**BYLAWS OF ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN SURGEONS**

**MEDICAL STUDENT CHAPTERS**

**PREAMBLE**

The intent of these bylaws is to outline the procedures and regulations governing the Medical School Chapters of the Association of Women Surgeons (AWS).

**ARTICLE I**

*Purpose*

The Association of Women Surgeons is dedicated to the mission of inspiring and supporting women in all stages of medical training and to inspire, encourage, and enable female surgeons to achieve their personal and professional goals. To that end, the establishment of student chapters at medical schools both within the United States and abroad will facilitate the success of aspiring women surgeons by 1) highlighting practicing role models at local institutions and within the community, 2) providing networking and mentorship opportunities with surgeons and surgical residents, and 3) providing a forum for open discussion and collaboration on strategies related to professional development and the challenges woman surgeons face. Ultimately, this unique focus will provide opportunities in which personal and professional interests, concerns and common experiences can effectively be addressed.

*Non-Discrimination Policy*

The Association of Women Surgeons does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion or creed, gender, gender identification, HIV/AIDS status, nationality or ancestry, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military status, protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its operations, recruitment, or events.

**ARTICLE II**

*Membership*

As required by the Guidelines for Student Organizations, 90% of the membership of the Association of Women Surgeons will include current Ohio State University students who express a career interest in surgery. Non-student members are limited to graduates of The Ohio State University College of Medicine who are physicians holding the M.D. degree, who identify themselves as surgeons.

**ARTICLE III**

*Methods for Removing Members and Elected Officers*

**Section 1. Members**

If a member engages in behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, violates the organization’s constitution or by-laws, or violates the Code of Student Conduct, university policy, or federal, state or local law, the member may be removed through a majority vote of the officers in consultation with the organization’s advisor(s).

**Section 2. Elected Officers**

Any elected officer of the chapter may be removed from their position for cause. Cause for removal includes, but is not limited to: violation of the constitution or by-laws, failure to perform duties, or any behavior that is detrimental to advancing the purpose of this organization, including violations of the Student Code of Conduct, university policy, or federal, state, or local laws. The Executive Committee may act for removal upon a two-thirds affirmative vote of the executive board in consultation with the organization’s advisor(s).

**Section 3. Temporary Suspension**

In the event that the reason for member removal is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or cannot otherwise be shared with members, the executive board, in consultation with the organization’s advisor(s), may vote to temporarily suspend a member or executive officer.

**ARTICLE IV**

*Chapter Administration*

**Section 1. Eligibility**

All allopathic/osteopathic institutions interested in establishing a chapter are eligible to apply. Students interested in starting a new chapter at their school must submit a formal application and undergo a review process. New chapter applications will be submitted to the chair of the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee. Regional representatives within the designated region will make the final decisions. At the time of application, schools must identify a student chapter president as well as a faculty mentor. Having a faculty mentor who is an existing AWS member is preferred, although not required. The student chapter leadership structure will be left to the discretion of the individual chapters, as outlined in Article V, Section 1.1.

A chapter is considered "official" by AWS when: 1) an application has been submitted and approved by the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee and 2) within one month of a chapter application the President of the new AWS chapter has applied for and obtained official AWS student membership (rules and application can be found on [www.womensurgeons.org](http://www.womensurgeons.org)). As the mission of AWS is to encourage support of women in surgery by all individuals across the medical field, chapter memberships will extend to all students.

Each chapter will select one faculty mentor, who may be either male or female. Faculty mentors will be strongly encouraged to join the AWS, regardless of gender.

There will be 4 United States regional divisions: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. There will be one International Division. The regions shall be defined according to the US Census Bureau designations: Northeast (New England and Mid-Atlantic), Midwest (West North Central and East North Central), South (South Atlantic, West South Central, and East South Central), and West (Pacific and Mountain regions).  Each region shall have a regional representative, as selected according to Article V Section 1.2 of the by-laws. The AWS Medical Student Executive Committee shall reassess leadership of the regional divisions at the beginning of each academic year and vote on subdivision of the regions based on the number of active chapters in the area.

Fig 1. Flow Chart for AWS Chapter Application:

**Section 2. Active Chapters**

Chapters will provide a brief summary of meetings and activities held on a semester basis that will be submitted to the regional representative. Regional representatives will submit the local chapter activity logs to the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee. Activity logs should be submitted to the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee by December 15th and May 15th. Each chapter should have at least two events per semester and the number of individuals in attendance should be documented. Each AWS chapter will hold one introductory meeting at the beginning of each academic year for incoming students, and an additional meeting to vote for leadership positions. Faculty mentors should be present for at least one meeting or event each academic year.

**Section 3. Inactive Chapters**

Chapters that fail to meet the requirements outlined in Article II Section 2 will be reviewed by the Executive Committee. If the chapter continues to fail in meeting the above stated requirements, the chapter may be declared inactive per committee discretion.

**Section 4. Regional Leadership and AWS Medical Student Executive Committee Meetings**

 Regional representatives will give a status update on any developments on chapters within their respective regions at the monthly AWS Medical Student Executive Committee conference call. Chapter leaders should briefly update regional representatives of any ongoing questions or concerns so they can be properly voiced to the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE V**

*Meetings*

**Section 1. Regular Meetings**

Individual chapters should respect the guidelines outlined in Section 2 to remain active. Beyond these guidelines, individual chapters can hold additional meetings at their discretion.

**Section 2. Regional Representative Meetings**

Regional Representatives should aim to have one meeting every semester with AWS chapter presidents in the assigned region via conference call to discuss region-specific issues and activities. The specific events discussed during these calls do not need to be reported to the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee, but should be briefly highlighted during AWS Medical Student Executive Committee conference calls.

**Section 3. Quorum**

Quorum shall be defined as FIFTY PERCENT (50%) PLUS ONE (1) of the total active membership. Active members will be defined as those who attend greater than 50% of all individual chapter meetings that pertain to the organization and planning of chapter events as well as discussing the internal affairs of the chapter. The requirements regarding degree of involvement in event organization shall be left to the discretion of individual chapter leadership. Quorum must be met for all chapter meetings where either 1) leadership will be voted upon or 2) funding/proposed meetings will be voted upon.

**ARTICLE VI**

*Funding*

All funding as of this writing is to be secured from individual fundraising events that the school chapter hosts, faculty or other donations or from school activity funds.

**ARTICLE VII**

*Officers*

**Section 1. Selection of Local and Regional AWS chapter leadership**

1. AWS chapter leadership positions shall be voted on by chapter members on an annual basis. Each chapter must have at least a chapter president. The number of supporting chapter leadership positions is left to the discretion of the individual chapter.

2. Regional representatives shall be chosen by interest, application, and interview (if necessary) by the members of the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee. Regional representatives shall be members of the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee. Regions will be assigned based on US census bureau divisions and regional representatives assigned to represent chapters based primarily on geography. In order to ensure equitable representation, members of the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee may be assigned to represent a region where they do not reside as necessary

3. Transition of chapter leadership should occur by April 15th annually

**Section 2. Terms of Office**

Officers shall be chosen annually during the first two weeks of April, and shall serve until April 15 of the following year. Outgoing officers are encouraged to provide guidance and assistance to newly elected officers during the initial months of the new term.

**Section 3. Chapter Responsibilities**

**President**

 1. Preside over all chapter meetings

 2. Hold at least two general body meetings a semester

 3. Supervise and facilitate goals of the executive board, working closely with the advisor, Vice President, and Treasurer.

 4. Act as liaison between [The Ohio State University College of Medicine] and national chapters

 5. Promote the AWS at [The Ohio State University College of Medicine], and facilitate member participation in the national organization.

**Vice President**

1. Assist the President in designing and planning chapter events, and assist other executive officers as needed.

2. Plan and execute a fundraiser event for a charity of the group's choice

3. Promote membership in [The Ohio State University College of Medicine] chapter and the AWS national organization.

4. Attend all chapter meetings.

**Treasurer**

1. Prepare and update the organization’s budget as appropriate and for the proper and timely expenditure of the budget.

 2. Collect fees (if applicable) at the appropriate times throughout the semester. If applicable, these will be agreed upon dues appropriate to support chapter activities.

 3. Attend all chapter meetings.

**Officer Elect**

 1. Record and send minutes for each meeting.

 2. Provide internal audit for organization’s budget, working alongside the Treasurer to make any corrections or adjustments.

 3. Assist executive officers as needed.

 4. Attend all chapter meetings.

**ARTICLE VIII**

*Committees*

**Section 1. Ad-hoc Committees**

Regional leadership reserves the right to develop regional committees as the need arises

**Section 2. Duties of Ad-hoc Committees**

Duties of committees shall be determined as they are formed

**ARTICLE IX**

*Chapter Advisor*

Surgical professionals affiliated with the medical institution or within the local community may become advisers by unanimous vote of the chapter leadership. Advisers can be of any gender, and shall assist in the planning, supervision, and direction of the organization. Advisor position and contact information should be provided to regional leadership when applying for chapter establishment. Any changes should be provided to regional leadership thereafter.

**ARTICLE X**

*Amendments or changes*

**Section 1. Procedure for Amendments or changes**

Proposed amendments or changes to these by-laws must be delivered to regional leadership and communicated to the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee in writing. The executive committee members, having received the proposed amendment, shall schedule a vote at the next conference call. At this time, the amendment shall be read aloud, discussed, and voted upon. Amendments to local chapter by-laws shall be handled by local leadership.

**Section 2. Ratification**

The by-laws may be amended by a three-fourths (3/4) VOTE of quorum or by unanimous vote of the executive committee.

**ARTICLE XI**

*Review of these By-laws*

The Executive Committee of the AWS Council and the AWS Medical Student Executive Committee may review by-laws at any time.