

ACE Constitution Bylaw B: Policies and Procedures Manual

The Association for Communication Excellence is a diverse organization with a long oral, as well as recorded, history. A group of past presidents and coordinators prepared this document in May 1998 to record many of the unwritten policies and procedures that have guided ACE for decades.

The manual covers ten areas: annual manual review, awards, board members, committees and special interest groups (SIGs), removal from office of ACE leadership position, meetings and workshops, guidelines for using regional funds, criteria for charter status/affiliate membership, the ACE Seal of Approval, and sponsorship. In general, this document outlines the policies and procedures for each. Policies are defined as rules as stipulated in the ACE constitution. Procedures are defined as guidelines, allowing for flexibility and innovation among the ACE leadership.

The manual is a dynamic document that reflects the ongoing needs and ideas of ACE's members and leaders.

I. Annual Manual Review

A. The ACE Policies and Procedures Manual will be reviewed and updated by the ACE officers each year prior to the fall board of directors meeting.

RATIONALE: The Policies and Procedures Manual provides information that assists the ACE leadership in managing and guiding the organization. When administrative procedures are changed and new methods for managing the organization introduced and put in place, the manual will be updated to reflect these changes. The ACE officers include the president, president-elect, vice president, past president, and the treasurer.

B. The board of directors at the fall board meeting must approve updates of the Policies and Procedures Manual.

RATIONALE: The Policies and Procedures Manual was adopted as Bylaw B of the ACE Constitution at the 2000 fall board meeting. If the document is changed or revised it must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the board. Upon acceptance by the board the revised Policies and Procedures Manual will be posted on the ACE Web site, with printed copies sent to ACE officers and the ACE Headquarters.

II. Award Nomination and Selection Procedures

A. ACE rewards its members and leaders in communications related to agriculture, natural resources, and life and human sciences with an approved list of awards, as designated by the ACE board of directors.

1. Pioneer Award (early career award)

PROCEDURE: Regional directors send Pioneer nominations to ACE Headquarters, which forwards them to the appropriate regional director for final selection. Nominees of the D.C. region will be judged by the northeastern regional director; the northeastern by the north central; the north central by the western; the western by the southern; and the southern and international by the D.C. The president writes letters to notify/congratulate Pioneer Award winners and letters to notify their administrators. Directors also send letters of congratulations to winners, their supervisors, nominators and nominees who did not receive the award. (The name of the winning nominee should not be revealed to others, only that another nominee was selected.)

2. Professional Award (recognizes excellence and professionalism. This is ACE's highest award given to its own members.)

PROCEDURE: ACE members send Professional Award nominations to the president, who forwards nominations to a panel (past Professional Award recipients and presidents of national agricultural communication organizations) that will select the recipient. The president notifies the recipient, nominator and recipient's administrator.

3. Awards of Excellence (exemplifies excellence in a particular medium)

PROCEDURE: Special interest group (SIG) leaders collect Awards of Excellence nominations and send final selections to the SIG director, who presents them to the board for approval. Upon board approval, the president writes to congratulate Award of Excellence winners and also writes letters to their administrators. The appropriate SIG leader notifies nominators of those not winning awards.

4. Service Award (honors service to ACE)

PROCEDURE: ACE board members submit nominations to the president; the board makes the final selection. The name of the recipient should not be revealed until the award is presented at the annual business meeting.

5. *Journal of Applied Communications* Article of the Year

PROCEDURE: The JAC editorial board chooses judges who select the Article of the Year. The editorial board chair reports the selection to the ACE president for confirmation at the spring board teleconference and then notifies the winning author(s).

6. Reuben Brigham Award (recognizes a non-ACE member in communication who has made a major contribution in the field of agriculture, natural resources,

and life and human sciences)

PROCEDURE: ACE members send Reuben Brigham nominations to the president, who presents them for final selection by the ACE board at the spring teleconference. The president notifies the recipient and invites him/her to the annual meeting.

7. Research Paper of the Year Award

PROCEDURE: The Research SIG chair is responsible for the process naming the Research Paper of the Year Award, which is presented at the annual meeting.

8. ACE Development Fund Grants

PROCEDURE: ACE members apply for grants by sending applications to ACE Headquarters, who forwards them to the Development Fund Committee. The committee sends a recommendation to the ACE board for final approval. The Development Fund Committee chair notifies the recipient(s) as well as those who did not receive grants.

B. The ACE board of directors makes the final confirmation on the awarding of the Awards of Excellence and the Professional, Reuben Brigham and Service awards. The SIG director should review nominations for the Awards of Excellence to ensure nominees meet the criteria. The board must also confirm recipients of the Pioneer Awards (recommended by assigned regions), and the JAC Article of the Year (recommended by judges appointed by the JAC editorial board). The board also confirms recipients of the ACE Development Fund Grants.

RATIONALE: The board members are the elected representatives of the members so they carry the responsibility to ensure recipients are qualified and deserving.

1. All award nominations should be made by a date selected by the incoming president as he or she develops the Calendar of Deadlines for the coming year. The nominations are approved by the board at the spring board teleconference. Forms need to be in the board members' hands a minimum of one week before the spring board teleconference.

RATIONALE: Setting a single date simplifies preparation and collection of nominations.

2. Members may not nominate themselves.

RATIONALE: Peer nominations elevate the credibility of the organization.

3. People may receive the Award of Excellence in the same year they receive other awards.

RATIONALE: People are nominated through different procedures honoring different achievements.

4. Those responsible for notifying the award winners, as outlined in the ACE Calendar of Deadlines, should also offer to notify the winners' administrators.

RATIONALE: Administrators should understand the recognized value of those on their staffs. They should also be encouraged to support their award winners' attendance at the international conference where the award will be presented.

5. In rare cases, award winners may receive the same award more than one time, if appropriate.

RATIONALE: Although ACE wants to see many people win awards, it does not want to penalize someone who continues to excel professionally. However, it would need to be an exceptional case to show enough professional advancement to warrant another award in the same category.

6. An award can be presented posthumously to anyone who was a member in good standing at the time of his or her death and met the criteria for the award.

RATIONALE: Although ACE does not want to present awards simply as a memorial following a member's death, it does not want to disqualify a nominee if he or she is qualified for the award.

7. For particularly prestigious awards, such as the Reuben Brigham or the Professional Award, the board should try to generate more and better nominations.

RATIONALE: ACE can raise its credibility through the quality of its award winners.

8. Any board or committee members who have a role in the selection process for awards are not eligible for these awards.

RATIONALE: The selection process must be perceived as honest and fair.

9. With the exception of the Reuben Brigham Award, ACE awards are not named to honor specific individuals.

RATIONALE: Award names should reflect the reason for the award.

III. ACE Board Members

A. Qualifications for the Office of Vice President

1. Procedure: It is recommended nominees be current or past board members, SIG chairs, or standing committee chairs. Members must be informed of the desired qualifications when the call goes out for nominees.

2. Policy: Our constitution states that candidates for vice president must have been members in good standing for four consecutive years.

RATIONALE: Having working knowledge of ACE leadership is essential to being a good officer.

B. Removal of Board Member for Cause

1. Procedure: Upon the recommendation of the ACE board, a sitting member or director-elect of the board may be removed for not performing his or her assigned duties or for no longer being eligible to serve. (This procedure is covered in detail in the "Removal from Office of ACE Leadership Position" section.)

RATIONALE: The ACE membership is not served well when its officers do not fulfill their responsibilities.

C. Directors Who Retire or Cannot Complete Their Term of Office

1. Policy: According to "Article V Section 4 – ACE Directors," only active members may serve as directors (except in the case of the retirees director). Therefore, a director who retires while in office may serve out the calendar year(s) while he or she is still an active member.

2. Procedure: If a director should be unable to serve and there is no director-elect, the president shall appoint an interim director who will serve until an election can be held to select either a director or director-elect, whichever is needed.

D. President May Appoint Board Members Under Special Circumstances

1. Policy: The president (or senior board member) may appoint board members under unusual or compelling circumstances. The appointment may be up to a full 3-year board term. The board will review the president's rationale for making such an appointment and will approve by simple majority vote at the next opportunity.

2. Procedure: The president will identify and contact a qualified member and forward the name to the board and ACE Headquarters. The appointment is effective immediately but must be approved by the board in a timely manner.

3. Rationale: In some circumstances, the normal board nomination and election process fails to identify a candidate or leaves a position vacant for too long. This can be true in smaller regions such as D.C. or for other reasons, such as international representation. The president needs to be able to take action to further strategic goals and objectives of ACE and to avoid the loss of critical input and perspective on the board.

E. Awards

1. Procedure: None of the voting members of the ACE board are eligible for the Award of Excellence, Professional Award, Pioneer Award, Service Award, Development Fund grants, or any other award on which the board votes. Directors-elect, however, are eligible for these awards.

RATIONALE: Board members should not be eligible for awards on which they vote. Without this guideline, the board would be open to criticism from the membership.

2. Procedure: All board members are eligible to participate in the Critique & Awards Program with the exception of the president-elect.

RATIONALE: Headquarters and the president-elect hire, instruct, and pay the C&A judges. Therefore, we want to eliminate any possible conflict of interest.

F. Duties of Officers

1. Past President

- a. Procedure: The past president shall chair the Nominating Committee.
- b. Procedure: The past president shall serve as an ex officio member, or board liaison, of one or more committees at the discretion of the president.

2. President

- a. Policy: The president shall follow “Robert’s Rules of Order” when conducting meetings, as dictated in Article IX - Meetings, Section 4. This means that the president shall not vote on issues except to break a tie.
- b. Procedure: The president shall, with approval of the board, take official positions on behalf of ACE on emerging public policy issues that affect our organization. For example, the president may write a letter to a member of Congress in support of legislation affecting funding for agricultural education and research. Another example is that the president may write letters to government or university decision makers in support of ongoing, effective communications.

c. The ACE president should consider joining other professional organizations to interact with other society presidents and have a broader voice on public policy issues.

RATIONALE: The president of an international communications organization should be able to offer support for effective, ongoing communications issues. ACE's voice should be heard in public policy debates.

3. President-elect

1. Procedure: The president-elect shall chair the Critique & Awards Program. The president-elect also will coordinate changes in the C&A Program with the SIG director, who serves as liaison to SIG chairs.

2. Procedure: The president-elect will serve as a liaison to the Professional Development Committee.

3. Policy: The president-elect shall serve as interim president if the president is incapacitated or unable to perform his or her duties.

4. Vice President

1. Procedure: The vice president shall serve the liaison to the Finance Committee. This role will provide the opportunity for the newly elected officer to gain a fundamental knowledge of ACE operations, resources, and financial management objectives. The vice president will coordinate efforts to complete an independent audit of the organization's finances annually.

2. Procedure: The vice president shall serve as the ACE parliamentarian, assisting the president in interpreting and enforcing Robert's Rules of Order in conducting ACE business.

RATIONALE: By having the vice president serve as parliamentarian, this will eventually mean that all officers will have a firm foundation in parliamentary procedure, which should help in the conducting of ACE business.

3. Policy: The vice president shall serve as interim president-elect if the president-elect is incapacitated or unable to perform the duties of the office.

5. Treasurer

1. Procedure: The treasurer will be appointed by the other officers for a three-year term. The treasurer will be indemnified by the organization.
2. The treasurer will chair the Finance Committee and serve as fiscal officer of the organization.
3. The treasurer will make a report at each board meeting. The treasurer will assist in the preparation of the budget, supervise the maintenance of records for the organization's operating budget, revenue, expenditures, and investment accounts, and make financial information available. The treasurer will liaise with the Strategic Planning Committee in order to help align resources to initiatives.

G. Incoming Officers

1. Procedure: All newly elected officers and board members are encouraged to participate in any ACE board teleconferences or meetings. This includes serving on committees, joining in discussions, and performing other tasks as assigned by the president.
2. Policy: The vice president-elect and the directors-elect shall not vote on ACE issues until they assume office.

RATIONALE: "Article V, Section 5" prohibits directors-elect from voting on board issues. However, because they soon will be acting and voting as full board members, they should be as active as possible in board matters to gain a broad understanding of the issues coming before the board.

H. Past President from Previous Year

1. Procedure: The person who served in the previous year as past president will mentor and advise the incoming vice president.

I. Directors

1. Policy: Any active member in good standing is eligible to run for director-elect to represent the region in which he or she works or to represent the special interest groups. Any retiree or life member is eligible to serve as retirees director. Candidates must be informed of the duties, opportunities, and prohibitions of being a director-elect and director.

B. Procedure: Directors should encourage members to recommend candidates for director-elect. Two names for each office to be filled will be selected by a process designated by the director.

J. Adding or Dissolving a Region

A. Procedure: Upon the recommendation of the ACE board, the membership must approve a motion to add or dissolve a region.

RATIONALE: Although such action directly affects those in the region in question, it also affects the entire membership so everyone should have a vote on this issue. However, the wishes of the members in that region should certainly be taken into consideration.

K. Elections

1. Procedure: Directors should provide the Nominating Committee with the names of two candidates for director-elect from their regions or membership body (SIGs and retirees), which the committee must approve. If the Nominating Committee rejects a candidate, the director will be asked for an alternate name. The Nominating Committee must provide the board with two candidates for each vacancy.

2. Procedure: All members vote in the election for vice president and SIG director. The members in each geographic region vote in the election for director of their respective region. Retired and life members vote for the retirees director.

L. Election Results

1. Policy: The ballots will be counted by Headquarters using an online voting system that can be reviewed by the officers. The results will be reported to the president of ACE, who will confirm the count.

2. Procedure: The president shall contact, preferably by phone and paper letter, the winner of elections for vice president and directors-elect as soon as the results have been tallied.

3. Procedure: The chair of the Nominating Committee, the past president, will notify candidates for vice president who did not win as soon as the president indicates he or she has notified the winner.

4. Directors will notify candidates for director-elect who did not win, as soon as the president indicates he or she has notified the winners.

5. Procedure: Directors shall notify the members of the appropriate region when a new director-elect has been elected.

M. Conducting Board Business by Electronic Mail

1. Policy: Although official board business is normally conducted through face-to-face meetings and telephone conferences, business may be conducted by

electronic mail (e-mail) when rapid response is required, provided that parliamentary procedure is followed and that the rights of all board members are safeguarded.

RATIONALE: The board may need to respond quickly to a situation. It may not be possible or practical to hold some of these matters for the next scheduled teleconference or face-to-face meeting of the board. Such matters can often be addressed rapidly and expeditiously by e-mail. However, procedures for conducting board business by e-mail must ensure that board members enjoy the same rights as they do in a face-to-face meeting.

2: Procedure: When board business is conducted by electronic mail, the president shall use the ACE board listserv to announce the subject to be acted upon, making it clear in the subject line that the message pertains to official board business and requires a timely response. In presenting the matter, the president shall specify the timetable for board action. All further messages from the president and from board members shall be sent to the board listserv, not to the president or individual board members, so that all members will receive them. Motions, seconds, and discussion shall be conducted under the same rules as followed in face-to-face meetings, with the stipulation that the president must ensure that adequate time (usually at least 24 hours) elapses at each step of the process for board members to read and respond to e-mail messages.

IV. ACE Committees, Special Interest Groups, and Representatives

A. Definitions

1. Standing Committees

Ongoing work groups with specific tasks that may be modified over time. Members serve terms of office, usually three-year terms with members rotating off in different years. They are listed in the “Calendar of Deadlines.”

1. Strategic Planning Committee
2. Membership Committee
3. Technology Advisory Committee
4. Development Fund Committee
5. JAC Editorial Board
6. Professional Development Committee
7. Finance Committee

2. Ad Hoc Committees

Established for a specific purpose with a limited time of service. Referred to as “Boards or Commissions or Other Entities” in the ACE constitution. Here are examples:

1. Annual Meeting Program Committee
2. Nominating Committee

3. Special Interest Groups

Board-endorsed, self-assigned networks of members with interests in a particular communications subject or medium. Leadership and activities selected by the members.

4. Representatives

Individuals who serve as a liaison between the ACE board and members in each state, government agency, or country, or who are selected by the president to represent ACE to other organizations.

B. Membership of Standing Committees

1. Procedure: Current board members should consider resigning their positions on committees in favor of serving as the board liaison to the committee. Each committee and task force should have at least one board member on it as an ex officio member to provide liaison to the board and support for the group leader.

RATIONALE: Officers and directors may not be aware of the extent of their duties relating to the board. By stepping down from committee membership, they open up opportunities for leadership for other ACE members. The decision on whether a current board member should remain a fully active member of a committee rests with the president.

In addition, committee work can often occur in a vacuum. By serving as liaisons to committees, board members can help guide the committee's efforts, making sure committee chairs stay on schedule and keep on track for the year.

2. Procedure: The president appoints new committee chairs and new committee members immediately after the summer international meeting. While committee chairs are not empowered to name new committee members, they are encouraged to make recommendations to the president. The president needs to ensure that leadership of all committees is selected equitably from among the membership. The president should consider naming a continuing member of a committee as chair to ensure continuity.

3. Procedure: The committee chairs should discuss their committees' direction and goals for the year with their ACE board liaisons early in the year, making sure there is a follow-up with the president.

4. Procedure: The president decides whether a committee member or chair is invited to serve for an additional term.

RATIONALE: Committee members serve at the pleasure of the president. Outstanding committee members or chairs may be asked to serve additional terms.

C. Membership of Ad Hoc Committees

1. Procedure: The past president chairs the Nominating Committee, which shall consist of three to five past presidents, named by the president. The committee solicits nominations from anyone for vice president.

RATIONALE: A committee of past presidents would understand the demands of board membership and the necessary leadership qualifications. While our constitution provides for cases in which only one candidate can be found, the vigor of the organization is impeded when only one candidate runs for office.

2. Procedure: Membership on ad hoc committees is open to anyone appropriate for the task, including board members. However, efforts should be made to select members from the membership at large.

RATIONALE: Certain tasks may be most appropriately filled by sitting board members. These short-term duties should not detract from their regular board duties.

3. Procedure: The president appoints chairs and members of ad hoc committees. Generally, ad hoc committee members do not serve specified terms, but serve until the committee has completed its work.

RATIONALE: The president must work with the leadership of the committees and must ensure that committee members and chairs are selected equitably from among the membership.

D. Membership and Leadership of Special Interest Groups

1. Procedure: Membership is open to anyone in ACE with an interest in the concerns of the SIG.

2. Procedure: Leadership of a SIG is open to any SIG member.

3. Procedure: SIG chairs are elected by the SIG membership. Each SIG decides its own leadership structure. However, the suggested procedure is to elect a vice chair-elect via e-mail or other means at some point before the annual conference. The vice chair-elect typically will serve one year, then advance to vice chair and chair in successive years. SIG officers may be elected to serve additional terms.

RATIONALE: This procedure provides training and consistent leadership for the

SIGs. Electing leadership before the summer conference allows incoming leaders to make plans to attend leadership training sessions at the conference and encourages continuity in planning.

E. State, Agency, and Country Representatives

1. Procedure: ACE state, agency, and country representatives are identified by their respective regional directors and serve two-year terms concurrent with their directors' terms. State representatives serve as the conduit for ACE and local members by planning local professional development and networking opportunities and recruiting members within their states. Agency representatives may be appointed at the discretion of the D.C. region director to perform similar functions within the region's various governmental agencies. Country representatives may be appointed at the discretion of the international director to carry out these functions in countries where there are multiple members. In countries with charter affiliate chapters, the charter affiliate representative generally performs these functions and it is therefore not normally necessary to appoint a country representative.

F. *Journal of Extension* Representative

1. Procedure: The president shall appoint the ACE representative to the *Journal of Extension* (JOE) board for a three-year term in December every three years. The representative shall give a written annual report to the ACE board prior to its annual meeting. ACE will not provide any financial support. The person appointed must have authorization and support from his or her institution for travel to JOE board meetings.

2. Procedure: The president may choose to reappoint a representative.

RATIONALE: It has been customary to have an ACE representative to the JOE board, since many of us work for Extension. The ACE board needs some accountability from this representative.

G. NETC Representative

1. Procedure: The president shall appoint the ACE representative to National Extension Technology Conference (NETC) in odd-numbered years, after the conclusion of the ACE/NETC annual meeting. The representative shall be an active ACE member at the time of appointment.

2. Procedure: The president may choose to reappoint a representative.

H. Committee Charges

1. Procedures: Soon after the annual international meeting, the past president will

communicate to committee chairs any goals and specific directions given to the committees by the board at the annual international meeting. This is to ensure committee productivity and progress toward pursuing ACE priorities. Committee chairs will submit progress reports at the fall board meeting and year-end reports at the next year's annual international meeting. Board liaisons to the committees are responsible for ensuring that committees make progress toward specified goals and submit the required reports.

RATIONALE: Committee productivity is a perennial issue. Providing more direction from the board and more involvement via the board liaison will ensure continuity, progress and accountability.

RATIONALE: To provide guidance for committees and continuity in activities, committee charges need to be recorded and made available from year to year, especially because of the volunteer nature of ACE.

2. **Procedures:** Once committees set goals, they should consider setting up working groups or subcommittees (with their own chairs) to tackle individual goals. Board liaisons work with them to ensure the efforts succeed.

RATIONALE: The most common issue year after year is lack of results from various committees. Setting reasonable goals and showing progress toward them are key factors. If this doesn't occur, the ACE board liaison needs to be ready to make suggested changes. We're all volunteers and things do come up, but a commitment to an international organization should be a professional responsibility.

3. **Procedure:** Names, locations, and terms of office of committee members shall be listed in Signals and on the ACE Web site.

V. Removal from ACE Offices and Leadership Positions

ACE has positions that are both elected and appointed. Guidelines for removal from office vary accordingly.

A. ACE Board Members

Board members are expected to attend all board meetings and conferences in person or by phone conference link. Any board member who expects to miss a meeting shall contact the ACE president in advance.

The duties of officers (president/president-elect/vice president/past president/treasurer) are outlined elsewhere in Bylaw B, Policies and Procedures. Other board members (directors) have duties as assigned by the ACE Constitution, Policies and Procedures Manual, and Calendar of Deadlines. In addition to, or in the performance of those duties,

officers and directors shall also contact their constituencies at least three times each year during their term of office.

The ACE president will contact a board member who misses two meetings over the course of two years, for reasons unexcused by the president, or who otherwise is not fulfilling the duties of office. A board member's position may be vacated by a vote of the ACE board.

Interim vacancies will be filled using the following procedures:

- a) For directors, vice president and president-elect, the ACE past president will gather together the previous year's nominating committee to seek candidates to hold a mid-term election. If no more than one candidate can be found, an election with no opposing candidates can be held.
- b) For the ACE past president, the ACE president will ask a previous past president to fill that role for the remainder of the term.
- c) For the treasurer, the president will appoint an interim to fulfill the remainder of that term.

B. ACE Committee Chairs

Incoming and/or outgoing committee chairs are expected to present their committee reports at the board meeting immediately preceding the annual conference. If they cannot attend, they shall contact the ACE president in advance. They should meet with their committee members at the conference and by phone conference at least twice during their term of office, and by e-mail at least every other month. Minutes of their meetings should be sent to the president, Headquarters, and to all other committee chairs. Progress should be made during the year to fulfill expectations of the president and board in carrying out the committee's work and goals.

Committee chairs who do not fulfill their duties, in the opinion of the president and the board liaison in coordination with the board's officers, over the course of a three-month period, will be contacted by the president. Together, they will discuss whether the chair should step down from that position or be put on a probationary period to last no longer than three months.

The ACE president will appoint a new chair, if necessary.

C. ACE SIG Leaders

ACE SIG leaders are expected to attend the SIG leader training and chair the annual SIG meeting at the ACE international meeting. If they cannot attend, they shall contact the SIG director in advance and ask the SIG vice chair to attend in their place. ACE SIG leaders are also expected to attend all ACE SIG leader phone conferences. If they cannot attend, they shall contact the SIG director in advance, and ask the SIG vice chair to

represent the SIG. SIG leaders are also expected to contact their SIG members via e-mail at least once a month.

SIG leaders who are not fulfilling their duties by sufficiently representing and leading their SIG members or working closely with the SIG director will be contacted by the SIG director. Together, they will discuss whether the SIG leader should step down from that position or be put on a probationary period to last no longer than three months. If inactivity continues, the SIG director shall contact the SIG leader and other officers of the SIG to determine a plan of action. The SIG director may recommend a change of SIG leadership.

IV. ACE State Representative

ACE state representatives are expected to attend the state representative training at the ACE international meeting. If they cannot attend, they shall contact the ACE president and their regional director in advance and send a substitute in their place. State reps are also expected to hold meetings, send e-mails or otherwise keep their state contingent informed and active. They shall keep their regional director informed of this activity with an update every three months. If two consecutive updates are missed, or if state reps are not fulfilling their duties in other ways, the regional director will contact the state rep to discuss the situation. Together, they will discuss whether the state rep should step down from that position or be put on a probationary period to last no longer than three months. If inactivity continues, the regional director shall discuss the situation with members within the state and appoint a new state representative.

VI. ACE Meetings and Workshops

A. ACE Workshops: Procedures

1. An ACE workshop is defined as a professional meeting, sponsored or co-sponsored by ACE, that promotes the growth in professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for a career in agricultural, natural resources, and life and human sciences communications. Workshops may be face-to-face or technology based (Web, satellite, etc.). Workshops are open to all members and non-members with an interest in the topics at hand.

RATIONALE: ACE workshops are essential to the professional development and well-being of our members and for others such as administrators, subject matter specialists, and non-member communicators.

2. The ACE Professional Development Committee oversees the process for initiating, planning, and carrying out ACE workshops.

RATIONALE: To best serve the interests of its members, a national oversight

committee works with those proposing to host workshops to identify critical topics, maintain a database of facilitators or speakers, review requests for loans from the meetings and workshops account forwarded from ACE Headquarters, and provide detailed background information on workshop planning.

3. A member or group of members, a state, a region, a SIG, the Professional Development Committee, or any combination of the preceding may initiate an ACE workshop.

RATIONALE: Great ideas for workshops come from a number of sources and combination of efforts.

4. The “Planning and Hosting a Workshop” guide is available on the ACE Web site to anyone considering sponsoring a workshop.

RATIONALE: Workshop hosts have access to a guide for hosting a workshop. The handbook includes information on organizing a planning committee, choosing a hotel and/or meeting site, timetables, budgets (including determining break-even figures), etc.

5. It is recommended, but not required, that two tracks be planned for each workshop (hosts may decide to offer one, two, or three tracks).

RATIONALE: With such a diverse membership and with a membership whose responsibilities are constantly expanding, it is important that planners consider hosting multiple tracks in one workshop. The tracks could be arranged around completely different communications and technology issues or they could center on skill building for the beginner, intermediate or expert on a particular topic.

6. Workshop registration fees should be higher for non-ACE members.

RATIONALE: Membership in ACE should provide the benefit of lower registration fees for ACE workshops. Higher registration fees for non-members should be used to encourage them to join ACE.

7. Co-sponsorship of workshops or meetings with other organizations will, on occasion, require negotiation and/or compromise between co-sponsors regarding ACE Policies and Procedures. Any potential conflict with ACE Policies and Procedures should be discussed as early as possible with ACE officers and any others deemed appropriate by the ACE president.

RATIONALE: Open and early consultations between meeting or workshop planners and ACE leadership will improve meeting planning and encourage sponsorship while respecting ACE policies, procedures, and values.

B. International Meetings: Procedures

1. Meeting registration fees should be higher for participants who are not members of ACE or other approved organizations.

2. Where complimentary rooms are available at international meetings, host states should designate one as a hospitality suite. If another room is available, they should consider making it available to the president.

RATIONALE: There is significant value to the membership as a whole to have a hospitality suite available to the membership for networking.

3. The host committee and/or program committee of an international conference should prepare a report for the board within three months after the meeting to assist future meeting planners. These will be kept on file at Headquarters for future reference.

RATIONALE: Host committees should include such items as fund raising, committees, equipment needs, timetable, relationship with international program committee, responsibilities and requirements, etc. This information would be extremely valuable to a host state planning a future meeting.

4. The president should designate, in consultation with the chair of the host state committee and the chair of the program committee, a liaison who will serve on both committees to facilitate communication between the groups.

RATIONALE: The program committee will need to plan within the logistical limits of the host site.

5. If there are future Ag Communicators Congresses, and if ACE agrees to participate, ACE should have at least 51 percent of the seats on the steering committee.

RATIONALE: ACE traditionally makes up the majority of the attendees. It needs a voice in proportion to its participation. This would reduce the need for a separate ACE program during the Congress.

6. The president-elect shall appoint the program committee for the international meeting in which he or she will be president. For joint ACE-NETC meetings, the planning committee should include at least one person who is not an ACE member but has attended and/or helped plan past NETC meetings. The president will ask the NETC steering committee to select its own representative(s).

RATIONALE: Even though the majority of NETC attendees are also ACE members, it is not inclusive. Therefore, the non-ACE, NETC members should feel they have a voice in the planning of the joint conference.

7. The ACE board will solicit bids from institutions and/or groups to host international meetings.

RATIONALE: The constitution was changed in 2001, by a vote of the membership, giving the board the authority to approve the site of the annual meeting. As part of that change, it was agreed that ACE members will be asked for their input before a site for an annual meeting is selected.

C. Financing ACE Meetings and Workshops – Loans

1. ACE Headquarters maintains a separate account, called the meetings and workshops account, made up of profits from ACE conferences, workshops, and other professional development events. This account is used to support ACE-sponsored meetings and workshops, mainly in the form of start-up loans. The board, in consultation with the Professional Development Committee, must approve any start-up loans made to planners of meetings and workshops.

RATIONALE: Start-up funds are crucial to planning a meeting or workshop. Often expenses are incurred before income from registration fees is received.

2. To request a loan, the host/planning committee for a meeting or workshop must submit a loan application (found on the ACE Web site). As part of the application, the host/planning committee will also submit a meeting/workshop budget. The Host/Planning Committee may apply for either a loan or a Development Fund grant, but not both.

3. A loan application is sent to ACE Headquarters, and then forwarded to the Finance Committee. The vice president and the Professional Development Committee review the application to see if the event is consistent with the ACE mission and the needs of members. The Finance Committee examines the event budget to ascertain whether the event is likely to break even financially. With few exceptions, meetings and workshops will be expected to break even. If the vice president and Professional Development Committee deem the request appropriate for funding, they will make that recommendation to the ACE board. The board must approve all loans from the meetings and workshops account.

4. Loans from the meetings and workshops account are limited to one-half the amount in the account. For example, if the account holds \$8,448, the amount lent as start-up funds may not exceed \$4,224 for any one meeting. If a second meeting/workshop planning committee requests a loan before any of the first loan is repaid, the loan for the second event may not exceed \$2,112, and so on.

5. It is expected that loans from the meetings and workshops account will be reimbursed once all expenses of the event have been paid. In addition, half of the profits from the event (money remaining after expenses and repayment of the loan) will go to the meetings and workshops account. The other half of the profits

also may go to the meetings and workshops account, or it may be divided among the host institution, the SIG, and any other groups involved in conducting the meeting or workshop. Agreements for the division of profits should be formulated in advance of the event and described on the loan application. The ACE officers must approve such agreements.

6. If an event does not make enough profit to allow the entire amount of a loan to be reimbursed, the planning committee will reimburse the amount left after all expenses are paid. The remainder of the debt will be forgiven.

7. In the event a meeting or workshop loses money, the start-up loan funded by the meetings and workshops account will be forgiven and ACE will help assume responsibility for covering the loss.

8. If the vice president and Finance Committee determine that an event for which a start-up loan has been requested is not likely to break even, or for some other reason is not appropriate for funding from the meetings and workshops account, they may forward the request to the Development Fund Committee for consideration.

9. A loan of up to \$5,000 may be available from the Development Fund to underwrite event expenses. Such loans are repaid to the Development Fund. Any proceeds after payment of expenses and repayment of the loan will be divided evenly between the workshop or meeting host and the Development Fund. ACE assumes no further financial responsibility beyond the amount of the Development Fund loan.

D. Financing ACE Meetings and Workshops – Sponsorships

1. Hosts/planners of meetings and workshops should seek sponsors and local funding to reduce expenses and make it possible to lower the event's registration fee.

2. ACE may periodically accept corporate sponsorship provided that certain conditions are met, and that such sponsorships do not conflict with the spirit of provisions stated elsewhere in our constitution.

3. ACE shall accept sponsorship that is aligned with its statement of organizational values.

VII. Criteria for ACE Charter Status/Affiliate Membership

A. For charter status, a representative of a qualifying country submits an application and the current fee for an active member (at the “new member” rate the first year and the

“renewal” rate thereafter). This entitles a charter group to one vote in ACE elections and one set of materials (newsletter, directory, etc.) that can be translated, duplicated, and distributed to affiliate members.

Affiliate members will be allowed to participate in ACE professional meetings and workshops and in the ACE C&A program at ACE member rates, but they cannot hold office in ACE. This would not preclude individuals in charter countries from joining ACE as active members. Designated representatives of charter countries may serve on the ACE board as international director. Since the designated representative is already the person who can vote on behalf of the charter country (for which membership dues are paid), this is a logical extension.

1. Criteria for Charter Status: Charter status is possible for those from countries classified as either “low income” or “middle income” by the World Bank. These are countries to which the World Bank makes loans for development purposes. The annual World Development Report published by the Bank will be considered authoritative concerning eligibility. The World Bank, Washington, D.C., can be found in full text PDF form on the World Wide Web at <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/wdrpoverty/>.
2. Criteria for affiliate membership: Same as ACE active or retired members.
3. Minimum number of affiliate members: Ten members with no maximum.
4. A charter country can still have active ACE members as long as regular individual membership fees are paid.
5. Required from Charter Countries: Charter countries must pay to ACE the equivalent of one current active ACE membership fee each year. The charter country will designate one individual to officially represent the charter membership to ACE. This individual will be designated as the “charter representative” and will have the same voting and other privileges as any active ACE member, including receiving the newsletter, journal and other e-mail and ACE SIG mailings. The “charter representative” must meet the same eligibility requirements as any other ACE member. The “charter representative” will serve as the official liaison between ACE and the charter country membership. Charter representatives in the international region are eligible to be candidates for international director-elect and to serve as international director.
6. Each charter country membership may organize itself to maximize membership benefits under its political and organizational system. However, certain minimal criteria must apply:
 - a. Each charter country must maintain a current affiliate membership list, updated at least annually, and must provide a copy of the list to ACE each January;

- b. Affiliate members of the charter must meet the same standards for membership as ACE active or retired members do;
- c. Affiliate members must indicate that they wish to join the charter country organization, and that they are interested in their own professional development as communicators and information technologists in agriculture, natural resources, life sciences, and family, rural and community development.
- d. Charter country organizations must find a source of revenue to support their activities. This may come from any combination of: (1) affiliate membership dues; (2) donor grants or other support; (3) organizational or company support; (4) public monies from government or other agencies; (5) specific earmarked funds from the ACE Development Fund or other ACE sources.
- e. Each charter country organization must provide to the ACE board an annual report of its activities.

7. The purpose of charter country memberships is to develop the professional skills and networking of agricultural and rural communicators in the country, and to link affiliate members to counterparts in other charter country organizations and ACE members around the world. To fulfill this purpose, charter country organizations are encouraged to:

- a. Adapt, translate, and distribute materials from ACE that are useful to charter country members;
- b. Develop a charter country newsletter, journal or other publications that further the purposes of the organization;
- c. Regularly contribute articles and journal submissions to ACE publications;
- d. Provide professional training/improvement opportunities for charter country members

8. Charter countries may form “chapters” to allow more active participation in areas remote from the core of affiliate members. Chapter leadership is acceptable.

When a country is approved by the ACE board for charter status, individuals in that country eligible for membership in ACE would be referred to as “affiliate” members. The charter country would provide the names and addresses of those who would be included as affiliate members. Leadership in a charter country will determine the best form of local organization and administration.

VIII. Guidelines for Using Regional Funds

A. Source of Funds.

1. Procedure: Each year the ACE board evaluates the organization's budget situation and determines the feasibility of providing funds to each region based on the number of paid ACE memberships. In the past decade, the amount of this allotment has ranged from \$1 to \$5 per member.

In addition to receiving funds from the ACE board, some regions have increased their accounts by holding ACE auctions; others received monetary contributions from a host state when international conferences or regional workshops were profitable.

Regional funds shall be kept in the general account at ACE Headquarters. ACE Headquarters, upon the request of the director, issues checks, deposits income, and keeps records of the funds for the director.

B. Using Regional Funds

1. Procedure: Regional directors are responsible for managing and allocating the regional funds. These ACE funds generally should be used to benefit ACE members within that region or state(s) within the region, or to enhance the profession of communications, journalism, public affairs, or agriculture and natural/human resources. Examples of ways ACE members and directors have used regional funds in the past include:

- a. Supporting speakers at a workshop that attracts non-ACE members for recruitment
- b. Paying for refreshments at social events that include current ACE members and potential members
- c. Providing honoraria for high-quality speakers at ACE events
- d. Supporting or offsetting first-year memberships in ACE
- e. Contributing money toward scholarships for journalism/communication students at universities within the region
- f. Paying for programs, workbooks, and other printed materials for ACE workshops

- g. Purchasing materials to donate to an ACE auction (national or regional)
- h. Identifying “good works” that support ACE members and the community in which they reside
- i. Paying tuition for ACE members to participate in inexpensive classes, workshops, or other appropriate professional development opportunities.
- j. Covering rental or touring costs of local communications-related businesses and museums.

3. Procedure: Although it is acceptable to return regional funds to the general account at ACE Headquarters, previous ACE boards believed surplus funds should be used at the state and regional level. This is best handled by supporting state programs within the region, encouraging membership by offering discounts to new ACE members, and/or hiring speakers and contractors to enhance an existing ACE program or project.

C. Requesting and Allocating Funds

1. Procedure: State representatives can submit a request to the appropriate regional director at any time (ACE members should discuss requests with their state representatives before visiting with the regional director). The request should detail the amount of funding needed, how the money will be spent, to whom the check should be addressed and mailed, how members within the state or region will benefit, and how ACE as an organization will be credited and promoted during the event. The regional director is authorized to allocate the funds as long as these conditions are met, although the director may consult with the ACE officers and other board members for guidance.

D. Reporting Use of the Funds

A. Procedure: After the ACE event is completed, the state representative and/or ACE member must send a written report to the regional director. This report should include how the funds were used, the number of participants at the event, and how the activity benefited the state(s), ACE members, and ACE as an organization. The regional director will share this report with ACE members in the Signals newsletter.

B. Procedure: If the director allocates regional funds to support a regional and/or international conference, workshop, or speaker, the director will advise regional ACE members in his/her twice-yearly reports to the ACE board.

IX. Guidelines for ACE Mid-Year Dues Payments

A. Dues Payment Schedule

A. Policy: The ACE membership year is concurrent with the calendar year. Dues are payable on January 1 of each calendar year. However, some new members join during the calendar year, and some current members do not pay their dues until after the January 1 deadline. The following guidelines address the management of mid-year dues payments and set forth the benefits to be accorded those who pay their dues after January 1.

B. Mid-Year Renewals

1. Policy: Renewing members whose dues are received after January 1 but before registration for the summer ACE international meeting has closed will be credited with membership for the current calendar year and will be eligible for all member benefits as soon as their application has been processed.

2. Policy: Members whose dues are received after registration for the summer ACE international meeting has closed will have the choice of:

a. Having their dues credited for the current year, in which case their records will show no lapse in membership, and they will be immediately eligible for all member benefits for the remainder of the year, including all ACE publications and other documents distributed by Headquarters that were produced during the current year;

or

b. Having their dues credited to membership for the following year, with the understanding that their membership will become effective in the current year upon receipt of payment and continue through the entire following year. Members choosing this option will receive all member benefits for the remainder of the current year (such as participation in SIGs and subscriptions to the *Journal of Applied Communications* and to *Signals*) *except* reduced member registration rates at any workshops or conferences during the remainder of the current year.

RATIONALE: Some members will want their dues applied to the current year so their record will show no lapse of membership, which can affect their eligibility for certain awards and election to office, and so they can receive all of the current year's publications and other documents. Others may prefer to have their dues applied to the following year because they will have missed many of the ACE benefits for the current year, including participation in the Critique and Awards program and reduced registration for the summer international meeting. Providing them with membership benefits for the remainder of the year (with the exception of reduced registration rates for any conferences or workshop during the remainder of the current year) costs ACE little and helps ensure that these returning members are welcomed back and become involved with ACE again.

C. New Members

1. Policy: New members whose applications and dues payments are received before registration for the summer ACE international meeting has closed will be credited with membership for the current calendar year and will be eligible for all member benefits as soon as their application has been processed.

2. Policy: New members whose dues are received after registration for the summer ACE international meeting has closed will be credited with membership for the remainder of the current year and all of the following year and will immediately be eligible for all member benefits.

RATIONALE: New members who join after the international meeting will have missed some of the most important ACE membership benefits for the current year. Many would therefore choose not to join until the beginning of the following membership year unless an accommodation can be given. By accepting their dues in mid-year and providing membership benefits immediately, ACE can get these new members involved in the organization immediately and offer them extra value, helping to ensure their future loyalty. These new members would be eligible for reduced member rates at ACE conferences and workshops, which are sometimes used as an incentive to recruit new members.

X. Guidelines for ACE Seal of Approval

1. To qualify for the ACE Seal of Approval, programs/products must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Sufficient in scope to be applicable and easily duplicated in other areas of the country or internationally.
 - b. Address identified needs or growing trends regionally, nationally or internationally.
 - c. Based on sound research, proven methodology and evaluation.
 - d. Demonstrate innovation in addressing common needs or issues.
 - e. Include a needs assessment, program development plan, marketing plan and evaluation instrument.
 - f. Be supported by program/product developers who agree to serve as consultants for other ACE groups that want to implement the program/product.
2. Developers are encouraged to submit their programs. The process for submission/acceptance is presented below:
 - a. ACE will develop and publish guidelines and an online submission form for programs seeking a seal.
 - b. Leadership for the appropriate SIG will prescreen all submissions related to its area and will determine if the SIG endorses the submission.

- c. Once a submission receives the endorsement of SIG leadership, the submission will be forwarded to the Professional Development Committee chair for vetting. The Professional Development Committee will include the SIG chair of the subject area most closely related to the submission. Working with the Seal Ad Hoc Committee, the Professional Development Committee will develop a standard evaluation and scoring system with minimum standards identified and points determined.
- d. Programs not receiving SIG endorsement can be returned to the submitting member with comments for improvement or clarification and can be resubmitted within three weeks for reconsideration. Or, if the SIG leadership to which the submission was made feels the program is better suited to the expertise of another SIG, the SIG chair can forward the submission to the SIG they deem more appropriate for consideration.
- e. Approved programs will be announced at the ACE business meeting at each annual conference. Authors are invited to create an exhibit of their programs to be displayed following the business meeting.
- f. Approved programs will be added to the ACE Web site and the appropriate SIG site. Eventually approved programs will develop into a catalogue of programs.

XI. Guidelines for ACE Sponsorship of Other Meetings/Programs

1. Programs or organizations seeking sponsorship from ACE must submit the request in writing, with detail of the request and the program, including the agenda and invitation list. In addition, a list of other proposed or contracted sponsors must be provided.
2. The ACE logo may be used on programs/products that the organization endorses or otherwise supports. The logo use must be approved by the board.
3. If the request is financial, the requestor must provide information about what the funds will be used for.
4. The organization that uses the logo will provide to ACE tear sheets or copies of the product with the logo as a follow up to the event/activity. If program evaluations are available, the requestor should submit those as well.

The original version of this manual was prepared in May 1998 under the leadership of ACE President LaRae Donnellan. Her team included Jack Sperbeck, ACE president, 1989-90; Bonnie Riechert, ACE president, 1988-89; Dave King, ACE president, 1991-92; Janet Rodekohr, ACE president, 1996-97; Ashley Wood, ACE coordinator, 1990-97;

and Julie Graddy, ACE coordinator, 1997-1999.

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