

Constitution of Women in Physics and Astronomy (WomPA)

Adopted on: Feb 2019

I. Name

- A. Women in Physics and Astronomy (WomPA)

II. Purpose

As the Women in Physics and Astronomy Group (WomPA), we strive to foster a sense of community among women in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, encourage networking and mentoring across disciplines and career stages, educate ourselves and others about issues important to the advancement of women in STEM fields, and increase the visibility of women in physics and astronomy.

WomPA events provide opportunities for informal mentoring and sharing of resources, and also serve as forums for exchange of information and advice. We increase the visibility of women by highlighting important scientific contributions of local scientists, and by participating in community outreach events, targeted at encouraging young women in STEM fields. Any graduate student, postdoctoral associate, faculty, or staff in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, of any gender identity, are encouraged to join.

WomPA aims to:

- A. Facilitate scientific literacy and awareness of gender issues in science among the members.
- B. Foster a sense of community among the members.
- C. Represent the issues and concerns of group members in the Physics and Astronomy Department.
- D. Encourage girls and young women to pursue careers in STEM fields, especially Physics and Astronomy.
- E. Promote and support members in their scientific careers.
- F. Coordinate events and meetings to advance our knowledge and provide tools for career development.
- G. We agree to abide by all regulation described in the Guidelines for Recognized Student Organizations, all University policies, in addition to all federal, state, and local laws.
- H. This organization shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, or status as an individual with disability, or as a protected veteran, and any other status protected by applicable state or federal law. (University of Utah, Policy 6-400, Section II-E)

III. Membership

- A. Membership shall be open to any currently enrolled student or employee of the University.
 - 1. Specifically, any graduate student, postdoc, or faculty/staff member of the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Utah.
- B. Membership is open to persons of any gender.
- C. Membership is defined as belonging to the email mailing list and is voluntary.

IV. Meetings

- A. Meetings with members will occur on a monthly basis during the normal academic year.
- B. Meetings of the executive board will occur once a semester. Additional meetings will be held as needed. These meetings can be called by any executive member.
- C. Further socials, workshops, and events will occur on occasion, depending on their benefits to members, in the context of the available budget.

V. Executive Board

- A. The executive board is composed of members elected by the group members. These members are known as Coordinators.
- B. There is a minimum number of three with a maximum of five Coordinators. Three of these Coordinators will have the additional titles of President, Vice President, and Treasurer. All Coordinators will share the organizational responsibilities of organizing group events and meetings.
- C. The responsibilities of Coordinators:
 - 1. Schedule Monthly Meetings
 - a) Reserving a space/room
 - b) Sending announcement emails to members
 - c) Putting meetings on the calendar
 - d) Preparing an agenda or topic of discussion for the meeting
 - 2. Additional Events
 - a) Coordinating to securing any necessary reservations or permissions required, or if necessary, to organize transportation
 - b) Communicating with the members via email
 - c) Documenting the event on the calendar for records (this could be as brief as recording the date, or could contain more elaborate information)
 - d) Any other responsibilities required for the event
 - 3. Other

- a) Being available for members to discuss issues privately
- b) Representing WomPA in department discussions and committees

VI. Elections

- A. Elections will occur once a year at the beginning of the spring semester.
- B. Nominations will be accepted from any WomPA member via email or in person.
- C. Upon acceptance of nomination, Coordinators will be confirmed by majority vote via informal elections held during one of the monthly meetings.
- D. Coordinators may be removed, and replacements elected, under certain circumstances:
 - 1. Grounds for removal include the inadequate fulfillment of aforementioned duties or the violation of regulations described by University policies or any federal, state, or local laws.
 - 2. Coordinators may also be met with unforeseen difficulties that prevent them from continuing in their duties, requiring that they step down. When this occurs, the Coordinator will be relieved of their position informally.
- E. The process for removing a Coordinator, in the event that they do not step down voluntarily, is as follows:
 - 1. Reports indicating grounds for removal may come from any member, Coordinator, or the Advisor. The person making the report is referred to hereafter as the reporter.
 - 2. At the request of the reporter, the discussion may be kept confidential, remaining between the Coordinators, Advisor, and reporter. In this case, removal of the Coordinator in question will be made by majority vote between the reporter, Coordinators, and Advisor, excluding the Coordinator in question. If there is a tie, this is considered a vote in favor of removal.
 - 3. If confidentiality is not requested, the matter may be discussed at the next monthly meeting, and removal will be decided by a majority vote of all members, Coordinators, and Advisor, if present, excluding the Coordinator in question. This vote, however, would be avoided by the Coordinator in question stepping down voluntarily.
 - 4. If discussion of this issue proves uncivil in the presence of the Coordinator in question, then a member of the executive board may dictate that the Coordinator in question steps out of the room for the discussion. However, they will be allowed to address any points made against them before any vote is made.

- F. If the number of Coordinators drops below 3 via removal, a special election will take place during the next scheduled meeting, following the procedure outlined in VI.C, to elect a new Coordinator to take their place.

VII. Funds

- A. Funds for events will be provided by the Department of Physics and Astronomy and will be negotiated by the group Advisor.
- B. Funds may be requested from ASUU.
- C. Funds may also be raised through group fundraising activities.
- D. Coordinators and Advisor may undertake grant writing for larger events.

VIII. Advisor

- A. There will always be a faculty Advisor.
- B. If the faculty Advisor should resign, a new faculty Advisor will be elected using the voting procedure described in section VI. C. from among the Department of Physics and Astronomy with member input and approval of the Department.
- C. In extreme cases, the Advisor may be removed following the same process outlined in VI.E.

IX. Ratification

- A. This constitution was ratified after discussion at a meeting between Coordinators and was distributed to members through email, whereupon they could provide feedback. Suggestions and input were incorporated into the constitution before it was finalized.
- B. As the process in IX.A happened between monthly meetings, it was planned that potential amendments could be proposed at the following meeting.

X. Amendments

- A. All amendments to the constitution, will be voted on in a monthly meeting. All votes for changes must be advertised to the members and discussed at a meeting. The vote will then take place at the next monthly meeting, unless it is at the end of the semester.
- B. All group decisions must depend upon votes from group members, defined as the email mailing list. A period of at least week will be allowed for comments and concerns from members regarding regulations and amendments.
- C. A new voting process shall be established if the basis for the previous voting has fundamentally changed and a new one has established.
- D. Amendments to the constitution must be submitted to and approved by the Department of Student Leadership & Involvement before they become effective.