

CHARTER  
OF  
THE EDUCATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
WOODS HOLE OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTION

April 1975

Revisions approved by WHOI Board of Trustees Executive Committee.

Revised - February 17, 1988

Revised - September 4, 1990

Revised – August 11, 2000

Revised – August 5, 2005

The Educational Assembly  
of the  
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

I. Purpose

The Educational Assembly is established in order to ensure full and responsible staff participation in determining the policies and practices that guide the Institution's educational programs. Analogous to a faculty in a university, the Educational Assembly is deliberative body through which the staff members responsible for the conduct of the educational programs attempt to attain common agreement regarding educational philosophy and objectives. In order to enforce these agreements on its own members, the Educational Assembly, like a faculty, is also a legislative body in that it is responsible for determining standards for admissions, educational content, counseling and degree requirements. The Educational Assembly operates under authority that is delegated by the President and Director and the Board of Trustees.

II. Purview

The purview of the Educational Assembly covers all continuing educational programs that have been established by the Board of Trustees. Existing programs are:

- Joint Graduate Program with MIT
- Cooperative Graduate Programs with other universities
- WHOI Doctoral Program
- Cooperative Undergraduate Programs with other colleges and universities
- Summer Student Fellowship and Minority Fellowship Programs
- Postdoctoral Scholar and Fellowship Programs
- Secondary School Program

The Educational Assembly, on the basis of its studies and deliberations, may make recommendations to the President and Director and Board of Trustees regarding the establishment of new educational programs.

### III. Responsibilities

1. With respect to existing degree-granting programs, the Educational Assembly has the following responsibilities:

- a) To determine admissions requirements and policies
- b) To determine degree requirements
- c) To approve all courses offered by WHOI
- d) To determine the advising system and its policies
- e) To set general standards and requirements for general and qualifying examinations and the thesis
- f) To recommend the awarding of degrees to candidates who have met degree requirements
- g) To set criteria for awarding financial aid

For established joint programs with other institutions, it is understood that the Educational Assembly's responsibility extends only to the establishment of WHOI's policies and positions. In such cases, educational requirements must be jointly agreed upon.

2. With respect to existing non-degree programs, the Educational Assembly is responsible for setting the objectives, approving the general content of the programs, and setting the standards and requirements for both admissions and staff participation.

3. The Educational Assembly may identify new educational needs and opportunities for the Institution and make appropriate recommendations for implementation.

4. The Educational Assembly, because of its responsibility for the quality and effectiveness of the Institution's educational programs, may make recommendations to the President and Director and the Board of Trustees on any matter of Institutional policy which directly affects the educational programs.

5. Actions of the Educational Assembly must be consistent with the resources available for the educational programs and with general institutional policies.

### IV. Mode of Operation

The Educational Assembly will meet three scheduled times each year and on other occasions, as the agenda requires. The Assembly will operate primarily through an executive committee called the Educational Council. The Assembly will be chaired by the Vice President for Academic Programs and Dean and will use standard parliamentary rules for discussion and voting upon motions presented to it.

The agenda for each meeting will be prepared by the Educational Council and distributed in advance. The Educational Council will place on the agenda any item submitted in writing at least three weeks in advance of the meeting and signed by five members of the Assembly. Business on the agenda may be introduced from the floor and discussed; voting, however will be deferred until the next meeting, if the matter affects educational policies or degree requirements.

The Educational Council will consist of:

- a) The Dean, as Chairman
- b) The Associate Dean
- c) The five Education Coordinators
- d) One member from each of the five departments and Marine Policy Center elected by members of the Assembly from those departments and MPC or selected by the Department Chair or MPC Director with approval of the Scientific Staff of the Department or MPC
- e) One member elected by the Assembly at-large at its first meeting of the academic year (nominations will take place in the following way: the outgoing Educational Council will nominate a slate of at least three candidates; additional nominations may be made from the floor)
- f) One student member elected by and from the student members of the Assembly
- g) One Postdoctoral Association member elected by the Postdoctoral Association representatives

Terms for Educational Council members will be October 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year, except as provided for appointments of the Vice President for Academic Programs and Dean, Associate Dean and J. Seward Johnson Chair and Education Coordinators. The elections to the Council will take place annually in August or September. Members may serve for up to three successive years. The normal selection process for full term appointments will fill vacancies during the year.

The Educational Council provides advice to the Vice President for Academic Programs and Dean about the formation or dissolution of standing committees and receives reports, as needed, from established standing committees (such as those on Admissions, Fellowships and the WHOI membership of the Joint Committees). In addition, the Educational Council provides advice to the Vice President for Academic Programs and Dean for establishing ad hoc committees, which may be required to make studies and recommendations on specific issues. Members of standing and ad hoc committees are appointed by the Vice President for Academic Programs and Dean in consultation with Department Chairs and the MPC Director with attention to appropriate representation of the Departments and MPC for specific committees.

The Associate Dean will serve as Secretary to the Assembly and its committees.

The Registrar will serve as Recording Secretary.

All meetings of the Assembly will be open to all WHOI Scientific Staff members, registered students and postdoctoral appointees.

Individuals who are not otherwise members of Educational Assembly may be extended the privilege of attending and of speaking at a meeting of the Educational Assembly upon the recommendation of the Vice President for Academic Programs and Dean and approval of Educational Council.

The quorum of the Assembly and other necessary rules of operation will be determined by the Assembly. Provision should be made whereby critical decisions can be made by written vote of Assembly members.

## V. Membership

The membership of the Educational Assembly in a given year will consist of:

- a) All members of the Scientific Staff
- b) Those members of the Technical Staff who participate in the Institution's educational programs in any of the following ways: classroom teaching, supervising and counseling students, serving on student thesis and examining committees, and serving on departmental or Institutional educational committees
- c) Eight graduate student members elected by and from those graduate students enrolled in WHOI degree programs, elected in such a way so as to ensure at least one student from each of the five departments
- d) Seven representatives of the Postdoctoral Association of WHOI elected according to the Charter of the WHOI Postdoctoral Association
- e) Members of the Directorate who are not otherwise eligible and those individuals, designated by the Educational Council, who participate in the educational programs in the ways described in V (b)

## VI. Duration and Review

The Educational Assembly represented a new experiment for the Institution when the Assembly was established in April 1975. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees reviewed the Charter of the Educational Assembly and voted on May 16, 1978 "To continue the Charter of the Educational Assembly without modification." Since that time, the President/Director of WHOI has brought forward recommendations from the Educational Assembly for modest modifications of the Charter on February 17, 1988, September 4, 1990, and August 11, 2000 to facilitate the Educational Assembly's ability to effectively and efficiently pursue the mission of the Institution within the framework of evolving external and internal opportunities.

The experience of the first 30 years of the Educational Assembly suggests that a review of the Charter of Educational Assembly by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees on a decadal basis, or when requested by the President/Director of WHOI and/or the Educational Assembly, would be good governance practice. Such a review as part of the normal Self Study for Re-accreditation would be most appropriate.

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Judith E. McDowell

Secretary, Educational Assembly