



Sections Manual

American Sociological Association

August 2011

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Sections and the American Sociological Association

The Origin and History of Sections

Sections have been an integral part of the American Sociological Association from the earliest days of the organization. The modern version of Sections has its origin in the late 1950s when groups of members interested in special fields within Sociology approached the Association with the request to become affiliated in a formal way. The earliest Sections, formed in the 1920's, focused the majority of their activities on the ASA Annual Meeting; from the late 1950's onward Section activities became ongoing through the year.

The first modern Section was authorized on August 27, 1958¹ when the ASA Council reviewed and unanimously approved an application by a group of over 200 members to form a Section on Social Psychology. The Section on Medical Sociology was established the following year on September 3, 1959. Anticipating additional requests, in 1958 and 1959, Council established rules and procedures for the establishment and operation of Sections².

By the end of 1961 there were five Sections with a total of 2,252 members. At the conclusion of the 2011 membership year there were 51 full Sections with more than 27,000 memberships. Sections have experienced solid, consistent growth since their launch, but especially over the last decade.

The Philosophy Underlying ASA Sections

Sections provide a forum within ASA for the involvement of individuals drawn together by a common interest in a field of study, teaching, and/or research³. Sections are an integral part of the ASA, providing opportunities for members to participate actively in the Association both through section activities and in leadership positions. All ASA members (including Associate Members) of the Association may join Sections by paying the appropriate dues⁴.

ASA and Sections are mutually interdependent and supportive. The Association is committed to advancing strong and dynamic sections that reflect the various substantive areas and sub-field specialties of the discipline of sociology. The Association encourages each Section to develop programs and activities to further their stated mission.

Due to the number and variety of potential Section activities, the ASA Council felt it was important that the Association provide clear guidelines for forming, operating and continuation of Sections. This Manual is intended to summarize existing Association policy on the operation of Sections and to reduce any uncertainties or ambiguities that might exist regarding Sections.

¹ See Appendix B for information on when each Section started operation.

² In 1958, a minimum 200 members were required, and Section dues were \$1.00 per person.

³ Sections are authorized by ASA Bylaws, Article VI, Section 1, which reads, in part: "Members who share interests in a sociological specialty may seek to become a section."

⁴ Section membership requires ASA membership.

Sections and the Association

The ASA Council

The ASA Constitution designates the ASA Council to be responsible for the direction of the Association and the formulation of policy. As such, Council has the authority to set policies, procedures, and standards for the operation of Sections, as well as the authority to form new Sections and to terminate existing Sections⁵. ASA Council, the Committee on Sections (COS), the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget (EOB), and the Executive Office work in coordination to provide guidance to sections and set policies regarding their administration.

ASA Council sets policy for the Association and its sections. Council has final authority regarding the formation, maintenance, and continuation of sections and establishes policy guidelines within which sections operate. In matters that may affect all sections, the membership at large, or the overall well being of the discipline or Association, the ASA Council retains the final decision-making authority.

The Committee on Sections

The Committee on Sections is authorized by Association Bylaws⁶, which directs that the Committee on Sections has the responsibility to guide the Association on the administration of Sections including the creation and continuation of Sections. In addition, the committee advises the ASA Council on substantive matters of policy regarding Sections and section activities, evaluates and makes recommendations to ASA Council on the formation and continuation of Sections, and

annually reviews Section activities. In most matters, Sections communicate to Council through the Committee on Sections, and sections may turn to the Committee on Sections for advice and guidance.

The Committee on Sections convenes a meeting of section representatives at each Annual Meeting. Usually, the Section chair or a designated representative attends the meeting. The meeting provides an open forum for section officers to discuss Section-related issues with the Committee on Sections, which may become recommendations from the Committee to ASA Council.

The Committee on Sections is composed of nine members. Three of the members are appointed by Council from among members of the Association, three of the members are appointed by Council from among Council members-at-large, and three members are elected by Chairs of the sections according to section membership size (i.e., small, medium, large). All terms are staggered so that three people rotate off the committee each year.

The Committee on the Executive Office and Budget

The Committee on the Executive Office and Budget advises ASA Council on membership and fiscal matters for the Association and its sections. The Committee on the Executive Office and Budget, chaired by the Secretary of the Association, works closely with the Committee on Sections with respect to section matters and provides guidance to sections and recommendations to ASA Council.

The Executive Office

The Executive Office has responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the Association and the implementation of the policies of the Association and ASA Council. The Executive Office maintains communications across all parts of the Association. Section officers are encouraged to contact the Executive Office with questions regarding section activities. If

⁵ Contrary to popular belief, the ASA Council has terminated a Section for failure to comply with existing standards. That Section corrected the problems and was later re-instated as a Section.

⁶ ASA Bylaws Article V, Section 5.

further guidance is required, Executive Office staff will consult with the Committee on Sections, the ASA Secretary, or other ASA officers. The Executive Office communicates pertinent information to all sections through regular correspondence to section officers.

Starting and Maintaining Sections

Members interested in organizing a new Section should notify the Executive Office of their intention to do so in order that the Association is aware of this possibility at the earliest possible point. This portion of the Manual describes what is required in order to request approval from the Committee on Sections and Council to become a section-in-formation. The Executive Office is available to answer questions or provide guidance on the process for forming a section.

All sections begin as Sections-in-Formation (SIF). To form a section-in-formation, organizers prepare a detailed proposal (i.e., at least several pages) regarding the purpose of the section, its potential contribution to the discipline, and types of activities envisioned for the section. The proposal should make clear the nature of this sub-field of sociological work, the issues being addressed in this area, and the potential for its future development as a sub-field of interest. To highlight the intellectual merit of the sub-field, the proposal should provide a summary of existing scholarly work in sociology and include a short bibliography of the sub-field literature. The proposal should also address any links or possible overlaps to other sub-fields of sociology, especially those that are already constituted as sections.

A petition signed by at least 200 current Association members must accompany the proposal. Petition signatures may be gathered electronically. Signing the petition implies that members will pay dues for the section for two years. The petition form must include the

following statement: "**Signing this petition is a commitment to join and pay dues to the section for at least two years.**" The petition should be forwarded to ASA Executive Office to the attention of the Director of Governance and Sections.

The proposal and petition for creation of a new section will then be referred to the Committee on Sections for its review. Prior to making a recommendation to the ASA Council, the Committee on Sections will review the proposal to ensure that the proposed section represents a sub-field that has intellectual merit and that the vision for the section will benefit the profession. If the Committee on Sections approves the proposal, it will recommend to ASA Council that it be granted the status of Section-in-formation. Council has the authority to approve or reject the proposal. If Council approves the Section-in-formation, the organizers will have two years from the beginning of the following membership year to recruit at least 300 members.

Each section-in-formation must prepare a set of Bylaws that will be sent to the Executive Office. The Bylaws must conform to the Constitution, Bylaws, and policies of the Association. The Committee on Sections will review the proposed Bylaws and recommend action to ASA Council. If a Section-in-formation reaches 300 members, and the ASA Council has approved the proposed Section Bylaws, the Section will achieve full Section status.

To permit ASA members an opportunity to respond to the proposed Section, the Executive Office will announce in Footnotes the proposal for a new Section after its approval as a Section-in-formation by the Committee on Sections and ASA Council.

Rights and Responsibilities of Sections-in-Formation

During the period of formation, the Association will provide listserv and web support for a new

Section-in-Formation. In the second year, a Section-in-formation will receive an allocation for operating funds based on the number of members as of September 30th of their first membership year.

Sections-in-formation are entitled to one organizing session at the ASA Annual Meeting to elect acting officers and to create a set of proposed Bylaws. Sections-in-Formation may have receptions, provided they have the resources. For on site receptions, Sections-in-Formation may be granted reception space on a space available basis. This may not conflict with requests from established Sections.

Sections-in-Formation may not grant awards.

Sections-in-Formation are not required to draft Annual Reports.

Sections-in-Formation are not required to conduct elections. In addition, the Executive Office will not provide support for SIF elections.

Sections-in-formation which end the membership year on September 30th with 300 or members will be enter the next year as a full Section, with all rights and benefits granted by section status. Should a section not achieve full status by that time, it may still attempt to do so between October 15th and December 31st. A section that achieves recognition before the next calendar year would be allocated two full sessions at the next Annual Meeting. Please note that a section attempting this would be doing so at the start of the *next membership year*, and would start this process with 0 members, not the September 30th count.

Assessment

The continuation of Sections depends on quantitative and qualitative assessments of their vitality. The quantitative criterion is Section membership of at least 300 members. Qualitative assessment is conducted by the Committee on Sections via the section's Annual Report.

Sections with fewer than 300 members may be dissolved by the ASA Council if they fail to demonstrate their continued vitality. Vitality can be demonstrated by meeting the following criteria:

- ⤴ Meaningful activities as reflected in Annual Meeting sessions, newsletters, or other initiatives.
- ⤴ An annual business meeting with at least 25 Section members present.
- ⤴ An annual Section council meeting.
- ⤴ An annual report that describes the business and council meetings, activities of the year, plans for the following year, and includes a copy of all Section newsletters for that year.
- ⤴ A Section-approved operating budget and sound management of operating budget.
- ⤴ A democratic nominations and election process.

Each Section must have an annual Business Meeting at the ASA Annual Meeting with a quorum of at least 25 Section members present. A report of the meeting, including its agenda and a count of the people present, shall become part of the Section's annual report.

The council of each Section must have at least one meeting a year, which is normally held during the ASA Annual Meeting. If the Section does not use the timeslot allocated in the annual meeting program, the Section council is responsible for making other arrangements for a Council meeting. The date, time, and location of the meeting must be determined at least one month prior to the meeting. A report of the meeting becomes part of the Section's annual report.

Section Annual Reports

On or before October 15 of each year, the immediate past chair of each section and section-in-formation will provide the Executive Office with an annual report of the year's activities. The annual report will contain at least the following information:

- ⤴ A report of the business meeting held at the annual meeting, including the agenda and a count of the members present.
- ⤴ A report of the section council meeting.
- ⤴ The nominations procedures to be used by the Section.
- ⤴ An operating budget for the coming year approved by the Section council.
- ⤴ A review of the current year's activities.
- ⤴ Plans for the coming year.
- ⤴ Copies of the Section newsletters or the print equivalent of electronic communications.

Termination of Sections

In reviewing the vitality of sections the Committee on Sections will use both quantitative and qualitative indicators. If the Committee on Sections determines that a section should be terminated, it will report this recommendation to ASA Council. If the ASA Council concurs with the Committee on Sections, the section will be given one year to reorganize the section. A section in provisional termination status will be reviewed after one year by the Committee on Sections and ASA Council. Council will make the final determination regarding the continuation of the section. Only the ASA Council has the authority to terminate sections.

A section may decide to terminate itself by a vote of the section membership.

Restrictions on Sections

Activities Involving Legal and Financial Commitments

Sections may not enter into legally binding relationships or make commitments to other groups, or in other ways affect the constituent relationship between sections and the Association without approval of ASA Council or its delegated representatives. Such approval is necessary for activities that require a legal commitment or a financial obligation beyond the section's resources. The Executive Officer, in consultation with the President and the ASA Secretary may take action or refer a request for Section activities with legally-binding implications to ASA Council. Sections are encouraged to consult with the Executive Office if such approval is sought or where there may be ambiguity or uncertainty.

Activities Involving External Funds

Sections wishing to pursue external funding for research, training, and/or other projects that support section activities should consult with the Executive Office. The Executive Office, in consultation with the President and ASA Secretary, is authorized to take action on such proposals, or when necessary, refer the request to Council. If approved, the Executive Office will provide assistance in such matters as budget preparation, negotiations with funding agencies, administration of funds, and the sharing of responsibilities with a section representative on a section-initiated project.

Journals and Other Publications

The Association encourages innovation by sections consonant with the Association's publication policies and procedures as outlined in the Guidelines for ASA Publications Portfolio and the Association's overall publication objectives. Publication ideas from sections for

journals, annuals, or other periodicals (whether print or electronic) should be brought to the ASA Publications Committee for review and recommendation to ASA Council. Based on the recommendation from the ASA Publications Committee, the ASA Council may determine to pursue the idea as an ASA publication or will advise the section whether it may pursue a publication prospect and, if so, under what conditions. In addition, a section must have an end-of-year membership count greater than 500 to be eligible to start a new section journal.

Public Policy Positions

Only the ASA Council can take public policy positions on behalf of the Association. Sections are not permitted to take public policy positions independent of the Association. Sections are encouraged to make recommendations to ASA Council or to bring to the attention of the Association issues for consideration, especially in areas relating to the expertise, competence, or interests of sections.

Communication

Newsletters

The Association considers communication and dissemination of relevant information to Section members to be an essential function of Sections and encourages Sections to produce timely, quality newsletters. Each Section may choose to create newsletter. Section newsletters are distributed electronically via Section Listservs and Websites.

Web Sites

The Executive Office provides basic information about each section on the ASA's website. This page contains the mission statement of the section, the current officers of the section, and a link to the section's website if one exists. Sections are encouraged to appointment a webmaster and to maintain their own websites.

Two main options exist for hosting section websites. Section websites may reside on a University server with a link provided on the ASA website to the section's home page. Sections may also maintain basic websites on the ASA web server. The Executive Office makes space available to sections on the ASA server at no charge. Regardless of where the sites reside, each section is responsible for maintaining its own site and providing linking information to the Association if necessary.

Listsers

To facilitate timely communication between Section officers and Section members, the Executive Office provides each Section with two listsers, an announcement listserv and a discussion listserv. The announcement listserv is for Section officers to send messages about Section-related business and items of interest to members of their Section. Members may not reply to announcement listserv messages — they are read-only. The second listserv is an open discussion listserv and is intended to give Section members a forum to exchange ideas and news of interest. All members of each Section are automatically subscribed to the announcement listsers, but membership on the discussion listsers is voluntary and at each member's discretion.

Administration

Dues

In 1998 base dues for sections were set at \$10 for regular, emeritus, and low-income members and \$5 for student members⁷. Sections were

⁷History of ASA Section Dues: 1957-1958 dues were \$1.00; on September 2, 1971, Council increased section dues to \$3.00 per person and granted sections the right to levy additional dues above the \$3.00; On January 13, 1979, Council increased Section dues from \$3 to \$5; On January 28, 1988, Council increased Section dues from \$5 to \$8 and added a \$5 dues category for student members; On August 17, 1993, Council set dues for Sections-in-Formation to \$4 for the time they were in formation, increasing to \$8 in subsequent years of operation as a full section; and in August 1997, Council increased Section dues from \$8 to \$10 per person starting with

also granted the authority to levy dues over the rates established by the ASA Council. Any change in the base section dues requires the review of the Committee on Sections and the Committee on the Executive Office and Budget, and the approval by ASA Council. After the section council approves an increase, members of the section must vote on the dues change. Additional dues levied by sections above the base dues will become effective the following membership year.

Operating Budget

Also starting in 1998, the Association granted each section an annual budget allocation based on the number of section members at the close of the prior membership year. The current formula used to calculate this allocation is listed below⁸:

- ASA provides all sections with \$2 per member.
- In addition to the \$2 per member, Sections also receive a base allocation determined as follows:
 - ⤴ Sections with more than 300 members receive a base allocation of \$1,000.
 - ⤴ Sections with less than 300 members but more than 200 members receive a base allocation of: (# of section members minus 100) multiplied by \$5.

the 1998 membership year – the rate for student dues remained unchanged.

⁸ This formula was established by Council at its February 2006 Meeting. Prior to February 2006 action, the Section financial allocation formula was: "The allocation formula provides \$1,000 in base amount plus \$2 per member (except where noted below). The first year that a section's membership falls below the 300-member requirement, the base amount will be calculated by dividing the total number of section members by 300 and multiplying the result by 1000; the \$2 per member allocation remains unchanged. If a section remains below the required number of 300 members for a second year, the base amount will be reduced by half if a section has 200 or more members and will be eliminated if a section has fewer than 200 members. The \$2 per member allocation remains unchanged."

- ⤴ Sections with fewer than 200 members receive a base allocation of \$500.

This budget allocation, together with any additional dues assessment levied by Sections, constitutes the Section's operating budget for the year. At the end of each fiscal year, unspent funds roll over to the Section for the next fiscal year (i.e., the unused portion of the operating budget may accrue from year to year). Funds rolled over from one year to another do so without earning interest.

At the Section council meeting each year, Section officers should discuss the fiscal impact of any plans for the next calendar year. Formal budgets are not required but may be developed to assist the Section in planning.

Section chairs are responsible for the overall fiscal management of their Section. Only the Secretary-Treasurer is permitted to authorize expenditures from the section's operating budget. In the absence of the Secretary-Treasurer, the Section chair may approve such expenditures. The Executive Office will reimburse or make payment to individuals and organizations for expenses when authorization is received from the Secretary-Treasurer via letter, electronic mail, or fax.

Sections may not use their operating budgets to fund gift memberships. However, if a section receives an unrestricted gift from a member or another source, those funds may be used in support of gift memberships. Generally, however, gift members are discouraged as ineffective and generally just utilized to increase section membership counts.

The Executive Office will administer financial resources for sections and provide financial reports on section finances, including on any restricted accounts.

Section Restricted Accounts for Awards and Grants

Sections may have funds in restricted accounts for section awards or grants such as support for dissertation research. The Association will establish and administer restricted accounts for a section should a section receive funds or gifts to support section awards or grants. The funds will be placed in an interest-bearing sub-account of the Association if the funds are in excess of \$10,000. The Executive Office provides separate financial reports on these restricted accounts.

In keeping with current Association policy, the term “award” refers to honorific recognition of past accomplishments and the term “grant” refers to monetary support for future activity.

Succession of Officers

In most cases, section bylaws provide instructions in the event that a section officer is unable to complete their term. If a section’s bylaws do not provide guidance, refer to Article II, Section 4 of the ASA Bylaws

“For all positions other than President, President-Elect, Past-President and Past Vice-President, if the elected person dies, resigns, or becomes unable to complete the full term for which that person was elected, the candidate who received the next highest number of votes shall be declared elected for the remainder of the term, unless otherwise specified herein.”

The Section Chair or Chair-elect is responsible for notifying the Executive Office of new openings in the section’s leadership.

Services Provided by the Executive Office

The Executive Office undertakes activities and provides information to assist the Sections. It is responsible for processing Section membership applications and renewals through its Membership Department. Whereas the Governance Department of the Executive

Office provides regular reports to Section officers on their membership and financial operations. In addition, the Executive Office provides the following services:

- ▲ Section elections as part of the Association’s general election;
- ▲ Rosters or electronic files of Section members (name, address, telephone and fax numbers, email address) twice each year;
- ▲ Mailing list rental at discounted fee for members;
- ▲ Two listservs per Section (one for section announcements by Section officers, and one for open discussion among Section members);
- ▲ Coordination of Annual Meeting sessions and receptions.

Section Archives

The Governance Department of the Executive Office maintains section important historical documents for each Section, including Section Bylaws, historical listing of Section officers, recent annual reports, newsletters, and award recipients. The Association has established an official Archive at the Pennsylvania State University for these and other Association records.

Section Officers are responsible for ensuring the preservation of relevant documents regarding their Section. Officers are encouraged to consult with the Executive Office and/or the ASA Archivist regarding the preservation of section information and history. Questions regarding the archival value of information, and about transferring information to the archives, may be addressed to:

American Sociological Association
Archives
The Pennsylvania State University

ATTN: Dr. James P. Quigel
Head, Historical Collections
104 Paterno Library
University Park, PA 16802-1808
(818) 863-2505
j pq1@psu.edu

Officers are also responsible for forwarding to their successors' official records, documents and other materials relevant to Section business and operation.

Elections

Nominations

Each section must have a nominations committee that is responsible for preparing a slate of candidates for election to section offices. All elected offices must be contested. Each section establishes and follows nominating procedures that provide an opportunity for broad representation of section members. Only voting (regular, emeritus, and student) members of the Association are eligible to serve as section officers. Section members who are associate members of the Association are eligible to vote in section elections but may not hold office.

The nominations committee is responsible for providing the election slate to the Executive Office by December 21st, and candidate biographical statements no later than January 31st. At the time of the election, all candidates must be voting members for the current year. No candidate may run for chair-elect of two sections simultaneously, nor serve as chair of two sections in the same year.

Section Balloting

The Executive Office conducts section elections as part of the Association's general election each spring.

All voting members of each Section are contacted in May to participate in elections. Elections are conducted via the internet. When election results become available, the Executive Office provides the Section chair with the election results. Each Section chair is responsible for notifying all candidates of the Section election results.

Section elections and referenda must be conducted in cooperation with the Executive Office; ballots to Section members should not be sent independently or included as part of a Section's newsletter. In order for Section ballots to be included as part of the general ASA election ballot mailing, Sections must adhere to the submission deadlines established by the Executive Office.

Failure to meet the Association-wide deadlines will result in Sections having to conduct separate balloting at their own expense. The Executive Office will administer the balloting and all associated costs will be charged to the Section.

Petitions and Candidates

Candidates and Ballot Initiatives may also be placed on the ballot via member petition. Each section's bylaws should have procedures established for doing so. Petition signatories may be verified by the Governance Department of the Executive Office.

The Annual Meeting

Section Sessions at the Annual Meeting

The final count of section members on September 30 of each year determines the number of sessions for the next Annual Meeting. A section need not use all of its assigned slots. Sections may not have additional session slots. Section program deadlines must remain consistent with those listed in the Organizers Manual.

The allocation of Annual Meeting sessions is as follows:

Number of Members	Number of Sessions
Less than 300	1
300-399	2
400-599	3
600-799	4
800-999	5
1000+	6

The Meeting Services Department prepares an Organizers Manual each fall detailing Association policies developed by the ASA Program Committee. The Organizers Manual, which provides detailed instructions on the process of organizing sessions, is distributed to the designated session organizers in late fall for their work in organizing sessions for the ASA Annual Meeting in the following year.

The Program on Section Day

At each ASA Annual Meeting one day is designated for the program of Sections. Each Section's program sessions, business meeting, and council meeting will normally be scheduled on an assigned day. Those Sections whose programs are larger than the time slots available on their assigned day will have sessions scheduled on an adjacent day.

Sections cannot cancel their business meetings and those business meetings must be held on their assigned days.

The Section chair is responsible for planning the Section's program at the Annual Meeting. This planning responsibility includes the options of serving as organizer of all Section sessions, designating another Section member to handle the task, or appointing a program committee to plan the Section activities.

The Section chair is responsible for providing the Executive Office with the topic of each program session, each session's classification (open submission or by invitation only), and names and addresses of the people responsible for organizing the program sessions. The names and addresses of the open submission session organizers will be published in the Annual Meeting Call for Papers.

The scheduling of the activities of the Annual Meeting is the responsibility of the Executive Office. The Meeting Services Department will do everything possible to accommodate Section requests, but decision-making responsibility for the final schedule lies in the Executive Office. Again, Section members should be aware that the move from a five-day meeting to a four-day meeting means there is less flexibility in scheduling.

Section Day Groupings and Rotation

In March of 1979, the ASA Council enacted a rotation system so that each section would have equal access to "prime" days of the meeting. The current rotation schedule for section activities results in the following groupings for section days:

GROUP A

Animals and Society
Body and Embodiment
Collective Behavior and Social Movements
Communication and Information Technology
Development , Sociology of
Education, Sociology of
Emotions, Sociology of
Evolution, Biology and Society
International Migration
Medical Sociology
Political Economy of the World-System
Race, Gender, and Class Theory

GROUP B

Aging and the Life Course
Altruism, Morality and Social Solidarity
Asia and Asian America
Children and Youth
Crime, Law, and Deviance
Culture, Sociology of
Economic Sociology
Global and Transnational Sociology
Labor and Labor Movements
Marxist Sociology
Methodology
Social Psychology
Teaching and Learning

GROUP C

Community and Urban Sociology
Ethnomethodology & Conversation Analysis
History of Sociology
Latino/a Sociology
Law, Sociology of
Mathematical Sociology
Mental Health, Sociology of
Political Sociology
Population, Sociology of
Science, Knowledge, and Technology
Sex and Gender

GROUP D

Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco
Comparative and Historical Sociology
Disability and Society
Environment and Technology
Family, Sociology of the
Inequality, Poverty, and Mobility
Organizations, Occupations, and Work
Peace, War, and Social Conflict
Racial and Ethnic Minorities
Rationality and Society
Religion, Sociology of
Sexualities, Sociology of
Sociological Practice and Public Sociology

Each section advances one day in the rotation each year. For example, if in 2012 a section is on Day 1, in 2013 that section will be on Day 2. Sections on Day 4 move to Day 1 the following year. The groupings outlined above are fixed and switching between sections is not permitted.

Every effort is made to minimize and avoid scheduling conflicts. However with as many as 5,000 members in attendance at Annual Meetings and more than 600 sessions scheduled on the program, conflicts are unavoidable.

Co-Sponsored Sessions

Sections may choose to co-sponsor sessions with other Sections; however, the sessions count against the allotment of one of the Sections. One arrangement is to have a two-year co-sponsorship, with the joint session counting as one Section's session in the first year and the other Section's in the second year. Another arrangement is a non-reciprocal one, where the host Section simply agrees to list another Section or group as a co-sponsor.

Coordination of Annual Meeting Section and Regular Sessions

Section open submission session organizers often coordinate with the Regular Session

organizers appointed by the ASA Program Committee. If the organizer of a Section's open submission paper session receives a substantial number of high-quality submissions, the Section organizer may contact the organizer of a comparable Regular Session topic to see if the papers can be considered for presentation there. Submissions may also be forwarded to the section's roundtable organizer for consideration.

Papers may be dually submitted to Regular Sessions and Section open submission sessions as long as the submitting authors meet the guidelines for dual submissions announced in the Call for Papers. A Regular Session organizer may also contact a section open submission session organizer to coordinate paper reviews and acceptance decisions. Details on submissions policies and practices are contained in the Organizers Manual.

Section Receptions

Sections that wish to hold receptions in ASA meeting facilities at the Annual Meeting must request space for this activity. Reception space requests must be sent to the Meeting Services Department by **March 1st** of each year. Requests received after March 1st will be accommodated on a space-available basis. Please note that Sections-in-Formation may only receive on site reception space if it is available. Sections may host receptions elsewhere in the host city, but assistance in making such arrangements cannot be provided by the Meeting Services Department.

When space is used in the official meeting facilities, refreshments must be purchased through the catering service of the hotel or convention center. Menus and cost estimates are available from the Meeting Services Department.

Section receptions are normally scheduled at 6:30-8:15 p.m. of the first and third nights of the meeting. Sections that co-sponsor

receptions may choose either section's day for the reception.

The reception time slot does not count against the program session allocation. Receptions that are held in ASA meeting facilities are listed in the program publications and are open to all registrants. Receptions held elsewhere may not conflict with general program activities.

Invited Participants Registration Fee

Each section may exempt one invited non-member, non-sociologist participant from the Annual Meeting registration fee requirement. Sections may utilize Section operating funds to support travel and registration fees for additional non-member, non-sociologists.

New Section Officer Orientation

All section officers, such as the Chairs-elect and newly elected Secretary-Treasurers, as well as Newsletter Editors are welcome to attend the Section Officer Orientation. The Section Officer Orientation provides an overview of the operating guidelines for Sections. This session also provides an opportunity for section officers to meet the Executive Office staff and representatives from the Committee on Sections.

Section Officers Meeting with the Committee on Sections

The Committee on Sections conducts an open discussion meeting each year at the Annual Meeting. All section officers are encouraged to meet with the Committee to raise concerns and reflect on the previous year's activities. The committee enters into its formal meetings immediately after this session and addresses the subjects mentioned during its discussion with the Sections.

Section Council and Business Meetings

Each Section is required to hold an annual Business Meeting. The Section cannot cancel its business meeting and cannot use the time

for another session. If the Section wishes to use the Council hour for a purpose other than a Council meeting, such as a short/one-hour panel, it may do so provided Section officers understand that they are responsible for determining when and where to hold the Section Council meeting; ASA does not provide additional space for such displaced Council meetings. Some Sections have separated the Business Meeting time slot into two segments, utilizing the first part the session for a meeting of the Section's Council and the remaining portion of the time for the Section's Business Meeting.

Awards

Section awards are an opportunity for the Association and its sections to provide recognition to sociologists and others who have contributed significantly to the discipline or sub-field of the Association. A Section award may be named in honor of a person or people.

Title Format

The title format for section awards is standard for all sections:

The American Sociological Association Section on (name of section) (name of person(s) honored - optional) Award for Distinguished (Scholarship, Service, or Teaching). For example, the Section on Social Psychology award is titled: "The American Sociological Association Section on Social Psychology Cooley/Mead Award for Distinguished Scholarship."

Number of Awards

Each Section may give up to five awards per year.⁹ One of the Section's awards must be a student award. Only student awards may be cash awards. The remaining award(s) cannot be cash awards but Sections may choose to reimburse travel expenses for award recipients

if section resources permit. Sections can begin to present awards two years after they achieve full section status.

Award Publicity

The section chair provides the Executive Office with a Call for Award nominations no later than **October 25th**. The call is posted on the ASA website. Sections are responsible for disseminating information on each award winner in the Section newsletter.

The ASA Executive Office will include any award recipients in the "ASA Major Award Recipients" program provided that their names are sent before **June 25th**. In addition a fall issue of Footnotes and/or the ASA website will feature an "Honor Roll" in which each section may list all its awards, the name and affiliation of the winner(s), and the book, article, or dissertation title, if appropriate.

Important Points of Contact

For questions on any section matter, including policy issues, newsletters, financial statements, awards, elections, and rosters, contact Section Coordinator at sections@asanet.org.

For questions on Annual Meeting program planning, sessions, and receptions, contact Meeting Services at meetings@asanet.org.

For questions on membership, adding members to sections or verifying memberships, contact the Membership Department at membership@asanet.org.



⁹ This number was increased from three to five by the ASA Council in August 2004.

Appendix A: Section Bylaws

The ASA's Sections Manual states that each section must prepare a set of bylaws to guide their operation. Writing bylaws is a required part of the approval process for sections-information. All bylaws must be in harmony with the ASA's Constitution and its own operating bylaws. To ensure this all new sets of bylaws and amendments must be approved by the Committee on Sections and the ASA Council. In addition sections are required to have a copy of up-to-date bylaws on record with the Executive Office.

The governance department of the Executive Office is charged with supporting sections in drafting and keeping their bylaws up to date. The department can also provide copies of section bylaws, assistance with interpreting those bylaws as well as access to past section records. Please direct any such requests to Sections@asanet.org

The Process

New bylaws and amendments go through an extensive review process before formally going into effect.

1. Any draft bylaws language must be approved by the Section Council and must meet all requirements enumerated in the Section's Bylaws for amendments.
2. Send the amendments to the Governance Office at Sections@asanet.org. The governance office will maintain records of this process and will place all amendments on the agenda of the Committee on Sections.
3. The language will be reviewed and approved by the Committee on Sections

at one of their two yearly meetings. The Committee on Sections may approve the language as is, or request that the section make adjustments.

4. Once the changes have been approved they go before the ASA Council (at one if its two yearly meetings) for approval.
5. After Council approval the bylaws amendment will be placed on the section's ballot for ASA's spring election. Bylaws drafted by a section-information are not voted on during the spring election.
6. An amendment that receives a majority of favorable votes will enter into force on the last day of that year's annual meeting. Bylaws drafted by a section-information enter into force at this time.
7. The Executive Office will facilitate this process for sections by recording amendments and sending the required materials to the Committee on Sections and the ASA Council. In addition the Executive Office will facilitate communication between Committees and Section Chairpersons.

Timeline for Sections Bylaws Approval

To ensure that all bylaws changes receive due attention the Executive Office has formalized the following timeline.

Some events, such as the Annual Meeting and the winter meetings of the Committee on Section and the ASA Council are held on different dates each year so exact dates are not given.

The Executive Office will provide updates on the status of amendments as each of these events occurs.

August 1st

Sections are sent an overview of the Bylaws amendment process and are informed of upcoming deadlines.

August

The Annual Meeting.

This is a great time to get input on any potential changes from section members, as well as draft new language at section business meetings.

November 10th

Amendments for next year's election are due at the Executive Office.

Bylaws received after this date without prior notice may be delayed until the next meeting of the Committee on Sections in August. This would delay voting for a year.

December

The Committee on Sections conducts its Winter Meeting. Bylaws changes are included on its agenda.

February

ASA Council Meeting. Section Bylaws changes are included on its agenda as part of its review of sections' business

April

ASA Election begins. Any bylaws that were received by November 10th will be included on the ballot.

Early June

Election results are sent to Section Chairs.

August

The Annual Meeting: both the Committee on Section and ASA Council hold meetings at this time. Bylaws received after November 10th of the previous year may be put on their agenda at the section's request.

August

New amendments and bylaws enter into force on the last day of the Annual Meeting.

Some Helpful Guidelines

Simpler is better. Use simple language and as little language as necessary to convey its meaning. Use clear, formal language and avoid legalese when possible.

Define any technical terms, abbreviations, offices, or any language that may be used in a nonstandard way. Terms should be used consistently throughout the document. For example: if a section officer is named Chairperson-Elect, then use Chairperson-Elect in all references to the office.

Clarity: Section leaderships experience continuous turnover and often have only limited institutional memories. Consequently, bylaws and amendments will provide the most guidance if they are written concisely and without ambiguity.

Editing: Poorly edited bylaws can create confusion. Errors in grammar and in the spell checker's auto-correct can completely change the meaning of a phrase.

Paragraphs should be kept as short as possible so that they are easier to read. Each paragraph should contain only one idea. Do not split a single idea up across multiple paragraphs.

Use inclusive, gender-neutral language. Several ways of doing this are to use neutral terms for offices (Section Chair as opposed to Section Chairman) or omitting gendered pronouns.

Use Appendices when necessary. This should be done when additional documents are referenced directly or are established in the bylaws. In nearly all cases they should be added to the end of a set of bylaws as opposed to added in-line.

Explanatory Paragraphs

Bylaws changes are discussed by the Committee on Sections and then approved by the ASA Council before going to the Section membership for a vote. Because of this it may

be valuable to write a brief explanation of the problem the amendments aim to solve, and the reasoning behind them.

Sample Set of Bylaws:

The Section on the Sociology of Examples 2011

Explanatory notes are included in italic print.

Article I. Name

The Section shall be known as the Section on the Sociology of Examples.

This is the formal name of the section, and may differ from a commonly used name or abbreviation. Names are extremely important; a name change can indicate a change of focus or a broadening of the section's research agenda. A small change here can result in a significant change of membership.

Article II. Purpose

The Section on the Sociology of Examples seeks to facilitate communication, expand networks, and provide a forum for intellectual exchange and debate among sociologists, scholars, and teachers. The Section welcomes members of all theoretical persuasions and substantive interests that are encompassed by the broad rubrics of (the section's area of expertise).

This portion of the bylaws is a short mission statement, and should reflect the interests and orientation of the section. There is no standard purpose statement.

Article III. Council and Officers

The principal governing body of the Section shall be the Council, which shall consist of six members, elected by vote of the section members. Council shall also include two student members. Elected members shall serve staggered three-year terms. Student members shall serve staggered two-year terms.

The student member involvement of sections varies. Most sections have one or two members. In some sections student members have restrictions. For example, they may serve shorter two-year terms or are required to be graduate students.

The elected Officers of the Section shall be a Chair, Chair-Elect, Past Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer. The Chair-Elect shall serve in that position for one year, followed by one-year terms as Chair and Past Chair. The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve a three-year term.

Officers shall not succeed themselves. The Chair, Chair-Elect, and Secretary-Treasurer shall be ex officio members of the Council, with the following specific duties: the Chair shall conduct Council meetings, the Chair and Chair-Elect shall co-chair the Program and Activities Committee, and the Secretary-Treasurer shall take and circulate minutes of Council meetings while keeping and

presenting official documents and financial records of the Section.

If an elected office is vacated before the term is completed, the candidate with the next highest vote count is invited to fill the open position for the remainder of the term.

The Council may from time to time create other positions to manage Section affairs. The Chair will appoint members to such positions in consultation with other officers and subject to confirmation by the Council.

This is the most common arrangement of Section Officers and Council Members. In this example there are six council members. The Chair, Chair-Elect and Secretary/Treasurer sit as voting members of the council as well. Other forms are also possible; in some sections committee chairpersons sit on the council as voting members as well. Variations should arise as needed to solve

All regular members of the Section are eligible for election as Officers.

Article IV. Powers of the Council

The Council is vested with the power to carry out all necessary operations of the Section, acting as representatives of the members of the Section. To that end, it shall meet on the occasion of the ASA Annual Meeting and may meet at other times when more than half of the Council can be assembled, whether in person or through electronic means. The Council shall make decisions by majority rule of its assembled members.

Article V. Referenda

Questions to be brought before the Section membership for approval may originate with the Council itself (if requested by at least three Council members), by a petition of 10 percent of the Section membership, or by 25 members of the Section (whichever is less). Any resolution passed by the annual Business Meeting of the Section and not subsequently accepted by the Council shall automatically be submitted to a vote of the Section membership.

Article VI. Elections and Voting

The elections of the Section shall be carried out in concurrence with the American Sociological Association and coordinated with its schedule. Newly elected officers and Council members shall assume office on the day following the annual Business Meeting of the Section at the American Sociological Association's Annual Meeting.

Occasionally the section's nominating process is defined at this point.

Article VII. Nomination by Petition

Members of the Section may be nominated for any office by a petition of ten percent of the members of the Section or 25 members of the Section, whichever is less. The choices of the Nominations Committee for each office shall be made known to the membership at least 60 days prior to the deadline for receiving nominations by petition.

The proceeding four paragraphs are fairly standard across all sections. The second and fourth paragraphs grant members the right to petition to the section. The language is drawn from the ASA Constitution. The election language

Article VIII. Committees

The section shall have the following standing committees: Membership, Program, Publications, Nominations and Awards. Other committees may be created from time to time by the Council, and the Council may change the name of any committee.

The Membership Committee, whose members are appointed by the Section Chair for two-year terms, shall be responsible for recruitment of new members. The committee shall be chaired by the Outreach Coordinator, who shall serve a term of two years renewable for one year.

The Program Committee shall be chaired by the Section Chair and have at least four other members. Committee members shall be appointed for staggered two-year terms by the Chair. The committee shall develop sessions for the annual meeting of the ASA, in cooperation with the ASA Program Committee, and initiate and promote other activities in line with the purposes of the Section, subject to the approval of the Council.

It is not uncommon for the Section Chair to head one of the committees. Program committees are a logical choice as Chairs are typically responsible for planning the section's sessions at the Annual Meeting.

The Publications Committee shall be chaired by the Editor of the Section Newsletter, who shall be appointed by the Section Chair. The Editor's term shall be three years, renewable for one or more years with the approval of the Council. The committee shall have at least three members. Committee members shall be appointed for staggered three-year terms by the committee Chair in consultation with the Section Chair. The Publications Committee shall produce the Section Newsletter to be distributed to all Section members four times a year through the American Sociological Association. It may also initiate and produce other publications in line with the purposes of the Section, subject to the approval of the Council.

In some cases it is also appropriate to define the role of a section Webmaster in addition to a newsletter editor, or to combine these roles together. Section newsletters are distributed electronically (usually in PDF form) and back issues are usually kept on the section's website.

The Nominations Committee, appointed each year by the Section Council, shall have at least four members, none of whom is currently serving as a Section officer. No member of the committee shall serve for more than two consecutive years. The Nominations Committee shall present at least two candidates for each office to be voted on by the members of the Section.

Section Past Chairs are frequently called upon to head this committee on the assumption that he or she is in the best position to know people in the section and to assess their abilities.

The Awards Committee shall be appointed by the Chair-Elect, its members serving two-year terms. It shall be chaired by an elected member of the Council. The committee shall develop annual awards for best scholarly book, best scholarly article, best graduate student publication. The Council may establish other awards, such as a Distinguished Career Award to recognize a senior scholar's cumulative achievements, from time to time. The committee shall create distinct sub-committees for each award; no member may serve on more than one sub-committee. Each sub-committee shall have at least three members. The call for award nominees shall be made in the newsletter, on the Section's information listserv, and on the Section's web site.

In some sections each award committee is defined in its own clause and details are provided regarding how to conduct the award.

Article IX. Membership

Any member of the American Sociological Association, without regard to the classification of membership, may become a member of the Section.

Article X. Dues

Dues shall be in accord with minimum requirements as set by the American Sociological Association.

Sections may choose to charge additional dues. In addition any sections that begin publishing a Section Journal will need to amend their bylaws to reference the additional dues assessed for a journal subscription.

Article XI. Amendment of the By-Laws

Amendment of the Section By-Laws requires, first, discussion of proposed changes at an annual meeting of the Section; second, approval by a majority of the Council (including ex officio members); third, approval by the Committee on Sections and ASA Council; fourth, approval of a majority of those voting in a vote submitted to all Section members.

This outlines the basic process of amending the bylaws.

Appendix B:

All current Sections and their date of founding.

	Formal Section Name as Stated in Bylaws	Date of Founding
1	Section on Teaching and Learning in Sociology	1973
2	Section on Methodology	1961
3	Medical Sociology Section	1962
4	Section on Crime, Law and Deviance	1966
5	Section on Sociology of Education	1967
6	The Family Section	1967
7	Section on Organizations, Occupations and Work	1970
8	Theory Section	1968
9	Section on the Sociology of Sex and Gender	1973
10	Community and Urban Sociology Section*	1973
11	Section For Social Psychology	1961
12	Section on Peace, War and Social Conflict	1978
13	Section on Environment and Technology	1977
14	Section on Marxist Sociology	1977
15	Section on Sociological Practice and Public Sociology*	1979
16	Section on the Sociology of Population	1978
17	Section on Political Economy of the World-System	1981
18	Section on Aging and the Life Course	1980
19	Sociology of Mental Health	1993
20	Section on Collective Behavior and Social Movements	1981
21	Racial and Ethnic Minorities	1981
22	Section on Comparative-Historical Sociology	1983
23	Section on Political Sociology	1985
24	Section on Asia and Asian America	1986
25	Section on the Sociology of Emotions	1988
26	Section on the Sociology of Culture	1988
27	Section on Science, Knowledge and Technology	1990
28	Section on Communication and Information Technologies	1990
29	Latino/Latina Sociology Section	1994
30	Section on Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco	1993
31	Children and Youth	1994
32	Section on Sociology of Law	1994
33	Section on Rationality and Society	1995
34	Sociology of Religion Section	1994
35	Section on International Migration	1995
36	Section on Race, Gender, and Class	1997
37	Mathematical Sociology Section	1997
38	Section on the Sociology of Sexualities	1997
39	Section on the History of Sociology	1999

40	Section on Economic Sociology	2000
41	Section on Labor and Labor Movements	2002
42	Section on Animals and Society	2002
43	Section on Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis	2004
44	Section on Evolution, Biology and Sociology	2007
45	Section on Disability and Society	2011
46	Section on the Sociology of Human Rights	2010
47	Section on Altruism, Morality and Social Solidarity	2012
48	Section on the Sociology of the Body and Embodiment	3020
49	Section on Global and Transnational Sociology	2011
50	Section on Inequality, Poverty and Mobility	2012
51	Sociology of Development	2012
52	Sociology of Consumers and Consumption **	SIF

** Section in Formation

The Visual Sociology Section-In-Formation was terminated in 1981

