

**Draft Constitution and Bylaws  
The Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Society of Professional Journalists**

Prepared May 2006

**ARTICLE I**

**Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Society of Professional Journalists (IUP SPJ).

**ARTICLE II**

**Purposes and Objectives**

- To introduce students to the profession of journalism and to develop the skills and values of students experienced in journalism
- To bring professional journalists to campus to broaden and deepen understanding of the profession and its central role in enlightening citizens and in ensuring liberty.
- To attract talent and diversity to the membership and the profession
- To attend professional conferences and competitions
- To advance the ethical standards of journalism
- To protect and defend the profession and practice of journalism and its attendant First Amendment rights and responsibilities
- To elevate the profile and prestige of the Journalism Department at IUP and of campus news media
- To foster contacts between the department and the profession and thus to facilitate career development among the membership
- To uphold the standards of the national Society of Professional Journalists

**ARTICLE III**

**Membership**

**Section One: Eligibility**

Membership will comprise IUP students in good academic standing, regardless of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, or sexual orientation.

**Section Two: Responsibilities**

a. National dues are set by SPJ national headquarters and vary year to year.

National dues shall be collected from each member by the chapter treasurer at the outset of each academic year and sent with the official form provided by SPJ Headquarters to the SPJ Director of Finance no later than November 1. On payment of such dues a student is entitled to one full year's membership extending from November 1 to October 31 of the following year. A student member must notify the IUP chapter board of official membership and provide a member ID number provided by the national headquarters.

b. Local dues will include a one-time fee necessary to cover chapter expenses. All fees will be collected by the chapter treasurer or advisor.

c. Members must participate in at least one standing committee (Refer to Article IV for listing) and perform the duties delegated by his or her committee chair.

d. Members must attend at least five meetings and a minimum of one annual program to retain membership eligibility. Attendance requirements can be waived with evidence of hardship or severe conflict.

e. Members must remain in good academic standing.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Committees**

#### **Section One: Standing Committees**

Standing Committees shall be established by no later than the end of September of each academic year. Committees may include: Events, FOI, Diversity, Ethics, Fundraising, Speakers, Community Service, Web, Publications, and so on.

#### **Section Two: Ad hoc Committees**

Ad hoc committees can be organized or dissolved whenever the President deems it necessary, after consultation with the board (Article VI, Section Five), or upon a majority vote by the chapter. All ad hoc committees are considered dissolved at the end of the spring academic semester.

#### **Section Three: Committee Chairs**

During its first regular meeting, the board shall fill all vacant committee chair positions. Chairs may be removed only by a majority vote of the board, excluding elected positions.

#### **Section Four: Committee Membership**

All board members are eligible to serve on any committee and are encouraged to serve on at least one committee, pending approval by a majority of the board as a slate. Members may be removed by a majority vote of the board. The president, or the vice president as his or her designee, is an *ex officio* member of all committees.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Elections**

#### **Section One: Filing for Candidacy**

All students enrolled at IUP are eligible to run for all board positions. Any student interested in running for a board office must submit notification in writing to the faculty advisor no later than one week before the scheduled date of the election.

#### **Section Two: Method of Elections**

a. Elections for all offices shall be held no later than May 1 and will be coordinated by the faculty advisor or, in his or her absence, a designee. The advisor may be assisted by students who are not running for contested positions.

b. Prior to the election, each candidate may make a brief presentation to the membership. Candidates unable to be present at the election may select a designee to make a presentation on his or her behalf, provided that prior notice has been made to the chapter advisor.

c. Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot. No absentee ballots shall be issued. Elections must be held in such a manner as to allow all students to fully and equally participate in the process. To be elected to all board positions, candidates must receive the greatest number of votes.

### **Section Three: Campaigns**

a. The faculty advisor shall arbitrate any disputes related to campaigns and may remove a candidate from the ballot if any serious, verifiable infractions are found, pending appeal to the administration.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Officers**

#### **Section One: Elected positions**

The officers of this chapter shall be president, vice president, secretary, and faculty advisor. These officers will constitute the board of the chapter.

#### **Section Two: Appointments**

There shall be appointed chairs for such committees as may be created each new academic year.

#### **Section Three: Vacancies**

The board shall have the authority to fill any vacant positions by a majority vote.

#### **Section Four: Duties**

a. The duties of the president are to call board of directors meetings and arrange for chapter meetings and the general welfare of the chapter. The president must lead the chapter's business meetings, chair the board, cosign checks along with the treasurer, and any other duties that may occur during the course of the year.

b. The vice president must be prepared to assume the role of president in case of emergency and assist the president in any of his or her duties. The vice president will also oversee the committees of the chapter.

c. The treasurer must keep track of the chapter's finances and bookkeeping, co-sign checks with the president and present frequent reports to the board about the financial status of the chapter. Financial records must be available upon request. The treasurer will chair the fundraising committee.

d. The secretary is responsible for keeping accurate minutes of every chapter business meeting, filing all required reports, and keeping up-to-date records of membership and attendance. The secretary must have access to the school's duplicating facilities, mailing privileges, and classroom schedules in the journalism school in order to reserve rooms for meetings and chapter events. At the end of the academic year, the secretary will create and disseminate a report of the year's accomplishments for the benefit of the succeeding class.

e. The faculty advisor shall be approved annually by the chapter or by the chapter's board of directors, according to national bylaws. The faculty advisor will be charged with the duties of attending meetings regularly, acting as advisor to the chapter at all times, conducting elections, and providing, whenever possible, a permanent place of safekeeping for the books, documents, and records of the chapter and its officers.

#### **Section Five: Executive Board**

The executive board shall consist of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and the faculty advisor. The executive board will be convened as needed by the president and shall have the power to make emergency decisions on behalf of the board. All actions of the executive board will be subject to approval of the board at their next regular meeting.

### **Section Six: Removal**

Any chapter officer may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the entire board during a special meeting held for this purpose. Petition for removal must be submitted to all parties concerned at least two weeks in advance of a special convocation of the chapter and all parties concerned shall have the opportunity to present their cases. Grounds for removal shall be intentional misconduct so as to bring discredit to the chapter, school or profession of journalism, dereliction of assigned duties, electoral misconduct, intentional violation of SPJ bylaws or chapter bylaws, and/or failure to maintain acceptable academic standards. Proceedings in such cases shall be confidential. The vacated position shall be filled in accordance with section three of this article.

### **Section Seven: Term of Office**

The term of office for all officers shall commence upon the announcement of the election results. The term for all officers shall end no later than the final day of the academic year.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Meetings**

#### **Section One: Time and Place**

The chapter shall meet regularly at least six times during the year. Location will vary.

#### **Section Two: Procedure**

Meetings will be conducted in standard parliamentary procedure. The president shall refer to Robert's Rules of Order if deemed necessary. A quorum, consisting of one-half of the members of the board, is necessary to vote.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended by a three-quarters favorable vote of the board, provided that the amendment shall have been proposed at least one meeting previous to the time of voting. Amendments in the chapter **constitution** and bylaws, however, shall become effective only upon their approval by the national SPJ headquarters. Such amendments shall conform to the national bylaws of the Society of Professional Journalists.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Ratification**

This constitution shall be ratified by no later than the end of the second meeting of the 2006-2007 academic year. Ratification shall occur by vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting.

*Sources: SPJ Web site [<http://www.spj.org/pdf/samplebylaws-campus.pdf>]; Columbia University Web site [<http://spj.jrn.columbia.edu/bylaws2003.pdf>]*