

Constitution of the NCAR Scientists' Assembly.

13 August 2004

1. Mission Statement

The NCAR Scientists' Assembly (NSA) exists to foster a community of mutual respect and cooperation within NCAR/UCAR, to facilitate effective scientist participation in the management of NCAR, to facilitate scientific interaction across NCAR/UCAR, to enhance communication in matters of concern to NCAR scientists and management, to engage NCAR scientists' skills in the guidance of NCAR's programs, and to advise NCAR management and UCAR governance concerning scientific policy and related matters affecting the institution.

2. NSA Membership

All members of the NCAR scientific staff (Scientists, Associate Scientists, Project Scientists, Post-Docs and Visiting Scientists) are members of the NCAR Scientists' Assembly unless they remove their name from the membership list. All members of the NSA have full voting rights in the NSA, and these rights apply both to the selection of the EC and to voting on issues raised by the NSA or the EC.)

3. Structure of the NSA

Executive Committee (EC)

The EC will consist of the head of the ECSA and one representative from each NCAR Division (currently ACD, ATD, CGD, MMM, SCD, RAP, HAO and ESIG) and the NCAR Science Advisor.. Changes to Divisional representation in the EC that may be needed as the structure of NCAR evolves will be made with a majority vote of the NSA EC.

- The EC organizes meetings of the full NSA.
- The EC must clearly delineate whether official positions taken are those of the EC or the full NSA.
- The EC organizes scientific fora.

Committees

Early Career Scientists' Assembly (ECSA)

The ECSA is a permanent standing committee of the NSA, organized according to its own bylaws. The ECSA or its Steering Committee has the right to issue position statements without the approval of the NSA EC. The statements should include a standard disclaimer that such positions are not necessarily endorsed by the NSA as a whole or by the EC.

Other Committees

Aside from the ECSA, the EC can establish or discontinue standing subcommittees. The members of a standing subcommittee are NSA members, appointed by the EC. The Chair must be a member of the EC.

The EC may establish or discontinue ad hoc committees from time to time as deemed desirable. The membership of ad hoc committees is determined by the EC

EC Meetings

The EC meets monthly and more frequently if the need arises. For routine (non-voting) EC meetings, a quorum exists if half the members are present. For voting meetings, a quorum exists if three-quarters of the members are present. A positive vote by more than half of those present is sufficient to carry a motion. The NCAR Directorate may provide agenda items for EC meetings that require EC input or action.

NSA Meetings

The EC calls NSA meetings as the need arises, but the NSA must meet at least once a year. The EC sets the agenda for NSA meetings.

NCAR Science Advisor

The NCAR Science Advisor is hired by the EC and holds a joint appointment with the NSA and the Directorate. The NSA EC co-chairs are the supervisors of the NCAR Science Advisor, with input from the Directorate.

4. Responsibility of the Officers

NSA Executive Committee member and alternate

The Executive Committee member attends meetings or selects an alternate if he/she cannot attend, reports the proceedings of the EC to constituents regularly, ascertains the wishes of his/her constituents and represents them on the EC, and takes minutes on a rotating basis. The EC member will also organize the selection process for his/her Divisional replacement and obtain EC approval before initiating the process.

NSA Executive Committee Co-chairs

The NSA EC Co-chairs run the NSA meetings and the monthly EC meetings, call special EC meetings, meet with the NCAR Science Advisor on a regular basis, and set agendas for EC meetings.

NCAR Science Advisor

The NCAR Science Advisor is responsible for communication between the NCAR Executive Committee and the NCAR Directors' committee and both the EC and the NSA. The NCAR Science Advisor represents the NSA at the NCAR Executive Committee and the NCAR Directors' Committee meetings. He/she also provides advice to the NCAR Director.

5. Selection of Officers

Executive Committee (EC) of the NCAR Scientists' Assembly – Division Representatives.

There is one representative elected from each administrative unit (hereafter called "Division")

Qualifications: Any member of the NSA can be a Member or Alternate Member of the Executive Committee except for senior management (any member with a title of "Director" (or equivalent) or above in their job description).

Selection: Each Division may devise its own process for selecting a representative to the EC, but the EC must approve the Division process for selection of EC members.

Alternate: The EC member designates an alternate who attends meetings when the member cannot attend. The alternate will have full voting rights at the EC meetings. If an EC representative fails to finish his/her term, a special election should be held according to the Division process.

Terms: Members of the EC will serve for three years, starting 1 October. The ECSA representative will serve a one-year term since the head of the ECSA is a one-year rotating position.

Vacant seats: The seat of an EC member is deemed vacant if the member has not attended EC meetings for six months or longer. In this case, the Division selects a new EC representative for the remainder of the term using the procedures specified above.

Rotation: Approximately one-third of the EC should be selected each year.

For the first election, approximately one-third of the members of the EC will rotate off this year, one-third the next year, and one-third in the third year.

Recall procedure: An EC member representative can be recalled by a petition signed by 2/3 of the home Division NSA members. In this event an election for a new Division representative follows according to Division procedure.

Co-chairs of the EC are selected by the EC. The co-chairs must be members of the EC. The EC determines the selection procedure. The term is one year, possibly renewable.

NCAR Science Advisor

Qualifications: The NCAR Science Advisor should be a member of the NSA.

Selection: The NCAR Science Advisor will be selected through an application process, with the selection committee consisting of the EC.

Term: One year, renewable.

Head of the ECSA

The head of the ECSA is chosen according to ECSA procedures.

6. Voting on Issues

Calling for a vote

Any member of the NSA can call for a vote at an NSA general meeting as long as there are at least 25 NSA members present (which shall constitute a quorum). The process for calling for a vote will be dictated by Roberts Rules of Order, i.e., a second is asked for, the question is discussed and refined (if necessary), and those present at the meeting vote whether to put the vote to the entire NSA. A simple majority is required for the motion to pass.

The Executive Committee is authorized to put any matter to a vote of the NSA, as long as a majority of the EC agrees to it.

Voting Procedure

A vote will be taken whenever the NSA and/or the EC wishes to state an official position on an issue under consideration.

Voting will be done over the Web. Once a vote has been authorized by the EC or the NSA, the full NSA membership will be notified by email. The question to be voted on is then posted on the NSA Website, along with a discussion of the issues to be decided. The EC determines the interval of time and deadline for voting, posting this information on the NSA web site.

Reporting results of the vote

The EC will report the results of the vote, including the number of votes, to the NSA in a timely manner.

7. Relationship of NSA to ECSA

The ECSA will be a permanent standing committee of the NSA, with the ECSA chair being a member of the EC.

The NSA EC will approve the ECSA by-laws and changes thereto.

8. Modifying the Constitution

Provisional period

The constitution will be considered provisional during the first year. During this period, the EC will be able to change the constitution by a majority vote.

Amendments to the Constitution

After the first year, any member of the EC may propose changes in the NSA Constitution at a regular meeting of the EC. To be approved, such changes must be the subject of notice provided to the entire NSA at least two weeks prior to the next meeting of the EC. NSA EC members are responsible for ascertaining the wishes of their constituents. Adoption will require the affirmative vote of three-quarters of the EC members or a majority of the NSA. The times of approval will be documented.

By-Laws

1. Election of EC Representatives

A web-based voting procedure is recommended, but this is not compulsory.

1. Nomination: by Division NSA members, including the current representative.
2. The nominee is informed of the duties of an EC member and asked if he/she is willing to stand for election.
3. Elections are held using a secret-ballot process.

2. Support Staff

The following positions are to support the efforts of the EC, NSA, and ECSA.

NSA Secretary/Treasurer (staff member)

The NSA Secretary-treasurer is a staff member who maintains the member database, posts the minutes on the web site, and manages the budget.

Website manager (staff member)

The Web Site manager is a staff member who maintains the NSA Web Site (possibly the same person who maintains the ECSA Web site.)

3. NCAR Science Advisor (Half time funded position)

In addition to the duties described in the NSA Constitution, the NCAR Science Advisor will also participate in generating ideas for NCAR-wide science discussions, act as a science ombudsperson, plan at least one scientific event (retreat, workshop, etc) during his/her tenure, and write the annual report for the NSA.

4. EC Co-Chairs

The EC Co-Chairs have line management responsibility over the NCAR Science Advisor. The EC Co-Chairs are responsible for NSA's budget, with the practical accounting tasks being delegated to the NSA Secretary/Treasurer.

5. EC

The EC will meet monthly or more frequently should the need arise. It is expected that EC Members and Alternate members represent the opinions of their constituents.

6. NSA Communications

Because communication lies at the center of the NSA mission, a communications plan is outlined below. This is in addition to face-to-face communications expected of EC members and in the meetings described in the constitution.

Website

The NSA Website will be the public face of NSA and placed in the NCAR website at the same entry-level that the Divisions are currently, or at the same level as the laboratories will be eventually.

Use of Email

Email will be used for internal direct communication, such as:

1. Announcement of NSA meetings
2. Announcement of NSA-EC agendas, posting of minutes (links to the website)
3. EC Policy positions (link to website for member comments)
4. Other special announcements (NSA seminars, etc).

Maintaining Email List

The email list will be updated monthly. NSA members are on the list by default. Any member of the NSA can be excluded by request. Any member of the UCAR staff can be included upon request. These requests should be honored when the NSA Secretary/Treasurer updates the list.

7. Changing the By-Laws

The By-Laws can be changed by majority vote of all the members of the Executive Committee of the NSA.