

**BYLAWS of the**  
**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION**

**Ratification**

These bylaws were approved by the Texas A&M University Postdoctoral Association General Members via online voting. All postdoctoral fellows and researchers at Texas A&M University were eligible to vote.

**Article 1. Mission**

The mission of the Texas A&M University (TAMU) Postdoctoral Association (PDA) shall be to foster a sense of community among the postdoctoral scholars, to be an advocate and a representative voice of the postdoctoral scholars at TAMU, and to improve the quality of the postdoctoral experience at TAMU.

**Article 2. Membership**

2.1 Definition of a postdoctoral scholar

A postdoctoral fellow, researchers, or scholar, referred to hereafter as a “postdoc,” is an individual holding a doctor of philosophy degree (Ph.D.) or equivalent (e.g., Sc.D., M.D., D.D.S., J.D.) who is engaged in a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training for the purpose of acquiring the professional skills needed to pursue a career path of his or her choosing. Postdocs are essential to the scholarly mission of the mentor and host institution.

2.2 Classification of membership

2.2.1 General members

Any postdoc at Texas A&M University, including but not limited to other campus such as Galveston and Qatar, is considered to be a “general member” of the TAMU PDA. All general members are invited to attend and speak at all general assembly, executive, and committee meetings and raise topics for discussion by submitting an email request to the Executive Committee (pda@tamu.edu) ahead of time. Any general member is eligible to serve on the Executive Committee pending the results of an election (Article 3, Section 3).

2.2.2 Departmental Representatives

Any general member may serve as a Departmental Representative. A Departmental Representative shall serve as a liaison between the postdocs in their department and the Executive Committee (Article 3, Section 3). Terms begin in the Fall semester on a volunteer basis and are first-come

first-serve. The Departmental Representative shall facilitate communication between the TAMU PDA and the postdocs in their department.

### **Article 3. Executive Committee**

#### **3.1 Structure and purpose of the Executive Committee**

The members of the Executive Committee include a President, Vice President, Communications Officer, and Treasurer, elected to one-year terms.

The Executive Committee shall meet regularly to review any issues or concerns related to postdoctoral life at TAMU. It will be in charge of maintaining the relevance of the bylaws to the Association, suggesting bylaw amendments to the officers if any are deemed necessary. The Executive Committee shall provide analysis of the legality and the integration of any proposed amendment prior to a vote and shall be responsible for interpreting the bylaws when a question of interpretation arises.

#### **3.2 Nominations**

All general members are eligible for nomination to any Executive Committee position as long as they plan to remain at Texas A&M University as a postdoc for the duration of their term. All members, including the current Executive Committee, may submit a nomination, including a self-nomination. All nominations must be approved by the Executive Committee. Each accepted nominee must provide a written nomination statement to be presented to the membership. Executive Committee members may be reelected.

#### **3.3 Elections**

Elections are held once a year. Nominations are accepted in March and elections are held in April. The election is organized and administered by the Election Committee (Article 4, Section 1.1)

#### **3.4 Terms of office**

Terms of office shall begin at the beginning of May, following the election, and shall be terminated at the end of April following the next annual election.

#### **3.5 Resignation of appointment**

If an elected Executive Committee member is unable or unwilling to complete a full year's appointment for any reason, he or she may resign by informing the remaining officers of his or her intent.

#### **3.6 Termination of appointment**

If an elected Executive Committee member does not fulfill his or her duties, or conducts duties in a way that is detrimental to the mission of the PDA, a meeting of the remaining elected officers

will be held to discuss the issue, and the officer may be requested to resign. If the officer does not resign and it is deemed necessary by the remaining officers that he or she should no longer remain in office, a simple majority vote among the other Executive Committee members will be required to terminate the appointment.

### 3.7 Filling vacancies

Vacancies in the Executive Committee shall be filled either by holding a new election for the position or following this election succession process a) The Vice President shall succeed the President and a new interim Vice President will be voted on by the Executive Committee. b) The Vice President or Communications officer shall succeed the Treasurer, and a new interim officer will be voted on by the Executive Committee. c) Other officer vacancies prior to the General Elections shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee.

### 3.8 Faculty and administrative mentors

Faculty and/or administrators are invited to participate in a non-voting, advisory role to the organization. The Executive Committee shall approve their participation.

### 3.9 Duties of Executive Committee members

#### 3.9.1 President

The President shall preside over and set agendas for the Executive Committee meetings and the biannual general assembly meetings shall serve as the liaison to TAMU and other organizations, shall approve and/or initiate PDA events, and shall be responsible for the condition of the PDA and the proper discharge of the duties of the Executive Committee members. Additionally, the President will serve in official capacities in other campus organizations including but not limited to the University Staff Council and the Center for Teaching Excellence Faculty and Student Advisory Board.

#### 3.9.2 Vice President

The Vice President shall support all of the duties of the President and assume those duties, or those of the other officers, in their temporary absence, shall coordinate creation of an annual written report to be completed and presented at the spring general assembly meeting. This report will summarize all completed business, ongoing business, and plans for the next year by all committees. The Vice President shall also keep minutes for the general assembly and Executive Committee meetings. In case the Vice President is absent from a meeting, other members of the Executive Committee can take over recording minutes.

#### 3.9.3 Communications Officer

The Communications Officer will carry out the PDA's correspondence with the TAMU community. Specifically, they will communicate meeting notices, seminar and activity

announcements, meeting minutes and agendas, maintain the Executive Committee email server and assign email addresses to the Executive Committee members, respond to emails on the general PDA email account, maintain the PDA website, and distribute any news and noteworthy achievements of the PDA members. Additionally, the Communications Officer will be expected to actively maintain the social media accounts of the TAMU PDA, and they will be responsible for upkeep of the TAMU PDA listserv. The Communications Officer will also coordinate activities with the Departmental Representatives.

#### 3.9.4 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall develop a budget request and present it to the Division of Research prior to a new fiscal year. Upon approval, the Treasurer shall keep record of spending and administer budget tracking, administer cost codes and accounts, and provide regular reports on the organization's finances at general assembly and Executive Committee meetings. Additionally, the Treasurer is responsible for the organization's compliance with TAMU rules and regulations. They shall complete required financial training through the TrainTraq system. They shall be familiar with the proper use and procedures associated with the use of the TAMU PDA Pro-Card provided by the Division of Research.

### **Article 4. Committees**

#### 4.1 Committee formation

Committees are established *ad hoc*. As the membership of the PDA increases and new needs emerge, the executive committee can establish committees to help our membership. The only committee that cannot be eliminated is the Election Committee. Previous committees include: professional development, advocacy, communications, and events.

##### 4.1.1 Election Committee

The Election Committee shall coordinate the Executive Committee member election, including overseeing the nomination, collecting the votes, and reporting the results. Election committee members cannot be nominees. This committee is established in Spring before elections.

### **Article 5. Meetings**

#### 5.1 General assembly meetings

General assembly meetings will be held biannually, in the spring and fall semesters. All members are encouraged to attend. These meetings will include a report of recent activity from the Executive Committee and any *ad hoc* committee chairs. All association members are encouraged to present ideas and topics for ongoing and future PDA activities.

#### 5.2 Executive Committee meetings

The regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held on a regular basis, usually at least once a month to discuss business matters of the PDA, and to facilitate communication between the officers and committees. Any PDA member may attend, or request to be included in the regular agenda by writing to the President, but are not eligible to vote, unless they are members of the Executive Committee. Meeting minutes will be made available.

### 5.3 Committee meetings

Committees are encouraged to meet as needed and the meetings are open to all members.

### 5.4 Order of business

An agenda will be distributed by email, in advance of all scheduled meetings. The Chair of the meeting shall call the meeting to order. If there are reports from special representatives and standing committees, the Chair shall call on them to present during the meeting. Unfinished business will be relegated to the next meeting. Agenda items for the next meeting shall be decided on, towards the end of the meeting.

### 5.5 Approval of minutes

A copy of the previous meeting's minutes will be sent by e-mail to members prior to the meeting. At the meeting, the Chair shall ask for any addition or correction 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."

## **Article 6. Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the general members. Amendments may be proposed by any general member via email or written submission to the Executive Committee. Amendments must be presented, with an opportunity for discussion, to all members of the PDA before voting occurs.

## **Article 7. Unforeseen circumstances**

Under extreme unforeseen circumstances (e.g. hurricanes, tornadoes, campus closures, etc.), Executive Committee will change or adjust dates as needed.