

# BYLAWS OF THE AAPT PHYSICS EDUCATION RESEARCH TOPICAL GROUP

## ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this Topical Group shall be the Physics Education Research Topical Group, or PERTG.

## ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVE

The objective of PERTG shall be to assist the advancement, dissemination, and application of knowledge of physics education research (PER). PERTG serves to promote PER within and beyond the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT) by:

1. Supporting activities that foster communication and exchange of ideas among professionals with an interest in PER.
2. Promoting the development of high-quality publication venues for PER.
3. Promoting and disseminating high-quality research in physics education, which in turn can lead to curricular improvements in physics (and science) teaching.
4. Publicizing PER events and news to PERTG, AAPT, and wider communities.
5. Promoting access to quality resources for learning about and conducting PER.
6. Cultivating inclusive environments in professional spaces for the PER community.

## ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

The members of PERTG shall consist of members of AAPT who (1) have indicated, in accordance with procedures established by AAPT and these Bylaws, their desire to join PERTG and (2) retain membership from year to year by the payment of designated dues or by any other method established by AAPT or these Bylaws.

## ARTICLE IV – GOVERNING BODY

**1. Name.** The governing body of PERTG shall be known as the Physics Education Research Leadership Organizing Council, or PERLOC.

**2. Scope and Responsibilities.** PERLOC shall have general charge of the affairs of PERTG in order to carry out the objectives described in Article II. Thus, PERLOC's responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, (1) overseeing the organization and running of an annual Physics Education Research Conference (PERC) and its associated *Proceedings*, (2) managing the collection and disbursement of PERTG funds, (3) communicating any relevant matters to the PERTG membership through appropriate channels (e.g., the PERTG Town Hall (defined below), email, any PERTG or AAPT websites or newsletters, and/or relevant journals or other publications), and (4) ensuring the adherence of PERTG to

these Bylaws.

**3. Composition.** PERLOC shall consist of eight voting Councilors, seven of which are elected Councilors and one of which is an ex-officio Councilor. The elected Councilors shall consist of six non-student Councilors and one graduate student Councilor; they shall be elected in accordance with Article VI of these Bylaws. The ex-officio Councilor shall be the current Chair of the AAPT Committee on Research in Physics Education (RIPE).

**4. PERLOC Meetings.** PERLOC shall meet at least once each month. Two of these meetings shall be in-person meetings at the AAPT Summer and Winter Meetings; any Councilors that cannot attend either meeting in person shall join it virtually via appropriate technology. The other ten meetings shall be virtual meetings conducted using appropriate technology. Should there be insufficient business to justify a meeting in any given month, the meeting may be canceled at the discretion of the Chair. All meetings will be closed to the public, unless PERLOC has extended an explicit invitation to a non-Councilor to join a particular meeting.

**5. Official Year.** The Official Year of PERLOC shall extend from the close of one AAPT Winter meeting to the close of the next such meeting.

**6. Quorum and Votes.** A majority of the voting Councilors shall constitute a quorum for conducting business at a PERLOC meeting.

PERLOC may make decisions without holding formal votes, except as indicated in these Bylaws or on a particular decision if any Counselor makes a request that a vote be held. PERLOC votes shall take place at PERLOC meetings and shall pass by a majority of those Counselors present at the meeting voting in favor, with ties broken by the Chair.

## **ARTICLE V – OFFICERS**

**1. Officers.** The officers of the Topical Group shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, and a Treasurer.

**2. Duties of the Chair.** The Chair shall call and conduct all meetings of PERLOC. The Chair shall appoint any PERLOC Committees, in accordance with Article VII of these Bylaws. The Chair shall be the official representative of PERTG and PERLOC to AAPT and other external organizations which may have need to interact with PERTG or PERLOC from time to time.

**3. Duties of the Vice Chair.** The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in the event that the Chair is unable to perform his or her duties.

**4. Duties of the Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall have responsibility for all of PERTG's funds and shall make disbursements from such funds in a manner that is consistent with the general policies of AAPT. The Treasurer shall present a financial report at each meeting of the PERLOC and, when requested by the

Chair, at a Town Hall meeting (see Article VIII).

## **ARTICLE VI – ELECTION AND TENURE OF COUNCILORS AND OFFICERS**

**1. Qualifications.** Councilors must have been members of PERTG for at least two years prior to their election to PERLOC. The graduate student Councilor is exempt from this limit but must be a current member of PERTG while serving on PERLOC.

**2. Term.** Each year, two non-student PERTG members will be elected to serve three-year terms on PERLOC. Every two years, one graduate student PERTG member will be elected to serve a two-year term on PERLOC.

**3. Election of Councilors.** The election of PERLOC Councilors shall be conducted by the ex-officio Councilor. The ex-officio Councilor shall be responsible for ensuring that all members of PERTG are informed about the election process in a timely fashion, including detailed instructions about how they may submit nominations and cast ballots. The ex-officio Councilor shall also have the authority to resolve any problems that arise in the implementation of PERLOC elections (e.g., ties in Phase 2).

### ***Phase 1: Selecting Nominees***

The goal of Phase 1 is to generate a sufficiently large set of nominees for each type of Counselor position (i.e., graduate student and non-student). Phase 1 may be extended if not enough PERTG members are nominated; see “Phase Transition Logic” below for further details.

Nominations for all PERLOC Councilor positions that will be vacant at the start of the subsequent Official Year shall be solicited from all PERTG members. Any PERTG member may self-nominate or nominate another member. Anyone nominated must confirm their willingness to serve on PERLOC to be included among the nominees. They must also submit a one-paragraph statement of candidacy before the beginning of the next phase of the election.

### ***Phase 2: Selecting Finalists***

The goal of Phase 2 is to reduce the number of nominees to be included in the set of finalists that move on to Phase 3, in the event that there are too many nominees. Phase 2 may be skipped for one or both types of Counselor position if there is no need to reduce the number of nominees for that type of position; see “Phase Transition Logic” below for further details.

All PERTG members may cast a ballot through the AAPT voting system to determine the nominees that shall be included on the slate of finalists. These ballots shall include the nominees’ statements of candidacy. For each type of position, PERTG members may vote for as many nominees as they like. The slate of finalists of each type shall consist of the nominees with the most votes, such that the total number of finalists is four times the number of available positions of that type (e.g., if there are two available non-student Counselor positions, then this process shall result in a slate of eight finalists).

### ***Phase 3: Selecting Councilors***

The goal of Phase 3 is to elect Councilors from amongst the finalists.

All PERTG members may cast a ballot through the AAPT voting system to determine which finalists shall be elected to PERLOC. These ballots shall include the finalists' statements of candidacy. For each type of position, each PERTG member may cast a number of votes equal to the number of available positions of that type (e.g., two votes for non-student Councilors if there are two such positions available). The finalists of each type who receive the most votes shall become PERLOC Councilors, such that all of the available positions are filled. Any tied votes that introduce ambiguity into the selection of Councilors shall be resolved via a method as determined by a vote of PERLOC.

### ***Phase Transition Rules***

This section describes the conditions under which Phase 1 may be extended and Phase 2 may be skipped in a given election. Different types of Counselor positions shall be treated distinctly for the purposes of these rules; this means that Phase 1 may be extended for one type of position but not the other and likewise that Phase 2 may be skipped for one but not the other.

At the end of Phase 1, count the number of nominees for each type of position, and divide this number by the number of available position of that type. If the result is

- less than one, then Phase 1 shall be extended and additional nominations solicited.
- between one and four, inclusive, then the election process shall continue with Phase 3.
- greater than 4, then the election process shall continue with Phase 2.

For example, if there are two available non-student Councilor positions, then Phase 1 must be extended if there are 0 or 1 nominees (ratio of nominees to available positions is less than 1), the election process shall move to Phase 3 if there are 2 to 8 nominees (ratio is between 1 and 4), and the election process shall move to Phase 2 if there are 9 or more nominees (ratio is greater than 4).

### ***Timeline***

*Start Date:* The Counselor election process shall begin on the third Friday in August with Phase 1.

*Duration of Phases:* Phase 1 shall proceed for four weeks (unless it is extended), Phase 2 shall proceed for two weeks (unless it is skipped), and Phase 3 shall proceed for two weeks.

*Gaps between Phases:* Subsequent Phases shall begin one week after the close of the previous Phase.

*Synchronicity between Position Types:* The beginning of each Phase for each type of position shall be synchronized. For example, if Phase 2 is skipped for non-student positions but proceeds for graduate student positions, Phase 3 will not begin for either until Phase 2 is completed for graduate student positions.

**4. Selection of Officers:** At the start of a new Official Year, the Vice Chair of the previous Official Year shall become the new Chair, and the Chair of the previous Official Year shall lose this position. If

applicable, this rule shall be superseded by Article VI.5.

Within a month after the start of each Official Year, PERLOC shall elect Officers. This election shall exclude the position of Chair, unless that position is vacant. The Officers shall be elected in the order in which they are listed in Article V. The election shall be conducted by the ex-officio Councilor. The election vote shall include a nomination process (including self-nomination), and each Councilor may cast a single vote per Officer position. The nominee with the most votes for an Officer position shall be elected to that position, with ties broken by the Chair.

**5. Vacancies in Offices.** If a vacancy occurs in the office of Chair, the Vice Chair shall immediately become Chair for the current and subsequent Official Year. Vacancies in any other Office shall be filled or left unfilled for the remainder of the current Official Year at the discretion of PERLOC.

## **ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES**

**1. Standing Committees.** The Chair may establish Standing Committees to address issues and conduct business on behalf of PERLOC. The initial membership and charge of any Standing Committee must be approved by a vote of PERLOC. Thereafter, these Committees shall be reviewed and reapproved at the start of every Official Year by the new Chair and Vice Chair. At any time, any Councilor may call a vote to dissolve any Standing Committee.

**2. Ad Hoc Committees.** The Chair may establish Ad Hoc Committees to address issues and conduct business on behalf of PERLOC. The Chair does not need to receive the approval of PERLOC to constitute an Ad Hoc Committee, including setting its membership and charge. Ad Hoc Committees shall automatically dissolve when the Chair that created them is no longer Chair (typically at the end of the current Official Year). At any time, any Councilor may call a vote to dissolve any Ad Hoc Committee.

**3. Membership.** Any member of PERTG and any employee of AAPT shall be eligible to serve as a member of a PERLOC Committee. Any person not belonging to either of these groups may serve on a Committee with a vote of PERLOC. The Chair of any PERLOC Committee must be a PERLOC Councilor.

## **ARTICLE VIII – PERTG MEETINGS**

**1. Town Hall.** A meeting of PERTG, known as the PERTG Town Hall, shall be held at each AAPT Summer and Winter Meeting and shall be open to all attendees of that Meeting. Each Town Hall shall include reports of Officers and Committees, notification of election results and other items of interest to PERTG members, and the transaction of other business affairs.

**2. Other Meetings.** Meetings of PERTG other than the Town Hall may be scheduled by PERLOC on an as-needed basis. Special conferences may be sponsored in whole or in part by PERTG.

## **ARTICLE IX – PERTG DUES**

Dues for maintenance of membership in PERTG shall be established by PERLOC in consultation with AAPT. PERLOC shall make reasonable efforts to minimize the amount of dues for student members.

## **ARTICLE X – PERTG VOTES**

Unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws, this Article shall govern the process by which PERTG votes on substantive matters.

A Proposal for the membership of PERTG to vote to make a substantive decision may be introduced by either of the following methods: (1) any Councilor may make a Proposal by introducing it in writing at a PERLOC meeting or (2) any member of PERTG may make a Proposal by submitting a petition to the Chair that includes the text of the Proposal signed by no fewer than twenty members of PERTG. A Proposal originating by either method must first be approved by a vote of PERLOC before further action may be taken.

Once PERLOC approves the Proposal, PERLOC shall distribute it to all members of PERTG through an appropriate mechanism no fewer than three weeks prior to AAPT Summer or Winter meeting.

Opportunity for discussion of the Proposal shall be given at the Summer or Winter Town Hall. Members of PERTG can also contact the Chair within three weeks after the Town Hall to express any comments or concerns about the Proposal. PERLOC shall make and vote on any final revisions to the Proposal based on any public discussion and private communication relevant to the Proposal.

Not later than twelve weeks after the meeting at which the Proposal is discussed, PERLOC shall distribute the revised Proposal to all members of PERTG through the AAPT voting system for an adoption vote. Adoption of the Proposal shall require the affirmative votes of a majority of the members who voted, as long as at least 25% of the PERTG membership in total cast votes.

## **ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

An Amendment to these Bylaws may consist of any addition, deletion, and/or replacement of any of the text in these Bylaws. Amendments may be proposed and enacted in the manner described in Article X, except that final adoption of the Amendment shall require the affirmative votes of two-thirds of the members who voted.