

The Bylaws of the  
Western Kentucky University Chapter  
of the  
Society of Physics Students

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# Western Kentucky University Society of Physics Students Bylaws

## 1 Name

The official name of this organization shall be “The Western Kentucky University Chapter of the Society of Physics Students”, abbreviated “WKU SPS”.

## 2 Objectives

The purpose of WKU SPS shall be to:

1. encourage and assist students interested in physics to develop the knowledge, competence, enthusiasm, and social responsibility that are essential to the advancement of physics;
2. stimulate interest in advanced study and research in physics;
3. develop collegiality and a sense of community among physics students and faculty members by providing social events;
4. promote public interest in physics throughout the academic and local communities;
5. provide liaison between students and the member societies of the American Institute of Physics; and
6. recognize high scholarship and potential achievement in physics among outstanding students by means of Sigma Pi Sigma membership.

## 3 Membership

Membership in the WKU Chapter of the Society of Physics Students shall be open to all individuals interested in physics at Western Kentucky University.

### 3.1 Types of Membership

Any individual affiliated with Western Kentucky University who has an interest in the aforementioned chapter objectives and who has attended at least three SPS meetings automatically becomes a member of WKU SPS.

1. *Active Members* shall be enrolled undergraduate and graduate students at WKU. Active members have the rights of voice and vote. Active members are expected to pay for membership fees as outlined by the National SPS guidelines. All Active Members are encouraged to join the National SPS.
2. *Associate Members* shall be faculty, alumni, previous members, or any other individual so named. Associate members may not participate in votes, or hold office, or have any other special rights designated for active members (such as ability to receive awards, etc.).

### 3.2 Member Benefits

All active members of WKU SPS are entitled to:

1. vote in all WKU SPS chapter matters, including election of officers and any issues brought before the membership for consideration;
2. secure a locker in the SPS Room (TCCW 238) for their personal use (members are responsible for providing their own lock for the locker);
3. attend the chapter sponsored picnics each semester free of charge; and
4. attend the annual Sigma Pi Sigma banquet free of charge.
5. access to SPS room via card swipe/key

All active members who are also members of the national SPS are entitled to:

1. serve as officers in the WKU SPS chapter;

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2. registration as a student member of the American Institute of Physics, with all benefits therein, including a year subscription to *Physics Today*; and
3. the ability to apply for scholarships from the national SPS office, as well as the potential to participate in all other national SPS activities, including the physics honor society Sigma Pi Sigma.

## 3.3 Sigma Pi Sigma Membership

Membership in Sigma Pi Sigma, the national physics honor society included within the Society of Physics Students, shall be based upon character and academic and professional attainments and is not restricted to physics majors. Each spring semester the chapter advisor will review the qualifications of students who are potential Sigma Pi Sigma inductees to see who has met the requirements listed in 3.3.1 below. The results of this review will be verified by the department head and members of the faculty. All students who have met these standards will be given an invitation to join Sigma Pi Sigma. New members who accept this invitation will be inducted at the annual Sigma Pi Sigma Banquet which will be presided over by the chapter advisor, current officers, and members of the Physics and Astronomy faculty.

### 3.3.1 Requirements for Sigma Pi Sigma Membership

The requirements for membership in the WKU Chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma are:

1. the completion of all core curriculum physics courses (except Electricity and Magnetism and Junior and Senior Seminar);
2. a minimum GPA of at least 3.30/4.00 in physics courses, and
3. an overall undergraduate GPA of at least 3.00/4.00.

## 3.4 Dues

In the spirit of the chapter's focus on community, no local dues shall be collected to join the chapter, apart from any dues required by the National Office. It shall instead be expected that all new members contribute their time and energy whenever and however possible to the objectives of the chapter. For local dues to be collected, this article must be amended.

## 4 Officers

### 4.1 Eligibility

To be eligible to seek or hold office in the WKU SPS chapter a student:

1. must be an active member of WKU SPS;
2. must currently be a full-time WKU student; and
3. must have and maintain an overall GPA of at least 2.75 out of 4.00.

### 4.2 Officer Responsibilities

The officers of the chapter shall be a president, a president elect, a secretary, and a treasurer; succession shall be in accordance with this order. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by this chapter.

All WKU SPS chapter officers are expected to maintain active membership status during their tenure and are expected to act in a manner that fosters a casual, social atmosphere at WKU SPS activities. In addition, each of these positions has required duties, established as the following:

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## 4.2.1 President

The individual serving as the president of the WKU SPS chapter:

1. shall provide leadership by presiding over all meetings and presenting ideas that promote the objectives of the chapter;
2. shall act as liaison and be the main representative of the WKU SPS chapter, representing the membership to the university and the professional community;
3. shall maintain a working relationship with the chapter advisor and physics department chair, and interact professionally with any guest speakers, visitors to the department, or other public figures;
4. shall supervise and actively encourage the activities of all other officers, making certain their duties are performed adequately (this responsibility can involve personally helping the fellow officers and/or appointing committees from the WKU SPS membership to accomplish this duty);
5. shall cast the deciding vote if there is a tie in normal voting procedure; and
6. shall attend the yearly SPS Zone Meeting.

## 4.2.2 President Elect

The individual serving as the president elect of the WKU SPS chapter:

1. shall assume the office of president the following academic year as outlined in section 4.4 below.
2. shall preside over all meetings in the absence of the president;
3. shall provide leadership by working in partnership with the president to promote the objectives of the chapter;
4. shall work with the secretary to advertise all chapter activities through posted bulletins, electronic mail, and web-based and personal announcements;
5. shall act as advisor and coordinator for all committees;
6. shall chair the Laboratory Manual Committee (described in Section 7.2);
7. shall carry out any other duties as assigned by the president and/or advisor;
8. shall have the right to vote except when acting as president; and
9. shall attend the yearly SPS Zone Meeting.

## 4.2.3 Secretary

The individual serving as the secretary of the WKU SPS chapter:

1. shall preside over all meetings in the absence of the president and president elect;
2. shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings;
3. shall be responsible for archiving the minutes of all meetings on the chapter website;
4. shall work with the president elect to advertise all chapter activities through posted bulletins, electronic mail, and web-based and personal announcements;
5. shall handle all organization correspondence;
6. shall ensure the chapter information at the SPS National Office is up-to-date;
7. shall have the right to vote except when acting as president; and
8. shall attend the yearly SPS Zone Meeting, if at all possible.

## 4.2.4 Treasurer

The individual serving as the treasurer of the WKU SPS chapter:

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1. shall preside over all meetings in the absence of the president, president elect, and secretary;
2. shall be in charge of all financial transactions of this organization;
3. shall keep an accurate account of all finances;
4. shall have the right to vote except when acting as president; and
5. shall attend the yearly SPS Zone Meeting, if at all possible.

## 4.3 Elections

### 4.3.1 Regular Elections

The offices of president elect, secretary, and treasurer shall be nominated by the active membership at the end of the first meeting in April; the exact date shall be set by the current officers and chapter advisor. Members shall not be nominated to more than two positions. Nominees must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in section 4.1. The election shall be by closed ballot as described in section 4.3.3. The newly elected officers shall assume their offices starting the next academic year as described in section 4.4.

### 4.3.2 Special Elections

If there are any office vacancies during the year, with the exception of president, new elections shall be held at the next publicized meeting to fill the position. In the case of the presidency, the succession will occur in the order laid out in Section 4.2 and an election will be held for the remaining position(s).

### 4.3.3 Election Procedure

Elections for officers shall be by closed ballot. Elections shall be announced to the membership at least one week in advance. The voting period shall be for one full week after nominations are announced.

The chapter secretary shall prepare a ballot sheet consisting of the names of students nominated for each office (president elect, secretary, and treasurer), as well as a very brief description as to why they want the position, along with a list of the current active members. Prior to the start of the election, the membership list and a stack of ballots shall be given to the departmental secretary who will oversee the election process. To vote, members shall go to the departmental office and present their WKU ID to the departmental secretary who will verify active membership status, give a ballot to the member and identify on the membership list that this member has exercised his/her right to vote. The departmental secretary will maintain the anonymous marked ballots in a secure location for the duration of the election. Students who are away from campus during the voting period may vote by absentee ballot by making arrangements with the chapter advisor and departmental secretary prior to the election.

At the end of the voting period the chapter advisor and the president shall collect the ballots and voting record from the departmental secretary and tally the votes in the presence of at least two of the other officers. The number of ballots must match the number of voters listed on the membership record. The outcome of the election is to be announced immediately to the membership.

## 4.4 Terms of Office

Elected officers shall hold office for one full academic year. The term of office officially starts the day after the completion of the spring semester and continues until the end of the following spring semester.

The student elected to the office of president elect will serve for two years: the first year as president elect and the following year as president. As a result, students nominated for the office of president elect should have two years of academic study remaining in their tenure when nominated.

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## 4.5 Impeachment

An officer may be removed from his or her position due to negligence of duty, inefficiency in office or any other action which is considered detrimental to the name or purpose of the organization. An officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the active membership, present and voting, at a meeting of the organization. Missing more than 2 regular meetings a semester is grounds for impeachment.

## 5 Chapter Advisor

The chapter advisor shall be a faculty member appointed by the Head of the WKU Department of Physics and Astronomy and approved by the WKU SPS officers. The chapter advisor shall provide liaison among the chapter, the department, and the national office of the Society of Physics Students. The chapter advisor will supply counseling to the chapter, furnish continuity of experience in chapter operations, and provide long-range perspective to insure departmental interest in and support of the Society of Physics Students. The chapter advisor shall assist the secretary in furnishing the national office with the required data and shall assist the Treasurer in transmitting fees and dues to the national office.

## 6 Meetings

### 6.1 Meeting Frequency

Regular meetings shall be held at least monthly, on a date to be determined by the officers. Special meetings may be called at any time by the president or president elect. The meeting date, time, location, and tentative agenda must be publicized to the membership at least a week in advance. There shall be at least four meetings per academic semester.

### 6.2 Rules and Procedures

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Chapter in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special Rules and Procedures the Chapter may adopt.

## 7 Committees

### 7.1 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the president, president elect, secretary, treasurer, and the chapter advisor. It shall have charge of all matters of policy, including the interpretation of the chapter by-laws. The executive committee is responsible for scheduling activities and events. All executive members shall further the long-term interests of the chapter by maintaining a file specifically relating to their portfolio that will be useful for successors to the position.

### 7.2 Laboratory Manual Committee

The WKU SPS chapter oversees the printing and distribution of laboratory manuals for the department's introductory University Physics and Biophysics laboratories as a fund raising mechanism. The Laboratory Manual Committee is responsible for working with the chapter advisor and the faculty Laboratory Director(s) to ensure that the lab manuals are printed and distributed to the university bookstore in a timely fashion prior to the start of each semester. The president elect shall chair this committee and shall appoint additional members to help oversee this responsibility.

## **8 Amendment of Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of active members, provided that the amendment shall have been proposed at least one meeting previous to the time of vote. Such amendments shall conform to the regulations established by the National Constitution of the Society of Physics Students.

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