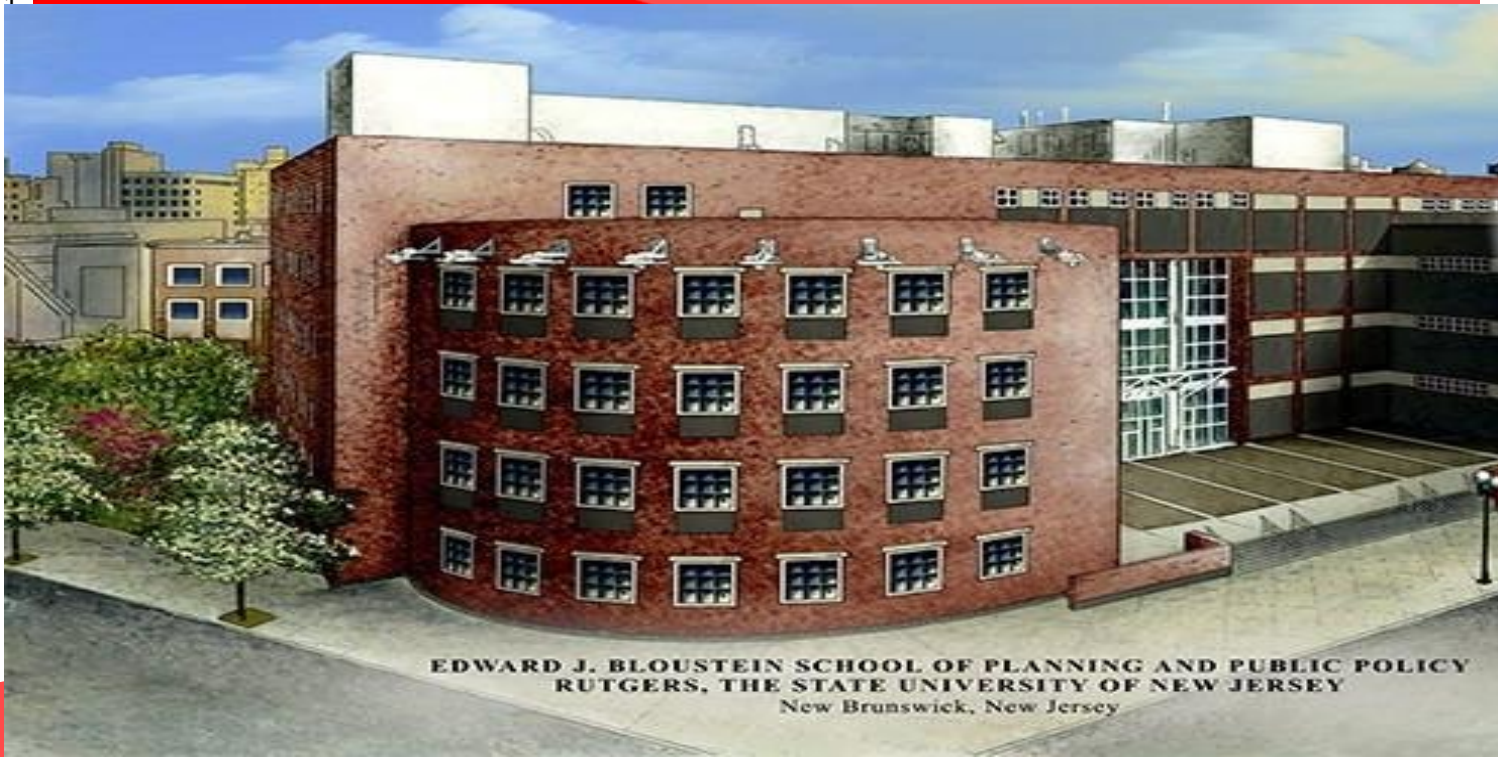




CONSTITUTION OF THE PUBLIC INFORMATICS STUDENT GROUP

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A brief history of Public Informatics

The concept of informatics was discussed as early as 1967, with its first mention in the United States occurring in 1973. The terminology of informatics gained wider usage in the medical and public health fields in the 1980's as researchers generated innumerable data points for study. The term Urban Informatics is first used by tech culture writer Howard Rheingold in 2003, but appeared more widely in the fields of public policy, administration and planning around 2010. The future of Public Informatics is expected to include opportunities for student in a number of fields relating to the urban environment, public service, and data analytics.

Table of Contents

Article I. General Provisions.....3

A. 3

B. 3

C. 3

Article II. Governing Bodies3

A. 3

B. 3

C. 4

D. 4

Article III. Officers5

A. 5

B. 7

C. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

D. 8

E. 9

F. 9

G. 9

Constitution Proposal Timeline8

Article I. General Provisions

A. Name of Organization

(the) Public Informatics Student Group (hereafter referred to as PISG).

B. Mission of Organization

PISG creates exploration within the student body by applying and using information, computing technology, data and artificial intelligence in the contexts of public good and human wellbeing.

C. Membership of Organization

PISG is an interdisciplinary student organization at Rutgers University. Although the organization is geared towards students at the Edward J. Bloustein School for Planning and Public Policy, any Rutgers students or faculty with interest in the organization's mission may become a member. Members are expected to support PISG initiatives and attend at least one meeting or event per semester.

Article II. Governing Bodies

A. Composition

1. The President(s), Vice President(s), Treasurer, Secretary, and Membership and Outreach Coordinator, and such other officers comprise the PISG Board which oversees the planning of events for the organization's members.

B. Authority

1. Ultimate authority and oversight over all policies and decision-making pertaining to the PISG shall reside collectively with the PISG Board, subject to the stipulations and constraints of this Constitution.
2. The President shall provide clarification regarding the proper interpretation of this Constitution upon Request.
3. Should there be a dispute as to the proper interpretation of this Constitution, the PISG Board shall be presented with both interpretations, and it shall conduct a procedural vote to determine which interpretation is correct.

C. Meetings and Procedures

1. The PISG Board must plan a minimum of one professional and two educational events per year for the members of the PISG.
2. Each registered member of the PISG will receive an invitation by email at least seven days prior to each member event (I.e. conference, networking event, etc.). These events may also be open to the general public.
3. The PISG Board Shall meet at least once each month from September to May while the University is in Session. The purpose of these meetings is for event planning and delegation of responsibilities.
4. The Secretary will provide PISG Board meeting notes and make them available to all PISG members upon request.
5. Only the elected PISG Board Members will receive ongoing invitations to PISG Board meetings.
6. Any general PISG member may request permission from the PISG president to attend PISG Board meetings, however, general members may not vote on PISG Board decisions.
Such requests must be placed with the President for each subsequent PISG Board meeting invitation.

D. Voting

Election of the PISG Board shall occur in the month of November (or at the earliest thereafter) for the term beginning in January (or at the earliest thereafter) of the following calendar year. Any member who has attended at least two events and/or meetings within the past year is eligible to vote. Any member who has attended at least two events and/or meetings within the past year is eligible to be nominated and voted into office with only the exception being the president. The position of president must be held by a student who has taken at least three credits within the school within the past academic year and is enrolled in at least three credits within the school during the fall semester after they assume office. All eligible members must be given at least one week (7 days) notice of the election and be given all reasonable opportunities to vote. All eligible members possess one vote. Elections are won by a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the members of the current PISG Board who are not up for reelection

may make the tie-breaking decision and cast one vote based on a simple majority of the PISG Board.

Article III. Officers

A. Authorities and Delegation

The elected officers of the PISG Board must uphold the duties listed below from the time they enter office in January (or at the earliest thereafter) through the following calendar year. There should, whenever possible, be an odd number of elected officers. All PISG positions (nominees or appointees) need to be validated by the Bloustein Associate Director for Graduate Student Services (or equivalent) and the MPI Program Director.

Dual Degree Students taking 36 MPI credits, and more later in an additional program: Dual degree students taking 36 MPI credits and later taking additional courses under another program may hold a PISG main officer position only as long as the student will be concurrently (along with the PISG position) taking at least one 3 credit MPI course for any given semester.

PISG officer roles for MPI dual degree students with 12 credits of MPI courses: MPI dual degree students with 12 credits of MPI courses are eligible for roles where continuity is not critical. They may serve as:

“Project/Event Director” for Project-Based Roles, such as leading time-bound initiatives, research, or events.

“Project/Event Advisor” - Consulting role to provide insights and mentorship based on their experience, to contribute strategically to the organization's short-term goals

Inclusion of Non-Bloustein Students: To promote interdisciplinary collaboration and diverse perspectives for informatics across Rutgers University:

1. The organization shall promote PISG memberships for graduate, undergraduate and other RU students outside of Bloustein. All RU students will be eligible for PISG membership by filling a membership application.
2. Non-Bloustein PISG members will be eligible to hold certain PISG officer positions, provided they follow the process and meet the criteria outlined in the organization's leadership guidelines.

3. These specific positions are:

- a. Director for Undergraduate Informatics - Research, Outreach and Events
- b. Director for Graduate Informatics - Research, Outreach and Events

4. Director - Special Projects (On an as needed basis).

5. All PISG positions (nominees or appointees) need to be validated by the Bloustein Associate Director for Graduate Student Services (or equivalent) and the MPI Program Director.

6. Outreach and partnership initiatives shall target non-Bloustein programs to enhance engagement and awareness of the MPI program, PI research and PISG events and initiatives.

7. The total of Non-Bloustein students on the PISG Board may not exceed 40% to maintain focus on the primary PISG and MPI mission while ensuring inclusivity.

Nomination of Students: To ensure a fair and transparent process for leadership selection:

Nominations for leadership roles may be submitted by any active PISG member. Self-nominations are acceptable. Nominations must include a brief statement of interest and qualifications, which will be reviewed by the Nominations Committee. All need to be validated by the Bloustein Associate Director for Graduate Student Services (or equivalent) and the MPI Program Director. Final nominees shall be voted upon by the general membership through a majority voting process.

Reflecting Diversity of the Student Body on the PISG Board: To ensure that the organization reflects the diversity of its members:

The leadership shall strive to maintain representation from different genders, racial, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Co-Presidency: The organization may adopt a co-presidency model to enhance leadership capacity and diversity of thought:

1. Two individuals may share the presidency, with distinct responsibilities clearly delineated to avoid duplication of efforts.
2. The co-presidents must collaborate on major decisions and serve as joint representatives of the organization in external forums.

- 179 3. In the event of a vacancy in one co-president role, the remaining co-president will
180 assume full responsibilities until a replacement is elected.

181 B. Elected Officers

182 1. The President shall:

183 Chair the PISG Board, schedule and oversee PISG Board meetings; provide
184 leadership, planning, and guidance to the student group; act as the liaison to the
185 Bloustein Graduate Student Group (BGSA), attending BGSA meetings when required
186 act as the primary point of contact for PISG members; and assist the PISG Board in
187 event planning and recruitment.

188 This president is also the de facto Vice President of Public Informatics for BGSA. In
189 this role the Officer will be responsible for attending all Bloustein School steering
190 committee meetings, as well as representing the interests of their respective
191 academic programs at PISG Board and BGSA meetings. This Officer shall also be
192 responsible for planning and running listening sessions for Public Informatics
193 programs during the spring semester.

194 2. The Vice President shall:

195 Serve as the President at their discretion, or in their absence; and act as the primary
196 contact for internal University organizations and offices; assist the PISG Board in
197 event planning and recruitment.

198 The Vice President will also manage the co-ordination of the Membership and
199 Outreach, and shall:

200 Maintain a list of all current PISG members; manage email lists, social media
201 accounts, any member and non-member outreach; and serve as the primary officer
202 in charge of event planning and recruitment.

204 3. The Treasurer shall:

205 Oversee funding disbursements and refunds from all funding sources; solicit and
206 manage donations; provide the PISG Board with a list of any income or expenses
207 within a reasonable timeframe; and assist the PISG Board in event planning and
208 recruitment as needed.

209 The treasurer shall:

210 also act as GSA Liaison Officer to maintain all types of communication between
211 Rutgers GSA and PISG.
212

4. The Secretary shall:

Take PISG Board meeting notes and distribute a summary of proceedings to all PISG members within a reasonable time after each event; ensure the distribution and collection of post event questionnaires; and assist the PISG Board in event planning and recruitment as needed.

5. PISG Research Officer shall:

Be responsible for collecting open-source data, and other resources to support research activities conducted by public informatics students. The officer will be responsible to have at least one active research project every semester with collaboration of the responsible faculty.

6. Appointed Officers:

From time to time the PISG Board may require an additional officer to complete some specific function. The appointment of an additional officer may be conducted at a PISG Board meeting by any member of the PISG Board under the following rules and procedures:

1. A clear description of the to-be-appointed officer's duties and responsibilities must be shared with the PISG Board in writing and added to the meeting notes by the secretary. Any member who has attended at least one event or meeting within the past year is eligible be appointed, attendance at current meeting is acceptable. The PISG Board must vote unanimously for an appointment to be confirmed.
2. The appointed officer has no vote on the PISG Board, and assumes no duties or responsibilities not specified in their appointment. The term limit of this appointment will run from the date of the appointment until the last day of the calendar year, but may run shorter if specified otherwise. All members should be notified within at least one week (7 days) notice of the appointment.

C. Annual Elections

Elections should be held in the month of November (or at the earliest thereafter) in accordance with Article II, Section D. At least one week (7 days) before the beginning of the voting period, the PISG Board shall announce the start of the nomination period, by notifying the members electronically, through circulars, and/or the posting of the information in a common area and call for nominations, indicating the requirements for a valid nomination, and the date and time by which nominations must be presented to them, i.e. the end of the nomination period.

As soon as possible after the closing of the nomination period, the secretary shall post a list of those nominated for the PISG Board. The notice of nominees shall also contain information on where ballot papers are to be obtained, where the ballot box will be located, and the date and time at which voting will end. The nomination and voting processes may be conducted on-line if a system is available that meets the specifications determined by the PISG Board. Ballot papers must then be placed in the ballot box. An electronic ballot box is acceptable. At the close of the election period, the PISG Board shall count the votes cast, and post the results as soon as possible.

D. Accession to Office

Officers may abdicate their position by providing a written statement informing the PISG Board of their intention at least one week (7 days) prior to the next PISG Board meeting. During the next PISG Board meeting the remaining officers shall vote on a replacement with the President holding the tie-breaking vote.

E. Vacancies

In the event of vacancies in the PISG Board, the remaining PISG Board members shall vote on a replacement with the President holding the tie-breaking vote.

F. Officer Misconduct and Removal from Office

The PISG Board holds the right to revoke membership of an individual should they violate any of the following provisions:

1. They act in a manner that is threatening to the safety or wellbeing (physical or emotional) of other members or event attendees.
2. They violate the University Code of Student Conduct.
3. They do not satisfy minimum requirements for membership listed in Article I. Section C.
4. Under scenario one, the revoked member may petition the PISG Board and a vote will be provided in which all members may partake in a vote to uphold or deny the decision. Any Officer of the PISG Board may be removed from their position under the following circumstances:
 1. The Officer acts in a manner that is threatening to the safety or wellbeing (physical or emotional) of other members or event attendees.
 2. The Officer violates the University Code of Student Conduct.

3. The Officer fails to complete his or her assigned duties as stated under Article III, Section B, and is issued two warnings prior to the removal offense.
 4. The Officer misses more than two scheduled meetings or events without prior approval from the committee.
 5. At least 50% of members, including members of the PISG Board, vote for their removal.
- Should an Officer be removed from office, they may retain membership unless the provisions listed in the previous paragraph are violated.

G. PISG out-of-governance clause

1. If PISG or any of its officers go into an out-of-governance status (which includes becoming inactive, absences as described in PISG constitution, unavailable -due to graduation, transfer, illness or any other reason), then the MPI Director, who serves as the lead faculty advisor to PISG and the Assistant Director of Student Services will convene initiatives to appoint one or more new student officers by selection of one or more appropriate candidates to serve as PISG officers and leadership.
2. PISG will engage and work with multiple faculty advisors and the Assistant Director of Student Services. The Director /Executive Director of the MPI program or such other person shall serve as the lead faculty advisor. All institutional and governance issues will be facilitated by the Assistant Director of Student Services.