



THE SOCIETY FOR REFORMATION RESEARCH

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

The specialization of historical studies, the importance of the Reformation, broadly interpreted as the various religious movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and their impact on society, and the significance of the Reformation for subsequent centuries have prompted the formation of this organization and its incorporation on 23 July 1947 under the “General Not for Profit Corporation Act” of the State of Illinois.

Article I: NAME

The name of this organization is THE SOCIETY FOR REFORMATION RESEARCH (hereinafter referred to as “the Society”).

Article II: OBJECTIVES

This Society has been established in order

1. To promote the study of the Reformation,
2. To foster research in all aspects of the Reformation period,
3. To assist in the dissemination of the results of such research through publications, lectures, conferences, annual meetings, and any other suitable media, and
4. To promote cooperation with organizations having objectives similar to those of this Society.

Article III: MEMBERSHIP

Any person who is in sympathy with the objectives of this Society and who is ready to promote them shall be eligible for membership.

Article IV: OFFICERS AND MANAGEMENT

1. The officers of this Society shall be a president, vice-president, recording officer, and treasurer.
2. Management of this Society shall be vested in an Executive Council which shall consist

of the following: the above-named officers, the program secretary and any program chairs, the membership secretary, the North American editor(s) of the *Archive for Reformation History*, the immediate past president, the nominating committee, and four members of the Society elected by the membership of the Society.

3. The nominating committee shall consist of three members elected by the membership of the Society.

Article V: AMENDMENTS AND CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION

1. Amendments and changes in this constitution or its by-laws may be proposed by the Executive Council or through a petition signed by at least twenty percent (20%) of the membership.
2. Proposed changes must be mailed either by post or electronically to the membership by the membership secretary at the direction of the president at least (60) days prior to the business meeting at which they are to be discussed.
3. Within thirty (30) days after the business meeting, all members will receive a mail ballot either postal or electronic concerning the proposed changes. All ballots must then be returned to the membership secretary within sixty (60) days.
4. A simple majority of all votes cast shall be necessary to change or amend the constitution or by-laws of this Society.

Article VI: DISSOLUTION

1. Dissolution of this Society shall be pursuant to a vote of the members present at a business meeting of the Society provided that prior notice was given to the membership at least sixty (60) days before the date of the meeting. Notice shall be given by the membership secretary at the direction of the president. Absent members of the Society may vote by mail ballot either postal or electronic.
2. A two-thirds majority of all ballots cast shall be necessary for dissolution. In the event of the dissolution of this Society, the manner of disposition of the Society's assets, after all legal liabilities have been satisfied, shall be proposed by the Executive Council and voted upon by the membership by mail ballot either postal or electronic. A simple majority of votes cast shall determine the matter.

BY-LAWS

Section I: CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Any person eligible under Article III of this constitution shall become a voting member of this Society upon payment of the annual dues as set by the Executive Council of this Society.
2. Members whose dues remain in arrears at the time of any election shall not be sent ballots for said election.
3. The Executive Council of this Society may grant honorary membership for life to individuals who have made significant contributions to Reformation studies, or who have promoted the objectives of this Society in outstanding ways. Members in this category shall have voting rights in this Society but shall not be required to pay dues.
4. Institutions and/or libraries subscribing to the *Archive for Reformation History* or any other publication or services of this Society shall be designated as “subscribers,” and shall not be franchised.

Section II: ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF OFFICE

1. The president shall serve for a two-year term and shall not be eligible for re-election.
2. The vice-president (president-elect) shall be elected for a two-year term and shall succeed automatically to the office of president upon completion of retiring president’s term.
3. The immediate past president shall serve for a two-year term on the Executive Council immediately after his/her term as president ends.
4. The recording officer shall be elected for a four-year term and shall be eligible for reelection.
5. The treasurer and the membership secretary shall be elected for a five-year term and shall be eligible for re-election.
6. The program chairs shall be appointed for three-year terms by the president upon consultation with the vice-president and the Executive Council. They shall be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term.
7. The four Executive Council members-at-large shall be elected for four-year terms in such a way that one member shall be elected each successive year. They shall not be eligible for re-election until five years after the completion of their terms of office.
8. The members of the nominating committee shall be elected for three-year terms in such a way that one member shall be elected each successive year. The member in his or her third year of service shall serve as the chairperson. The president shall be as ex-officio member of the nominating committee. Its members shall not be eligible for re-election.
9. The nominating committee shall make one nomination for each elective position of the Society. It shall forward its nominations to the recording officer no later than September 15 of any calendar year. Nominees to the offices of vice-president and president shall be persons who have shown substantial interest in the affairs of the Society. Nominees must be members of the Society in good standing at the time of their nomination.

10. The names of nominated officers shall be presented to the members of the Society for approval at the business meeting held in conjunction with the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference. The recording officer shall notify members of the results of all elections. Following the election, the outgoing nominating committee chair shall notify all successful candidates.
11. Officers, members of the Executive Council, and members of the nominating committee shall assume their duties on January 1 following their election.

Section III: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. The president shall be the chief executive officer and spokesperson of the Society and normally shall preside over all its meetings and those of the Executive Council of and prepare agendas for such meetings. The president shall maintain and promote contacts with other learned societies, in particular with the Verein für Reformationsgeschichte. He or she after consultation with the vice-president and program secretary shall be responsible for the scholarly programs of the Society. The president shall have the power, upon consultation with the vice-president, to make interim appointments to fill any vacancies in the elective offices of the Society until the next regular election.
2. The vice-president shall preside over all meetings of the society or of the Executive Council in the absence of the president. He/she shall consult with the president and the program secretary regarding the scholarly programs of the Society and shall assist the president in any manner that the president and the Executive council deem necessary and proper.
3. The recording officer shall be responsible for the Society's records and correspondence, keep minutes of all meetings of the Society and the Executive council, make all necessary preparations for the annual meeting at the Sixteenth Century Studies Society and Conference, function as the parliamentarian, and at the request of the presiding officer render authoritative interpretations of the constitution and by-laws of the society. He/she notifies the president and heads of relevant committees when actions need to be completed, assures that all elections and committee activities are completed in a timely fashion, and notifies the members of election and other results as stipulated in Section II, 8 of the by-laws.
4. The membership secretary shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the membership rolls of the Society in accordance with Section I, 2 of the by-laws, and of sending notices of membership renewal to all members in conjunction with renewal notices for the *Archive for Reformation History* and the *Literature Review* for the year.
5. The program committee consists of the program secretary and any additional program chairs that the Executive Council authorizes. The program secretary is responsible for the overall coordination and planning of SRR-sponsored sessions, while the program chairs may provide assistance at specific conferences. The program secretary and chairs shall provide the recording officer with a record of all the programs of the Society in time for distribution to the Executive Council and the membership before the Society's annual meeting.
6. The treasurer shall be responsible for the collection, safeguarding, and expenditure of the funds of the society. He or she shall be responsible for financial planning in furtherance

of the Society's current objectives as outlined by the Executive Council. The treasurer shall be empowered to make investments on behalf of the society, to accept cash or endorse checks made out to the society, and write checks for the society. He or she shall report annually to the Executive Council and to the business meeting on the financial condition of the society.

Section IV: THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

1. The Executive Council shall meet at least once a year. Six members of the Executive Council and the president or, if he or she is unable to attend, the vice-president shall constitute a quorum. The agenda for meetings shall be prepared by the recording officer, authorized by president, and circulated to the members of the Executive Council at least fourteen days before the meeting.
2. Upon written request of at least four of the members of the Executive Council the president shall, with due notice as stipulated in Section IV, 1 of the by-laws, call the Executive Council into session.
3. The Executive Council shall appoint or authorize the president to appoint such standing and/or ad hoc committees as it deems necessary for carrying out the Society's business.
4. The Executive Council shall by simple majority vote appoint the North American editor(s) of the *Archive for Reformation History*, whose term of office shall be six years, and who shall be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term.
5. In case there is no quorum at the annual meeting of the Executive Council, the president shall conduct the business of the society in consultation with the members of the Executive Council until the next regularly scheduled business meeting of the society.
6. The Executive Council shall report to the members through the president at the annual business meeting of the society.
7. The Executive Council shall be responsible for the general oversight of the financial affairs of the society. It shall review the treasurer's annual financial report and make appropriate budgetary and financial recommendations to the membership at the annual business meeting of the society.
8. The Executive Council shall have responsibility for the general operation of the society during the period between the business meetings of the society.

Section V: MEETINGS

1. Normally the Society shall meet for scholarly purposes at most three times a year, in conjunction with the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference in the fall, the American Historical Association in the winter, and the International Congress of Medieval Studies in the spring. The Executive Council and business meetings will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Sixteenth Century Society and Conference.
2. Although the responsibility for and final decision concerning the scholarly programs of the Society rest with the president after consultation with the vice-president and the program committee as stipulated in Section III, 1 and 2 of the by-laws, the programs shall be prepared on the basis of suggestions or proposals made by the membership at large, in

order to involve the members, both established and younger scholars, as much as possible.

3. A business meeting of the Society shall be held at least once a year. Members of the Society shall be informed of such a meeting at least thirty (30) days before its date. The president in consultation with the Executive Council shall determine its time and place.
4. If the president or Executive Committee feels it appropriate, discussion of and decisions about Society business as occur at a business meeting may also take place online. Such discussions and decisions would need to be routed to all Society members, and if a vote is necessary, the membership must be given seven (7) days to respond.

Section VI: CORRESPONDENCE AND RECORDS

1. All correspondence and records generated in the service of this Society are the Society's.
2. Both digital and hard copy archives of the Society shall be established at H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies at Calvin College or a subsequently designated depository. The archive shall be stored and catalogued in keeping with the procedures currently established at the Meeter Center and relevant library or at the subsequently designated depository. Current officers and members of the Executive Council may access the material at any time.
3. Upon completion of any officer's term in office, any correspondence and records in either digital or paper form shall be transmitted to that officer's successor. It is the new officer's responsibility to retain the records for his/her tenure of office and that of his/her immediate predecessor.
4. Also, upon completion of any officer's term of office, any correspondence and records in either digital or paper form generated during his or her tenure shall be transmitted to the archives of the Society within one month of the expiration of his/her own term of office. Thus each officer must transmit his/her own records to the successor and the predecessor's records to the Society's archives.
5. Only once an officer has determined that correspondence and records from previous holders of that office have been successfully archived and are accessible to other officers of the Society may he/she delete records on computers or in files that are over six years old.
6. Officers must also send copies of important Society documents to the Society's archives. Such records may include this constitution, minutes of meetings, and contracts with the printer of the *Archive for Reformation History*, etc. The Council may also earmark certain documents for inclusion.

Section VII: PRIZES

The Society currently administers two prizes awarded in alternate years: the Miriam Usher Chrisman Travel Fellowship and the Bodo Nischan Award for Scholarship and Civility. The following section considers both the establishment of new prizes and the maintenance of existing ones.

1. Members of the Society must initiate all proposals for new prizes.
2. All those wishing to establish a new prize must present a written proposal to the Executive Committee sixty (60) days before the annual meeting. The proposal must include: (1) the reasons for establishing the prize; (2) financial provisions for the prize; (3) criteria for determining recipients; (4) methods for assessing applications and/or recipients; and (5) timing and method of awarding the prize.
3. Prize proposals will be discussed at the Executive Council meeting and edited to conform to the Council's decisions. The proposal will then be sent to the president and recording officer, at a minimum, for further review and, if appropriate, distribution to the general membership.
4. The general membership will have thirty (30) days to discuss the proposal. After that time, the recording officer will distribute a ballot to all members, and they will have sixty (60) days to return the ballot to the recording officer. A prize will be successfully established if fifty percent (50%) of the returning ballots vote for its establishment.
5. Once a prize is established, a committee of the Executive Council will draw up procedures for (1) choosing the prize committee; (2) collecting, distributing, and evaluating applications; and (2) awarding and announcing prize winners.
6. Once a prize is approved, the treasurer will establish an accounting line for that prize and inform the Executive Committee when sufficient funds exist to begin awarding the prize.
7. Once the prize can be awarded, the Executive Council will appoint a committee of at least three members. While the chair should be a member of the Council, the other members are not required to be. Every effort should be made to have the committee reflect the Society's diverse membership and interests.
8. The recording officer, president, and chair of the prize committee shall review alterations to the procedures for prizes.