

Animals and Society Section Bylaws

Last revised September 2025

The purpose of the Section on Animals and Society is to encourage and support the development of theory, research and teaching about the complex relationships that exist between humans and other animals. In the process, it is anticipated that the light we shed on these issues will increase the well-being of both humans and other animals.

Officers of the Section: The officers of the Section shall be a Chair, a Chair-Elect, a Past-Chair (the immediately preceding Chair), Secretary-Treasurer, and a Student Representative. The Student Representative must be a student at the time of the election but may remain in the position if their status changes while in office. The Secretary-Treasurer shall serve for a period of three years, the student representative for two years, and the other three officers shall serve for a period of one year. The Council shall consist of eleven members: six elected council members and the five officers. Students are eligible to serve in council member positions. Neither the officers nor the council members shall immediately succeed themselves in the same position. Each of the six elected council members shall serve for three years, with two council seats being vacated each year. The Chair shall preside over meetings of the Council and the Section Business Meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer shall present to each new council member the current draft of the By-laws, and also the current draft of the ASA Manual on Sections. The Chair shall plan the program for Animals and Society for the Annual Meeting of the ASA. The Chair-Elect shall assume the duties of the Chair in the latter's absence or incapacity.

Powers of the Officers: The Council is vested in principle with the power to carry out all the necessary business of the Section, acting as the representative of the membership of the Section. Any action of the section, including proposed changes of the bylaws, may be brought to the vote of the section by the council, by a petition of 10 percent of the members of the section or by 25 members of the section, whichever is less. Changes in the bylaws are valid when approved by a majority of the section members voting in a ballot. Questions that are interpreted by the council to be matters of major program development or policy shall be brought before the membership for approval.

In the event of death, resignation, incapacity or inactivity of the Chair, Chair-Elect or Secretary-Treasurer, the council acting on the initiative of any member thereof may designate an interim officer to perform the functions of that office for a period of at most one year. Such action shall require the approval of two-thirds of the council members. The interim officer so designated may be any member of the section, including a member already holding another office or membership on the council. In case of death or resignation, or in the case of the continued incapacity or inactivity of an officer for a period longer than the one year permitted for an interim officer, the council shall call for the election of a replacement at the time of the regular annual election, and the elected replacement shall fill the remainder of the term of office.

Elections and Voting: The elections of the section shall be carried out by ballot in accordance with the American Sociological Association's procedures and schedule for sections. Two persons shall be nominated for each vacant position by April 15 of each year. Newly elected officers shall assume their offices on the first of September.

Committees: All committees of the section shall be appointed as specified below and approved by the council. All committee members must be members in good standing of the section. Additional ad hoc committees may be established by a majority vote of the council.

The Committee on Nominations shall be chaired by the Past-Chair and consist of three additional members appointed by the Past-Chair. Each year the Committee on Nominations shall solicit suggestions for nominations from the members via an announcement in the section newsletter and on the section listserv. It shall nominate two candidates who are section members in good standing for each office to be filled. These candidates shall not be announced until they have consented to serve. The Committee on Nominations may also recommend to the council the names of persons to be considered for appointment to the other regular committees.

The Program Committee shall be chaired by the Section Chair and consist of at least two additional members appointed by the Section Chair. It shall prepare the program for the Annual Meetings of the ASA in the field of interest of the section and cooperate with the ASA Program Committee in its planning.

The Awards Committee shall consist of three Section members appointed by the Section Chair. When the Chair of the Section deems necessary, separate awards committees can be established for the various awards. The committee members should not have conflicts of interest. So, if a committee member has a conflict for a particular award (e.g., they themselves are nominated for it), a substitute member may be appointed by the Section Chair to evaluate that particular award. Committee members who think, based on their own professional judgment and good faith, that they may have a conflict should give a full disclosure to the Section Chair, who will judge the degree of the conflict and decide how to handle it appropriately.

The chair of the Membership Committee shall be appointed by the Section Chair and the committee shall consist of at least two additional members appointed by the Section Chair. The committee will actively encourage past members to rejoin the section and recruit new members.

Membership: The membership of the section shall be drawn from the members of the American Sociological Association. Elected officers and Committee members shall be members of the American Sociological Association who have voting privileges.

Awards: The Section offers four awards annually, with the winners determined by the Awards Committee. The Chair of the Awards Committee will send out a call for nominations for the awards via the Section listserv and in the Newsletter in the Fall. This call will include the deadline for submissions, which typically will be in early March, as determined by the Awards Committee. The committee may choose to extend the deadline after the initial call, as long as this extension is clearly announced via the listserv and all nominations are given fair consideration. Nominees must be members of the ASA Animals and Society section by the date of the submission deadline to be considered. The committee may choose to not give a particular award in any given year if they do not find any of the nominees to be worthy of the award.

Jane Goodall Award for Graduate Student Scholarship. Papers may be empirical or theoretical, and they may address any aspect of animals and society. Papers are evaluated based on their potential contribution to the field of human-animal studies. To be eligible, a paper must be authored by a current

graduate student (or students). Unpublished and published papers, as well as those which have been presented at a professional meeting, are eligible. There is no page limit.

Distinguished Article Award. The award will be given for an article to an author(s) whose work makes a significant empirical or theoretical contribution to the sociological understanding of animals and society. The article must have been published within the two calendar years preceding the award year (e.g., at the 2020 ASA meeting, the award will be for an article published in 2018 or 2019).

Distinguished Book Award. The award will be given for a book to an author(s) whose work makes a significant empirical or theoretical contribution to the sociological understanding of animals and society. The book must have been published within the two calendar years preceding the award year (e.g., at the 2020 ASA meeting, the award will be for a book published in 2018 or 2019).

The Clifton Bryant Animals & Society Course Award. The Committee will consider teachers/courses based on the course syllabus, other material from the course (e.g., assignments, description of course activities, teaching evaluations) and a nominating letter discussing the nominee's distinguished contributions to undergraduate and/or graduate understandings of animals and society.

Dues: Dues shall be set by the Council to cover the operation of the section in accord with the requirements of the American Sociological Association.

Amendment of By-Laws: These By-Laws may be amended through a favorable majority vote of the Section Council, provided this action is subsequently confirmed through a favorable majority of the members of the section who have voted by official ASA ballot.