

**Middle Tennessee Chapter
Bylaws**

Society for Technical Communication

Revised April 12, 2003

Article I Name, Location, Vision, Mission and Objective

Section 1. Name

The name of the organization is Middle Tennessee Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication, Inc., which hereinafter are referred to as the Chapter and the Society respectively.

Section 2. Location

The Chapter is located in Region 3 of the Society for Technical Communication.

Section 3. Vision

The Chapter is dedicated to advancing the art and science of technical communication in and around the Middle Tennessee Area.

Section 4. Objectives

The objectives of the Chapter are the same as those set forth in Article I of the Society bylaws.

The Chapter shall be a nonprofit, educational, and professional organization.

The Chapter strives to Support, Promote, Educate, Serve, and Network technical communicators.

- **Support**
The Chapter supports technical communicators who are established in the profession, those just starting, and those making the transition from other professions.
- **Promote**
The Chapter promotes the profession of technical communication through worthy activities and by recognizing excellence and mastery.
- **Educates**
The Chapter educates technical communicators and the community by providing opportunities for professional growth and a richer understanding of technical communication.
- **Serve**
The Chapter serves the community in creative and useful ways and cooperates with other professional organizations in mutually beneficial projects.
- **Network**
The Chapter provides forums that build relationships between technical communicators that result in cooperation and mutual encouragement in pursuit of professional goals.

Article II Powers and Constraints

The Chapter may engage only in activities that conform to the Society's purposes.

Because the Society is nonprofit, nonsectarian, and nonpartisan, the Chapter cannot endorse or disparage a commercial enterprise, a political platform, or a candidate for public office.

Society bylaws take precedence over the Chapter's bylaws. If Society bylaws are changed in a way that conflicts with the Chapter's bylaws, the Chapter bylaws must be amended as soon as possible to bring them into agreement with Society bylaws.

Procedural issues that are not addressed by these chapter bylaws are handled in accordance with the *Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws* of the Society.

Article III Membership

Section 1. General

The Chapter abides by the Society's membership guidelines. Members are assigned to a chapter upon joining the Society. Members without chapter affiliation may request affiliation with the Chapter according to Society bylaws.

Only members in good standing may be Chapter members (hereafter referred to as "members"). Only voting members of the Society are eligible to vote on Chapter questions, to hold office, and to manage committees.

Section 2. Rights and Privileges of Membership

- **Universal Rights**
Individual members may:
 - Attend any meeting, seminar, or conference sponsored by a chapter of the Society
 - Contribute ideas that may further the Chapter's and Society's purposes
 - Wear the Society and Chapter emblem(s)
 - Carry the Society and Chapter membership card(s)
 - Receive the Society and Chapter's publications

- **Voting Rights**
Members (except for student members) may vote on each matter submitted to the membership by the Board of Directors. Only members of the Society and the Chapter shall be allowed to vote in Chapter elections.

- **Office Holding Rights**
Only members of the Chapter shall be allowed to hold elective office on the Chapter Board of Directors. Student members may not hold elective office, but they may serve as non-voting committee members.

- **Transfer of Membership**
Membership may not be transferred or assigned to another person.
- **Dues and Fees**
Annual dues, as set by the Society's Board of Directors and published in the Society's literature, are payable January 1 for the ensuing year. Dues are non-refundable.
- **Reinstatement**
A member who resigns or whose membership lapses for nonpayment of dues may apply for reinstatement by submitting a year's dues and the reinstatement fee either to the Chapter or to Society headquarters. A member who has been expelled may be reinstated only by approval of the Society board after a hearing by the appeals panel.

Section 3. Obligations of Membership

By acceptance of the Society's certificate of membership, each member agrees to abide by its governing documents, work toward achievement of its purposes, and act in accordance with its precepts. Members who fail to do so may have their membership suspended or revoked by the Society's board.

Article IV Board of Directors

The Board of Directors (also called the "Board") is the governing body of the Middle Tennessee Chapter. Board members are elected according to Article VI of these bylaws. The board consists of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary (may be combined with Treasurer), the Immediate Past President, and six directors (Membership, Competition, Employment, Newsletter, Publicity, and Webmaster).

Section 1. Powers and Constraints

In accordance with the Society bylaws, only the elected officers can vote on chapter business. The elected officers are responsible to the chapter members for the professional and financial health of the Chapter. The Board has the power to determine chapter fiscal policies and to direct chapter affairs in order to meet the objectives of the Society stated in Article I of the Society bylaws. The Board may prudently delegate powers in the interest of efficient management, but is ultimately responsible for the interests of the chapter.

Section 2. Eligibility

All candidates for elective office must be Chapter members in good standing. The officers and directors are elected according to Article VI of the Chapter bylaws.

Section 3. Terms of Office

The term of office is one year, commencing with installation at the transition meeting held in June. All members serve without compensation.

Section 4. Duties of the Board

The following duties must be discharged:

- Provide at least five regularly scheduled program meetings for the membership.
- Recruit new members.
- Conduct a yearly planning session for the Board.
- Ensure fiscal responsibility for chapter funds.
- Submit quarterly activity reports to the director-sponsor and annual fiscal reports to the STC treasurer.
- Conduct an annual election spearheaded by the chapter Nominating Committee.

The following activities are optional, but have proven beneficial to chapter growth:

- Publish a regular newsletter, *Communiqué*, to establish communication with chapter members.
- Create publicity of the chapter's activities and of STC in general. This may be done through the newsletter, email, local publications and activities.
- Provide Chapter sponsored seminars, workshops, and competitions for members.
- Collect and disseminate employment information to establish communication between chapter members and local employers.
- Participate in STC competitions for newsletters, publicity, and chapter awards.

Section 5. Duties of Elected Officers

A. President

- Serves as head of the Board of Directors and is responsible for all operations of the Board
- Exercises general supervision over the affairs of the chapter and presides at chapter meetings and the council.
- Appoints committees as needed subject to the approval of the other council members
- Serves as an ex officio member of all chapter committees
- Keeps the Society director-sponsor informed of chapter activities and accomplishments

B. Vice President

- Directs program and event planning
- Assumes the duties of the President in the absence or incapacity of the President
- Performs duties that the President or council assigns

C. Treasurer

- Supervises the chapter's fiscal affairs
- Prepares an annual fiscal year budget for review at the first Board meeting
- Maintains books and records so they can be inspected at any time by the President, Board, or auditor named by the Board
- Authorizes disbursements (along with co-signature by one other authorized signatory)
- Submits the annual report to the STC treasurer

D. Secretary

- Keeps minutes of the Board and chapter meetings
- Conducts official correspondence
- Maintains records and lists
- Performs duties that the President or Board assigns

- E. Immediate Past President
 - Attends council meetings
 - Provides advice and support as required
- F. Directors
 - Solicit members to serve on the committees for their area of responsibility
 - Chair the committee(s) for their area of responsibility
 - Attend Board meetings

Article V Committees

The following committees help the Board fulfill its responsibilities to the membership. These standing committees may be inactive or, as required, additional committees may be established at the direction of the President with approval from the Board. Each of the committees listed below is managed by one of the directors, or the Vice President.

- A. Competition
 - Publicizes and coordinates all facets of competitions.
- B. Employment
 - Maintains resume bank
 - Serves as a link between the corporate community and chapter members
 - Educates members about employment opportunities in the Chapter's area
 - Coordinate the annual salary survey
- C. Membership
 - Tracks the members attending chapter meeting
 - Plans and coordinates activities to increase membership
- D. Newsletter
 - Solicit, edit, and layout articles and other announcements for the Communiqué
- E. Program
 - Plans, coordinates, and publicizes chapter meetings and events. (This may be the Vice President or multiple committees with chairman reporting to the Vice President.)
- F. Publicity
 - Advertises the Chapter's events and opportunities to the corporate community, members, potential members, Society members at large, and the Society
 - Issues email notices to chapter mailing list regarding upcoming events, schedule changes, and other chapter business.
- G. Web Master
 - Maintains and enhances the Chapter's Web site, including announcements of upcoming events and activities as well as publishing Communiqué to the Web site
 - Encourages member interaction and communication through the Web site

- Advises the Chapter about technical matters concerning the Internet

The following committees are assembled on an as needed basis. The President appoints the committee manager with approval from the Board.

- 1) Nominating Committee
 - Guides the election process, seeing that the slate of officers is prepared and distributed in accordance with the dates of the election process
 - The committee is formed each year according to Article VI of the Chapter bylaws
- 2) Teller Committee:
 - Collects and counts votes
 - The Teller Committee will consist of the Nominating Committee Manager and the Web Master
 - The Nominating Committee Manager publishes election results to the membership and Society
 - This committee is formed each year according to Article VI of the Chapter bylaws
- 3) Bylaws Committee
 - Maintains the Chapter's bylaws
 - Amendments must be sent to the general membership at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the amendment will be voted on. Amendments are then voted as "for" or "against" by 2/3 of the membership present at a special or regular meeting
 - The manager then submits proposed amendments to the Society's Bylaw Committee for approval. A bylaws committee should be formed every two years to review the Chapter bylaws to ensure that they are in compliance with the Society bylaws
 - The bylaws committee will be formed according to Article VIII of these bylaws
- 4) Hospitality Committee
 - Coordinates all arrangements with facilities, food, and other meeting needs for the chapter meetings and the awards banquet
 - Meets and greets member and guests at meetings
 - If established, this committee reports to the Vice President (If not established, these duties are the responsibility of the Vice President.)

Article VI Elections

The Chapter elections occur yearly in such a manner that officers are elected by May 1.

Section 1. Nominating Committee

The President appoints the Nominating Committee manager in December. The Publicity Director makes certain the January meeting notice includes information that two Nominating Committee members will be elected by a plurality of the voting members at the January meeting.

Section 2. Nominations

By February 1 the Nominating Committee shall send a notice to the membership requesting the names of nominees and encouraging self-nomination. All nominees and self-nominations must be submitted to the Nominating Committee by February 10. By the first Monday in March the Nominating Committee shall publish the slate of officers to the membership.

Section 3. Voting

Elections are to be held online for five days beginning the third Monday in April.

Candidates are elected by a plurality of the votes cast. A tie vote is resolved by a majority vote of the current Board of Directors. If an unopposed candidate receives fewer affirmative than negative votes, the office is declared vacant.

Section 4. Ties

The Teller Committee is responsible for determining and publishing the election results to the membership and the Society. In the event of a tie the outgoing Board of Directors will decide the vote. Elected officers are installed at the June transition meeting.

Section 5. Vacancies

The Vice President fills a vacancy in the office of President. The President recommends to the Board a candidate to fill any other vacancy on the Board. The position is filled by a majority vote of the Board.

Article VII Finances

The Treasurer shall deposit chapter funds in a duly established bank account. The Chapter may use any banking institution that is a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or a savings and loan institution that is a member of the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation.

Chapter funds may be withdrawn only over the signatures of two of the three authorized account signatories. The President and Treasurer are always signatories on the account. One other member, approved by the Board is also listed as an approved signatory. No check can be signed by the Payee.

No chapter member shall contract debts in the name of the chapter without authorization from the Board of Directors. The chapter president shall have the power to authorize payment of debts contracted in the name of the chapter.

Article VIII Amendments

The President has the authority to appoint the manager of a three-member committee for amendments with the remaining two members being elected by votes from the board. Amendments must be sent to the general membership at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the amendment will be voted on. Amendments are then voted as “for” or “against” by 2/3 of the membership present at a special or regular meeting. All amendments must be sent to the Society for final approval.

Article IX Parliamentary Authority

Meetings of the Chapter and the Board of Directors are guided by the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Article X Dissolution

The Chapter can be dissolved only by the Society Board of Directors.