

CONSTITUTION OF ALPHA OMEGA ALPHA

REVISION ADOPTED 2004

ARTICLE I. NAME

Section 1

This organization shall be called Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, the three Greek letters ΑΩΑ being the initials of the essential words in the following motto:

Ἀξιοζώφελειν τοὺς ἀλγοῦντας
"Worthy to serve the suffering"

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP AND AIMS

Section 1

Individuals eligible to be elected include:

- Medical students who have excelled academically and have shown promise of becoming leaders in the profession.
- Physicians (residents or fellows, faculty, and alumni/ alumnae) who later have demonstrated such leadership.
- Physicians or scientists who have attained distinction in any worthy line of endeavor and are not eligible for election by any other means. These individuals are elected by the Board of Directors as honorary members.

Section 2

The Society is organized for educational purposes exclusively and not for profit, and its aims shall be the promotion of scholarship and research in medical schools, the encouragement of a high standard of character and conduct among medical students and graduates, and the recognition of high attainment in medical science, patient care, and related fields.

ARTICLE III. INSIGNIA

Section 1. Badge of the Society

The official badge of this Society shall be in the form of a key or key-pin, and shall be designed after the *Manubrium Sterni*. The face shall have engraved thereon the three Greek letters ΑΩΑ and 1902, the date of organization of the Society.

Section 2. Certificate of Membership

The certificate of membership in this Society shall be of such design and wording as the Board of Directors approves. It shall bear the seal of the Society and the signatures of the President and Secretary.

Section 3. Seal of the Society

The seal of this Society shall consist of a circular wreath of laurel in the inside of which, near the wreath, shall be placed the motto in Greek. Inside of this the words, Alpha Omega Alpha, and below this "Organized in 1902."

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP AND GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Section 1. General

The function and influence of the Society depend upon the wisdom with which members are elected. Candidates are

selected for membership of a chapter as medical students, residents or fellows, faculty, and alumni/ alumnae not members of that faculty of medicine.

Individual chapters, through their members, including students, residents and fellows, and faculty, shall establish procedures to apply the national criteria for election of new members.

All members of the chapter are eligible to vote. Each candidate shall be balloted upon separately at a meeting of members convened for that purpose or by mail. Election shall require a majority vote of those in attendance.

No candidate shall be denied election because of race, color, creed, ethnic origin, age, gender, or any other characteristic prohibited by the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action laws of a state, province, territory, or nation.

Section 2. Medical Student Memberships

- Those candidates whose scholastic qualifications place them in the upper twenty-five percent of their class shall be considered for election. From that number, one-sixth of the total number of the class expected to graduate may be elected to membership. In those medical schools that have no graded standings for students, the Dean or his/her designee can provide to the chapter Councilor the names of students that approximate in number the upper quartile of the class expected to graduate and who, by consensus, match the high criteria for selection to membership (see section 2c.).
- Up to one-half of the quota for any class may be elected to membership in the spring of their junior year. Each chapter, each year, may determine whether or not to elect members from the junior class. Chapters may choose to elect all or a portion of their quota of student members at any time during the senior year prior to graduation. Each chapter is encouraged to save one or two positions in each class of students for seniors to be elected close to time of graduation, in recognition of notable achievements during the final year of undergraduate medical education.
- Criteria for election:* Scholastic achievement should be the primary but not sole basis for election of a student. Leadership capabilities, ethical standards, fairness in dealing with colleagues, potential for achievement in medicine, and a record of service to the school and community at large should be criteria in addition to the academic record. These additional attributes will be weighted in the selection process by policies established within each chapter.
- Method of election:* Individual chapters, through their members, including students, residents, fellows, and faculty, shall establish procedures to apply the national criteria for election of new members. Each eligible candidate shall be considered separately. If academic records and/or personnel files of eligible candidates are reviewed in connection with the election

process, the chapter must contact the Dean's office to determine if the specific written consent of students is required prior to this review. If so, that must be obtained from eligible students before the election process. Only the Chapter Councilor or the Councilor-designated alternate member(s) should have access to grades or class standing of students. Conflicts arising about choices of students for election will be resolved within the institution.

- e. Students who have taken part of their medical school education elsewhere will be eligible for election to the Society after being in attendance for one academic year in the medical school of the electing chapter.
- f. Elected candidates may only be inducted into the Society after the membership fees to the local chapter and to the national AΩA office have been paid.

Section 3. Resident and Fellow Memberships

Residents and fellows who were elected as medical students to the Society are automatically members of the chapter of the medical school sponsoring the educational programs in which they are enrolled.

In addition, each chapter may elect to membership in the Society each year up to three residents or fellows, after their first year of residency or fellowship. Such election shall be based on continued achievement and promise referred to in Article II and Article IV.

Section 4. Alumni/Alumnae and Faculty Memberships

The provision for election by each chapter of up to two alumni/alumnae members and two faculty members each year provides a means of recognizing and honoring individuals who have distinguished themselves in their professional careers. Inasmuch as the number of individuals eligible for election in these two categories is limited, chapters should evaluate carefully the professional and personal stature of nominees.

- a. Alumni/Alumnae: Graduates of medical schools in which a chapter exists, who were not elected as students, residents, or fellows, but who, after ten years or more following graduation are judged on the basis of achievement to be qualified, may be elected to membership in their medical school chapter.
- b. Faculty: Members of the sponsoring school's Faculty of Medicine who hold an earned doctoral degree (M.D., Ph.D., or equivalent) and have demonstrated a commitment to scholarly excellence and medical education may be elected to the chapter of that school.

Section 5. Honorary Membership

The Board of Directors may elect physicians or others to honorary membership who have attained national or international recognition in teaching or research, or in leadership roles that are relevant to medicine, and who are not eligible for election through other means. Election shall be by unanimous vote.

Section 6. Membership Transfer and Reciprocity of Membership

Members of the Society may join the activities of the chapter nearest to the location of their continued professional activity by contacting the Councilor of that chapter.

Members not residing near a chapter may become affiliated with an Association or help in the founding of an Association (Section 7).

Section 7. Associations of Alpha Omega Alpha

Groups of ten or more society members may, upon approval of the Board of Directors, form an Association of Alpha Omega Alpha in medical schools, cities, or districts where a chartered chapter does not exist.

The function of these Associations will be to foster intellectual and social exchange among the AΩA members forming the Association, and they may not elect members of any type to the Society.

Associations are formed and disbanded at the pleasure of the President of AΩA. Members desiring to form an Association may request a membership listing in a given area. The national office of AΩA should then be petitioned by providing a list of ten or more dues-paying members and their addresses, and a brief statement of plans for activities. They should elect officers who will submit a yearly summary of activities and members to the Executive Secretary of AΩA.

Section 8. Membership Revocation

The Board of Directors may, at its discretion and by unanimous vote, revoke the membership of any member or honorary member for proven behavior that is in conflict with the national criteria for election, or that is inconsistent with the goals and purposes of AΩA as outlined in Article II, Section 2.

ARTICLE V. ORGANIZATION AND CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. General

The general management of the Society shall be vested in the Board of Directors, the officers elected by it, and an advisory council comprised of sixteen regional Councilors. The Board of Directors shall conduct the business of the national organization of Alpha Omega Alpha.

Nominations to the board shall be made by a nominating committee chaired by the Vice-President and comprised of three regional Councilors and three additional members of the board, each chosen by the President.

Section 2. Officers

The officers shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and elected by majority vote of the Board. The latter two offices may be combined, if approved by the Board.

Section 3. Executive Secretary and National Office

The national office shall be directed by an Executive Secretary, chosen by the Board, who will be responsible for implementation of all activities of the society, for maintenance of all society records, and for reports on the state of the society each year to the Board.

Section 4. President

The President shall be elected by the Board to serve for one or more terms of three years or until a successor is duly elected and installed. He or she shall be the executive head of the Society and shall, with the approval of the Board of Directors, administer the business of the Society not otherwise provided for by the Constitution.

Section 5. Vice-President

The Vice-President shall be elected by the Board to serve one or more three-year terms, or until a successor is duly elected and installed. The Vice-President shall serve as the presiding officer in the absence of the President. In the event of death or

resignation of the President, the Vice-President shall assume the office of President until a new president is elected.

Section 6. Secretary

The Secretary shall be elected by the Board to serve for a term of three years. The Secretary shall perform the usual duties devolving upon such officer, including but not limited to keeping a complete record of all members and their addresses, and such other data as the Board of Directors may require.

Section 7. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be elected by the Board for a term of three years, and shall perform the usual duties of such officer. At the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, the Treasurer shall present a written report of the financial standing of the Society that includes a detailed statement of all monies received and expended during the preceding year. The Treasurer shall be bonded to such sum as the Board of Directors may require.

Section 8. Installation of Officers

The officers will be installed at the time of their election.

Section 9. Composition of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of fifteen members elected by the Board of Directors and installed after each annual meeting of the Board. Nine shall be Members-at-Large, each elected for a three-year term. Members-at-large are limited to three consecutive terms.

Three shall be Councilor Directors who are Councilors of AΩA chapters at the time of their election to the Board of Directors. Each shall be elected for one three-year term.

Three shall be student members of the Board, one elected each year to serve a three-year term. The student shall be elected so that he or she would serve in his or her senior year of medical school and first two years of residency. Nominations for student membership to the Board shall be submitted by Chapter and Regional Councilors, and the student members will be elected by the Board.

Section 10. Meetings of the Board

The Board of Directors shall meet at the call of the President or any six members of the Board at such place as may be decided. It may conduct business by correspondence, including facsimile transmission and electronic mail, and votes so taken shall be binding. A record shall be kept of its action, and report thereon shall be made to the next annual meeting of the Board.

Section 11. Removal of Officers

The Board of Directors shall be empowered to remove officers for cause and to fill vacancies by majority vote.

Section 12. Advisory Council

The Advisory Council shall be formed of the regional Councilors appointed by the Board. The Advisory Council shall convene upon the call of the President of the Society.

The function of the Advisory Council shall be to advise the Executive Secretary and the Board regarding the activities of the regional Councilors and chapters, and to make recommendations concerning any aspect of chapter activities including chapter officers.

ARTICLE VI. CHAPTER OFFICERS

Section 1. Composition

The officers of each chapter shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Councilor. The offices of

Secretary-Treasurer and Councilor may be held by the same person. As soon as chapter officers are chosen, the Councilor shall assure that their names, school addresses, and other pertinent information are promptly sent to the national office of Alpha Omega Alpha.

Section 2. Chapter Councilor

The Councilor, who must be a member of the Faculty and of the Society, shall be appointed by the Dean of Medicine on the recommendation by the chapter to serve for three years. He or she may be reappointed to successive three-year terms. He or she shall be responsible to the Faculty and to the officers of the Society for the operation and well-being of the chapter.

Section 3. Election of Chapter Officers

The President and Vice-President will usually be student members elected for one year and shall perform the duties usually devolving upon such officers.

Section 4. Chapter Secretary-Treasurer

The Secretary-Treasurer shall be a member of the Faculty and of the Society, shall serve for three years, and may be re-elected to successive three-year terms at the discretion of the chapter. He or she shall maintain accurate records of newly elected members. These records will furnish the full name, date of election and induction, and other required data concerning each member. After election of each new member, the Councilor shall assure that the full name, date of election and induction, year of graduation, and other required data, are promptly sent to the national office of Alpha Omega Alpha.

ARTICLE VII. CHAPTER MEETINGS

Section 1

At least two meetings shall be held each academic year at times and places decided upon by the chapter officers in consultation with the Councilor.

Section 2

A meeting to discuss the election of student members shall be held at least once a year. Other meetings for any purposes may be called at the discretion of the chapter President in consultation with the Councilor.

An annual Alpha Omega Alpha address by a distinguished member of the medical profession or other appropriate speaker should be sponsored by each chapter. The address may be given on the same day as the annual dinner for the recognition of new members.

Section 3. Voting

All members of the chapter are entitled to vote at a chapter meeting or in response to receipt of a ballot by mail. Each chapter shall establish the number of members constituting a quorum for the transaction of chapter business and election of members.

This Society since its inception has been an organization of medical students; therefore, every effort should be made to stimulate and maintain student interest in the Society and its mission. Chapters are urged to engage in activities in which medical student members may take part.

Section 4. Fiscal Matters

Chapters may institute local membership dues at a level agreed upon by a majority of members constituting a quorum at the annual chapter meeting. Other methods of fund raising for the chapter must have the approval of the Executive Secretary

acting on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Society.

ARTICLE VIII. CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1

The executive committee of a chapter shall consist of the chapter officers and the Chapter Councilor.

Section 2

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for arranging the meeting programs, for providing a suitable speaker to deliver the annual Alpha Omega Alpha address, for the nomination of candidates for election, and for the transaction of necessary business in the intervals between chapter meetings.

ARTICLE IX. NEW CHAPTERS

Section 1

A chapter may be chartered at a College or School of Medicine that meets the Society's requirements. An application signed by the Dean and by at least six members of the Faculty of Medicine who are members of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society shall be sent to the President, and forwarded by him or her to the Chair of the Committee on New Chapters. Upon receipt of a favorable report from this Committee, the President or the Secretary shall submit the application and recommendation to the Board of Directors. If the application is approved by the Board of Directors, the proposed charter shall be granted.

Section 2. Form of Charter

The form of the granting of charters shall be as follows:
"Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, by virtue of the authority granted to it by the State of Illinois, herewith grants to the power to establish a chapter of this Society at subject to the Constitution governing said Society. In token of these presents are herewith affixed the signatures of the President and the Secretary, with the corporate seal of the Society."

ARTICLE X. SUSPENSION AND WITHDRAWAL OF CHARTER

Section 1

The charter of any chapter or Association of Alpha Omega Alpha may be suspended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. During such suspension the chapter shall not elect or induct new members. The Board may reinstate a chapter by the same mechanism.

Section 2

The procedure for the withdrawal of a charter shall include:

- a. An investigation convincing to the Board of Directors that such action is desirable and a unanimous affirmative vote of the Board to that effect.
- b. Formal declaration by the President of withdrawal of the charter.

Specifically, any chapter inactive for five years will be so notified and disenfranchised after expiration of a one year's grace period to allow the given chapter to consider and implement reactivation. Further, the charter of a chapter in a school that loses its accreditation will be invalidated and the chapter cannot elect new members. "Inactivity" of a chapter will be determined by the Board based on recommendations by the appropriate regional Councilors and the Executive Secretary.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION

Section 1

Proposals for amendment of the Constitution shall be submitted through the President to the Board at least ninety days before the next annual meeting of the Board.

A two-thirds majority vote by the Board in favor shall be necessary to adopt any amendment to the Constitution.

ARTICLE XII. OTHER PROVISIONS

1. Committees

- a. A standing Committee on New Chapters shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors. This committee shall, upon direction by the President, investigate applicant institutions and make recommendations thereon to the Board of Directors.
- b. An Executive Committee shall be appointed, consisting of the officers, and additional members as appointed by the officers. The duties of the Executive Committee shall be to transact the business of the Society in the interim between meetings of the Board of Directors.
- c. The Board of Directors shall appoint such other committees, temporary or standing, as may from time to time be required.

2. Fees and Dues

- a. The initiation fee to the Society will be established by the Board of Directors and may change from time to time as it may deem necessary.
- b. Annual sustaining dues, which shall include an annual subscription to the Society's quarterly journal, *The Pharos*, shall be set by the Board of Directors and shall be payable to the Secretary-Treasurer upon receipt of notice. The fee for lifetime sustaining dues will be set by the Board of Directors.

3. Fiscal Policy

- a. The Board of Directors must approve an annual budget. There shall be an annual audit
- b. The fiscal year shall extend from September 1 to August 31.

4. Publication Policy

- a. *The Pharos* shall be the official publication of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. The Board is the publisher of *The Pharos* and responsible for editorial policy and management.
- b. The Editor of *The Pharos* shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and provide an annual report to the Board.
- c. Advertisements will not be included in *The Pharos* without the consent of the Board of Directors.
- d. The editor of *The Pharos* shall be an ex officio member of the Board of Directors of the Society and may also serve as Executive Secretary of the Society at the discretion and direction of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XIII

For all purposes this Constitution shall constitute the corporate Bylaws of the Society.