

# The Constitution of the Society of Postdoctoral Scholars at the University of Saskatchewan

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## Article 1: Society Name

- A. The society will be known as the Society of Postdoctoral Scholars, abbreviated SPS, and hereafter referred to as the “Society”.

## Article 2: Purpose

- A. To act as official representatives for postdoctoral scholars/fellows (hereafter referred to as “postdocs”) at the University of Saskatchewan by providing a formal and continuous structure through which we can communicate with University of Saskatchewan administrators and the Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars.
- B. To foster communication between postdocs so that they can share their experiences, resources, and knowledge and to provide information to postdocs that supplements and enhances the information that is provided by the University of Saskatchewan through the Society website.
- C. To act as a social hub for postdocs at the University of Saskatchewan by organizing meetings and social events throughout the calendar year.

## Article 3: Membership

- A. Any postdoctoral scholar working at the University of Saskatchewan is eligible to be a member of the Society. Only members may vote in elections and hold executive positions.
- B. The society does not place any limits on members based on age, gender, race, religion, language, or disability.

## Article 4: Executive Officers

- A. The executive will be made up a council of 5 officers:
  - i. Managing Director
  - ii. Director of Operations
  - iii. Director of Finance
  - iv. Director of Communications
  - v. Director of Member Relations
- B. The minimum duties of each executive officer are as follows, however, additional duties may be assigned at the discretion of the executive:
  - i. The Managing Director shall
    - a) Be responsible for ensuring the smooth operation of the society.
    - b) Acts as an official representative of the Society when dealing with the University of Saskatchewan administration.
    - c) Set the agenda for all meetings.
    - d) Sit as chair of all meetings.
    - e) Read and understand University policies concerning postdocs.
    - f) Act as a signing officer of the Society.

- g) Be responsible for ensuring his or her successor is properly transitioned into the role of Managing Director.
  - ii. The Director of Operations shall
    - a) Work directly with the Managing Director to help ensure the smooth day-to-day operations of the Society.
    - b) Act as deputy chair in all meetings.
    - c) Take minutes at all meetings.
    - d) Act as a signing officer of the Society.
    - e) Act as chair of all meetings in the absence of the Managing Director.
    - f) Be responsible for ensuring his or her successor is properly transitioned into the role of Director of Operations.
  - iii. The Director of Finance shall:
    - a) Keep records of all spending within the Society.
    - b) Create and maintain the annual budget.
    - c) Act as a signing officer of the Society.
    - d) Be responsible for creating and/or managing the Society bank account.
    - e) Manage applications for Society grants.
    - f) Act as chair of meetings in the absence of both the Managing Director and the Director of Operations.
    - g) Be responsible for ensuring his or her successor is properly transitioned into the role of Director of Finance.
  - iv. The Director of Communications shall:
    - a) Maintain the Society's website (<http://www.usask.ca/groups/sps/index.php>) and confidential mail server.
    - b) Manage the overall communication of the Society with external organizations, such as news media.
    - c) Participate in decisions that may impact the ongoing reputation of the SPS.
    - d) Provide notice to all member regarding upcoming events, meetings, and motions.
    - e) Act as a signing officer of the Society.
    - f) Act as chair of meetings in the absence of the Managing Director, the Director of Operations and the Director of Finance.
    - g) Be responsible for ensuring his or her successor is properly transitioned into the role of Director of Communications.
  - v. Director of Member Relations
    - a) Work closely with the Director of Communications to collect and disseminate information pertinent to members of the Society.
    - b) Maintain a confidential and up-to-date Society membership list.
    - c) Actively participate in member recruitment.
    - d) Personally meet all Society members and instill confidence that the Society operates in the best interest of its members.
    - e) Listen to member concerns and present said concerns to the executive.

- f) Act as a signing officer of the Society.
  - g) Plan and organize Society social events.
  - h) Act as chair of meetings in the absence of the Managing Director, the Director of Operations, Director of Finance and Director of Communications.
  - i) Be responsible for ensuring his or her successor is properly transitioned into the role of Director of Member Relations.
- C. Each executive on the council has an equal rank and voting right. Executive positions are to be held for a term of 2 years. In the case that an executive leaves the University of Saskatchewan, is no longer a postdoc, or wishes to forfeit their position on the executive council, the executive shall appoint an interim Director to fill the position until the next election.

## Article 5: Meetings

- A. There will be three types of meetings: general meetings, executive meetings, and annual general meetings (AGM's).
- B. The regulations regarding each type of meeting are as follows:
- i. General meetings
    - a) Quorum for general meetings shall be 2/3 of the executive and the lesser of 50% of the general membership or 5 (non-executive) members.
    - b) Voting on motions put forth at general meetings must go before the general membership.
    - c) Voting will be conducted via a show of hands, though any member may request that the motion be voted on by secret ballot. If any one member requests this for any motion, voting must be done by secret ballot.
    - d) A majority vote is needed to pass a motion (a majority signifying 50%+1 of all members in attendance).
    - e) The Director of Operations of the Society will be responsible for giving advance notice of all motions to be voted on at any meeting not less than 48 (forty-eight) hours before the meeting, and this notice must be given to all members of the society.
  - ii. Executive meetings
    - a) Quorum for executive meetings shall be 3/5 of the executive.
    - b) Executive meetings shall be used at the discretion of the executive to ensure the smooth operation of the Society, however, it is recommended that the executive meet at least once a month.
    - c) Any motions to amend the Constitution must be voted on by the general membership, and as such motions cannot be passed during Executive meetings.
  - iii. Annual general meetings (AGM's)
    - a) Quorum for an AGM shall be all Executive members and the lesser of 50% of the general membership or 35 (non-executive) members.

- b) An AGM must be called at least once per academic year by the Managing Director.
- c) There will be at least one AGM during the months of February or March, during which elections will take place (see Article 6).
- d) Any additional AGM's may be called at the request of all Executive, or at the request of a member of the general membership with a petition for an AGM signed by 75% of the general members.
- e) Constitutional amendments can only be made at an AGM (see Article 8).
- f) Voting on motions must go before the general membership.
- g) Voting will be conducted via a show of hands, though any member may request that the motion be voted on by secret ballot. If any one member requests this for any motion, voting must be done by secret ballot.
- h) A majority vote is needed to pass a motion.
- i) Notice of an AGM must be given to all members not less than one week before the AGM, and the Director of Communication or in the case of his or her absence the Director of Member Relations is responsible for delivering this notice.

## Article 6: Elections

- A. Elections shall be held at an AGM no later than April 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, every two calendar years.
- B. The Managing Director shall be responsible for overseeing elections.
- C. If the Managing Director wishes to re-run for any position, then the Director of Operations shall act as chair.
- D. In the event that both the Managing Director and Director of Operations wish to run for any position, the members present at the AGM shall nominate and vote on a chair from the general membership.
- E. Nominations for elections can be given to the Director of Operations before the AGM at which elections shall take place, and notice of nominees will be given at the same time notice of the AGM is given to the rest of the general membership. Alternatively, nominations will be taken from the floor during the AGM at which the elections are taking place.
- F. Voting will be conducted via a show of hands, though any member may request that the motion be voted on by secret ballot. If any one member requests this for any motion, voting must be conducted by secret ballot.
- G. A majority vote is required to elect each position.
- H. Each member can hold at most one executive position at a time.

## Article 7: Impeachment

- A. No member of the executive may be recalled without just cause, or in any manner not specified in this constitution.
- B. Just cause is defined by this constitution as:

- i. Failing to attend 4 consecutive executive or general meetings.
  - ii. Failing to fulfill the majority of their mandates as dictated by this constitution, within reasonable limits, and without reasonable excuse.
  - iii. Conduct likely to result de-ratification of the Society, or conduct likely to bring the Society into disrepute.
  - iv. Other gross misconduct.
- C. Any member may put forth a motion to impeach provided they have a petition signed by 75% of current members, and this petition can also serve to request an AGM as directed by Article 5(iii)(d).
- D. A vote to impeach an executive member can only be brought forth at an AGM.
- E. Advance notice of a motion to impeach must be given to the member up for impeachment, and that member must have the ability to speak in their defence before the vote is taken.
- F. A vote of 75% +1 of the general membership is required to impeach an Executive member. Voting will be conducted by secret ballot.

## Article 8: Constitutional Amendments

- A. In the event that the Society cannot be ratified as a result of the content of this constitution, the current Executive have the ability to make such changes as are deemed necessary by the University of Saskatchewan Dean of Graduate Studies and Research . These changes become official upon ratification.
- i. If any member of the Society wishes to contest the changes, they may do so at the next AGM, or petition the President to call one as per Article 5(iii)(d).
- B. With the exception of circumstances in Article 8(A), amendments to this constitution are subject to the following regulations:
- i. Amendments to the constitution can only be made at an AGM.
  - ii. Motions to amend the Constitution must be presented to the Director of Operations of the Society no less than one-week before the AGM at which the constitution will be amended.
  - iii. All members are entitled to vote on amendments to the constitution.
  - iv. Voting will be conducted via a show of hands, though any member may request that the motion be voted on by secret ballot. If any one member requests this for any motion, voting must be done by secret ballot.
  - v. A 2/3 vote is required to pass a motion to amend the constitution.

## Article 9: Finances

- A. As stated in Article 4, all executive officers will be the signing officers of the Society.
- B. At least two signing officers must sign every cheque from the bank account of the Society.
- C. An executive officer cannot sign a cheque made out to his/her self.
- D. The budget will be created each year by the Director of Finance, and will be passed by the executive at an Executive meeting.