

# Charter

## University of Nebraska–Lincoln Postdoctoral Advisory Council

### 1 Name

- 1.1 The official name of the organization here described shall be the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Postdoctoral Advisory Council (or UNLPAC)—hereafter referred to as the PAC.

### 2 Mission

- 2.1 The PAC will promote interaction among postdoctoral appointees on an academic, professional, social, and cultural basis.
- 2.2 The PAC will support postdocs in all aspects of their professional and career development.
- 2.3 The PAC will serve as a representative voice for the postdoctoral community and advocate postdoc interests and concerns to the Office of Postdoctoral Studies (OPS) and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL).

### 3 Membership

- 3.1 All individuals who have earned a doctoral degree and have a temporary appointment in the UNL payroll system (titles including, but not limited to, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Research Assistant Professor, Postdoctoral Researcher, and NRSA Postdoctoral Fellow) are eligible to serve as voting members of the PAC.
- 3.2 The PAC will strive to maintain a membership with an equal representation from academic discipline, and diversity in race, ethnicity, experience, gender, and foreign national status.
- 3.3 The membership of the PAC will be governed by these bylaws:
  - 3.3.1 The PAC will be comprised of a maximum of 20 members.
  - 3.3.2 Any individual defined in 3.1 may apply to join the PAC by contacting an Executive Officer.
  - 3.3.3 If the PAC has more applicants than vacancies, new members will be admitted at a regular PAC meeting by majority vote, with priority given to academic disciplines underrepresented in the PAC.
- 3.4 Responsibilities: New PAC members should commit to actively serving for a minimum of 12 months. “Actively serving” includes, but is not limited to:
  - Attending 7 or more regular PAC meetings in an academic year
  - Participating on one or more PAC committees
  - Increasing awareness about postdoc activities and concerns
  - Attending PAC-sponsored events and providing organizational support if requested
- 3.5 Discontinuation
  - 3.5.1 A member may be dismissed from the Council for missing a total of 4 PAC meetings (or 3 consecutively) in a 12-month period or for failing to support the mission and activities of the PAC.
    - 3.5.1.a The Chair may call for a vote of member dismissal at a regular PAC meeting.
    - 3.5.1.b If the vote to dismiss passes by a two-thirds vote, the Chair will send written notice to the dismissed member.
    - 3.5.1.c A dismissal is effective immediately following the vote.
  - 3.5.2 A dismissed member may not chair a PAC committee but, at the discretion of the committee chair, may continue to serve as a committee member.
  - 3.5.3 Members nearing the end of their postdoc appointment or otherwise unable to meet their obligation to the PAC should notify an Executive Officer to allow a reasonable amount of time for their replacement.

### 4 Organization

- 4.1 Executive Officers
  - 4.1.1 Chair
    - 4.1.1.a Sets agenda for monthly meetings with input from PAC members and the OPS.
    - 4.1.1.b Conducts monthly PAC meetings.
    - 4.1.1.c Maintains communication between the PAC and the OPS, and with other UNL offices under direction of the OPS.
    - 4.1.1.d Oversees the timely appointment or election of new members or officers.
    - 4.1.1.e Reviews and approves PAC budget in collaboration with the Vice-Chair, the Treasurer and the OPS Director.

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- 4.1.1.f Appoints chairs of PAC committees.
- 4.1.1.g Initiates vote to dismiss a PAC member for cause (as defined in 3.5.1).
- 4.1.1.h Notifies the Vice-Chair when unable to attend a PAC meeting.
- 4.1.2 Vice-Chair
  - 4.1.2.a Assists the Chair in setting agenda for monthly meetings.
  - 4.1.2.b Reviews and approves the PAC budget in collaboration with the Chair, the Treasurer, and the OPS Director.
  - 4.1.2.c Temporarily assumes duties of the Chair if the Chair is unable to fulfill them.
  - 4.1.2.d Serves as *ex officio* chair of the Newsletter Committee
- 4.1.3 Secretary
  - 4.1.3.a Notifies the PAC and the OPS of upcoming vacancies on the PAC.
  - 4.1.3.b Maintains a record of PAC meeting attendance, calling the roll if necessary, and determining if quorum is present.
  - 4.1.3.c Records the minutes of each PAC meeting and within one week emails draft to PAC members for review. Posts final version of minutes to PAC document archive on Blackboard within one month.
  - 4.1.3.d Maintains a current PAC roster, in coordination with the Chair and the OPS.
  - 4.1.3.e Sets the PAC meeting schedules at the beginning of each term with input from PAC members (scheduling preference given to Executive Officers and OPS), reserves adequate meeting space, and notifies PAC members of dates/time/location of meetings.
- 4.1.4 Treasurer
  - 4.1.4.a Develops the annual budget for PAC operations, programs, and events in collaboration with the PAC and the OPS Director.
    - 4.1.4.a.(1) Solicits planned expenses from the PAC and drafts an annual budget for the PAC.
    - 4.1.4.a.(2) Presents a draft budget to the Chair, Vice Chair, and OPS Director for approval.
    - 4.1.4.a.(3) Submits the final budget to the PAC for review by the end of August to be ratified at the September PAC meeting. The OPS retains final authority over any PAC financial matter.
  - 4.1.4.b Maintains a record of income and outlay of the PAC account in coordination with the Director of the OPS and shall be prepared at any PAC meeting to give a summary of the financial state of the PAC.
  - 4.1.4.c Actively develops strategies to maintain and increase funding opportunities for the PAC.
  - 4.1.4.d Presents to the PAC in the last month of the term a review of the PAC finances (May and December, unless otherwise necessary).
  - 4.1.4.e Temporarily assumes duties of Secretary if Secretary is unable to fulfill them.
  - 4.1.4.f Serves as *ex officio* chair of the Travel Grant Committee.
- 4.2 Elections
  - 4.2.1 Executive Officers will be elected from nominees of the existing PAC general membership.
    - 4.2.1.a Elections will be held during a regular PAC meeting; in May for terms running July 1 to December 31, and in November for terms running January 1 to June 30.
    - 4.2.1.b The Secretary will call for nominations from PAC members one month before election meetings.
    - 4.2.1.c One week before scheduled elections the Secretary will send to all PAC members a list of nominees.
    - 4.2.1.d Members in attendance will elect officers by secret ballot.
    - 4.2.1.e If an executive officer resigns (or is dismissed) mid-term, the Chair may call for a special election to be held at a regular PAC meeting.
  - 4.2.2 Terms of Office
    - 4.2.2.a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer will serve for a term of six months.
    - 4.2.2.b At the completion of a term the Vice-Chair accedes to the position of Chair; thus a newly elected Vice-Chair must commit to serve for a total of one year.
    - 4.2.2.c A new Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected every six months.
    - 4.2.2.d Secretary and Treasurer may be nominated for re-election, and the exiting Chair may be nominated for a new executive position.

4.3 Committees

- 4.3.1 All committees will be chaired by a member of the PAC. The committee chair will:
    - 4.3.1.a Recruit committee members, if needed;
    - 4.3.1.b Call and conduct committee meetings, if needed;
    - 4.3.1.c Ensure minutes are taken at all committee meetings (if applicable), or notes are kept regarding progress. Minutes (or notes) should be available for review by PAC members; and
    - 4.3.1.d Report on committee activities and progress at PAC meetings, if called to do so by the Chair.
  - 4.3.2 Committee members need not be members of the PAC, but must be eligible to join the PAC, as defined in 3.1.
  - 4.3.3 Standing committees are formed to tend to matters of continuing importance. Executive officers, together with the OPS, will periodically review these committees to determine if their continued function is necessary.
    - 4.3.3.a Travel Grant Committee is a standing committee that oversees the OPS Postdoc Travel Grant Program.
      - 4.3.3.a.(1) Committee Membership
        - 4.3.3.a.(1.1) The PAC Treasurer serves as *ex officio* chair of the Travel Grant Committee.
        - 4.3.3.a.(1.2) Two other members of the PAC are appointed by the PAC Chair to serve for two award cycles.
        - 4.3.3.a.(1.3) A member of the committee may apply for funding from the Program, but shall recuse himself or herself from the review process for the applicable award cycle.
      - 4.3.3.a.(2) Responsibilities
        - 4.3.3.a.(2.1) Reviews funding applications
        - 4.3.3.a.(2.2) Makes award recommendations to OPS
        - 4.3.3.a.(2.3) Prepares a monthly report of activity for PAC
    - 4.3.3.b Newsletter Committee is a standing committee that coordinates the production and publication of the semiannual PAC newsletter.
      - 4.3.3.b.(1) Committee Membership
        - 4.3.3.b.(1.1) The PAC Vice-Chair serves as *ex officio* chair of the Newsletter Committee.
        - 4.3.3.b.(1.2) There shall be no limit to the number of committee members.
      - 4.3.3.b.(2) Responsibilities
        - 4.3.3.b.(2.1) Determine newsletter content and develop articles and features
        - 4.3.3.b.(2.2) Make timely calls to the postdoc community for content submission
        - 4.3.3.b.(2.3) Obtain written and photographic records of postdoc news and events
        - 4.3.3.b.(2.4) Submit formatted drafts and figures to OPS for publication
    - 4.3.3.c Other standing committees
  - 4.3.4 *Ad hoc* committees may be created to perform specific, transitory tasks (e.g., surveys or events).
    - 4.3.4.a At its formation, an *ad hoc* committee will receive from the PAC Chair a specific time period in which to complete its task.
    - 4.3.4.b The *ad hoc* committee will dissolve when its task is complete and it has provided a final report to the PAC.
    - 4.3.4.c If an *ad hoc* committee does not or will not complete its task within the appointed time the PAC Chair may extend the completion deadline or dissolve the committee.
  - 4.3.5 The chair of any committee, or his or her designee, shall be prepared at regular PAC meetings to make a report of activity and progress.
- 4.4 *Ex officio* members of the PAC
- 4.4.1 The Director and Associate Director of the OPS are *ex officio* members of the PAC and all committees (that is, they may make motions, debate and vote, but are not counted in the determination of a quorum).
  - 4.4.2 Each year the OPS Director will nominate a member of the graduate faculty to serve for two years as one of two Faculty Advisors to the PAC. The nomination may be confirmed by majority vote at a

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subsequent PAC meeting. Two faculty advisors will serve concurrently, with their tenures overlapping one year. The faculty advisors are accorded the same privileges as *ex officio* members.

- 5 Office of Postdoctoral Studies – *Oversight and management of the PAC is provided by the OPS.*
  - 5.1 Maintains OPS website ([www.unl.edu/postdoc/](http://www.unl.edu/postdoc/)), monitors email address ([postdoc@unl.edu](mailto:postdoc@unl.edu)), and administers postdoc listservs; responsible for replying to emails or directing them to the appropriate persons/committees.
  - 5.2 Renews UNL’s institutional membership in the National Postdoctoral Association, thereby affording UNL postdocs, faculty and PIs free affiliate membership and access to NPA resources.
  - 5.3 Maintains a current roster of all postdoctoral researchers at UNL (postdoctoral researchers as defined in 3.1).
  - 5.4 The OPS Director or Associate Director attends all regular PAC meetings and together serve as administrative liaisons and advisors.
  - 5.5 Provides administrative and marketing support for PAC events.
  - 5.6 Approves and coordinates distribution of all official communication for the OPS and PAC.
  - 5.7 Appropriates funds to the PAC from the OPS operating budget and has final authority over expenditures recommended by the PAC.
- 6 Meetings
  - 6.1 Scheduling
    - A regular PAC meeting will be held each month of the academic year (August through May). Special meetings may be convened at any time as needed.
  - 6.2 Quorum Definition
    - One-half of the entire PAC membership, not including vacancies, shall constitute a quorum. A quorum shall be necessary to conduct any business.
  - 6.3 Order of Business
    - 6.3.1 The Chair shall call the meeting to order.
    - 6.3.2 Approval of Minutes: The Chair shall ask if there are additions or corrections to the previously distributed minutes. If there are no changes, minutes will be declared Approved. If changes are made by general consent, minutes will be declared Approved as Amended. Approval status shall be noted in the minutes of the current meeting.
    - 6.3.3 Announcements: The Chair may call for general announcements from PAC members.
    - 6.3.4 Committee Reports: The Chair shall call only on those committee chairs who have progress updates.
    - 6.3.5 Unfinished business: This includes any discussion that was tabled in the previous meeting and special presentations or invited guests.
    - 6.3.6 New business: The Chair addresses new business from the agenda and may call for new business from PAC members.
    - 6.3.7 Review Assignments and Action Items: The Chair tables active discussions by motion of the PAC, recapitulates committee chair and other assignments and plans for the intervening period before the next meeting. The PAC may suggest agenda items for the next meeting.
    - 6.3.8 The Chair shall adjourn the meeting.
- 7 Charter Review and Amendments
  - 7.1 The Charter may be amended by a two-thirds vote at a regular PAC meeting.
    - 7.1.1 A PAC member must submit proposed amendments in writing to the Chair.
    - 7.1.2 The Chair will forward proposed amendments to all PAC members and the OPS Director for a 7-day review, during which time proposed changes may be discussed, but no vote may be taken.
    - 7.1.3 At a regular PAC meeting following the 7-day review period, proposed amendments may be discussed and voted upon. If proposed amendments are many or substantial, the Chair may appoint an *ad hoc* committee to review the amendments and make recommendations to the PAC.
    - 7.1.4 Amendments to the PAC Charter take effect immediately, unless otherwise indicated by a proviso adopted by majority vote.
  - 7.2 The PAC shall also formally review the Charter bylaws annually to ensure they remain in the best interest of UNL postdocs and the PAC.