Postdocs of Earth and Mineral Sciences (PoEMS) Charter
Updated Draft as of 06/09/2022
Adapted from PSPS Bylaws taken on 11/22/2021 https://postdoc.psu.edu/pbps-bylaws/


I. MISSION

The mission of Postdocs of Earth and Mineral Sciences (PoEMS) is to enhance the postdoctoral experience at Penn State in the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences (EMS) by providing resources to build community among the EMS Postdocs as well as assist postdoctoral fellows, postdoctoral scholars, and visiting postdoctoral scholars in their professional and personal development. Our aim is to provide information and support around career advancement pertaining to fields within the College of EMS. We are also focused on representing postdoctoral causes to the College of EMS administration. In addition, we would like to facilitate social and professional interaction between postdoctoral fellows/scholars in the College of EMS, toward the goal of building a community that can benefit from the exchange of knowledge and experience.

A. Primary goals of PoEMS in the College of EMS include the following:

1. To foster social and professional interactions among postdoctoral fellows/scholars.

2. To enhance the professional enrichment and development of postdoctoral fellows/scholars.

3. To serve as a liaison between postdoctoral fellows/scholars and the College of EMS administration to bring forth concerns regarding, for example, the overall work environment, benefits, and climate that postdoctoral fellows/scholars encounter.

4. To assist in the dissemination and discussion of research as well as planning and hosting seminar talks.

B. PoEMS will strive to maintain diversity and equal representation amongst scientific discipline, experience, gender, and foreign national status. PoEMS does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race, religion, national origin, language, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

II. MEMBERSHIP

A. All individuals in the College of EMS with the position title of Postdoctoral Fellow, Postdoctoral Scholar, Visiting Postdoctoral Scholar, or Research Associate (either in the Pennsylvania State University payroll system or identified as such through their departments), and who work directly on the University Park campus, are recognized as members of PoEMS and, as such, are eligible to serve on the PoEMS’ Executive Council after attending three Executive Council meetings.
B. Other individuals who are interested in being involved and hold a position similar to those described in Part II A, above, may be recognized as members of PoEMS, upon request. The PoEMS Executive Council will assess such requests on a case-by-case basis.

III. ORGANIZATION AND OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

The structure of PoEMS is defined by the by-laws that follow. However, given the transitory nature of Postdoctoral appointments, in some cases the by-laws may not be applicable/enforceable. If this is the case, and/or there are instances not covered by the by-laws, changes can be made by a 2/3 majority vote of the Executive Council (see Part V D).

A. Executive Council Overview:

1. The Executive Council will consist of:

   a. Three elected Officers (see part B, below).

   b. Council Members (other than the Officers; see part C, below), who are added to the Executive Council after attending at least three PoEMS’ Executive Council meetings.

2. Executive Council Members (including Officers) who are not serving PoEMS’ interests may be removed by a 2/3 majority vote of the Executive Council (see Part V D).

B. Officers:

1. Election of Officers:

   a. A Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Treasurer will be elected from among volunteers from the existing Executive Council membership.

   b. Volunteers can be self-nominated if they are an existing Member of the Council or nominated by another Member of the Council. If nominated by another member, the nominated person must agree to the nomination. If the nominee is not a Member of the Council, they may be considered for the position by a majority vote of current Executive Council Members.

   c. If more than one individual is nominated for each position, the position will be filled by the nominee that receives a majority vote, through secret ballot, of all PoEMS’ members in attendance at the Executive Council meeting in which voting is taking place.

   d. The Officer positions will become up for election bi-annually (ideally January and July) by a vote of all Postdocs within PoEMS, and as needed with departures.
2. Description of Officer positions:

a. **Chairperson and Co-Chairperson:** The key responsibilities of the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson are to: facilitate regular meetings with the PoEMS Executive Council Members (circa monthly, or more frequently, as required); communicate PoEMS' needs to external entities as and when necessary; and help plan and execute professional development and social events for PoEMS. The Chairperson and Co-Chairperson will also serve as a liaison between the PoEMS group and all entities external to PoEMS. The external entities could include the Dean or Assoc. Dean of EMS, counterparts at Penn State, Penn State Postdoc Society, etc. The Chair and Co-Chairperson are expected to share these responsibilities and coordinate assistance from Executive Council Members as and when needed.

i. The Chairperson is responsible for the following items:

1. Scheduling monthly Executive Council meetings, forming the agenda (including soliciting items for the agenda from Executive Council Members prior to each meeting), distributing the agenda to all Executive Council Members in advance of all meetings, and facilitating the meetings.


3. Overseeing the timely appointment and/or election of new Officers and/or Members.

4. Maintaining the official PoEMS email address (email TBD) at least once per week and replying to emails and/or directing emails to the appropriate Officers/Members/persons/committees.

5. Serving as liaison to the College and University Administration.

6. Maintaining a working relationship and open communication with the Executive Council of Penn State Postdoc Society (PSPS).

ii. The Co-Chairperson is responsible for the following items:

1. Obtaining and maintaining a current list of all active postdocs in the College of EMS from the payroll office and/or the Postdoctoral Office.

2. Maintaining a list of current Executive Council Members, including noting how many Executive Council meetings any individual general PoEMS member attends (in order to evaluate whether they are eligible to join the Executive Council after having attended three meetings).

3. Meeting minutes will be undertaken by the co-chairperson/delegated to an Executive Council Member.

4. Maintaining a record of parts 1-3, above, in the PoEMS Executive Council Teams
5. Sending an “About PoEMS” email directly to the Departments and Institutes in the College at the beginning of each Fall/Spring semester, in order to reach any new Postdocs. Ensure that any new Postdocs are added to the PoEMS listserv, as well as the list of current PoEMS members.

b. Treasurer: The role of the Treasurer is to help facilitate all financial transactions that take place in organizing PoEMS events. The Treasurer will help maintain the budget allocation for such events and will also communicate with the college personnel on the budget requirements for future events.

i. The Treasurer is responsible for the following items:

   a. Developing the PoEMS budget with input from the Executive Council and in liaison with the Dean/Assoc. Dean’s Office from the College.

   b. Recording and managing all funds that the Executive Council receives.

   c. Soliciting planned expenses at Executive Council meetings. The Executive Council will approve expenses by a majority vote.

C. Executive Council Members (other than Officers):

1. Postdocs (as defined in Part II A) are eligible to join the Executive Council as Members after attending at least three consecutive PoEMS Executive Council meetings.

2. Upon accepting membership in the Executive Council, individuals agree to maintain active membership for a minimum of one year or until their time as an EMS postdoc ends.

   a. If a Council Member fails to attend more than 3 consecutive Executive Council meetings, their Council Membership will automatically lapse. If the person wishes to reactivate their Council Membership, they will need to attend 3 consecutive Executive Council meetings.

3. Executive Council Members are expected to actively help with the organization of social events, seminars, workshops and/or activities each semester, to conduct business, and to ensure the continued leadership of PoEMS.

D. Executive Council Appointments:

1. Appointments to the Executive Council are for a minimum of six months (for Officer positions) and one year (for the Executive Council Members). Members who are unable to complete their term for any reason should immediately notify the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson.

E. Conflict resolution will be undertaken by the Executive Council at large.
IV. FACULTY SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Faculty Sponsor (Assoc. Dean; currently Zuleima Karpyn, as of 9th Jun 2022), who is not a member of the Executive Council, is responsible for the following:

1. Ensuring that PoEMS activities are in compliance with the University policies and regulations.

2. Providing guidance for the Executive Council on professional development opportunities.

V. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

A. Executive Council meetings will be held at least monthly.

1. If the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting, they will notify the Executive Council in advance and the Co-Chairperson will serve as Chairperson for that meeting. If both are unable to attend, the Treasurer will serve as Chairperson for that meeting. If none of the three Officers are able to attend, the meeting shall be re-scheduled.

B. Any person who is a member of PoEMS (see Part II) may attend an Executive Council meeting.

C. It is expected that all meetings will be conducted in a professional and collegial manner.

D. General business motions require a majority vote from the PoEMS’ Members present at the meeting.

E. A vote to change the by-laws, or to remove a Council Member (including Officer), requires a 2/3-majority vote of Executive Council Members present at the meeting at which the vote is taking place. A minimum of 3/4 of the Executive Council must be present.

VI. REVIEW OF CHARTER

A. This document shall be reviewed by the Executive Council at least annually, at the first Executive Council meeting after the Spring Officer elections. Any proposed changes stemming from this meeting shall be emailed out to the PoEMS’ Membership for review. At the following meeting, a vote on each of the proposed changes shall take place in accordance with the procedure outlined in Part V.E.

B. Changes to the Charter may also be proposed at any time, by submitting proposed changes in writing to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will email out the proposed changes to the PoEMS’ Membership for review, at least two weeks prior to the next scheduled Executive Council meeting. Following discussion at said meeting, the proposed changes may be implemented by the voting procedure outlined in Part V.E.