



Harvard Asia-Pacific Club/Contact Leaders Meeting

Bylaws Session

# Purpose

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## Have a clear purpose and mission statement for the club.

- Resource: <http://officerslounge.clubs.harvard.edu/article.html?aid=109>; includes a sample mission statement. Also see other clubs' mission statements.

## Club Operating Guidelines



Summary of the fundamental operating guidelines under which the HAA expects Harvard Clubs to function.

### I. Mission/Purpose of Harvard Clubs

The common purpose of Harvard Clubs is to advance the mutual welfare of Harvard University and alumni/ae. This is accomplished in working in cooperation with the HAA and HAA Regional Directors by:

- A. Providing opportunities for alumni/ae, parents of students, and friends of Harvard University to meet and to serve as advocates, helping to communicate the role and direction of the University;
- B. Promoting and elevating the stature of the University within the community through Club programming;
- C. Providing opportunities for alumni/ae to remain connected to the University and to serve the University;
- D. Encouraging life-long learning, intellectual enrichment, professional growth, and social interaction through forums of continuing education and development; and

# Membership

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**Define who is a member, how eligibility is established, membership categories, and the process for any changes in membership status.**

- **Definition and Eligibility:**
  - HAA Clubs & SIGs Officer Handbook (“Handbook”): any degree holder including honorary degrees, 6 months study at Harvard or Radcliffe as a student or instructor, or certificate holder of an official University program of at least six weeks are eligible to be Club or SIG members.
  - “Friends” category (no longer “Associate Member”) for parents, spouses of deceased members, or member of a teaching hospital affiliated with Harvard.
- **Membership Categories:**
  - Some clubs create dues based categories (e.g. regular, young/senior alumni, friends, etc.); others are open to all eligible members
  - Voting rights per membership category
- **Change of Membership Status:**
  - Termination, suspension, resignation, reinstatement processes
  - Transferability of membership

# Member Meetings

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**Define any regularly scheduled meetings, who is eligible to attend, and who can vote.**

- **Annual General Meetings**
  - Typically to elect board members, officers, etc.
  - When and where including general timing during the year
- **Extraordinary and Other Meetings**
- **Notice of Meetings**
  - Communication method (email / written)
  - Notice period
- **Voting Process and Eligibility**
  - Attendance eligibility
  - Voting process (including proxy voting, if allowed)
  - Number of members required for a quorum (% of membership or # of members)

# Board, Officers and Executive Committee

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- **Designations and Duties**

- Job description and duties for each officer and Executive Committee, as well as other committees
  - Resource: Harvard Clubs and SIGs Officer Lounge, Organizational Governance  
<http://officerslounge.clubs.harvard.edu/article.html?aid=130>
- Eligibility for a board member
- Number of board members
- Special or senior advisors, including Advisory Board or Committee

- **Terms**

- Officers
  - Handbook: Club officers usually serve one or two-year terms with elections taking place at either the Annual Meeting or the Board Meeting in May or June. The maximum term acceptable should be 3 years. For many clubs, the term of office begins on July 1 of each year and ends June 30 of the succeeding year.
  - Handbook: To maximize alumni involvement and to avoid volunteer burnout, it is strongly recommended that officers serve no more than two consecutive terms in any single role.
- Board
  - Stagger transitions / rotate new members periodically.

# Board, Officers and Executive Committee

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- **Selection or Appointment Process and Vacancies**
  - Who are eligible for President, officer and board positions?
  - Have a transparent process of how candidates are selected
    - Open elections of the board and/or offices
    - Some clubs appoint a Nominating Committee, who then nominate candidates for election
  - What happens when a position is vacated?
- **Elections**
  - Transparency – is it open, transparent, and inclusive?
  - How are the votes compiled?
    - Electronic voting ([votingplace.net](http://votingplace.net))
  - Suggest publishing the by laws on club website for transparency

# Board, Officers and Executive Committee

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- **Succession Planning**

- Handbook: It is recommended that a leadership track be established, with a progression from Vice President to President-Elect to President.
- Co-leadership
- Onboarding process

- **Removal or Suspension**

- Have clear guidelines for removal or suspension policies
- ALC suggestion that if Board members miss a certain agreed number of meetings, they are automatically removed from the Board

# Conflicts of Interest

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- **HAA Conflicts of Interest Policy**

- Handbook: Any activity that might give rise to a real or apparent conflict of interest must be disclosed to the Board (or a committee of the Board established for this purpose) before the proposed activity takes place. The proposed activity should not take place without prior discussion and approval by the Board or committee.
- Define if any interest will be allowed, and how. HAA: You should apply common sense in making these determinations. The most important thing is that all of the relevant facts and circumstances are disclosed, and that the Board or committee makes a determination before the activity takes place.
- Resource: see Appendix A of Handbook for HAA's full policy and guidelines.

- **Trademark Policy**

- Resource: Harvard Trademark Program's webpage at [www.trademark.harvard.edu](http://www.trademark.harvard.edu).



# Financial Provisions

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- **Fiscal Year**
- **Bank Accounts and Financial Reporting**
- **Contracts**
  - Which officer is allowed to enter into a contract on behalf of the club?
- **Sponsorships**
  - If your club accepts sponsors, who qualifies, how is a sponsor selected, and how are conflicts of interest dealt with.
- **Scholarships and Donations**

# Amendments & Dissolution

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- **Amendments**
  - Identify items that require simple majority of the board, a larger majority, majority of Executive Committee, or unanimous vote
- **Dissolution**
  - Identify how remaining funds and property will be disbursed.

# Further Resources

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- **HAA & Regional Directors**
- **HAA Club and SIGs Officer Handbook**
  - Includes sample bylaws
  - <http://officerslounge.clubs.harvard.edu/article.html?aid=105>
- **Leadership and Succession Toolkit**
  - <http://officerslounge.clubs.harvard.edu/article.html?aid=382>
- **Other Club's Bylaws**
- **President Transition Document**
  - Ask HAA or Directors
- **Facebook Harvard Club and SIGs Leaders**