

## SECTION V

### GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Smith clubs are self-funded organizations chartered through a set of bylaws and governed by an elected set of officers, whose purpose is to further the well-being of Smith College.

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## Organization and Governance

### **The executive committee**

The governing body of the organization, comprising the president (or co-presidents), vice president/program chair, treasurer, alumnae admission coordinator and other positions, such as secretary, as indicated by the organization bylaws, is considered the executive committee.

All officers are elected in accordance with the bylaws, on either a single or double slate, for two-year terms. Elections are held at the annual business meeting of the organization or by mail-in ballots.

The executive committee is empowered to act on behalf of the organization to solicit dues, manage the treasury, meet expenses, and provide members with information regarding the AASC and the college.

The organization president, in conjunction with the executive committee and the AASC, is empowered to make appointments, relieve an officer of her responsibilities, accept the resignation of an officer, and appoint any interim officers.

To change the configuration of the executive committee, a vote must be taken by the club to amend the bylaws — especially if the specific configuration of the executive committee is stipulated by the bylaws.

### **Appointments**

The president is empowered to appoint an individual or committee to serve on a temporary basis to assist with specific projects.

Appointments/committee members are not considered club officers and therefore do not serve on the executive committee.

Appointments/committee members may report to the executive committee or to a specific officer.

Appointments of **admission** volunteers are made in consultation with the staff of the admissions office.

## **Bylaws**

In general, all organization bylaws should make provisions for the following:

The club group is organized to further the well-being of Smith College and operates exclusively for educational and charitable purposes.

In furthering the well-being of the college, the organization should keep in mind such goals as:

Fostering a spirit of friendship among graduates and former students

Extending the aims and achievements of the college

Promoting and encouraging communications between the college, the AASC, and the organization

Delineating the primary responsibility of each officer position

Outlining the process for holding regular meetings of the club and of the executive committee

Organization bylaws should also indicate the following:

What constitutes a quorum

Processes for election of officers

Appointment and formation of a nominating committee

Provisions for setting the dues fee

Provisions for dissolution of the organization

The process for amending the bylaws

Organization bylaws **must** have a paragraph that prohibits inurement. All officers must understand that:

No part of organization earnings may benefit any member, director, officer, or other private individual

The organization officers are authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered

No activities of the organization shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation

The organization cannot participate in or intervene in any campaign for public office

Nothing in the bylaws could be read as authorizing or permitting the organization to operate other than exclusively for charitable or educational purposes within the regulations of tax-exempt 501c(3) status

**It is critically important that all organizations understand these five items. Failure to comply with them will jeopardize the tax-exempt status of an organization.**

**Organizations are asked to file any amended bylaws with the AASC. (Sample bylaws may be found in Appendix III.)**

## **Executive Committee Positions**

All officers share

An enthusiasm for Smith, a strong interest in their club or group, and a desire to connect alumnae to each other and the college

A team spirit

A willingness to represent the college

The ability to respond to difficult situations and to listen to alumnae concerns

It is recommended that officers

Serve for two-year terms; elected in accordance with bylaws

Remain informed and be able to explain the position of the AASC and the college regarding current issues

Obtain all files and records from the previous officer upon election and pass them on at the end of term

Contact the assistant director for clubs regarding any change in officers or organizational status

## **President**

The president provides leadership to officers and members. She communicates with officers to ensure that they are meeting their responsibilities. She oversees the schedule of events and is empowered to appoint assistants for any and all projects.

## **Responsibilities**

Presides at all official meetings

Maintains regular contact with other executive committee members to receive updates on their efforts

Sends out at least one newsletter per year to club members, which could include news from the AASC and a report, or letter, from the organization's executive committee

In case of a resignation or vacancy among officers, the president, in consultation with the Executive committee, is empowered to appoint someone to fill the unexpired term. If an officer cannot, or does not, fulfill her responsibilities, it is the responsibility of the president, in cooperation with the AASC, to determine a course of action including resignation and replacement

Keeps records of important publications, communications with officers and members, and correspondence of note involving the AASC. These files should be passed onto the succeeding president

Helps the treasurer file the annual report with the AASC by July 31<sup>st</sup>, the close of the fiscal year

As a newly elected club officer, attends the club leadership conference

Mentors new and potential volunteers

## **Vice President/Program Chair**

The principal duty of the vice president is to act as program chair. She makes significant appointments of volunteers to committees and maintains involvement with all committee work.

### **Responsibilities**

Acts for the president if the president is unable to fulfill her responsibilities.

Acts as program chair

Organizes, plans, and schedules events

Submits a list of events for inclusion in the newsletter

Oversees events budget

Acts as the principal source of event information to members

Selects committees to help organize various events as needed

Coordinates with alumnae admissions coordinator to plan events for prospective students.

Attends the club leadership conference, in the absence of the president or president-elect

### **Appointments**

The vice president makes the following appointments:

Program co-chair

Event chair

Event committee member

Treasurer

The treasurer is responsible for the fiscal management of the treasury, including the collection of dues and maintenance of all financial records.

### **Responsibilities**

Sets financial guidelines for management of funds and ensure that the guidelines are ratified by the officers

Assists the vice president/program chair in developing a program budget for the year

Sets the dues rate for the organization, in conjunction with other officers

Solicits dues from members on a regular schedule

Pays all authorized bills and volunteer reimbursement efficiently and ensure that the club has a firm financial base to launch annual programs

Submits an itemized financial statement to members at the annual meeting

Submits an annual financial report to the president and the alumnae outreach department by July 31<sup>st</sup> of each year

Maintains a list of members with their donation amount to the organization's scholarship fund (if applicable) for those who want comprehensive credit, and submit it with the annual donation to the college (see page 45)

Maintains record of all annual financial reports throughout term

Has a clear understanding of organization's financial history and treasury status

Follows rules regarding disclosure of the group's financial status, in accordance with laws governing tax-exempt status

## **Alumnae Admissions Coordinator (AAC)**

The AAC is appointed by the executive committee in consultation with the admissions office. The role of the AAC is to raise students from her defined area. As an AAC, an alumna organizes local contact with students, high schools, and parents to acquaint them with Smith College and assists the Office of Admission with applicants. The AAC usually operates within a Smith club. In an area where there is no other organized form of Smith alumnae activity, the AAC may serve as a point of contact for alumnae. The AAC may work alone or supervise a committee of as many as 30 other alumnae.

### **Responsibilities**

- Contacts students whose names appear on inquiry and search cards
- Sustains interest among applicants
- Offers interviews to all applicants
- Conducts special recruiting programs for prospective applicants
- Attends college fairs and high school programs
- Develops a rapport with secondary schools
- Assists an admission traveler visiting her area

Fall is the busiest season in AAC work, just as it is for admission staff. During January and February the AAC and committee members conduct interviews with applicants and, in April, work on "yield" for her area - encouraging accepted students to choose Smith. See the website: [www.smith.edu/aac](http://www.smith.edu/aac) for more information.

### **Secretary**

The secretary is responsible for the administrative record keeping for the organization.

### **Responsibilities**

- Keeps a permanent record of minutes of all organization and executive committee meetings
- Keeps complete, up-to-date membership list (if no membership chair is elected)
- Notifies members (or all alumnae in the area) of the year's programs and of individual meetings
- Reports all changes of address to the advancement records department
- Forwards appropriate materials to the alumnae outreach department or the college archives

### **Guidelines For Donating Materials To The Archives**

The Smith College Archives is interested in collecting materials that document the history and activities of Smith clubs and groups. The college archives has already started to collect materials from various clubs such as:

- Articles of incorporation and bylaws
- Minutes of meetings
- Publications produced by organizations: newsletters, announcements, fliers
- Photographs of activities
- Newspaper clippings of activities
- Files relating to special events

## Audio, video, and discs of special club events

If you are interested in knowing whether the college archives has historical records of your club, or if you have questions about the types of materials archives accepts, feel free to contact Nanci Young, college archivist, at the Smith College Archives, Northampton, MA 01063 or at (413) 585-2970, or email: [nyoung@smith.edu](mailto:nyoung@smith.edu).

The outreach department works with college archives to preserve club history. Please continue to send copies of important club materials to the college.

## **Presidential Appointments**

Several positions in organization governance are filled by appointment and do not require confirmation by the organization.

It is important to foster new leadership. One way to do that is to offer volunteers one-time responsibilities for specific events (such as establishing the phone tree to remind members of upcoming events) and later offer to appoint them to larger roles.

**Volunteer positions** (depending upon size and activity of the organization)

### **Young Alumnae Chair**

Designs programming that appeals to young alumnae

Acts as liaison between young alumnae and the executive board

Works to increase the membership and attendance of young alumnae at events

### **Communications Chair**

Works on the newsletter

Maintains the web page and page design

Serves as webmaster, where appropriate

### **Nominating Chair**

Appoints two or three members to the nominating committee

Leads the search for new leadership

Develops the slate

Tallies the results of elections

## **Nominating Committee Procedures**

The responsibility of nominating chair/committee is to present a slate of officers to the organization. These officers will continue the business of the club for the next term. The committee should seek to broadly represent all club/affinity group constituencies and choose individuals who are able to meet the responsibilities of the given office. The current officer team should inform the nominating chair of the organization's priorities for the upcoming term. The confidentiality of all applicants for officer positions and clarity regarding their potential responsibilities are primary concerns of the committee.

Once appointed, the chair may select two or three members to serve on the nominating committee. These members represent the organization as a whole and should be well acquainted with the entire organization. The current officers present the nominating chair with guidelines for selection of a committee and future officers.

After receiving the name of the nominating chair from the president, the AASC sends her a complete list of alumnae within the club area, or in the case of affinity groups, a list of all members of the affinity group. These lists will designate any alumnae who have previously held class, club, or affinity group officer positions. Upon request, the AASC sends job descriptions for club officers.

The chair and committee call for nominations in a newsletter and solicit potential candidates from current officers.

The chair and her committee determine the slate. Depending on organization bylaws, a single or double slate election process is required. A single slate necessitates a firm commitment from the single nominee; members vote on the proposed slate. A double slate includes two nominees who agree to be on the slate; members choose between the two.

Bylaws should stipulate what positions are designated as officers. The AASC views the executive committee as president, vice president/program chair, treasurer, secretary, and alumnae admissions coordinator. Any changes to this configuration must be voted on by the organization and noted as amended in the bylaws.

The nominating committee member should send the position description to the nominee and ask that she carefully read the job description.

Potential nominees are contacted directly by a committee member and agree to have their names placed on the slate. For information, the nominating committee member may refer the nominee to the current officer or to the assistant director for clubs at the AASC.

The nominating chair may contact the AASC's national nominating committee to determine names of members who have expressed interest in an officer position at the national level. The AASC's nominating committee can be a valuable resource for general information regarding search processes for officers.

Once the slate has been completed, the chair submits it to the organization's president and the assistant director for clubs at the AASC. The slate should be published in the final newsletter.

The slate is voted on at the annual meeting or by mail-in ballot.

## **Leadership and Volunteers**

### **Building Your Smith Team**

Every organization is only as strong and vital as the people involved in making it work. Despite the fact that people are increasingly busy, most people do volunteer work of some kind. There are women who would be happy to volunteer for Smith and for the organization. The challenge lies in finding them and determining the volunteer job which provides the best "fit" for them.

### **Finding Volunteers**

The first rule of finding volunteers is to **ask**. Give members opportunities to sign up on the dues form, at an event, or through a survey.

Ask other Smith women if they know of anyone who would be a good volunteer.

Approach a potential volunteer personally. Let her know that what she would be doing is important to the organization and to Smith.

Follow up on all offers of help! Don't lose the chance; timing is key.

Break major jobs into smaller ones. People are more likely to sign up for a minor task than to assume major responsibility.

Appoint co-chairs rather than a single chairperson. It's more fun and less onerous to share a job with someone else. Remember: focus on fun and friendship.

### **Fostering Leadership and Managing Volunteers**

Listen to volunteers' ideas and be receptive. There are many ways to do things.

Support volunteers in what they are trying to do. Praise and thank them.

Pair experienced volunteers with new ones, older with younger.

Vary the tasks or reassign them every so often so no one does the same thing event after event, or year after year.

Provide clear communication regarding duties and deadlines to ensure a sense of accomplishment and purpose. Make sure a volunteer knows what she is being asked to do and by when. As long as tasks are clear, she'll gain satisfaction from accomplishing them.

Always try to give volunteers assignments for which they have an aptitude or expertise.

Contact your RCC or the AASC for advice and support as well as suggestions for volunteers.