

OCB SCIENTIFIC STEERING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

SSC MEMBERSHIP

The OCB SSC was established in February 2006, and was created jointly by NSF, NASA and NOAA to promote, plan, and coordinate collaborative, multidisciplinary research opportunities related to carbon cycling and associated marine biogeochemical cycles and ecosystem processes. For a detailed description of SSC responsibilities, please refer to the SSC charge document. SSC members serve at least one term of 3 years with the option to serve one additional term via a re-nomination and re-election process. At the discretion of the existing SSC, some SSC members may continue to serve in an *ex officio* capacity if they provide a critical link to ongoing OCB-relevant scientific activities and/or initiatives. *Ex officio* members take part in SSC decision-making and voting, and they receive travel support for the summer workshop.

In the fall, the OCB Project Office solicits nominations from the OCB community for new SSC members. In addition to aiming for complementary expertise, OCB maintains a dedicated early career slot on the SSC, which is open for nomination and election every two years. To qualify for this slot, a nominee must be within 4 years of having completed a PhD; both postdoctoral researchers and faculty members are eligible. For the early career nominees who are currently postdocs, a letter of support from the nominee's postdoctoral advisor is required. The early career SSC member is responsible for identifying OCB-relevant opportunities for early career members of the community and leading/organizing OCB professional development activities. Early career members serve a term of 3 years, but only the first two years are in an early career capacity. In their final year, they transition to a regular SSC member and a new early career member is elected to the SSC.

SSC members discuss the full list of nominees, focusing on how each candidate would contribute both scientifically and programmatically to OCB. OCB SSC members send their individual lists of top candidates to the Project Office. OCB SSC leadership and Project Office staff tally the SSC candidate selections and then meet to discuss each nominee in light of the feedback received from the full SSC. In addition to important issues of balance (scientific, geographic, institution, gender, career stage, etc.), OCB must ensure that its SSC maintains the necessary expertise to engage with partner programs (U.S. CLIVAR, IMBER, SOLAS, etc.) and participate in national planning initiatives of the U.S. Carbon Cycle Science Program. The SSC and Project Office leadership then work together to develop a final list of recommended candidates that meets the above criteria and circulate it to the full SSC for approval, which is determined by "yea" or "nay" majority vote (75% required).

SSC LEADERSHIP

To facilitate OCB leadership transition, the OCB SSC maintains a chair and a vice-chair at all times. The SSC chair and vice-chair provide counsel and leadership in the development of OCB products and activities that promote program breadth and balance.

Specific duties of the chair and vice-chair include:

- Interfacing with and assisting OCB Project Office staff on SSC agenda planning, review of early career applications for OCB support to participate in training and other courses, and other issues of urgency to OCB

- Interfacing with agency representatives on behalf of the OCB SSC
- Take on leadership role promoting OCB with scientific community and federal agencies
- Attending OCB workshops and activities
- SSC chair and/or vice chair formally opens and closes the annual OCB summer workshop

Every other year, immediately following the selection of new OCB SSC members, the OCB SSC casts internal nominations among current SSC members for the position of SSC vice-chair. SSC members then vote via electronic ballot and results are tallied by the OCB Project Office. The vice-chair serves a 2-year term working closely with the SSC chair, and at the end of 2 years, takes over as SSC chair for 2 years, for a total commitment of 4 years in an SSC leadership role. SSC members elected to the vice-chair position automatically have their SSC terms extended by 4 years. If the SSC chair resigns before the completion of their term, the vice-chair automatically steps in to fill the chair position. If the vice-chair position becomes vacant at any time (due to early chair or vice-chair resignation), the OCB Project Office coordinates an immediate internal nomination and election process to fill the vice-chair position as soon as possible.

PROJECT OFFICE LEADERSHIP

OCB brings together scientific disciplines and cultivates partnerships with complementary US and international programs to address high-priority research questions about marine ecosystems and biogeochemistry. The OCB Project Office, which is based at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), plays multiple important support roles for the OCB network:

- Coordinate workshops, PI meetings, short courses, working groups, and synthesis activities
- Contribute to relevant U.S. and international science planning initiatives
- Serve as central information hub (web, [twitter](#), biweekly [eNewsletter](#)) for its network
- Develop and disseminate education and outreach activities and products
- Train the next generation of ocean scientists and engage early career scientists in OCB activities

The OCB Project Office staff currently includes Executive Officer Heather Benway, Communications Officer Mai Maheigan, and Administrative Associate Mary Zawoysky. The OCB executive officer works closely with the SSC chair and vice chair to provide scientific direction and leadership for OCB and its SSC, and supervises other Project Office personnel in managing the daily operations of the office.