

STC Washington, DC Chapter BYLAWS

Article I-NAME AND GOALS

Section 1. Name

The name of the chapter is the Washington, DC Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication, Inc. (STC), hereafter referred to as the chapter and the Society, respectively.

The chapter name can be changed by a two-thirds vote at a business meeting of the chapter, provided a quorum is present. (Twenty-five percent of the voting members or 20 voting members, whichever is fewer, constitutes a quorum. See Article III, Section 3B of the Society bylaws regarding voting rights.) Written notification of the motion to change the name must be given to all chapter members at least two weeks before the vote. The Society must be notified if the name is changed.

Section 2. Location

The chapter is located in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, where its members live, work, or attend school.

Any change to chapter boundaries must be submitted to the Society for approval. The Society may change the chapter's boundaries if deemed in the best interest of the Society.

Section 3. Goals

The goals of the chapter, identical to those of the Society, are to advance the arts and sciences of technical communication by:

- Encouraging research.
- Developing educational programs and establishing scholarships.
- Stimulating the exchange of information by means of publications, programs, and conferences.
- Recognizing outstanding accomplishments.

- Cooperating with other societies and institutions in mutually beneficial projects.
- Developing new leaders.
- Providing greater value to members.
- Reaching out to wider communities.

Article II-POWERS AND CONSTRAINTS

Section 1. Powers

The powers of the chapter reside in its members. These powers are exercised on behalf of the membership by an elected administrative council. The administrative council has powers to take whatever legal and proper actions are necessary for the fulfillment of Society and chapter purposes.

Section 2. Constraints

The chapter is nonprofit, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan. It cannot endorse or disparage a commercial enterprise, a political platform, or a candidate for public office. The name of the chapter shall not be used in connection with a commercial concern for any purpose other than the regular work of the chapter. The chapter exists under its charter from the Society, and shall operate under the Society's Bylaws and within the Society's policies.

Should situations not addressed in these bylaws arise, the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Society for Technical Communication are in force. Should the Society bylaws be changed such that they conflict with these chapter bylaws, the Society bylaws take precedence. Chapter bylaws must then be amended as soon as possible to bring them into agreement with Society bylaws. The Secretary sends a copy of the amended bylaws to the STC Bylaw Committee Manager for review to ensure that

changes are aligned with the rules or ethics of the Society.

Section 3. Use of Name

Only persons authorized by the Society or the chapter's administrative council may use the chapter name and logo, singly or in combination, and only for chapter purposes. The chapter name must not be connected with a commercial concern for any purpose other than the regular work of the chapter.

Article III-MEMBERSHIP

All members of the chapter must be members of the Society, assigned to the chapter by the Society. Article III (Membership) of the Society's Bylaws sets forth grades of membership and the rights and privileges thereof.

Article IV-ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Section 1. Membership

The administrative council consists of the following officers:

- President
- First Vice President
- Second Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Immediate Past President.

The extended administrative council includes anyone else the administrative council deems advisable, such as managers of active committees and of local Special Interest Groups (SIG). The administrative council members (except for the Immediate Past President) are elected. All members of the administrative council must meet the requirements described in the Society's bylaws, Article III, Section 3, subsection C. Other members of the extended administrative council are appointed. Only the administrative council members are eligible to vote on administrative issues.

Members of the extended administrative council serve as advisors to the officers on administrative issues. All members of the extended administrative council must be chapter members in good standing. All extended administrative council members serve without compensation. Specific administrative council members may authorize expenses related to serving on the administrative council or the extended administrative council, as described in Article VII, Section 3.

Section 2. Powers and Constraints

The administrative council has the power to manage the chapter's property to determine its fiscal policies, and to direct its affairs to meet the objectives stated in Article I. The administrative council acts in accordance with the governing documents, which it has the authority to interpret and clarify in terms of language. The administrative council may prudently delegate powers in the interest of efficient management.

Section 3. Council Responsibilities

The Society Bylaws (Article IX, Chapters) specify appropriate chapter activities as follows:

- Hold regularly scheduled program meetings for the membership (at least five per year).
- Recruit and process new members.
- Hold at least three meetings of the administrative council or extended council for the fiscal year to handle the chapter's business.
- Maintain a close liaison among the chapter, Director-Sponsor, Society, and other communication organizations.
- Find ways to gain support of business and industry for the chapter and the Society.
- Establish fiscal controls in accordance with Article VII (Finances): approve budgets, expenditures, and fiscal operations.
- Provide quarterly annual activity reports to the Director-Sponsor and annual fiscal reports to the Society Treasurer.

- Comply with IRS requirements regarding annual information returns.
- Have the Nominating Committee conduct annual elections in accordance with Article VI (Elections).
- Hold an annual business meeting to announce the election results and induct the new administrative council members. Have committee managers report year-end summaries to the membership. Present chapter service awards and other recognition to deserving members. This meeting is usually held during the last meeting of the program year.
- Hold a summer planning meeting at the end of the program year with previous and new members of the extended administrative council to plan the coming year. Have the chapter officers and committee managers report on the status of turnover meetings and their goals, budgets, and schedules for the coming year.

The optional activities follow:

- Publish a newsletter regularly to establish and maintain communication with chapter members.
- Publicize the activities of the Society and chapter.
- Encourage members to contribute to *Intercom*, *Tieline*, *Technical Communication*, and STC's professional development publications.
- Provide educational programs for members such as chapter-sponsored seminars, workshops, and competitions.
- Maintain an employment referral service to establish contact between chapter members and local employers.
- Establish special interest groups (SIGs) to pursue specific fields of interest in technical communication within the chapter.
- Hold a summer leadership training seminar.

Section 4. Duties of Administrative

Council Members

The administrative council members (or chapter officers) are:

- President
- First Vice President
- Second Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Immediate Past President

The duties of each officer follow.

The **President** exercises general supervision over the affairs of the chapter; presides at meetings of the chapter, the administrative council, or the extended council; appoints heads of chapter committees, subject to council approval; authorizes expenditures approved by the council; and is an ex officio member of all chapter committees.

The **First Vice President** assumes the duties of the President in the absence of the President, and performs such other duties as the President or council may assign. In particular, the First Vice President has the responsibility for the functioning of a major committee such as the Events Committee. A major committee is defined as one that consists of several members and enables the First Vice President to learn people and task management skills.

The **Second Vice President** presides at meetings of the chapter, the administrative council, or the extended council in the absence of the President and First Vice President and performs other duties as assigned by the President or council. In particular, the Second Vice President has the responsibility for the functioning of a major committee such as the Competitions Committee. A major committee is defined as one that consists of several members and enables the Second Vice President to learn people and task management skills.

The **Secretary** prepares and distributes minutes of all administrative council and extended council meetings; conducts official correspondence; maintains lists of officers and committees (including mailing addresses and telephone numbers) so that they are available

at any time to the President or council; maintains the Chapter Bylaws when required; and performs such other duties as the President or council may assign.

The **Treasurer** receives and disburses chapter funds (as authorized by the administrative council); submits a monthly fiscal report to the administrative council; submits budgets as required by the President or council, including the annual financial report for submittal to the Society's Treasurer; and maintains books and records so they can be inspected at any time by the administrative council or an independent auditor named by the administrative council.

The **Immediate Past President**, the last person to have completed a term as President, advises the administrative council and chapter as required, and performs other duties that the President or administrative council may assign.

Section 5. Terms of Office

Administrative council members are elected (except the Immediate Past President) for one-year terms. With the exception of the Treasurer, one-year terms extend from the officer's induction at the last meeting of the program year to next year's induction. The Treasurer's term overlaps the incoming Treasurer until the outgoing Treasurer prepares and submits the annual financial report to the Society's Treasurer by the Society due date. A member may not be elected to the same office for more than two consecutive years but may serve any number of times in nonconsecutive offices.

While it is not mandatory, it is anticipated that the First Vice President assumes the presidency for the following year and the Second Vice President assumes the office of First Vice President for the following year. However, it is understood that life circumstances may make it impossible or undesirable for the officer to assume the position. Members filling administrative council vacancies that occur during the chapter's fiscal year may, but are not required to, assume a follow-on office.

Section 6. Vacancies

Vacancies in the administrative council are filled by majority vote of the remaining Council members. Vacancy appointments extend to the next annual business meeting and are not deemed a term of office within the meaning of any restriction imposed by Section 4 (Terms of Office).

Section 7. Removal

If the conduct of an administrative council member is such that the administrative council as a whole feels it is necessary to suspend the member's authority, the administrative council appoints a special committee to hear and review the case. The person to be suspended must be served personally or by registered mail with a notice containing a statement of the charges and specifying the time and place of a hearing before the special committee. This notice must be received at least ten days before the hearing. At the hearing the accused may be represented by counsel and must be allowed to confront the accusers. The special committee reports its findings to the administrative council. A vote on the committee's recommendations must be sustained by two-thirds of the entire administrative council.

Section 8. Meetings and Quorum

The administrative council or extended administrative council meets at the discretion of the President or at the request of two or more members of the administrative council. A majority of the voting members of the administrative council constitutes a quorum (at least three of the six voting members).

Any chapter member or appointed administrative council member may attend an administrative council meeting, but may not vote on administrative issues.

Section 9. Transaction of Business

Council meetings follow the parliamentary procedures specified in Robert's Rules of Order where applicable and consistent with the

governing documents of the chapter and the Society. The administrative council acts by majority vote of the administrative council present, a quorum being present, except when a two-thirds vote (meaning two-thirds of those present), or a two-thirds vote of the entire administrative council, or any other vote is explicitly required by the bylaws.

Article V-COMMITTEES

Section 1. Formation

The President or administrative council requests the establishment of committees in support of chapter activities. Normally the President appoints a manager who then recruits additional members to fill the committee. Committee managers are encouraged to recruit at least three members for their committees. A committee manager serves until a successor is appointed. Administrative council approval of committee appointments is not required. The former committee manager is responsible for orderly transition of tasks once a successor is appointed.

Section 2. Committees and their Functions

All standing committees help the administrative council fulfill its responsibilities to the membership.

The Washington, DC Chapter's standing committees may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Audit Committee
- Community Service
- Bylaws
- Competitions
- Education
- Employment
- Events
- History
- Hospitality
- Membership
- Newsletter
- Nomination
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- Public Relations
- Strategic Planning
- Volunteers
- Web Site

The activities of each committee follow.

The **Audit Committee** verifies the chapter's accounts and assets. The audit compares deposit slips, receipts, and checks with ledger entries for accuracy; verifies that all expenses were appropriate for the chapter and were charged to the correct account; and checks that the books balance and correspond to the chapter's bank statements. The audit committee should maintain an inventory and verify the whereabouts of equipment and software assets purchased for use by the chapter. The auditor may not be an active Administrative Council member. One member of the audit committee shall have served previously as a chapter treasurer.

The **Bylaws Committee** advises the chapter members on matters associated with the chapter's and Society's governing documents, and periodically reviews their adequacy. The manager is a member of the administrative council (typically the secretary). Other members may include the past president, who serves as parliamentarian, and at least one member appointed by the committee manager. The committee formulates amendments to the bylaws that have been proposed in accordance with Article VIII and submits them to the administrative council with recommendations.

The **Community Service Committee** works on finding projects in which members of the Washington, DC Chapter can volunteer to help serve their community.

The **Competitions Committee** plans, organizes, and executes the annual Technical Art, Technical Publications, and Online Communication Competitions, collectively called the Technical Communication Competitions. Activities include the production and distribution of a Call for Entries, receipt of entries and entry fees, recruitment of judges, coordination of entries and judges for judging the entries, production and distribution of letters of award notification and judges' evaluations, production of the awards banquet

program and award certificates, presentation of awards, submission of qualified entries to the International Competition, and disposition of all other entries. One person has the responsibility for this committee's function and may appoint subcommittee managers for each competition and other roles as needed.

The **Education Committee** plans, organizes, and executes the annual Austin T. Brown High School Technical Communication Competition, and any other student scholarship programs sponsored by the chapter. Activities include the production and distribution of forms, receipt and judging of entries, production and distribution of letters of award notification, presentation of awards, submission of qualified entries to the International Student Technical Writing Competition, and disposition of all other entries. The committee also helps respond to inquiries about educational requirements and resources. Committee members may also participate in community educational programs.

The **Employment Committee** develops and maintains connections between potential employers and chapter members. It is intended to be an employment resource only. The committee advertises job opportunities, but does not screen or interview applicants.

The **Events Committee** identifies topics of interest to chapter members and recruits experts to speak on these topics at chapter programs. The committee plans, organizes, and executes five or more chapter programs from September through June and arranges other activities as directed by the administrative council. Duties include making arrangements for the program, location, food, and reservations; tracking the receipts and expenditures; preparing notices for the newsletter; preparing and disseminating reminder cards; and ensuring smooth execution of the program. The Events Committee works with the Public Relations Committee to publicize chapter events and works with the Hospitality Committee to arrange meeting facility and meal needs.

The **History Committee** collects information and photographs about the Washington, DC

Chapter, maintains lists of individual and chapter honors, and is responsible for archiving the chapter's historical materials.

The **Hospitality Committee** serves as the chapter's official greeter, welcomes guests and new members attending chapter programs or activities, introduces guests and new members to officers and other members, registers guests and members upon arrival at chapter programs, and collects payment for meals, as appropriate. The Hospitality Committee works with the Programs Committee to provide an accurate count for planning meals and space, and works with the treasurer to ensure proper accounting for monies received.

The **Membership Committee** recruits new members, maintains lists of current and prospective members, answers questions prospective members might have, and sends them an information packet. The committee provides mailing labels for the newsletter, program flyers, and other related chapter business; publishes lists of new chapter members in the newsletter; may develop and publish a chapter membership directory; and generally seeks to increase chapter membership.

The **Newsletter Committee** plans, solicits, and edits articles for the chapter's newsletter, which they publish on a monthly or bimonthly basis. Committee members also assist the Managing Editor in recruiting advertisements.

The **Nominations Committee** solicits candidates for the administrative council and works with the President and the Volunteers Committee to solicit volunteers for committee positions. The committee prepares nomination material for Associate Fellows and other Society awards or honors and performs such other duties as the President or administrative council may assign. Article VI (Elections) explains the election procedures. The Nominating committee is responsible for ensuring that people who vote are eligible to do so, and that each eligible voter submits only one vote. The Nominating committee may appoint tellers to assist with this task.

The **Public Relations Committee** plans and develops publicity for chapter events through

news releases to local newspapers, the chapter newsletter, and other publications and media as appropriate, or as directed by the administrative council. The committee creates and maintains a chapter brochure, coordinates publicity with other committees, prepares program announcement postcards, distributes publicity and copies of the newsletters to local student chapters, designs and updates the chapter's calling card with the scheduled programs for the year, and maintains a Public Relations binder of activities for the STC PR Competition.

The **Strategic Planning Committee** defines the chapter's mission and where the organization is headed for the next 3 years. The committee sets strategic goals for the chapter and defines ways for implementing those goals, evaluates the capabilities needed to meet the strategic goals, defines tasks needed to achieve critical success factors, and measures whether the strategy is being met.

The **Volunteers Committee** recruits volunteers for committees and chapter offices. The committee matches volunteers to tasks according to their interests and amount of time they are willing to give, maintains a database of on-call chapter members who work on different projects on an as-needed basis, and encourages committee managers to use volunteers and train them for future leadership roles.

The **Web Site Committee** maintains the chapter's Web site.

Article VI-ELECTIONS

Section 1. Timing

In April, the membership elects the chapter officers, and the current President works with the incoming President to recruit and appoint (with the current administrative council's approval) committee managers for the next program year. The new administrative council and committee managers are announced at the chapter meeting in May, published in the newsletter, and inducted at the last regularly scheduled chapter meeting of the program

year. The responsibilities held by the previous administrative council and its committees are officially transferred to the incoming administrative council and committees upon induction.

The President appoints the Nominating Committee manager, often an Immediate Past President or a senior member who is familiar with many chapter members. The Nominating Committee selects candidates, prepares ballots, and tallies and records the votes. To assist the President throughout the year, the Nominating Committee identifies volunteers for vacancies that may occur in officer and committee positions.

Section 2. Procedure

The Nominating Committee publishes requests for names of candidates for consideration for all elected positions in the newsletter, on the Web site, in e-mail announcements, and through verbal announcements at chapter meetings. Nominating Committee members may also contact individual members for recommendations. The committee reviews the qualifications and availability of the candidates.

If a First or Second Vice President does not wish to move up to the next level, candidates may be selected from among members who have managed at least one major committee for at least one year.

Not later than the February chapter meeting, the Nominating Committee submits the ballot and slate of candidates to the President. The Nominating Committee includes evidence of consent or approval from all nominees before placing their names on the ballot. No member can be nominated for more than one office in the same election. The President announces the nominations to the chapter membership at the February chapter meeting, through the chapter newsletter, on the chapter Web site or another Web site, or by a special mailing.

Whenever possible, the committee should offer more than one candidate for each position. The ballot shall offer a Yes and a No option for unopposed candidates. Voting instructions

should clearly identify the number of candidates for each office, when to return the ballots, and where to mail the ballots.

All ballots are secret, and members are not required to sign their ballots. However, the voter's name and address must appear on the return envelope.

The Nominating Committee counts and records the vote. A plurality of votes cast determines the candidate's election. A majority vote of the current administrative council resolves tie votes. If an unopposed candidate receives more negative than positive votes, the office is declared vacant.

The President notifies the chapter membership of the election results at the annual chapter business meeting in May and in the next issue of the chapter newsletter following the chapter business meeting.

Section 3. Voting Issues Other than Elections

Whenever possible, special chapter issues, such as amendments to the Chapter Bylaws, should be included on the annual election ballot. However, the administrative council, by majority vote, may authorize a special ballot.

If a special election ballot is issued to the chapter membership, follow the basic elections procedure:

1. The Nominating Committee creates the ballot and instructions. They inform all chapter members of the vote at least two weeks before the final date when ballots must be returned.
2. The Nominating Committee counts and records the vote. A majority vote of the current administrative council resolves tie votes.
3. The committee manager announces the results of the special ballot at the next monthly meeting and publishes them in the next issue of the newsletter following the election deadline. The Webmaster updates the chapter's Web site if any pages are affected by the election results.

Article VII-FINANCES

Section 1. Responsibility

The chapter Treasurer's responsibilities include ensuring accurate financial records and reporting. The chapter operates on a fiscal year basis from July 1 to the following June 30.

The Treasurer conducts an informal audit of the chapter's books before turnover to the incoming Treasurer. The Audit Committee reviews the monthly financial reports and the chapter's books with the treasurer once all expenses through June 30 are received. When the President or administrative council deems it necessary, the Audit Committee arranges for an audit of the chapter's books by a competent accountant.

Section 2. Deposits

The Treasurer must deposit chapter funds in any banking institution that is a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), or a credit union that is a member of the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund (NCUSIF).

Section 3. Disbursements

The chapter operates under a financial budget approved by the administrative council. The council must authorize payment for chapter expenses.

The Treasurer is responsible for all disbursements. Disbursements must be authorized in writing by the Treasurer and one additional officer (President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, or Immediate Past President).

The Treasurer will determine the amount of funding available to support one or more elected chapter officers to attend the annual conference.

Section 4. Required Reporting

The Treasurer must prepare and submit the annual financial report to the Society's

Treasurer by the Society due date, as close to June 30 as possible.

Article VIII-AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER BYLAWS

Section 1. Origination

An amendment to the Chapter Bylaws may originate with the administrative council, or with a written petition signed by at least 20 voting members of the chapter. Such resolution or petition is transmitted to the Secretary.

Section 2. Procedure

After the Secretary (or in the absence of a Secretary, a person appointed by the President) has formulated the proposed amendment in coordination with the originator, he or she submits the proposed change to the administrative council for review and consideration. The council reviews the amendment to ensure that it conforms to Society guidelines and Bylaws.

The administrative council may, by a three-fourths vote, adopt proposed amendments to Articles III (Membership), V (Committees), VI (Elections), and VII (Finances). Proposed amendments to Articles I (Name Goals), II (Powers and Constraints), IV (Administrative Council), and VIII (Amendments to Chapter Bylaws) must be referred to the membership at large by means of a ballot at least one month before the deadline for returning ballots.

To become effective, a bylaws amendment submitted to the membership requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the valid votes cast.

Chapter bylaws with the approved amendments are announced and made available to the membership at the earliest opportunity.

An article in the newsletter and on the chapter Web site informs the chapter members about the approved amendment. The Secretary sends a copy of the revised Chapter Bylaws to the Society office for inclusion in the chapter's file. A PDF file is posted to the chapter Web site and a copy is sent to the Director-Sponsor.

Section 3. Scheduled Review

The administrative council should review Chapter Bylaws at least once every two years to ensure that the Bylaws remain responsive to the chapter's needs.

Article IX-DISSOLUTION

The chapter has no power to effect its own dissolution. Only the Society board of directors may dissolve a chapter as described in Article IX (Chapters) of the Society Bylaws.

The chapter can recommend dissolution upon unanimous recommendation of the board of directors, followed by a concurring chapter vote of three-fourths of the votes cast, provided a quorum is present.

In the event of dissolution, the chapter administrative council continues in office until all legal and financial matters have been settled, including sending all chapter records and residual funds to the Society, and the Society board of directors has notified the chapter administrative council of the dissolution.