

University of Texas at Austin Chapter of the Society of Physics Students BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be "The University of Texas at Austin Chapter of the Society of Physics Students". The name of the honors physics organization shall be "The University of Texas at Austin Chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma".

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of these Chapters shall be the advancement and diffusion of knowledge of physics, the encouragement of interest in physics throughout the academic and local communities, the advocacy for the best interests of physics students and the introduction of students to the professional community.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Society of Physics Students Membership

Membership in this Society of Physics Students Chapter shall be open to all individuals interested in physics.

Section 2. Sigma Pi Sigma Membership

Membership in Sigma Pi Sigma ($\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$), the physics honor society included within this Society of Physics Students Chapter, shall be based upon character, academic and professional attainments and is not restricted to physics majors. New members shall be inducted in April or May.

Subsection 2.a Undergraduates

For undergraduate students in physics or related fields, the minimum requirements for $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ membership within this Chapter shall be as follows:

1. All members-elect shall have completed 60 credit hours towards an undergraduate degree.
2. All members-elect shall have completed 15 credit hours of physics courses.
3. All members-elect shall have attained a 6.5 combined grade point average (GPA), taking the sum of the cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale and the physics-only GPA on a 4.0 scale, with a minimum of a 3.0 physics-only GPA. Rounding should be done to the tenths place to calculate the combined GPA (e.g., a 6.945 combined score or above will qualify for this requirement).
4. All members-elect shall have completed 10 hours of SPS- or $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ -organized or approved service during both the Fall and Spring semester prior to induction and all following semesters (for a total of 20 hours per year), including, but not limited to:
 - a. Teaching students in elementary, middle, or high schools
 - b. Volunteering for events like the Physics Open House, Explore UT, or Prospective Students Day
 - c. Tutoring fellow classmates during Sunday Night Study Sessions
 - d. Acting as a mentor for SPS Mentoring groups
 - e. Aiding in projects or activities sponsored by SPS or $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$.
5. All members-elect shall be registered members of the National Society of Physics Students.
6. All members-elect shall have obtained the approval to join $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ from the $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Chapter Advisor based on the requirements listed in this document. The $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Chapter Advisor may allow for special circumstances with regard to requirements.
7. All members are expected to uphold the requirements above once inducted. Failure to comply with requirements above will result in termination of membership in $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$, with the following mutually-exclusive exceptions:
 - a. Combined GPA falls below 6.5, but not below 6.0 in a semester other than the semester in which the member is graduating. The member will become a provisional member for a maximum of one semester until all requirements are again fulfilled.
 - b. Community service time as outlined in requirement 4 falls below 10 hours/semester, but not below 5 hours/semester in a semester other than the semester in which the member is graduating. The member will become a provisional member for a maximum of one semester until all requirements are again fulfilled.
 - c. Special circumstances as approved by the $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Chapter Advisor.

For the Spring 2013 induction only, the service requirement may be reduced to 10 hours for the Spring semester only rather than 20 full hours for the year. Future members-elect must fulfill the whole requirement pending exception from the $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Chapter Advisor.

Subsection 2.b Graduates

For graduate students in physics or related fields, all members-elect either (a) shall meet the academic requirements for undergraduate members-elect, based upon their undergraduate records, or (b) shall have completed at least one year of graduate work, meeting departmental standards for satisfactory progress towards an advanced degree. Graduate students interested in becoming members of $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ must fulfill all other requirements of undergraduates in terms of service, $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Chapter Advisor approval and membership in the National Society of Physics Students.

Subsection 2.3 Other Members

For faculty members, research staff members, and other qualified individuals, who are in physics or related fields, election to membership shall be based upon their professional attainment and membership in the National Society of Physics Students.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Section 1. SPS Chapter Officers

The officers of the Chapter shall be a President, a Vice-President, an Outreach Coordinator, a Treasurer, and a Secretary; succession and election shall be in accordance with the order listed above. A Freshman Representative may be elected during the Fall semester for the following Spring at the discretion of the officers listed above. Should this position be filled, the Freshman Representative will take final place in the succession listed above. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by this Chapter. Additional officer positions can be created at any time should the majority of current officers agree that a new position is needed. At the time a new position is created, it must be determined whether the position can be one of appointment or must be one of election. Any change in elected SPS positions requires an amendment to this section.

Section 2. Elections

Definition: for this section only, the term "member" shall refer to official members of this chapter of the Society of Physics Students and non-members who are active participants in the chapter as judged by attendance, volunteerism or other characteristics outgoing officers deem appropriate.

Officers shall be elected at a scheduled meeting or via online vote in April or May of each year. Nominations shall be by open nomination into a pool of nominees via email or other nomination process at least one week before the election. Nominees may reject their nomination or select specific offices for which they wish not to be elected should they not wish to run for all positions (which is the default case for a nominee). Nominees will be provided a medium to communicate a message to members with reasons they believe they should be elected prior to the election. Elections will take place in a cascading fashion, with all members other than the candidates participating in the voting. First, the president will be elected by plurality of all candidates for president. Next, the vice-president will be elected by plurality of all remaining candidates (save those who do not wish to run for vice-president), and so on, until all offices are filled. Should a tie occur at any point for the plurality of a particular office, the candidates with the same number of votes shall be placed in a run-off election, wherein additional votes are taken until a single candidate has the plurality of the vote.

Should the officers serving during the Fall semester decide to hold an election for a Freshman Representative, an announcement of the election shall take place no less than a week before the election, which shall take place no later than the final class day of the Fall semester during a scheduled meeting or online vote. First-year UT students are eligible for this position and will nominate themselves. Nominees will similarly be provided a medium by which to communicate a message to members prior to the election. The Freshman Representative will be elected by plurality, with ties being broken by a run-off election.

Section 3. $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Officers

The UT Austin $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Chapter shall serve as part of the UT Austin Chapter of the Society of Physics Students. One officer shall be elected to represent $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ to the other UT SPS officers. This $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Representative shall serve as the head of the $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ chapter, and shall be elected by plurality of current members of $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ during the Spring semester at a scheduled meeting. The $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ representative will serve as an officer of UT SPS, and will, with the $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ Chapter Advisor be given the responsibility of managing the affairs of UT $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ and the representative shall report on $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ to the other SPS Officers. Any change in elected $\Sigma\Pi\Sigma$ officers requires an amendment to this section as outlined below.

ARTICLE V. CHAPTER ADVISORS

The Chapter Advisors shall be a faculty members appointed by the Chairman of the Physics Department, after consultation with the Chapter officers. The Chapter Advisors shall provide liaison among the Chapters, the Physics

Department, and the National Office of the Society of Physics Students. The Chapter Advisors will supply counseling to the Chapters, 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 and Sigma Pi Sigma. The Chapter Advisors shall assist the Secretary in furnishing the National Office with any required data and shall assist the Treasurer in transmitting fees and dues to the National Office.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Regular SPS meetings shall be held weekly as determined by the officers, with any non-meeting weeks announced to regular meeting attendees.

ARTICLE VII. DUES

There is to be no cost of membership to join this chapter of the Society of Physics Students other than the dues to join the national organization.

There shall be no cost of membership to join this chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma other than the dues to join the National Society of Physics Students.

ARTICLE VIII. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

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 of order the Chapter may adopt.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of SPS meeting attendees for sections and changes specifically relating to SPS and not to ΣΠΣ. A two-thirds vote of ΣΠΣ meeting attendees is required for sections and changes specifically relating to ΣΠΣ and not SPS as a whole. Should an amendment involve both Chapters, the amendment must be approved by both Chapters by two-thirds vote in each Chapter. For either organization, amendments must be proposed at least one meeting prior to the time of vote, and must conform to the regulations established by the National Constitution of the Society of Physics Students. Should the number of members in one organization become 3 or fewer, the larger organization shall presume ability to amend bylaws of both organizations.