

The constitution of:



Nicholas PhD Advocacy Council

A student organization at Duke University

Registered on November 20, 2015, by the Graduate and Professional Student's Council (GPSC)

Article I. Name

The organization shall be known as the Nicholas PhD Advocacy Council.

Article II. Mission

The Nicholas PhD Advocacy Council (NPAC) is a group composed of peer-elected students from the Nicholas School-affiliated PhD programs (ENV, UPE, UPEP, MSC, TOX, EOS) which aims to represent and support the academic and professional interests of all Nicholas School-affiliated PhD students while fostering a sense of community within the Nicholas School. NPAC aims to:

- Strengthen professional and social relationships among students in Nicholas School-affiliated PhD programs (e.g. through professional development activities such as the Graduate Afternoon Seminar).
- Advocate for the academic and professional interests of Nicholas School-affiliated PhD students.
- Provide support to program administrators for PhD student needs (e.g. Nicholas School PhD student orientation).
- Provide representation for Nicholas School-affiliated PhD students to other administrative and advocacy groups (e.g. Nicholas School faculty meetings, Duke Graduate and Professional Student Council, Strategic Planning Committee).

Article III. Constituents

All currently enrolled Nicholas School of Environment PhD students will automatically be considered constituents of NPAC. They will have the right to run for position on - and vote for members of - the executive committee, and have the right to vote on changes to the constitution.

Article IV. Non-Discrimination

NPAC shall not discriminate on the basis of political ideology, race, national and ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation or preference, gender, or age in its membership, activities, and projects. NPAC shall not tolerate harassment of any kind.

Article V. Leadership

NPAC Executive Committee Positions

Any member of the NPAC constituency can stand for election to the NPAC executive committee. Executive officers shall be elected annually in the spring semester (see Article XIII: Elections) by a majority vote of each of the affiliated PhD program's constituents. Officers' terms start on the first day of summer.

The following positions form the executive committee. Positions may be shared by more than one officer, and one officer may take on multiple positions. The positions are:

NPAC Chair(s)

- Calls and presides over official meetings of the organization
- Maintains organization in good standing with NSOE, GPSC and other Duke University entities

Treasurer(s)

- Responsible for managing NPAC funds

GAS (Graduate Afternoon Seminar) Coordinator(s)

- Organize GAS

Communications Officer(s)

- Records minutes of all official meetings of the organization
- Maintains official historical file for the organization (e.g. constitution, minutes)
- Updates the website as required

ESP Division Student-Faculty Representative(s)

- Attend faculty meetings in the ESP division of the Nicholas School
- Provides regular updates to constituents about relevant NSOE faculty decisions

Other Student-Faculty Representatives may be included if such positions exist in the relevant faculty meeting group (e.g. EOS or MSC Division Student-Faculty Representative)

Program Chairs (one position for each PhD program in the Nicholas School: UPEP, UPE, ENV, MSC, TOX, EOS)

- Represent constituents of their relevant PhD program

GPSC Representatives (one position for each PhD program in the Nicholas School: UPEP, UPE, ENV, MSC, TOX, EOS)

- Represent constituents of their relevant PhD program
- Represent NPAC interests at GPSC

The positions of NPAC Chair, Treasurer, and Communications Officer may be chosen either by majority vote by members of the executive committee (i.e. elected officers, as described in Article XIII: Elections), or by direct vote of the constituency.

Article VI. Advisor

A full-time faculty or staff member of NSOE shall be selected by the executive committee and serve as the organization advisor. The advisor shall be an ex-officio member of the organization and all of its committees.

Advisor duties:

- Interpret Duke University policy for the organization
- Direct membership to appropriate campus resources to accomplish organization goals
- Act as the official university contact in matters of policy violation

Article VII. Removal of Officers

Officers may be removed with a three-quarters (3/4) vote of the executive committee. The officer in question must be notified of the vote of removal at least one (1) week in advance and shall have the opportunity to speak before the executive committee prior to the vote.

Article VIII. Executive Committee Role

The executive committee of the NPAC shall be composed of the organization officers, along with any appointee deemed appropriate by the Chair(s). The executive committee shall make decisions regarding organization activities, advocacy efforts, funding, among others, and shall promote the mission of the organization.

Article IX. Meetings

Regular general body meetings (at least 10 constituents, including at least one third of the executive committee) of NPAC shall be held at least once per academic year. The date, time and on-campus location will be at the discretion of the NPAC Chairs(s). The Executive committee will meet at least 2 times per semester.

Article X. By-laws

By-laws shall be created to dictate the structure and procedures of the organization. By-laws may be proposed by any constituent and must obtain a majority vote of the executive committee. No by-law shall infringe on the authority of the constitution.

Article XI. Sub-committees

Sub-committees of the organization shall be created from time to time by the executive committee in order to organize and distribute the workload of the organization. Sub-committees shall be led by coordinators, chosen by the executive committee. Sub-committee coordinator duties may overlap with duties listed in Article V as determined by the executive committee. Sub-committees shall be governed by by-law and shall not have authority over the executive committee.

Article XII. Parliamentary authority

Meetings and voting shall be governed by a modified version of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, tenth edition. Modifications to Robert's Rules of Order shall be described in the Parliamentary Modification by-law.

Article XIII. Elections

Elections must be openly publicized for at least two (2) weeks and open to the constituency of the organization. Candidates may be nominated, or self-nominate, either before the ballot, or via write-in on the ballot. Officers are chosen through majority vote of the relevant program constituency for each elected position. The elected positions include Program Chairs, GPSC Representatives, ESP Division Student-Faculty Representative(s), and GAS Coordinator(s). Other positions may be included at the discretion of the outgoing executive committee. Elections must occur before the end of the spring semester.

Article XIV. Amendment

Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by any member and must obtain a two-thirds (2/3) majority by a vote of the constituency. A vote on constitution change must be advertised to all members of the constituency via (at least) email, (at least) one week prior to the vote.