

# American Chemical Society Committee on Science

## Member Handbook - 2019

The **ACS Committee on Science, ComSci**, is a joint ACS Board/Council committee that facilitates the advancement of the science of chemistry, the formulation of science policy, and the recognition of outstanding chemical scientists and their achievements. Due to its role in the Society, ComSci's primary stakeholders include ACS governance (committees and divisions), members of ComSci, and policy makers.

**ComSci Vision:** Engage the global/broader chemistry enterprise to build a better tomorrow.

**ComSci Mission:** To identify new frontiers of chemistry, examine the scientific basis of and formulate public policies related to the chemical sciences, and recognize outstanding chemical scientists.

### Committee Responsibilities

ComSci considers and coordinates science activities across Divisions and Committees of the ACS and provides an interface between and among these bodies.

ComSci:

- identifies new emerging areas of focus in the chemical sciences;
- provides input and expertise in the development of ACS policy statements in cooperation with other relevant ACS committees, including members who serve on writing teams for new statements and those scheduled for review;
- collaborates with appropriate ACS Divisions and Committees to identify and recommend distinguished scientists for national and international awards in recognition of their achievements and contributions to the chemical sciences; and
- informs ComSci's stakeholders about its activities in science and technology, public policy, and awards.

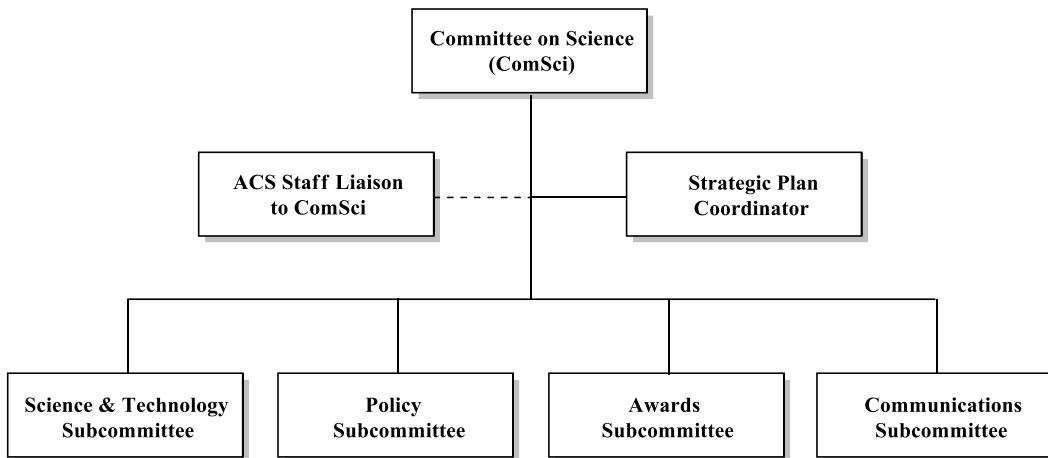
### Strategic Plan

An updated strategic plan for ComSci was formulated in 2018. The plan summarizes the vision, mission, goals and strategies of the committee for the next five years, and is a “living document” that will be reviewed frequently for relevance and for evaluation of completion of strategies and goals. The vision and mission statements above come from the strategic plan. The plan focuses on activities that establish and strengthen the committee structure and processes, while allowing the committee and subcommittees to contribute broadly within the structure and processes. A

one-page summary of the strategic plan may be found on the ComSci website. In addition, the most recent version of the strategic plan is included with each agenda book.

This Member Handbook incorporates aspects of the strategic plan in its descriptions of the structure, subcommittees, and roles and responsibilities of the committee, subcommittees, and members, associates, division representatives, and liaisons from ACS staff and from the ACS Committee on Committees.

## Structure



To achieve its mission, ComSci has four subcommittees: Science and Technology, Policy, Awards, and Communications. Descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of the subcommittees are found below.

Subcommittees are staffed in consultation with appropriate committee members and the Executive Committee from among the members, associates, and division representatives of the committee. The chair and the executive committee may from time to time organize new subcommittees to carry out tasks consistent with the ComSci strategic plan. Subcommittees may be disbanded or reorganized when their missions have been completed or when their work may be combined with the work of another subcommittee.

The ComSci Executive Committee comprises the committee chair, the chairs of the subcommittees, the staff liaison, and the strategic plan coordinator. The executive committee manages and coordinates the projects and programs of ComSci.

The ComSci strategic plan coordinator is a member of the committee whose responsibility is to monitor progress on completion of the strategic plan, notify ComSci leadership of any changes in the plan or of any aspects of the plan that are receiving insufficient attention, and to report to the committee on the status and progress of the strategic plan at the committee's meetings.

## **Policy Subcommittee**

Purpose: Examine the scientific basis of public policies related to chemistry and make recommendations to appropriate ACS entities.

### Areas of Focus:

- Identifying areas of science policy that ComSci can uniquely impact, and participating on writing and review teams for new and existing ACS policy statements;
- Promoting discussion of critical science policy issues within relevant ACS entities;
- In collaboration with the Science and Technology subcommittee, organizing symposia, round tables, and other similar activities to inform ComSci and its stakeholders on key aspects of science that impact public policy.

Strategic Plan Goal: Improve the development and review processes for ACS public policy statements and related materials.

### Strategic Plan Strategies: (for completion in 2019)

- Implement annual review process for existing policy statements to inform future revisions, and
- Continue to evaluate areas for new policy statements.

## **Science and Technology Subcommittee**

Purpose: Identify emerging multidisciplinary science that holds promise for fostering innovation and growth opportunities for chemistry-related scientists worldwide.

### Areas of Focus:

- Identifying broad and/or multidisciplinary emerging areas of interest (frontiers) in the science of chemistry, and coordinating with ACS entities to ensure that the Society is aware of these areas and is addressing them as appropriate;
- Developing long term approaches to pursuing initiatives through collaboration among ComSci subcommittees and other ACS committees and divisions.
- Coordinating activities such as programming at ACS meetings with subcommittees such as Policy, along with ACS divisions and committees, so as to provide essential information about emerging areas of science.

Strategic Plan Goal: Develop and implement a process to identify emerging areas of chemistry.

### Strategic Plan Strategies: (for completion in 2019)

- Create a framework for using data and input from stakeholders to identify emerging science;
- Develop and pilot a collaborative process with other ACS units for an ongoing symposium series for cutting-edge science.

## Communications Subcommittee

Purpose: Inform ComSci's stakeholders about its activities in science and technology, policy, and awards.

### Areas of Focus:

- Listing and prioritizing ComSci stakeholders;
- Identifying gaps in communications with stakeholders and developing ideas on ways to fill these gaps;
- Developing and implementing communications processes to support efforts in science and technology, policy, and awards.

Strategic Plan Goal: Develop and implement communications systems to engage collaborators and stakeholders.

### Strategic Plan Strategies: (for completion in 2019)

- Develop a communication platform to inform the larger ACS community of ComSci's activities and accomplishments on a regular basis
- Identify and prioritize specific ComSci audiences and stakeholders, aligned with current/future ComSci activities and corresponding communication formats, in order to help direct and prioritize future communications activities.

## Awards Subcommittee

Purpose: Collaborate with ACS divisions and committees to recommend distinguished scientists for national and international awards in recognition for their contributions to the chemical sciences.

### Areas of Focus:

- Collaborating with appropriate committees and divisions within ACS to identify candidates for the National Medal of Science, the National Medal of Technology and Innovation, the Dreyfus Award, the Grand Prix Award, the King Faisal Award, and other awards for consideration by the ACS Board of Directors. Prepare and submit nominations for those nominees approved by the ACS Board of Directors.
- Working with ComSci membership to identify qualified candidates for the ACS Fellows program and provide nominations from the ComSci chair for these candidates.

Strategic Plan Goal: Improve the process to advise the ACS Board of Directors to recognize outstanding scientific achievements.

### Strategic Plan Strategies: (for completion in 2019)

- Define a mechanism for identifying qualified nominees for awards nominated by ACS.

## Chair of ComSci

The Chair of ComSci works with the executive committee, committee members, associates, division representatives and liaisons to plan and execute committee programs and activities.

The ComSci chair:

- Provides vision and guidance to the committee;
- Coordinates committee activities and monitors progress on various initiatives;
- Assures that committee members, associates, and division representatives take on appropriate committee and subcommittee roles;
- Initiates discussions on aspects of ComSci programs and activities as appropriate with committee members, associates, and division representatives, staff, governance, and members of ACS;
- Conducts meetings in an efficient manner, following the agenda, seeks opinions of committee members, and ensures that areas of concern are discussed and views of all committee members, associates, division representatives, and liaisons are heard;
- Welcomes new members, associates, division representatives and staff liaisons to the committee at the beginning of each year by e-mail, encourages them to view the *ACS and You* online course (see below), and sends them a copy of the member handbook;
- Serves as ex-officio member of subcommittees;
- Assumes responsibility and accountability for committee strategic planning;
- Interprets and carries out all rules and bylaws with the help of the staff liaison;
- In collaboration with the executive committee and staff liaison, develops an agenda book for each meeting of ComSci at ACS National Meetings;
- Convenes special meetings as needed to conduct committee business between national meetings of the ACS;
- Serves as the official representative of ComSci to the ACS Council, Board of Directors, and other ACS governance bodies.

## Chairs of Subcommittees

The chairs of the ComSci subcommittees:

- Provide leadership and vision for subcommittee programs, focus and activities;
- Chair subcommittee meetings at ACS National Meetings in an efficient manner;
- Maintain an active agenda of projects and programs for the subcommittees consistent with the ComSci strategic plan, goals and areas of focus of the subcommittees;
- Coordinate volunteer efforts of the subcommittee members to ensure timely completion of tasks;
- Collaborate with other subcommittees within ComSci and with other ACS committees and divisions as appropriate;
- Review all subcommittee programs and activities for relevance to keep and improve those that add value and discontinue obsolete or less useful programs;

Serve as members of the ComSci executive committee, and participate in executive committee conference calls and meetings to discuss progress, challenges and opportunities.

### **ComSci Liaisons to Other Governance Bodies**

With mutual agreement between the chair of ComSci and the chair of the other governance body, members or associates may be appointed by the ComSci chair to serve as liaison to that governance body.

ComSci liaisons to other governance bodies:

- Serve as a conduit for information exchange to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the collaboration;
- Provide oral or written reports to ComSci and the other governance body as needed on progress toward mutual goals.

### **Liaisons from Other Governance Bodies to ComSci**

With mutual agreement between the chair of ComSci and the chair of the other governance body, a liaison from that body may attend ComSci meetings and participate in activities of mutual interest.

Liaisons from other governance bodies to ComSci:

- Serve as a conduit for information exchange to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the collaboration;
- Provide oral or written reports to ComSci and the other governance body as needed on progress toward mutual goals.

### **ACS Staff Liaison to ComSci**

The ACS national office appoints a staff liaison to ComSci to support the committee in the administration of the programs of the committee, to facilitate interaction with other committees and divisions and the national office, to manage the committee budget, and to provide guidance related to ACS operating policies on matters of relevance to the projects of the committee.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Committee Members, Associates, and Division Representatives**

The members of the committee are appointed jointly by the Board of Directors and the Council (in practice this means the Chair of the Board and President-elect receive input from the Committee on Committees). There are 15 members who serve 3-year terms. Committee associates serve 1-year terms. The Chair is appointed in the same manner as the members. There are five “divisional representatives” who are nominated and elected by the leaders of technical divisions. Members may

serve on ComSci for up to 9 years. Consultants, who are persons with special expertise relevant to ComSci, may be appointed to the committee from time to time. The Staff Liaison is an ACS staff member who has as one of his or her significant job responsibilities the administration of the committee.

In practice and throughout the meeting, there is no attempt made to distinguish between committee members and associates. However, only committee members are officially allowed to vote on recorded votes. (This is most likely to happen for votes pertaining to policy). In many cases, the chair will opt to allow everyone to speak on an issue and to vote.

- All ComSci members, associates and Divisional representatives attend ComSci meetings to participate in committee activities through their active role on various subcommittees
- The activities may involve taking responsibilities for certain tasks on selected projects.
- These activities may involve serving on working groups or task forces.
- The activities may involve gathering information, organizing symposia or discussion forums, developing reports or formulating policy drafts, participating in discussions and guiding and facilitating the conversation to build a consensus at subcommittee and committee meetings.
- Participate in subcommittee conference calls or face-to-face meetings at ACS national meetings.
- Advise Committee Chair of opportunities and challenges.
- Divisional representatives may have a special responsibility to liaise with the Divisions or note opportunities for interaction.

Following are suggestions for ComSci members, associates and division representatives about some good practices for working on ComSci:

- **Keep asking yourself: why are you here?** Think of the needs of self, ComSci, ACS, and the public as concentric spheres that you can influence. You cannot affect any sphere but the innermost one directly, but in ComSci you are in a position to learn about and extend influence in other ways.
- **Personal and professional development:** ACS has many opportunities for formal and informal training, mentorship, and leadership that can help build or pivot careers. Being involved with governance, and ComSci specifically, can help you find them.
- **Committee members are tremendous resources.** They are experienced professionals who are passionate enough to give back to the Society—and they tend to have interesting experiences. You can hear and learn things from this group that you will not find in any other discussion in the world. Finding a meaningful experience in ACS often means building meaningful relationships.
- **Identify your sweet spot:** As with anything chemistry-related, you will be most effective and happiest on ComSci if you take an interest and can devote some passionate energy to it—after all, we are here as volunteers
- **Build collaborations and make meaningful connections:** ComSci has a perspective that extends across ACS, and our mandate as a joint Board/Council committee can open doors.

Like any kind of networking, however, invitations for potential partners work best when they clearly gain too—so it is important to understand what they want.

- **A corollary to the above: partnerships require aligned competence and trust.** Many first jobs for chemical scientists focus on technical proficiency, including collaborations. For instance, it is common to ask, “Does the potential collaborator have a capability I need?” and vice versa. However, nearly every experienced professional knows that competence is not enough. In the worst case, competence without trust can seem like a threat! A frequently successful way to build trust is to listen actively to others, and to be open with others so they can see where you are coming from. Authenticity and respect go a long way.
- **Like science, there is an art to politics, including in organizations like ACS and ComSci.** There are many more good practices than this list, and there are real benefits to learning them. One person who writes engagingly about her experiences and what she learned is our colleague Laura Pence: <https://drpence.wordpress.com/2014/09/>

### **How does ComSci fit within ACS?**

The ACS is a self-governed individual membership organization that consists of over 150,000 members, about half of whom are from industry. This provides ample opportunity for peer interaction, regardless of your professional or scientific interests. There are 32 ACS technical divisions, representing a wide range of disciplines for chemists and chemical engineers.

The ACS is made up of a variety of pieces. First, there are the Local Sections. There are 187 ACS Local Sections in the U.S. with an additional 21 International Chemical Sciences Chapters located around the globe. Local Sections and International Chemical Sciences Chapters enable members to communicate and interact with other professionals in their areas, participate in programs that enhance their professional development, and contribute to the public understanding of chemistry in their communities. These are geographically-based member groups. When a person joins the ACS, they automatically are assigned to their closest geographical Local Section. Local Sections elect their own officers and Councilors.

Secondly, there are the ACS Technical Divisions, which are specific to a member’s discipline. There are currently 32 of these Divisions within the ACS. The Divisions are primarily responsible for programming at National Meetings and offer awards, scholarships, workshops, and publications in their technical field. Divisions elect their own officers and Councilors.

Thirdly, there are the many and varying ACS Committees, a list of which is provided below. Beginning on the next page, you will see the pieces of the ACS and how members may be part of those pieces. You will also find the classifications of Committees and where ComSci is located within those classifications. Appointments are made by the Board of Directors and/or the Council (elected or selected by the President-elect).

At the national level, ACS is governed by a Council and Board of Directors. The Board is the legal representative and policy-setting body of the Society. The Council is the Society’s “House of Representatives,” made up of elected Councilors from all Local Sections and Divisions. As a

Board/Council Committee, ComSci reports in writing to all Council and Board meetings and orally (at least annually) to the Council.

### **The American Chemical Society**

<https://www.acs.org/content/acs/en/careers/leadership/descriptions/acs-and-you.html>

*ACS and You* is an e-course that describes the mission of ACS and the history of the organization. It provides a thorough description of the structure of the organization; the purpose and main activities of each structural unit (local sections, divisions, and committees); and the responsibilities of leaders in each role. It also describes the events ACS sponsors, the purpose of each, and the kinds of resources ACS makes available to its members. Finally, it provides a brief overview of the ACS Leadership Development System. [It takes less than an hour to go through this module.]

#### **Instructional Objectives**

After completing this program, a member or potential member will be able to describe:

- The history and mission of ACS
- Business issues facing the ACS
- The structure of the organization and the main functions of each unit
- Opportunities for participation as a volunteer and as a leader (with the personal and professional benefits they can expect from this participation)
- The supporting resources the organization makes available to its members
- The leadership learning system designed to support volunteers as participants and as leaders.

### **Acknowledgments**

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## A Guide to Acronyms often used within ComSci

### *ACS and Miscellaneous*

ACS	American Chemical Society
CAS	Chemical Abstracts Service
CCEW	Chemists Celebrate Earth Week
EAC	Office of External Affairs and Communications
EDU	Education Division
LAN	Legislative Action Network
M&SS	Member & Society Services Division
NCW	National Chemistry Week
NSF	National Science Foundation
OSGC	Office of the Secretary and General Counsel
PRF	Petroleum Research Fund
PUBS	Publications Division
SCI	Scientific Advancement Division
SPPM	Society Program Portfolio Management
2YC <sub>3</sub>	Two-Year College Chemistry Conference

### *ACS Committees*

B&F	Committee on Budget & Finance
CA	Corporation Associates
CCPR	Council Committee on Public Relations
CCS	Committee on Chemical Safety
CEPA	Committee on Economic and Professional Affairs
CMA	Committee on Minority Affairs
ComSci	Committee on Science
ConC	Committee on Committees
CPC	Council Policy Committee
CTA	Committee on Technician Affairs
CWD	Committee on Chemists with Disabilities
DAC	Divisional Activities Committee
LSAC	Committee on Local Section Activities
M&E	Meetings & Expositions Committee
MAC	Membership Affairs Committee
N&E	Nominations & Elections Committee
PA&PR	Board Committee on Public Affairs & Public Relations
P&MR	Board Committee on Professional & Member Relations
SCC	Senior Chemists Committee
SOCED	Society Committee on Education
WCC	Women Chemists Committee
YCC	Younger Chemists Committee

*ACS Technical Divisions*

AGFD	Agricultural & Food Chemistry
AGRO	Agrochemicals
ANYL	Analytical Chemistry
BIOT	Biochemical Technology
BIOL	Biological Chemistry
BMGT	Business Development & Management
CARB	Carbohydrate Chemistry
CATL	Catalysis Science & Technology
CELL	Cellulose and Renewable Materials
CHED	Chemical Education
CHAL	Chemistry & the Law
CHAS	Chemical Health & Safety
CINF	Chemical Information
COLL	Colloid & Surface Chemistry
COMP	Computers in Chemistry
ENFL	Energy & Fuels
ENVR	Environmental Chemistry
FLUO	Fluorine Chemistry
GEOC	Geochemistry
HIST	History of Chemistry
I&EC	Industrial & Engineering Chemistry
DIC	Inorganic Chemistry
MEDI	Medicinal Chemistry
NUCL	Nuclear Chemistry & Technology
ORGN	Organic Chemistry
PETR	Petroleum Chemistry
PHYS	Physical Chemistry
POLY	Polymer Chemistry
PMSE	Polymeric Materials: Science & Engineering
PROF	Professional Relations
RUBB	Rubber Chemistry
SCHB	Small Chemical Businesses
TOXI	Chemical Toxicology