

Amendments to the Bylaws of the Evangelical Theological Society, proposed by the ETS Board of Directors and Executive Director.

During the 2022 Annual Meeting, prior to the business meeting, the Board will provide a special forum for members to comment and ask questions about the amendments. Formal discussion and voting on the amendments will take place at the 2022 Annual Business Meeting.

Amendments:

AMENDMENT 1: Article III.1(c) Membership (Full)

Current wording:

A Th.M. degree or its theological equivalent shall ordinarily be required for full membership in the Society. In exceptional instances anyone who lacks the Th.M. degree or its theological equivalent may be eligible for full membership, provided that he has made significant contributions in the realm of theology (such as writing, or administration or teaching in evangelical educational institutions).

After amendment:

The Ph.D., Th.D., or other research doctorate related to biblical or theological studies from an accredited institution shall ordinarily be required for full membership in the Society. In exceptional instances, an individual who lacks the Ph.D., Th.D., or qualified research doctorate may be eligible for full membership upon the approval of the membership committee based on similar qualifications. PROVIDED: Current full members who qualified with a Th.M. will remain full members as long as they retain their membership.

Rationale:

The Th.M. was the terminal degree for many academics when ETS was formed, and it was fitting that it was the minimal requirement for full membership then. Now the PhD or an equivalent doctorate is the terminal degree for most academics, and it is fitting that it should be the requirement for full membership in an academic society. Current full members who qualified with a ThM will remain full members as long as they retain their membership.

Note: “similar qualifications” indicates publications with an academic press or peer-reviewed academic journal, and/or significant contribution in theological education through teaching in a field of biblical or theological studies.

AMENDMENT 2: Article III.1(d) Associate Membership

Current wording:

Associate members shall be those who are in sympathy with the scholarly and theological purposes of the Society and who desire its publications and fellowship. They are to be accepted upon recommendation of a member as a sponsor and with the approval of the chairperson of the Membership Committee. They shall be nonvoting and subject to the same fees and requirements as full members.

After amendment:

Associate members shall be those who may not qualify for full membership but are in sympathy with the scholarly and theological purposes of the Society. They are to be accepted on the basis of an application, their signature affirming the Doctrinal Basis, and approval of the Executive Director. They shall be nonvoting members and subject to the same requirements as full members.

Rationale:

A recommendation need not be a requirement for associate membership, and many do not know a full member.

AMENDMENT 3: Article III.1(e) Student Membership

Current wording:

Student members shall be those who are in college or graduate school. They are to be accepted upon recommendation of a sponsoring member and the approval of the chairperson of the Membership Committee. They shall be nonvoting, subject to the same requirements as full members, except due requirements may be lessened in accordance with paragraph (g) below.

After amendment:

Student members shall be those who are in college or graduate school and are in sympathy with the scholarly and theological purposes of the Society. They are to be accepted on the basis of an application, their signature affirming the Doctrinal Basis, and approval of the Executive Director. They shall be nonvoting members and subject to the same requirements as full members.

Rationale: a recommendation need not be a requirement for student membership, and many do not know a full member.

AMENDMENT 4: Article III.2(a) Membership Application and Maintenance (Process)

Current wording:

Applications for membership shall be submitted to the Membership Committee. Upon a two-thirds vote, the committee shall enroll all qualified members.

After amendment:

Applications for membership shall be submitted to the Executive Director, who shall enroll all qualified applicants according to their qualifications and their affirmation of the Doctrinal Basis by signature. The Executive Director shall consult the Membership Committee as necessary. If an applicant wishes to appeal a membership decision, the applicant shall inform the Executive Director in writing. The appeal will be considered by the Membership Committee, which will rule on the appeal.

Rationale:

This reflects the way applications have been processed for years. It is more efficient since, in most cases, the membership requirements make decisions on applications simple. It also gives appeal to the membership committee if the applicant believes an appeal is in order.

AMENDMENT 5: Article III.2(b) Membership Application and Maintenance (Dues)

Current wording:

Dues of \$50 for full members and \$45 for associate members (\$30 for either if retired) are to be paid annually. Dues for student members shall be \$30 annually.

After amendment:

Membership dues will be set by the Board of Directors upon the recommendation of the Executive Director. Dues shall be paid annually and are good for one year.

Rationale:

Something as specific as the amount of dues should not be set in the bylaws.

AMENDMENT 6: Article IV.1 (b) Conference Meetings (President-Elect Role)

Current wording:

The president-elect will arrange for plenary speakers and any special sessions at the national conference meeting.

After amendment:

The President-Elect will serve as program chair and will arrange for plenary speakers and any special sessions at the national conference meeting.

Rationale:

Slight clarification, reflecting the responsibilities of the President-Elect.

AMENDMENT 7: Article V.2(a)&(b) Number and Term (Directors)

Current wording:

Section 2. Number and Term. The Board of Directors shall consist of eight directors determined as described below. In the interests of board continuity, the directors shall consist of the following:

(a) The President, President Elect, Vice President and Secretary, all of whom shall be elected at each annual business meeting of the members.

(b) In addition to the officers described in paragraph (a) above, four members at large, one to be elected at each annual business meeting, shall serve as directors.

After amendment:

Section 2. Number and Term. The Board of Directors shall consist of eight directors determined as described below. In the interests of board continuity, the directors shall consist of the following:

(a) The President, President-Elect, Vice-President, and Secretary. A new Vice-President shall be elected at each annual meeting, who shall serve as President-Elect in the second year and as President in the third year.

(b) The officers described in paragraph (a) above, together with the four most recent past presidents, shall constitute the Board of Directors. The Executive Director is a non-voting, ex-officio member.

Rationale:

This amendment underscores the importance of board continuity, it reflects and clarifies the procedure that ETS follows for the election of officers (i.e., the Vice-President is the only officer elected at the business meeting), and it specifies the process for service as officers.

AMENDMENT 8: Article VII.2 Nominating Committee

Current wording:

Nominating Committee. There shall be a nominating committee consisting of the two most recent former presidents and three members, elected at the membership annual business meeting, which shall present to the Society proposed candidates for election to office at the next membership annual business meeting. This committee shall consider that the officers of the Society should be members who wholeheartedly support the purposes and Doctrinal Basis of the Society, who have been regularly involved in Society activities, and who are recognized for their contributions to evangelical scholarship.

After amendment:

Nominating Committee. There shall be a Nominating Committee consisting of the two most recent former presidents and three members, elected by plurality vote at the membership annual business meeting, which shall present to the Society a candidate for election to the office of Vice-President at the next membership annual business meeting. This committee shall consider that the officers of the Society should be members who wholeheartedly support the purposes and Doctrinal Basis of the Society, who have been regularly involved in Society activities, and who are recognized for their contributions to evangelical scholarship. The committee will be chaired by the most recent former president serving on the committee.

Rationale:

Note changes: from “shall present to the Society proposed candidates for election to office” to “shall present to the Society a candidate for election to the office of vice-president.” Also, adds “by plurality vote” and “the committee will be chaired by the most recent former president serving on the committee.”

These changes specify the election process clearly and reflects what ETS has done for years.

AMENDMENT 9: Article VII.3 Membership Committee

Current wording:

Membership Committee. The committee shall be composed of the Secretary, who shall serve as the chairperson, together with six members, two to be elected at each membership annual business meeting.

After amendment:

Membership Committee. The committee shall be composed of the Secretary, who shall serve as the Chair, together with six members, who serve a term of three years, two to be elected by plurality vote at each membership annual business meeting.

Rationale:

This clarifies service on the Membership Committee and adds “by plurality vote” to clarify the election process.

AMENDMENT 10: Article VII.4 Editorial Committee

Current wording:

Editorial Committee. The committee shall be composed of the editor, who shall be appointed by the Board and shall serve as chairperson, together with four members, one to be elected at each membership annual business meeting. The editor shall report to the Board.

After amendment:

Editorial Committee. The committee shall be composed of the editor of JETS, who shall be appointed by the Board and shall serve as Chair, and the associate editors. The editor shall report to the Executive Director.

Rationale:

This reflects the current process.

AMENDMENT 11: Article VII.8 Vacancies

Current wording:

Vacancies. Vacancies may be filled in the interim between annual business meetings of the Society by the Board.

After amendment:

Vacancies. With the exception of the Nominating Committee, vacancies on committees may be filled by the Board between annual business meetings of the Society.

Rationale:

This clarifies the bylaw. It adds “with the exception of the Nominating Committee,” to avoid a perception that the Board could shape the committee in the Board’s interests.

AMENDMENT 12: Article VIII.8 Secretary

Current wording:

Secretary. The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Board and members, shall record all the proceedings of the meetings in a book to be kept for that purpose and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board.

After amendment:

Secretary. The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Board and members, shall record all the proceedings of the meetings in a book to be kept for that purpose and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board. The Secretary is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the board.

NOTE: based upon feedback from members after reading the amendment in 2021, the Board will be offering an amendment to AMENDMENT 12 making the Secretary a nonvoting member of the Board. The amendment will be brought to the floor and will read:

The Board moves to amend the motion on Bylaws Amendment 12 by adding “as a non-voting member.” So, if adopted, Amendment 12 will read

Secretary. The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Board and members, shall record all the proceedings of the meetings in a book to be kept for that purpose and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board. The Secretary is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the board as a non-voting member.

Rationale:

This clarifies that the Secretary is appointed by the Board and shall be a non-voting member.

AMENDMENT 13: Amend the bylaws by adding:

ARTICLE XIII PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

“The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the Society in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Society may adopt.”

AMENDMENT 14: Amend the bylaws by replacing all instances of “Chairman” with “Chair.”

(NOTE: see ARTICLE IV §6, ARTICLE V §5, ARTICLE VI §1 & §2, and ARTICLE VIII §5 for instances.)

AMENDMENT 15: Amend all instances of sole masculine pronoun (he, him, or his) by inserting “or she,” “or her” as required.

(NOTE: see ARTICLE III §2 d., ARTICLE IV §3, ARTICLE IV §6, ARTICLE V §3, ARTICLE VI §4, ARTICLE VII §1 for instances.)