

BYLAWS OF THE WESTERN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION  
Adopted 1974; revised 2024

ARTICLE I: NAME

- Sec. 1        The name of the organization will be the Western Literature Association (WLA).

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

- Sec. 1        The purpose of the WLA is to foster and promote the study of the literature of the North American West and its frontiers, borderlands, and homelands in all their varied aspects, complexity, and diversity, including transnational and comparative approaches. The Association strives to represent and respect the richness of the North American West as a home to varied, shifting, and divergent cultures and identities and to provide a safe and collegial environment in which scholars of all backgrounds can flourish.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

- Sec. 1        Individual membership is open to all persons.
- Sec. 2        Categories of membership and dues for each will be established by majority vote of the Executive Council.
- Sec. 3        Universities, scholarly organizations, research centers, and similar entities interested in promoting the study of literatures of the North American West may become institutional sponsors. Institutional sponsors will be subject to the approval of the Executive Council by majority vote.
- Sec. 4        Active membership will begin when the Association's office receives the first payment of annual dues, which include a subscription of *Western American Literature*. Any member whose dues are in arrears and who has not renewed after two email reminders will be dropped from the membership rolls. Those who have been thus dropped may be reinstated upon payment of one year's dues in advance. No retroactive payments will be assessed.
- Sec. 5        Universities, scholarly organizations, research centers, and similar entities other than institutional sponsors may subscribe to the Association's publications. They are not eligible for membership.
- Sec. 6        Only individual members of the Association may vote, hold office, or serve on committees for the Association.

## ARTICLE IV: ORGANIZATION

- Sec. 1 The Executive Officers will be a President, President-Elect, Vice President, Executive Secretary, Treasurer, and Past President. The Vice President will succeed to the position of President-Elect, the President-Elect will succeed to the Presidency, and the President will succeed to the Past Presidency. The President, President-Elect, Vice President, and Past President may co-serve with another member.
- Sec. 2 The Executive Council of the Association will consist of the Executive Officers, the Editor of *Western American Literature*, twelve elected members, and two Graduate Student Representatives.
- Sec. 3 The Executive Council will be responsible for the general policy and conduct of the WLA.
- Sec. 4 In the event of an emergency, the Executive Officers of the Association will be responsible for the conduct of the Association with the consent of the Executive Council.

## ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

- Sec. 1 The Executive Council will meet at least once per year.
- Sec. 2 The Treasurer oversees the presentation of the Association's annual financial report at the annual meeting of the Executive Council.
- Sec. 3 There will be a General Membership Meeting for the Association at least once per year.
- Sec. 4 The Executive Secretary will preside at the meetings of the Executive Council, General Membership Meeting, and the Association in general.

## ARTICLE VI: TERMS OF OFFICE

- Sec. 1 The President, President-Elect, Vice President, and Past President will serve for one year in each position.
- Sec. 2 The Executive Secretary and Treasurer will serve three-year, renewable terms.
- Sec. 3 The twelve elected members of the Executive Council will serve rotated terms of three years and will not succeed themselves for at least one year.
- Sec. 5 Graduate Student Representatives to the Executive Council will serve rotated terms of two years. They may not serve for more than one term.

## ARTICLE VII: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

- Sec. 1 A new Vice President will be elected each year to replace the Vice President who succeeds to the position of President-Elect.
- Sec. 2 Four members of the Executive Council will be elected each year.
- Sec. 3 One Graduate Student Representative will be elected each year.
- Sec. 4 The Executive Secretary and Treasurer will be appointed (or reappointed) by the Executive Council when their terms expire.
- Sec. 5 The Executive Secretary or a designee will solicit all members of the Association for nominations for open positions during the annual meetings of the Association. Self-nominations are accepted. The Executive Secretary or a designee will ensure all nominees who have not been self-nominated agree to run for the position.
- Sec. 6 Within 30 days of the annual meetings, nominees will provide a 250- to 500-word statement that includes a brief biography, relevant experience, qualifications, and interest. Self-nominations are accepted.
- Sec. 7 Within 60 days of the annual meetings, the Executive Secretary or a designee will post an electronic message identifying the nominees, their statements, and providing instructions for electronic voting. Voting will be open for at least a 14-day period during which the Executive Secretary or a designee will send at least two reminders to the membership. The results will be announced electronically within 30 days after voting has closed.
- Sec. 8 A tied vote for any position will be resolved by special electronic ballot issued no more than 30 days after the original vote. Results will be announced no more than 14 days after the ballot has closed on the Association's website and by electronic message.

## ARTICLE VIII: DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

- Sec. 1 The Executive Secretary will preside at meetings of the Executive Council, Membership, and the Association in general. The Executive Secretary will assist the President in the arrangement of the annual conference and in making the annual report of the affairs and progress of the Association to the Executive Council. The Executive Secretary will oversee nominations and elections.
- Sec. 2 The President is responsible for coordinating a professional program for the annual conference held during the President's term of office and other duties as required.

- Sec. 3        The President-Elect is responsible for coordinating local arrangements for the annual conference that will be held the year following the President-Elect's term of office and other duties as required.
- Sec. 4        The Vice President is responsible for nominating a Distinguished Achievement Award winner or winners to be voted on by the Executive Council during the Vice President's term of office and other duties as required.
- Sec. 5        The Past President is responsible for settling any accounts that remain from the annual conference held prior to the Past President's term of office, delivering a financial report from the annual conference to the Executive Council, and other duties as required.
- Sec. 6        The Treasurer oversees the financial health of the Association, the presentation of the yearly financial report, and other duties as required.

#### ARTICLE IX: EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

- Sec. 1        The Executive Council will be the policy-making body of the Association.
- Sec. 2        The Editor will be responsible for the management of *Western American Literature* in cooperation with the Editorial Board. The Editor may enlist other assistance as needed, such as a Managing Editor or Book Review Editor.
- Sec. 3        The Graduate Student Representatives will voice the needs, interests, and concerns of graduate student members of the Association, including the organization of professionalization panels and networking events at the annual conference of the Association.
- Sec. 4        The elected members of the Executive Council review and revise policy and procedures of the Association in order to effectively further the Association's purpose. They serve on standing and ad-hoc committees.
- Sec. 5        All members of the Executive Council will attend the annual meeting of the Executive Council and be available for consultation and voting between annual meetings as necessary.

#### ARTICLE X: CONDUCTING ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

- Sec. 1        A quorum for the Executive Council will consist of fifty percent of the Council plus one. A quorum for a General Membership Meeting will consist of the number of members who actually attend.
- Sec. 2        Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed by a majority vote of the Executive Council. Such proposed amendments will be submitted to a General

Membership Meeting. A majority of votes cast at that General Membership Meeting will determine approval or denial of the proposed amendment.

- Sec. 3 The business of the organization will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order Revised.

#### ARTICLE XI: COMMITTEES

- Sec. 1 Except as otherwise noted, the Executive Council will create standing and ad-hoc committees in order to conduct the affairs of the Association. These may include, but not be limited to, a Nominating Committee, Membership Committee, Program Committee, Local Arrangements Committee, Finance Committee, Governance Committee, Communications Committee, and Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Sec. 2 Each committee created by the Executive Council will include at least one member of the Executive Council.
- Sec. 3 The Executive Council will appoint committee members for one-year terms, which can be repeated as appropriate.

#### ARTICLE XII: AWARDS

- Sec. 1 The Executive Council will appoint an Awards Coordinator, who will serve a term of three years, which can be repeated as appropriate.
- Sec. 2 The Awards Coordinator will nominate committee members for the following awards of the Association: Delbert and Edith Wylder Award, Thomas J. Lyon Book Award, Don D. Walker Prize, J. Golden Taylor Award, Dorys Crow Grover Awards, Creative Writing Award, Susan J. Rosowski Award, Louis Owens Awards, WLA/Charles Redd Center K-12 Teaching Award, and others that are developed as appropriate.
- Sec. 3 The Awards Coordinator will establish committee composition, term lengths, and selection processes for each award in consultation with the Executive Council.
- Sec. 4 Distinguished Achievement Award/s will be nominated by the President-Elect of the Association to the Executive Council at least one year prior to the year the award will be given. The Executive Council will ratify this nomination by majority vote.

#### ARTICLE XIII: PUBLICATIONS

- Sec. 1 The Association will publish a scholarly journal called *Western American Literature*.

- Sec. 2           The Executive Council will approve the Editor of the journal.
- Sec. 3           An Editorial Board of 10 to 15 persons will be nominated by the Editor, subject to the approval of the Executive Council.
- Sec. 4           The duties of the Editorial Board will be to advise the Editor in the policy and conduct of the journal.
- Sec. 5           The Editor will report annually to the Executive Council on the operation of *Western American Literature*.

#### ARTICLE XIV: ANNUAL CONFERENCE

- Sec. 1           There will be an annual conference for the Association. The place and date will ordinarily be selected two to three years in advance.
- Sec. 2           The President will be responsible for organizing a professional program for the annual conference. The president may enlist help as needed in the form of a Programming Committee, a Local Arrangements Committee, and other similar bodies.
- Sec. 3           The registration fees will be determined by the person or persons in charge of the annual conference.