

[Alumni Group Name] By-Laws

By-laws contain the standing (permanent) rules of procedure of an organization. Items in the by-laws may be covered in appropriate detail in the constitution. However, most groups keep the two separate because by-laws usually contain more detail and are subject to change more than that of the constitution and, therefore, may require different procedures for amending.

Provision for amendment of the by-laws should be somewhat easier than that of the constitution, as rules of procedure should adapt to changing conditions of the organization. When amending the by-laws, as with the constitution, previous notice of any changes are usually required to be given to the membership and should not be changed in the same meeting in which proposed.

By-laws are more permanent, however, than passing a general motion, which may require only a simple majority vote of voters present at a general meeting of the membership (a quorum being present). By-laws cannot run contrary to the constitution.

The Alumni Association suggests that all official organizations write and vote in by-laws that are curtailed to the needs of the individual club or society. Below, you will find sample articles that your group can utilize for writing by-laws. The Ohio State Alumni Association does NOT require that any of these articles be in place.

Article I- Parliamentary Authority

Most organizations use Robert's Rule of Order to govern their organization's decision-making except when these rules are inconsistent with their constitution or by-laws of the organization. These rules are of Western cultural origin, and based on the premise that "though the minority shall be heard and absentees protected, the majority will decide."

Example to include:

Section 1: The rules contained in [specify the source for parliamentary practice] shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are consistent with the by-laws of this organization.

Article II- Membership

Procedures for becoming a member, which may vary by membership category (i.e. leadership vs. member), amount of dues, if any, termination of membership, and so on should be described in detail.

Examples of items to consider including:

Section 1: Dues shall be \$____ per person, per year.

Sub-section A: One "year" shall be defined as the period from January 1/July 1 through December 31/ June 30.

Sub-section B: Dues shall/shall not be pro-rated

Section 2: In order to serve as an Elected Officer or Appointed Board Member of the club, an individual must be a Life Member or Sustaining Member of The Ohio State Alumni Association, as well as in good standing with the [Alumni Group Name].

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Sub-section A: Elected Officer Positions are defined as President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary. Appointed Officer positions are defined as Scholarship Chair, Committee Chair, and Board Member.

Sub-section B: "Good standing" is defined as current on all dues owed to the Alumni Club of [Sample] by the date of elections.

Section 3: Methods for Removing Members and Executive Officers

Sub-section A: If a member engages in behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, violates the organization's constitution or by-laws, or violates the federal, state, or local law, the member may be removed through a majority vote of the Elected and Appointed Officers of the organization.

Sub-section B: Any elected or appointed officer of the organization may be removed from their position for cause. Cause for removal includes, but is not limited to: violation of the constitution or by-laws, failure to perform duties, or any behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, including violations of federal, state, or local laws. The Executive Committee may act for removal upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the executive board (Elected and Appointed Officers).

Article III- Election/Appointment of Leadership

This section should hold Elections rules and procedures, including eligibility for office, the nominating process, design of ballots and balloting procedures, and so on unless clearly outlined elsewhere. These should be specified as well as appointment and ratification procedures. The timing of elections and/or appointments should be specified along with the procedures to cover special circumstances (resignations, impeachments, etc.).

Examples of items to consider including:

Section 1: The [Alumni Group Name] holds (bi-) annual elections in the month of January every (other) year.

Sub-section A: Elections are to take place at the annual membership meeting.

Sub-section B: Elections are presided over by [insert Appointed Board Member or Officer], who facilitates the vote following presentation of candidates.

Section 2: Voting Procedures

Sub-section A: Half/Two-thirds of recorded/dues paying membership must be present at (bi-) annual elections for quorum, and elections to be held.

Sub-section B: Individuals hoping to run for an Elected Officer Position must be present at the election/membership meeting. Following motion and second for the opening of elections, each candidate will verbally express qualifications for the Elected Officer Position to the present membership. Following the verbal presentation by individual candidates, [insert individual

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responsible for conducting vote] will disseminate typed ballots to present members. Individual members will then select their preferred candidates for each position, before returning the ballot to [insert individual responsible for conducting vote].

Sub-section C: Should an Elected Officer be removed or step down from their position prior to the designated (bi-) annual membership meeting:

-the existing board (composed of elected and appointed officers) will appoint a replacement following Appointment Procedures. This individual will maintain the office until the annual election meeting.

OR

-a special meeting will be held to review candidates and elect a replacement following the aforementioned election procedures.

Section 3: Appointment Procedures

Sub-Section A: Individuals hoping to take on a position of responsibility with the board may select to apply for Appointed Officer positions. This individual must meet membership standards as described in Article II.

Sub-Section B: The exiting board will produce applications for all appointed positions, to be disseminated at least one month prior to the annual membership/election meeting to all area alumni. Individuals interested in these positions, will then turn these in (electronically OR on paper) at the membership meeting to [insert individual responsible for conducting vote].

Sub-Section C: The newly elected officers will review the applications, conduct interviews (*if desired*), and appoint by majority vote all open positions.

OR

Sub-Section C: The newly elected President will review the applications, (conduct interviews?) and appoint all open positions.

Article IV- Executive Committee

Specific duties and responsibilities of the Elected and Appointed Officers to the membership. This section should elaborate beyond what the constitution states.

Article V- Standing Committee (if needed)

Specific duties of each committee and their responsibilities to the organization leadership and general membership. This section should elaborate beyond what the constitution states.

Article VI- Meeting Requirements

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Regular, special, size, and determination of quorum (number of voting members required to vote on decisions placed before the general membership, executive, and standing committees).

Article VII- Method of Amending By-Laws

Method should be similar to amending the constitution, however, by-laws are apt to change more often than the constitution, thus amending should be somewhat easier. By-laws may be amended by proposing in writing and reading the change at a general meeting of the membership and then bring a proposed change up for a vote at the next general meeting with a 2/3 majority vote of the membership present (a quorum being present). It might be good to consider an annual review of the by-laws for amendments, additions, and general upkeep.