Society of American Archivists
Visual Materials Section

STANDING RULES

2023 Draft Proposed Revision

Article 1. Name.

The name of this section shall be the Visual Materials Section of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), hereinafter referred to as the Section.

Article 2. Objective.

To promote greater communication among visual materials archivists and to represent and promote appropriate care, management, and use of visual materials collections to the greater archival community through annual meetings, continuing education programs, and publications, including a newsletter, web site, and appropriate social media, reporting on the Section's activities and other matters related to visual materials collections.

Article 3. Membership.

Membership in the section shall be determined according to the guidelines established in Section IX. of the SAA Governance Manual.

Article 4. Governance.

These standing rules of the Visual Materials Section shall serve as a supplement to the SAA Section Bylaws, which govern all SAA sections. Please refer to Section IX. Sections of the SAA Governance Manual for information on membership, section election procedures, reporting requirements, and more.

Article 5. Leadership.

A. [moved from article 5.D] The Section shall be guided by a Steering Committee composed of Chair, Vice Chair, Immediate Past Chair, elected members-at-large, and Committee Chairs.
   1. Chair. The Chair shall preside over Section meetings, and with the advice and assistance of the Steering Committee and Working Group Chairs, shall direct the Section’s activities. The Chair, with advice of the Steering
Committee, appoints Committee and Working Group Chairs and Liaisons; submits the final Long Range Plan and summary to SAA Council after receiving a draft from the Long Range Plan Working Group chaired by the Chair-elect; submits budget requests to SAA Council; and turns over the records of his/her administration to the Vice Chair. After the annual Section meeting, the Chair gathers reports from committee and working group leaders and submits a final annual Section report to the Section's Council liaison.

2. The Vice Chair/Chair-elect shall advise and assist the Chair in conducting the Section's business. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair assumes the duties of Chair. The Vice Chair leads the Three-Year Plan Working Group and submits a draft plan to the membership for review and the Chair for approval and submission to SAA Council. The Vice Chair leads program planning for the annual meeting.

3. The Immediate past Chair provides continuity and support with long-term initiatives, oversees special projects that arise and serves on the Elections Working Group.

4. Members-at-Large attend and actively contribute to regular committee meetings, help set goals and priorities for the section, and develop or solicit proposals for the section’s session at the SAA Annual Meeting.

5. The Communications Coordinator is appointed by the Section Chair and works to ensure consistent and open communication with the membership through official section channels, such as the SAA-managed listserv, microsite, blog, and social media. The Communications Coordinator makes recommendations to the Steering Committee for the roles of Webmaster and Views Editor and may also appoint additional persons to help manage social media accounts or other platforms.

6. The Webmaster is appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Communications Coordinator. The Webmaster may appoint assistant Webmasters from among the Section members. The Webmaster is responsible for posting announcements and other updates on the Section micro-site in a timely manner and in accordance with the Uniform Guidelines for SAA Websites and Online Communications. The Webmaster shall ensure longevity and reliability of the Section's institutional history on the microsite.

7. The Views Editor is appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Communications Coordinator. The Editor’s main role is to solicit and publish contributions from Section membership to the Views blog, formerly the newsletter. The Editor may appoint assistant Editors from among the Section members.

B. Terms of office.

1. The Chair and Vice Chair shall serve a term of one year each. The Chair may not be elected to serve as Vice Chair in the year immediately following his/her term of office. Vice Chair, Chair, and Immediate Past Chair: A person shall be elected to the role of Vice Chair/Chair-Elect and serve one year, after which they will serve one year as Chair, and one year as Immediate Past Chair, for a total of three years served.
2. The three elected Steering Committee members shall serve alternating staggered three-year terms.

3. The Communications Coordinator, Views Editor, and Webmaster are appointed by the Chair, with advice from the Steering Committee, to a two-year term each. At the end of the term, the Chair shall call for new volunteers to serve those roles. If no new volunteers come forward, the terms of the incumbents may be renewed with their consent, which can be renewed indefinitely.

4. The Chair, Vice Chair, and elected Steering Committee members shall assume office at the close of the annual Section meeting in which they are elected and shall serve until their successors have taken office.

C. Nomination and Election.

1. Nomination
   a. The Elections Working Group shall call for nominations for Vice Chair and Member-at-large on the Section’s official communications channels, listserv and the Section website.
   b. Only individuals who have consented to nomination may be listed on the slate of candidates.

2. Election.
   a. The Elections Working Group shall prepare a ballot for distribution through SAA electronic channels. This ballot shall include provision for a write-in candidate.
   b. Elections shall be conducted online with the assistance of the SAA staff and in accordance with guidelines for section elections as specified in Section IX. Sections of the SAA Governance Manual. Availability of the online ballot and deadline for voting shall be announced by the Chair to all section members via the section’s official communications channels, official email discussion list and website.

3. Vacancies in Office.
   a. Chair. In the case of vacancy in the office of Chair, the Vice Chair shall assume the office and duties of Chair.
   b. Vice Chair. In the case of vacancy in the office of Vice Chair, the office shall remain vacant until the next annual Section meeting, at which time a new Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected. The Chair shall assume the duties of Vice Chair in the interim, although the Chair may ask a member of the Section to assist in fulfilling the duties of Vice Chair.
   c. Member-at-Large. In the case of a vacancy, the Chair, guided by the Steering Committee, shall appoint a replacement who shall fill the position to the end of that position’s next Section election cycle. The elected replacement shall serve for either the full term of three years if elected during the year of that member’s end of term, or a portion of the term if elected during a year when that Member-at-large position would not come up for election.

D. Duties of the Steering Committee members. [Moved to Article 5.A.1]

A. Meeting times. The Section shall meet once a year at the time of the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, and may meet at other times deemed appropriate by the Steering Committee. The time of and agenda for this any official business meeting shall be announced on the Section’s official communications channels listserv and Section website at least three weeks in advance of the meeting.

B. A record of any official business meeting shall be made available to the Section membership in the form of meeting notes, recording, or other documentation shared on the Section’s official communication channels within a reasonable time period after the meeting.

C. Other meetings. Additional Section meetings may be scheduled at the call of the Chair. Such meetings shall be announced on the VisualMat listserv, the SAA Section listserv, and the Section website.
   1. Such meetings shall be announced on the Section listserv and the Section website.
   2. A report of a meeting called by the Chair must be posted on the Section website within three weeks following the meeting.
   3. Decisions proposed during any meeting called by the Chair must be posted on the Section web site immediately following the meeting, and approved by the membership at large during the annual election conducted online with the assistance of the SAA staff and in accordance with guidelines for section elections as specified in Section IX. Sections of the SAA Governance Manual.

D. Voting. All policy decisions shall be determined by a plurality of members in an online vote. Voting in these cases shall be coordinated by the Chair and Vice Chair with guidance from the Steering Committee, and will be communicated clearly and in a timely manner to the membership by means of the Section membership listserv and the website. For elections voting, see Article 5.C.2.


A. The Chair may appoint or dissolve Committees (ongoing) and Working Groups (ad hoc) as needed. Each Committee and Working Group shall have a written charge; Working Groups shall also have a specified period of service. Committees and Working Groups shall report on their activities at the annual Section meeting and on the Section website prior to the annual meeting.

B. Elections Working Group.
   1. The Elections Working Group shall consist of the two most recent, available, past Chairs and should include the Immediate Past Chair if possible. Members of the Working Group shall serve for no more than two consecutive years. Members of the Working Group may not nominate themselves or each other for office.
   2. The Working Group shall prepare a slate of candidates for election reflecting the diversity of the Section’s membership, especially in terms of location, size, and type of employing institution. The Working Group shall request of nominees consent to candidacy and a brief biographical and position statement for posting on the Section web site immediately preceding the election annual Section meeting. The annual election is
conducted online with the assistance of the SAA staff and in accordance with guidelines for section elections as specified in Section IX. Sections of the SAA Governance Manual.

C. Three-Year Plan Working Group
   1. The Vice Chair leads the Three-Year Plan Working Group and recruits additional members from the Steering Committee and general Section membership.
   2. The Working Group will determine directions, priorities, and goals for the Section which align with the SAA Strategic Plan and provide Section members an opportunity for input.

D. Communications Committee.
   1. The Communications Coordinator is the Chair of the Committee as appointed by the Section Chair.
   2. The Views Editor is appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Communications Coordinator. The Editor may appoint assistant Editors from among the Section members. Prior to publication, the newsletter shall be prepared and reviewed by the Editor and Assistants and forwarded to the Section Chair for approval.
   3. The Webmaster is appointed by the Chair in consultation with the Communications Coordinator. The Webmaster may appoint assistant Webmasters from among the Section members. The Webmaster is responsible for posting time sensitive announcements on the website in a timely manner.
   4. The Views, website and other social media shall be published in compliance with the SAA Guidelines for Sections.

E. Cataloging and Access Committee (VMCAC)
   1. The Visual Materials Cataloging and Access Committee (VMCAC) provides a forum for archivists and others working with visual collections to discuss cataloging and access issues including, but not limited to, description methods, digitization, cataloging tools and standards, and other esoteric topics.
   2. VMCAC shall be an ongoing contributor to VMS’s blog newsletter, Views, with a column, "Voices from VMCAC," dedicated to VMCAC member projects and contributions.
   3. The VMCAC chair shall be appointed by the VMS chair annually and shall serve on the VMS Steering Committee.


Standing Rules shall be reviewed every 4 years by the Steering Committee and Working Group members. All proposed changes to the standing rules shall be distributed via the Section’s official communications channels for review by Section membership. To ensure alignment with SAA’s governance documents, any amendments to the section’s standing rules should be reviewed by the executive director (or their designee) and the section’s Council liaison by May 1, before they are put forward in a referendum for vote by the section membership. Proposed amendments to the section’s standing rules will appear on the section’s annual election ballot for final approval by a simple majority of voters. Any adopted amendments should
be posted promptly to the section’s official microsite and be noted in the section’s next annual report to the Council. Any revisions to the section’s name or mission/description must be submitted to the Council for final approval. For more information on amendment procedures, see Section IX. Sections of the SAA Governance Manual. All proposed changes to the standing rules shall be distributed via the Section listserv and posted on the Section web site 30 days prior to the annual section election. Proposed revisions to the standing rules will appear on the section’s annual election ballot for final approval by a simple majority of the section’s membership.

To ensure alignment with SAA’s governance documents, any amendments to the section’s standing rules should be reviewed by the executive director (or her/his designee) and the section’s Council liaison by May 1, before they are put forward in a referendum for vote by the section membership. Proposed amendments to the section’s standing rules will appear on the section’s annual election ballot for final approval by a simple majority of voters. Any adopted amendments should be posted promptly to the section’s official microsite and be noted in the section’s next annual report to the Council. Any revisions to the section’s name or mission/description must be submitted to the Council for final approval. For more information on amendment procedures, see Section IX. Sections of the SAA Governance Manual.

Article 9. Parliamentary Authority.

Roberts Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern the proceedings of the Section, except as otherwise provided for in the bylaws of the Section, or in the constitution, bylaws, or other special rules of the Society of American Archivists.