

## Utah Postdoctoral Association (UPDA) Bylaws

### **I. MISSION**

#### **A. Our Mission**

The mission of the Utah Postdoctoral Association is to enhance the postdoctoral experience at the University of Utah by providing resources to assist postdocs (as defined by the “Membership” section of this document) in their professional development and personal needs. We aim to provide information and support around career advancement and financial issues. We are focused on representing postdoctoral causes to the University administration, as well as, facilitating social interaction between postdocs. Our goal is to build a community that can benefit from the exchange of knowledge and experience.

#### **B. Our Primary Goals aim to:**

- a. Help incoming postdocs acclimatize to their new positions and possibly to a new city, state, country and/or culture.
- b. Foster social interactions and communication between postdocs.
- c. Inform about career options and assist in driving career advancement.
- d. Be highly responsive to our members' needs and issues of concern.
- e. Provide a forum for interaction between departmental faculty and postdocs.
- f. Represent postdocs to the University of Utah administration and the National Postdoctoral Association.

### **II. ORGANIZATION**

The structure of the Utah Postdoctoral Association is defined by the bylaws that follow. However, given the transitory nature of postdoctoral positions, in some cases the bylaws may not be applicable/enforceable. In these cases, a course of action will be decided upon by a majority vote of the board.

#### **A. Board Members**

- a. The board will serve to organize seminars, workshops, and social activities each semester, conduct business, and ensure the continued leadership of the organization.
- b. A call for volunteers from the general association membership will be issued each academic year.
- c. An open call for additional board members may be held at any time if there are  $\leq 5$  board members in total.
- d. New board members are required to attend three board meetings before being invited to join the board. Addition of board members depends on a vote of the board and can be elected at any meeting.
- e. Board members or officers who are not serving the Postdoctoral Association's interests may be removed by a two-third-majority vote of the full board.
- f. Board members must remain in good standing. Any board member who is not in good standing may be asked to leave the Board.
  - i. To remain in good standing, board members must attend at least 50% of the scheduled board meetings (over the preceding 12 months or since they joined the board, whichever is shorter) and may miss only two consecutive meetings (i.e. can miss two, but not three consecutive meetings).
  - ii. Board members may request a leave of absence due to illness, career responsibilities or any other reason approved by UPDA leadership (Sr. Chair, Jr. Chair or other designee), which will not impact good standing as long as the board is notified as soon as practical. Members are not required to provide medical or personal details, they can state the general nature and expected length of the leave. The board member seeking a leave of absence is welcome to use an intermediary to contact the UPDA leadership (e.g. HR representative).
- g. Board members must notify the Senior Chair as early as possible of their desire to discontinue working with the organization
- h. The board will also consist of 1-2 faculty/staff sponsors, who are voting members of the board, and one of these faculty/staff members must represent the graduate school.
- i. Upon accepting membership on the board, individuals agree to maintain good standing for a minimum of one year unless unforeseen circumstances arise (see Section II.A.d).

**B. Officers**

- a. The officers for the UPDA board include, but are not limited to, a Senior Chair, Junior Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, and Officer of Diversity and Inclusion. These positions will be filled from the members of the board.
- b. If more than one board member volunteers for a specific position, the position will be filled by the candidate who receives a majority vote of the board members in attendance at that meeting. The board may alternatively vote to appoint multiple individuals to share a position.

**C. Officer elections**

- a. Officers (Junior Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, Diversity and Inclusion) will be nominated before the designated board meeting, with elections to be typically held during the May board meeting or before June 1.
- b. On June 1, the previous year's Junior Chair will become the Senior Chair and the new slate of officers (see II.C.a) will begin their terms.
- c. Should the Junior Chair be unable to step into the Senior Chair role, a Senior Chair should also be elected before June for a June 1 start.

**III. MEMBERSHIP**

A. The UPDA will strive to maintain diversity and equal representation amongst the various disciplines within the University, experience, gender and foreign national status. The UPDA does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, religion, national origin, language, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability, or lack of any of the aforementioned.

B. All individuals with the title of Postdoctoral Fellow, Postdoctoral Scholar, or Research Associate in the University of Utah payroll system or identified as such through their departments are eligible to participate in the UPDA and serve on the UPDA board.

C. Other individuals with similar positions to those described above who are not University of Utah employees but have interest in our organization may be recognized as affiliated with the UPDA upon request. The board will vote to approve such requests. Those persons will not be eligible to sit on the board but are welcome to attend any UPDA events.

**IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. The Senior Chair is responsible for the following items:

- a. Invitation to the UPDA general membership to join the board or Working Committees.
- b. Overseeing the timely appointment and/or election of new members.
- c. Serve as liaison to the University administration.
- d. Scheduling the Association board meetings, forming their agenda, and facilitating the meetings.
- e. Ensure that events are planned and managed effectively.
- f. Training the Junior Chair to assume the position of the Senior Chair.
- g. Serve a 1-year term limit.

B. The Junior Chair is responsible for the following items:

- a. Support and help the Senior chair coordinate the events of the UPDA.
- b. Welcome new board members and communicate them key information about the organization and its events.
- c. Help coordinate the events of the UPDA.
- d. Learn the Senior Chair's position.
- e. Step into role of Senior Chair after completion of Junior Chair term.
- f. Serve a 1-year term limit.

C. The Secretary/Treasurer is responsible for the following items:

- a. Recording minutes at each board meeting.
- b. Maintaining a record of meeting attendance and minutes.
- c. Ensuring that information from UPDA meetings is available to all postdocs (posted on the UPDA website). This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring that minutes of meetings are shared with UPDA board members.
- d. Serve as a liaison with the UPDA's faculty/staff sponsor pertaining to money issues for the organization.
- e. Serve a 1-year, renewable term.

D. The Diversity and Inclusion Officer is responsible for the following items:

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- a. Representing the UPDA at various internal and external functions related to diversity and inclusion.
  - b. Coordinating logistics for diversity-related events.
  - c. Coordinating the UPDA diversity and inclusion efforts to ensure equality in carrying out the UPDA mission.
  - d. Serve a 1-year, renewable term.
- E. All Postdoctoral Association board members are responsible for the following items:
- a. Organizing and facilitating UPDA seminars, workshops, and activities.
  - b. Ensuring that pertinent information is disseminated to the postdoctoral population at large.
  - c. Communicating concerns and ideas to the association from member postdocs.
  - d. Informing postdocs of events and helping to organize events, as needed.
  - e. Holding informal meetings with postdocs, when necessary.
  - f. Representing Postdocs in their department.
  - g. There are no term limits on the service of a general board member.
- F. The faculty/staff sponsor(s), is/are responsible for the following:
- a. Ensuring that UPDA activities follow the University regulations.
  - b. Providing guidance for the board in creating and providing professional development opportunities.
  - c. Facilitating communication between the board and University Administration.
  - d. There are no term limits on the service of a faculty/staff sponsor.
- G. One person on the board may concurrently hold more than one role on the board. However, the Senior and Junior Chair positions may not be held concurrently.

## **V. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

- A. Quorum: A minimum of one-half of the board members in good standing (excluding board members on leave of absence) plus one must be in attendance to call a vote on proposed motions.
- B. Structure of board meetings
- a. Meetings will be held once a month.
  - b. The Senior Chair will solicit agenda items and share a final agenda in advance of the meeting.
  - c. Approval of minutes: Before or during the meeting, board members will be asked to review and approve the minutes from the previous meeting.
  - d. Agenda items may include, in any order:
    - i. Reports of special representatives and standing committees: The Senior Chair shall call only on those special representatives or standing committees who have reports to make.
    - ii. General orders or unfinished business: unfinished business or general orders shall be considered in the order of the agenda. New business.
    - iii. Announcements.
  - e. Voting motions shall carry if they receive a majority vote of board members present. All board members present may vote.
- C. Senior Chair: If the Senior Chair is unable to attend a meeting, the Senior Chair will notify the Junior Chair in advance to serve as the facilitator of the meeting. However, this should only occur in emergencies and if the Senior Chair's absences become excessive (as decided by the remaining board members) the board may vote to remove the Senior Chair from their position and/or the board.

## **VI. WORKING COMMITTEES**

- A. Working committees shall be created by the board, as needed, to investigate and recommend action on matters that are of interest or concern to the board or for the purposes of organizing seminars, workshops, social events, or other activities.
- B. Working committees will be led by volunteers from the board or the general association membership. If a general member serves as a working committee chair, they, or a designated representative, will be required to attend the board meetings.
- C. Working committee members may be specifically recruited from the general association membership.
- D. The duties of a working committee and its power to act on certain decisions shall be outlined at its formation and shall be approved by the board.

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**VII. REVIEW**

- A. The board shall review these bylaws annually to ensure that they remain current.
- B. Proposed changes should be submitted in writing and made available to the board. There must be opportunity for discussion and additional recommendations by all members of the board.
- C. All proposed changes to the bylaws will be discussed and approved by a majority vote of the board.
  - a. Proposed amendments must be sent to all members at least one week prior to voting.
  - b. Amendments to the bylaws may be made at any board meeting.