



## SOCIETY FOR SURGERY OF THE ALIMENTARY TRACT COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

### **SSAT Vision**

The SSAT will provide leadership in setting the standards for gastrointestinal surgery and interdisciplinary management of digestive disease, in North America and around the world.

### **SSAT Mission**

The Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract is committed to advancing the science and practice of surgery in the treatment of digestive disease.

### **SSAT Core Objectives**

The SSAT strives to:

- stimulate, foster, and provide surgical leadership in the art and science of care for all patients;
- teach and research the diseases and functions of the alimentary tract;
- provide a forum for the presentation of such knowledge; and
- encourage training opportunities, funding, and scientific publications supporting the foregoing activities.

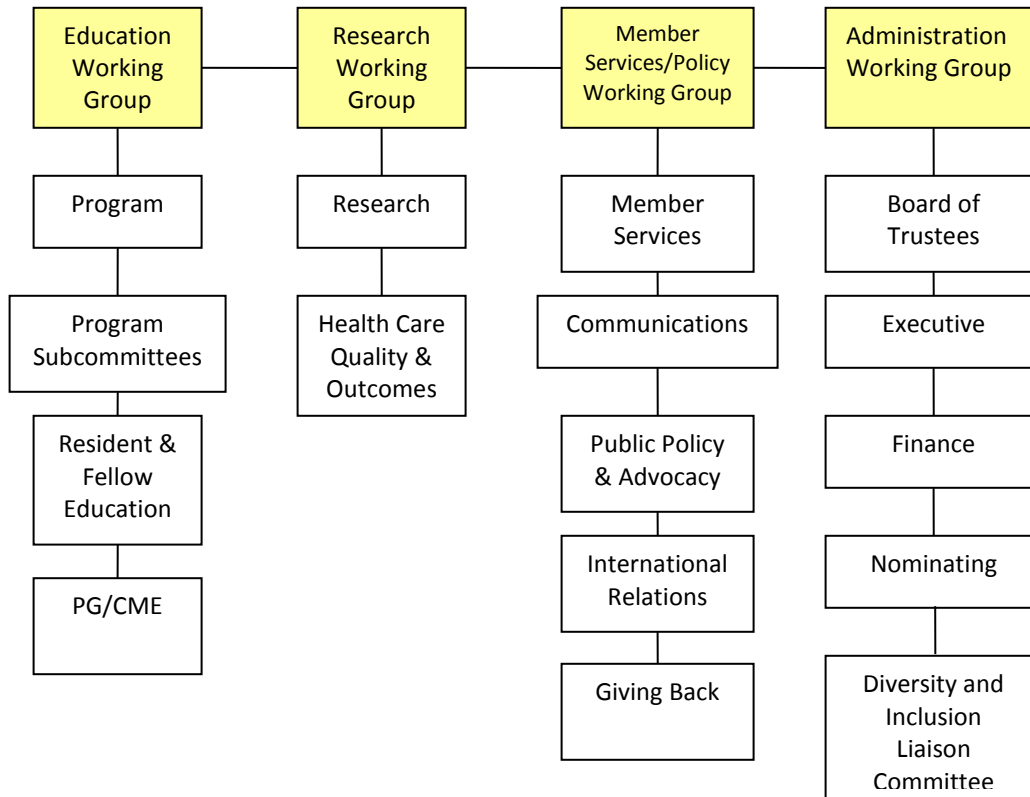
### **Vision and Values Statement**

The Society will adopt a culture that honors the value of inclusion with an integrated approach to address the needs of a diverse membership and surgical workforce. Moreover, the Society will develop and sponsor education and research to achieve culturally competent care and eliminate health care disparities in alimentary tract surgery.

### **Statement of Commitment**

The Society will actively engage and extend resources to enhance all manner of diversity for the betterment of its members and patients through inclusive leadership, training and education, and societal stewardship.

## SSAT COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## **GUIDELINES FOR SSAT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

### *SSAT Committee Appointments and Self-Nomination Procedure*

In 2011, per its [Strategic Plan](#), the SSAT began filling most committee positions through a self-nomination process, which successfully enhanced participation by the membership and opened active roles in the society to members who may not have been from the same institutions as the top leadership.

The SSAT self-nomination process is open for one month, between April and May. Self-nomination is done entirely online through a personalized email communication from the SSAT. Each SSAT member is permitted to self-nominate for a total of two (2) committees. If a member currently sits on one (1) committee and is eligible to remain active on the committee, and wishes to do so, he or she may only select one (1) additional committee for self-nomination. If a member currently sits on two (2) committees and is eligible to remain active on both committees, and wishes to do so, he or she cannot select any new committees for self-nomination. Self-Nomination does not guarantee appointment to a committee. To better serve the SSAT and its members no individual will be permitted to participate concurrently on more than two (2) committees. The terms of self-nominated committee positions are for one (1) year.

Following the in-person committee meeting at the SSAT Annual Meeting held in conjunction with DDW, the committee Chairs will provide an annual assessment of each committee member's participation to the senior leadership. Reappointment and consideration for subsequent leadership positions will be based on this information. Those members that are reappointed will be reappointed for one year and will receive electronic communications from the SSAT confirming their continued participation. Please note that serving on a committee does not guarantee a continued position on the committee.

## **COMMITTEE CHAIR JOB DESCRIPTION**

The role of the Chair is a pivotal one for guiding the committee's work. By agreeing to serve in this capacity, the Chair has the following responsibilities:

### **Facilitate Committee Work**

- Each committee should work on the tasks and goal assigned in the [SSAT Strategic Plan](#). For a list of said goals and tasks please select the appropriate committee from the list available at <http://ssat.com/about/committees.cgi>.
- Coordinate with SSAT staff to plan and lead meetings, including but not exclusive to providing agenda items; approving agendas prior to distribution to the committee; and reviewing minutes drafted by SSAT staff.
- Assign tasks to committee members and hold them responsible.
- Monitor the group's progress, and communicate with staff members assigned to the committee.
- Resolve conflicts among members of the group.
- Adhere to all SSAT timelines in regards to the Annual Meeting program, committee projects, and Board initiatives.
- Include diversity and inclusion in each committee initiative per the Board's Diversity & Inclusion Task Force initiative.

### **Committee Meetings**

- Each committee is expected to meet in-person at the ACS Clinical Congress in October and at the SSAT Annual Meeting held in conjunction with DDW in May.
- Conference calls can be scheduled on an as-needed basis.

### **Communicate with the Board of Directors**

- Serve as the liaison between the committee and the Board Working Group Representative, the Board of Directors, and SSAT Staff.
- Prepare a written report for each SSAT Board of Trustees Meeting. The SSAT Board meets via conference call in February or March, at the SSAT Annual Meeting held in conjunction with DDW, and at a standalone meeting October or November. Any funding requests should be completed and submitted to SSAT staff for inclusion in the Board Agenda at minimum of 2 weeks prior to a scheduled Board meeting; funding forms are available at [http://ssat.com/files/\\_hidden/Project-Funding-Request-Form.doc](http://ssat.com/files/_hidden/Project-Funding-Request-Form.doc).
- Attend and report at the Annual Board of Trustees Retreat held in Chicago, IL, roughly two weeks after the ACS Clinical Congress. Chairs may also request to address the Board in person at the Annual Meeting, and may be asked to participate on the conference call in February or March.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF SSAT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each committee member should:

- Be committed to the mission of the SSAT.
- Become familiar with the SSAT Strategic Plan and the Committee Goal and Tasks.
- Actively participate in planning and implementing short- and long-range goals.
- Devote the time and effort required to accomplish the committee's objectives.
- Fulfill assignments on a timely basis.

Each committee member must:

- Be in good standing with the society.
- Complete the SSAT Online Disclosure Form.
- Attend the majority of committee meetings and participate in the majority of conference calls.
- Adhere to the Committee Requirements detailed in the Committee Member Requirements, Committee Member Expectations, Goals and Tasks section of this document. This information is also available online at <http://ssat.com/about/committees.cgi>.

*Committee members who fail to complete the mandatory requirements may be removed from their volunteer duties.*

## COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS, GOALS AND TASKS

### EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

#### **Program Subcommittees**

**(Biliary/Hepatic; Colon-Rectal/Combined Science; Esophageal; Pancreas; Stomach/Small Bowel; Video)**

**Goal:** Develop the highest quality program for the Annual Meeting

#### **Requirements to Volunteer for the Program Subcommittees**

- Active or Senior member in good standing.
- Published author on two or more manuscripts
- Attended at least one SSAT Annual Meeting held in conjunction with Digestive Disease Week
- Ability to dedicate necessary time between the abstract submission deadline (typically December 1<sup>st</sup>) and the grading deadline (typically December 31<sup>st</sup>) to review and grade assigned abstract or video submissions
- Must Participate on January Conference Call of Program Subcommittee
- After notification of appointment to subcommittee, submission of written confirmation of agreement to actively participate in abstract review and the January subcommittee conference call

#### **Tasks**

- Review the abstracts submitted for the Annual Meeting to a particular category (e.g., Biliary/Hepatic, Esophageal, Stomach/Small Bowel, etc.)
- Recommend to the Program Committee which abstracts should be selected for presentation at the Annual Meeting
- Attend the Annual Meeting, at which members may be asked to serve as Co-Moderators and/or Invited Discussants

#### **Meetings**

- Via conference call, either the first or second Friday of January, and as-needed

## **PG/CME Committee**

**Goal:** Play a pivotal role in the society's post-graduate education and self-accredited CME-activities

### **Requirements to Volunteer for the PG/CME Committee**

- Active or Senior member in good standing
- Board-eligible or Board-certified by American Board of Surgery
- Actively engaged in the clinical practice of gastrointestinal surgery
- Willingness to create, review, and critique maintenance of certification tools relevant to SSAT
- Interest in literary writing and review work
- Experience in continuing education
- Interest in social media and its application to surgery

### **Expectations of Continuing Education Committee Members:**

- Review of Fischer Fellowship, DeMeester Fellowship, and Writers Workshop Scholarship applications by stated deadlines
- Participation in Conference Calls as needed
- Participation at yearly in-person meetings at the SSAT Annual Meeting at DDW and the ACS Clinical Congress. Call-in available for unavoidable conflicts
- Review CME material for SSAT as requested by stated deadlines

### **Tasks**

- Provide the Program Committee with assistance, as needed, in coordinating Joint Symposia with other Societies at the Annual Meeting
- Develop proposals for Joint Symposia with other Societies at other meetings (AHPBA, ASCRS, ISDS, SAGES, SSO, etc.), then, once approved, coordinate those scientific offerings
- Identify new CME opportunities
- Form a CME Subcommittee to work on SSAT self-accredited CME offerings and serve as CME overseers
- Create new non-meeting learning moments (e.g., podcasts, blogs)
- Recommend the recipients of the annual [Fischer International](#) and [DeMeester U.S./Canada](#) Travelling Fellowship Awards to the Foundation and Board of Trustees
- Recommend the recipients of the annual [Writers Workshop Scholarship](#) to the SSAT Board of Trustees

### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis

## **Resident and Fellow Education Committee**

**Goal:** Facilitate resident participation in SSAT and Annual Meeting activities

### **Requirements to Volunteer for the Resident and Fellow Education Committee**

- Membership in good standing
- Work with Program Committee to enhance the Resident and Fellows Research Conference on the Friday of the Annual Meeting
- Seek out Resident members of committees
- Work closely with Communications Committee to ensure that appropriate media are used to enhance access to SSAT by surgical residents

### **Expectations of Resident and Fellow Education Committee Members:**

- Participation with initiatives from the committee (e.g., *JOGS* manuscript, Fellowship Fair, Residents Corner on website)
- Participation in Conference Calls as needed (75% participation)
- Participation at yearly in-person meetings at the SSAT Annual Meeting at DDW and the ACS Clinical Congress. Call-in available for unavoidable conflicts
- Encouraged to attend the Residents and Fellows Research Conference and Fellowship Fair
- Participation in development of a proposal for a designated session at Annual Meeting
- Provide content for the SSAT Residents Corner

### **Tasks**

- Work with Program Committee to enhance the Resident and Fellows Research Conference on the Friday of the Annual Meeting (and attend said Research Conference)
- Develop sessions at the Annual Meeting that are targeted at residents (e.g., “How to Assess a Job/Fellowship”)
- Seek out Resident members of committees
- Work closely with Communications Committee to ensure that appropriate media are used to enhance access to SSAT by surgical residents

### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis



## RESEARCH WORKING GROUP

### Research Committee

**Goal:** Foster the development of new knowledge and techniques that improve the understanding and treatment of digestive disease

#### **Requirements to Volunteer for the Research Committee**

- Active or Senior members in good standing
- Interest/expertise in basic science, clinical, health services, patient-centered outcomes, or education research
- Previous experience writing or reviewing grants

#### **Responsibilities of Research Committee Members:**

- Read and score the following award applications. Members asked to review 5-6 applications for each award and provide comments/scores according to NIH scoring system (please note these award deadlines are in the winter and early spring):
  - Career Development Award funded by the Foundation
  - Career Development Award for Clinical/Outcomes/Education Research
  - Disparities Research Award
  - Mentored Research Award
  - SSAT/SBAS Research Award (New)
- Coordinate, plan, and attend the annual State-of-the Art Conference at DDW; one member chosen annually to lead this effort; group chooses topics and participates in speaker engagement, case selection, etc.

#### **Expectations of Research Committee Members:**

- Review of career development and other research applications by stated deadlines
- Attendance at 75% of the in-person meetings
- Participation in 75% of the conference calls

#### **Tasks**

- Recommend the recipient of the [Career Development Award for Basic Science Research](#), the [Career Development Award for Clinical/Outcomes/Education Research](#), [Mentored Research Award](#), [Health Care Disparities Research Award](#), and SSAT/SBAS Research Award to the Foundation and Board of Trustees
- Coordinate the State-of-the-Art Conference at the Annual Meeting (and attend said State-of-the-Art Conference)

#### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis

### **Health Care Quality and Outcomes Committee**

**Goal:** Use the best available knowledge to define meaningful standards and oversee their dissemination in the public domain

#### **Requirements to Volunteer for the Healthcare Quality and Outcomes Committee**

- Active and Senior member in good standing
- Actively engaged in the clinical practice of gastrointestinal surgery.
- Interest in participating in health care quality and outcomes initiatives relevant to the SSAT.

#### **Expectations of Healthcare Quality and Outcomes Members:**

- Participation (75% minimum) in conference calls, individual or group calls and emails
- Participation (75% minimum) at annual in-person meetings at the SSAT Annual Meeting at DDW and the ACS Clinical Congress. Call-in available for unavoidable conflicts
- Volunteer and follow-through on committee initiatives, as appropriate.

#### **Tasks**

- Develop and update Guidelines for treatment of digestive disease
- Define Quality metrics for treatment of digestive disease
- Work with other DDW societies to derive consensus / create consensus conferences and publications
- Contribute ideas and content for a potential Quality and Outcomes Session at the Annual Meeting

#### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis

## MEMBER SERVICES/POLICY WORKING GROUP

### Member Services Committee

**Goal:** To serve as the premier member resource center for Digestive Diseases

#### **Requirements to Volunteer for the Member Services Committee:**

- Membership in good standing
- Attendance of at least one SSAT Annual Meeting at DDW
- Commitment to recruiting new members
- Commitment to reviewing member nominations and recommending approval

#### **Tasks**

- Create/Build/Strengthen services in part based on Member Needs Assessment results
- Inform other committees on member needs
- Recruit new members
- Set policies regarding dues and member retention
- Develop mentoring program for young surgeons

#### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis

### Communications Committee

**Goal:** Connect the membership to the activities of the society, providing accurate useful information in real time

#### **Requirements to Volunteer for the Communications Committee:**

- Membership in good standing
- Interest in social media and its application to surgery
- Participate in selection of 'best papers' for *JOGS*

#### **Expectations for Communications Committee Members**

- Attend committee meetings
- Contribute ideas to improve our ability to communicate with membership
- Contribute information for SSAT social media

#### **Tasks**

- Oversee/Update the SSAT Website
- Provide content for SSAT Social Media (Twitter and Facebook)

- Participate in Twitter feed during the Annual Meeting (and attend said Annual Meeting)
- Recommend the recipients of the annual *JOGS* Best Article Award(s) to the Board of Trustees and Journal Editors
- Manage enduring materials

### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis

### **Public Policy and Advocacy Committee**

**Goal:** Advocate for patients and Society members to advance treatment of digestive diseases, and nurture the development of SSAT members with expertise in the legislative and political arena

### **Requirements to Volunteer for the Public Policy and Advocacy Committee**

- Membership in good standing
- Actively engaged in the clinical practice of gastrointestinal surgery
- Interest in participating in public policy and advocacy initiatives relevant to the SSAT

### **Expectations of Public Policy and Advocacy Committee Members:**

- Participation (75% minimum) in conference calls, individual or group calls and emails
- Participation (75% minimum) at annual in-person meetings at the SSAT Annual Meeting at DDW and the ACS Clinical Congress. Call-in available for unavoidable conflicts
- Recipient of ACS/SSAT Health Policy and Management Scholarship will serve a two year term on the PPAC and serve on the Advocacy subcommittee

### **Tasks**

- Advocate within “the house of medicine”
- Work with the American College of Surgeons Political Action Committee and other surgical societies in areas of common interest
- Coordinate and design the proposed PPAC panel discussions for the SSAT annual meeting
  - Serve as moderators on any potential panel – Moderators are responsible for communicating with speakers, drafting manuscript, and moderating session
- Maintain and update the SSAT advocacy site
- Write manuscript summarizing panel discussions
- Write manuscripts summarizing PPAC sponsored projects

- Present ideas for engagement
- Read and Score applications for the ACS/SSAT Health Policy and Management Scholarship
- Coordinate/Be informed by work of the Health Care Quality and Outcomes Committee

### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis

### **International Relations Committee**

**Goal:** Help the SSAT interface with societies and members outside the USA and Canada

### **Requirements to volunteer for the International Relations Committee**

- Membership in good standing
- Interest in international contacts and exchange
- Sufficient contact to national and international surgical societies to establish an exchange with the SSAT
- Availability to take an active part in common projects of the committee

### **Expectations of International Relations Committee Members**

- Participation in the regular Conference Calls
- Participation in in-person meetings at the DDW and the ACS Annual Congress
- Participate in and provide input on the main tasks and current projects of the committee:
  - Establishing contacts with national and international surgical societies and supporting the organization of joint sessions at the annual meetings and the DDW
  - SSAT Abroad
  - Participation in the SSAT Video- online Project
- Play an active role in the SSAT initiative to improve surgical care in developing countries in cooperation with the Giving-back Committee

### **Tasks**

- Reach out to surgeons and surgical societies outside of the USA and Canada
- Advise Member Services Committee on benefits structure for international members
- Develop and assess opportunities to hold joint conferences in other countries
- Develop and assess medical mission/ service opportunities

### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis

### **Giving Back Committee**

**Goal:** To increase the global impact of the SSAT in other parts of the world

### **Requirements to volunteer for the Giving Back Committee**

- Membership in good standing
- Interest in philanthropy
- Availability to take an active part in common projects of the committee

### **Expectations of Giving Back Committee Members**

- Participation in the regular Conference Calls
- Participation in in-person meetings at the DDW and the ACS Annual Congress
- Actively participate in and provide input on the main tasks and current projects of the committee
- Review applications for the Traveling Fellowship for Surgeons in Developing Nations

### **Tasks**

- Foster opportunities to Provide educational opportunities to surgeons working in developing areas
- Develop and assess opportunities to improve the GI health and wellbeing of individuals living in developing areas and in our local communities

### **Meetings**

- In-Person at the Annual Meeting (at DDW) as well as at the ACS Clinical Congress
- Via conference calls on an as-needed basis

## QUICK LINKS

- [SSAT Website](#)
- [SSAT Strategic Plan](#)
- [SSAT Committee Goals and Rosters](#)
- [SSAT Members Only Area](#)
- SSAT Social Media:
  - Twitter: [@SSATNews](#)
  - [Facebook](#)
  - YouTube: [SSATVideos](#)
- [Digestive Disease Week \(DDW\)](#)

## SSAT CONTACT INFORMATION

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