

Task Force on Constitution and By-Laws revisions

16 Sept 2016 10:30 am

Chair: Diane Vanner Steinberg

Committee: Lexey Bartlett, High Plains Regent; Kathy Nixon, Eastern Regent; Gloria Hochstein, Immediate Past President; Shannon Nakai, High Plains SR; and Elizabeth Upshur, Southern SR

The Task Force was charged with considering changes and updates to the Constitution, the By-Laws, and the policies of Sigma Tau Delta, and bringing any recommendations to the Board of Directors.

The Task Force decided to propose emendation to the Constitution at this fall's board meeting, and emendations to the By-Laws at the spring 2017 board meeting. Policies would be considered at the Fall 2017 board meeting.

The recommended changes fell into a few categories. Some changes reflected changes in how chapters and members are contacted (electronically as well as by post). Some changes reflected the inclusion of an Alumni Representative as a board affiliate. Some changes streamlined sentences structure or punctuation. Some changes reflected changes in committee assignments. Lastly, several changes clarified processes for replacing board positions due to resignations.

The following changes were submitted and approved:

Article I Incorporation / Section III. Mission and Purposes / Current wording "The Society shall strive to . . . B. provide, through its local chapters, cultural stimulation on college campuses and promote interest in literature and the English language in the surrounding communities." Proposed change "The Society shall strive to . . . B. through its local chapters, provide cultural stimulation on college campuses and promote interest in literature and the English language in the surrounding communities."

Article II Board of Directors and Board Meetings / Section IV. Board Meetings / B. Special Meetings. Current Wording "A special meeting may be called by the President at his/her discretion. A special meeting must be called by the President upon written request of the majority of the current members of the Board. No later than two weeks after receiving such a request, the President shall notify the Board of the date of the special meeting, which shall be held within one month of the notification date." Proposed change "A special meeting may be held electronically and called by the President at his/her discretion. A special meeting must be called by the President upon written request of the majority of the current members of the Board. No later than two weeks after receiving such a request, the President shall notify the Board of the date of the special meeting, which shall be held within two weeks of the notification date."

Article II Board of Directors and Board Meetings / Section IV. Board Meetings / Proposed change is that we add **“D. Notifications and Voting. Notifications, requests, meetings, and voting may be via face to face communication, mailed communication, or virtual or electronic media.”**

Article III Officers (Executive Committee) / Section IV. Vacancy. / B. Secretary/Treasurer. Current Wording “ If the Secretary/Treasurer is, for any reason, unable to serve, the Board shall call a special election within ninety days to fill the position.” Proposed change **“If the Secretary/Treasurer is, for any reason, unable to serve, the Executive Committee will appoint an interim Secretary/Treasurer to serve until a new Secretary/Treasurer can be elected by the official chapter delegates present at the annual business meeting. The appointment must be ratified by the voting members of the Board within thirty days.”**

Article III Officers (Executive Committee) / Section IV. Vacancy. / C. Vice-President/President-Elect. Current Wording “If the Vice-President/President-Elect is, for any reason, unable to serve, the Board shall call a special election within ninety days to fill the position.” Proposed change **“If the Vice-President/President-Elect is, for any reason, unable to serve, the Executive Committee will appoint an interim Vice-President/President-Elect to serve until a new Vice-President/President-Elect can be elected by the official chapter delegates present at the annual business meeting. The appointment must be ratified by the voting members of the Board within thirty days.”**

Article III Officers (Executive Committee) / Section IV. Vacancy. / E. Historian. Current Wording “If the Historian is, for any reason, unable to serve, his/her office shall remain vacant until the next Board meeting, regular or special.” Proposed Change **“If the Historian is, for any reason, unable to serve, his/her office shall remain vacant. However, the President, with Board Approval, may appoint someone to serve in that position.”**

Article III Officers (Executive Committee) / Section V. Powers and Duties. / B. Duties of Individual Officers. / 1. The President Current Wording “The President shall be an ex officio member of all committees (except the Executive Committee and the Nominating Committee).” Proposed Change **“The President shall be an ex officio member of all committees (except the Executive Committee).”**

Article IV Regents / Section III. Election. Current wording “At the international convention of the Society, each Region shall elect its own Regent when the post becomes vacant. Only student members of the Region shall participate in the election, and each chapter present shall have one vote. In the event that no vote is possible at the convention, the Board shall appoint, during that convention, a Regent to serve that Region until the next international convention or regional conference.” Proposed change **“At the international convention of the Society, each Region**

shall elect its own Regent when the post becomes vacant. Only student members of the Region shall participate in the election, and each chapter present shall have one vote.”

Article IV Regents / Section V. Vacancy. Current wording “If a Regent is, for any reason, unable to serve, the Board shall, by majority vote, select a Regent from among the Sponsors in that Region to serve until the next international convention or regional conference,” Proposed change “If a Regent is, for any reason, unable to serve, or a Regent position becomes vacant between conventions, the Board shall, by majority vote, select a Regent from among Sponsors to serve until the next international convention.”

Article IV Regents / Section VI. Powers and Duties. / A. General. Current wording “. . . serving as liaisons with the Central Office and providing regional information for the *Newsletter*.” Proposed change “. . . serving as liaisons with the Central Office and providing regional information.”

Article IV Regents / Section VI. Powers and Duties. / B. Regional. / 6. Current wording “accomplishing these aims by newsletters, inter-chapter activities, and personal contacts, and” Proposed change “accomplishing these aims by newsletters, inter-chapter activities, electronic media, and/or personal contacts, and”

Article V Student Advisors / Current wording “**Section II. Election.** The Board, by majority vote, shall select the Student Advisors from the student members of active chapters and are nominated by sponsors and/or other Board members.” Proposed change “**Section II. Selection.** The Board, by majority vote, shall select the Student Advisors from applicants who are student members of active chapters.”

Article V Student Advisors / Section IV. Vacancy. Current wording “If a Student Advisor is, for any reason, unable to serve, the Board shall select a new student advisor to fill out the term.” Proposed change “If a Student Advisor is, for any reason, unable to serve, the Board may select a new student advisor to complete the term.”

Article V Student Advisors / Section V. Powers and Duties. / A. General. Current wording “. . . serving as liaisons with the Central Office, assisting Regents, and providing information for the *Newsletter*.” Proposed change “. . . serving as liaisons with the Central Office, assisting Regents, providing information to the membership, and working with the Convention Chair.”

Article VII Standing Committees / Section I. Current wording “With the approval of the Board, the Society may create Standing Committees such as:

- A. Nominating,
- B. Strategic Planning,

- C. Finance,
- D. Print/Electronic Communications,
- E. Scholarship and Awards,
- F. Student Leadership,
- G. Alumni,
- H. Convention,
- I. Service,
- J. Partnership Initiatives, and
- K. Outstanding Chapter Award.”

Proposed change “With the approval of the Board, the Society may create Standing Committees such as

- A. Strategic Planning,
- B. Communications,
- C. Scholarship and Awards,
- D. Student Leadership,
- E. Convention, and
- F. Service and Partnership Initiatives.”

Article VII Standing Committees / Section II. Membership / A / 2 Current wording “at least one non-Board Sigma Tau Delta member, and” Proposed change “at least one non-Board Sigma Tau Delta member, when appropriate and practical, and”

Article VII Standing Committees / Section II. Membership / A / 3 Current wording “at least one student, where appropriate and practical,” Proposed change “at least one student, when appropriate and practical.”

Article VII Standing Committees / Section II. Membership / A / 4 Current wording “Multi-regional representation shall be observed where practical.” Proposed change “Multi-regional representation shall be observed when practical.”

Article VII Standing Committees / Section III. Powers and Duties. Current wording “The Standing Committees shall report annually to the Board regarding the fulfillment of the charges given them by the President.” Proposed change “The Standing Committees shall report annually to the Board regarding the fulfillment of the charges given them by the President. Reports at the Spring Board Meeting shall be in writing.”

Article VIII Chapters / Section I. Establishment and Maintenance of Chapters. / B. Chartering a Chapter. / 1. Petition for Chapter Current wording “A group petitioning for a Chapter charter shall be sponsored by a qualified faculty member . . .” Proposed change “A group petitioning for a Chapter charter shall be sponsored by a qualified faculty member or administrator . . .”

Article VIII Chapters / Current wording “Section II. Life of a Chapter. A Chapter shall be ‘active’ as long as the sponsoring institution meets the requirements above (Section I.A, this article). A Chapter not reporting new members for two consecutive years to the Executive Director shall be deemed ‘inactive.’ The Chapter may be reactivated by sending to the Executive Director the names of the officers and Sponsor(s) along with the designated reactivation fee established by the Board.” Proposed change **“Section II. Chapter Status.**

A. A Chapter shall be ‘active’ as long as the sponsoring institution meets the requirements above (Section I.A, this article).

B. A Chapter shall be ‘inactive’ after not enrolling new members for two consecutive years.

C. The Chapter may be reactivated by reporting to the Central Office the names of the officers and Sponsor(s) along with the designated reactivation fee established by the Board.”

Article VIII Chapters / Current wording “Section III. Chapter Reports. A chapter shall send the Executive Director the appropriate information whenever

A. new members are inducted, and

B. the annual report is requested by the Executive Director.”

Proposed change **“Section III. Annual Reports.** The Central Office shall request annual chapter reports from each Chapter.”

Article VIII Chapters / Section V. Alumni Chapter. Current wording “Alumni members will have the option of joining the Alumni Epsilon Chapter. (See Article IX, Section II.C.)” Proposed change **“Alumni members will have the option of joining the Alumni Epsilon Chapter. (See By-Laws.)”**

Article IX Membership / Current wording “Section I. Minimum Academic Qualifications for Chapter Membership. Chapters may raise but not lower the following criteria.

A. **Undergraduate Membership.** A candidate for membership shall have a minimum of two college courses in English language and literature beyond the usual requirements in freshman English. The candidate shall have the minimum of a B or equivalent average in English and in general scholarship, shall rank at least in the top thirty-five percent of his/her class, and shall have completed at least three semesters or five quarters of college course work.

B. **Graduate Membership.** A candidate for graduate membership who did not hold undergraduate membership shall be enrolled in a graduate program in English or one of its specializations, have completed 6 semester hours of graduate work or the equivalent, and have a minimum grade point average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale.”

Proposed change **“Section I. Minimum Academic Qualifications for Induction.** Chapters may raise but not lower the following criteria.

- C. Undergraduate Criteria.** A candidate for membership shall have a minimum of two college courses in English language and literature beyond the usual requirements in freshman English. The candidate shall have the minimum of a B or equivalent average in English and in general scholarship (a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale), shall rank at least in the top thirty-five percent of his/her class, and shall have completed at least three semesters or five quarters of college course work.
- D. Graduate Criteria.** A candidate for graduate membership who did not hold undergraduate membership shall be enrolled in a graduate program in English or one of its specializations, have completed 6 semester hours of graduate work or the equivalent, and have a minimum of a B+ or equivalent average in his/her graduate studies (a 3.3 on a 4.0 scale).”

Article IX Membership / Current wording “**Section II. Categories of Chapter Membership.** There shall be four categories of Chapter membership: student, faculty, alumni, and honorary. Each chapter shall be responsible for assigning its members to the appropriate categories.”
Proposed change “**Section II. Categories of Membership.** There shall be four categories of Society membership: student, faculty, alumni, and honorary.”

Article IX Membership / **Section II. Categories of Membership.** All of sections A to D are moved to the By-Laws.

Article IX Membership / Current wording “**Section IV. Chapter Fees. / A. International Induction Fee.** The one-time international induction fee entitles each chapter member to receive Society journals and the *Newsletter* for one year and to wear the Society pin. . . . The amount of the international induction fee shall be determined by the Board.” Proposed change “**Section IV. Membership Fees. / A. Society Induction Fee.** The one-time Society induction fee entitles each chapter member to receive a membership certificate and to wear the Society pin. . . . The amount of the Society induction fee shall be determined by the Board.”

Article X Financial Policies Current wording “The Board shall be responsible for formulating, approving, implementing, and reviewing all policies relating to the finances of the Society.”
Proposed change “The Board shall be responsible for formulating, approving, implementing, and reviewing all policies relating to the Society’s finances.”

Eliminate **Article X Financial Policies** / **Section I. Funds and Investments.** / **C. Safe Deposit Boxes.**

Article X Financial Policies / **Section II. Operating Expenses.** / B. Current wording “The Finance Committee.” Proposed change “**The Executive Committee.**”

Article X Financial Policies / Section III. Financial Safeguards. Current wording “Financial safeguards shall include the auditing of accounts, the bonding of Board members whose duties include financial responsibility, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest.” Proposed change “Financial safeguards shall include the auditing of accounts and the avoidance of conflicts of interest.”

Article XI Amendments and Additions / Section II. Constitution. / B. Ratification. Current wording “Balloting is to take place by mail.” Proposed change “Balloting is to take place by mail or e-mail or other electronic means.”