

# Oral History Section of the Society of American Archivists

## Bylaws for Structure and Responsibilities

### **Purpose:**

The Oral History Section of the Society of American Archivists is composed of members of the Society and others who are interested in or are actively engaged in conducting oral history interviews and/or teach oral history methodology. The Oral History Section provides a forum for news, for discussion of issues and developments, and for establishing and maintaining communication and cooperation with other professional organizations.

### **Steering Committee:**

The Steering Committee is composed of seven members, which includes the officers (chair, vice-chair/chair-elect, and the immediate past chair) and four members (two elected per year for two-year terms). The newsletter editor serves as an ex officio member (unless the newsletter editor also holds elected office).

The Steering Committee directs and coordinates activities of the section and approves appointments made by the chair if vacancies occur. Committee members approve the section's annual program, sponsor SAA sessions, appoint a newsletter editor as necessary, contribute to the newsletter, establish and maintain liaisons with other professional organizations, and act as advocates for the section within SAA. Steering Committee members are expected to attend the annual meeting.

The chair, vice-chair/chair-elect, and members of the Steering Committee not serving as members of the Nominating Committee serve on the Program Committee. The immediate past chair and two elected members of the Steering Committee in their second year of service compose the Nominating Committee.

### **Officers:**

The chair, vice-chair/chair-elect, and the immediate past chair serve as officers of the section. Only members of SAA and the Oral History Section may hold these positions.

The chair directs and reports the activities of the section, conducts the annual meeting of the section and the Steering Committee, acts as liaison for the section to other bodies, appoints section committees as needed, and handles administrative matters.

The vice-chair/chair-elect serves as acting chair in the absence of the chair, organizes the annual meeting of the section, sets the agenda of the Steering Committee, and participates as a member of the Steering Committee in all its activities.

The immediate past chair serves as a member of the Steering Committee and as chair of the Nominating Committee.

The officers make a commitment for three years to serve one year each as vice-chair/chair-elect, chair, and immediate past chair. Each is expected to attend the annual meeting.

**Newsletter Editor:**

The newsletter editor shall be appointed by the Steering Committee for a negotiated term. Terms should be no less than two years and no more than three years. The newsletter editor serves as an ex officio member of the Steering Committee, unless the editor also holds elected membership. In the latter case, the editor shall have all decision privileges of committee members. The editor shall not serve concurrently as chair of the section.

The newsletter editor shall be responsible for editing, publishing, and distributing in a timely manner (approximately every six months) two newsletters per year and any other special issues or mailings as determined by the Steering Committee. The editor maintains the section mailing list and negotiates all newsletter matters with the SAA office as appropriate. The editor serves as secretary at the annual section meeting and takes minutes that are subsequently published in the newsletter. The newsletter editor is expected to attend the annual meeting.

**Program Committee:**

The Program Committee is composed of the chair, vice-chair/chair-elect, and Steering Committee members who are not members of the Nominating Committee. The chair shall appoint Program Committee members to coordinate, write, and submit Steering Committee-approved session proposals on behalf of the section to the SAA Program Committee.

The Program Committee develops proposals for both the section program and SAA sessions for the following year's annual meeting. The Steering Committee reviews and selects proposals.

**Nominating Committee and Election:**

The Nominating Committee is composed of the immediate past chair, who serves as chair of the committee, and the two elected Steering Committee members in their second year of service. If any of these cannot serve, the section chair shall appoint members from the Steering Committee as needed.

The Nominating Committee solicits candidates for the next year's leadership, using a notice in the newsletter and receiving the names of volunteers of persons recommended, and prepares an appropriate slate for the elected section positions from those nominees agreeing to place their names in nomination. The committee ensures that there is at least one nominee and no more than two nominees for vice-chair/chair-elect, and that the number of nominees for Steering Committee is not less than the

number of positions to be filled. All candidates for election must be members of SAA and the section.

The committee publicizes the slate in the newsletter issued preceding the annual meeting. The committee prepares a ballot and conducts an election at the annual section meeting. Only members of the section may vote. Any member of the section unable to attend the annual meeting may request an absentee ballot from the committee chair; absentee ballots must be returned to the committee chair prior to the annual meeting. Voting at the annual meeting shall be by secret ballot if there are more candidates than can be elected for any position. Candidates with the highest number of votes are elected. New leadership assumes office at the close of the annual meeting of the section.

If for any reason the vice-chair is unable to succeed to the office of chair, a new chair shall be elected following the same procedures as election for a vice-chair. The Steering Committee shall appoint any other vacancies to fulfill unexpired terms of elected positions, after which a normal election shall occur.

**Enactment:**

These bylaws shall be distributed to the membership of the section with a mail ballot for their approval or rejection. They shall become effective immediately if approved by a majority of the votes cast by the deadline set for the return of the ballots. The ballot shall include a method for indicating interest in elective or appointive positions for the section.

Society of American Archivists  
Oral History Section  
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