

**POLY WINTER EXECUTIVE MEETING –
ONLINE (JAN 8, 2026) AND IN PERSON (JANUARY 17-18, 2026)
DESOTO HOTEL, SAVANNAH, GA**

Present: Jan 8 (on zoom)

Taylor Hebner, Kathy Mitchem, Carlee Black, Justin Kennemur, Laura Stratton, Kapil Dev Sayala, Derek Patton, Beth Elacqua, Graham Collier, Dawanne Poree, Erik Berda, Alice Savage, Caroline Szczepanski, Danniebelle Haase, Mike Sims, Greg Tews, Hayley Brown, Brian Long, Colleen Scott, Rigoberto Advincula, Tomonori Saito, Ying Yang, Mary Ann Meador, Yoan Simon, Michael Petr, Philip Costanzo

Present: Jan 17-18 (in person)

Taylor Hebner, Kathy Mitchem, Derek Patton, Laura Stratton, Mary Ann Meador, Greg Tew, Colleen Scott, Caroline Szczepanski, Allan Guymon, Kathryn Uhrich, John Matson, Danniebelle Haase, Erik Berda, Yoan Simon, Hayley Brown, Piril Ertem

Summary of Motions and Votes

Motion 1 (by Brown): To enable utmost flexibility as we serve our membership, maintain our business meeting but single, annual, synchronous business meeting that may be held in-person, hybrid, or virtual as a part of the bylaws update in 2026 to be effective upon approval by membership and ACS.

Second - Uhrich

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion 2 (by Stratton): To allocate national symposium sponsorship as \$500 per symposium, including POLY and co-sponsored symposia, regardless of number of sessions, starting in Fall 2026.

Second – Brown

Vote: 8 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion 3 (by Brown): To initiate an award with no monetary value but with opportunity for presentation at an national meeting symposium with multiple awardees starting in 2028, with award rubric criteria, cadence of award frequency, and eligibility requirements to be determined by the programming/awards committees with a strong suggestion to emphasize the group of investigators whose career advancement would most benefit from receiving this award.

Second – Matson

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion 4 (by Stratton): To eliminate the Mark Scholar Award series after the current award cycle.

Second – Uhrich

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion 5 (By Patton): To approve the controlled radical polymerization workshop

Second – Brown

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion 6 (by Stratton): In recognition that the current International Relations Committee has achieved strong success in certain regions while other areas have not reached the same level of engagement, we propose dissolving the International Relations Committee and establishing a new Global Engagement Committee. The new committee will adopt a regional structure, with the current Chair transitioning to lead North and South America, additional Regional Chairs appointed for other regions as determined by POLY leadership, and with regional assignments and boundaries subject to adjustment over time to reflect organizational needs, all coordinated by an Overall Global Engagement Committee Chair. Approval of this motion authorizes leadership to implement the new structure accordingly.

Second – Urich

Vote: 9 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Motion 7 (by Urich): To approve the 2026 POLY budget (see slides by Matson)

Second - Brown

Vote: 6 yes, 1 no, 0 abstain

Detailed Minutes and Discussions:

ZOOM MEETING START: January 8, 11 am Central time (RECORDED)

Chair's Welcome (Patton)

Opening comments, welcome to everyone

- 2026 is a special year for POLY as its 75th anniversary, history lesson from Derek: originally the Division of High Polymer Chemistry, many wonderful past chairs with prominence in the polymer chemistry community.
- Special thanks to Laura as most recent past chair.
- 75th anniversary intended to be opportunity to reflect on impact in past as well as thinking about opportunities for what is to come, emphasis on changing costs and membership landscapes
- Agenda summary
- Recap of strategic goals (engaging membership, resources, effective communication)
- Introduction of new officers
 - o Erik Berda as Vice Chair, Tayler Hebner as Secretary, Greg Tew and Brian Long as Councilors, Daniebelle Haase and Caroline Szczepanski as Alt. Councilors
- Overview/review of org chart

Reports by ExComm members not able to attend in-person meeting

Long – discussion at previous excomm meeting about Long serving on Divisional Activities Committee (DAC), did not get placed on this committee but did get placed on nomenclature committee.

- *Meador* – should engage with committee on committees if trying again, should also check with PMSE to see if they have a rep on this committee. Committees that used to be councilors only are now open to everyone
- *Brown* – we should get as many people as possible to engage and try to serve on this committee
- *Tew* – suggest that Tew and Meador discuss before in-person meeting and give more context at the next meeting, Tew and Urich now on N&E (Nominations & Elections) and Meador possibly last year on M&E (Meetings & Exhibitions)
- *Long* – Christine is on divisional activities committee, Meador will follow up with her

Advincula – reminder about 150 year anniversary of ACS, invite Rigoberto Hernandez to some of our activities (he's a polymer chemist too)

- *Meador* – it is also the 100th year for the Women Chemists Committee
- *Patton* – think about how to highlight these overlapping milestones, further discussion about this at in-person meeting and strategize with social media/advertising
- *Stratton* – Frank Lumen discussion, Fall meeting activities, trivia event in the works

Education Committee: MACRO – Mitchem comments that this will probably be presented in-person

IAB (Sims)

- Introductions of Mike Sims as new chair and Kapil Dev Sayala as co-chair
- Trying to alternate chairs as large company and small company representatives
- Highlights of 2025: three new members (Syensqo, Medtronic, Qnity), IAB member involvement in ACS programming, sponsorship and presence at academic events (NGRPC, MIT Polymer Day, Future Faculty Workshop)
- Focus for 2026: maintain programming/awards support, deliver on member company initiatives (networking, meetings, company flyers at ACS), integrate smaller company members, streamline/standardize invoicing schedules, support small events
- Budget overview
 - o 2025 was a perfectly average year, income appears slightly lower than expense because there was one source of income and a few member companies late on their dues, 2026 may show surplus from this
 - o Saved over \$1000 by doing their breakfast meeting off-site, will continue doing this
 - o New: quarterly discretionary fund. \$750 each quarter to sponsor ad-hoc events that come up
- Spring 2026 – several symposia, networking reception Monday March 23 6-8:30 pm
- POLY grad student travel award continued to be sponsored
- New 2026 activities – another virtual panel discussion on career progression in industry, ad hoc sponsorship of FSU POLY/PMSE symposium, MIT polymer day, others to come
- Future ideas – more virtual panel topics, workshops at ACS meetings, company flyers at ACS, potential for raising dues (has been constant for last 3 years, when do we raise this and by how much?)
- *Mitchem* – ACS is very funny about signage in general meeting space, overwhelming number of small posters on table already but extra info like brochures would be awesome for people to pick up and take with them rather than signs. Consider putting signs in meeting room for IAB sponsored symposium (this must go IN the room, can't go outside of room or ACS will get mad)
- *Patton* – what would dues increase look like? **A** – perhaps 1750 for large companies, 750 for large

Programming (Haase)

- Majority of topics will be discussed at in-person meeting
- Rotation of programming team, Julia Kalow is lead for this year, Michael Petr joined as new industry rep
- Recap past discussion on building up virtual program, ACS is wanting to have more robust virtual programming – ideas regarding this topic are welcome
- *Patton* – how hands-on time is needed during virtual sessions? **A** – pilot with maybe one day to get data, earliest virtual meeting would be 2027. ACS is not quite ready in terms of plans for increasing

virtual programming, we are trying to get ahead of them so we can propose things that are beneficial to us

- *Mitchem* – programming is now Sunday-Thursday again instead of Monday-Thursday. *Hasse* – seems like ACS is treating Spring meeting more like the traditional ACS programming. Seems like we are still condensed to Monday-Wednesday for programming

Webinars (Saito)

- 2025 webinars (see slides for stats) “Flow chemistry” webinar was great, “some polymers like it hot” was also great, “polymers at the interface of sustainability and health” had a lot more interest than the others
- 2026 – three planned, March/June/September, topics tbd
- Bob Lambeth taking over as chair
- *Mitchem* – send Carlee some info about what we are looking for in terms of webinar content, see if we can gather more ideas/participation from general membership to appease ACS wanting more webinars from POLY
- *Sayala* – collaborate with IAB for topics too

International (Advincula)

- Important engagement with MACROMEX 2026 (November, Cancun, Mexico). Held every three years, POLY tasked with helping create the program. More information to come
 - o *Scott* – do organizers choose symposia or can members propose symposia as well? **A:** There’s a stack of recurring themes, but new proposed topics would be welcome as well, contact members of committee via email
 - o *Mitchem* – in the past, had three staff and there was a dedicated staff member for this meeting. A new proposal is needed for support request to be voted on at in-person meeting.
- Pacific Polymer Conference (PPC) (2027 in Busan, Korea, last year in Kitakyushu, Japan)
 - o No financial obligation for this meeting since we aren’t organizing it like the last one
- IUPAC Macro 2026 (51st world polymer congress, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)
- Other conferences of interest that POLY is less directly involved in – see slides

Workshops (Elacqua)

- Overview of workshop committee goals (see slide)
- Need to emphasize the timeline of proposing/hosting workshops, there’s a new google form/online solicitation but this doesn’t really help communicate the timeline
- 2025 workshops – fluoropolymers was successful, reasonable financial gain (~\$4k). Fuel cells less successful, around gov shutdown but maybe not main reason for high loss (~\$10k)

- 2024 workshops (fire and polymers, polyolefins) were very successful and organized by people who are very proactive and easy to work with
- 2023 – perhaps harder hit by pandemic effects, don't remember why controlled radical was a loss
- *Mitchem* – when you have organizers who are reaching out to sponsors and such, things go really well; when they don't, things don't go so well.
- Four workshops planned for 2026 (fire and polymers, innovations in plastic recycling/sustainability) and 2027 (polyolefins, controlled radical polymerization to be voted on at in-person meeting). CRP hoping to be a 4 year rotation possibly, but they should have a sharper program planned and international participation
- National Graduate Research Polymer Conference at Arizona State in 2025, fairly successful
 - o University of Florida host in 2027 – request for POLY to assist with collecting sponsor support with 5% collection fee
- Seeking proposals for 2028 and beyond
 - o Invites to be sent to fire and polymers, fuel cells, fluoropolymers, PoWER polymer women empowerment research
- Summary slide of important reminders
- *Scott* – if anyone needs volunteers for workshop let her know
- *Mitchem* – we need to keep communicating with workshop organizers that we value, otherwise they will start going elsewhere that they feel valued, excomm needs to work together better with the workshop committee to get things organized more efficiently with future workshop spots. Agreement by Elacqua.
- *Simon* – consider that committing to the same workshops on repeat makes it inaccessible to others to propose new things
- *Brown* – similarly acknowledge that resources are limited and if we try to accommodate more, resources and support will be scaled back. Question to the group – who has been to a POLY workshop? (almost all of zoom attendees say yes) Does this reflect general membership? Would be interesting to gather information from the workshops and see who is attending them.
- *Scott* – is there surveying being done on the value of these workshops by participants? **A** (*Mitchem*): surveys are distributed at the meeting and online and the results are sent to the organizing committee
- *Patton* – revisit this in-person

Return to Costanzo for MACRO

- Received James Flack Norris award, presented at Northeastern ACS
- Trying to start linkedin, need to find someone willing to run this
- Community of communities update – see slide for action items
- For new topics of curriculum, contact Phil or Liz
- Professional development panel occurred in November, plan to have 2-3 panels per year
- Outreach – funding mechanism for student chapters, first award to Umass for 2025 (up to \$600)

- Proposed budget – \$4100 total, info sent to Kathy/Derek, see slide for breakdown

Regional meetings (Yang)

- reach out to see who is organizing what for regional meetings
- Stratton* – regional meet-ups at national meetings, will get info to Yang

POLY/ACS Fellow Nominations (Mitchem)

- See email to ExComm about nominations
- Who are we nominating for ACS fellows?
- Kathryn has a running list of who has awards etc, can consult her/this list for help in identifying people

Patton – looking for ways to recognize Andy Lovinger and honor his contributions at the Fall meeting. Can we recognize him with a distinguished award?

Black – note award deadlines, these will be posted to the website

Patton – Kathy and Carlee are amazing, thank you for being incredible. Thanks to everyone else too

MEETING ADJOURNS: 12:59 pm Central time

IN-PERSON MEETING DAY 1: January 17, 2026, 8:04 am

ExComm Opening (Patton)

- Welcome, if you have updated slides send them to Carlee
- Overview of agenda
- **Dawanne** will update bylaws
- Intro to newly elected officers
- 25 years of Kathy 🎉
- Review of org chart
- Review of strategic goals set in 2023 (mission/vision/goals statements from website)
 - o Where do we stand?
 - o What still needs attention?
- Derek's 2026 chair initiatives (see slide for details)

- Tell our poly story, articulate value to members, humanize POLY leadership – **champion:** **Tayler**
 - Beyond awards, emphasizing stories of how you got engaged and continued to stay engaged
 - Start with ExComm stories – Derek scripted prompts
 - Follow with committee chairs, long standing
 - *Hebner* – suggest one per week from now until spring meeting
 - *Mitchem* – platform matters, email bad because people will unsubscribe, linkedin is good

- Build community through member participation – **champion:** **Derek**
 - We do a good job of engaging people at meetings/workshops, then we don't engage with our other 1500+ members
 - Minimal membership attendance at business meetings
 - Pilot virtual town halls in Spring 2026 instead of in-person business meeting, maintain in-person fall meeting as per bylaws
 - Emphasize discussion/feedback from members, share prompts
 - *Scott, Brown* – suggestion to do polls, moderated chat
 - *Stratton* – webinars have everyone muted, but moderator feeds question to speakers, we could use this platform
 - *Hasse* – incentive for people to come? Be considerate of timing for non-US members
 - *Hebner* – create slide for symposium chairs to share at Spring meeting to advertise this
 - *Tew* – Can we get rid of the Fall business meeting too? This would require getting it out of the bylaws, can't do that this year but could get it in next year
 - *Hebner* – can we hold a “meet the ExComm” networking event in place of business meeting?
 - **Motion 1 + vote**

- Celebrate POLY's legacy – lean into the 75th anniversary – **Champions:** **Hayley/Erik**
 - Jeff Ting leading some efforts on this already for editorial etc
 - *Brown* – History division could do an exhibit of original documents at the national meeting, *Mitchem* agrees that this is a great idea, **Hayley** is going to champion this and make a mini-museum happen at the Fall meeting, work with Colleen
 - *Uhrich* – did you know that POLY would charter flights for fun!!
 - Kathy has photos!!

- **Hebner and Uhrich** will coordinate semi-frequent social media posts with fun facts using #75YearsOfPOLY as hashtag
- We have swag but not vintage swag 😞
- *Matson* – Recognized in old reports that Kathy brought that there was previously a nomenclature column in Polymer Preprints. He would be interested in resurrecting this with his IUPAC colleagues, perhaps via LinkedIn posts or in the Newsletter.
- Frank Blum working on trivia
- Potential for POLY (and PMSE) ExComm to show up at Plenary in black tie attire
- Chair kick-off letter for 75th
- Need to coin a social media term to brand everything for the year
- **Danniebelle Hasse** lead sub-committee for the 75th anniversary, **Caroline Szczepanski** as co-chair

Strategic Plan Update (Guymon)

- Summary slide
- 3 strategies, champions for each, some have gone very well yet some are still at starting points
- Engaging membership
 - web-networking, was successful and IAB is taking this forward, MACRO is also doing similar things, **Yoan** is going to help coordinate
 - need someone to document/collect information on what has been done and what will be done moving forward (Laura sent this to Allan)
 - Nothing has been done related to retaining members
 - Membership committee has been doing some things, connect with Piril and Oleg
 - Gather volunteers, this has gone very well
 - *Scott* – posting volunteer form on social media has been productive for gathering volunteers, we have about 50 on a standing list. Request for feedback on whether these volunteers have actually participated and been useful/productive
 - *Mitchem* – need to follow up with volunteers to see if they engaged
 - *Hebner* – we need to recognize volunteers for the year. communicate with committee chairs and keep track of who actually did show up. *Uhrich* – use QR code to check in as volunteer
 - Past chairs committee has been really well organized and meets three times per year, has been productive
- Education
 - Videos - Kinda started out, didn't really happen
 - Repository – IPG was applied for, did not get funded.

- *Patton* – Is there value to member-only information? **A:** probably not
 - Hayley/Allan/Sara – career development workshops and resources, these are moving forward, IPG is funded, see slides for details
 - One workshop for early career (beyond the bench), one for mid career (PIVOT)
 - *Uhrich:* has trained to be ACS career consultant. There is a standing workshop every Thursday of the first week of the month, they're always looking for topics and what Allan is describing is what they have set up already, perhaps we can leverage this platform since it is ACS supported
 - Request for ExComm help with some of this (resume review, etc)
 - Thank you to Sara for all her work on this
 - Outstanding needs – authorization for business office to help with registration and logistics, \$500 travel assistance for Piril (3M) to be able to participate in Atlanta
- Effective communication
 - Crafting the message – this has been successful, ongoing and still evolving
 - **Taylor and Kathryn** need to summarize what has been done and what will be done moving forward
 - Justin did a great job kicking this off with a survey – summary of take home messages (see slide)
- Wrap up this discussion for now, but acknowledge that this is a 5 year plan and we can still assign new champions for initiatives moving forward
 - *Brown:* 2 years out from needing a new strategic plan facilitator, Erik should start searching for this now to make sure we are set for this

Councilor Reports

- **Uhrich:** used to be on M&E, now on N&E, responsibilities are coming up with nominees for leadership positions
 - Committees have expanded to include “global councilors” to represent ~10,000 international members
 - Figure out what section of the world she is working with for nominations, then evaluate who is appropriate to put up for bigger positions
 - *Brown:* how does committee support you in figuring out if these people are appropriate for nomination **A:** so far, they don't, but this is very new and they're still figuring things out
 - Technical programming plans Fall meetings Monday-Thursday, Spring meetings Sunday-Thursday
 - Spring meeting is historically more heavily attended than Fall
 - Budget and finance committee: in 2025, ACS got \$30M + , 60%+ came from international sources
 - *Uhrich:* we have no international representation in POLY ExComm committees currently, need to discuss this further
- **Tew:** two things

- They changed the committees that ACS members can serve on, includes every committee but three, encourages ExComm and POLY membership to serve on these committees.
 - We have some people doing this, alternate councilors especially should start getting involved
 - Note: N&E, ConC, and CPC committee members must be councilors and voted upon at Council meeting
 - *Meador*: DAC needs representation, we don't have anyone on this committee currently and it would be nice to have someone there. PMSE might have someone there
 - if someone is interested, apply specifically to DAC and go to the Spring or Fall meetings. *Uhrich* is going to reach out to DAC chair to get information.
- change of name: pubs committee is no longer a committee, it is now going under the governing board of publishing
 - most of ACS funding is coming from pubs, we should be active in this, we should have people submitting their names to whoever is deciding on participation in this.
 - Not the same form as committee selections anymore!!
- **Meador**: the future of meetings
 - Sunset of task force last year
 - Trial run of some things last Fall
 - More programming in convention center, this will likely continue
 - Everyone despised the "pods/igloos", recommendation to use these for governance meetings instead of technical sessions
 - Discussion in meetings, how do we get everyone to come to the meeting without giving a talk? Conclusion supported by data - You don't, unless they're coming for governance
 - Multi-division socials have been active, some divisions feel good about these but some don't
 - Piril signed up to do this, when she showed up there was no space available for POLY
 - Board of directors seems to not acknowledge that people need to give talks to attend meetings
 - First time attendees events have been relatively successful (webinars + breakfast)

Secretary Report (Kennemur/Hebner)

- **2025 Year in Review (Kennemur)**
 - See slides
 - Summary of motions/votes
 - Summary of major discussions
 - Major focus on workshops
 - Note that very little discussion occurred at business meetings
 - Summary of spending over time, major changes last year, saved so much money in Fall 2025 compared to previous years (35k in Denver to 13k in DC)

- Lineup for Spring 2026 meeting – shift in responsibilities between Kathy and secretary (Tayler) in terms of organization
- **Publicity/communications report + secretary plans for 2026 (Hebner)**
 - See slides
 - Summary:
 - 2025 goals were successful (linkedin, website migration, support of other committees), secretary duties are shifting to re-emphasize communications, working with business office to define these responsibilities.
 - 2026 goals emphasize email and newsletter communication.
 - We need a new publicity chair, open for suggestions
 - Hayley has thoughts

Treasurer's report (Matson)

- Positives and negatives summary (see slide)
 - Investments had a very good year, saved money at meetings
 - Downward trend in membership dues, workshops hurt us
 - Natural polymers ccc spent less than budgeted
 - Overall – income declining/expenses increasing
- Membership continues in consistent downward trend
- Allocation formula keeps changing but is still a bit of a mystery, Hayley will be at the leadership institute next week and can try to figure it out
- workshops were -8k, partially driven by international travel
- ACS meeting expenses: high F&B, keep an eye on all of your charges and ask questions, go a la carte with selecting meeting expense items
 - hotel is more expensive than the convention center
- sponsorship support
 - The journal, *Polymer Chemistry*, will no longer sponsor general papers, do we want to continue this?
 - Allan will sponsor for this year, talking to polymer chemistry about how to move forward
 - We should rebrand the general topics session to be something more specific
 - *Meador*: M&E doesn't want general topics, *Brown*: but POLY does much better though
- Investments – see spreadsheet
 - \$1.2M
 - Action in 2025 – moved 60K from vanguard to checking, moved all from Janney to checking
 - Historical basis: things are going up, but another -17% or similar would really hurt

- *Meador*: financial manager may be of use, John Matson thinks that spending money on a manager is probably not a good use of POLY funds.
- Simulation – useful outcomes: (1) outlook on what happens in the next few years, (2) this year we are doing better in terms of how much we can withdraw per year and not go negative in 50 years. Excellent market year helped us here
- Discussion points:
 - We rely too much on investments
 - Ways to reduce expenses
 - F&B at meetings
 - Attendance (discuss in programming)
 - Plenary costs
 - Symposium support – formula doesn't work, we actually just pay \$500 for POLY half-day session. People have still not entirely respected timeline, but people also don't know it's available or what the timeline is.
 - This is a broader problem for communication of symposium organization, Hayley and Danniebelle are going to take action on making this more clear and effective
 - *Hebner*: can we communicate mechanisms for funding (POLY vs industry) better
 - *Simon*: We should consider that we may have more people asking
 - *Brown*: can we give a cap for this funding as first come first serve?
 - *Guymon*: external support is harder the later you initiate it, we should use part of the programming meeting to explain this process or find another way
 - *Mitchem*: can we cut to \$400 per half day instead of \$500 per half day?
 - Reminder: we strongly encourage using funds for travel support/student engagement, but do not exclude dinners (networking is important)
 - *Uhrich*: do we need to have a mechanism for prioritizing assistant professors/new organizers? **A** (Hasse): we incorporate this in the symposium organization selection process already, but we can also incorporate
 - *Berda*: can we just give every symposium \$500 as long as there is one POLY half day session? **Discussion**: this is a great idea, **Motion 2**
 - *continue further in programming discussion*
 - PPC support – they have asked for \$8k plus admin support, we gave this to them in 2023
 - *Guymon and Mitchem* have already informed organizer that funding is no longer available.
 - Funding for 75th anniversary - \$1k for now
 - Mini-museum, Pins and stickers

- Membership support – do we need to spend 10k? can we reduce our 6k if they are bringing in 4k?
 - *Ertem*: revisit this in membership discussion

Break

Programming report (Hasse)

- Julia is lead for this year, we have an ACS person we have immediate access to
- 2025 review/summary
 - They are changing some of the things we care about
 - Between 2024 and 2025, attendance didn't change a lot despite changes in meeting structure being implemented in 2025, this could still be impacted longer term so we will continue to monitor
 - ACS wants more joint programming, they may consider giving you more sessions in this case because it usually increases attendance
- Spring 2026 symposia
 - No symposium with >4 half day sessions, this is a rule moving forward
 - Large fraction of joint symposia
- Fall 2026 symposia
 - Slate locked, footprint even smaller
- Program team rotation – Julia leading, Graham next
- New/continuing initiatives
 - Thank you Kathy and Hayley! (continuity is appreciated)
 - Thanking organizers – recognition, reporting, etc
 - Review best practices
 - Discussions regarding DEIR – follow lead of ACS
 - Symposia selection guidelines being continually improved/updated
 - 2026 goal – develop virtual program, new virtual programming chair
 - Get ahead of ACS to develop best practices, hope to share our preferences to influence overall implementation
 - Hope to get something piloted for Spring 27
 - *Brown* – general topics award could be named as memorial, need 75th anniversary plenary
 - *Patton* – consider split plenary with historical + forward-looking context
 - *Kennemur* – Hillmyer is just old enough to cross both timelines
 - Top suggestions: Marc Hillmyer, Stuart Rowan, Bob Moore
 - Frank Blum already coordinating other things for 75th anniversary
 - PMSE giving us slot for 75th anniversary, we gave them ours for their 100th, nobody owes anyone anything
 - Frank Bates asked if we can somehow honor Andy Lovinger, possibly recognize him and his impact at plenary – everyone approves, **Derek** will work with PMSE

Awards (Patton)

- Derek moving off, Hayley moving on committee
- Spring 2026 awards
 - Distinguished/special service still to be determined
 - POLY/PMSE plenary – PMSE lead, we think Brett may have this figured out
 - Poster Awards – engagement by membership committee
 - Acknowledge volunteer judges
- There's a lot of turnover in awards committee, this isn't necessarily bad and is probably good though we want to make sure there's some continuity
 - Toby is supposed to convene a judging committee for each award

- *Brown*: For IAB award, they are supposed to convene 6 industry member awards
 - *Mitchem*: POLY pays for IPS, IAB pays for YIPS
 - Things don't always happen with structure for this committee, do we change our bylaws to reflect what actually happens or do we change what happens to reflect what's in bylaws?
 - *Patton*: semi-functional last year, the awards happened, rubrics now exist for all awards
 - Members should be recruited for award judging committees
 - *Kennemur*: nominated Karen Winey for ACS fellow last year, did not get it because not enough ACS service, wanted to do awards and got connected. Justin asked her why she doesn't have more prior POLY service and it was clear she didn't know it was an option
 - *Stratton*: we should be more consistent with asking prior recipients of the award to be on selection committee
 - Discussion on deadlines vs when we need decisions: 2 months isn't enough
 - *Meador*: why can't we do like ACS does where the chair appoints a committee and they go through rotations?
 - We need some succession planning, need representation from industry, government, and faculty.
 - *Mitchem*: Toby has about three awards that fall under him, all the others are managed by someone else
 - *Stratton*: we need someone to put some structure in place, can we name a co-chair? **A**: yes, we should do this, and we should also put together a structure for involving industry representatives
 - *Ertem*: need to be on top of engaging volunteers
 - Should we add a young investigator symposium that recognizes numerous industry/academic/government?
 - Probably yes
 - This would replace some sessions that recognize more people
 - Get rid of Mark Scholar series, only have the single big award
 - Add this as mid-career instead of early-career
 - *Kennemur*: was aged out of young mark scholar award after two years, the same people who are in the pool early are going to get all of the awards
 - Eliminate Mark Scholar award and replace it with the new symposium series to make a more inclusive and accessible award instead
 - **Motions 3 and 4**
 - Do we miss opportunity by not having a future faculty symposium?
 - Yes probably
 - Can we use one of the general sessions for this? *Hasse*: does this have to be a regular technical session and is that the way we want to do that?
 - Doing this as non-technical would have other costs, can we do this in the expo halls?
 - Define something that is for people who are planning on applying to jobs (industry, academic, gov, etc) in the next year
 - Can we do future faculty/industry etc posters?
 - Have programming committee discuss further, **Hayley** championing this
 - We should possibly rebrand/rephrase the description for the excellence in graduate research symposium
 - Can we make this more inclusive without depleting the prestige/honor of this?
 - *Mitchem* – let's move on and have a town hall about it

- Proposal for controlled radical polymerization
 - o Discussion on profit vs loss in previous workshops
 - o They have been profitable in the past, there was one bad year, Brent said they could do better
 - o Reasonably well attended last time
 - o *Mitchem*: we kind of pre-approved them for this workshop because we proposed they go elsewhere for a 2 year cycle and come back here on 4 year cycle, which is what they're doing now.
 - o We should talk to Brent
 - o They had about 65 attendees in their international event
 - o **Motion 5**
 - o Need to discuss with them and let them know if it's a loss this time around they may not be considered again
- Workshops greatly benefit those who attend them, but how does this compare to other events hosted by poly?
 - o Review of past 3 years of workshops
 - o Immigration/international travel are going to be an issue for attendance
- Everyone likes organizing workshops through Kathy because she does all the work of administration
- If we don't have workshops, we could reduce staff because a portion of the money that goes into workshops goes to staff
- Does our current workshop model fulfill our POLY mission?
 - o You could argue that it does, but could also argue it doesn't because it's a limited number of people
- *Kennemur*: these workshops are like grc but more specific topics, nothing else really offers that
 - o *Mitchem*: agree with this but it's a killer on the budget from perspective of staff time and hotel contracts, don't limit to what we've done before, think about what we want to do moving forward
- *Hasse*: everything can have some benefit, but not everything is a valuable use of time/resources. Is there something else that we should be offering instead?
- *Ertem*: to Justin's point, how much influence do we have over the topics that come up if we keep repeating the same workshops?
 - o Those who have been successful in the past keep applying, this makes it seem exclusive to others and harder for new people to try
- *Brown*: We are doing this in the most expensive way possible – hosting at hotels/expensive locations, can we require these workshops to operate in conjunction with a university?
- *Stratton*: whatever we decide, we need to have a non-technical programming availability to explain organizer guidelines, especially for those who may want to propose new topics
 - o Workshop committee chair should do this
- *Uhrich*: consider making a requirement that workshop has to align with one of the regional meetings
 - o *Stratton*: this is a great idea but unsure if all the pieces in place
- *Berda*: temporarily invest in regional meetings to build up the workshops in this way
- Can we require either university/sponsoring institution location or regional meeting?
- Can we try with CRP to require them to have a partnering institution?
 - o No, they already put in their proposal
 - o Start with 2028 proposals
- Kathy can help when we prepare, can't help when we don't have a direction
- *Patton*: follow up on this with a town hall meeting
- *Berda*: who chairs this committee and how do we appoint a chair? And why did all the workshops get retired?
 - o Time for revamp of committee, Beth is in third year.
 - o When we cut staff time for workshops, we didn't do as many and they weren't willing to wait

- *Also Berda*: what is the value for people to run workshops through POLY? And how will motivation change if we require them to host in certain locations? If we take away draw of location does that draw from attendance
 - o Depends on organizers
- Workshop topic combination depends on organizer
- *Ertem*: industry prefers specific topics, can we have co-chairs from industry and academia
- *Berda*: Action items begin with who is on that committee, look at who has engaged in workshop organization earlier
- Graduate conference was good
- Form is nice but not being used

Regional meetings (Patton/Kennemur)

- Kennemur report on ambassador program
 - o First shot went well, easy to say yes due to proximity
 - o Fantastic small conference, 1.5 day PMSE/POLY symposium divided into topical sessions, 14 posters with plenty of judging
 - o Justin has photos of the award ceremony
 - o Room for brainstorming, we had a POLY/PMSE table with stickers but we can advertise better
 - o *Stratton*: goal of ambassador program is not entirely established but overall is to promote POLY
 - o Students did a lot, they chaired sessions and filled other volunteer roles and loved it
 - o We got name badge stickers for ambassadors
- Patton
 - o budget request for 2026 is \$3500, see slide for breakdown
 - o SERMACS – see slides for plans, multiple symposia planned, POLY has a recognizable presence here already but still opportunity
 - o Part of problem is there's no formal mechanism for planning
 - o Regional meetings handle their own programming and take on burden of profit/loss
 - Extra complicated because it's different people running them all the time
 - They have some meetings about regional meetings at the national meeting but they're kind of hard to find and attend
 - o *Berda*: can we deputize the poly ambassadors at each region to find contacts and ask about engagement, if we are already engaged then advertise more (Tayler), if not, initiate mechanism for symposia **A**: yes, this has been tried but failed because nobody could get in contact with people in charge of the regional meetings
 - o We need to advertise for POLY at regional meetings on website
 - o Also need social events for POLY at regional meetings, have ambassadors do this, someone just needs to take charge
 - o

International Committee (Brown)

- *Brown*: Described the communication process with the current International committee chair
- ExComm discussed expectations of the international committee and if it's meeting the needs of our members.
- **Motion 6** by Stratton to restructure international committee into Global Engagement Committee
 - o Discussion to ensure that restructured committee should align with overall ACS goals
 - o Noted that restructuring would still align with PPC and MacroMex (as examples) goals in supporting membership. However, POLY cannot financially support conferences, which is predominantly through staff support
- *Patton*: propose flat rate monetary support for MacroMex and no administrative support moving forward, similar to what we do for PacifiChem

- No budget for global engagement committee until the mission is defined
- Patton: as Chair, responsible for appointing the new Chair

Membership (Ertem):

- Summary of committee members
- Piril organizes membership committee with student chapters, student social, and volunteer coordinators as sub-committees
 - o Poster judge coordination as a side quest since it doesn't have a persistent leader, have a few volunteers who are willing to co-chair poster judging sub-committee
- Good news: we are increasing in membership numbers in Q3, Q4
 - o Largely due to membership drive that incentivized with three free division memberships
 - o Who we gained as members – improved in associate/affiliate members and student members, lost regular members
 - Loss of regular members will impact our allocation numbers 😞
 - o Membership is decreasing across all divisions of ACS
 - o POLY and PMSE are average in numbers among all divisions
 - o ACS has a division membership working group, Piril is a member of this group
 - Info from survey on what works and what doesn't, see slide for details
 - Key points: people want networking, local sections, newsletters. What they don't like is lack of engagement paths, onboarding, opportunities
- Highlight of membership committee in 2025
 - o Volunteer interest form – lots of benefit from this in 2025
 - Majority of those who want to volunteer are grad students and industry professionals
 - Quickly filled gap for sci mix judges and poly desk volunteers
- 2026 focus – create opportunities for volunteering, networking, and career advancement
 - o Continued volunteer engagement, meet with committees to gain insight on need for volunteers
 - o POLY/PMSE mentoring program
 - Kickoff soon for first year, 30 mentors and 80 mentees signed up
 - See how things go for first 6 months and then re-evaluate
- Budget
 - o Approved for \$6000 each year, sponsor support last year was 3500
 - o Student social is biggest expense, membership committee caters heavily to students
 - o Request for budget increase to \$7500
 - Accounting for budget of one social (not two) since PMSE is co-sponsor of student socials
 - Do we need a membership social?
 - No, save \$1000
 - Request declined, keep at \$6000
 - o Thinking points for future: how do we work with membership committee to address challenge of member dropoff after student phase of career
 - Work with other committees to address
- Student chapters
 - o We have 19, 2 new
 - o Maybe need another volunteer to help with organizing student chapters
 - o Highlights from 2025 – see slide

Election Slate (Stratton/Guymon)

- Summary/brainstorm of nominees for vice chair, treasurer, councilor x2, alt councilor
- Should consider industry/government councilor

- Discuss bylaw revision for more members at large – probably not for now
- Ask IAB for names
- Look through POLY fellows list

DAY 1 MEETING ADJOURNS 4:42 pm

IN-PERSON MEETING DAY 2: January 18, 2026, 8:09 am

Budget review (Matson)

- Projected -\$168k, this is consistent with past years but often have grants etc that offset this
- Discussion on symposium support, we don't normally have all symposia ask for funding, generally 50% do so maybe we don't want to give the automatic \$500 to each
 - o Return to requests, can request up to the end of the meeting (no need for 3 month lead time)
 - o **Matson** will update the website/communication materials with this new policy
- We will stop paying for old websites (keep polyacs.org site)
- Can the MACRO symposium be POLY/PMSE joint sponsored? **Brown** will check on this
- **Motion 7**

Additional discussion (Patton)

- Workshops: proposal for virtual town hall with workshop committee members and a few workshop organizers to get input on how to move forward with a consistent path forward
 - o Kathy will provide names for a few organizers
 - o *Berda/Meador*: What are outcomes of this meeting?
 - Do we get someone on board to manage this and invest in something potentially uncertain or do we ramp down a bit?
 - We need to think about what to do through the transition of Kathy managing this?
 - o *Uhrich*: it's important for us to have this discussion with organizers
 - o Be clear in this meeting that we want to ramp things down and change the process for how we're doing things, get input on organizers thoughts on regional meeting involvement or university sponsors etc
 - o *Matson*: what is the problem we are trying to solve here? Workshops are meant to be break-even with staff time and are at least close to accomplishing this as best we can estimate.
 - **A**: do we want to keep investing in a staff person to do this or sunset this program
 - o *Meador*: do we hire half a staff person with PMSE?
 - They just hired someone
 - o *Mitchem*: admin support currently includes things that typically fall in excomm officer responsibilities. At a handful of times during the year, there's too much work for one person to take on as we currently run the division
 - o *Guymon*: can we do something like we did in 2023 – what would it look like if we continue what we're doing vs if we ramp down
 - o Review workshop budget info from last 13 years
 - We can't do 2 per year and have a robust workshop program
 - If we have 2, at least one has to be successful, if we have 4, there can be 1 or 2 awesome ones and a couple that just do ok
 - Larger context – funding agencies are cutting, going to be harder for attendees to come
 - o Compare overall budget from 2015
 - Support from acs has dropped substantially in these 10 years, the equivalent of staff salary
 - Income is half now what it was in 2015 and in 2018
 - *Mitchem*: we had more sponsors, we had more from ACS allocation

- We need to update website with historical budget information
 - Update with archive folders – Tayler and Carlee work on this
- *Hasse*: what other ideas do we have that can generate income?
 - Is 75th anniversary an opportunity for this?
 - Laura mentioned wanting to champion this, we should talk to her
- Review division allocation
 - Largely attributed to membership and number of attendees at national conferences
 - Membership somewhat comes from workshop attendees, not huge but contributes
- *Matson*: in a world where we get rid of workshops entirely, including getting rid of staff support, we are still at -\$160k
- *Guymon*: Decision is really do we want to get rid of staff time overall
- *Berda*: if we lean into regional meetings, we become more inclusive and accessible
 - *Meador*: can we do this for some of the workshops in 2027? **A**: no
- *Hebner*: we need to think differently than divisions that don't have competing societies when we talk about how to change things
- *Hasse*: we need to be transparent about why we are making these changes
- *Hebner*: can we generalize feedback from our members to find out what people are able to do in the current financial situations
- *Patton*: the fundamental decision we need to make is whether we have a staff person or not
 - There's external services for workshop organization, they're expensive, but they're out there
- *Brown*: up until about 2022, they were very transparent about how much of ACS income is going to divisions and then it is very unclear
- *Mitchem*: many people have contacted saying they're willing to engage in POLY but only if they have support, if we told them there's no support, they likely wouldn't run for positions
- *Matson*: getting rid of workshops does not solve our financial issues, looking at it as 10% of members is shortsighted. If POLY is not there to support, none of these things would have ever existed
 - *Uhrich*: organized one of these long ago, but now wouldn't do things the same way and probably would invest time in something that is not a workshop. Move forward on commitments we already have, but then put things on hold
- *Hasse*: caution that just because something doesn't impact all of our membership, doesn't mean it's not important to keep doing
 - *Brown*: similar argument could be made for excomm meetings
- *Mitchem*: networking is most valuable service to our members, we have ways we can re-evaluate this
- *Uhrich*: at a much higher level, what are we trying to do for our members?
- *Patton*: request for Kathy to step out for committee discussion
 - (Kathy exits)
 - *discussion*
 - (Kathy returns, congratulations Dr. Mitchem)

Closing remarks (Patton)

- Thanks to everyone for good discussions
- Will follow up with recap after the meeting

MEETING ADJOURNS: 10:03 am

Divisional Allocation Formula (as of 2025)



- **15% reserved for grants**
 - Innovative Project Grants (IPGs), Strategic Planning grants (SPGs), Transitional Project Grants (TPGs), Convergent Chemistry Community (CCC) grants.
- **17.5% base**
 - Split equality among all 32 divisions.
- **17.5% tied to division membership**
 - Distributed proportionally based on number of division members.
- **50% distributed for other factors – ACS Spring/Fall meetings**
 - Proportionally based on number of division members registered for a national meeting.
 - Note: Year-on-year cap distribution of (+25%)/(-7.5%) on previous year.