does NOT qualify as working on that project.

Section 3: Officer Terms

Terms of service for Officers will be one year coinciding with the academic school year. Officers will be selected in the Spring semester of the prior administration’s term, and will be expected to serve through the Fall and Spring semesters of the following school year.

Section 4: Officer Selection

All officers for the following school year will be selected during the Spring semester. In January, the President shall oversee the formation of the Election Committee, which will be responsible for appointing the next administration.

The Election Committee will meet in March prior to Spring Break in order to write the Officer Application. Officer Applications may be reused from previous years or altered at the discretion of the Election Committee. In April, at least four weeks after the release of the Officer Application, the Election Committee will meet to review applications, discuss applicants, and choose the Society President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer for the following school year by majority vote.

In the event that the President is unable to continue service to the Society for any reason during the academic year, the Vice President will be expected to assume the office of the President until the completion of that term. A new Vice President will be chosen by the remaining officers and faculty advisor within 4 weeks to serve for the remainder of that term.

Should an officer other than the President vacate their office for any reason during the academic year, the remaining officers and faculty advisor will choose a replacement within 4 weeks to serve for the remainder of that term.

In the event that two or more officers can no longer complete their duties for any reason, and none of the previous rules can be applied to remedy the situation, replacements will be chosen by general election to serve for the remainder of that term.

Section 5: Officer Termination

Officers may be removed from office at any time if they no longer meet the prerequisites for office, neglect their duties, are absent from more than one monthly meeting per semester, are deemed unfit for office, or voluntarily resign for any reason.

Any officer or Society member may request that the Executive Committee (excluding any officer in question) investigate the grounds for removing a specific officer from Society leadership. If the Executive Committee determines by a unanimous vote that a legitimate reason to remove the officer in question exists and that the officer’s removal would be in the best interest of the Society, then that officer will be removed from office, effective immediately. A suitable replacement will be appointed according to the rules of officer selection.

Article V: Faculty Advisor

The Faculty Advisor for the Scientific Research Society must be a current Liberty University Department of Biology and Chemistry faculty member who is actively conducting research. He or she shall serve as the primary advisor to the Officers of the Society and will be expected to represent the interests of the Society with Department of Biology and Chemistry administration on behalf of the club as needed. The faculty advisor will also serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

Article VI: Committees

Section 1: Establishment of Committees

New committees may be established at the discretion of the President in order to better equip the Society to accomplish club goals. Committees should be established within one month of the start of the Fall or Spring semesters. Committees will be composed of a Chair and four members. The President will appoint a Committee Chair, who will choose the four additional committee members. The Committee Chair is encouraged to select students they know to be qualified, and should inform the President of his or her selections prior to officially extending invitations. The President shall be permitted, but not required, to attend committee meetings and should be regularly updated on the actions of the committee. The President and Committee Chairs are free to establish any reasonable requirements for committee membership, including semesters of completed research experience, class designation, etc., according to the purpose of the committee. A Committee Chair’s term lasts until the appointment of a new Chair by the current or future President or the Chair’s resignation or graduation.

Newly established committees may only be classified as Standing Committees by amendment to the Society Constitution. Amendments can serve to establish a new Standing Committee or to reclassify an existing committee as a Standing Committee.

New committees will be expected to write a brief committee charter describing the purpose and goals of the committee, as well as the plan to accomplish these goals. Committee charters should be sent to the Society President and Secretary for club records by midterm.

Section 2: Maintenance of Established Committees

Any established committee will continue to exist until the President dissolves it. At the start of each academic year, a currently serving Committee Chair may keep this position for the following academic year unless the incoming President decides to appoint a new Chair for any reason or the Chair wishes to resign. The four membership positions will be filled at the discretion of the Committee Chair at the start of each academic year, and committee members are permitted to serve for more than one year if invited to do so.

Should a committee member resign within the academic year, the Committee Chair may appoint a suitable replacement. Should a Committee Chair resign within the academic year, one of the existing members will assume the role of Chair, as decided by the committee members. The new chair will choose a suitable replacement to fill the vacant member seat.

Society Officers can be Committee Chairs, but they cannot be committee members, with the exception of the Election Committee and the Executive Committee. In the event that a Committee Chair or member desires to run for an officer position and he or she is selected to be an officer by the Election Committee, they may request to continue involvement in their committee as the Committee Chair. This will be decided by the incoming President.

Section 3: Dissolution of Committees

Any committee that is not classified as a Standing Committee may be dissolved by the President within one month of the start of the Fall or Spring semesters if he or she decides the committee no longer serves an important purpose within the Society. This can be done by notifying the Committee Chair of the decision to dissolve the committee.

Standing Committees may be dissolved only by amendment to the Society Constitution.

Section 4: Standing Committees

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the President, Vice President, and Faculty Chair. In the event that one of the Executive Committee members is not qualified to serve on this committee in a particular instance, such as an investigation of one of the Executive Officers, the Society’s Secretary or Treasurer will serve in his or her place until the situation is resolved.

Mentorship Committee

The Mentorship Committee is responsible for the planning and operation of the Scientific Research Society’s Mentorship Program. It will be made up of one Committee Chair and four members. Requirements for membership in this committee are the completion of at least one semester of research experience prior to service as a member, the desire to make research at Liberty better by equipping younger students to succeed, and willingness to coordinate prospective student, current research student, and faculty interactions with discretion and integrity.

Election Committee

The Election Committee exists to appoint the leadership team for the next academic year during the Spring semester of a given term. Formation of the Committee will be overseen by the President at the start of the semester. It shall be chaired by any officer of the Society who is of Senior status (defined as graduating at the end of that semester), or the Faculty Advisor if no such officer exists. In addition to the Chair, there will be six members representing as many of the different research projects and disciplines within the Department of Biology and Chemistry as possible. All members are to be of Senior status with at least one year of completed research experience, though rare exceptions can be granted by the Executive Committee if it is determined that an individual’s service to the committee will be particularly beneficial.

Article VII: Meetings

Section 1: Officer Meetings

Officer meetings shall be called at the discretion of the President. Other officers may request that the President call the Officers together for any reason, but should not officially call a meeting. Meeting minutes should be kept by the Society Secretary.

Section 2: Club Meetings

Club meetings shall be scheduled at the beginning of a given semester by the Officers and should occur at least once monthly. Exceptions can be considered by the executive committee. Officers are expected to attend these meetings but are permitted one absence per semester. More than one absence could result in the individual’s removal from office. Detailed meeting minutes should be kept by the Society Secretary.

Article VIII: Duration and Dissolution

The Society can be dissolved at any time by unanimous vote of the officers and Faculty Chair.

Article IX: Amendments

An officer may propose an amendment to the Constitution at any time. Ratification of the amendment will require a majority vote of the officers and the Faculty Chair. Any officer wishing to propose a new amendment must be able to demonstrate how the change would benefit club goals before a vote can be held.