



Official PPSA Bylaws

The Constitution of the Public Policy Student Association
Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy
University of Chicago



CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

The Public Policy Student Association, hereinafter referred to as “PPSA,” does hereby dedicate itself to the enhancement of graduate student life at The Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies. As the premier student-run organization in the Harris School, PPSA will ensure that this enhancement will be initiated both within PPSA and outside PPSA and will serve to strengthen relations between the student body, faculty, and administration. This organization will represent all members of the Harris School student body.

ARTICLE I: GROUP NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Public Policy Student Association (PPSA).

ARTICLE II: MISSION

The mission of PPSA shall be to articulate, discuss and endeavor to resolve issues of concern to Harris School students, and to facilitate interaction among students, faculty, the administration of the Harris School, and the greater university community.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

Section 1: All officers must be degree-seeking candidates at the Harris School.



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- A. A first year student is defined as a student admitted to the Harris School and beginning hir¹ first year at the Harris School.
- B. A second year student is defined as a student who has been a registered Harris student for 3 quarters.

Section 2: The offices, which members in good standing may obtain upon election by the student body, are as follows:

- A. President (1) [Second year student]
- B. Secretary-General (1) [First year student]
- C. Student Ombudsman (1) [Second year student]
- D. Budget and Oversight Committee (2)
- F. Academic Committee (2)
- G. Career Services and Alumni Relations Committee (3)
- H. Social and Community Events Committee (2)

Section 3: Duties

In addition to hir individually stated duties, each officer shall also attend bi-weekly PPSA Board meetings, pertinent committee meetings, and assist other officers with their duties on an as-needed basis.

At the end of the year, each Committee will also produce a transition report, either in written or spoken form.

A. President

- 1) The President shall be a second year student.
- 2) The President shall coordinate the activities of the Board to ensure implementation of all internal and external tasks and steady communications while avoiding duplication of effort.
- 3) The President shall act as the representative of the entire PPSA when communicating with faculty, administration, other Harris School students, and other entities within the university community.
- 4) The President shall ensure that the Harris School and PPSA are represented at Graduate Council meetings by either attending himself, or appointing a PPSA officer to fulfill this task.
- 5) The President shall make verbal and written statements to the public concerning PPSA policy, goals and objectives.
- 6) The President shall appoint members of special committees on an as-needed basis.

¹ Hir: gender neutral personal pronoun that can be substituted for his/her.



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- 7) The President shall appoint new Board members to vacant board positions with the consent of a majority of the remaining board members.
- 8) The President shall coordinate both Fall and Spring Quarter Executive Board elections, which entails responsibility for: collecting nominations, scheduling election dates, organizing poll volunteers, and preparing election materials.
- 9) The President shall advise on officer transitions at the close of the term of office.

B. Secretary-General

- 1) The Secretary-General shall be a first year student.
- 2) The Secretary-General shall record the minutes of all board meetings and general membership meetings, and must make such minutes available upon request to the members of the executive board.
- 3) The Secretary-General shall be responsible for coordinating the publication of updates for the student body and the PPSA Quarterly at the end of each quarter, updating the PPSA website and social media, sending non-committee-specific emails and making announcements, and maintaining the PPSA bulletin board.
- 4) The Secretary-General shall be responsible for documenting the history of PPSA.

C. Student Ombudsperson

- 1) The Student Ombudsperson shall be a second year student.
- 2) The ombudsperson's primary responsibilities are to: (1) provide general notice to students (by email or otherwise) at least once per quarter to inform them of hir role and availability; (2) meet with students upon request to discuss concerns and complaints regarding faculty, staff, and/or other students; and (3) foster communication between students and the PPSA board.

D. Budget and Oversight Committee

- 1) The Budget and Oversight Committee (2) shall consist of one first year and one second year student. The second year student will serve as Chair, the first year will serve as Representative.
- 2) The Budget and Oversight Committee will be primarily responsible for: 1) tracking the use of funds provided by the Harris School Administration, the University of Chicago, and proceeds from events coordinated by PPSA; 2) creating and maintaining a budget for PPSA-funded activities through the formal Budget and Oversight Committee review process; 3) facilitating communication between PPSA and Harris Student Organizations; and 4) providing guidance to HSOs about PPSA funding and how to obtain funding from other sources, including the University of Chicago.



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- 4) The Budget and Oversight Committee shall keep books of all the transactions of PPSA's account. Those books will be handed to the entering Executive Board at the end of each academic year as part of the transition process.
- 5) The Budget and Oversight Committee shall be responsible, at the petition of the Executive Board, to create an annual budget for PPSA and prepare reports regarding PPSA's account with the University of Chicago. Also, at the petition of the Executive Board, the Budget and Oversight Committee shall be responsible for working with the administration to request more funding for PPSA and other student organizations within the Harris School.
- 6) The Budget and Oversight Committee members in conference shall select 3 additional Harris students (two second years and one first year), rotating quarterly, to comprise the PPSA Finance Committee, which will administer funds for HSO programming and general organizational maintenance. Please see the supplementary document for a full explanation of the Finance Committee.
- 7) It is the aim of the Budget and Oversight Committee to coordinate a budgetary process for PPSA in harmony with student organizations. To that end, direct conversations between the Budget and Oversight Committee and Treasurers or designated representatives of student organizations within the Harris school shall be undertaken, as necessary and appropriate, to assist with funding needs in an equitable manner.

F. Academic Committee

- 1) The Academic Committee (AC) shall consist of (2) one second year student and one first year student. The second year student shall serve as chair.
- 2) The AC Members shall serve as liaisons between the administration and students on issues regarding academics. Their responsibilities include, but are not limited to, conducting the mid-quarter evaluations, organizing faculty dinners or events, and the end-of-year student and faculty awards, as well as coordinating, in conjunction with the Bosman Fellowship Fundraising Committee, the Amy Marie Bosman Memorial Fellowship.
- 3) The AC Members shall engage the administration to solve ongoing student concerns regarding academics, and shall assume responsibility for facilitating transparent communication between the administration and the Harris School student body.

G. Career Services and Alumni Relations Committee

The Career Services and Alumni Relations Committee (CSARC) (2) shall consist of one second year students and one first year student. The second year student shall serve as chair and the first year student shall serve as representative.

- 1) The CSARC shall serve as liaison between the administration and students on issues regarding career development. Its responsibilities include coordinating, in conjunction



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with the Bosman Fellowship Fundraising Committee, the Amy Marie Bosman Memorial Fellowship.

- 2) The CSARC shall engage the administration to solve ongoing student concerns regarding career development issues, and shall assume responsibility for facilitating transparent communication between the administration and the Harris School student body.
- 3) The CS shall work as a liaison between the ombudsman and the career services director on matters relating to student complaints and requests for changes with the career services office. The CSARC shall also interface with the Harris School in order to strengthen the bonds of community between alumni and current students.
- 1) The CSARC shall serve as the student liaison between the Office of External Affairs and the Harris Alumni Board Task Force to strengthen the Harris alumni network for current and future Harris graduates. Its responsibilities include, but are not limited to, working with the administration to strengthen the Harris alumni base, improving data collection of Harris alumni, and representing current students at alumni events.
- 2) The CSARC shall support the career services office and/or external affair office in the development and execution of alumni related events throughout the academic year.
- 3) The CSARC shall be responsible for working with Harris Administration in administrating the graduation survey to graduating students at the end of the academic year.

H. Social and Community Events Committee

- 1) The Social and Community Events Committee (3) shall consist of two chairs, who shall be second year students, and one representative, who shall be a first year student.
- 2) The Social and Community Events Committee shall be responsible for coordinating and planning PPSA-sponsored social and community-building activities which include, but are not limited to, the PPSA Halloween Party, the End of the Year Party, and Harris After Hours.
- 3) The Social and Community Events Committee members in conference shall select at least 4 additional Harris students (two second years and two first year) to comprise the Bosman Fellowship Fundraising Special Committee. In the same way, it shall select at least 3 additional Harris students (two second years and one first year) to comprise the Follies Special Committee. It is responsibility of the Social and Community Events Committee to oversee these two special committees and request general updates that should be presented to the Executive Board of PPSA during bi-weekly meetings.
- 4) The Bosman Fellowship Fundraising Special Committee shall coordinate the reservation of a venue and the solicitation of donations, seek out external and additional funding, attend to all logistical details, and generally oversee the auction.



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- 5) The Bosman Fellowship Fundraising Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Public Service Auction is fully funded and that all loans are paid in full at the completion of the Auction. No funds raised for the Amy Marie Bosman Fund may go towards financing the Public Service Auction event.
- 6) The Bosman Fellowship Fundraising Committee shall submit a financial statement to the administration and the PPSA board at the beginning and the end of each quarter leading up to the Auction. The report shall contain the expected funding level, cost projections and estimated ticket cost. In addition, the Committee must provide a financial update to the Social and Community Events Committee as requested.
- 5) The Bosman Fellowship Fundraising Special Committee shall have the authority to hold events beyond the Auction and solicit donations to raise funds for the Amy Marie Bosman Memorial Fellowship.
- 6) The Bosman Fellowship Fundraising Special Committee shall coordinate the logistics of the Amy Marie Bosman Memorial Fellowship in conjunction with the Academic and CSARC.
- 7) The Follies Special Committee shall host interest meetings, manage budget, manage ticket sales, coordinate the promotion of the event, coordinate script writing, organize rehearsals and room reservations, reserve a performance venue, and plan the Follies reception.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

Section 1: Executive Board Meetings

PPSA shall have, at a minimum, meetings on a bi-weekly (once every two weeks) basis during each quarter of each academic year. The President shall arrange a convenient time and place for all meetings. Any member of the student body is welcome to attend a meeting with observer status, while time shall be set aside at the close of each meeting for public comment.

Section 3: Quorum

For all matters requiring votes or major consensus decisions, a minimum of one half of the Executive Board members must be present. Votes shall be decided by a majority of the Executive Board (50% + 1). In cases where a vote must occur outside of regularly scheduled meetings, voting by email is permitted if there are no objections. However, at least two thirds of the Board must submit a vote and in order for the motion to pass, it must be by a majority vote (50% + 1).

Section 4: Attendance Policy

Members of the Executive Board must notify the President and/or Secretary-General in advance if they plan to miss any meetings. More than four unjustified absences during the member's elected term will result in consideration for removal from office.



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ARTICLE V: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

Any PPSA officer or faculty advisor may be removed from hir office based on the following:

- A. Demonstrated failure to consistently fulfill hir duties as determined by PPSA.
- B. Consistent failure to attend meetings or lack of accountability with respect to meetings, per the established PPSA attendance policy.
- C. A vote of no less than two thirds vote of the remaining PPSA officers (officer in question may not vote).
- D. If an officer decides to resign, the President shall have the right to recommend one or more candidates from the student body at large, to be confirmed by a majority vote of PPSA members. If the President resigns, the new President shall be chosen from a list of eligible candidates to be nominated by the PSSA and confirmed by a majority vote of the remaining PPSA members.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

Section 1: Ad-hoc Committees

Ad-hoc committees may be formed as needed for the purpose of organizing members to help with an event or project.

Section 2: Members

All positions on standing and ad-hoc committees shall be held by students in good standing, and shall be selected by the President.

ARTICLE VII: ELECTIONS

Section 1: General

- A. In order to run for office, a student must currently be a degree candidate at the Harris School and plan to be a degree-seeking University of Chicago student during the term of office.
- B. PhD and joint-degree students are eligible to hold PPSA offices if they are registered Harris students at the time of the election. In their second and subsequent years at Harris, they are eligible for second-year positions.
- C. Continuing Harris students shall elect first year PPSA officers and second year students shall elect second year officers.
- D. The election of rising second year officers shall take place during the first three weeks of the spring quarter of their first year.
- E. The election of the first year candidates shall take place within the first three weeks of the autumn quarter of their first year.



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F. Each officer shall be expected to serve a term of one academic year, such term to officially begin at the start of autumn quarter and end at the end of spring quarter.

Section 2: Nominations

A. Nominations for all officers can be submitted to PPSA via e-mail or written nomination.

B. Write-in candidates shall be allowed for all positions. If there are no candidates for an office, the write-in candidate must appear on at least one third of the write-in ballots cast in order to be elected and must win the election by a majority of votes cast.

Section 3: Declaration of Intent

A. A member of the Harris School student body shall seek election to a PPSA office by accepting a nomination and declaring his intent to run for office by a date to be specified in the elections timetable.

B. PPSA shall approve a declaration of intent upon verification that all requirements for placement in the ballot have been met. These requirements include, but need not be limited to, all requirements specified in the PPSA Constitution and By-laws.

C. No candidate shall be placed on the ballot unless and until a declaration of intent has been filed and approved by PPSA. If there is a position to which there are no candidates, PPSA may appoint a candidate. However, the candidate must consent to take office and must be approved by a two thirds vote of the PPSA members.

D. No candidate shall run for more than one position on PPSA in a given election.

Section 4: Campaigns

A. Campaign Conduct

1) Campaigning shall be defined as the dissemination of printed material, commercial ads, and public speeches and displays regarding any candidate or ballot measure. The actions of any office holder of PPSA, done in the course of discharging his duties, shall not be considered campaigning.

2) No candidate shall use any PPSA resources for campaigning purposes. Failure to obey this provision shall constitute sufficient grounds for disqualification.

3) All campaign materials shall bear the name of the candidate who has published it. Failure to obey this provision shall constitute sufficient grounds for disqualification.



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4) Any action of a candidate that is found unbecoming of a student by PPSA, as demonstrated by a majority vote of the current PPSA board, shall result in immediate disqualification. Additional disciplinary measures may be taken if PPSA deems them necessary.

Section 5: Voting

A. Voter Qualifications

- 1) Only registered students may vote in the election.
- 2) A list of all registered students shall be maintained by the President and/or Secretary at the time of voting.

B. Counting of Votes

- 1) All ballots shall be counted before they are handed to each voting member and after they are returned to assure consistent reporting of election results.
- 2) An ad-hoc committee may be established to count the effective number of ballots returned after voting.
- 3) The result of the vote shall be reported to the student body.

Section 6: Election Results

- 1) If more than one candidate runs for an elected office, the winner shall be the candidate who receives the majority (50% + 1) of the votes cast.
- 2) In the event that no candidate receives a majority of the votes, PPSA shall hold a runoff election to determine the winner.
- 3) The results shall be announced to the student body within 48 hours from the close of voting.

ARTICLE VIII: FUNDING

- 1) Harris Student Organizations registered with the Harris School of Public Policy, and who operate within and serve Harris School students, shall have the right to spend money allocated to them as approved by the Budget and Oversight Committee, as long as PPSA continues to receive funding from the Harris School Administration and the University of Chicago.
- 2) The Budget and Oversight Committee shall provide each Harris Student Organization (HSO) funding on a per-expenditure basis. The Budget and Oversight Committee, subject to Executive Board approval, shall determine the amount of money for each student organization.



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- 3) The Budget and Oversight Committee shall request, prior to all expenditures, a plan from each student organization for the use of funds to be provided by PPSA through use of the Budget Item Request form. The request will detail expense requests for events/miscellaneous requirements, and a description of students to be served. Expense requests will be considered by the full committee at regular intervals as determined by the chair, a minimum of once every two weeks. PPSA reserves the right to withdraw and/or withhold funding to organizations if programming is not intended to serve the entire Student Body.
- 4) Barring unforeseen changes in the money allocated to PPSA and the needs of Harris Student Organizations, the Budget and Oversight Committee shall strive to allocate at least 50% of its funds to student organizations.
- 5) All budgeting decisions and allocations shall be made public and disseminated to the Harris School student body.
- 6) Student organizations shall follow the University of Chicago procedures for reimbursements, and other rules that the Budget and Oversight Committee may adopt at the beginning of each academic year. The reimbursement process is outside of the control of PPSA.
- 7) New Harris Student Organizations that want to apply for PPSA funding must submit a Constitution to the Executive Board at least one week prior to a regularly scheduled PPSA meeting, where a vote to approve the organization shall be held. Representatives of the applicant organization are invited to attend the meeting to address any questions. Normal PPSA voting procedures outlined above shall be followed. PPSA shall reserve funds for new organizations that submit their Constitutions to the Board for approval by the beginning of spring quarter of the year prior to the establishment of the new organization.

ARTICLE IX: HARRIS STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1: Recognition

A. Conditions

- 1) Only currently registered Harris students shall be eligible for active membership status in Harris Student Organizations. All other persons, including but not limited to, faculty, staff, and community members, may participate in the organization but will not be recognized as leaders of the organization.
- 2) Harris Student Organizations may not discriminate against any potential members on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or other factors irrelevant to participation in programs of the University.



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- 3) The purpose and/or functions of a Harris Student Organization must not duplicate those of an existing Harris Student Organization.

B. Process

- 1) A group of enrolled Harris students interested in creating a new Harris Student Organization shall include at least three students committed to the completion of their HSO recognition process. This group will be known by PPSA as “Prospective HSO Leadership”.
- 2) The Prospective HSO Leadership shall notify the President of PPSA of their interest to incorporate a new Harris Student Organization.
- 3) The Prospective HSO Leadership shall complete the “New HSO Recognition Application” that will be provided by the President of PPSA. Once completed, it should be delivered back to the President of PPSA.
- 4) Once the application review is completed by PPSA, the Prospective HSO Leadership will be notified by the President of PPSA to attend a regularly scheduled meeting of the PPSA Executive Board Meeting at which the Executive Board Members will ask clarifying questions regarding the request for recognition. The prospective HSO will be granted or denied recognition by a vote of one half plus 1 (50%+1) of the voting Executive Board members present, subject to applicable quorum requirements.
- 5) If the prospective HSO is granted recognition, its Leadership shall undertake the required training by PPSA and Student Affairs before it can begin organizational operations.

Section 2: Recognition status

- 1) Prior to the end of each Spring quarter, every Harris Student Organization must submit a list of students who shall carry the leadership of the HSO for the next academic year. HSOs who fail to do so will be subject to losing their recognition status by PPSA.
- 2) Harris Student Organizations which have an active recognition status will be in Appendix 1.

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Notice

Notice to amend the Constitution shall be given three (3) days prior to any meeting at which such a change is to be voted upon.

Section 2: Amendments



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The Constitution may be amended at a regularly scheduled meeting by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting Executive Board members present, subject to applicable quorum requirements.



**APPENDIX I:
Currently Recognized Harris Student Organizations**

Asian Policy Forum
Behavioral Economics and Public Policy
Center for Policy Entrepreneurship Student Advisory Board
Chicago Policy Review
Committee on International Affairs and Public Policy
Data in Public Policy
Economic Policy Society
Education Policy Student Association
Graduate Consulting Club
Harris Energy and Environmental Policy Association
Harris Food Policy Advocacy Group
Innovators in Public Policy
Latin America(n) Matters
Minorities in Public Policy Studies
OutPolitik
PhD students group
Women in Public Policy
GROWTH
Student Network of Culture, Arts & Policy
Community Action Bureau
Students for Criminal Justice Reform