

**Recommendations by the AlaPSA President Tim Barnett
for the 2006 Executive Council Meeting, April 28, 2006**

“Proposed Amendments to the 1973 AlaPSA Constitution.”

Amendment 1: The constitution of the AlaPSA is hereby amended by the addition of a *Statement of Organizational Purpose* which shall function as Article II of the constitution, the other articles to be renumbered according.

Sec. 1. The purposes of this Association are: to encourage scientific investigation and research in the field of government, politics, and administration, with special reference to the state and local problems of Alabama; to encourage understanding of and improve instruction in political science and public administration; to develop collegial relations and cooperation among political scientists in Alabama and reach out to political scientists in the region; to establish and improve relations between political scientists and public officials; to facilitate a greater understanding of government and politics at all educational levels; and to uphold ethical standards and foster competence.

Sec. 2. This association shall not take official stands on public policy issues nor assume a partisan position upon any question of practical politics, nor commit its members to any position thereupon.”

President's comment: This change is made in accordance with IRS standards and current state political science association norms. Failure to take this step will impeded the ability of the organization to achieve the status needed to obtain grants. All four of the comparative organizations have similar statements, the one we add being closest to North Carolina's purpose clause.

Amendment 2: Article II of the 1973 constitution is hereby amended with the addition of section 3.

Sec. 3. Membership in the Association will be on a calendar year basis. There are four categories of membership in the Association: Faculty, student, public, and institutional. The Association shall set forth Bylaws governing these membership categories.

President's comment: In an effort to raise income flow for the organization we seek to create sustaining (fee based) institutional memberships as common in other state organizations and as recommended at last year's annual business meeting by JSU department head Lawson Veasey. Furthermore, it is necessary to clarify the role of students and the public in the decision making of the organization as other state organizations have seen fit to do in their constitutions.

Amendment 3: The third article of the AlaPSA constitution is hereby amended by a change in offices and terms of office. The wording of each affected section shall be as follows.

Sec. 1. Officers of the Association shall include a President, Vice President & Program Chair, Immediate Past President, Program Chair Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, At-large member, and Editorial Board Representative. The nine member board shall comprise the Executive Council. Duties for Executive Council members and circumstances for office holding shall be set forth in the Bylaws.

President's comment: The current Executive Council consists of five offices, two which are replacements for the Councillors offices in our 1973 constitution. The Executive Council is so small as to limit service opportunities for AlaPSA members while creating the hazard that inactivity by one or two members cripples the Council's work. An expanded Council is similar to that used by other organizations (MN, 13; NC, 10; PA, 11). Furthermore, a larger Council will help us with institutional memory. The office of Program Chair Elect is created to help individuals be socialized into the Executive Council before being saddled with the responsibility of hosting our annual meeting — a daunting task. The office of Historian (archive manager) is authorized so that we will have some official redundancy in record-keeping — the omission of which has crippled us to this point as evident in the fact that there is no official record of Bylaws that has been submitted to any current organization officer. Additionally, while we have relied heavily upon the Immediate Past President office in recent times, it is not an official office in our AlaPSA constitution. All of these considerations are due attention.

Sec. 2. The terms of office for the President, Vice President & Program Chair, Immediate Past President, and Program Chair Elect shall be one year terms; provided, upon satisfactory performance each office is progressive to the next, resulting in a four-year term of service on this track. The Executive Council will vote in private session annually to confirm a Council Member's continuance on this track, the procedures for filling a vacated position to be set forth in Bylaws. The terms of the other offices shall be for four years upon good service, except for the office of the Editorial Board Representative and the At-large member which shall be for two years and up for election in odd-numbered years. The Secretary will be elected in years of U.S. presidential elections while the Treasurer and Historian are elected two years thereafter. A Bylaw stipulation will adjust terms at the time new offices are created.

President's comment: The creation of several longer and staggered offices will increase leadership coherence while smoothing transitions through the organizational learning curve.

Sec. 4. The Vice President shall be the Association's Program Chair for the annual program. The Vice President shall assist the President at the President's request in directing the affairs of the Association.

President's comment: The 1973 constitution states that the VP is in charge of the annual program but does not call the VP the program chair. The clarification is made here. The main change in this section is the removal of the Vice President's responsibility to serve in the president's capacity in case the Association loses its president. This is better handled by the

Immediate Past President who has more experience in Association leadership and is not burdened with program responsibilities.

Sec. 5. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer shall be divided after April 29, 2006. The *Secretary* shall keep records of all formal proceedings of the Association or its Executive Council, and of such other matters as the Executive Council deems appropriate, transmitting such information to the Historian for archival purposes. The Secretary shall conduct such correspondence as may be required by the Executive Council. The Secretary shall issue such publications as this Constitution or the Association may direct, send notices of Association meetings to all members, and provide each member with a copy of this Constitution and such Bylaws as may be adopted. The *Treasurer* shall keep records of all income and disbursements, and of other such financial matters as is appropriate. Disbursements of funds for Association purposes shall be left to the Treasurer's discretion with an accounting to the Association at the annual meeting; provided, the Treasurer's discretion may be guided through Bylaws and Executive Council resolutions.

President's comment: As organizational robustness increases, the duties of a combination office put too much of a burden upon a single member. Pennsylvania and North Carolina both divide the two offices and we should as well.

Sec. 6. The Executive Council shall arrange Association meetings, or may authorize the President to appoint committees for this purpose. Special meetings of the Association may be called by the Executive Council. The Council may be called into special session by the President or any *four* Council members to consider the affairs of the Association, to formulate recommendations to the membership, or for other purposes.

President's comment: This section reads like the original 1973 constitution except the word "two" is changed to "four." With a larger Executive Council, this adjustment maintains the ratio necessary for members in the minority to call for an unscheduled Executive Council meeting.

Sec. 7. Vacancies on the Executive Council shall be filled as follows: In the withdrawal, unavailability or suspension of the President, the Immediate Past President shall complete the President's term while retaining the duties of Immediate Past President. In the event of the vacancy of any other office on the Executive Council, the President shall nominate and secure a temporary appointment with the oral or written support of a simple majority of the Executive Council, drawing if necessary upon an Executive Council member to perform temporary duty in a second office until the next annual meeting.

President's Comment: The office of the Immediate Past President is an increasingly popular office for volunteer organizations that use the Vice President as Program Chair for the annual meeting. If something happens to the President, it is overwhelming for the Vice President to carry the President's duties as well as his or her own. The office of the Immediate Past President helps meet this contingency while increasing organizational memory and the mentoring of newer Executive Council members. While the AlaPSA has adopted this norm

(which was used very successfully in 2005), our constitution does not yet reflect the change.

Amendment 4: Article IV of the AlaPSA 1973 constitution is hereby amended by a change in its wording and operation.

Bylaws for the Alabama Political Science Association shall be created by the Executive Council through a simple majority vote in executive session at the annual business meeting. Resolutions passed at Association business meetings may be designated as Bylaws at the Executive Council's discretion on the basis of general or permanent application. Other resolutions shall be maintained as resolutions and titled according to their circumstances.

President's comment: The constitution of 1973 allows those who propose resolutions from the floor during a business meeting to designate their resolutions as Bylaws, taking away from the Executive Council the ability to manage the organization and creating an increased prospect for Bylaw creation in conflict with the constitution that authorizes them. This potential flaw needs correction.

Amendment 5: A new article on the "Annual Meeting and Vote Process" is added to the AlaPSA constitution following Article III, the other articles renumbered accordingly.

Sec. 1. The regular annual meeting shall be held between March 1 and April 15 unless the Association directs otherwise. The date of the AlaPSA annual meeting shall be decided by the vice president / program chair in consultation with the president.

Sec. 2. Nominations for any open or expiring position on the AlaPSA Executive Council shall be made by the agreement of any two members of the Executive Council and submitted in writing to the Council. The Executive Council shall be receptive to nomination *recommendations* from all AlaPSA members in good standing, such recommendations being submitted the AlaPSA secretary, vice president or president in writing up until thirty days before the annual business meeting. A nomination recommendation shall become a nomination when supported in writing by two Executive Council members.

Sec. 3. Nominations for the Executive Council shall be voted upon by the Council at their annual meeting. The Executive Council shall not vote upon a nominee until the nominee has agreed orally or in writing to stand for the office, such agreement to be secured by the president or vice president in the year of the Council's vote. In the case that no nominee for an Executive Council position receives a majority vote by Executive Council members present, the Council will hold a run-off vote in the same Council meeting for the two candidates garnering the most votes for a position. No candidate shall be voted by the Executive Council to repeat service in the same office within a ten year period; provided, this disability may be waived by a unanimous Council.

Sec. 4. The Council will announce its successful nominees in the annual business meeting and will ask the voting membership in attendance for an affirming vote. An affirming vote for officer candidates shall consist of a simple majority of votes cast on affirmation ballots, each candidate voted separately. In the matter of a failed affirmation, a bylaw shall govern the process.

President's Comments: There is a need to stipulate an annual meeting in the AlaPSA constitution rather than the Bylaws. Also, the nominating process that produces the organization's CEO (our president) needs to move from the Bylaws to the AlaPSA constitution. The nomination process needs to be adjusted to reflect the current realities of securing officers for a small statewide association.

Amendment 6: The constitution of the AlaPSA is hereby amended by the addition of an article to deal with the unanticipated event of dissolution.

In the case of the dissolution of the Association, any assets remaining after the obligations of the Association have been paid shall be distributed to not-for-profit exempt organizations, under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code as it may then be amended. Any such distribution shall be for scholarly or educational purposes first, and charitable purposes if the existing Executive Council makes no selection. Any such assets shall not be distributed to members of the Association nor enure to their private benefit.

President's comment: This is a necessary phrase that is missing from our current constitution.

END OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS