Constitution
University of Pittsburgh
Graduate School of Public Health

Article I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Student Public Health Epidemic Response Effort (SPHERE).

Article II – MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to foster the development of public health skills and expertise by training and engaging students in local outbreak investigations, emergency response efforts and community health events.

Article III – PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be:

○ To facilitate student involvement with local, county, and state public health professionals;
○ To instruct students in the fundamentals for responding to public health emergencies in Southwestern Pennsylvania;
○ To aid the Allegheny County Health Department, Pennsylvania State Health Department, and the Center for Public Health Preparedness with outbreak investigations and other special projects and programs;
○ To aid the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center with special projects and drills;
○ To expand resources and opportunities available to students;
○ To provide students with an opportunity to be involved in applied epidemiology

Article IV – MEMBERSHIP

Those considered eligible for membership on SPHERE are:

1. All GSPH students that demonstrate an interest in epidemiology and public health response and who can attend mandatory monthly meetings. SPHERE shall not discriminate on the basis on creed, ethnic origin, sex, age, political persuasion, sexual orientation, disability, or marital status.

2. Membership begins upon completion of a criminal and child abuse background checks, HIPAA online training modules, and confidentiality forms, and an outbreak training session.

3. Members attendance policies are left to be decided by the Executive Board.
Article V- OFFICERS and EXECUTIVE BOARD

1. The executive Board shall consist of a combination of the below designated positions and must be inclusive of a Chairperson and Financial Chairperson:

Elected positions of the Executive Board are the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, Financial Chairperson, Secretary and Liaison. These positions are elected from a general election described in Article V. No person shall hold more than one voting position on the Executive Board at any given time. The SPHERE Executive Board directs the general policy of SPHERE and shall be the governing body of SPHERE with the power to act on all matters for the interest of the organization consistent with the provisions of the bylaws, not limited to calling meetings of the membership, the filling of vacancies, and the authorization of expenditures.

a. Officers
   - 1 Chairperson, nominated annually by eligible SPHERE members and elected by the Executive Board
   - 1 Financial Co-Chairperson, nominated annually by eligible SPHERE members and elected by the Executive Board
   - 1 Recruitment and Training Co-Chairperson, nominated annually by eligible SPHERE members and elected by the Executive Board
   - 1 Secretary Co-Chairperson, nominated annually by eligible SPHERE members and elected by the Executive Board
   - 1 Liaison Co-Chairperson, nominated annually by eligible SPHERE members and elected by the Executive Board

b. Faculty/Staff Advisors
1-2 faculty or staff advisors who volunteer to be involved in SPHERE

c. Partners
Allegheny County Department of Health, Pennsylvania Department of Health, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Center for Public Health Preparedness, and the Pittsburgh Influenza Prevention Program, and other organizations who may be of interest to SPHERE in the future.

d. Purpose
The purpose of the Executive Board shall be to provide on-going oversight, guidance, and support for the organization by holding bi-monthly or monthly meetings as deemed necessary. The Executive Board is responsible for organizing monthly speakers and general meetings, and makes final decisions effecting SPHERE such as agreements to participate in events.
Article VI – MEETINGS

General Meetings of SPHERE shall be held at such times and places that the Executive Board designates, at the discretion of the faculty/staff advisors, at least once each semester. Proper notice of all meetings shall be given to all members, i.e. through the use of the SPHERE list serve.

Executive Board meetings and all other SPHERE meetings will be the responsibility of the SPHERE officers under the discretion of the SPHERE faculty advisers.

Article VII – FUNDS

Funds for the operation of SPHERE will be negotiated with the Center of Public Health Preparedness for the Fall 2007- Spring 2008 academic year. Beginning in Fall 2008, SPHERE shall receive funds from the Graduate School of Public Health Student Government Association. Funds should also be obtained through outside funding sources including community outreach grants and partnerships with public health agencies as appropriate.

The Financial Co-Chairperson and Faculty/Staff Advisors will be responsible for the management of all funds accrued by SPHERE.

Executive Board will project budget needs for different events, which will then be used to allocate funds for SPHERE events. If a SPHERE event needs extra funds for specific projects, the Financial Co-Chairperson will adjust the budget accordingly to make funds available for worthwhile projects.

The Financial C0-Chairperson will ensure that approximately half of the budget is allocated for Fall Semester and half of the budget is allocated for Spring Semester.

Article VIII- AMENDMENTS

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members in attendance at any meeting that has been appropriately announced to all members, i.e. through the use of the SPHERE list serve.

By-Laws

Article I-OFFICERS and EXECUTIVE BOARD

Officers will be nominated by eligible student SPHERE members annually and elected by the executive board. SPHERE must have at least a chairperson and financial chairperson to constitute an Executive Board.

a. The Chairperson shall be the voice of SPHERE in matters pertaining to the organization and shall represent the SPHERE student members at official GSPH or
University functions. He/she is also responsible for calling general meetings of SPHERE and meetings of the Executive Board and preparing for such meetings. The Chairperson shall also coordinate guest speakers and informational sessions for SPHERE with the Executive Board.

b. The Recruitment and Training Co-Chairperson will be responsible for organizing all outbreak and activities/event trainings. He/she will also be responsible for arranging catering services for meetings, and ordering supplies such as speaker gifts and team shirts. He/she will also be responsible for recruiting new members, advertising, and applications for membership.

c. The Financial Co-Chairperson will be responsible for approving all SPHERE expenditures, and signing and submitting all approved expenditures to the Center of Public Health Preparedness for reimbursement. The Financial Co-Chairperson will assure that funds are used only for appropriately advertise SPHERE activities, events, and services.

d. The Secretary Co-Chairperson shall be responsible for taking notes during all Executive Board meetings, and recording these notes in an electronic format. The Secretary is also responsible for recording attendance at the general meetings, keeping track of mandatory forms and trainings, and for updating the list serve. The Secretary is responsible for all correspondence with members, partners, speakers, advisers, SGA, staff, and students. In the case of a response event, the Secretary will be contacted by the Faculty Advisor the Secretary will email response information and details to all members in order to coordinate the response.

e. The Liaison Co-Chairperson shall be responsible for attending all GSPH SGA general meetings to represent SPHERE. The Liaison will also maintain contact with monthly speakers and SPHERE partners to ensure a proper, long-standing relationship. The Liaison will maintain contact with the designated SPHERE faculty advisers and involved partners. The Liaison is responsible for distributing, collecting, and analyzing the monthly speaker surveys. The Liaison will also arrange all social events for SPHERE.

f. The Faculty/Staff Advisors shall provide on-going oversight, guidance and support to both the SPHERE members and the Executive Board. The faculty advisor will be notified by our partners of an outbreak or other event that requires the response of SPHERE. The Faculty Advisor will then contact the Executive Board. They are responsible for attending the monthly meetings and as many Executive Board meetings they deem necessary. The Faculty Advisors shall oversee the Financial Chairperson and the budget; as well ensuring officer elections are properly handled.

Terms of Office: All members of the Executive Board shall serve for one year beginning on the first of May and ending on the last day of April of the following year. No member may hold the same position for more than two consecutive terms.
Article II – Meetings
Section 1: General Member Meetings

1. Executive Board Participation: All members of the Executive Board are asked to participate in the General Meetings. The Chairperson or other designated member of the Executive Board shall preside over the meeting.

2. Voting: Any matter requiring the vote of SPHERE that arises during a General Meeting shall require a quorum of two-thirds of the General Membership present.

3. Minutes – The minutes of the General Meetings shall be kept by the Secretary and posted on the SPHERE website within two weeks of the meeting.

Section 2: Executive Board Meetings

1. Regular Meetings: The Executive Board shall meet 1-2 times per month depending on the needs of the board. Meetings are open to all Executive Board members and Faculty/Staff Advisors

2. Quorum: A quorum shall be defined as 80% or 4 out of the 5 board members.

Article II- Amendments

3. Voting: Unless otherwise requested, voting shall be done by a show of vice voce. A written ballot may be requested at any time by any member of the Executive Board.

4. Minutes: The minutes of the Executive Board meetings shall be kept by the Secretary and posted within one week of the meeting.

Article III - Amendments

The By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members of SPHERE in attendance at any meeting, where a quorum of two-thirds of the members in attendance occurs.