

## SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION SECTION BY-LAWS

Approved 1994

The purpose of the Section on Sociology of Religion is to encourage and enhance research, teaching and other professional concerns in the study of religion and society. The Section seeks to promote communication, collaboration, and consultation among scholars in the field of the sociology of religion.

**Officers of the Section:** The Officers of the Section shall be a Chairperson, a Past-Chairperson, a Chairperson-elect, a Secretary-Treasurer, and a Council of seven members. The Chairperson-elect shall serve in that position for one year before automatically succeeding to a one-year term as Chairperson, followed by a one-year term as Past-Chairperson (making a combined three-year term). Six members of Council and the Secretary-Treasurer will serve three-year terms, with two Council seats being vacated each year. Offices shall not succeed themselves in the same position. The Chairperson, Past-Chairperson, Chairperson-elect, and Secretary-Treasurer shall also serve as members of the Council, with the following specific duties; the Chairperson of the Section shall serve as Chairperson of the Council and shall chair the Program committee; the Secretary-Treasurer shall take and circulate minutes, and keep and present official documents and financial records of the Section. The Seventh Council seat will be reserved for a graduate student, selected for a one-year term by a democratic process determined by the chair.

In the first-year election of the Council following establishment of the Section within the ASA, the Chairperson shall be elected for a term of one year only; further, two Council seats shall be identified as for a one-year term, two more as for a two-year term, and the remaining two as for a three-year term. Thereafter, each annual election will be for a Chairperson-elect and two Council seats, with Secretary-Treasurer elected every third year.

All voting members of the Section are eligible for election as Officers. If an elected office is vacated before the term is completed, it shall be filled for the unexpired term through appointment by the Chairperson, subject to confirmation by the Council at its next meeting.

**Powers of the Council:** The Council is vested with the power to carry out all necessary operations of the Section, acting as the representative of the membership of the Section. The Council shall make decisions at its scheduled meetings by a majority vote of its attending members and between meetings by mail, e-mail, conference phone call or any similar method designed to allow all Council members a chance to register their votes. Any action to be made on behalf of the Section will be brought to the next Section Business Meeting for a vote, if requested by three or more Council members. In addition, an action to be made on behalf of the Section may be brought to the next Section Business Meeting for a vote by a petition signed by 10 percent of the members of the Section or by 25 members, whichever is less.

The Council shall appoint a Newsletter Editor.

Unless otherwise provided in these by-laws, all appointments to Committees shall be made by the Chairperson with the concurrence of the Council.

**Election and Voting:** The elections of the Section shall be carried out by mail in cooperation with the American Sociological Association and coordinated to its schedule.

Newly-elected officers shall assume office immediately after the adjournment of the Business Meeting of the Section at the Annual Meeting of the ASA. A simple majority of the members voting for Chairperson-elect and Secretary-Treasurer shall determine the outcome, as it shall for all referenda or revisions of by-laws as may be submitted for vote. Otherwise, in the elections for seats on the Council (normally with four candidates for two positions), the two candidates having the largest number of votes shall be elected. In the case of a tie vote for a Council seat, the tie will be broken by a random process

**Committees:** The Committee on Nominations shall consist of the Past-Chairperson plus three additional members appointed by the Past-Chairperson. The Committee on Nominations each year shall solicit suggestions for nominations from the members; it shall name two candidates who are Section members in good standing for each office to be filled. These candidates shall not be announced until they have consented to serve. The Committee on Nominations shall also submit to the Council the names of persons to be considered for appointment to the other regular committees.

There shall be a Program Committee Consisting of at least three members appointed for one-year terms by the Program Committee Chair with the concurrence of the Council. The Chairperson of the Section shall serve as Chair of the Program Committee. Other members of the committee shall be appointed by the Program Committee Chair. The Program Committee shall develop sessions of interest to the Section at each annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in cooperation with the Program Committee of the Association. The Program Committee may also develop programs outside of this framework with the consent of the Council.

Other committees may be established by the Chairperson of the Section on an ad hoc basis, subject to approval by the Council.

**Membership:** The membership of the Section is open to any member of the American Sociological Association without regard to the classification of the membership. Members who do not pay their Section dues shall be suspended, and dropped from the rolls after two years.

**Dues:** Dues shall be set by the Council to cover the operation of the Section in accordance with the requirements of the American Sociological Association.

**Amendment of the By-Laws:** These By-Laws may be amended through a favorable majority vote of those voting at a Business Meeting, provided this action is subsequently confirmed through a favorable majority vote of those voting by a mail ballot to the Section membership.