

Constitution

Article I: Name

Section 1. This organization shall be known as the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (hereafter, the Society).

Article II: Objectives

Section 1. The Society seeks to promote the study of religions through those disciplines maintaining high academic, professional, and ethical standards as they employ valid and reliable scientific methods in their investigation. The Society seeks also to promote dialogue among the sciences and other disciplines engaged in systematic efforts to understand religion.

Section 2. Notwithstanding any of the purposes or objectives stated herein, the Society is organized exclusively for educational purposes and will not engage in any activities which are not contemplated by the provision of section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Society is not organized for profit, and no part of its net earnings shall be used to benefit members, officers, directors, or other private persons, except that the Society be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services.

Section 3. In the event of dissolution of the Society, any net assets shall be distributed to one or more organizations that have established appropriate exempt status under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or to a State or local government for public purposes.

Article III: Membership

Section 1. Membership is open to any person interested in the objectives of the Society. The forms and conditions of membership are set forth in the Bylaws.

Article IV: Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Society shall be a President, a Past-president, a President-elect, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

Section 2. A President-elect shall be elected by members from the Society's membership, serve one year in that position, then serve one year as President, after which a one-year term of Past-president shall be served¹. The Secretary and the Treasurer shall be appointed from the membership by the Executive Council, normally for a period of four years. The terms of Secretary and Treasurer may be extended beyond four years.

¹ Term of office changed from two years to one year in 2000.

Article V: Executive Council

- Section 1. The governing body of the Society shall be the Executive Council, with authority to interpret this Constitution and Bylaws, formulate policy, and conduct the general and fiscal affairs of the Society. It shall fill all vacancies not otherwise provided for, call regular and special meetings of the Society, and appoint such committees as are deemed necessary to achieve the objectives of the Society.
- Section 2. The Executive Council shall consist of: (a) the officers of the Society, (b) the Executive Officer [non-voting], (c) the Editors of the Society [non-voting], (d) six councilors, elected by members from the membership for three-year terms, two of which expire and shall be replaced each year. One councilor elected each year shall be a sociologist, and one councilor shall be from one of the other disciplines represented among the membership.
- Section 3. Members may not simultaneously hold two offices on the Executive Council.

Article VI: Executive Officer

- Section 1. The Executive Officer² is the chief administrative officer of the Society, the person primarily responsible for carrying out the decisions made by the Executive Council and acting on behalf of the Society between Annual Meetings.
- Section 2. The Executive Officer shall be appointed from the membership by the Executive Council, normally for a period of four years. The four-year term may be extended.
- Section 3. The Executive Officer shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Executive Council.

Article VII: Meetings

- Section 1. The Society shall hold an Annual Meeting for the transaction of business, presentation of papers, and general discussion of the scientific study of religion. The Executive Council may authorize additional meetings.
- Section 2. The Executive Council shall schedule and announce times and places of the Annual Meetings. This schedule shall be announced at least a year in advance and shall be at times and places where all accommodations are open to all members of the Society.
- Section 3. The Executive Council shall meet at least once during the Annual Meeting, at a time and place announced in advance to members, and shall be available to receive oral or written communications from members. A majority of the Council shall constitute a quorum at all meetings.
- Section 4. At least one Business Session, scheduled at a time not in conflict with other sessions, shall be held during the Annual Meeting, for the discussion of the business of the Society,

² Executive Officer name change in 1997 from Executive Secretary.

including the presentation of reports to inform members on matters of interest to the Society, and to permit response from the officials to questions and suggestions from the membership. All members of the Executive Council are therefore expected to attend the Business Session.

Article VIII: Publications

- Section 1. The objectives of the Society include publication of the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, which exists for the publishing of research articles and book reviews and such other material as the Executive Council may authorize.
- Section 2. The Editor of the *Journal* is appointed from the membership by the Executive Council, normally for four years, during which time the Editor is a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Executive Council. This term may be extended. The Book Review Editor is nominated from the membership by the Editor and is ratified by the Executive Council, as is any Editorial Board or Advisory Board for the *Journal*.
- Section 3. The Executive Council may authorize other regular or occasional publications, designating which shall go to members as part of their privilege of membership, but may not commit the Society to publication costs beyond existing or projected revenues without a vote of the membership to increase dues or otherwise finance the cost.

Article IX: Special Funds and Endowments

- Section 1. The Executive Council may solicit, receive, invest, and expend funds and the income therefrom for special purposes designed to further the interests of the Society.
- Section 2. The Executive Council is responsible for creating such committees or boards as may be proper to achieve the objectives stated in Section 1 above. Said committees or boards shall be governed by policies and procedures established by the Executive Council.

Article X: Amendments

- Section 1. The Constitution may be amended, or a new Constitution adopted, if two-thirds of the eligible voters voting in a mail ballot approve.
- Section 2. A proposed change in the Constitution shall be sent to the members for a vote

when: (a) initiated or endorsed by the Executive Council, (b) submitted in a petition signed by fifty or more voting members, or (c) endorsed by a majority vote at a Business Session of an Annual Meeting, providing at least one hundred members are present.