Bylaws of the George Washington University Postdoc Association (GWPA)

Article I — Mission

The mission of the George Washington University (GW) Postdoc Association (GWPA) is to enhance the postdoctoral experience at GW by establishing a sense of community among GW postdoctoral researchers, serving their needs and concerns, and providing them with career development training, counseling, and mentorship. The GWPA purpose shall be:

1. Promoting interaction between postdoctoral researchers on an academic, social and cultural basis.
2. Providing a liaison and facilitating communication between its members, faculty, administrators, and the Office of the Vice President for Research. Disseminating university information relevant to the GWPA members.
3. Aiding members with career and professional growth through a series of seminars and workshops tailored to the specific needs of postdoctoral researchers.
4. Promoting postdoctoral researchers to showcase their work and increase the campus visibility of the postdoc population.

Article II — Membership

Full members. Any GW affiliate holding a position as a postdoctoral fellow, postdoctoral scholar, research scientist, visiting scientist (or equivalent) is automatically a full member of the GWPA. Voting privileges apply to all GWPA members. Full members are eligible for nomination and/or election to serve in Steering Committee positions.

Advisory members. An OVPR representative will serve as a non-voting Ex-Officio member. At most 1 faculty member from each school within GW can serve as a non-voting advisor. This position is appointed by a two thirds votes of the GWPA Steering Committee officers.

Affiliate members. Individuals with other research appointments, e.g., PhD candidates, may join as affiliate members and participate in GWPA activities. Affiliate members do not hold voting rights.

The GWPA does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of age, gender, race, physical disability, height, weight, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

Article III — Steering Committee and Governance

The GWPA will be governed by an elected Steering Committee consisting of a:

• President
• Vice-President
• Secretary
• Treasurer
• 1 full member as a representative for each of the GW schools and colleges

Elections will be held once a year during the PA General Assembly (GA) meeting, taking place sometime in October/November.

Nominees shall present their nominations by writing to the President two weeks prior to the GA. Nominations must include a short statement of no more than 200 words to be distributed to the GWPA membership at least one week prior to the GA.

Nominees shall be present at the GA (except for extraordinary circumstances where the absence can be granted by the President upon discussion with the rest of the Steering Committee).

Elections will be held by secret ballot at the GA according to the following procedure:

• Pre-printed ballots will be distributed to all voting members in attendance.
• Ballots will be collected during the course of the GA day.
• Votes will be tabulated by the members of the Election Committee.
• Steering Committee members will be elected by a simple majority vote of the GWPA members present at this General Meeting. In the event of a tie the current Steering Committee members will vote on the new officer on basis of a 2/3 majority.
• In the absence of a full member nominee for a given position, the steering committee will appoint a full member to the vacant position.
• GWPA full members may vote in absentia in advance through anonymous balloting.

Under the circumstance of 1 nominee per position, the general vote may be bypassed and the new Steering Committee members are announced directly.

Steering Committee members will serve a term of one year (January-December), renewable for up to 1 additional year. The time between the elections and the start of a new Steering Committee will be utilized to ensure a smooth transition between Committees.

A member cannot hold more than 1 steering committee position at a time nor shall serve more than two terms in the same position. However, should there be too few Steering Committee members following the election, the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer may hold a School Representative position for their respective school in addition to their primary position.

If an officer must leave office before the normal end of term, any full member may be nominated or self-nominate to fill the vacancy on an interim basis, and then be voted in at the next Steering Committee meeting. This interim position does not count towards the two years limit on holding a Steering Committee position.
Article IV — Duties of Steering Committee Officers

General duties of all Steering Committee officers:
• Attend, organize, and participate in all GWPA activities, including but not limited to: career development and social events, GA and other yearly meetings, and Steering Committee leadership meetings.
• Introduce the GWPA to prospective postdocs at GW.

President duties:
• Preside over and set agenda for the monthly leadership meeting and annual GA meeting.
• Act as a GWPA liaison with faculty and administration.
• Provide reports of the Steering Committee’s activities to the GWPA members during events and meetings.
• Oversee the Standing Committees work and provide the necessary help for the Committees chairs.

Vice-President duties:
• Support all the duties of the President and assume those duties, or those of the other officers, in their temporary absence.
• Serve as a point of contact for the GW faculty Senate Committee by attending their meeting and briefing the steering committee during committee meetings.

Secretary duties:
• Call meetings and record minutes of all Steering Committee meetings.
• Distribute meeting minutes to the Steering Committee for revision and comments, then distribute to all GWPA members.
• Responsible for the duties of the President and Vice-President in their absence.

Treasurer duties:
• Monitor, authorize (with full Steering Committee approval) and maintain records of all financial transactions on behalf the GWPA.
• Prepare an annual financial report, propose an annual budget, discuss it with the Steering Committee and finalize it.
• Participate in all meetings with administration with regard to financial budget.

School and College representatives:
• Disseminate information related to the GWPA activities to postdocs within their respective School or College.
• Organize events that may be of specific interest to their School or College.
Article V — Standing Committees

All Standing Committees will be appointed by the Steering Committee. A Standing Committee member has to be a full member of the GWPA. Each Standing Committee will be chaired by a member of the Steering Committee. Each Steering Committee member must serve on at least 1 Standing Committee.

The Following Standing Committees will be appointed annually:

• Professional Development Committee

  The Professional Development Committee will be responsible for providing educational and professional development resources to postdoctoral scholars. This will include communicating frequently and meeting with the GWPA members, GW center for career services and OVPR to identify the most relevant areas for Postdoctoral Career growth. It is also responsible for the distribution of information regarding academic and industrial conferences, career development seminars, and job opportunities. Along with the Events Committee, the Professional Development Committee will be responsible for the organization of the Career and Professional Development events.

• Media, Networking, and Publishing Committee

  This Committee will be responsible for maintaining a professional and social online presence for the GWPA, i.e., website/Facebook/Twitter page. This will include, but not be limited to, adding and removing pertinent GWPA communiqué as needed and providing updates on regular basis. This Committee will also be responsible for collecting articles, editing, and publishing the GWPA newsletter on the GWPA website.

• Events Committee

  The Events Committee will be responsible for planning and organizing social events and outreach activities for the GWPA. This committee will also work with the Professional Development Committee to help them organize the Career and Professional Development events.

• Election Committee

  The Election Committee will be responsible for planning and organizing the election procedure during the GA. It is also responsible for communicating the results of the election to all members of the GWPA.

All the above Committees will be responsible for the organization of the Annual Postdoc Appreciation Day to be conducted in September/October each year, during the National Postdoc Appreciation Week.
Article VI — Meetings and Events

Monthly Steering Committee meeting:
A Leadership meeting will be held to discuss all business matters of GWPA. Any full member may attend, or request for an item to be included in the regular agenda by writing to the President. The minutes for each meeting will be distributed to all full members via email in a timely manner.

Professional and Social Events:
Career-related events, such as seminars or workshops, and social events will be held approximately every month. These events will be advertised at least two weeks in advance to all GWPA members. During the selected activity, announcements will be made to keep the attendees abreast of GWPA affairs and events.

Annual General Assembly meeting:
Should an election be required to select Steering Committee members for the next year, the GWPA will organize an annual meeting for all members. During this meeting, the Steering Committee members report on the activity of the GWPA within the last year. This shall be held in October or November and known as the General Assembly (GA) meeting. Elections will be held during this GA meeting. Breakfast or lunch will be catered. Should an election not be required, the GWPA will instead distribute to its members information about its activities and new Steering Committee electronically via email, social media, and its website.

Annual Postdoc Appreciation Day:
Held in September during the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) National Postdoc Appreciation Week. Postdocs get to showcase their research through either an oral or poster presentation. All GWPA members and GW faculty are invited to attend this event.

Article VII — Review and Ratification of Bylaws

Changes and amendments to these Bylaws may be discussed and/or implemented at any time according to the discretion and two-thirds majority approval of the GWPA Steering Committee membership. Members will be notified upon any change.