

Teachers College Alumni Association
Bylaws

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Article I – Name, Purpose, and Relationship to College

Section 1.1. Name.

The name of the organization is the Teachers College Alumni Association (“Association”).

Section 1.2. Purpose.

The mission of the Association is (Re)Connecting Alumni to Teachers College, Columbia University (“College”) through events, alumni recognition, and other projects.

Section 1.3. Relationship to College.

Section 1.3.1. Legal Entity.

- A. The Association, its members, its Alumni Council, and all its committees and constituents operate only under the auspices and at the sole and express direction and authority of the College, as represented by the Office of Alumni Relations (“Alumni Relations”).
- B. The Association, its Alumni Council, or any committee or subcommittee are not independent legal entities.
- C. No independently incorporated alumni group or other entity may use the College name, save in cases approved explicitly by the College.

Section 1.3.2. The Office of Alumni Relations.

- A. Alumni Relations is the liaison between the Association and the College.
- B. All budget and other resources are provided to the Association by the College through Alumni Relations.
- C. Representatives of Alumni Relations shall be present, as non-voting members at each Council meeting and at every Association meeting as ex-officio members.
- D. At least one Office of Alumni Relations staff member is appointed as a liaison to each Association Committee and is present for their Association Committee meeting(s).
- E. Alumni Relations and the College maintain exclusive and sole authority and control over the Association, and reserve the right to dissolve the Association if they deem it necessary.

Article II – Association Membership

Section 2.1. Association Membership.

The Association is a non-dues-paying body, consisting of all persons who have earned a degree or certificate, or have taken coursework towards a degree from the College or held a non-degree College-sponsored appointment, such as visiting scholars, post-docs, and Fulbright scholars. Members have no voting rights.

Members of the Association may serve on Alumni Association Committees and if elected, on the Alumni Council.

Section 2.1.1. Member in Good Standing.

To be considered a member in good standing, individuals must adhere to all applicable College policies and procedures as well as federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations.

Article III – Alumni Council and Association Committees Purpose and Responsibilities

Section 3.1 Purpose.

Section 3.1.1. Alumni Council Purpose

The purpose of the Alumni Council (“Council”) is to be the coordinating body for and voice of the Association serving solely as an advisory body representing the Association to the administration of the College, as represented by Alumni Relations.

Section 3.1.2. Association Committees Purpose

The Association Committees carry out the mission of the Council through their work.

Section 3.2. Responsibilities for Alumni Council and Association Committee Members.

- A. Work with the College to maintain the brand and reputation of the College.
- B. Foster lifelong identification and involvement with the College worldwide.
- C. Recognize and share excellence and professional/academic achievement of students and alumni.
- D. Support the College in its strategic initiatives.
- E. Recommend and support College-sponsored alumni activities.
- F. Promote professional development and networking between alumni and among all members of the Teachers College and Columbia University communities.
- G. Help the College obtain financial support, especially alumni participation in the TC Annual Fund.
- H. Support the enrollment of qualified graduate students.
- I. Promote hiring TC alumni in the workplace. Encourage alumni to hire fellow alumni or students by recommending job opportunities to the Career Education and Professional Development department.
- J. Act as an effective channel of communication between the alumni and the College.
- K. Prepare for and attend meetings, either in person or remotely. In advance of an anticipated absence, inform Alumni Relations.
- L. Whenever possible, attend College events in New York, especially Academic Festival and Convocation Ceremonies, and any Association events in their region.
- M. Conduct themselves in a professional manner at Council and Committee meetings, as well as in communications with other Council members, the staff of the College, fellow alumni, and other affiliates.

- N. Protect and maintain the privacy of fellow Alumni Association and Council members by agreeing not to utilize any Alumni lists or contacts to market their own or third-party goods and services. Alumni lists and contacts may be used only for purposes expressly stated by the College.
- O. Participate in New Member Orientation.
- P. Complete onboarding process and acknowledgement form.

Article IV – Alumni Council

Section 4.1. Size and Structure.

Section 4.1.1. Size.

The Council consists of up to twelve voting members and up to three non-voting members.

Section 4.1.2. Voting Council Members.

The Council consists of the four Council Officers (defined in Article V) and two Co-Chairs from each of the four Association Committees (defined in Article VII).

Section 4.1.3. Non-voting Council Members.

One representative from the Board of Trustees, the Student Senate, and the faculty of the College may be invited by the College President to serve as non-voting liaisons from their respective groups.

Representatives of Alumni Relations shall be present, as non-voting members at each Council meeting.

Section 4.2. Eligibility.

Voting Members of the Council must:

- A. Hold an earned degree from the College.
- B. Have served on an Association Committee for at least one year.
- C. Actively participate in Association committee work, displaying leadership capacity.
- D. Be a member of the Association, in good standing.
- E. Contribute to the TC Annual Fund.

Section 4.3. Authority.

The Council has the authority to:

- A. Create annual strategic goals aligned with the goals of Alumni Relations.
- B. Approve the proposed goals and charters of each Committee annually.

Section 4.4. Working Groups of the Council.

All members of the Council must serve on one Working Group of the Council.

Section 4.4.1. Governance Working Group.

The Governance Working Group is responsible for:

- A. Facilitating the nomination and election process for President-Elect and Secretary.
- B. Facilitating the selection of Committee Co-Chairs.
- C. Reviewing bylaws every three years.
- D. Reviewing policies and procedures that promote the mission of the Association and recommending amendments to the Council, as necessary.
- E. Reviewing membership standing annually, or as necessary.

Section 4.4.2. Awards Working Group.

The Awards Working Group is responsible for:

- A. Selecting the annual Distinguished Alumni, Early Career and Alumni Award for Outstanding Service.
- B. Reviewing policies and procedures that the Working Group employs to make these selections.

Article V – Officers

Section 5.1. Officers.

Officers of the Council consist of the President, Immediate Past President, President-Elect, and Secretary.

Officers are expected to follow the protocols, as provided by Alumni Relations.

Section 5.1.1. Council President.

The Council President is the principal officer of the Association, managing the affairs of the Council in line with its mission, and providing leadership and advice for all members of the Council.

Section 5.1.1.1. Term.

The Council President is a voluntary, elected position serving a two-year term, beginning June 1.

Section 5.1.1.2. Duties of the Council President.

The duties of the Council President are:

- a. To preside at meetings of the Council and of the Council Officers.
- b. To chair the Governance Working Group.
- c. To lead the review and revision of the bylaws every three years, as necessary.
- d. To be an ex-officio member of all Association and ad-hoc committees.

Section 5.1.2. Council Immediate Past President.

The Council Immediate Past President serves as an advisor to the Council.

Section 5.1.2.1. Term.

The Council Immediate Past President serves for one year following their term as Council President, beginning June 1.

Section 5.1.2.2. Duties.

The duties of the Council Immediate Past President are:

- a. To assist Council members in ensuring successful completion of the established strategic plan.
- b. To be an ex-officio member of all Association and ad-hoc committees.

Section 5.1.3. Council President-Elect

The President Elect assumes the duties and responsibilities of the Council President in the President's absence.

Section 5.1.3.1. Term.

The Council President-Elect is a voluntary, elected position serving two years, beginning June 1 of the first year of the President's term.

Section 5.1.3.2. Duties of the Council President-Elect.

The duties of the Council President-Elect are:

- a. To provide support to the President, as needed.
- b. To chair the Awards Working Group.
- c. To be an ex-officio member of all Association and ad-hoc committees.

Section 5.1.3.3. Eligibility.

To be Council President-elect, a candidate must have been a member of the Council for at least two years.

Section 5.1.4. Council Secretary.

The Council Secretary is the principal recordkeeper for the Council.

Section 5.1.4.1. Term.

The Council Secretary is a voluntary, elected position serving a one-year term, beginning June 1, with the possibility of renewal for up to a three-year maximum term.

Section 5.1.4.2. Duties.

The duties of the Council Secretary are:

- a. To maintain the minutes and attendance records for all Council meetings.
- b. To work with Alumni Relations to prepare a year-end report of the Council's accomplishments to be presented at the Council's final meeting of the year.

Section 5.1.4.3. Eligibility.

To be Council Secretary, a candidate must have been a member of the Council for at least one year or an active member of an Association Committee for at least two years.

Article VI – Nomination of Officers

The President and Immediate Past President positions are continuing roles which begin with the nomination and election of the President-elect. For this reason, only the Offices of President-elect and Secretary require a nomination and election process.

Section 6.1. Nomination.

- A. Candidates may self nominate or be nominated by another Council or Committee member.
- B. Candidates MUST submit a personal statement, of no more than one page in length, explaining why they should be considered as a candidate for the nominated role.
- C. Electioneering is not allowed.

Section 6.2. Process and Timeline.

- A. In January of the Council President's second year, the Governance Working Group will initiate the nomination process for the role of President-Elect and Secretary, in conjunction with Alumni Relations.
- B. Alumni Relations prepares and presents the candidates to the Council.
- C. The Council conducts a formal vote prior to the final meeting of the academic year or May 1, whichever comes first, by secret ballot.
- D. Each member of the Council shall have one vote.
- E. Votes are tallied by the Council President and Alumni Relations.
- F. The individual receiving a plurality of votes is the winner.
- G. In the case of no candidate receiving a plurality of votes, there shall be a run-off also by secret ballot.
- H. The winning candidates are recommended to the College President for approval.
- I. Officers terms begin on June 1 and end on May 31st of their final term.

Section 6.3. Vacancies.

Section 6.3.1. Council President.

A vacancy in the office of Council President is filled by the President-Elect for the unexpired term, in which case the President-Elect will serve the normal two-year term as President after completing the unexpired term.

Section 6.3.2. Council Immediate Past President.

A vacancy in the office of Council Immediate Past President is not filled.

Section 6.3.3. Council President-Elect.

A vacancy in the office of Council President-Elect is filled through the process identified in Section 6.2 for selecting a President-Elect. The individual thus elected completes the unexpired term as President-Elect and then serves a full term as Council President.

Section 6.3.4. Secretary.

A vacancy in the office of Secretary is filled by appointment of the Council President and approval of Alumni Relations for the remainder of the one-year term. This person should have served on a Committee for at least two years and meet the other criteria for Officers.

Article VII – Association Committees

Section 7.1. Structure and Size.

Four Association Standing Committees support the work of the Association and are represented by two Co-Chairs on the Council.

Size will be determined by each Committee and stated in their Charter.

Section 7.1.1. Standing Committees:

- A. Alumni Experience
- B. Communications
- C. Regional & Affinity Group
- D. Young Alumni & Student Engagement

Section 7.1.2. Ad-Hoc Committees:

The Council may, consistent with its approved strategic goals, or as issues arise, by a majority vote, establish and terminate ad-hoc committees of the Association chaired by current Council members, as needed. If an ad-hoc committee exists for at least three years, the Council may consider converting it to a Standing Committee, adding co-chairs and expanding the size of the Council through the necessary bylaw amendments.

Section 7.2. Eligibility:

Any member in good standing may apply to join one or more committees. Applications will be vetted and appointments will be based on available seats per the Committee Charter. Committee members must adhere to the Responsibilities outlined in Section 3.2. to continue to serve on a Committee.

Article VIII – Association Committee Co-Chairs

Section 8.1. Association Committee Co-Chairs (“Co-Chairs”).

Each committee will have two co-chairs who serve on the Council.

Section 8.2. Co-Chair Responsibilities.

Co-chairs are responsible for:

- A. Convening and leading their Committees in accomplishing their specific goals.
- B. Representing their Committee members' interests to the Council.
- C. Working with the Council to inform and accomplish its strategic goals.
- D. Nominating and voting, with the Council Officers, the President-elect and Secretary.

Section 8.3. Eligibility.

To be a Co-Chair, a candidate must:

- A. Be an active member of the Committee to which they are nominated for at least one year.
- B. Follow the protocols, as provided by Alumni Relations.

Section 8.4. Election of Co-Chairs.

Section 8.4.1. Nomination.

- A. Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated by other Committee Members.
- B. Candidates MUST submit a personal statement regarding how they will contribute to the committee.

Section 8.4.2. Process.

- A. Each January, the Council President calls for Co-Chair nominations.
- B. Alumni Relations vet nominees to ensure they are eligible members in good standing.
- C. The Council presents candidates to the Association Committee Members.
- D. Association Committee Members vote by secret ballot.
- E. The candidates with the plurality of votes become the candidates recommended to the College President for appointment.
- F. In the case of no candidate receiving a plurality of votes, there shall be a run-off also by secret ballot.

Section 8.4.3. Terms.

- A. Each Co-Chair is elected for a two-year term, with Co-Chairs alternating term start and end dates to provide term overlap of one year, and consequently, continuity in leadership.
- B. A Co-Chair can serve two consecutive terms for a total of four years.
- C. Co-Chair terms begin on June 1 and end on May 31st of their final term.

Section 8.4.4. Vacancies.

A vacancy in the role of Co-Chair is filled by appointment of the Council President and the remaining Co-Chair and approval of the Committee and Alumni Relations for the remainder of the two-year term. This person should have served on the Committee in question for at least one year and meet the other criteria for Co-Chair.

Article IX – Committee Members with Specialized Roles

Section 9.1. Purpose.

Association Committee Members with Specialized Roles serve in specific roles that require a greater level of training and are invited or selected by Alumni Relations, per Committee charters and handbooks. Specialized roles include but are not limited to Regional and Affinity Co-Leaders and Communication Managers, Admissions Alumni Ambassadors, and Alumni Area Network rep (AAN).

Section 9.2. Eligibility.

To be eligible to serve in a Specialized Role, a Committee Member must:

- A. Have been invited/recruited to serve based on previous involvement/experience.
- B. Completed the application process.
- C. Have been trained in the specialized role.
- D. Have experience with volunteering at the College or with another school or philanthropic organization.

Section 9.3. Terms.

A Committee Member with Specialized Roles is appointed for a one year term, with the possibility of multiple terms; additional criteria can be found in each of the committee's policies and procedures.

Section 9.4. Vacancies for Specialized Roles.

A vacancy in the Committee Member with Specialized Role is filled by appointment of the Co-Chairs and approval of Alumni Relations for the remainder of the one-year term. This person should have served on a Committee for at least one year and meet the other criteria for this specific role.

Article X – Meetings, Notice, and Recordkeeping

Section 10.1. Meetings.

Section 10.1.1. Council Meetings.

The Council meets up to four times annually, through virtual, in-person and/or hybrid meetings.

At least one virtual meeting of 75 minutes or less, will be held each semester, and at least one meeting annually will incorporate a ½-1-day Leadership Summit, preferably held on campus, which may take place over a weekend, and will be organized by Alumni Relations in conjunction with the Alumni Council.

Section 10.1.2. Alumni Association Committee Meetings.

Alumni Association Committee Meetings are called regularly (at least once per semester) by their respective co-chairs in coordination with Alumni Relations.

Section 10.1.3. Additional Meeting Opportunities.

Council and Committee members will also be invited to on-campus meetings which will include professional development opportunities.

Section 10.2. Voting and Notice.

Section 10.2.1. Quorum.

For the transaction of business, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the Council or committee.

The act of a majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Council or committees, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or elsewhere in these Bylaws. Voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

Section 10.2.2. Electronic Voting.

Electronic voting is authorized when voting on matters pertaining to the Association. The Council may use electronic voting in the conduct of business where an agreement of its members is necessary. Alumni Relations will initiate and collect the votes electronically.

Section 10.2.3. Action Without a Meeting.

Any action that would be permitted at a meeting of the Council or any committee thereof may be taken without a meeting if written notice is transmitted to each member of the Council or committee by the time stated in the notice, in the following manner:

- A. Votes in writing for such action.
- B. Votes in writing against such action.
- C. Abstains in writing from voting.
- D. Fails to respond and fails to demand that action not be taken without a meeting.

Section 10.2.4. Notification of Action Without a Meeting.

Notification of an action without a meeting must state the action to be taken, the deadline for all responses, and the impact of nonresponse. If any party believes a meeting is required, they must email the Alumni Relations team before the stated deadline. A lack of written response will be recorded as an abstention.

Section 10.2.5. Recordkeeping.

All such actions taken in writing shall be stored with, and in the same manner, as the minutes of the meetings. Minutes of meetings shall be shared with the Council and associated Committee members.

Article XI - Resignation and Termination

Section 11.1. Ongoing Appointment.

Ongoing appointment to the Council or any committee is contingent on Council members abiding by all applicable College policies, procedures, and trainings as well as federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations. The College reserves the right to remove any Council member who is in violation of the same.

Section 11.2. Resignation.

Resignation from the Council or any committee must be in writing and received by Alumni Relations and the Council President.

Section 11.3. Termination.

Committee or Council members shall be terminated due to excess absences, more than two unexcused absences from meetings in a year. A Committee or Council member may be removed for other reasons by a three-fourths vote of the Governance Working Group members, excluding any members under review.

Article XII — Amendments

Section 12.1. Amendments.

Proposed amendments to these bylaws must be submitted to Alumni Relations, Council President, and Governance Working Group and distributed to all Council members prior to being voted on. Any proposed amendments will be shared with Council members no later than 30 days prior to the meeting at which they will be voted on.

The Teachers College Alumni Association Bylaws were last updated in May 2020.

Section 12.2 Addendum to the Bylaws - Fall 2021

In Fall of 2021, the Alumni Council and Alumni Relations determined that based on the interest and activity of Association members that the Communications Committee would thereby be dissolved as a standing committee and that the incumbent Co-Chairs would serve as Members-at-Large until the Bylaw Review process of 2023 and contribute their expertise on communications-related initiatives.