

GRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL (GEC) POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

The GEC Postdoctoral Affairs Advisory Committee (PAAC) is responsible for advising the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS) on the needs and best practices related to policies, processes, and services that support postdoctoral scholars and their supervisors.

Mandate and Responsibilities

1. Gathering and disseminating information on needs, trends, and best practices in postdoctoral training, mentorship, supervision, and professional development.
2. Advising on initiatives to promote a positive and professionally enriching environment for postdoctoral scholars at Western.
3. Advising SGPS on policies and processes regarding the terms of appointment, compensation, and benefits for postdoctoral scholars at Western.
4. Providing guidance on mentorship and supervision best practices for postdoctoral scholars including:
 - i. Recommendations for faculty development in postdoctoral supervision
 - ii. Guidelines for effective mentorship, performance feedback and conflict resolution
 - iii. Resources to support positive working relationships between postdoctoral scholars and supervisors.
5. Advising on career development initiatives for postdoctoral scholars including:
 - i. Career progression tracking and professional development opportunities
 - ii. Support for both academic and non-academic career pathways
 - iii. Organization of workshops, seminars, and networking events for postdoctoral scholars
6. Advising on well-being, inclusion, and equity initiatives for postdoctoral scholars, including policies addressing diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and decolonization in the postdoctoral experience.
7. Reporting to GEC on activities, recommendations and outcomes.

Composition

Elected Members:**

- Two Postdoctoral Scholars, elected by GEC
- Four Associate Deans-Graduate, elected by GEC
- Two Faculty members with experience in postdoctoral supervision (preferably, one each from STEM and non-STEM disciplines), elected by GEC
- One Director of a Western Research Institute

Ex Officio Members:

- * Postdoctoral Services Coordinator, SGPS
- Vice-Provost, SGPS
- One Associate Vice-Provost, SGPS
- Director, Western International (or designate)
- One Associate VPR (or designate)
- One Associate Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and/or Associate Vice- President, Office of Indigenous Initiatives (or designate)
- One Human Resources representative

*The Postdoctoral Services Coordinator, SGPS, will serve as Chair of the Postdoctoral Affairs Advisory Committee.

Terms of Appointment:

Postdoctoral scholars, staff and faculty members serve one-year term, renewable once. Ex Officio members serve by virtue of their position.

** Every effort must be made to have an equitable and transparent process for identification of candidates, to ensure breadth of disciplinary representation and that the elected/appointed members reflect Western's commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, Decolonizing-Indigenization.

Meetings

The Committee will meet at least once per academic year, or more frequently as needed.

Additional working groups or subcommittees may be established to support specific initiatives (e.g., supervision, policy review, data/metrics).

The Committee shall seek advice from external partners such as alumni postdoctoral scholars, industry or community partners, etc., as relevant, who may also be invited to attend Committee meetings.

Revised November 2025 (Supersedes October 2025; April 2023; March 2014)