

Iowa State University - ISU Society of Women in Physics and Astronomy  
CONSTITUTION

Adopted in current form: April 2018

The Iowa State University Society of Women in Physics and Astronomy (SWiPA) is a student-run organization which works with physics and astronomy faculty in order to: (1) promote development of professional skills, (2) raise awareness of minorities in physics and astronomy and find allies, (3) increase recruitment and retention rates of women in physics and astronomy, (4) provide mentorship and support, and (5) collaborate with WiSE and the Physics and Astronomy club on outreach. SWiPA is open to anyone involved in physics at Iowa State and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or status as a U.S. Veteran. SWiPA abides by and supports established Iowa State University (ISU) policies, State and Federal laws, and local ordinances or regulations. SWiPA agrees to annually complete President's Training, Treasurer's Training, and Advisor Training (if required).

**I. Structure**

a. Membership may include ISU undergraduates majoring or minoring in Physics and graduate students a part of the ISU Physics and Astronomy Department. SWiPA meetings are open to the public, but to remain an official member of the organization, members cannot have three unexcused absences per semester. Voting membership for elections and changes to the SWiPA constitution consists of all official members of the SWiPA Organization. Voting membership for decisions related to finance, programming, and other SWiPA responsibilities consists of the SWiPA officers. New members may join SWiPA at any time. A special emphasis on recruiting new members will be publicized at the beginning of the fall term.

b. The executive board shall consist of six elected officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Outreach Chair, and LAS Council Representative. In addition, SWiPA will have one or two faculty advisers. Duties expected of all executive officers include attending all SWiPA meetings, report on weekly tasks, being actively involved with SWiPA responsibilities, and being familiar with the Constitution. Officers may have up to two excused absences per semester. If an officer has more than two excused absences in a semester or has an unexcused absence, the officer will be removed and replaced. Duties expected of individual members are as follows:

i. President: Organize agendas, run meetings, and attend weekly meetings with the SWiPA Adviser(s). The President is also in charge of giving a direction to SWiPA and helping members accomplish SWiPA goals. In addition to the Treasurer, the President will also obtain and hold a purchasing card.

ii. Vice President: Run meetings in the absence of the president and attend weekly meetings with the SWiPA Adviser(s). The Vice President coordinates organizational tasks: publicity, events, and other executive board responsibilities. The Vice President will also serve as the risk management officer. The role of the risk management officer is [a] to recommend risk management policies or procedures to SWiPA, [b] to submit documentation to ISU's Risk Management Office and [c] to ensure that Risk Management procedures are implemented at all SWiPA events.

iii. Treasurer: Organize overall budget, hold and maintain a purchasing card, maintain a ledger, and perform other financial duties as requested by SWiPA. Attempt to coordinate at least one fundraiser per month during the Fall and Spring semesters, excluding August and May.

iv. Secretary: Keep and make public the minutes of SWiPA meetings. Keep track of event attendance and record details of events.

v. Outreach Chair: Coordinate at least two outreach events for SWiPA per semester. Communicate regularly with the Physics and Astronomy Club to stay updated on club events. Encourage attendance and participation at SWiPA events. Communicate with WiSE and collaborate on outreach. Update social media pages and publicize our events to the Physics and Astronomy Department via the Dispatch or other methods.

vi. LAS Council Representative: Attend all bi-weekly LAS council meetings and report back to SWiPA. Make any necessary petitions or other presentations to LAS council.

vii. Advisor(s): One to two faculty members of the ISU Physics and Astronomy department will serve as the advisors to SWiPA. The advisors will be selected by the president of SWiPA. The duties of the advisor(s) will be to maintain communication and meet with officer(s) biweekly, approve of financial expenditures, and ensure that the organization is operating in conformity with the standards set forth by Iowa State University and Student Activities Center.

d. SWiPA Elections shall be held in the second half of the spring term after public notice in the Physics building and through SWiPA publicity, at a date and place convenient for SWiPA. An electronic voting system may be established if agreed upon by SWiPA. Elections will occur no later than four weeks before finals week. All officers will be self-nominated and elected by a plurality vote of all official SWiPA members by method of secret ballot.

e. To be eligible for office, students must be able to fulfill their duties for the duration of the elected term and meet the following requirements:

i. Be a member in good standing with the University and enrolled: if an undergraduate student, at least full time (12 or more credit hours) during the term of office and if a graduate level student, at least halftime (four or more credits unless fewer credits are required in the final stages of their degree as defined by the Continuous Registration Requirement) during their term of office.

ii. Have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) as stated below and meet that minimum GPA in the semester immediately prior to the election/appointment, the semester of election/appointment and semesters during the term of office. For undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, the minimum GPA is 2.00. In order for this provision to be met, at least six hours (half-time credits) must have been taken for the semester under consideration.

iii. Be ineligible to hold an office should the student fail to maintain the requirements as prescribed in (a) and (b)."

f. Elected terms last for one (1) year, where a year is defined to end and begin at the election of officers in the Spring term. Members elected to a vacated position will serve the remainder of the term, rather than an entire year.

g. Officers or advisors may be removed from office by 2/3 vote of the other officers if their actions are deemed inappropriate by the board. The officer is permitted to speak before the organization and the general membership about the charges made concerning his/her performance. The officer is not permitted to participate in the deliberation of the organization regarding the charges.

h. All vacated positions will be filled through a special election using the same procedures for spring elections.

i. The SWiPA Constitution will be revisited at the beginning of every spring term.

## **II. Finances**

a. All monies belonging to this organization shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for this organization at the Campus Organizations Accounting Office and/or approved institution/office (must receive authorization via Campus Organizations Accounting Office). All funds must be deposited within 48 hours after collection. An advisor to this organization must approve and sign each expenditure before payment.

b. No dues will be collected.

c. Only official SWiPA members are eligible to benefit from the use of substantial SWiPA funds.

### **III. Amendments and Ratification**

a. This Constitution supersedes all previous constitutions of the Iowa State Women in Physics Organization. It shall take effect when:

i. It has been approved by a two-thirds vote of SWiPA voting members present at the consecutive meeting after publication.

b. Amendments to this Constitution may be passed when the above criteria are met.

c. All past, present, and future Constitutions must be kept on file.

d. This Constitution must be re-ratified every four years.