

# SPS Operations Manual

This document is a living document that resides with the Governance Committee and contains information on the processes and procedures of the Society of Physics Students and Sigma Pi Sigma. While this document supports the text within the SPS/Sigma Pi Sigma Constitution and Bylaws, the constitution and bylaws supersede this document.

## Forward

The Society of Physics Students (SPS) is a professional association explicitly designed for students and their advisers. Membership, through collegiate chapters, is open to anyone interested in physics and astronomy. The only requirement for membership is that you be interested in physics and astronomy. Besides physics majors, our members include majors in astronomy, chemistry, computer science, engineering, geology, mathematics, medicine, and other fields.

Within SPS is housed Sigma Pi Sigma, the national physics honor society, which elects members on the basis of outstanding academic achievement. Sigma Pi Sigma exists to honor outstanding scholarship in physics; to encourage interest in physics among students at all levels; to promote an attitude of service of its members towards their fellow students, colleagues, and the public; to provide a fellowship of persons who have excelled in physics. Sigma Pi Sigma's mission is not completed in the induction ceremony with the recognition of academic accomplishment. In the four dimensions of Honor, Encouragement, Service, and Fellowship, the mission of Sigma Pi Sigma takes a longer view.

This unique two-in-one society operates within the American Institute of Physics (AIP) and is part of AIP, who has full fiduciary responsibility for the organization.

## Section 1 - SPS Mission Statement

SPS is a chapter based society that exists to help students transform themselves into contributing members of the professional community. Traditional coursework develops only one range of skills. Other skills needed to flourish professionally include effective communication and personal interactions, leadership experience, establishing a personal network of contacts, presenting scholarly work in professional meetings and journals, research experiences, and outreach services to the campus and local communities. Through its members, advisers, chapters, and leadership, SPS enables national initiatives and local impacts within the community. SPS supports students, advisers, and departments to improve the overall community. SPS and Sigma Pi Sigma strive to represent the best interests of all students, advisers, and departments.

## **Section 2 - Termination Appeal Process**

See Bylaws Article II, Section 4

If the membership of a member or affiliation of an Affiliate is terminated, to appeal the termination as voted by the Executive Committee, the complainant must submit in writing a petition within 60 days of the Executive Committee's notification to the SPS director. The petition shall be in writing and include all necessary information. The petition will then be reviewed by an ad-hoc committee, called the Termination Appeals Committee (as stated in Bylaws, Article II, Section 4), which is to be chaired by the SPS Director and to include the Executive Committee Historian, two Associate Councilors, and two Councilors. Constituent Associate Councilors and Councilors are determined by a majority vote of the National Council. The Termination Appeals Committee is to be chaired by the SPS Director, has voice and can only cast any necessary tie-breaking votes. A meeting of the Termination Appeals Committee should take place within 45 days of receipt of the formal appeal petition. The Termination Appeals Committee can decide to overturn the termination or replace the termination with a suspension not to exceed 18 months in length. Other reinstatement criteria can be decided by the Termination Appeals Committee. The Termination Appeals Committee shall report to the complainant and National Council within 15 days of the committee's decision.

## **Section 3 - SPS and ΣΠΣ Code of Conduct**

The Society of Physics Students (SPS), Sigma Pi Sigma (ΣΠΣ), and the American Institute of Physics (AIP) are pleased to welcome all attendees, participants, staff, volunteers, speakers, media, service providers, and other stakeholders (collectively, "participants") to SPS and ΣΠΣ events. SPS is open to all SPS members and those with an interest in understanding and advancing the physical sciences community.

To foster a positive experience built upon open communication, professionalism, and respect, all SPS and ΣΠΣ participants are expected to adhere to this Code of Conduct at all events and venues, including ancillary meetings, workshops, and social events.

### **Scope**

By becoming a member of SPS or ΣΠΣ, you agree that you have read and will follow the guidelines and expectations in this Code of Conduct.

### **Code of Ethical Conduct**

Participants are expected to treat all other participants with respect, professionalism and consideration. Everyone should strive to foster an environment of learning, creativity and exchange of ideas. Open communication and collaboration with others is encouraged. Feedback and critiques should be limited to ideas and delivered with compassion, and should be received and considered in the spirit of fairness, dedication, and improvement.

Be mindful of your surroundings and of your fellow participants. Promptly notify appropriate staff (whether department, SPS, or AIP Staff, or volunteers) if you notice any dangerous physical

situation or someone in distress.

All participants must respect and obey all laws, rules, and regulations of the city, county, and state in which the event is being conducted, as well as the rules of the facilities.

### **Inappropriate Behavior**

SPS, ΣΠΣ, and AIP are dedicated to providing a safe and harassment-free experience for all participants regardless of gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, physical appearance, race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof), or other attributes protected by law. SPS/ΣΠΣ and AIP will not tolerate harassment of participants in any form.

### **Reporting Inappropriate Behavior**

If you are the subject of inappropriate behavior or a witness to behavior that violates professional and respectful conduct, immediately notify a SPS or AIP Staff member, or volunteer in a leadership position. Notification may also be done by emailing or calling the SPS staff, AIP Staff, or a volunteer in a leadership position and is kept confidential. Anyone experiencing behavior that constitutes an immediate and serious threat is advised to locate a telephone, SPS/ΣΠΣ leader, ask for the security office, and/or immediately call 911.

### **Event Consequences**

If a participant engages in harassing or similar inappropriate behavior, SPS and AIP reserve the right to take any action which the SPS or AIP Staff may deem appropriate, including warning the offender or expulsion from SPS/ΣΠΣ events without refund. Anyone asked to stop or modify any behavior deemed unacceptable is expected to comply immediately.

SPS/AIP will not tolerate any form of retaliation against individuals who file a complaint or provide assistance in investigating a complaint.

### **Respecting intellectual property**

By registering for or attending any SPS/ΣΠΣ or a related event, each participant acknowledges and agrees that they may be photographed, audiotaped, or video recorded. Each participant grants SPS and AIP the right and permission to publish, own, modify, and edit any video photograph, audio, or video recordings containing the participant's image or likeness.

Participants are prohibited from recording or photographing another participant's presentation or intellectual property (in whole or in part) without the express written permission of SPS/AIP and the presenting participant. Sharing content of another participant's presentation or intellectual property (via social media or otherwise) may affect or jeopardize intellectual property rights. Those authorized to photograph SPS/ΣΠΣ events, including talks and poster sessions, for the purposes of chronicling/reporting should aim to capture the events and excitement of the conference and not capture individual's research in a readable or specific form. The unauthorized recording, photographing, or distributing of another participant's intellectual property shall be considered objectionable conduct allowing for recourse against the offending party.

## Section 4 - Past President

The outgoing President of the Council or President of Sigma Pi Sigma will immediately become a Past President at the end of the president's term. A Past President will advise the Executive Committee and service shall be nominally one year. A Past President will have voice but no vote in the Executive Committee and advise the long-range planning committee. A Past President must be a current member of the Society of Physics Students.

## Section 5 - Membership guidelines

In reference to the Constitution, ARTICLE IX. SIGMA PI SIGMA MEMBERSHIP Section 3. With text underlined for ease of discussion:

*“Clause 1: A Sigma Pi Sigma Chapter may elect into its membership, regardless of membership in or affiliation with any other honor society, those students, faculty members and other qualified persons, either in or nearby the institution in which the Sigma Pi Sigma Chapter is located, who attain its standards of high scholarship in physics and other subjects and who give evidence of professional merit, proficiency, and distinction. Sigma Pi Sigma membership shall be conferred in strict accordance with standards no lower than those established by the Society of Physics Students Constitution and the Association of College Honor Societies Constitution. The only basis of selection shall be the character and the professional or scholastic records of the candidate. Election to Sigma Pi Sigma membership is not restricted to physics majors or members of Society of Physics Students Chapters.”*

Sigma Pi Sigma chapters are encouraged to elect into its membership individuals that actively contribute to their chapter and department through:

- a. Professional merit
- b. Proficiency
- c. Distinction

in agreement with the Constitution. This includes but is not limited to those that exhibit a sustained, active contribution to the success of physics and astronomy majors, professionals that display exemplary support of the department, and those that have significantly served the Society of Physics Students, the chapter, and the department.

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