

As part of ongoing efforts to improve the leadership and effectiveness of the Design Records Section, we are proposing changes to the Section's Standing Rules. These revisions aim to streamline our leadership structure, increase continuity, and align more closely with practices adopted by other sections within the Society of American Archivists (SAA). Below is an overview of the new language and the rationale behind these changes. We encourage all members to review these changes before voting on this issue during Section Elections.

Current Rule Under Review (Per Section's Standing Rules):

V. OFFICERS. The officers of the Section shall be a Senior Co-chair and a Junior Co-chair. The Junior Co-chair shall be elected annually for a two-year term, serving in year one as Junior Co-chair and in year two as Senior Co-chair.

Proposed New Language:

V. The Section shall be governed by a Chair, Junior Chair, Immediate Past Chair, and a six-member Steering Committee. The Chair shall serve a term of three years, the first as Junior Chair, the second as Chair, and the third as Immediate Past Chair. The close of the annual section meeting shall mark the beginning of each of these rotating, one-year terms.

Rationale for Changes:

- **Alignment with Other SAA Sections:**

One key reason for these changes is to bring our Section's governance in line with the leadership models adopted by other sections of the SAA, such as the College and University Archives Section and the Description Section. These sections have successfully implemented a leadership structure where the Chair rotates over a multi-year term, which has proven effective for providing consistency and long-term planning.

- **Improved Continuity and Leadership Development:**

The revised structure introduces a leadership progression in which the Chair serves a three-year term: the first year as Junior Chair, the second year as Chair, and the third year as Immediate Past Chair. This system offers a more continuous leadership cycle, reducing the turnover of officers and allowing for a longer-term focus on Section goals. By extending the leadership terms, we ensure that leadership transitions are smoother, and incoming leaders benefit from the mentorship of those who have served in previous roles. This structure also helps to preserve institutional knowledge.

- **Greater Engagement by Chairs:**

The new leadership structure allows for more sustained engagement by our officers. Instead of the current system where the Junior Co-chair transitions to Senior Co-chair after only one year, the proposed three-year term provides a more stable leadership framework. This extended engagement enables the Chair to focus on strategic initiatives, long-term goals, and member outreach without the pressure of annual turnover. The Junior Chair, stepping into the Chair role after one year, will also have more time to develop leadership skills and contribute meaningfully to the Section's direction.