

BYLAWS OF THE STUDENT OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I – Constituent Chapters

Section 1. Chapter Petition

Any group of five or more students at a COCA accredited osteopathic medical school may petition for a chapter within the Association. The petitioners shall submit the SOMA New Chapter Application and supply any additional information or documentation requested by the Board of Trustees to be considered for new chapter status within the Association.

Section 2. Number of Chapters

There shall not be more than one such chapter at any osteopathic medical school, defined as an independent school, branch campus, or additional location.

Section 3. Chapter Benefits

Each chapter shall enjoy equal rights and representation within the Association and the House of Delegates as set forth in these Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 4. Granting of SOMA Chapter Status

SOMA Chapter status shall be granted by a simple majority ratification of the House of Delegates at the next meeting after a SOMA New Chapter Application is submitted.

Section 5. Chapter Officers

Each chapter shall elect as chapter officers: a President, a National Liaison Officer (NLO), a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, to serve as the Executive Board, except where the Region Trustee deems the chapter unable to elect a complete Executive Board due to extenuating circumstances. The Chapter may elect more positions, as it deems necessary. Any officer may hold a position in more than one student organization as long as a conflict of interest between the two positions does not occur. If a conflict does arise, it shall be the responsibility of the Region Trustee to settle the dispute in a manner that they deem necessary. If further measures are deemed necessary, the National SOMA President, with consultation by their counsel, shall determine the final decision regarding appropriate actions.

Section 6. Chapter Elections

Each chapter shall hold its annual election prior to the annual spring meeting of the SOMA House of Delegates. The election shall be an open election of all SOMA members of that chapter in good standing and shall follow all policies of the local chapter's college or university. Each new chapter may determine how they wish to select Chapter Leaders prior to approval of their local chapter by the HoD. This process should be determined in consultation with the school's administration.

Section 7. Chapter Officer Transition

It shall be emphasized that the outgoing Chapter President and NLO, as well as other local SOMA officers, should work closely with the newly elected officers to ensure a smooth transition of both the knowledge and workings of local and national SOMA for a period mutually agreed upon by the incoming and outgoing officers.

Section 8. Chapter Membership Drive

Each chapter is required to have their Fall Membership Drive completed and all required paperwork as outlined in the Governing Procedures of this Association submitted to the National SOMA Office prior to the date set by the Board of Trustees. Failure to comply with this regulation shall result in sanctions against the chapter as approved by the Board of Trustees.

Section 9. Local Chapter Attendance at National Conventions

1. **President and NLO Attendance.** National SOMA requires that, at a minimum, the local Chapter President and the NLO (or their proxies) attend all three SOMA conferences annually. See Article II, Section 3 for more details about attendance.
2. **Financial Assistance.** Should local chapters provide financial assistance to local officers for travel to conventions, National SOMA recommends that distribution of funding be determined by the local Chapter President and National Liaison Officer based upon:
 - a. Active participation in local SOMA activities.
 - b. Current or anticipated leadership in local or National SOMA.
 - c. Should disputes arise, the chapter's Region Trustee will be asked for their advice regarding distribution of funds.

ARTICLE II - Conferences

Section 1. Annual SOMA Conferences

SOMA will hold three conferences annually: the SOMA Spring Convention, the Summer Leadership Meeting and the SOMA Fall Convention.

1. **Spring and Fall Conventions.** SOMA will hold Spring and Fall Conventions annually. Where possible these shall coincide with D.O. Day on Capitol Hill and the AOA Osteopathic Medical Education Conference (OMED) respectively. The House of Delegates will be in session during the Spring and Fall Conventions. The Spring and Fall Conventions shall be open to all SOMA Members.
2. **Summer Leadership Meeting.** SOMA will hold a mid-year meeting annually. Where possible this mid-year meeting, known as the Summer Leadership Meeting (SLM), shall coincide with the AOA Annual Meeting and the AOA House of Delegates. The Summer Leadership Meeting shall only be open to Chapter Leaders.

Section 2. Attendance

1. **Chapter Leader Attendance.** In accordance with Article I, Section 9, attendance at all three SOMA conferences is mandatory for the Chapter President and NLO (or their proxies). This requirement begins at the SOMA Spring Convention after new Chapter Leaders have been elected. Outgoing Chapter President and NLO are also strongly encouraged to attend

Spring Convention, to ensure smooth leadership transition. If unable to attend any of the three conferences, Chapter Leaders are expected to notify the National President and their Region Trustee with the reason for their absence. If a chapter fails to meet the minimum attendance requirements, they will be notified of their offense, and an appropriate course of action will be determined by the Board of Trustees. Each offense will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

2. **General SOMA Member Attendance.** The Spring and Fall Conventions shall be open to all SOMA Members. A discounted cost will be available to all SOMA Members.
3. **Non-SOMA Member Attendance.** The SOMA Executive Director shall ensure an option is available for medical students (osteopathic, allopathic, and international), students of other health sciences, practicing physicians, related health care professionals, and members of related healthcare organizations that are not registered SOMA members to register and attend SOMA Conventions. The Board of Trustees shall establish a separate cost to attend SOMA Conventions for non-members.

Section 3. Osteopathic Principles and Practices

The Association shall be responsible for providing OMT tables at the SOMA National Conventions in order that OMT may be performed under adequate conditions, including supervision by a licensed osteopathic physician at OMT workshops, so that Association representatives may perform at their fullest potentials.

Article III – House of Delegates

Section 1. Addressing the House

All official members of the Association shall have the right to address the House of Delegates upon recognition by the Speaker of the House of Delegates. This recognition shall not entitle them to make or second motions. Only the two voting delegates for each chapter will be permitted to make or second motions.

Section 2. Requirements for Voting

1. **Quorum for the House.** A Quorum shall be required for the House of Delegates to conduct any business. A Quorum shall be defined as 50% + 1 of all occupied seats of the House of Delegates.
2. **Voting by the Speaker.** The Speaker of the House of Delegates shall vote only in the event of a tie vote, excluding officer elections. This one vote shall not count towards Quorum of the House of Delegates.

Section 3. Voting at House of Delegates Meetings

1. **Voting by Delegates.** Each Chapter present during Roll Call shall be entitled to two votes during the House of Delegates session. Members of a Chapter Delegation shall be given identifiers that indicate whether they are Delegates or Alternates. It is strongly recommended that one person control one vote; however, under extenuating circumstances where only one representative is available, one person may control both votes for their chapter. The ability of one person to control up to two votes, shall not be permitted during officer elections. Proxy voting between chapters shall be prohibited.

2. **Identification of Delegates and Alternates.** At the opening of the House of Delegates, each chapter shall provide to the Speaker of the House of Delegates, a list of two Delegates with voting rights and a list of Alternates who may vote in their absence. Persons shall be identified with SOMA-issued convention name tags indicating their "Delegate" or "Alternate" status. An Alternate can replace a voting Delegate provided they have been identified by the Speaker of the House of Delegates. Delegates and Alternates shall be required to provide photo identification if requested.

Section 4. Required Votes

All business, unless otherwise specified in the Constitution and Bylaws, shall be transacted by a simple majority of the votes cast.

Section 5. Order of Business

The order of business of the House of Delegates shall be determined by the Speaker of the House of Delegates with recommendations from the Board of Trustees, the Convention Director and the Executive Director, and shall be distributed at least fifteen days prior to the commencement of the meeting. The order of business shall only be changed by a vote of at least two-thirds of the House of Delegates.

Section 6. Robert's Rules

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th Edition shall govern the parliamentary procedures of all meetings of the House of Delegates.

ARTICLE IV - Resolutions

Section 1. Resolution Submission

Any member(s) of the Association may author a resolution by submitting the resolution, with at minimum one additional member co-author, to the National Parliamentarian at least twenty-one days prior to the next meeting of the House of Delegates.

Section 2. Late Resolutions

Resolutions submitted after the deadline, but before the opening of the House of Delegates, shall require a two-thirds vote of the House of Delegates to be debatable on the floor. The Speaker of the House of Delegates shall make recommendations to the House of Delegates on whether or not the resolution should be considered for business. Late Resolutions approved for consideration shall be referred to the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee and handled in the same manner as those resolutions submitted before the deadline.

Section 3. Emergency Resolutions

Resolutions submitted after the opening of the House of Delegates shall require a two-thirds vote of the House of Delegates to be debatable on the floor. The Speaker of the House of Delegates shall make recommendations to the House of Delegates on whether or not the resolution should be considered for business. Emergency Resolutions approved for consideration shall be debated on the floor of the House of Delegates without referral to the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee.

Section 4. Referral to the Resolutions Committee

All resolutions submitted in compliance with these Constitution and Bylaws shall be referred to the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee and reported to the House of Delegates during the annual convention in which they were introduced.

Section 5. Resolutions Affecting Chapters

Any resolution that names any specific SOMA chapter(s) will be discussed with the President(s) of such named chapter(s) prior to submission to the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee.

Section 6. Resolutions Committee Discussion

All proponents and opponents of the resolution shall be given a reasonable opportunity to appear before the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee during an Open Reference Meeting. The Resolutions Committee shall meet in executive session following testimony and submit a report of the committee's recommendations to members of this Association prior to the House of Delegates vote.

Section 7. Acceptance of Resolutions Committee Report

The House of Delegates shall either "approve," "approve as amended," "refer back to author," or "not approve" resolutions based on the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee Report in order to proceed with determining the policy of the Association. The resolved statements of resolutions approved by the House of Delegates will become a part of the SOMA Policies.

Section 8. Resolutions Committee

1. **Members.** The House of Delegates Resolutions Committee shall be composed of, at minimum, the following members: a Chair of the Resolutions Committee, a Vice-Chair, and two members from each region.
2. **Chair.** The National Parliamentarian shall serve as the Chair of the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee. The Chair of the Resolutions Committee shall also act as the SOMA Delegate to the AOA House of Delegates.
3. **Vice Chair.** The position of Vice Chair of the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee will be filled by the National Vice President. Should the Vice President choose not to fill this role, the Chair will retain the ability to nominate an alternate Vice Chair at their discretion, from current members of the Board of Trustees and National Board of Directors. The Vice Chair shall act as the SOMA Alternate Delegate to the AOA House of Delegates.
4. **Region Members.** At the Summer Leadership Meeting (SLM), each Region Trustee shall submit the names of two members from different chapters in their region to serve on the resolutions committee. The two members shall be elected by a simple majority vote in their region by the conclusion of SLM.
5. **Other Members.** The Chair retains the ability to nominate any additional members that they feel are necessary to complete the business of the Resolutions Committee.
6. **Duties.** The duties of the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee shall be to prepare a report listing their recommendations to amend and/or make corrections to the resolutions, in regard to punctuation, grammar, spelling, and citations within the Constitution and Bylaws of

the Association. The report shall also declare the committee's recommendation on each resolution submitted for that House of Delegates session; namely, that being to "approve," "approve as amended," "refer back to author," or "not approve."

Article V - National Board of Directors

Section 1. Members of the National Board of Directors

The National Board of Directors (NBD) shall be comprised of the following members:

1. Community Outreach Director
2. Convention Director
3. Diversity, Equity and Health Initiatives Director
4. Membership and Alumni Affairs Director
5. National Board of Directors Chair (shall also serve on the Board of Trustees)
6. Osteopathic Practice & Principles Director
7. Political Affairs Director
8. (Junior) Pre-SOMA Director
9. (Senior) Pre-SOMA Director
10. Professional Development Director
11. Public Relations Director
12. Research Director
13. Strategic Partnerships Director

Section 2. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible to serve in any National Board of Directors position, applicants shall be Osteopathic Medical Student Members of the Association and have attended two national SOMA Conventions. Additionally members shall meet one of the following eligibility criteria:

- Current or previous service as the President or NLO of a local SOMA chapter.
- Nomination by the applicants chapter President or NLO.
- Nomination by the Board of Trustee or National Board of Director member overseeing the Task Force or Committee for which the applicant serves.

The National Board of Directors Chair shall currently, or have previously served on the Board of Trustees or National Board of Directors. The Senior Pre-SOMA Director applicants shall currently, or have previously served as the Junior Pre-SOMA Director. In the event the Junior Pre-SOMA Director does not assume the role of Senior Pre-SOMA director, it is recommended, but not required, that applicants shall have currently or previously have served as National Officers or on the PreSOMA committee. For the positions of Convention Director, Membership and Alumni Affairs Director, and Strategic Partnerships Director, it is recommended, but not required, that applicants shall currently or previously have served as a National Officer.

Section 3. National Board of Directors Appointments

All members of the NBD shall be appointed by the incoming BoT officers, prior to the conclusion of the Spring SOMA Convention. They shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the spring session of the House of Delegates.

Article VI - National SOMA Budget

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of this Association shall be from June 1st through May 31st of each year. The books of account of the Association shall be closed as of the last day of May in each year.

Section 2. Annual Budget

The National Treasurer shall submit by June 1st, a National SOMA Budget Proposal to the Board of Trustees, who may accept, reject, or amend the budget proposal. After the budget has been accepted, it shall be presented at the annual Fall Convention to the chapter leaders and made available to all chapters upon request. All funding policies shall be outlined in the Governing Procedures.

Article VII – Board of Trustee Meetings

Section 1. Special Meetings of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall meet at the request of the National President or two or more of the members of the Board of Trustees. Notification shall be made at least seven days prior to the meeting.

Section 2. Quorum of the Board of Trustees

A Quorum shall be necessary to conduct the business of the Board of Trustees. A Quorum shall be defined as 50% + 1 of all occupied seats currently held by a Board of Trustee member. The National President, as Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, shall only vote in the event of a tie.

Section 3. Closed Meetings of the Board of Trustees

Closed meetings of the voting members are not considered contrary to the ideals of SOMA. Closed sessions may be called by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Trustees. Closed sessions may include consultation with members of the National Board of Directors or other persons having expertise on the discussed issue.

Section 4. Voting At Board of Trustees Meetings

Roll Call shall be made prior to any voting and the results included in the minutes of the meeting. All business, unless otherwise specified in the Constitution and Bylaws, shall be transacted by a simple majority of the votes cast. The results of the vote shall be included in the minutes of the meeting.

Section 5. Meeting Minutes

The Secretary will be responsible for keeping meeting minutes. All meeting minutes shall be typed, in the manner specified in the Governing Procedures, and submitted to the Executive Director within thirty days.

ARTICLE VIII – President's Advisory Cabinet

Section 1. Members

The National President may at his/her discretion appoint members to an Advisory Cabinet.

Section 2. Duties

Members of the Advisory Cabinet may coordinate with and advise the National President, but shall not establish policy

ARTICLE IX - Standing Committees, Subcommittees and Task Forces

Section 1. Creation & Duties of Standing Committees

The Standing Committees of SOMA shall be created by resolutions submitted to and approved by the House of Delegates. Job description and responsibilities of a Committee Chairperson are to be approved by a simple majority of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. Chairperson Selection

The Chairperson(s) of each Standing Committee shall be appointed by the National President and ratified by a simple majority vote of the Board of Trustees. For continuity of programs, the Chairperson(s) of each Standing Committee shall become an equal and integral component in the interviewing and subsequent selection of their immediate successor(s).

Section 3. Creation of Subcommittees

The Subcommittees of SOMA shall be created by approval of the Board of Trustees or the House of Delegates. The Chairman of a Subcommittee shall be appointed by the Chairperson(s) of the parent Standing Committee and ratified by a simple majority vote of the Board of Trustees.

Section 4. Creation of Task Forces

Task Forces shall be created at the discretion of the National President; these are established to facilitate new programs or new committees and are temporary in nature. The Chairperson(s) of each Task Force shall be selected by the National President. If program interest and needs continue for a period of two years, the Task Force is eligible to become a Standing Committee pending approval of the House of Delegates as per Section 1.

Section 5. Budget of Committees and Task Forces

The Chairperson(s) of each Standing Committee and Task Force will submit a tentative budget to the Treasurer for approval.

ARTICLE X - Affiliated Societies

Section 1. Society Application

Any autonomous national, state, territorial, provincial, or foreign medical student organization, which may desire to become an Affiliated Society, shall apply on a prescribed form, submit that its Constitution, Bylaws and Code of Ethics generally conform to those of this Association, and maintain an organizational structure which generally conforms to that of this Association.

Section 2. Granting Affiliate Status

Upon such application, the House of Delegates shall investigate and, finding satisfactory proof of a general agreement in policy and governing rules with those of this Association, issue affiliate status to any organization which does not duplicate the function or prerogatives of any presently affiliated organization.

Section 3. Convention Participation

Affiliated Societies may provide a non-voting member to the SOMA House of Delegates.

Section 4. Benefits of Affiliation

Affiliated Societies may be granted the privilege of attending the SOMA National Conventions and scheduling meetings with members if they do not conflict with the scheduling constraints of the SOMA conventions. Affiliated Societies shall be granted the opportunity to use National SOMA communication platforms to contact their current and potential members, at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. Affiliated Societies shall be granted the privilege of scheduling a meeting with the SOMA Board of Trustees by following the rules set forth in the Governing Procedures.

Section 5. Financial Obligations

National SOMA will not be held responsible for any financial obligations of any Affiliated Society and shall not act as a negotiating agent for any Affiliated Society in any business transaction. National SOMA shall not charge Association members for Affiliated Society activities and shall not collect dues for any Affiliated Societies.

Section 6. Cessation of Affiliation

Affiliated Societies shall have the option of terminating their affiliation with National SOMA by submitting a letter of intent from the affiliate's President to the SOMA National President by registered mail. The termination of the affiliation shall not take effect until the SOMA Board of Trustees has an opportunity to speak with the officers of the Affiliated Society. Upon concluding that the intent is verified, the SOMA Board of Trustees shall send a letter of confirmation of the intent to terminate the affiliation to the President or acting leader of the Affiliated Society by registered mail or appropriate electronic equivalent. The termination shall not take effect until the letter has been received by the aforementioned society. Societies shall be eligible to reapply for affiliation at the next House of Delegates meeting and shall follow the procedures outlined in Sections 1 & 2.

Section 7. Termination of Affiliation

The SOMA House of Delegates shall have the right to terminate the Association's affiliation with any society upon finding the actions or policies of the society violate the Constitution and Bylaws, Governing Procedures, or Code of Ethics of the Association. Upon these findings, the SOMA Board of Trustees shall investigate such violations and upon conclusion of such investigation, make a recommendation, in resolution form, to the SOMA House of Delegates. Voting on such a resolution shall be governed by the rules set forth in these Constitution and Bylaws, and the Governing Procedures. Affiliated Societies shall be entitled to speak at the SOMA House of Delegates when such a resolution is heard. Termination of the

affiliation shall take effect at the closing of the House of Delegates. Societies will be able to reapply for affiliation at the next SOMA House of Delegates meeting and shall follow the procedures outlined in Sections 1 & 2.

ARTICLE XI – The SOMA Foundation

Section 1. Definition

The Student Osteopathic Medical Association Foundation (SOMAF) is a fund within the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) who serves as the fiscal sponsor to SOMAF and is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation as established in November 1949 with the Employer Identification Number: 36-2967404. As a fund of the AOF, the SOMAF operates under the AOF's 501(c)(3) federal income tax exemption status as established by an Internal Revenue Service determination letter dated April 1951.

Section 2. Appointing the Foundation Chairperson

The current Governing Board of the SOMA Foundation shall interview candidates during the time following the National SOMA Summer Leadership Meeting in July and preceding the Fall National SOMA Convention in October and select an incoming Foundation Chairperson in accordance with their established SOMA Foundation Governing Policy. The SOMA Board of Trustees, upon submission of the nominee from SOMAF, must respond to the submission within forty-five (45) calendar days; if the forty-five (45) days pass without a response, the nominee for SOMA Foundation Chairperson will be considered confirmed.

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