

# Bylaws of the Student Osteopathic Medical Association

## ARTICLE I – Resolutions

### **Section 1. Resolution Submission.**

Any member(s) of the Association may author a resolution by submitting the resolution, with member co-sponsorship(s), 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 Resolution Committee.

### **Section 4. Referral to the Resolution Committee.**

All resolutions submitted in compliance with these Constitution and Bylaws shall be referred to the House of Delegates Resolution 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 Resolution Committee.

### **Section 6. Resolution Committee Discussion.**

All proponents and opponents of the resolution shall be given a reasonable opportunity to appear before the House of Delegates Resolution Committee during an Open Meeting. The Resolution 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 Resolution Committee Report.**

The House of Delegates shall either “adopt”, “not adopt”, or “adopt and amend” resolutions based on the House of Delegates Resolution Committee Report in order to proceed with determining the policy of the Association.

### **Section 8. Resolution Committee.**

1. **Members.** The House of Delegates Resolution Committee shall be composed of the following Active Members of the Association: Chair of the Resolution Committee, a Vice-Chair, and two members from each region, nominated by the Regional Trustees.
2. **Chair.** The National Parliamentarian shall serve as the Chair of the House of Delegates Resolution Committee. The Chair shall appoint all members of the House of Delegates Resolution Committee from the above nomination list and any other members who he/she feels necessary to complete the business of the Resolution Committee. The Chair of the Resolution Committee shall also act as SOMA Delegate to the AOA House of Delegates.
3. **Vice Chair.** The position of Vice Chair of the House of Delegates Resolution Committee will be filled by the current 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. The Vice Chair shall act as the SOMA Alternate Delegate to the AOA House of Delegates.
4. **Region Members.** At the Summer SOMA meeting, each Region Trustee shall submit the names of two members from different chapters in their region to serve on the resolution committee. The members shall be selected by a simple majority vote in their region by the conclusion of the Summer SOMA meeting.
5. **Duties.** The duties of the House of Delegates Resolution 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 adopt or not to adopt the resolution as presented and/or amended.

## ARTICLE II – National Board of Directors

### **Section 1. Appointed Members of the National Board of Directors.**

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

### **Section 2. Applicant Eligibility Criteria.**

In order to be eligible to serve in any National Board of Director position, applicants shall be active members of this Association and shall currently or have previously served as the president or NLO of a local SOMA Chapter or have attended two SOMA National Conventions and be nominated by their Chapter President or NLO. National Board of Directors Chair and Senior Pre-SOMA Director applicants shall currently or have previously served as National Officers. For the positions of Convention Director, Membership and Alumni Affairs Director, and Strategic Partnerships Director, it is recommended (but not required) that applicants shall have currently or previously served as National Officers.

## ARTICLE III – Constituent Chapters

### **Section 1. Chapter Petition.**

Any group of five or more students at an AOA-accredited osteopathic medical school may petition for a chapter within the Association. The petitioners shall sign the petition, date their signature and supply any and all additional information or documentation requested by the Board of Trustees as to its qualifications for membership.

### **Section 2. Number of Chapters.**

There shall not be more than one such chapter at any osteopathic medical school branch. Separate branches shall be defined as having separate administrations and separate student governing bodies.

### **Section 3. Chapter Benefits.**

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

### **Section 4. Granting of Charter.**

A chapter charter shall be granted by a simple majority ratification of the House of Delegates at the next meeting after petition for a charter is submitted.

### **Section 5. Chapter Officers.**

Each chapter shall elect as chapter officers: a President, a National Liaison Officer, 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 he/she deems necessary. If further measures are deemed necessary the National SOMA President, with consultation by his/her 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.

### **Section 7. Chapter Officer Transition.**

It shall be emphasized that the outgoing Chapter President, 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 Policies 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 National Liaison Officer (or their proxies) attend Fall and Summer Conventions, and that one outgoing and one incoming officer (or their proxies) attend Spring Convention. Other local officers and local chapter members are also encouraged to attend the Spring and Fall Conventions. Any exceptions to this policy shall be offered on a case-by-case basis by the Region Trustee for said chapter.
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 on:
  - a. active participation in local SOMA activities.
  - b. current or anticipated leadership in local or National SOMA.

When a local chapter provides funds for officers to attend the Spring Convention, one of those persons must be a newly-elected officer, if he or she chooses to attend. Should disputes arise, the chapter's Regional Trustee will be asked for his or her advice regarding distribution of funds.

## ARTICLE IV – Meetings

### **Section 1. Fall and Spring Meetings.**

The SOMA House of Delegates, the Board of Trustees, and the National Board shall convene at least twice a year for official meetings: one time being at the Annual Fall SOMA National Convention, which will coincide with the AOA Annual Convention & Scientific Seminar (OMED); and the second time occurring at the Annual Spring SOMA National Convention, which will coincide with D.O. Day on Capitol Hill.

### **Section 2. Mid-Year Meeting.**

The SOMA Board of Trustees, the National Board of Directors, and SOMA Chapter Leaders shall also meet at a Mid-Year Leadership Meeting to conduct the business of the Association and to observe and give input to the AOA House of Delegates on behalf of the students across the country. The meeting can be scheduled immediately before, during, or after the AOA House of Delegates as time and circumstances permit.

### **Section 3. Conventions.**

1. **OMT Tables.** 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.
2. **Attendance by non-SOMA members.** The SOMA Website Director shall ensure an option is available for medical students (osteopathic, allopathic, and international), students of other health sciences, practicing physicians, related health care professional, and members of related healthcare organizations that are not registered SOMA members to register and attend National SOMA Conventions. The Board of Trustees shall establish a separate cost to attend National SOMA Conventions for non-members.
3. **Meeting Attendance.** The constituent chapters are required to send at a minimum, the local President and the NLO (or their proxies) to the Fall Convention, and one outgoing and one incoming officer (or their proxies) to the Spring Convention. If unable to attend either Convention, Chapters are expected to notify the National President and 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 by National SOMA and an appropriate course of action will be determined by the Board of Trustees. Each offense will be evaluated on an individual basis.

#### **Section 4. Minutes of National SOMA Meetings.**

Each Regional Trustee shall be responsible for recording the proceedings of the Board of Trustees and the National Board and, if necessary, for the House of Delegates. All meeting minutes shall be typed, in the manner specified in the SOMA Process, and submitted to the National SOMA Office Administrator within thirty days.

## Article V – House of Delegate

#### **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 him/her 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 (this means 50% of the total delegate votes, which is two (2) times the number of constituent chapters, plus one vote).
2. **Voting by the Speaker.** The Speaker of the House of Delegates shall vote only in the event of a tie vote or whenever a ballot vote is taken; 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 provided with two voting cards. It is strongly recommended that one person control one voting card; however, one person may control up to and including all two cards for his/her chapter. 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 name tags indicating their "Delegate" or "Alternate" status. Before any business is undertaken by the House of Delegates, each Delegate and Alternate shall be identified and verified by the Speaker of the House of Delegates (or his/her designate), using at least one appropriate form of identification, be it SOMA-issued convention identification tag, school identification with picture, or federal or state-issued photo identification. An Alternate can replace a voting Delegate provided they have been identified by the Speaker of the House of Delegates.

#### **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 and the Convention Coordinator 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.

## Article VI – 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 Chairperson of the Board of Trustees only votes 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 Trustee 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.

## ARTICLE VII - 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. The duties of the Standing Committee shall be to organize and submit policy in their appointed area to the Board of Trustees and/or the House of Delegates and to appoint matters to their given Subcommittees. Job description and responsibilities of a Committee Chairperson is 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 comprised of the new programs or committees submitted for approval that are given a temporary status. Task Forces can be established and their Directors chosen at the discretion of the National President. Each Task Force Director shall have all the responsibilities of a National Board member, including representation at local and National SOMA meetings. 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 Finance Committee for approval based on merit and participation.

### **Section 6. Expenses of Committees and Task Forces.**

Monies, less than \$100, allocated for committees under management of National Board members shall be controlled by the National Chairperson of each respective committee. Each National Chairperson shall be held accountable for excellence in their respective program as a result of this assumption of responsibility.

## ARTICLE VIII- 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 Charter.**

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 such a charter 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 respective members if they do not conflict with the scheduling constraints of the SOMA conventions. Affiliated Societies shall be granted the opportunity to use the National SOMA newsletters and other membership mailings to contact their current and potential members. 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 SOMA Process.

## **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, SOMA Policies, 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 the SOMA Process. Affiliated Societies shall be given the right to testify at the Board of Trustees and the SOMA House of Delegates Reference Committee meetings. 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 IX – The SOMA Foundation

**Section 1. Definition.** The SOMA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization incorporated in the State of Illinois and is designated as a 509(a)(3) supporting organization with SOMA acting as the supported organization.

**Section 2. Appointing the Foundation Chairperson.** The current Board of the SOMA Foundation shall interview candidates during the fall meeting of the House of Delegates and select an incoming Foundation Chairperson in accordance with their established Bylaws. The SOMA Board of Trustees will at their discretion approve and appoint the nominated incoming Foundation Chairperson.