

# University of Washington Postdoctoral Association (UWPA) Charter

## I. MISSION

### A. UWPA Mission

The University of Washington Postdoctoral Association (UWPA) is a community of postdoctoral fellows dedicated to realizing the full potential of the postdoctoral training experience and to maximizing the success of postdoctoral fellows both at the University of Washington and in their careers beyond. We aim to establish and maintain a peer network that provides opportunities for scientific and social interactions within the postdoctoral community, and to identify resources and support available to postdoctoral fellows for their professional development.

### B. UWPA Goals

The goals of University of Washington Postdoctoral Association are to:

1. Establish an active social and scientific network of postdoctoral trainees at the University of Washington and affiliated institutions by identifying and reaching out to postdoctoral fellows, junior research faculty, and Ph.D. level research scientists who may benefit from membership in the UWPA.
2. Gain institutional recognition and support for the UWPA and to establish an Office of Postdoctoral Affairs within the University administration (see the UWPA Proposal for an OPA). Our vision is that the UWPA and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs will collaborate to accomplish each of the goals outlined below.
3. Provide information to support current, new, and prospective postdoctoral fellows in the following ways:
  - A. Enhance communication between postdoctoral fellows and university administrators, faculty, and students.
  - B. Develop and maintain a UWPA website containing our mission and goals, a calendar of events, and resources that pertain to postdoctoral training and professional development.
  - C. Provide an orientation packet to new postdoctoral trainees with information about the University of Washington and the Puget Sound area.
  - D. Provide information and resources addressing the specific needs of international postdoctoral fellows working at the University of Washington.
  - E. Inform fellows about University of Washington training grants, as well as, private and government-sponsored fellowships that fund postdoctoral trainees.
  - F. Offer methods for postdoctoral trainees to foster productive mentor-trainee relations, for example through periodic evaluations and cooperative assessment of career goals.
  - G. Help identify opportunities for scholarly training and professional development, such as teaching and mentoring experiences that are consistent with the current appointment and career goals of the trainee.

4. Facilitate career development opportunities for postdoctoral fellows in the following ways:
  - A. Seminars/discussions to help postdoctoral fellows balance work and life, define career goals, and pursue opportunities best suited to the individual trainee.
  - B. Advertise and promote workshops focused toward the academic job search, to help develop skills in areas such as grant-writing, interviewing, and job negotiations.
  - C. Seminars to educate postdoctoral fellows about the skills needed for non-academic careers, such as those in private industry, public policy, or patent law.
  - D. Provide a seminar format for current faculty to educate postdoctoral trainees about what makes a successful academic job search so as to increase the success rate of new faculty hires from the University of Washington postdoctoral pool.

## II. ORGANIZATION

The structure of the UWPA is defined by the by-laws that follow. However, due to the transitory nature of post-graduate enterprise, UWPA recognizes in some instances the laws may not be applicable/enforceable. In these cases the UWPA will decide upon a course of action by a regular majority vote as described in section II and III.

### A. Co-chairs

1. Two Co-Chairs will be chosen from volunteer UWPA members. One week before a regular meeting of the membership, a list of nominees for the position along with a brief description (no more than 250 words) of their platform will be sent to all UWPA members. If more than one individual volunteers for each position, the two Co-Chairs will be selected by a majority vote of the active members in attendance at the next business meeting. Members may also vote by mailing a ballot (downloaded from the web) to the incumbent co-chairs through campus mail.
2. Resignations must be announced at least one month before the next official UWPA meeting. The membership will be sent an email notification calling for nominations.
3. If the UWPA membership is informed about Co-Chair resignations with less than 2 weeks notice before the next meeting, an interim chair can be elected by majority vote of UWPA members present at a regular meeting of the membership. The above nomination and election procedures must be immediately pursued.
4. Each Co-Chair will commit to serve in that position for a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 2 years.
5. The election of the Co-Chairs must be staggered, with no more than two Co-Chair positions open for nominations at any given time.
6. At least one Co-Chair person must be available to attend each meeting.
7. Continued appointment as Co-Chair requires attendance at more than three fourths of the scheduled monthly meetings

- A. Absences of a Co-Chair are considered excused absences if agreed upon by the other Co-Chair. Excused absences do not count as skipped or failed attendance for appointment purposes.
- B. If a Co-Chair does not attend three meetings in a row, the other Co-Chair may notify the truant Co-Chair that the truant Co-Chair is no longer an active officer and commence election proceedings.

B. Co-Secretaries

1. The Co-Secretaries will be elected in the same manner as described for the Co-Chairs (Section II A.1-A.3).
2. The Co-Secretaries will serve in their positions for a minimum of 12 months.
3. If neither of the Co-Secretaries is able to attend a meeting, they must arrange for a substitute to take minutes and complete any other duties.
4. Continued appointment as Co-Secretary requires attendance at more than three fourths of the scheduled monthly meetings.
  - A. Absences of a Co-Secretary are considered excused absences if agreed upon by the Co-Chairs. Excused absences do not count as skipped or failed attendance for appointment purposes.
  - B. If a Co-Secretary does not attend three meetings in a row, the Co-Chairs may agree to notify the truant Co-Secretary that he or she is no longer an active officer and commence election proceedings.

C. Treasurer

1. A Treasurer may be elected, if deemed necessary by the UWPA membership, in the same manner as described for the Co-Chairs (Section II A.1-A.3).
2. The Treasurer will serve in their positions for a minimum of 12 months or through one budget cycle (if applicable).
3. Continued appointment as Treasurer requires attendance at more than three fourths of the scheduled monthly meetings.
  - A. Absences of the Treasurer are considered excused absences if agreed upon by the Co-Chairs. Excused absences do not count as skipped or failed attendance for appointment purposes.
  - B. If the Treasurer does not attend three meetings in a row, the Co-Chairs may agree to notify the truant Treasurer that he or she is no longer an active officer and commence election proceedings.

D. Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee will be a standing committee composed of the Co-Chairs, the Co-Secretaries, and the Treasurer (if applicable).

#### E. Regular Members

1. The UWPA will strive to maintain diversity and equal representation amongst scientific discipline, experience, gender and foreign national status.
2. We recognize as eligible for regular membership all individuals in the University of Washington community holding terminal degrees in their area of expertise. This is regarded as inclusive of members of the School of Medicine including Dental, Veterinary and allied health professionals. In addition to fields that traditionally graduate doctors (Ph.D., M.D., D.O., D.C., D.D.S., D.V.M., O.D., D.P.M., Sc.D., Eng.D., Dr. P.H., D.N.S., N.D., Pharm.D., D.S.W., Psy.D.) we also consider individuals in fields that offer as the most advanced degree a terminal masters degree (e.g. M.F.A.) as prospective members of the UWPA.
3. All regular members can attend all business meetings and are appointed by volunteering to participate.
4. Upon accepting membership in a committee (see section VII), individuals agree to maintain active membership for a minimum of one year.
5. Upon joining the UWPA, all new members will be made aware of the details of the Charter of the UWPA (available on the website).
6. The UWPA will provide all members with the same support and services, as directed by our mission statement (see above). This includes but is not limited to networking events, post-doctoral orientation, career development resources, scientific discourse, and ad-hoc advising.
7. If a subcommittee has limited membership and has more volunteers than open slots, new members will be selected by a majority vote of the regular members in attendance.

### III. RESPONSIBILITIES

#### A. UWPA Co-chairs are responsible for the following items:

1. Notification to the membership of vacancies in the officer pool.
2. Overseeing the timely appointment and/or election of new officers.
3. Setting the agenda for and co-facilitation of scheduled monthly meetings in accordance with the guidelines herein.
4. Maintaining a record of attendance, calling the roll if necessary, and determining if a vote will be carried out.
5. Ensuring that information from UWPA meetings is available to all UWPA members. This includes, but is not limited to ensuring that minutes of monthly meetings are posted to the UWPA website.
6. Ensuring that all UWPA subcommittees appoint a chair and that the chair reports the activities of the committee to the executive committee at monthly meetings.

- B. The Co-secretaries are responsible for the following items:
  - 1. Recording and distributing UWPA meeting minutes.
  - 2. Managing the UWPA website and listserv.
- C. The Treasurer, if elected, is responsible for the following items:
  - 1. Recording and handling all funds received by the UWPA.
  - 2. Solicitation of planned expenses from each subcommittee chair by the end of the year and development of an annual budget for the UWPA (if necessary).
    - A. The final budget will be reviewed by the Co-Chairs and sent out to the UWPA by the second week of January.
    - B. The UWPA will approve the budget by majority vote in the February UWPA meeting.
  - 3. Developing strategies to increase funding opportunities for the UWPA.
  - 4. Presenting a biannual review of the funding/budget status to the UWPA membership.
- D. Executive Committee
  - 1. Will maintain active communication with and represent the interests of the UWPA to the University of Washington administration and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.
  - 2. Will annually review the UWPA by-laws and make recommendations for changes or amendments to these rules.

#### **IV. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

- A. Time and Place

Regular meetings of the UWPA shall be held. Every effort should be made to hold monthly meetings, to plan events, and to coordinate the interaction between subcommittees and the UW administration.

  - 1. Meetings are to be no longer than one and one half hours.
  - 2. Any unfinished business must be tabled until the next meeting.
- B. Quorum
  - 1. A legal vote can only occur at a regularly scheduled meeting with adequate advance notice of a vote made to the entire membership (*e.g.* via the UWPA listserv).
  - 2. Adequate advance notice for a meeting is decided on by unanimous written declaration of the officers.
  - 3. Any attendance at a regular meeting that was preceded by the adequate advance notice is a quorum and can proceed with a vote.
- C. Order of Business

1. An agenda will be distributed by email to the UWPA membership in advance of all scheduled meetings.
2. The Co-chairs shall call the meeting to order.
3. Approval of minutes.
  - A. A copy of the previous month's minutes will be sent by email to all UWPA members prior to the monthly meeting.
  - B. At the meeting, the Co-Chairs shall ask if there are additions or corrections to the minutes. If there are no changes or changes are made by general consent, the minutes will be declared, "approved" or "approved as amended."
4. Reports of special representatives and standing committees. The Co-Chairs shall call only on those special representatives or standing committees who have reports to make.
5. General orders or unfinished business. Unfinished business or general orders shall be considered in the order of the agenda. Items to be considered under this heading include:
  - A. Any business that was pending when the previous meeting adjourned.
  - B. Any business considered at the previous meeting but was postponed for debate.
  - C. New business. The Chair shall ask if there is any new business. Members can introduce new business or remove from the table any matter that is on the table.
  - D. Announcements. The Co-Chairs may make, or call upon others to make any necessary announcements; or, members can briefly obtain the floor for such a purpose.
6. Program. If there is to be a presentation or other program, it is usually presented before the meeting is adjourned.
7. Voting motions shall carry if they receive a majority vote. All members present may vote.
8. Determination of topics for next meeting's agenda. Any UWPA member can recommend additional agenda items until the day before the next scheduled meeting. Agenda items can be sent to the UWPA Co-Chairs or Co-Secretaries.
8. Grievances. Any grievances about a voted manner should be submitted in writing to the executive committee. The executive committee has two weeks to decide by majority vote whether to revoke the issue or allow the vote to stand.

## **V. SUBCOMMITTEES**

- A. Subcommittees shall be created by the UWPA membership, as needed, at the regular monthly meeting to investigate and recommend action or take action on matters that are of interest to UWPA.

- B. The subcommittees will be chaired by volunteers.
- C. Subcommittee membership is open to all UWPA members. It is recommended but not required that the subcommittee members attend regular business meetings of the UWPA.
  - 1. Subcommittee formation is done at a monthly business meeting
  - 2. Subcommittee chairpersons should be appointed from within the subcommittee members at the end of their first meeting.
    - A. Subcommittee chairs may resign and be replaced by subcommittee members according to the same procedures described for UWPA officers (Section II A. 7A). Except, voting will occur among the subcommittee membership.
    - B. In extraordinary circumstances, subcommittee members may petition the UWPA, at a regular business meeting, to have the current subcommittee chairperson removed.
      - 1) Following a discussion, the item is placed on the next meetings agenda for voting.
      - 2) An announcement of the vote must be made at least two weeks prior to the next business meeting
- D. The duties of a subcommittee and its power to act on certain decisions shall be outlined at its formation and shall be approved by the UWPA.
- E. There will be two types of subcommittees which may be formed:
  - 1. Standing subcommittees shall be created to consider matters which will have a continuing existence. (*e.g.* Public Relations, Social Events, Executive Committee etc.) These subcommittees shall be reviewed annually to determine if their continued function is necessary.
  - 2. Ad hoc subcommittees shall be created as the need arises to perform a specific task. (*i.e.* surveys, events, etc.)
    - A. At its formation, the ad hoc subcommittee shall be given a specific period of time to complete its task.
    - B. The ad hoc subcommittee will go out of existence when its task is complete, and it has given a final report to the assembly.
    - C. The UWPA membership may extend the appointment time or dissolve the subcommittee by a regular vote.
    - D. All ad hoc subcommittees shall report to the group during the monthly meeting. Status reports from subcommittees may also be requested by the officers on an ad hoc basis.

## **VI. BYLAW REVIEW**

- 1. The Executive Committee shall review the bylaws at least annually and present the membership with proposed changes, if any, to ensure that the bylaws remain current and relevant to the mission of the UWPA.
- 2. Co-chairs will announce a review period to allow input from all members.

3. A proposal for changes to the bylaws can be made at a regularly scheduled committee meeting during the review period.
4. Proposed changes must be submitted in writing to the Co-chairs and discussed at a scheduled UWPA meeting.
5. To ensure that mutually exclusive proposals are not balloted, the executive committee will organize all proposals into balloted items or packages. Following discussion as per VI D, above, changes will be voted on by the Postdoctoral members in attendance at a scheduled meeting, in the manner of a regular vote. Changes are accepted if approved by a two-thirds majority vote.