

*Constitution*  
*And By-Laws*  
*Of the*  
*Washington Literary Society*  
*And Debating Union*

*At the University of Virginia*



Founded 1831  
Constitution Revised

1845 1861 1881 1898  
1903 1980 1992 1994  
2000 2002 2005 2010  
2012 2013 2014 2015  
2016 2017 2018

# Constitution of the Washington Literary Society and Debating Union

## Preamble

We students, of the University of Virginia, desiring to pursue the study of oratory, to acquire the power of debate, and to obtain general literary culture, do, for these several purposes, band ourselves in an association, calling it **The Washington Literary Society and Debating Union of the University of Virginia**, hoping that the name, recalling the deeds of the “Illustrious Father of American Liberty,” may animate us with the desire of devoting the power here acquired to the good of our country and weal of our countrymen. As we are thus associated in the pursuit of a common, noble object, it is our desire to be also closely united in the firm and lasting ties of friendship, thus proving ourselves worthy of the sentiments of our motto:

Quam Fluctus Diversi  
Quam Mare Conjuncti

## Article I

### *Membership*

#### **Section 1: Membership Criteria**

Any present or past student of the University of Virginia may become a member of this Society.

Our student organization does not restrict its membership, programs, or activities on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity, marital status, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, veteran status, and family and genetic information. Notwithstanding these requirements, a CIO may petition to restrict its membership based on gender (e.g. all-male or all-female a cappella groups) or an ability to perform the activities related to the organization’s purpose by filing a written request with the Office of the Dean of Students. In evaluating any such requests, the University will look not merely to the constitution of an organization but to its actual practices and operations.

#### **Section 2: Active Members**

Members must pay dues into the treasury each semester, in an amount fixed by resolution of the Society, if they are to be considered active. If dues are not paid within a period to be set at the

discretion of the Treasurer, the delinquent shall be notified by the Treasurer; if not paid within a second period after said notification, also at the discretion of the Treasurer, the delinquent shall be considered inactive.

### **Section 3: Provisional Members**

Individuals may become provisional members of the Society by signing the membership roll. A provisional member who completes at least one scheduled literary presentation, one scheduled debate, and who performs service for the Society in a semester, may be inducted into the Society at the end of the semester, provided that that provisional member has fulfilled all other requirements for active membership and has attended a proportion of meetings ranging from one half to two thirds, to be set at the discretion of the Vice President with the approval of the elected officers. The Vice President may include non-regular meetings of the Society towards this requirement with the approval of the elected officers.

### **Section 4: Honorary Members**

Any individual whom the Society deems worthy of its courtesy may be elected an honorary member by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular meeting.

### **Section 5: Resumption of Active Status**

Any inactive member of this Society may be reconstituted as an active member, unless said inactive member resigned or was expelled from the Society, by paying any dues owed for the semester.

### **Section 6: Resignation of Membership**

Whenever any member wishes to resign, that member shall make known their desire to the Secretary in writing, or to the Society via means of a general announcement, wherein that member shall state their reasons for resigning. Upon the receipt of the letter, or general announcement to the Society, said member may be permitted to withdraw.

### **Section 7: Expulsion of a Member**

Any member guilty of gross misconduct, or violation of the oath of membership, may be expelled from the Society by a 4/5 vote of the active membership of the Society. The charges must be made in writing to the Secretary one week before the vote can be taken. The Secretary must make all reasonable efforts to notify any member of the charges against that member in a timely manner.

### **Section 8: Induction**

The induction ceremony shall occur on the next-to-last meeting of each semester. The induction ceremony shall include but not be limited to the following: the President and members of the Society shall rise, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall escort the members-elect to the rostrum, the Secretary shall read the preamble, and the President shall administer the obligation, after which the provisional members shall sign the Constitution. No induction is necessary for honorary members.

### **Obligation**

Do you promise to yield obedience to the regulations of this Society, never to insinuate anything that may bring it into bad repute, and to aid by all honorable means in promoting the ends for which it was organized?

## **Article II**

### *Officers and Their Election*

#### **Section 1: Elected Officers**

The elected officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Reporter, and Sergeant-at-Arms.

#### **Section 2: Term of Office**

The term of office for all officers, save the Treasurer, is one semester. The term of office for the Treasurer is one year.

#### **Section 3: Rules of Election**

All officers mentioned in section one of this article shall be elected by ballot, provided there is more than one candidate. A majority of votes cast shall be necessary for election. If after the first ballot there is no majority, at least one candidate shall be removed from the ballot and a vote shall be taken on as many as three candidates receiving the highest number of votes; and if the second ballot be indecisive, the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes shall be dropped, and the contest shall be between the two remaining candidates.

#### **Section 4: Time of Election**

The elections shall be held on the last meeting of each semester to select officers for the following semester. In case the election is not completed, it shall be the order of the day at each succeeding regular meeting of the Society until all the officers are elected.

#### **Section 5: Entry of Office**

The officers shall be installed and enter upon their duties immediately upon election.

#### **Section 6: Oath of Office**

The President shall administer to the President-elect the following oath, and the latter shall then in like manner install the other officers:

### **Oath**

Do you solemnly promise to faithfully execute the duties of your office, to uphold the Constitution, and to endeavor, by all honorable means, to promote the welfare of the Society?

### **Section 7: Eligibility**

No member shall be able to serve in the same office for more than four successive semesters. Only active members of the Society who are presently students at the University of Virginia may serve as officers. No person shall be eligible to hold more than one elected office in any given semester.

### **Section 8: Selection of Candidates**

Members who wish to declare candidacy for a particular office may submit a memorandum to the President before the elections meeting. The President shall also accept nominations for each elected office from the floor immediately before each election. The President shall announce the election for each office in the order specified in section one of this article. The President will yield the floor to each candidate in the reverse order of the candidates' nominations.

### **Section 9: Decorum**

Once the President has yielded the floor to the candidate, no member of the house shall interrupt the candidate until that candidate yields the floor. The President shall ask the candidate to yield the floor when that candidate's time limit has elapsed. If the President deems that the candidate has strayed from topic of a question or has resumed giving their speech, or if the candidate persistently ignores or postpones the questions of certain members of the house, the President may interrupt the candidate and ask said candidate to adhere to election decorum.

### **Section 10: Time Limits**

Candidates for the offices of President and Vice President shall limit their speeches to ten minutes. Candidates for other offices shall limit their speeches to five minutes.

### **Section 11: Question Period**

After each candidate has completed speaking, the President shall invite the members of the house to ask the candidate questions. The candidate—who officially has the floor—will choose which questioners to answer. The question-and-answer period shall be closed by motion, after debate has been exhausted, or at the discretion of the candidate.

### **Section 12: Floor Speeches**

When all candidates have completed speaking, the President shall open the floor for discussion to all members of the house who are not candidates. No member may speak for more than five minutes. Once the President has yielded the floor, no member of the house may interrupt the speaker until the time limit has expired.

### **Section 13: Process of Voting**

After the tellers have collected the ballots, the President shall then ask twice, "Honorable members, have you all voted?" After which any member entitled to vote and desirous of so doing must come forward immediately and deposit their ballot. The President shall then declare the balloting closed, and no further ballots shall be recognized.

## **Section 14: Ballot Counting**

The tellers, after collecting the ballots, shall proceed to the Secretary's desk and shall then count the ballots; the Secretary shall make a memorandum of the result and deliver it to the President, who shall announce the result. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall see that no one save the tellers and the Secretary be near the desk when the vote is being canvassed.

# **Article III**

## *Duties of Officers*

### **Section 1: General Duties**

All officers shall show appropriate decorum during meetings and at all times when they are representing the Society.

### **Section 2: President**

The President shall preside at the meetings of the Society. The President shall preserve order and decorum in the hall; shall construe and enforce the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society, shall appoint all committees named in this Constitution, ordered by the Society, or created by the President; shall appoint and have the power to remove all non-elected officers and officers pro-tempore; shall convene all called meetings of the Society hereinafter provided for in the Bylaws; and shall give notice of every election at least one week beforehand. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees of the Society.

The President shall impose all fines and read them before the Society at the next meeting. The President shall also decide on all excuses for non-performance of duty.

On the night of installation, the President may deliver an inaugural address.

### **Section 3: Vice President**

In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall occupy the Chair and perform all the duties of the presiding officer. The Vice President shall also be responsible for orientation of provisional members, for recording the attendance of provisional members at meetings, and for recording the fulfillment of the provisional requirements. The Vice President shall be responsible for all presentations including debates and literary readings. The Vice President shall serve as ex-officio chairperson of the Topics Committee.

### **Section 4: Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall collect and keep all funds of the Society and disburse the same. The Treasurer shall keep in a book complete and correct records of all accounts of the Society, including, but not limited to, all receipts and disbursements, expenditures, outstanding debts owed to and by the Society, and other documentation pertinent to the financial standing of the Society. Additionally, the Treasurer shall keep a separate account detailing the financial relations and standing of each member with the Society. The Treasurer shall be responsible for

completing and filing all necessary documentation with the appropriate federal and state agencies regarding the tax and corporate status of the Society. The Treasurer shall make a full report at the last executive meeting of the officers and when requested by the President. The Treasurer shall serve as ex-officio chairperson of the Medals Committee. The Treasurer may request the assistance of other members in the performance of related duties.

The Treasurer shall prepare a budget and Student Activity Fund (SAF) request at the request of the President. The budget and the SAF request shall be prepared and presented to the Society before the SAF deadline at the request of the President.

The Treasurer shall collect all unpaid fines in an efficient and timely manner.

The Treasurer shall furnish the Secretary on the night of the Presidential elections a list of the members entitled to vote.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer, Secretary, and Historian to deposit with the Librarian of the University the Society records when they are filled.

The books and records kept by the Treasurer shall be subject to review, as determined necessary by the President, by a committee of members appointed by the President. This committee shall include no more than five appointed members and no fewer than three appointed members. The committee shall appoint one of its members to make a full report to the Society on the last regular meeting of the semester in which the review occurs. This committee shall be created for the sole purpose of reviewing the books and records of the Treasurer and shall be dissolved immediately following the report to the Society.

### **Section 5: Secretary**

The Secretary shall keep a careful record of the proceedings of the Society; shall carefully preserve all the records and documents that may be entrusted to the Secretary's care; shall transcribe in a book kept for the purpose all amendments and additions to the Constitution and to the Bylaws of the Society; shall call and record the roll at the beginning of every meeting; shall record into the minutes book all fines imposed upon any member of the Society by the President; and shall perform all duties naturally incident to the office of Secretary. The Secretary shall also be the ex-officio chair of the Semester Awards Committee. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer, Secretary, and Historian to deposit with the Librarian of the University the Society records when they are filled.

### **Section 6: Reporter**

It shall be the duty of the Reporter to handle all publicity for the Society. The Reporter shall serve as ex-officio chair of the Contests Committee. The Reporter may, with the aid of other members, produce a magazine for the Society, and may do so in conjunction with another organization.

## **Section 7: Sergeant-at-Arms**

The Sergeant-at-Arms shall see that on election nights none but active members are admitted to the hall and that during the induction ceremonies none but members of the Society are admitted to the hall. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall act as the President's ministerial officer in enforcing order. The Sergeant-at-Arms may appoint, when necessary, one or more temporary assistants to aid in enforcing order. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall be responsible for organizing social functions as directed by resolution of the Society.

## **Section 8: Appointed Officers**

The President shall, within that President's tenure of office, appoint at least the following positions: an Alumni Chair, an Historian, a Parliamentarian, and a Provisional Chair.

The Alumni Chair shall keep records of all of the Society's graduated membership and shall assist in coordinating contact between the Society and its alumni.

The Historian shall keep records of all of the Society's activities and dealings, both private and public. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer, Secretary, and Historian to submit the semester's records to the University of Virginia's special collections in order to have those records placed in the Washington Society archives. The Historian shall prepare, in the spring of each year, a slide show to be presented at the Finals Banquet. The Historian shall be the keeper of the lore of the Society, and shall be in charge of organizing a history meeting each semester in order to educate the membership about the Society's past.

The Parliamentarian shall advise the President and other officers, committees, and the general membership about parliamentary procedure. The Parliamentarian's role during a meeting is purely an advisory and consultative one, since parliamentary rules give the Chair final authority to rule on any question of order or to answer inquiries about procedure. The Parliamentarian shall be the keeper of the Society's rules of parliamentary procedure.

The Provisional Chair shall assist the Vice President in educating provisional members in the art of oratorical rhetoric and debate; shall assist the Vice President in the integration of new members into the Society; shall be responsible for the organization of social gatherings of the provisional class in order to build a sense of unity therein; shall be available on an *ad hoc* basis to work individually with members of the provisional class. The Provisional Chair shall, in conjunction with the Vice President, organize workshops to educate the provisional class in the art of oratorical rhetoric and debate; including but not limited to holding practice debate rounds and listening to literary presentations and oratorical expositions.

## **Article IV**

### *Duties of Committees*



### **Section 1: Topics Committee**

This committee shall consist of members appointed by the President and shall be chaired by the Vice President. This committee shall submit to the Vice President potential topics for debate.

### **Section 2: Special Debates Committee**

This committee shall consist of members appointed by the President and shall organize debates between the Society and other groups. It will meet with the Jefferson Society to organize the Harrison humorous debate and Ethics debate, to be held in the fall semester, and the Smith Simpson foreign policy debate, to be held in the spring semester.

### **Section 3: Contests Committee**

This committee shall consist of members appointed by the President and shall be chaired by the Reporter. This committee shall plan and administer all public contests of the Society.

### **Section 4: Semester Awards Committee**

This committee shall consist of members appointed by the President and shall be chaired by the Secretary. This committee shall organize the selection and presentation of Semester Awards.

### **Section 5: Medals Committee**

This committee shall consist of members appointed by the President and shall be chaired by the Treasurer. This committee shall be responsible for informing the Society of medal nomination dates and the medal selection process. The Medals Committee shall administer votes on medals and award the medals at the Society Banquet.

### **Section 6: Banquet Committee**

This committee shall consist of members appointed by the President. It shall be the duty of this committee to make all necessary arrangements for the Final Celebration Banquet, which celebration shall take place each year on or near the anniversary of the birthday of George Washington.

### **Section 7: Tournament Committee**

This committee shall consist of members appointed by the President and shall be responsible for organizing and holding a high school tournament in competitive debate and oratory. The committee chair shall be the Director of the high school tournament. The Tournament Committee shall be empowered to determine the staff of the high school tournament, subject to the President's approval.

### **Section 8: Scholarship Committee**

This committee shall consist of members appointed by the President. This committee shall be responsible for coordinating the Washington Society's scholarship with Alumni Hall and selecting the recipient or recipients of the scholarship. This committee is only required during the Spring Semester.

## **Article V**

### *Intercollegiate Debate and Forensics*

#### **Section 1: Intercollegiate Teams**

The Society may sponsor one or more teams to compete in intercollegiate debate or forensics tournaments.

#### **Section 2: Team Members**

Teams sponsored by the Society may only consist of active members of the Society and persons who have paid a fee determined by resolution of the Society into the treasury.

#### **Section 3: Director**

Each team shall have a director appointed by the President who shall organize practices, trips to tournaments, and other activities of the team.

#### **Section 4: Treasurer**

Each team shall have a Treasurer who shall manage all funds for the team, shall keep detailed accounts of all monetary transactions, shall prepare a budget, and shall submit all requests for reimbursement to the Treasurer of the Society.

#### **Section 5: Fundraising**

Each team, for purposes of fundraising, may organize a tournament or other activities.

## **Article VI**

### *Regular Exercises*

#### **Section 1: Regular Program**

The regular program of the Society shall consist of at least one literary presentation and at least one debate, not necessarily in that order. The Vice President shall have power to appoint orators to take part in the regular program.

#### **Section 2: Announcement of Format**

Before each meeting the Vice President shall notify the Secretary of the format of the meeting. The Secretary shall then detail the format in a program to be distributed at the meeting.

#### **Section 3: Voting on Debate**

After the conclusion of the debate, the house shall have two votes, one on sentiment and one on the quality of the debate.

#### **Section 4: Commentary**

After the debate has been voted upon, one member of the Society may be called upon to deliver a brief commentary on the debate.

#### **Section 5: Attendance at Meetings**

The meetings of the Society shall be opened to visitors at all times except during elections, when no one but active members shall be admitted, and during the induction ceremony, when only members of the Society shall be admitted. The Society, however, may exclude at any time by a majority vote all visitors for one particular night. Visitors or members may be excluded from one particular meeting when, in the opinion of the Chair, their conduct interferes with the progress of the meeting. The Chair may be overruled in this regard by a 2/3 majority of active members present.

### **Article VII**

#### *Societal Contests*

##### **Section 1: Judges**

The winners of Societal Contests shall be chosen by judges selected by the Contest Committee.

##### **Section 2: Fall Contest**

The Society shall, each fall, sponsor a public contest for non-original oratory, and present an award for the best speech.

##### **Section 3: Spring Contest**

The Society shall, each spring, sponsor a public contest for original literary endeavor, and present an award for the best presentation.

### **Article VIII**

#### *Awards and Medals*

##### **Section 1: Semester Awards**

The officers of the Society shall present Semester Awards to the Society members deemed to have been the best debater, the best orator, and any other award deemed worthy by resolution of the Semester Awards committee for that given semester. These are unrelated to Annual Medals.

##### **Section 2: Annual Medals**

The Society may present annual medals to departing members they have deemed worthy of receiving such an honor. These medals shall be known as the "Meritorious Debate Medal," the "Meritorious Literary Presentation Medal," and the "Leslie Eliason Medal for Extraordinary

Contribution to the Society.” The Society may select zero or more candidates among the nominees to receive each of the three annual Society medals. An eligible nominee shall be one who intends to depart the Society within one year of their nomination. A member who matriculates from the University more than once may be eligible for nomination following each matriculation but may not receive the same medal twice. The Society may also present medals to alumni they have deemed deserving. This medal shall be called the “Alumni Medal for Service to the Society.”

### **Section 3: Leslie Eliason Medal for Extraordinary Contribution to the Society**

The Leslie Eliason Medal may be awarded to an active member that has gone beyond the podium and done the most to further the mission of the Society.

### **Section 4: Meritorious Literary Presentation and Meritorious Debate Medals**

The Meritorious Medals may be awarded to candidates that have made an outstanding contribution to the culture and wellbeing of oratory in the Society through literary presentation or debate. A candidate for Meritorious Literary Presentation or Meritorious Debate may be eligible for contributions of either humorous or serious material.

### **Section 5: Alumni Medal for Service to the Society**

The Alumni Medal may be awarded to an alumnus/alumna that has gone beyond the podium and done the most to further the mission of the Society.

### **Section 6: Procedures**

Nominations for each medal must be presented in writing to the President no later than one week before the day of voting. Nominees may not decline their nomination. The Secretary shall announce the nominees and provide, to the best of their ability, a summary of each nominee’s involvement in the Society to include all literary presentations and all debates performed by the nominee, including those during the nominee’s provisional semester.

At the first meeting of the spring semester, the Society shall vote for the Leslie Eliason, the Meritorious Literary Presentation, and the Meritorious Debate medals in that order.

Nominees for each medal shall be considered independently. After a speech is given on behalf of the nominee, additional comments shall be accepted from the floor, followed by a secret ballot. Any nominee who receives a majority of favorable votes shall be awarded the medal, and the President shall cast a ballot in the event of a tie. Only members of the Society who have been non-provisional members for at least one semester may be eligible to vote.

### **Section 7: Presentation of Awards and Medals**

Annual Medals shall be presented to recipients at the Society Banquet. Semester Awards shall be awarded once per semester.

## **Article IX**

### *The Badge and Pin*

#### **Section 1: Badge**

The badge of the Society, to be worn on public occasions, shall be a plain white satin rosette.

#### **Section 2: Pin**

The pin of the Society shall be of gold or silver and shall bear a symbol of the Society as set by resolution of the Society.

## **Article X**

### *Voting*

#### **Section 1: Eligibility for Policy Matters**

Only active members of the Society who have witnessed the entire debate on a question may vote in elections or on matters of policy before the Society. Candidates running for an elected office may vote in that election.

#### **Section 2: Eligibility for Other Matters**

Any member of the Society may vote in a decision to confer honorary membership status, or for the selection of the Finals Orator. Any member of or visitor to the Society may vote to determine the winner of a debate, or a procedural matter.

#### **Section 3: Proxies**

Under no conditions may a vote be cast by proxy.

#### **Section 4: Presidential Vote**

The President shall vote only in the case of a tie.

#### **Section 5: Abstentions**

Abstentions shall count neither to support nor to oppose any motion before the house.

#### **Section 6: Quorum**

One-fourth of active members shall constitute a quorum of the Society.

## **Article XI**

### *Amendments*

All propositions to amend or add to this Constitution, directly or indirectly, shall be stated in writing, laid on the table at least two weeks, and shall require a vote of at least two-thirds of those present and eligible to adopt them. No such member may abstain from such a vote.

## **Article XII**

### *Removal of Officers*

Any officer of the Society who, having been duly elected, shows inability to perform the duties of office so assigned efficiently, or neglects or omits to perform the same without reasonable, adequate or proper excuse, or any President who fails to keep order and enforce the Constitution, shall be liable to a removal of office by a two-thirds vote. The charges must be made to the Secretary in writing one week before the vote can be taken. The Secretary must also notify any officer of such charges made against that officer.

## **Article XIII**

### *Board of Trustees*

#### **Section 1: Purpose**

The purpose of the Board of Trustees shall be generally to assist in the proper management of the Society and its financial assets and possessions; to encourage and coordinate alumni participation; to advise the Society on all legal and financial matters; to assist with fundraising and contributions; to protect the rights and concerns of the Society whenever necessary; to ensure the Society's continuation and existence at the University; and to maintain Washington Hall upon its reacquisition.

#### **Section 2: Membership and Terms**

The membership of the Board of Trustees shall consist of six alumni of the Society as well as the Current President of the Society, who shall sit as a regular board member while serving. Board members shall be chosen by the President of the Society in the spring of each year. Members shall serve three-year terms, with two alumni members being selected each year. All past Presidents of the Society at the end of their terms as President shall automatically become ex-officio members of the Board, entitled to all the regular privileges of Board members, save voting.

### **Section 3: Operating Rules**

The Board of Trustees shall elect from among their membership a Chairperson and a Secretary and adopt such rules or bylaws as may be necessary for the fulfillment of their function. The Board shall meet at least once every twelve months. The Secretary shall notify all voting members at least two weeks before the meeting date as assigned by the Chairperson. Such notice may be waived by consent of all voting members of the Board.

## **Article XIV**

### *Succession*

#### **Section 1: Procedures**

In the case that an elected officer of the Society is no longer an officer due to removal, resignation, or other causes, a special election shall be held for the vacated office. The election shall be held at the meeting directly following the announcement of the vacated office. The announcement shall constitute the one-week notice required for elections in Article III, Section 2. Except when otherwise specified in this amendment, elections shall follow the procedures laid out in Article II.

#### **Section 2: Eligibility**

In addition to the terms set forth in Article II, Section 7, other elected officers may run for the vacated office on the condition that, should they win the office, they resign their former post. If this happens elections shall continue until all offices are filled.

#### **Section 3: Term Limits**

The partial term of office held by both the officer who vacates the office, and the one that fills it, shall count as a full semester toward the four successive semester limit set out in Article II, Section 7.

## **Article XV**

### *Tax Exemption*

#### **Section 1: Organizational Purpose**

This Society is organized exclusively for an educational purpose.

#### **Section 2: Reasonable Compensation**

No part of the earnings of this Society shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the Society shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article XV, Section 1. No substantial part of the activities of the Society shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Society shall not participate in, or intervene in, (including the publishing and distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidates for public office. Notwithstanding this or any other provision of these articles, the society shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by any organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

#### **Section 3: Asset Distribution**

Upon dissolution of the Society, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the Society is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.



# Bylaws

## Article I

### *Meetings*

#### **Section 1: Regular Meetings**

The Society shall meet each Thursday evening during the semester promptly at 8 o'clock.

#### **Section 2: Other Meetings**

Other official meetings may be convened by the President, after public notice is given.

## Article II

### *Penalties*

#### **Section 1: Penalties of the Society**

The penalties imposed by this Society shall consist of fines, suspensions, and expulsions. Fines may be assessed by the President as per Article III, Section 2.

#### **Section 2: Failure to Perform as Scheduled**

A member who fails to deliver an essay or an oration, or to deliver an exposition, or to debate when regularly appointed, shall be fined fifty cents.

#### **Section 3: Dereliction of Duty**

Any officer or member of a committee who fails to perform their official duty shall be fined no less than twenty-five cents nor more than five dollars.

#### **Section 4: Criminal Offense**

Any member found guilty of a misdemeanor shall be fined twenty-five cents.

#### **Section 5: Indecent Language or Action**

Indecent, personal, or scurrilous language or action shall be punished by a fine of one dollar.

## **Section 6: Miscellaneous Fines**

All fines in this section shall not be over twenty-five cents nor less than ten cents.

1. Interrupting the proceedings by loud conversation.
2. Persistence in resolutions, motion and remarks ruled out of order.
3. Speaking without rising and respectfully addressing the Chair.
4. Leaving or entering the hall while a member is speaking.
5. Presentation of a humorous anecdote which is met with silence or which is considered totally devoid of humor by four-fifths of the membership.

## **Section 7: Further Penalization**

If a fine is not paid within three weeks after imposition and no excuse is rendered therefore, the delinquent shall be notified thereof by the Treasurer, and then if not paid within one week after such notification, the fine shall be doubled, and thereafter ten cents per week shall be added until the fine is paid; if such fine is not paid within one month after such notification the delinquent shall be suspended and if such fine is not paid in one month the delinquent shall be suspended permanently and will stand expelled.

# **Article III**

## *Rules Governing the Exercises*

### **Section 1: Rules of Order**

The rules of Parliamentary Practice as set forth in the Robert's Rules of Order shall govern this Society in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws.

### **Section 2: Floor Speeches**

No debater shall be invited to deliver a floor speech during said debater's own debate. No member shall be invited to deliver more than one floor speech during a single debate.

### **Section 3: Regular Presentations**

Regular presentations of the Society shall include literary presentations and debates.

A literary presentation shall call for the President to yield the floor to a member to present or recite from a text of the member's choosing.

A regular debate shall consist of four debaters, two affirming and two negating the resolution set in advance by the Vice President. Each debater shall present a constructive speech not to exceed six minutes and one member from each side shall present a crystallization speech not to exceed four minutes.

A humorous debate shall consist of six debaters, three affirming and three negating the resolution set in advance by the Vice President. Each debater shall present a constructive speech not to exceed eight minutes. This format shall be adopted at the discretion of the Vice President.

A special debate shall follow the format adopted as a result of negotiations by the Special Debates Chair. This format may also be adopted for trial debates within the Society at the discretion of the Vice President.

## **Article IV**

### *Order of Business*

#### **Section 1: Order of Business**

1. Call to order
2. Recitation of the Motto
3. Special events and contests
4. Roll Call
5. Readings and action on the fines of the previous meeting
6. Reading and adoption of minutes of the preceding meeting
7. Special announcements
8. Announcement of program for current and next meeting
9. Selection of Annual Medals Recipients
10. Induction of provisional members into active membership
11. Election and Installation of officers
12. Inaugural address of the President
13. Treasurer's report
14. Report of committees
15. Unfinished business
16. New business
17. Notice of Elections
18. Presentations
19. Adjournment

#### **Section 2: Presentations**

The presentations shall include literary presentations and debate as provided for in Article VI, Section 1.

## **Article V**

### *Miscellaneous*

#### **Section 1: Presidential Address**

The President shall have the privilege of addressing the Society at any time after having called the Vice President or a member to the Chair.

#### **Section 2: Overriding a Decision of the Chair**

An appeal from the decision of the President, in order to be valid, must be sustained by two-thirds of voters.

#### **Section 3: Early Adjournment**

To adjourn the Society before the regular business has been transacted shall require a vote of two-thirds of the members present; and no member who has moved to adjourn shall be allowed to make similar motion during the same evening.

#### **Section 4: Invalid Excuses**

Ignorance of the Constitution and Bylaws shall not be regarded as an excuse for any offense.

#### **Section 5: Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the Society shall begin on June 1 and shall end on May 31.

## **Article VI**

### *Amendments and Suspension*

All propositions to amend or add to these Bylaws shall be stated in writing, laid on the table at least one week, and shall require a vote of two-thirds of active members present and eligible. No such member may abstain from such a vote. The Society, by a majority vote of the members present, may suspend any article or section of an article from the Bylaws for one evening.