

# UWPA bylaws

## Article 1: Name

Let it be known that the name of the organization is University of Washington Postdoctoral Association, hereafter referred to as UWPA.

## Article 2: Non-discrimination

The UWPA shall not discriminate against any person because of race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or political opinions.

## Article 3: Mission and purpose

1. The UWPA is run by postdocs and for postdocs.
2. The association represents all postdocs working at the University of Washington and aims to maximize the experience and enhance the welfare of all postdocs at the University of Washington.
3. The purpose of the UWPA shall be to:
  - a. foster the professional development and career advancement of postdocs
  - b. promote networking and social opportunities for postdocs
  - c. actively advocate for the postdoc community within and outside of the UW

## Article 4: Membership

1. All postdocs working at the University of Washington are automatically members of the UWPA.
2. A postdoc is defined as a person with doctoral degree that is working at the university in a temporary and non-professorial position. Holders of research associate, research associate trainee, senior fellow, and senior fellow trainee job titles are considered postdocs. The UWPA board will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow someone who satisfies the general postdoc definition above but is not in one of the four postdoc titles to be considered a member.
3. Membership does not involve payment of dues or any other obligation.
4. All members are eligible to be board members of the UWPA at any time and take any position with the exception of the executive committee co-chair positions (Article 11).

## Article 5: Independence and cooperation

1. Let it be resolved that the UWPA is an independent organization that enables members to freely discuss all matters that are relevant to them.
2. The UWPA has autonomy to freely establish its goals and deliberate.
3. The UWPA shall ensure effective communication and cooperation with other relevant organizations at the university, including but not limited to the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA), the Graduate School, the Office of Research (OR), the colleges, the schools, the departments, the student and faculty organizations and other postdoc organizations.
4. In addition to communicating and cooperating with internal organizations, the UWPA shall communicate and cooperate with organizations external to the university that are relevant to postdocs, including but not limited to the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) and other postdoc organizations.
5. The UWPA will maintain a good working relationship with the postdoc union, UW Postdocs United (UWPU) / UAW 4121.

## Article 6: Structure

1. The UWPA board is composed of several bodies:
  - a. The executive committee.
  - b. Five non-executive permanent committees.

- c. A variable number of non-permanent committees.
  - d. The council of representatives.
2. Committee chairs and council representatives are required to be members of the UWPA board.
  3. Members of non-executive committees, excluding committee chairs, can opt out of being a board member.

## Article 7: Executive committee

1. The executive committee is collectively responsible for:
  - a. Establishing a coherent strategy for the UWPA.
  - b. Creating and dissolving non-permanent committees.
  - c. Appointing chairs to the other committees.
  - d. Ensuring that UWPA has an effective strategy for recruiting board members.
  - e. Consulting with the board and reporting progress to the board.
  - f. Addressing matters related to termination of officers.
  - g. Overseeing all the other bodies and activities of the UWPA.
2. The executive committee is composed of four officers:
  - a. Two co-chairs.
  - b. One treasurer.
  - c. One secretary.
3. The duties of the co-chairs are:
  - a. Chair the board meetings.
  - b. Chair the policy committee.
  - c. Chair the communication committee.
  - d. Manage the internal communication mechanisms (e.g., uwpa-board listserv).
  - e. Represent the UWPA in external bodies (e.g., FCR).
  - f. Participate in the annual National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) meeting, contingent on funding.
4. The duties of the treasurer are:
  - a. Propose an yearly budget plan to the executive committee.
  - b. Apply for funding.
  - c. Regularly report to the board regarding the used and available funds.
  - d. Manage budget expenditures and reimbursements.
5. The duties of the secretary are:
  - a. Organize the agenda for the board meetings.
  - b. Assist the co-chairs in organizing the board meetings (e.g. reserve room, send reminders, etc.).
  - c. Take minutes at the board meetings and make them available for review
  - d. Keep track of all the documentation of the UWPA.
6. Members of the executive committee can delegate to another board member all or a subset of their duties, including appointing liaisons, when necessary and appropriate but remain responsible for those duties.
7. The term of each officer of the executive committee is one year.
8. All officers of the executive committee are elected.
9. UWPA executive board members shall not hold a paid position with UWPU/UAW 4121.
10. If an UWPA executive board member is also a member of the UWPU/UAW 4121 bargaining or executive committee(s), they shall recuse themselves from any vote pertaining to the Union which may cause a perceived conflict of interest between the two organizations.
11. The executive committee will resolve all conflicts not specifically addressed in the bylaws.

## Article 8: Other committees

1. In addition to the executive committee, there are five permanent committees
  - a. Networking and social events committee
    - i. Duties:
      1. Identify the needs of postdocs regarding networking and social matters
      2. Propose and organize regular networking and social events (e.g., happy

- hours, HUB night events, barbecues, etc.)
- b. Professional development events committee
    - i. Duties:
      1. Identify the needs of postdocs regarding professional development
      2. Organize an annual research symposium
      3. Propose and organize other professional development events (e.g, brown bag events, conversation events)
  - c. Policy and advocacy committee
    - i. Duties:
      1. Organize regular internal meetings for discussion of policy and advocacy matters
      2. Identify problems that affect postdocs or the UWPA
      3. Proactively interact with other bodies and organizations to advocate for postdocs
      4. Propose policy and advocacy initiatives
  - d. Communications committee:
    - i. Duties:
      1. Coordinate the UWPA newsletter.
      2. Maintain the UWPA website.
      3. Ensure an active social network presence.
      4. Define and implement strategies to improve the membership email list (periodic updates from the UW directory, ensure the university provides it, etc.).
      5. Actively promote the visibility of UWPA within and outside of the university.
  - e. Elections committee
    - i. Duties:
      1. Organize the bi-annual elections.
      2. Optionally organize surveys during the election process
  - f. Union Liaison
    - i. Duties:
      1. Maintain open communication between UWPA and the Union
      2. Participate in UWPA board as a member in good standing
      3. During contract negotiation the union liaison will be expected to recuse themselves from any vote pertaining to the Union which may cause a perceived conflict of interest between the two organizations.
  - g. Office of Postdoctoral Affairs Liaison (OPAL)
    - i. Duties:
      1. Maintain open communication between UWPA and the OPA
      2. Participate in UWPA board as a member in good standing
      3. OPAL will be ineligible to vote in situations pertaining to the OPA, as decided by the executive committee
2. The executive committee creates, dissolves and establishes the duties of non-permanent committees (e.g., parenting committee, diversity committee, etc.).
  3. Non-executive committees:
    - a. All non-executive committees must have at least one chair.
    - b. The chairs of the non-executive committees are responsible for overseeing the committee, inviting committee members, regularly reporting to the board and ensuring that the duties of the committee are honored.
    - c. Chairs of non-executive committees are appointed by the executive committee and are responsible for recruiting members for the respective committee.
  4. UWPA members can be simultaneously part of several committees.

## Article 9: Council of representatives

1. The council of representatives serves to ensure that the UWPA is able to represent well the diverse needs of postdocs from the various areas within the university.

2. Every department with at least one postdoc can have one council representative.
  - a. The UWPA should ensure that any department with more than 5 postdocs has a council representative.
  - b. Schools that don't have departments are considered equivalent to departments for this purpose.
3. Any UWPA member can volunteer to become its department representative and is appointed by the executive committee.
4. Duties of the council representatives:
  - a. Communicate the problems and needs of postdocs of their department to the UWPA board
  - b. Promote the events and activities of the UWPA within their department

## Article 10: Board meetings

1. The board meetings serve to allow the different committees to update each other on past and planned activities, and to discuss matters important to the UWPA.
2. Board meetings are held monthly and generally last for one hour. Exceptionally, board meetings can be scheduled for periods longer than one hour if necessary.
3. The executive committee co-chairs are responsible for scheduling the meetings, ensuring the room is booked, and chairing the board meetings.
4. Agenda and reminder:
  - a. The secretary should send a reminder to board members to attend the board meeting with sufficient notice (e.g., 1 week).
  - b. The secretary should initiate and assist the co-chairs in the process of preparing the agenda when the reminder is sent
  - c. The agenda for the board meeting must be sent by the secretary to all board members at least one day before the meeting.
5. Attendance and participation:
  - a. The board meetings are open to all members of the UWPA.
  - b. All board members are expected to participate in the board meetings.
  - c. Board members that do not attend at least 2 of the last 6 board meetings are automatically terminated unless the executive committee decides otherwise.

## Article 11: Elections

1. Elections for the executive committee officers are held twice a year. With the goal of facilitating the transition, in each election only two of the four officers are elected, ensuring that terms of two pairs of officers overlap by 6 months.
2. Election calendar:
  - a. January: Election of one chair and the treasurer.
  - b. June: Election of one chair and the secretary.
3. The elections are organized by the elections committee.
  - a. The elections committee must have at least two members.
  - b. The members of the elections committee must not be candidates .
4. Call for candidates and announcement of election
  - a. The election announcement must contain:
    - i. the date, time and location of the election
    - ii. a copy of the bylaws
    - iii. list of known candidates at the time
  - b. The announcement must be posted on the UWPA website with at least a 1 week notice and must be announced on the UWPA newsletter with at least a 1 week notice
5. Every member can be a candidate for treasurer or secretary. Only members that have been board members for at least the preceding 6 months can be candidates for chair.
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In the event of no suitable candidates for chair, the 6 month requirement can be

- waived by unanimous executive committee decision.
6. The maximum number of consecutive terms for a given position (co-chair, treasurer and secretary) is 3 terms.
    - a. In the event of no external nominations, term limits may be waived by unanimous executive committee decision.
  7. Elections can be conducted using physical or electronic votes.
  8. Elections are conducted using secret ballots.
  9. Elections of officers are done by simple majority of valid votes.
  10. If a member of the executive committee resigns or is terminated during their term, the remaining members of the executive committee can appoint a replacement without elections. Alternatively, the executive committee can call for extraordinary elections to elect an officer for the remaining term of the vacant position.

## Article 12: Cessation of board membership

1. Board members can resign at any time but are expected, according to the circumstances, to give reasonable notice and make a reasonable effort to find a replacement.
2. Termination of board members that are not part of the executive committee can occur in the following conditions:
  - a. When board member have not attended at least two of the last six board meetings and have not provided a justification that is considered valid by the executive committee. The executive committee should reach out to absent board members and encourage them to return before this condition is reached.
  - b. When there is serious or repeated violation of assigned duties as understood by the executive committee. Whenever possible, the executive committee should reach out to members in this condition to try to proactively avoid the situation.
3. Termination of board members that are part of the executive committee can occur in the following conditions:
  - a. When there is serious or repeated violation of assigned duties as understood by the majority of the executive committee. Whenever possible, the other members of the executive committee should reach out to members in this condition to try to proactively avoid the situation.
4. Board members that have been terminated are removed from the board mailing list, website, and are not allowed to be board members of UWPA for the next period of 1 year.

## Article 14: Transition

1. All officers that reach the end of their term or resigned are expected to make an effort to help the new member take up their role.
2. Executive committee members who have reached the end of their term or have resigned are expected to:
  - a. meet with the new executive committee member who has replaced them with the intention of transitioning the specific roles and responsibilities of the position.
  - b. be reasonably available by phone or email to answer questions about the position for three months following their departure from the position.

## Article 13: Amendments

1. The bylaws can be amended by vote with the elections for the executive committee.
2. Proposals for bylaws amendments can be introduced by:
  - a. The executive committee.
  - b. A group of at least five (5) UWPA members.
3. Proposals to amend the bylaws must be introduced and discussed at the UWPA board meeting prior to the meeting where they are voted on.
4. Votes on bylaw changes have equivalent requirements as the election on the executive committee officers.

- a. Proposals to amend the bylaws must be announced in the UWPA newsletter and in the website, after discussion at the board, to give all UWPA members a chance to review the proposal before the meeting where they are voted on.
  - b. The announcement should include the current bylaws, the proposed bylaws, the differences highlighted, the identity of the group proposing, (optionally) a short statement from the proponents and opponents, if any.
5. To be approved the favorable vote of a qualified majority of two thirds of the valid votes is required.
  6. Amendments become effective upon approval by the members.

**Ratification: These bylaws were approved by the UWPA on 11/15/2018 in general election by majority of member votes.**