

Amendments to the
Bylaws for
The Topical Group on the Physics of Climate

RATIONALE:

- Amend the bylaws to conform to Society governance documents and to reflect governance best practices.
- Amend the bylaws to decide all elections except for the election to the position of Vice Chair by a plurality of votes cast rather than a majority for all ballot positions.
- Add a new position for a graduate student member of the Executive Committee, per Council resolution of November 2017.

Bylaws of the Topical Group on the Physics of Climate

Date Approved by Council:

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Date Ratified by Membership:

(In the following text, "Society" shall signify the American Physical Society, "Council" and "Board" shall signify the Council of Representatives and Board of Directors of the Society.)

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ARTICLE I – NAME

This Topical Group of the American Physical Society shall be called the Topical Group on the Physics of Climate, hereafter referred to as the "Topical Group" or "GPC".

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ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVE

The objective of the GPC shall be to promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge concerning the physics, measurement, and modeling of climate processes, within the domain of natural science and outside the domains of societal impact and policy, legislation and broader societal issues. The objective includes the integration of scientific knowledge and analysis methods across disciplines to address the dynamical complexities and uncertainties of climate physics. Broad areas of initial scientific inquiry are described in the Addendum to these bylaws. These are expected to evolve with scientific progress, while remaining entirely within the domain of natural science.

The GPC Executive Committee, Program Committee, and Communications Committee shall assist in maintaining the scientific focus of the Topical Group by conducting an ongoing and open dialog with Topical Group members concerning the scope and boundaries of scientific interest.

ARTICLE III – ENABLING CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION

The GPC is established by the authority vested in the Council by Article VIII of the Constitution and Bylaws and associated Policies and Procedures of the Society. Said documents as may subsequently be revised or amended, are hereby incorporated into these Bylaws by reference.

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ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

The members of the GPC shall consist of members of the Society who have indicated, in accordance with procedures established by Council, their desire to join

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the GPC and who retain membership from year to year by the payment of designated dues or by any other method established by Board.

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ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. **Governance.** The GPC shall be governed by an Executive Committee, which shall have general charge of the affairs of the Topical Group, including changes to the areas of scientific inquiry of the GPC.
2. **Composition.** The voting members of the Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers of the GPC, the most recent Past Chair, the most recent past Secretary-Treasurer for one year, six Members-at-Large elected to three-year staggered terms (two positions expiring in each year), and a seventh Member-at-Large position reserved for a member who is a graduate student at the time of election. The Newsletter Editor (who also serves as the Chair of the Communications Committee) shall be a nonvoting member of the Executive Committee.
3. **Executive Committee Meetings.** The Executive Committee shall meet at least once each year. Any member of the Executive Committee unable to attend a meeting may name a nonvoting alternate who is a member of the GPC in good standing to represent him or her, subject to approval of the Chair. A majority of the voting members of the Executive Committee, including at least two officers, shall constitute a quorum.

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ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

1. **Officers.** The Officers of the GPC shall be a Chair, a Chair-Elect, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary-Treasurer.
2. **Duties of the Chair.** The Chair shall have overall responsibility for the affairs of the GPC, and shall preside at all meetings of the Executive Committee and Business Sessions of the GPC at which his or her attendance is possible. In addition, the Chair shall perform such other functions as are explicitly designated in these Bylaws.
3. **Duties of the Chair-Elect.** The Chair-Elect shall act in place of the Chair if the latter is unable to perform his or her duties. In addition, the Chair-Elect shall perform such other functions as are explicitly designated in these Bylaws.
4. **Duties of the Vice-Chair.** The Vice-Chair shall act in place of the Chair-Elect if the latter is unable to perform his or her duties. In addition, the Vice-Chair shall perform such other functions as are explicitly designated in these Bylaws.
5. **Duties of the Secretary Treasurer.** The Secretary-Treasurer shall maintain the records of the GPC, including minutes of the Executive Committee meetings and Business Sessions, Topical Group activities, and membership lists. The Secretary-Treasurer shall notify the Executive Committee of matters requiring the decision of said Committee and together with the Chair, shall prepare the agenda of Executive Committee meetings and Business Sessions. The Secretary-Treasurer shall submit the meeting minutes to each member of the Executive Committee within four weeks after each meeting.

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The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for organizing the regularly scheduled elections and special elections of the GPC. Following elections, meeting minutes shall include the results of the election and a roster of the current Executive Committee membership and other elected officials. The Secretary-Treasurer, in coordination with the GPC assigned Councilor, shall keep the Council informed of the activities and needs of the GPC.

The Secretary-Treasurer shall have responsibility for all funds in the custody of or placed at the disposal of the GPC and shall, with the approval of the Chair, authorize disbursement from such funds for expenses in a manner that is consistent with the general policies of the Society and the GPC. Financial records shall be kept on an annual basis consistent with the fiscal policies of the Society. The approval of the Executive Committee shall be required for disbursements in excess of \$1000 per expenditure unless otherwise specifically delegated by the Executive Committee. The Secretary-Treasurer shall present a financial report at each meeting of the Executive Committee and at the annual Business Session of the GPC.

In addition, the Secretary-Treasurer shall perform such other functions as are explicitly designated in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII – ELECTION AND TENURE OF THE OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. **Qualifications.** Officers and Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee must be members of the GPC for at least one year at the time of nomination and must retain membership throughout the period of election and tenure in office.
2. **Ballot.** The Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, and Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee shall be elected by mail and/or electronic ballot as hereinafter provided.
3. **Nomination and Election of the Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, and Executive Committee Members-at-Large.** Each year the Nominating Committee shall nominate at least two candidates for the office of Vice-Chair, for Secretary-Treasurer during the final year of the current Secretary-Treasurer's term of office, and for the open Member-at-Large positions of the Executive Committee. The Nominating Committee shall consult with the Chair before nominating any candidate for a consecutive term. The Nominating Committee shall notify the Secretary-Treasurer of the slate of candidates not later than September 1, except under extraordinary circumstances. The election ballot shall contain those names and also those of other candidates nominated by petition of at least 10 members of the GPC (as determined by the Society membership roster as of the previous January 1) and received by the Secretary-Treasurer by September 1. Nomination by petition shall not preclude nomination of the same person by the Nominating Committee. Each year the Secretary-Treasurer shall provide a timely reminder to the GPC membership of the procedure for nomination by Petition.

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The Secretary-Treasurer shall submit the slate of candidates to, the GPC membership by mail and/or electronic ballot, stating a closing date not later than November 1. In the case where the Secretary-Treasurer is a candidate for a consecutive term, the election shall be administered by a person, determined by the Executive Committee, most usually the Past Chair. Ballots shall be returned to the election administrator. Election for Vice Chair shall be decided by a majority of those voting. If no candidate for Vice Chair receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election shall immediately be held between the two candidates with the highest vote count. The closing date of a run-off election, if needed, shall be no later than December 15. If there is a tie, the Executive Committee shall decide the election, with the Chair voting only in case of a tie among the other Executive Committee members. Election for any other position shall be determined by a plurality of the votes cast. The election administrator shall communicate the results of the election to the Chair and the Corporate Secretary of the Society no later than December 31 and shall publish the results in a manner designated for official announcements.

4. **Official Year.** The official year shall be the calendar year.
5. **Terms of Office.** The terms of office of the Officers and Members-at-Large of the Executive Committee shall coincide with the calendar year, beginning January 1 and ending December 31. The member elected as Vice-Chair shall serve in that office for one year, then for one year as Chair-Elect, then for one year as Chair and then one year as Past Chair. The Past Chair shall not be eligible for the office of Vice-Chair in the year following his or her term of office. The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve for a term of three years and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. The most recent Past Secretary-Treasurer shall serve on the Executive Committee for an additional year to assist in transition of duties. The Tenure of a Member-at-Large of the Executive Committee shall be three years in staggered terms. The student member-at-large shall also serve for a three-year term. The tenure of a member-at-large shall terminate in the event that the incumbent assumes a post as an elected Officer of the Topical Group, and the unexpired portion of his or her term shall be filled as hereinafter provided for a vacancy.
6. **Vacancies in Office.** If a vacancy occurs in the office of Chair, the Chair-Elect shall succeed and complete the term and shall serve as Chair in the following year. The Vice-Chair shall serve simultaneously as Chair-Elect during the remainder of the term and shall continue to serve as Chair-Elect in the following term.

If a vacancy occurs in the office of Chair-Elect other than through advancement to Chair, the Vice-Chair shall become Chair-Elect. In this case, and also if the office of Vice-Chair becomes vacant for other reasons, the office of Vice-Chair shall remain vacant for the remainder of the term. In the next scheduled election, candidates for both Chair-Elect and Vice-Chair shall be nominated.

If vacancies occur in the offices of both the Chair and the Chair-Elect, the Vice-Chair shall become Chair and shall complete the term. In this case a special election shall be held to fill the offices of Chair-Elect and Vice-Chair.

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The members so elected shall continue to serve as officers in the normal succession order.

Vacancies in any other elected office shall be filled (or left unfilled) by the Executive Committee until such time as the vacancy can be filled by regular election procedures.

ARTICLE VIII – APPOINTED COMMITTEES

- 1. Nominating Committee.** The Nominating Committee shall be chaired by the immediate Past Chair, who shall serve until he or she is succeeded in turn by the next immediate Past Chair. If the immediate Past Chair is unable to serve, the Chair shall nominate a member of the Executive Committee as a replacement, who shall serve until he or she is succeeded by the next immediate Past Chair. ~~The Nominating Committee shall include one GPC member appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Society for a one-year term. The Chair shall ascertain through the Chief Executive Officer of the Society the identity of this member. The Nominating Committee shall also include three members appointed by the Chair for one-year terms, at least one of whom shall not be a member of the Executive Committee. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates according to Article VII.3 of these Bylaws. The Nominating Committee shall also respond with appropriate names to the Society's call for nomination for senior Society positions.~~
- 2. Program Committee.** The Program Committee shall be chaired by the Chair-Elect and shall in addition have three members appointed by the Chair for one year terms, with the concurrence of the Executive Committee. At least one of these members shall not be a member of the Executive Committee. ~~The Program Committee shall work with the office of the Society Director of Meetings in scheduling contributed papers within areas of interest to the GPC and in arranging symposia and sessions of invited papers sponsored by the GPC at Society meetings. From time to time the Program Committee may also organize special GPC meetings and workshops, some with and some without the participation of other organizations. In connection with this responsibility, the Program Committee will be responsible for planning, coordination, and execution to the extent required.~~
- 3. Communications Committee.** The Chair of the Communications Committee shall be appointed for a three-year term by the GPC Chair, shall serve also as Newsletter Editor, and shall be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee. In addition, the Committee shall have three members appointed for one year terms by the Chair with the concurrence of the Executive Committee. At least one of these members shall not be a member of the Executive Committee. The Communications Committee shall have oversight of the Newsletter and any other publications that may be established by the GPC. The Communications Committee shall also be responsible for keeping the physics community and other interested communities informed about climate physics issues, activities, and accomplishments through the Newsletter, GPC website and email messages.

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4. **Fellowship Committee.** The Fellowship Committee shall be chaired by the Vice-Chair or his/her replacement as selected by the Chair, if the office of Vice-Chair is vacant. This Committee shall also have three members appointed by the GPC Chair to one _year terms. The Fellowship Committee shall solicit nominations and propose candidates for APS Fellowship, shall review the qualifications of such candidates, and shall submit its recommendations to the Head of the Honors Program for the Society.
5. **Terms of Office of Appointed Committee Members.** The terms of office of committee members appointed or recommended by an incoming Officer shall commence at the beginning of the year in which the Officer, assumes office.
6. **Other Committees.** The Chair may appoint other committees as necessary, which shall serve only during his or her term as Chair.

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ARTICLE IX - MEETINGS

1. **Annual Scientific Meeting.** One meeting of the GPC shall be held annually at such time and place as shall be determined by the Executive Committee, subject to the rules and regulations specified in the Society Constitution and Bylaws and associated Policies & Procedures. Whenever it shall be feasible and not to the disadvantage of the members of the Topical Group, the Executive Committee may order this or any other meeting to be held conjointly with a Meeting of the Society.
2. **Annual Business Session.** Each year the GPC shall hold a Business Session during one of the regular meetings of the Society. This Business Session shall be devoted exclusively to the reports of Officers and Committees, election results, and the transaction of business affairs. No scientific program of the Topical Group shall be presented simultaneously with the Business Session. The Secretary-Treasurer shall notify the Topical Group members of the agenda for the Business Session no later than three weeks prior to the Annual Scientific Meeting.
3. **Other Meetings.** Special scientific meetings of the GPC may be initiated by the Executive Committee and arranged by the Program Committee, subject to the rules and regulations specified in the Society Constitution and Bylaws and associated Policies & Procedures. The rules of the Society shall apply to scientific sessions of invited or contributed papers held in conjunction with meetings of the Society. The Program Committee shall be responsible for all arrangements concerning such sessions.
4. **Papers at Meetings.** Programs of meetings of the Topical Group may provide for the inclusion of both invited and contributed papers. When a meeting of the Topical Group is held in conjunction with a meeting of the Society, the rules of the Society shall apply to submitted papers. When a meeting of the Topical Group is not held in conjunction with a meeting of the Society, the Executive Committee shall prescribe the main theme of the meeting. The Program Committee Chair shall fix the deadline date for receipt of titles and abstracts in consultation with the Society Director of Meetings and shall designate the rules for their submission.

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ARTICLE X - DUES

Dues for maintenance of membership in the GPC shall be established by Board.

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ARTICLE XI – NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter of the GPC shall be managed and edited by the Communications Committee Chair who shall also serve as Newsletter Editor. If assistance is required for review and other work, members of the Communications Committee shall provide this assistance. At least two issues of the Newsletter shall be distributed to the membership each year.

ARTICLE XII – OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Official announcements shall be made in APS News (at the discretion of the APS News Editor), in special mailings or electronic communications to the Topical Group membership, or in such other publications as the Executive Committee may direct.

ARTICLE XIII – PROCEDURE FOR AMENDMENT OF THE BYLAWS

Proposal of an Amendment to these bylaws may be made by the Council, by the Society Governance Committee, by the Executive Committee, or by petition to the Chair signed by not fewer than ten percent of the members of the GPC. However an amendment is initiated, it must be approved by Council before further action can be taken. Following Council approval, the Secretary-Treasurer shall distribute copies of the proposed Amendment to all members of the GPC not less than two weeks prior to the next Business Session and opportunity shall be given for discussion during that Business Session. If a special election is not held for membership ratification of the proposed Bylaws Amendments, the Secretary-Treasurer shall again distribute copies thereof in conjunction with the next regularly scheduled election, accompanied by ballot forms and instructions. Adoption of the Amendment shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote of those voting. Council approval is not required for changes to the Addendum.

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ADDENDUM

Initial Areas of Scientific Inquiry:

Five broad areas of scientific inquiry are listed below. These are based on the perceived needs of climate science and are likely to change as that science progresses.

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1. Climate as a complex dynamical system, leading to a better understanding of the natural modes of the climate system, their coupling to each other and to exogenous forces.
2. The physics of climate influences, leading to a better understanding of the mechanisms, magnitudes, and timescales by which anthropogenic and non-anthropogenic processes affect climate, including for example, greenhouse gases, solar variability and unforced influences such as internal modes of variability.

3. Insight into the nature, magnitude and timescales of climate sensitivity, arising from feedbacks including clouds, water vapor and the hydrological and carbon cycles, at the surface, in the atmosphere, and in the oceans.
4. The physics of proxies used to infer the properties of past climates for which instrumental records are not available, leading to a better understanding of past climates and their relation to the present climate.
5. The computational physics and statistical analysis of climate model and measurement systems, leading to a better understanding of the methods, capabilities, and limitations of climate models and climate simulation predictions.

Specific science areas underlying these issues include fluid dynamics, modeling of nonlinear systems, the physics of complex systems, gas phase physics and chemistry, radiation/heat transfer, phase transitions, measurement science, computational physics, statistics, and biological physics. [\(Addendum reviewed in 2018.\)](#)