

Bylaws

1. Purpose of the Council

The Council of Principal Investigators consists of individuals elected to represent Principal Investigators (PIs) from members of the Texas A&M research community. The Council is committed to the continued improvement of the research environment for students, faculty, and staff. Specifically, the CPI and the PIs it represents, endeavor to work with administration to provide an effective and efficient research organization, to achieve the goal of being nationally recognized and competitive in research and teaching.

The Council meets monthly to address specific issues concerning the research and graduate environments. Appropriate recommendations are discussed with and implemented through the appropriate organizations or administrative offices.

Since its formation in 1984, the Council functions as an independent principal investigator-elected and principal investigator-led organization that does not report to any administrative unit within The Texas A&M University System.

2. Representation

Members of the Council are elected representatives of the Principal Investigators from various units of the Texas A&M research community. As such, it is the responsibility of Council Members to maintain an effective dialogue with their constituents.

A. Definition of Principal Investigator. The Council of Principal Investigators defines a Principal Investigator (PI) as any full-time member of Texas A&M University, The Texas A&M Health Science Center, The Texas A&M Transportation Institute, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service or Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station who is a PI or Co-PI on at least one externally reviewed and funded project or grant within the previous three years.

B. Meetings. Meetings shall be open to all observers, but only Council Members or their Alternates may vote. Meetings will generally be informal.

C. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of at least 50 percent of the members of the Council.

D. Elections. Elections to replace Council Members whose terms have expired or to fill other vacancies will be held in the spring semester of each year, after compilation of the census of Principal Investigators. The Chair of the Council shall inform all Principal Investigators in those units that have expired terms or unfilled seats of the need for nominations. The Coordinator/Director shall compile the list of nominees and prepare separate ballots for each unit with vacancies, and shall send a ballot to each Investigator on that unit's census list. Where multiple vacancies exist, the voters shall have as many votes as there are vacancies. The nominees receiving the most votes will be named Council Members until all vacancies have been filled.

E. Census of Principal Investigators. A census shall be conducted annually by the Coordinator/Director to update the list of eligible Investigators for each unit.

F. Allocation of Seats. The Executive Committee will annually review the census data and determine seats by unit based on proportional representatives of the total number of Principal Investigators obtained in the census. Each unit shall hold at least one seat on the council. The total number of Council Members will be maintained between 40-50, as determined by the Executive Committee.

G. Membership Term and Limits. Membership on the Council shall be for a three-year term. Members can be elected to serve up to two consecutive three-year terms. Members can be elected to a new three-year term one year from the end of their 2nd consecutive three-year term. (e.g. A Member's second consecutive three-year term ends on 2011. They can be elected to a new term in 2013.)

A member may serve no more than eight consecutive years on the Council (e.g., if an individual is elected as the Vice Chair during the last year of their initial term, then re-elected after their Past-Chair term expires. Or if a member in the 2nd year of their 2nd term is elected as Vice Chair).

H. Transfers and Reappointment. Any Council Member who transfers from one unit to another will retain a seat on the Council for the balance of the elected term. If that Council Member was the only representative of a unit, the now unrepresented unit will be entitled to elect a new representative at the next election, and in the interim, the transferring Council Member will be replaced by an Alternate from the unrepresented unit. If the census leads to changes in the number of Principal Investigators such that a unit has too many seated representatives, those Council Members will serve out their terms on the Council.

I. Alternates. If a Council Member has an extended time conflict arise (e.g. teaching commitment at the time of Council meetings, sabbatical, extended travel, illness, etc.) such that the Member is unable or unwilling to attend two or more consecutive meetings, the Member will enlist an Alternate from the Member's unit and notify the Coordinator/Director of the conflict and the Alternate. If the Member is unable to enlist an Alternate, the Chair may do so.

J. Failure to Participate. Any Council Member who fails to attend any four meetings in a year, and also fails to enlist an Alternate from the Member's unit, may be replaced by an Alternate from the Member's unit until the next election with approval of the Chair.

3. Council Officers and Committees

A. Officers. Officers of the Council are: Chair, Vice Chair, and Immediate Past Chair.

1. Selection of Officers. The Vice Chair will be elected to a one-year term which coincides with the September-August fiscal year. The Vice Chair will serve a one-year term as Chair, followed by a one-year term as Immediate Past Chair. Nominations for Vice Chair will be solicited from Council Members after completion of annual CPI elections. The Vice Chair is elected by the Council in the spring. Eligible nominees have served the previous year as an elected member of Council, are not in the last year of a 2nd

consecutive term, and are located in Brazos County. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Vice Chair, a special election will be conducted to fill the office with a Council Member for the remainder of the vacated term. The Coordinator/Director is a permanent staff position assigned to the Council and is an ex-officio (non-voting) member.

The elected CPI members who will be on the Council at the beginning of the incoming Vice Chair's term, September 1 of each year, participate in the Vice Chair nomination and election process.

2. Duties of Officers. The Chair will preside over meetings and serve as liaison between the Council and the research community. The Chair will call the meetings and, in concert with the Executive Committee, establish the agenda. The Chair will ensure that the census is conducted and elections held. The Vice Chair shall serve in the Chair's absence and shall assume the Chair if the Chair can no longer serve. The Immediate Past Chair provides historical perspective and continuity between the previous and present year's activities of the Council. The Officers will complete a yearly summary of Council activities.

B. Executive Committee. An Executive Committee will advise the Chair on Council activities. The Executive Committee will be comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, Immediate Past Chair, and Council Members that are recommended by the Chair and ratified by the Council. Executive Committee member terms are for one year, from September 1 to August 31 the following year.

C. CPI Committees.

1. Ad Hoc Committees. Ad hoc committees may be established by the CPI Chair, in consultation with the CPI Executive Committee membership, for various purposes (for example, to gather information, generate recommendations pertaining to improvements in the research environment or growth of the research enterprise). Ad hoc committees are expected to be able to complete their charges in a fixed period of time (generally less than 1 year).
2. Standing Committees. Standing committees may be established by the CPI Chair, in consultation with the CPI Executive Committee membership. Appointments to standing committees will be made on a rolling basis as needed; appointments for terms commencing September 1 should be made by August 1. The CPI Chair shall appoint the membership of all standing committees, and the chair of each standing committee shall report to the CPI Chair and Executive Committee. The duration of standing committee member terms, procedures by which standing committee chairs are elected (selected or appointed), and procedures for appointing new members shall be decided by the CPI Executive Committee, but in general will proceed as follows:

Committee members are appointed for terms appropriate for the specific standing committee (e.g., 2- or 3-year terms). After the maximum term, members must rotate off for a minimum of one full calendar year. New members are appointed by the CPI Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee and the current standing committee chair. The chair of any standing committee will be elected by the membership of the committee for a one-year term.

In the event a member is unable to serve the entire term, the CPI Chair will appoint a new member in consultation with the CPI Executive Committee and the standing committee chair. Terms for members normally begin September 1 and uniformly expire on August 31 (e.g., September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2018, etc.). The one-year terms for committee chairs will be from September 1 to August 31 the following year.

4. Changes to the Bylaws

These rules and operating procedures can be changed by majority vote of Council members by email. Recommendations from CPI members for changes can be presented to the CPI Chair at any time by email. The Chair will present proposed changes to the Executive Committee for review and consideration. After CPI Executive Committee review, and at the CPI Chair's discretion, all Members will be asked to vote by email on proposed changes. Members should have at least 10 days to vote by email on changes to bylaws. For those recommendations reviewed by the Chair and Executive Committee, but not put to a vote to the full Council, a written explanation will be given to the CPI member who submitted the recommendation.

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