Constitution of the Psychiatry Student Interest Group Network (PsychSIGN)

Article I: Name of Organization

The name of this organization will be the Psychiatry Student Interest Group Network ("PsychSIGN"). This is a special interest group for medical students within the American Psychiatric Association ("APA").

Article II: Sponsorship and Affiliation

PsychSIGN will be sponsored by and affiliated with the APA.

Article III: Purpose and Principles

PsychSIGN is a network of psychiatry interest groups at medical schools internationally that seeks to:

1. promote medical student interest in psychiatry;
2. further the creation and growth of psychiatry interest groups at medical schools at the national and international level;
3. foster connections between students with an interest in psychiatry at medical schools internationally, as well as connections between psychiatry interest groups at medical schools internationally;
4. serve as a central hub for information regarding organizing psychiatry interest groups, planning careers in psychiatry, and other topics relevant to medical students interested in psychiatry;
5. create connections between medical students interested in psychiatry and psychiatry residents and faculty members;
6. represent medical student views to the APA and other professional medical organizations;
7. provide a professional, respectful, and intellectually stimulating virtual and physical environment which recognizes the benefits of diversity throughout populations of patients, trainees, and professionals;
8. eliminate the negative stigma associated with mental illness while promoting mental health as an integral part of overall health amongst medical trainees.

Article IV: Membership

- Individual student membership is open to any medical student enrolled in any medical school internationally with an interest in the field and subject matter of psychiatry.

- Psychiatry Student Interest Group (PsychSIG) membership in PsychSIGN is open to any psychiatry-related interest group. The group title of “Psychiatry Student Interest Group” is not a requirement for PsychSIGN affiliation.

Article V: National Offices and Responsibilities

National Board

Membership

- The Members of the National Board include the President, Vice-President, Facilitator, Marketing Chairs, all Region Chairs, and all Special Interest Chairs.
- Subcommittee members are not members of the national board.
- Requests for new/alterations to Region Chairs, new Special Interest Chairs, or Liaisons other than those listed above must be submitted to the President for approval of the Board.
- The Election process for board members is described in Article VI.
- There are 3 equal teams on the National Board. The Special Interest Chairs, the Region Chairs, and the Marketing Chairs
- The terms of the special interest and region chairs begin after that year’s election cycle concludes.
- The previous board’s term concludes after the National PsychSIGN conference or when their successor has been brought onboard regarding their role and responsibility (whichever comes last)
- Marketing chairs term begin as soon as they are recruited into the role, and end when the supervising national board member’s term ends.

Responsibilities

<u>All National Board members</u>

- Be a voting member and participate in national board meetings
- Participate in monthly leadership meetings
    - Chairs may not miss more than two monthly meetings (barring extenuating circumstances). Failure to meet this requirement may result in disciplinary action up to and including possible removal from office at the discretion of the President and President-Elect. Chairs who are not removed from office may forfeit any or all privileges associated with office, including any travel opportunities.
- Under the leadership of the President and President-Elect, the National Board is responsible for the PsychSIGN annual meeting planning and execution.

- The entire National Board will meet once a month at a previously agreed upon date and time for the duration of that year's term. Agenda and points of discussion will be set by the President and President-Elect as per the requests by the general membership and national officers.
- The Board will review and ratify the PsychSIGN Constitution biennially (next in 2028).
- All members of the Board will have one vote and all votes (except votes to edit the constitution) will be determined by a simple majority unless determined otherwise by the Board in advance. A minimum of half the Board members must be present for a vote to be considered valid.

<u>President</u>

- Be responsible for forming and maintaining relationships between PsychSIGN and the APA as well as psychiatric subspecialty associations as follows:
    - Maintain annual updated master rosters of association liaisons.
    - Encourage submission of subspecialty news, opportunities, and events for inclusion in the monthly membership newsletter.
    - Make efforts to attend professional organizations meetings as invited. Past groups have included: the APA's Council on Medical Education and Lifelong Learning, ADMSEP, AADPRT monthly recruitment meetings, APA Scientific Planning Committee.
- Host a monthly leadership meeting for the Special Interest Chairs.
    - Provide mentorship to Special Interest Chairs to achieve progress along PsychSIGN's special interests.
    - Host biannual Board meetings to discuss changes and updates to PsychSIGN structure and programming.
    - Initiate biennial review of the PsychSIGN Constitution with the National Board.
        - a. Edits may be made to the constitution upon unanimous approval of the Board, barring requirement of changes that will benefit the organization prior to biennial review.
- Financial Oversight
    - Ensure that PsychSIGN meets all requirements for conditional funding provided by the APA, APA Foundation, or any other organization.
    - Verify all purchases from PsychSIGN.
- Provide ongoing mentorship to the PsychSIGN President-elect and assist with duties of President-elect.

- Participate in quarterly PsychSIGN review meetings with the PsychSIGN President-Elect and Facilitator.
- Share equal responsibility with the PsychSIGN President-Elect for PsychSIGN annual meeting planning and execution.
- Correspond with APA/APAF staff to ensure that financial responsibilities and/or programming requirements are completed in a timely and satisfactory manner.

President Elect

- Be responsible for membership as follows:
  - Maintain master rosters of active members of PsychSIGN including % membership in PsychSIGN and the APA per region.
  - Sponsor initiatives to encourage individual PsychSIGN and APA membership.
  - Maintain master rosters of alumni and alumni social events.
- Be responsible for regional functioning as follows:
  - Host a monthly leadership meeting for Region Chairs.
  - Maintain master rosters of past and present PsychSIG affiliates.
  - Review PsychSIG applications for new PsychSIGN membership.
  - Mentor Region Chairs in the development of regional conferences.
  - Identify APA State Association Liaisons and facilitate respective introductions to new Region Chairs
- Share equal responsibility with the PsychSIGN President for PsychSIGN annual meeting planning and execution.
- Participate in quarterly PsychSIGN review meetings with the PsychSIGN President and Facilitator.

Special Interest Chairs

Membership

- The Special Interest Chairs are led by the President, and are composed of the Mentorship Chair, Research Chair, Residency Application Chair, Wellness and Burnout Prevention Chair, and Advocacy and Policy Chair.

Responsibilities

- All Special Interest Chairs have the responsibilities of being a national board member, in addition to specific responsibilities based on their position.

Mentorship Chair

- Lead the development and management of mentoring opportunities for PsychSIGN members.
- Maintain a roster of psychiatrists, fellows, residents, and medical students interested in serving as Career, Research, or Peer Mentors.
- Develop and share PsychSIGN specific materials on methods of successful mentorship to be available to PsychSIGN general members.
- Correspond with APA/APAF staff to facilitate mentor/mentee programming.

Research Chair

- Direct medical students to resources that can help them to begin, excel, and share research.
- Work with organizations (such as, but not limited to the APA, AACAP, AMA) to know what research skills students are lacking, and find ways to help students to improve those skills
- Work with the Mentorship chair to improve the opportunities that may come from relationships from research-focused mentors.

Residency Application Chair

- Develop PsychSIGN specific materials on methods of career and application development to be available to PsychSIGN general members, such as, but not limited to: personal statement, CV preparation, and interview preparation.
- Create and maintain forums on the pre-, intra-, and post-match process for PsychSIGN members.
- Develop a system for applying members to have practice interviews before the interview season.
- Create and facilitate programming, panels and other educational materials for PsychSIGN members regarding the residency application process.

Wellness and Burnout Prevention Chair

- Maintain and update the PsychSIGN Wellness Manual yearly.
- Work with other associations and trainees on the development for further initiatives, including an Institutional Wellness Manual.
- Develop PsychSIGN specific materials on methods of wellness and burnout prevention to be available to PsychSIGN general members.

Advocacy and Policy Chair

- Coordinate PsychSIGN representation to the AMA Medical Student Section, AMA House of Delegates, American Psychiatric Association Assembly, and other relevant professional medical and public health associations as guided by the Board.
- Fulfill the duties as specified by the AMA Medical Student Section for MSS Assembly Members.

- Be responsible for reviewing AMA criteria for PsychSIGN representation, the application of PsychSIGN for representation, and recommending change such that PsychSIGN will continue to meet such criteria.
- Develop and carry out initiatives such as programming, messaging campaigns to encourage and empower PsychSIGN members to be more politically active.
- The Advocacy and Policy Chair-Elect is a 3-month onboarding role serving under the guidance of the Advocacy and Policy Chair, assisting with PsychSIGN advocacy initiatives, external representation, and fulfillment of organizational representation requirements, after which the Chair-Elect assumes the full duties of Advocacy and Policy Chair.

PsychSIGN Podcast Chair

1) Oversee a dedicated team of 2 producers, 1 writer, and 1 editor, managing the entire podcast production cycle from pre-production (idea generation) to post-production (final edits and publication on anchor.fm).

2) Serve as the host of the PsychSIGN podcast, conducting guest interviews and recording introductory and closing segments for each episode.

3) Organize and lead quarterly meetings to brainstorm new episode ideas, evaluate workflow efficiencies (using tools such as Google Drive and Trello), and address any operational challenges.

4) Recruit, screen, and interview prospective team members, facilitating a smooth transition from outgoing to incoming staff through team meetings and one-on-one training sessions.

5) Collaborate with social media chairs to market the podcast, ensuring episodes are updated on the website, featured in the monthly newsletter, and promoted via PsychSIGN's Instagram and Twitter accounts.

This position is NOT open to general members as it requires previous experience in working with the Podcast team. If interested in working on future iterations of the podcast, please email - **psychsignpodcast@gmail.com**

Region Chairs

Geography

- Region Chairs will be selected for each of the eight geographic regions defined by the APA as follows:
  - Region 1: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont.Region 2: New York
  - Region 3: District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania
  - Region 4: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin

- Region 5: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, and Uniformed Services
- Region 6: California
- Region 7: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan
- Region 8: Covering international medical students outside of the US and Canada

Responsibilities

- Represent the members of their respective regions and provide support and guidance to regional members including:
    - Maintain a reciprocal relationship with the respective PsychSIG leaders including sharing PsychSIGN events, news, and opportunities with PsychSIG leaders.
    - Host one virtual leadership meeting of regional PsychSIG leaders OR create an informal communication channel to allow direct correspondence with SIG leaders and/or membership.
    - These meetings and/or group chats will be used to discuss PsychSIGN news, allow SIG leaders to give updates on their recent and upcoming events, as well as assisting in the unification and overall camaraderie of PsychSIGN and regional SIGs.
    - Maintain rosters of affiliated PsychSIG chapters, member lists, and % membership in PsychSIGN.
    - Maintain a reciprocal relationship with the respective APA State Association Liaison or APA State/Region membership. including sharing PsychSIGN events, news, and opportunities with the State Liaison.
    - Carry out a minimum of 2 virtual or in-person events for region or national membership.This event can be done individually or in collaboration with another board member.
    - Organize a PsychSIGN Regional Conference or Project tailored to their specific region, but open to all PsychSIGN members as well as other medical students.
    - All Chairs may hold a virtual conference/event in lieu of an in person Regional conference.
      Participate with other National Officers to organize and carry out the PsychSIGN National Conference each year.

Marketing Chairs

Membership

- The Marketing Team is made up of 2 Media Outreach Chairs who both serve as voting members on the national board.

- They have an equal responsibility to represent and assist both the Region Chairs and Special Interest Chairs.
- Their division of responsibility is between them, but both are ultimately responsible for the completion of all responsibilities.

Responsibilities

- Accurate, timely representation of PsychSIGN news, opportunities, and events on PsychSIGN's active social media platforms.
- The overall design and maintenance of the PsychSIGN website, which currently requires comfortability working with Wordpress.
- Ensure that resources that are helpful for PsychSIGN members are easily accessible via either the website, YouTube, or other means.
- Publish a monthly membership newsletter sharing news, opportunities, and programming with the general PsychSIGN membership.
- Assist in the development of graphics, flyers, and templates to promote PsychSIGN news, opportunities, and events at the request of other members of the board.
- Assist the long-term marketing subcommittees with their projects.
    - PsychSIGN Magazine

Subcommittees

General

- Subcommittees are intended to be flexible, and may, or may not, exist for extended periods of time.
- The work of the subcommittees needs to be reported on by the overseeing chair during the monthly leadership meetings.
- Subcommittees do not need to be added to the PsychSIGN Constitution.
- Subcommittee membership and contact information should be provided on a centralized google drive.

Creation

- A subcommittee may be formed by a national chair if it is to help with the existing responsibilities of the chair.
- Subcommittees need the approval of either the President or President-Elect for their creation.
- They need to have a clear, written objective which supports the responsibilities of the national chair overseeing their work.
- If the work of the subcommittee extends in partnership with another professional or student organization, the leader of that committee (region or special interest chair) should make clear the responsibilities, benefits and duties that psychSIGN and it's membership may have.

Membership

- A subcommittee may or may not have a designated leader that is separate from the overseeing chair.

- The opportunity for membership on a subcommittee needs to be open for PsychSIGN members to apply for when feasible.
- Subcommittee members are not members of the National Board.

Termination

- Subcommittees may be terminated at either the completion of their objective (such as with a regional conference planning subcommittee when the conference ends), or at will by the overseeing chair.
- If desired, the subcommittee may petition to be reinstated by either the President or President-Elect if they feel that termination was not warranted. This final decision rests with the President and President-Elect.
- Subcommittees may not continue to advertise or claim PsychSIGN affiliation if or when a psychSIGN national board member is no longer serving in an official capacity.

Facilitator

Responsibilities

- Be a non-voting member of the National Leadership.
- Assist in transition of duty and PsychSIGN contacts to the subsequent President and President-elect.
- Provide mentorship and feedback to the Board regarding its operation and functioning.
- Participate in quarterly PsychSIGN review meetings with the PsychSIGN President and President-Elect.

Local Officers

Membership

- PsychSIGN Affiliated Psychiatry Student Interest Group Leaders
    - Often, this is whoever is the head of the Psychiatry club at the medical school.
- Or a liaison appointed by the head of the PsychSIG.

Responsibilities

- Agree in writing, at minimum via email to the region chair to provide at least one contact who will serve as the point person for psychSIGN to share events or opportunities with the SIG.
- Share news, opportunities and emphasize the benefits of National PsychSIGN/APA membership to students.
- Provide an updated list of e-board contacts if and when leadership transition occurs.
- Share SIG events or opportunities which might be open to or of interest to region psychSIGN members via email or group chat the PsychSIGN region chair.

Terms of Office

1. National Officers
    - Region Chairs will be elected for a 13-month term that will begin immediately after elections. The 13th month, which occurs after the election of the following year's officers, will focus on advising the newly elected Region Chairs from their respective regions. There are no term limits for Region Chairs.
    - Special Interest Chairs will be elected for a 13-month term that will begin immediately after elections at the National Conference. The 13th month, which occurs after the election of the following year's officers, will focus on advising the newly elected Special Interest Chairs from their respective regions. Each individual may only serve once in their respective chair position.
    - Due to the scope and responsibilities of the Advocacy and Policy Chair position, the term of the outgoing Chair may be extended for a transition period of up to three months following the election of a successor. This transition period is intended to facilitate an effective transfer of responsibilities, provide continuity in ongoing initiatives, and ensure that the incoming Chair-Elect is adequately prepared to assume the role. The outgoing Chair will remain in the position until the incoming Chair-Elect formally assumes their responsibilities.
    - President-Elect will be elected for a 12-month term that will begin immediately after elections at the National Conference. At the end of the 12 months, the President-Elect will transition to the position of President following the elections at the subsequent National Conference.
    - President will serve a 12-month term that will begin immediately after elections at the National Conference. At the end of the 12 months, the President will have the opportunity to transition to the position of Facilitator following the elections at the subsequent National Conference.
    - Facilitator will serve a 12-month term that will begin immediately after elections at the National Conference and may be a transition from the PsychSIGN Presidency or may be an appointed position by the entering PsychSIGN president.
2. Local Officers
    - PsychSIGN affiliated Psychiatry Student Interest Group Leaders terms will be set in accordance with the policies and procedures of the medical student affairs at their respective home medical institutions. PsychSIGN will have no influence over leadership positions at the local level.

Removal of PsychSIG affiliates

- Any PsychSIG affiliate organization which fails to fulfill the duties of an affiliate organization or PsychSIG Leader as listed in the PsychSIGN Constitution shall be placed on probation at the discretion of the President-elect. The probation period shall last 6 months during which the PsychSIG and its leader has the opportunity to fulfill the aforementioned duties. If the PsychSIG fails to meet

these by the end of the probation period, the PsychSIG will no longer be affiliated with PsychSIGN, will be removed from active chapter lists, and PsychSIG leaders will not be invited to regional leadership meetings. Following removal from the network, there will be an additional 6 month waiting period before the PsychSIG may re-apply for affiliation. Any PsychSIG may appeal their removal to the general membership, and may be reinstated with two-thirds approval of the members at the annual meeting.

Removal of Officers

- Any national officer may be removed from membership by a two-thirds vote of the Board. Prior to a removal vote by the Board, the national officer in question must be notified that such a vote is pending and must be given the opportunity to speak to the Board. Any national officer may appeal his/her removal to the general membership and may be reinstated with two-thirds approval of the members at the annual meeting.
- Removal of any national officer placed on academic probation by their medical school or taking a leave of absence from medical training greater than 6 months will be at the discretion of the President and President-Elect.
- Any vacancy in an office resulting from a removal or relinquishment of a position will be filled by appointment by the PsychSIGN President pending approval at the next Board meeting.

Article VI: Elections

Eligibility

- All members of the National Board must be members of PsychSIGN and of the American Psychiatric Association. They must also be full-time students at their respective institutions in the pursuit of a MD or DO degree (with the exception of the Facilitator).
- Leadership must be able to regularly attend required meetings and fulfill the responsibilities of the position.
- If running for a Region Chair position, it must be for the region where the student's medical school resides.
- National board members may not run for the same position in consecutive years. They may however, remain on a subcommittee at their successor's discretion if a project or initiative for PsychSIGN which they began was still underway.
- The Advocacy & Policy Chair must have previously attended at least one AMA Medical Student Section Assembly.
- A candidate can only run for the President-Elect position after already serving on the National Board for a complete term.

Election Process

President-Elect, President

- The President-Elect takes on the President position after serving as the President Elect for 1 year.
- The election process will be led by the outgoing president. It must be a democratic process.
- National Chair Elections will take place during the annual meeting after Region Chair Elections. Candidates should submit their names prior to the election and each candidate will have a 5-minute opportunity to address the assembled Board. The winner will be the candidate who garners two-thirds of the vote. If no candidate wins two-thirds of the vote, a run-off election will be held between the top two candidates, and the candidate who earns a simple majority of the votes in the run-off will be the winner. Members of the Board who are candidates for President or President-Elect may not vote in the President-Elect election.

Region Chairs

- The application process for Region Chairs will be led by the President-Elect. If half of the National Board votes to disagree with the process, then the process can be decided on by the President.
- Applications can be submitted and displayed publicly. The opportunity to apply for the National Board must be shared clearly in the monthly membership newsletter. No distribution of campaign materials or form of mass communication (i.e. listservs) will be utilized by any candidate in efforts to campaign with the general membership. No member of PsychSIGN shall recklessly or negligently disseminate information on behalf of a candidate about another PsychSIGN member or candidate.
- Each candidate will have an equal opportunity to advocate for themselves to the voting body.
- Each medical school may cast one electoral vote. Each school decides the electoral vote by a simple majority of members at that school. The candidate with the most electoral votes wins that region.

Special Interest Chairs

- Special Interest positions will be appointed by consensus of the President and President-Elect. An application process must be made available to all PsychSIGN members in a public manner.
- This process will take place after the Region Chairs election, and those who ran for Region Chair positions will have an opportunity to run for Special Interest Chair Positions.
- The positions are chosen by the outgoing president, the incoming president, and the incoming president-elect.

Facilitator

- The Facilitator position will be first offered to the outgoing PsychSIGN President. If so declined, the incoming President may appoint an alternative facilitator.

Local Officers

- PsychSIG Leaders will be identified in accordance with the policies and procedures of the medical student affairs at their respective home medical institutions. PsychSIGN will have no influence over leadership positions at the local level.

Grievances Regarding Election Procedures

1. Grievances regarding election procedures will be addressed to the outgoing PsychSIGN President, who will allow both sides to present their concerns and will attempt to find a solution that is agreeable to both parties.
2. If the grievance cannot be resolved in the aforementioned manner, it will be resolved by the newly elected Board as follows: Both parties will be permitted five to ten minutes to present their arguments to the Board. The Board will vote on a course of action; a two-thirds majority will win. Any Board members involved in the grievance will not vote in this process.
3. If the grievance cannot be resolved by the Board as described above, it can be appealed to the APA. Decisions by the APA will negate any conflicting articles in this document. Decisions by the APA are final and cannot be further appealed.

Article VII: Amendments

The PsychSIGN Constitution will be reviewed and approved by a two-thirds majority of the Board biennially. Amendments to this document may be submitted to the Board by any national officer or any member of PsychSIGN.

Last updated: 10/2026

Board Members
President: Lindsey Nguyen
President-Elect: Christopher Conquest
Media Outreach: Chloe Pak, Jennifer Ipe
R1: Brittany Anderson
R2: Amy Chen
R3: Tucker Apgar
R4: Vikram Saudagar
R5: Bernadine Decapia
R6: Phil De Vera
R7: Natalie Musial
R8: Haider Ashfaq
Research: Dhilan Mohit Thapar
Wellness: Danielle Springer
Mentorship: Marina Malcolm, Rodrigo Bravo
Residency: Hari Rao

Podcast: Sam Kang
AMA-MSS Delegate: Suraj Joshi