

The DPS Professional Culture and Climate Subcommittee (PCCS)

2024 Committee Meeting
06 October 2024

Current chair: James Roberts (JHUAPL)
Cocoa-Chairs: Ingrid Daubar (Brown), Jen Piatek (CCSU)

Who is the PCCS?

- Our current membership includes:

Jodi Berdis (JHU/APL)

Shawn Brooks (JPL/Caltech)

Ingrid Daubar* (Brown Univ., JPL/Caltech)

Serina Diniega (JPL/Caltech)

Joseph Masiero (Caltech)

Jessica Noviello (UMBC / GSFC)

Jennifer Piatek* (Central Connecticut State University)

James Roberts* (JHU/APL)

Steve Vance (JPL/Caltech)

Driss Takir (NASA Johnson)

Ashley Walker[†] (Howard University)

[†] - student representative * - current chairs

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URL: <https://dps.aes.org/leadership/climate>

PCCS Tasks through Oct '24

- Support efforts to continue building URM Travel grants
- More thorough review of the 2023 Fall DPS meeting exit survey
- Ongoing policy reviews (codes of conduct, bylaws, prize committee and rubrics)
- Ongoing partnership with NSBP
 - Kiana McFadden (University of Arizona) is this year's DPS-NSBP awardee.
 - She will speak at DPS meeting, and at Southwest Research Institute (SwRI), in Boulder, colloquium series "Updated Diameters and Albedos for the Main Belt Asteroids Using WISE/NEOWISE Data"
- EDIA plenary speaker for DPS meeting
 - Mental Health in Planetary Sciences
 - David Trang of Space Science Institute



Findings and Recommendations (1/4)

Findings and [recommendations for future meetings](#) related to **Surveys**:

- 1) The meeting survey often falls low on the priority list and is created at the last minute and sent out well after the fact.
The PCCS recommends that a person or team be assigned to lead post-meeting survey to ensure it is released in a timely fashion and is tailored to the current information-needs of future meeting organizers/can be related to actionable recommendations. One candidate for this task is the SOC lead for the following years' meeting, who has a substantial interest in the feedback.
- 2) Meeting surveys are often sent only to those who attended the meeting.
The PCCS recommends that the survey be sent to all DPS members whether they attended or not, in addition to all meeting attendees so that we can obtain information about why individuals did not attend.
- 3) Long surveys tend to discourage participation, limiting the feedback received. In addition, it is not always obvious that the data collected is used for future meeting purposes.
The PCCS recommends that survey questions be limited to items for which the Committee plans to use to inform future meeting decisions.

Findings and Recommendations (2/4)

Findings and [recommendations for future meetings](#) related to **Travel Grants/Student Support:**

- 1) The travel grant applications have been updated, now it's time to update the evaluation and administration process. Shepherding the travel grants through to ensure timely information and payment (critical for students and early career folks!) requires dedicated attention. Additionally, best practices should be used to mitigate/decrease bias in evaluation.

The PCCS recommends that the DPS Committee re-evaluate who is responsible for the Hartmann Travel Grant. (URM Travel Grant remains the responsibility of PCCS.) Whoever is responsible for that and the URM Travel Grant should work out the process with AAS Staff as this year it was a mess of emails to the wrong people, unanswered emails, and unshared-until-nearly too late deadlines and information.

Findings and Recommendations (3/4)

Findings and [recommendations for future meetings](#) related to **Accessibility**:

- 1) Although COVID is still present in our lives and such communicable illnesses are a large concern from those with high health risks, the DPS Committee did not feel it was feasible to have a mask mandate for this meeting. This unfortunately meant that some planetary scientists were unable to attend the meeting in person, including our Sagan Medal Awardee, Dr. Jamie Molaro, who is being recognized in part for her advocacy for the disabled community within planetary science. We deeply regret that we were unable to provide sufficient accommodations to help Jamie and others feel safe at this DPS meeting. This is a historical and ongoing challenge for science inclusivity.
PCCS recommends that the DPS issue a public statement at the DPS Members meeting, recognizing the failure to make needed accommodations.
- 2) The PCCS recognizes that we could not realistically alter our mask mandate close to the meeting. The PCCS recognizes that AAS does not appear able/willing to support many virtual attendance options.
The PCCS recommends that we have a process to re-evaluate health policies close to the meeting so that we remain flexible to respond to evolving health situations. An action for after this meeting should be to establish dates set for decisions on things like getting health metrics from the venue and from published epidemiology. We also set a date for revisiting the masking policy. Further, the PCCS recommends this plan be posted on the DPS site as part of the statement of care. The PCCS recommends that we explore the idea of having outside expert do an assessment and make the decision, to avoid the appearance of an arbitrary decision by the committee.

Findings and Recommendations (4/4)

Findings and [recommendations for future meetings](#) related to **Accessibility**:

- 3) There may have been other ways to mitigate risk, even without a masking mandate.
The PCCS recommends that DPS determine what sort of information is needed by someone with high health risks, aside from a mask policy, that may help them decide the meeting is safe enough to attend.
- 4) The PCCS sees unclear communication as a contributor to the cancellation of the Sagan Medalist talk. The PCCS did not see on the meeting site a person to contact for questions regarding accessibility; **The PCCS recommends that DPS have a a designated point of contact for accessibility issues, and that person needs to have a clear reporting structure (anonymously where possible), and note how those requests were addressed.** This provides accountability and also gives the meeting committees a sense of what questions/issues might be affecting attendance and allow them to potentially make improvements to future meetings.
- 5) **The PCCS acknowledges the impossible position the Committee faced at this stage, and would also like to express its deep appreciation for Carol's leadership and work for the DPS and the broader planetary science community.**

