

# ASA Section on Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society Section Bylaws

Amended 2020, 2023, 2025

The Purpose of the Section is to encourage and enhance research, teaching and other professional concerns relating to the scope and limits of explaining macroscopic patterns like social inequalities, segregation, opinion polarization, or diffusion processes resulting from the complex interplay of decision-making processes and social network dynamics. The Section seeks to promote communication, collaboration, and consultation among scholars using formal and computational models, social network analysis, survey data, digital traces, and/or experimental design to investigate micro-macro linkages.

I. Officers of the Section: The Officers of the Section shall consist of a Council that includes a Chair, a Chair-elect, a Past-Chair, a Secretary-Treasurer, two other members, a student representative and a Newsletter Editor serving ex officio. All Officers shall serve a two-year term except the Chair, who will be on Council for three years, and the student representative for one year. The Chair will determine the program for the ASA meeting the following year. The Chair will serve as Chair for one year, and will act as Chair of the Council and shall preside at the annual business meeting. The Secretary-Treasurer shall take and circulate minutes of meetings, and keep and present the documents and financial records of the Section. The Chair-elect will serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee, with the Chair serving ex officio on the Nominating Committee. Other members of the Nominating Committee may be appointed from the Council or section membership at the discretion of the Nominating Committee Chair.

In the first year of the Section's existence, special procedures will be used to establish a rotation of Council membership. In the first election of the Council following approval of these By-laws by the Council of the American Sociological Association, one Council seat shall be allocated to a two-year term, and the other shall be allocated to a one year term. The Newsletter editor shall be appointed by the chair with the concurrence of Council for a term that will commence immediately and expire at the end of the next business meeting, at which time the Editor may be reappointed or a new Editor appointed to a two year term. This paragraph shall be removed from the Section's By-laws following the first election held under it.

Officers cannot succeed themselves. No member can hold two elective offices simultaneously. No member may be a member of Council for more than a continuous five-year period, nor may any member hold Council positions for more than seven years of any ten-year period. All voting members of the Section are eligible for election as Officers. If an elected office is vacated before the end of its term, it will be filled for the unexpired term by appointment of the Chair with the concurrence of Council. If the Chair's office is vacated, the chair-elect shall fill the functions of Chair. If a Past-Chair cannot serve on Council, no replacement shall be appointed.

II. Powers of the Officers: The Council is vested with the power to carry out all necessary operations of the Section, acting as the representative of the membership of the Section. The Council shall make decisions at its scheduled meetings by a majority vote of its attending members and between meetings by mail, e-mail, conference phone call or any

similar method designed to allow all Council members a chance to register their votes. Any action to be made on behalf of the Section will be brought to the next Section business meeting for a vote if requested by three or more Council members. In addition, an action to be made on behalf of the Section may be brought to the next Section business meeting for a vote by a petition signed by 10 percent of the members of the Section or by 25 members, whichever is less. Unless otherwise provided in these by-laws, all appointments to Committees shall be made by the Chair with the concurrence of the Council.

III. Elections and Voting: The elections of the Section shall be carried out in cooperation with the American Sociological Association and coordinated with its schedule. Newly elected Officers and Council members shall assume office on September 1 and end their terms on August 31.

IV. Committees: There shall be a Nominating Committee composed of the Section Chair-elect serving as Nominating Committee Chair, the section Chair serving as member ex officio, and additional members from the Council or section membership appointed at the discretion of the Nominating Committee Chair, all appointed for one year terms.

V. Awards: Each year, the Chair of the section will select the chair of each committee from its membership. Each committee will consist of the previous winner of the prize plus others chosen by the Council. Each committee must have at least three members. The section grants the following three awards for outstanding scholarly work.

- (1) The Harrison C. White Outstanding Book Award. Every two years, the section will form a committee for the Harrison C. White Outstanding Book Award. To be eligible for the award, the book must be published within the last two years.
- (2) The James S. Coleman Outstanding Article Award. Each year the section will form a three-member committee for the James S. Coleman Article Award. To be eligible for the award, the article must be published within the last two years. Faculty and graduate students are eligible for the award. An article may be submitted to the Outstanding Article Award or the Graduate Student paper award, but not both. Co-authors share the award equally.
- (3) The Graduate Student Paper Award. Each year the section will form a three-member committee for the Graduate Student Paper Award. The paper must be authored within the last two years and may be published or unpublished. The author(s) must have written the paper while still a graduate student. Co-authored papers are eligible if and only if all authors are students. Student co-authors share the award equally.

VI. Membership: The membership of the Section is open to any member of the American Sociological Association without regard to the classification of the membership. Members who do not pay their Section dues shall be suspended, and dropped from the rolls after two years.

VII. Dues: Dues shall be set by the Council to cover the operation of the Section in

accordance with the requirements of the American Sociological Association.

VIII. By-Law Changes: proposed changes in these by-laws must first be discussed at an annual meeting of the section. Next, the changes must be approved by a majority of the entire Council. Finally, the changes must be submitted to vote of the section Members through a mailed ballot and approved by a majority of those submitting ballots.

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Summary of amendments

- Name changed from “Rational Choice” to “Rationality and Society” in 2001
- Name changed from “Rationality and Society” to Decision-Making, Social Networks, and Society in 2023
- Amendments a) clarify responsibilities of various Section officers and align these responsibilities with recent practice; b) rename the section’s book award to the Harrison C. White Outstanding Book Award and award it every other year instead of every three years; and c) follow ASA recommendations to revise start and end dates for terms served by Section officers.