

# AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF RHETORIC

## Constitution and Bylaws

### CONSTITUTION

#### Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the American Society for the History of Rhetoric.

#### Article II: Purpose

The purpose of this organization is to promote the study of both the theory and practice of rhetoric in all periods and languages and its relationship with philosophy, poetics, politics, religion, law, and other aspects of the cultural context. This is the exclusive purpose of the Society, and it shall be accomplished only in a charitable manner. The organization is not concerned with the furthering of practical rhetorical skills as such.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Society shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purpose of the Society. In particular, the Society shall not attempt to influence legislation or participate to any extent in a political campaign for or against any candidate for public office.

#### Article III: Membership

- A. Membership in the organization is open to any individual or institution subscribing to its aims.
- B. Conditions of membership shall be determined by the Steering Committee, with the approval of a majority of members present and voting at a General Business Meeting (see Bylaws Article II).

#### Article IV: Officers

- A. The Officers of the organization shall be a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Membership Chair, Website Coordinator, Journal Editor, and Immediate Past President.
- B. Nomination, election, and duties of the Officers shall be as specified in the Bylaws.

### **Article V: Steering Committee**

- A. The Steering Committee shall consist of current Society Officers and six At-Large members. At-Large members will be elected at the General Business Meeting. Normally, three new At-Large members will be elected each year, each to a term of two years. The President and Vice-President shall be ex officio members of the Steering Committee.
- B. The Steering Committee shall exercise such powers as described herein and shall advise and assist the President and the Vice-President.

### **Article VI: Assets**

- A. No part of the net earnings of the Society shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, officers, or any other private persons, except that the Society shall be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purpose set forth in Article II.
- B. In the event that the Society is dissolved, assets shall be distributed for one or more charitable purposes.

### **Article VII: Amendments**

Any provision in this Constitution and By-laws may be amended on recommendation of the Steering Committee during a General Business Meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting. In addition, five or more Society members may petition for an amendment by presenting the proposed wording of such a change to the President for review by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee shall transmit the amendment to the next General Business Meeting of the Society together with a recommendation for or against its approval or together with a substantive proposal. The proposed amendment or the substitute shall require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting to be adopted.

## **BYLAWS**

### **Article I: Nomination, Election, and Duties of the Officers**

- A. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the organization, responsible for its welfare, for its relations to other learned societies, and for its academic activities.
  - 1. The President shall serve one non-renewable term of one year and shall succeed to the office of the President upon completing a term of service as Vice-President. The

President's term shall commence annually at the close of the Society's General Business Meeting.

2. The President shall preside at all General Business Meetings, shall be an ex officio member of all committees (including the Steering Committee), shall designate the chairpersons of all committees, and shall exercise such other powers as the membership may from time to time determine by majority vote of those present and voting at a General Business Meeting.
3. The President shall appoint a member of the Steering Committee to act as Recording Secretary at meetings of the Steering Committee and General Business Meetings.

The Recording Secretary shall circulate copies of the minutes of the Steering Committee and General Business Meetings to the Steering Committee members, and shall do so prior to the succeeding General Business and Steering Committee meetings. In addition, the Recording Secretary shall, upon request, provide a copy of the minutes of any meeting of the Steering Committee or of any General Business Meeting to any member of the organization.

4. The President shall report to the Steering Committee and to the General Business Meeting at least once each year regarding the activities of the organization.
- B. The Vice-President shall assist the President and perform the functions of the President in the absence or incapacity of that officer.
1. The Vice-President shall serve one term of one year and shall be elected by the Steering Committee from among its members. The Vice-President's term shall commence immediately upon election, which election shall take place as the first item of business at the Steering Committee's annual meeting following the General Business Meeting.
  2. The Vice-President shall serve as an ex officio member of the Steering Committee.
  3. Unless otherwise assigned by the Steering Committee, the Vice-President shall be responsible for organizing the society's annual day-long scholarly conference.
- C. The Treasurer shall serve as the fiscal agent of the organization and provide a financial report annually to the Steering Committee. The Treasurer shall be elected by the Steering Committee for a term of two years and may be re-elected for successive terms.
- D. The Membership Chair shall maintain an accurate role of the organization's members, updating the contact information and institutional affiliation records of the membership as needed, and shall promote the organization's growth through membership. The Membership Chair shall be responsible for coordinating the collection of membership dues and for forwarding said dues or reports of accounts thereof to the Treasurer. The

Membership Chair shall be elected by the Steering Committee for a term of two years and may be re-elected for successive terms.

- E. The Website Coordinator shall maintain the organization's website to ensure a viable internet presence, posting new content on a regular basis and updating links and the site's design as needed. The Website Coordinator shall be elected by the Steering Committee for a term of two years and may be re-elected for successive terms.
- F. The Journal Editor shall be responsible for supervising the preparation, production, and distribution on an annual basis of the Society's journal (see Article III). The Editor shall appoint an editorial review board for the journal and direct the review process. The Editor shall be selected by the Steering Committee from among the Society's members, and shall serve a renewable term of three years. The President may appoint a subcommittee ("Publications Committee") to review candidates for the position of Journal Editor and present its recommendation to the Steering Committee.

## **Article II: Meetings**

### **A. General Business Meeting**

- 1. There shall be a General Business Meeting of members of the organization at least once each year.
- 2. The agenda of the General Business Meeting shall include the report of the President, the election of At-Large members of the Steering Committee, and additional items as requested by the Steering Committee. The agenda for the General Business Meeting shall be determined by the President. Additional items for discussion and vote may be placed upon the agenda by petition of any five (5) members present, when such a petition is delivered to the President in advance of the scheduled hour of the General Business Meeting, except that provisions of this Constitution shall be amended as hereinafter provided. The requirement of advanced petition for the addition of items to the agenda is not intended to preclude questions from the floor by any member of the organization.
- 3. Minutes of all General Business Meetings shall be taken by the Recording Secretary and shall be distributed to all members of the Steering Committee within one month following the General Business Meeting.

### **B. Steering Committee Meeting**

- 1. The Steering Committee shall meet at least once each year: immediately following the completion of the General Business Meeting, and at such other times as the President may deem necessary for the good of the Society.

**Article III: Journal**

- A. In accordance with its declared purpose, the Society shall publish annually a refereed journal to be named *Advances in the History of Rhetoric*. Supervision and production of the Journal are to be carried out by the Editor.
- B. The Journal will publish scholarship, written in English, on all historical aspects of rhetoric, in all historical periods, and with reference to all intellectual, national, and cultural communities. Submission of papers presented at events sponsored by the Society is especially encouraged.
- C. Membership in the Society entitles one to receipt of one copy of each issue of the Journal.

**Article IV: Awards**

- A. The Society shall give two awards annually to recognize work of special distinction in the historical study of rhetoric.
  - 1. An Award for Outstanding Dissertation will be given to honor a dissertation of high merit completed during the year preceding a given annual general Business Meeting of the Society.
  - 2. An Award for Top Student Paper will be given to honor a paper of high merit, authored by a student and presented at a Society-sponsored event during the year preceding a given annual general Business Meeting of the Society.
- B. Awards will be determined by committee review. Each committee will be appointed by the Steering Committee at its annual meeting and will be chaired by a Steering Committee member. Committees will be appointed in an effort to ensure diversity in rank, region, institution, and area of expertise.
- C. Nominations for Awards will be solicited annually, with deadlines to be set by the respective award committees.
  - 1. Nominations for the Outstanding Dissertation Award should include a letter of recommendation from the project advisor or other faculty member in a position to recommend the study.
  - 2. Self-nominations for the Top Student Paper Award will be accepted.
- D. Criteria for Awards shall include the significance of the work's contribution to the history of rhetorical theory, practice and/or pedagogy; quality of archival or primary research and contribution to historiographic practice; quality of the writing or style.

- E. Awards will be announced and recipients honored at the Society's annual Business Meeting.

**Article V: Relations with Other Scholarly Organizations**

- A. The Society shall be a member of and provide representatives to the Alliance of Rhetoric Societies (ARS). ARS representatives shall be the President and Immediate Past President.

*Approved by Membership 18 November 2005*