McWilliams Center onboarding

This document collects information about communication channels and resources available to members of the McWilliams Center, to help orient new students, postdocs, faculty, and staff involved in the Center. Some items below are specific to McWilliams Center members in Physics, or to particular career stages; they are flagged accordingly.

Communication channels

Slack: AstroPGH workspace, for CMU and Pitt astro groups. An existing member of the workspace can invite you using the option near the bottom of the left side-bar that says “Add teammates!”

- You are encouraged to join #seminar, #mcwilliams-center (these are public channels, which anybody in the workspace can join)

Mailing lists:

- Go to https://lists.andrew.cmu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mcwilliams-center to sign up for the mcwilliams-center mailing list, for frequent/informal communications.
- Go to https://lists.andrew.cmu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mcwilliams-seminar to sign up for astro lunch seminar reminders
- Go to https://lists.andrew.cmu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mcwilliams-announce to sign up for the mcwilliams-announce mailing list, for announcements.
- Most people sign up for all of these if they are planning to be active in the Center, while less active individuals may just sign up for the last one

Website: https://www.cmu.edu/cosmology/

- Fill in this form to get yourself added to the list of individuals affiliated with the Center: https://forms.gle/aFMqXp1Q438vAjKk6

GitHub organization: The McWilliams Center has a GitHub organization where you can create repositories and associate them with the Center. It also makes it easier to add collaborators who are part of the Center, even if your repo is not public. Contact Rachel Mandelbaum to ask to be added to the organization.

Resources

Computing: those in the Center with affiliations in Physics needing computing resources beyond those of their laptops may get accounts on the Vera cluster, for which documentation (including instructions for how to get an account) is at https://vera-doc.psc.edu/

- Vera users on AstroPGH Slack are encouraged to join #vera (public channel).
- Those with accounts on Vera are automatically subscribed to an email list for announcements about the cluster from the PSC admins.

- Some research groups have more specific allocations or queues; the PIs of those groups can provide more information about this.

Seed grants: The McWilliams Center and PSC have a yearly opportunity for members to propose for seed grants to explore a new area of research or jumpstart their research activity. The program is designed to encourage genuine collaborations between individuals affiliated with the Center for Cosmology and the PSC that involve either new avenues of research or the feasibility testing of new methods. More information: https://www.cmu.edu/cosmology/research/seed-grants/index.html

Physics staff information: Please consult the Physics department's guide to staff responsibilities, which explains who you can consult for travel reimbursement, room reservations, office keys, tech support, and more.

Physics and university resources: These are summarized in the Physics department's Canvas-based resource guide.

Materials and supplies, or any other resources: Please consult your advisor (if you have one) or Tiziana Di Matteo.

Regular events

Below is a description of regular events in the Center. Many of these activities are organized or co-organized by graduate students and postdocs; please reach out to the McWilliams Center director to volunteer to be involved. Research groups have regular (weekly) meetings to which visitors are welcome; check with the relevant faculty member for more information, or consult the McWilliams Center event calendar.

- **Arxiv discussion:** this is held weekly, with the day/time decided based on a poll. Reminders go to the mcwilliams-center mailing list, and the discussions also go on the event calendar. People vote on papers and volunteer to present via https://www.benty-fields.com/daily_arXiv (make an account and connect it with "McWilliams Center Journal Club @ CMU").
- **Astro lunch seminars:** these are hosted on alternating Fridays, with CMU and Pitt taking turns, at noon. They are announced on mcwilliams-seminar.
- **STAMPS seminars:** The STAMPS (STAtistical Methods for the Physical Sciences) seminars are organized by members of the Department of Statistics and Data Science. More info, including a link to sign up for their mailing list, is at https://www.stat.cmu.edu/stamps/**.**
- **McWilliams Software Development Series:** This series is a mix of lectures and activities aimed at providing software development instruction on a variety of topics for McWilliams Center members. It is held a few times per academic year and advertised on the McWilliams Center communication channels. Content from the series is at https://www.cmu.edu/cosmology/events/internal/msds.html (requires CMU login).

- **Jamboree:** We have an annual Jamboree in the fall semester, providing opportunities for everybody in the McWilliams Center to introduce themselves and learn about others' research interests. It is advertised on the McWilliams Center communication channels.

Miscellaneous

- New McWilliams Center members who are not from the US may be unfamiliar with US federal and state holidays on which the University is closed. If you use Google calendars, you can select an option to display US federal holidays on your calendar, to help you plan ahead. The CMU HR website also lists which of those are observed by the university.
- For outreach opportunities, check out the Physics outreach page, and/or ask Tiziana Di Matteo about cosmology-specific activities.
- The Physics Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) website provides information on DEI efforts in the department, and several ways to raise DEI-related questions and concerns.
- Postdoctoral researchers who are interested in getting involved in teaching classes should talk with Tiziana Di Matteo.
- Physics faculty may advertise research opportunities for undergraduates on this Physics department website. Physics postdocs or staff interested in doing so should identify a faculty member to develop a joint project advertisement with them. Please reach out to Stephanie Bolla, cc: Professor Gillian Ryan, in order to be listed.