

**Penn State  
Chemical Engineering Department  
Alumni Group  
(PSCHEAG)**

**CHARTER**

**April 2017**

**PSCHEAG Background and Mission:**

The Chemical Engineering Department Head established the Chemical Engineering Department Affiliate Program Group in September 2011. The PSCHEAPG is an Affiliate Program Group of the Penn State Alumni Association and the Penn State Engineering Alumni Society (PSEAS). In January 2014, our organizational name was modified to The Penn State Chemical Engineering Alumni Group (PSCHEAG). The PSCHEAG Leadership Team (PSCHEAG LT) leads the PSCHEAG organization.

The mission of the PSCHEAG is to be a working advisory team for, and reporting to, the Chemical Engineering Department Head to achieve and implement key objectives of value to the ChE Department and to foster enhanced relationships and engagement opportunities for ChE alumni, students, faculty and key industry partners.

**PSCHEAG Team Membership:**

The PSCHEAG is comprised of our Leadership team and ChE alumni associated members. The PSCHEAG LT will consist of a limited number of core team members, endorsed by the ChE Department Head.

**Core members of the PSCHEAG LT are:**

<b>PSCHEAG LT Member</b>	<b>Graduation Date</b>	<b>PSCHEAG Position</b>	<b>Term Number</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>	<b>LT Start</b>
<b>Ken Graziani</b>	ChE '70	Team Lead	2	9/2017	9/2011
<b>Jane Clampitt</b>	ChE '79	LT Member	2	9/2017	9/2011
<b>Frank Arieta</b>	ChE '96	LT Member	2	9/2017	9/2011
<b>Jennie Gibson</b>	Adm Just '96	ChE Dept, Staff Support	NA	NA	5/2016
<b>John Hollenbach</b>	ChE '78	LT Member	2	9/2019	9/2013
<b>Alysia Diffendal</b>	ChE '03	LT Member	2	10/2019	10/2013
<b>Sienna Helfrich</b>	ChE '13	LT Member	1	9/2017	9/2014
<b>Brad Sutliff</b>	ChE '05	LT Member	1	6/2018	6/2015
<b>Dainius Volertas</b>	ChE '16	LT Member	1	3/2020	3/2017

**Key extended team members are:**

- Dr. Phil Savage, ChE Department Head
- Erin Tench, Manager of Alumni Relations, Events and Volunteer Engagement
- Jane Horetsky, ChE and BioMed Eng Communications Specialist
- AIChE President and Mentoring Chair

Future core team membership may expand as appropriate to meet future objectives and initiatives.

**Associate Alumni members:**

All PSU ChE alumni are automatically associated members of the PSChEAG. There is no membership fee or formal application to be an associate member. PSChEAG associate alumni members may be engaged to assist PSChEAG in our various volunteer activities, e.g. Conventional mentors, Facebook e-Mentors, AIChE Lunchtime discussions, ChE Video projects and Career Panel Discussion alumni panelists.

**PSChEAG Key Resource Support:**

The following key resources will be available to the PSChEAG to facilitate achieving and implementing its objectives:

- ChE Department Administrative staff and teleconferencing services
- College of Engineering Communications
- Erin Tench, Manager of Alumni Relations, Events and Volunteer Engagement
- Diontre Earl, Director of Major Gifts
- Jonathan Dougherty, Chair, PSEAS APG Resource Committee; Lead PSEAS APG Grant Program
- PSEAS Board members and APG team leads
- PSEAS document storage processes
- PSEAS APG Grants

**PSChEAG Scope:**

The PSChE APG activities will be focused on several key objectives jointly defined with the Chemical Engineering Department Head and/or the AIChE Student President. The PSChEAG team is empowered to work as deemed appropriate to achieve these objectives, keeping the ChE Department Head apprised of progress and status.

Future objectives and initiatives may be defined at any time and initiated with the concurrence of the ChE Department Head.

**PSChEAG Key Objectives:**

As defined with the Chemical Engineering Department Head, the PSChEAG has completed several key initial objectives since its start-up year, 2011, and has initiated several new objectives since. Several objectives are ongoing or recur annually.

A summary of key Objectives/Achievements is:

**Completed/One-time Objective:**

- Chemical Engineering 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

- Alumni/Student analysis of 2013 ChE Jobs Report
- Conventional Mentoring Strategy Study

Completed/Annually Recurrent/New Objectives:

- Chemical Engineering Early Career Alumni Recognition Award
- Chemical Engineering LinkedIn Group
- Chemical Engineering Conventional Student/Alumni Mentoring (suspended 3/2017 pending Mentoring study)
- Chemical Engineering Facebook Student/Alumni e-Mentoring Group (suspended 3/2017 pending Mentoring study)
- Alumni/Student Career Panel Discussions
- PSChEAG alumni participation in Senior Banquet (Cancelled by AIChE 2016)
- PSChEAG/AIChE Football Tailgate
- “Concepts in Chemical Engineering” Video Project
- 2017 Student/Alumni Mentoring Strategy Study

Possible New Objectives:

- Student Lunchtime Alumni discussions
- Alumni resources for industry career discussions with students
- Facilitate new ChE Building fund raising, e.g. Fenske Bricks
- PSChEAG/alumni/faculty/student on campus workshop/strategy meeting
- Develop PSChEAG Leadership succession process

For more objective details, see PSChEAG Appendix.

**PSChEAG Operations:**

The PSChEAG will operate as follows:

- The PSChEAG LT will operate as a working advisory team reporting to the ChE Department Head
- Team Lead and core team members terms will be for 3 years. Members may serve additional terms with the endorsement of the ChE Department Head. (original team members agreed in 9/14 to second 3 year terms until 9/2017)
- Team Lead will be elected by team consensus with the ChE Department Head endorsement.
- Proposed PSChEAG Team Lead succession process: The succeeding PSChEAG Team Leader will be, by volunteering, from the existing PSChEAG team membership with the consensus of the PSChEAG Team and the ChE Department head. The Leader term will be three years with optional succeeding terms again with PSChEAG and Department Head consensus.
- Team decisions will be by consensus. In the event of an impasse, the Team Lead will make the decision with the endorsement of the ChE Department Head, if needed.

- The PSChEAG will follow the principles in the Engineering Affiliate



Group Manual of Best Practices. APGStartupManual\_Final\_12.2010.docx

- PSChEAG LT Meetings: Face-to-face team meetings will be coordinated with other PSEAS on campus meetings for convenience. The team will employ teleconferencing and email communication as appropriate to progress work. Each meeting will have a clear agenda, objective and minutes documentation. Secretarial duties will be rotated among the team members each meeting. During the start-up phase, “meetings” will be monthly. Face-to-face meetings will be defined by the PSChEAG LT based on objectives and need at the beginning of each year.
- PSChEAG and LT work documents will be stored and shared in a common secured website when established by PSEAS for APG usage.
- Team Charter will be reviewed annual and updated as needed. Team Charter will be stored on the Department of Chemical Engineering website.
- Once the team has established a clear plan forward for the year, a budget will be estimated and funds secured either through the PSEAS APG Grant program or the ChE Department
- Team Communications: The team will use email to communicate among PSChEAG LT members. Broader PSChEAG communications, such as general alumni notice of the establishment of the APG or significant achievements, will occur via standard ChE Department and PSEAS channels.

## APPENDIX I

### PSCHEAG Objectives

Completed objectives are:

1. **Obtained PS Alumni Association official recognition for PSCHE APG, September 2011.**
2. **Chemical Engineering Early Career Recognition Award:** The Early Career Recognition Award was established and inaugurated in 2012 to:
  - Build / strengthen connections with our alumni during the early stage of their career, and
  - Identify ideal "role models" for current ChE undergraduates to provide examples of how awardees' careers developed and how they became so accomplished within only a short time since leaving Penn State, complimenting Outstanding Engineering Alumni Award winners who tend to be later career individuals.

The PSCHE APG team defined and developed the ChE Early Career Recognition Award program for ChE alumni with up to 10 years of professional experience. An APG Program grant was received to support our initial event. The Award process was successfully implemented in 2012 and is now an annual ChE Department event. The PSCHE APG will continue to partner with the ChE Department to sustain and improve the Award process.

3. **ChE Department LinkedIn Group:** Defined, developed and implemented a ChE Department LinkedIn group in to facilitate:
  - Job opportunity and recruitment exchanges among ChE students, alumni and business partners.
  - The exchange of questions, ideas and resources related to chemical engineering,
  - Alumni and student interactions and building a powerful network of Penn State Chemical engineers.
  - allowing other more general discussions of ChE Department interest

ChE alumni membership now exceeds ~500. Key Department notices and information have been posted periodically.

4. **ChE Alumni/Student Mentoring Program:** The ChE Mentoring program has been suspended indefinitely 3/2017 due to lack of student interest in this form of mentoring. A Student/Alumni Mentoring Strategy Study will be initiated to evaluate possible new approaches for students to utilize alumni expertise and experience. For the record, in 2013, ChE Conventional Mentoring was brought under the auspices of the PSCHE APG. Initial objective was to enhance and revitalize the existing ChE Student Mentoring Program based on input from a 2013 mentoring feedback survey and other CoE Department Mentoring best practices. The survey indicated general satisfaction with the current conventional mentoring program. However, interest in a social media based Q&A e-Mentoring system was identified. (See Objective #6) As a result, a Mentoring Strategy study was conducted in 2014 and identified several key recommendations to potentially enhance the overall mentoring programs.



ChE\_Mentoring\_Strategy--KRG \_APD\_2-4-14

- 5. Chemical Engineering 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration:** 2013 marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chemical Engineering Department joining the College of Engineering. The ChE Department Head recognized this milestone with a celebration event on July 13, 2013. The PSCHE APG partner with the ChE Department in organizing the anniversary event. The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Organizing Committee included the following individuals:
- Ron Danner, Professor-Emeritus and Committee co-Lead
  - Jane Clampitt, co-Lead and principle PSCHE APG representative
  - Ken Graziani, PSCHE APG representative and PSCHE APG team lead
  - George Dinsmore, PSCHE APG representative
  - ChE Department Administrative staff.

A PSEAS APG program grant for 2013 helped support the event. The event was a success and attended by ~100 ChE alumni, faculty and friends.

- 6. Social Media e-Mentoring System:** The AIChE/PSCHEAG e-Mentoring has been suspended 3/2017 due to lack of student interest and inadequate year-to-year transition management. For the record, in 2013, student feedback showed a strong desire for a social media based e-Mentoring Q&A system. e-Mentoring is a joint initiative of the PSCHE APG and the Penn State AIChE Student Chapter. Key aspects of the e-Mentoring system are:

- To facilitate alumni and student interaction for guidance, information, and networking as related to the students' professional development.
- ~15-20 Penn State Chemical Engineering alumni volunteers of varied fields and experience levels act as e-Mentors.
- A closed Facebook group was set up for the sole purpose of e-Mentoring. Volunteers need to have a Facebook account, receive notifications when student questions are posted to the group, and respond if they have knowledge or experience to contribute.
- Alumni and students can now interact without any geographic constraints.

An e-Mentoring group was created and went live within the ChE Department Spring 2013. While student interest in the first year was reasonable, interest waned in subsequent years with no student engagement for the last few years. 2017 feedback from the AIChE confirmed low student interest. The social media approach to mentoring will be studied in the 2017 Student/Alumni Mentoring Strategy Study mentioned in Objective #4.

- 7. ChE Alumni Career Panel Discussion:** The Penn State AIChE Student Chapter expressed interest in our proposal for ChE Alumni Career Panel Discussions to address student career concerns. The PSCHE APG has partnered with the Student AIChE to hold Career Panel Discussions. Two Panel Discussions are planned each year: Fall Panel, focusing on Recruiting and ChE Academic Specialization topics and, Spring, focusing on the transition from Academia to Professional Career. We have held one complete cycle of discussions each year since 2013. Potential improved timing and topics will be explored for the 2017/2018 academic year. We have utilized videoconferencing to broaden alumni participation and have videotaped panels to archive the discussions for students.

8. **Assess the 2013 ChE Department Jobs Report:** We were asked by the ChE Department head to review the 2013 ChE Jobs report to identify opportunities to enhance ChE graduate hiring rate. We subsequently provided the report to the student AIChE officers for additional review and assessment. We found no single new opportunity to enhance hiring rate. Reasons for students at the margin not getting jobs upon graduation were varied and personal. We concluded our existing alumni mentoring programs, if enhanced, along with enhanced student academic counselling would be able to address such individual issues. Specific areas of added focus would be counseling/mentoring for students with: dual majors/minors, transfers from Commonwealth campuses, or participating in Co-op/internships.
9. **Organizational Change recommended and Accepted January 2014:** Due to lack of broad understanding of the APG designation among alumni, we agreed to change our organizational name from the PSCHE APG to the PSCHEAG (Penn State ChE Alumni Group). This group is led and managed by our smaller team that is the PSCHEAG LT (Leadership Team).
10. **AIChE/PSCHEAG Football Tailgates:** In 2015, the PSCHEAG has begun sponsoring one of the AIChE tailgates during the football season. The tailgates are to foster camaraderie and networking among students, alumni and faculty.
11. **“Concepts in Chemical Engineering” Video Series:** In 2015, at the request of Prof. Savage, we initiated our “Concepts in Chemical Engineering” Video Series. The objective of this ongoing project is to develop a series of 2-4 minute short alumni videos to demonstrate to current students how the alumni used various ChE concepts in their professional practice. Work has been done with the CoE Department of Communications and the ChE Communications specialist. It has utilized a student videographer to reduce production costs. Work to date has been funded by a PSEAS APG grant. Two videos have been produced so far: #1) Problem Solving, and #2) Energy Balances. Other videos are in various stages of production. “Concepts in Chemical Engineering” key



information can be found here... [VIDEO PROJECT KEY INFORMATION FOR ALUMNI](#) Concepts in Chemical Engineering Video Series can be found at: [Penn State College of Engineering](#), Search for “Concepts in Chemical Engineering”.