

# INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL WORK WITH GROUPS, INC,

## BYLAWS

As approved by the Board of Directors on June 18, 2008 and by the membership at the Annual Membership Meeting in Köln, Germany, on June 20, 2008.

### Article I: Name and Offices

- A. The name of this organization shall be the *International Association for Social Work with Groups, Inc.* abbreviated as *IASWG* or *IASWG, Inc.* and referred to herein as the *Association*.
- B. The principal mail address of the Association shall be at 101 West 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite #108, NYC, State of New York, 10011, USA.

### Article II: IASWG Mission Statement (Adopted June 2004)

The International Association for Social Work with Groups, Inc. (IASWG), is a not-for-profit organization of group workers, group work educators, and friends of group work who support its program of advocacy and action for professional practice, education, research, training and writing about social work with groups.

Within this group work context, we believe in the value and importance of diversity to enrich and strengthen our work and its relevance in the broad social environment. We affirm that we aspire to provide equitable opportunities for participation for all members, and that all aspects of the organization will be characterized by respect for, inclusion and representation of people across all aspects of social identity. Committed to social justice, IASWG gives particular attention to people systemically disadvantaged by the power differential inherent in oppressive social structures.

### Article III: Purpose

The purposes for which this organization has been organized and incorporated are as follows:

- A. To stimulate the publication and dissemination of literature about social work theory, research and practice with groups;
- B. To support an international symposium for the advancement of social work theory, research and practice with groups;
- C. To define and advocate for high standards of education for the practice of social work with groups in academic programs, across disciplines, in continuing education, and in staff development programs within communities;
- D. To stimulate and assist in the development of research that emphasizes best practices in social work with groups;
- E. To facilitate the development of teaching materials on social work theory, research and practice with groups;
- F. To become a force in promoting the betterment of society through the use of groups with particular attention to oppressed populations;
- G. To provide a forum for members to exchange information and enhance professional skills for more effective practice, teaching and research;
- H. To pursue and develop innovations in group work practice to meet social needs and to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative approaches to improving and advancing social conditions;
- I. To promote the inclusion of knowledge and skills in group work practice in the curricula of professional education in social work, to advocate the inclusion of such knowledge and skills in the criteria for accrediting such programs, and to promote competencies that benefit consumers of group work services;
- J. To identify areas of concern for social work in general and group work in particular;

### Article IV: Membership and Dues

- A. Membership in the Association shall be open to all persons who agree to support the purposes of the organization and pay the required dues.
- B. Associate membership may be granted at no cost to a limited number of persons living in countries whose currency or economies make payment of IASWG dues difficult or impossible. Associate members are not entitled to vote or hold office but are entitled to all other privileges and benefits of membership, including involvement in the organization of Chapters or Affiliate Organizations.
- C. Dues shall be established by the Board of Directors, reviewed on a regular basis, and may be changed at any meeting of the Board at which a quorum is present. A quorum is defined as three-fifths (3/5) of the board members expected to attend a board meeting. Changes in dues shall require a two-third (2/3) majority vote of those present and voting at such a meeting.

## **Article V: Officers and Directors of the Association**

- A. The Association shall be managed by its Board of Directors.
- B. The Board of Directors shall consist of the following:
  - 1. The President and Vice-President, who are elected by the membership to serve for three- year terms.
  - 2. The Secretary and Treasurer, each of whom is appointed for a three-year term by the elected President and Vice-President, in consultation with the Board of Directors.
  - 3. Nine members-at-large, elected for three-year terms on a staggered basis by ballot following procedures, which the Board shall specify from time to time. The terms of three at large members will expire each year.
  - 4. One Chairperson or Co-Chairperson of the immediate past, current, and next Symposia.
  - 5. Chair of the Symposium Committee.
  - 6. One Editor of *Social Work with Groups: A Journal of Community and Clinical Practice*.
  - 7. The Immediate Past President who will remain on the Board for a three-year term.
  - 8. Chairs and Presidents whose terms expired prior to 1985 shall remain on the Board as Life Members.
  - 9. Such persons as the Board shall have designated as Life Members prior to December 31, 1994.
  - 10. Webmaster.
  - 11. One person elected by each recognized and active Chapter, not on probation, as determined by the Board.
  - 12. One Editor of the *Encyclopedia of Social Work with Groups*, who will remain as a member of the Board until the publication of the encyclopedia.
  - 13. Legal Counsel as a non-voting position.
  - 14. Ex-Officio Members with voting rights, appointed by the President as Chairpersons of Committees or Ad Hoc Committees of the Board.
  - 15. The person designated as administrative support to the Board shall sit as an Ex-Officio, non-voting member.
- C. The President and Vice-President shall be elected in the following manner:
  - 1. The Committee on Nominations and Elections shall make public to the members of the Association their nominations for these positions.
  - 2. Additional nominations may be made by members of the Association. Members may be nominated or put their names forward for consideration. These nominations must be made within the time frame specified by the Committee on Nominations and Elections.
  - 3. A ballot will be distributed to all current members and the results of the election announced to the membership at the Annual General Meeting of the Association and by electronic means.
- D. A director or officer may resign by giving written notice of said resignation to the President and the Secretary, and this resignation will become effective upon its receipt by those two persons without further action being required.
- E. A director or officer may be asked to withdraw from the Board if she/he has been absent from more than two Board meetings or has failed to participate in more than two electronic votes requested by the President of the Board, or has conducted herself/himself in a manner contrary to social work Codes of Ethics and the mission of IASWG.

- F. An action of the Board of Directors shall be valid and binding only upon a vote of the majority of directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present.
- G. Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall take place at least twice each year, at the Annual Symposium and in the late fall or early winter, at a time and place to be determined by the President. All notices to Board members informing them of meetings shall be postmarked or transmitted by electronic medium at least twenty (20) days prior to the date of the meeting.
- H. Additional meetings may be called at any time by the President upon twenty (20) days (from the date of postmark or transmitted electronic medium) with written notice to all members of the Board. Meetings may be via technology. In the event of an emergency, meetings may be called with two (2) days notice.
- I. As a not-for-profit corporation no officer or Board member shall receive any remuneration for services. Direct and reasonable expenses for activities on behalf of the organization may be partially or fully reimbursed according to policies which have been established by the Board of Directors.

## **Article VI: Chapters**

- A. Chapters shall be created by groups of members who desire to do so. Chapters may be formed in states, provinces, nations, regions, cities, or groupings of such irrespective of state, provincial, city or national boundaries. Chapters shall have authority to establish and carry out their local programs. Unless otherwise incorporated, chapters function as units of the Association and their financial and legal operating data, as well as chapter activities, will be reported in an Annual Report to the Chair of the Chapter Development Committee. In order to be recognized by the Association, Chapters' purposes must conform in substance with the mission, purposes and procedures of the Association as listed in Articles II and III and other relevant provisions of these bylaws.
- B. Affiliate Organizations may be recognized, without membership dues being required, if these organizations are located in countries generally recognized as being in the process of development, having unconvertible currencies, and/or low levels of cash incomes for their populations.
- C. The Chapter Development Committee is charged with helping chapters or, where appropriate, Affiliate Organizations, to develop and with evaluating their readiness for recognition. Criteria for recommending recognition shall be shared with the membership of the developing Chapter (or Organization) and shall include the following:
  - 1. Chapters must have at least twenty-five (25) IASWG members.
    - a. They shall define the geographical area served, in accordance with Section A of this Article.
    - b. They shall furnish the Association with member-approved bylaws with purposes and procedures in general conformity with those of the Association.
  - 2. Chapters shall have their own elected officers and governing boards which:
    - a. Come into being according to procedures which have been specified in writing and approved by a majority of the chapter's membership, and
    - b. Seek to reflect in their composition representation of all the IASWG members in the Chapter's geographic area.
  - 3. In addition to the substantive agreement called for in Section A of this Article, Chapters shall conform in their policies, operations and programs to the policies of the Association.
  - 4. Membership in a Chapter, voting rights in the election of chapter governance and eligibility for candidacy for chapter office shall include all Association members living in the designated area from which Chapter members are drawn or indicating to the Association's membership office their preference for affiliation with that Chapter. No person may be a member of more than one Chapter.
  - 5. Chapters may limit offices held by students but shall make provision for the representation of student members on their Boards of Directors and Executive Committees.
  - 6. Each recognized and active Chapter, not on probation as determined by the Board, shall elect one person as a representative to sit on the Board of Directors of the Association as provided in Article V, Section 9 above.

7. Notwithstanding such financial arrangements as may from time to time be established between the Association and its local Chapters, each Chapter may assess its own members and/or collect such additional funds as are required for carrying out the Chapter's activities.
8. Upon the temporary or permanent dissolution of a Chapter, the assets and records of the Chapter shall be returned to the Association and shall belong to it.
9. The Board of Directors of the Association shall mediate within a cooperative spirit and framework any boundary issues that may arise between or among Chapters.

## **Article VII: Committees**

- A. Appointments to Committees normally will be made by the President. Committees also may be created and members named by the Board by majority vote at any meeting. Committees are charged with carrying out the work of the Association. While it is anticipated that, under ordinary circumstances, all Board members will be active members of Committees, any member in good standing of the Association may be a member or chair of any Committee.
- B. The following are the standing committees. They shall report to the Board on their work at each meeting and shall prepare reports for the Board at least annually. More frequent reports may be requested by the Board or the President:
  1. Executive Committee. This Committee shall be composed of the officers of the Association: the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chair of Chapter Development, Chair of Commission on Group Work in Social Work Education, Chair of Membership and Chair of Symposium Committee. The President may appoint other individuals when particular expertise or knowledge of the organization is required. The Committee shall act on behalf of the Board on routine matters between Board meetings or when time or urgency of an issue does not allow waiting until the next full Board meeting or calling a special meeting. The Committee shall make a full report at the next meeting of the Board regarding any actions taken in the interim since the last Board meeting. The Committee shall be chaired by the President of the Association or in that person's absence, by the Vice-President.
  2. Budget and Finance Committee. Budget and Finance Consulting Committee. This Committee shall be chaired by the Treasurer of the Association and is charged with consulting with the Treasurer as requested in financial analysis, transactions, and reports, including the preparation of the annual budget to be voted on by the Board of Directors.
  3. Chapter Development. This Committee will assist Chapters and Affiliate Organizations in the process of organizing, will evaluate their progress toward meeting standards for recognition and then will recommend, when appropriate, such recognition to the Board of Directors. A Council of Chapters may be organized in order to serve as a channel of communication among the chapters and between chapters and the Board of Directors and membership of the Association.
  4. Membership. The Membership Committee shall be concerned with the procedures for recruiting, securing and maintaining the Association's membership.
  5. Nominations and Elections. This Committee is responsible for the development of slates of nominees and for supervising the election process so as to ensure that it is conducted within both the requirement of these Bylaws and the spirit and the values which underlie the Association.
  6. Symposium Committee. This Committee provides support, advice, and oversight to designated symposia organizing groups throughout the process and collaborates with the Chapter Development Committee to recruit and help develop future symposia sites.
  7. Commission on Group Work in Social Work Education. The Commission is charged with strengthening the teaching of social work practice with groups in social work schools and programs and with maintaining a relationship with the journal, *Social Work with Groups*, and the oversight of any other publications produced under the auspices of the Association.
  8. Archives Committee. This Committee is charged with maintaining, enhancing and promoting the use of the Association's Archives, now established at the University of Minnesota.
- C. The President or the Board of Directors may, at their respective discretions, establish *ad hoc* committees to study and recommend or take action on any matter which falls within the purview of

the Association. Ad hoc committees will exist until their charge is concluded and they have made a final report to the Board, along with a motion to dissolve the committee.

## **Article VIII – Officers**

- A. The President will be the chief executive officer of the Association, shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors, shall conduct the general management of all affairs of the Association, and shall be responsible for ensuring that all orders and resolutions of the Board are carried out.
- B. The Vice-President shall preside at any Board meeting at which the President is not in attendance and shall carry out the responsibilities of the President in case of that person's incapacity or prolonged absence.
- C. The Secretary:
  - 1. Shall issue all calls or notices of meetings, write such letters as the President or the Board of Directors may direct, and shall record business conducted during meetings of the Board and membership meetings of the Association. The exact wording of every motion should appear in the minutes and whether it was carried or lost. A vote count should be recorded when there are ties and when the President votes to break a tie.
  - 2. Shall have custody of all papers belonging to the Association which are not especially under the charge of any other officer, and shall carry out any other duties that may be assigned by the Board of Directors or the President: and
  - 3. Is responsible for filing any required reports with the Secretary of State and/or any other Departments or Offices of the State in which the Association is incorporated. The Secretary will sign for the corporation any official documents as necessary.
- D. The Treasurer shall have responsibility for all the funds and securities of the Association. The Treasurer shall:
  - 1. With the exception of symposium contracts, which will be signed by the President, sign and execute all contracts in the name of the Association, with countersignature by the President or Vice President or Secretary, the latter two only when acting as a substitute for the President as provided elsewhere in these Bylaws;
  - 2. Sign all checks, drafts, notes and orders for the payment of money which shall have been duly authorized;
  - 3. At all reasonable times and in collaboration with the Administrative Support Team make financial records including audits and tax returns available to any Director of the Board in collaboration with the Administrative Support Team within four weeks of the request;
  - 4. Hire an outside auditor to audit the accounts, the full financial records of IASWG and/or hire an outside tax preparer to prepare tax returns as deemed necessary by the Board;
  - 5. File all financial reports and pay related fees as required by government agencies; and
  - 6. Have authority to deposit funds into, withdraw funds from, or transfer funds between any and all bank and/or investment accounts of the Association for Association business.
- E. The President in consultation with the Executive Committee can contract with persons to handle specific duties necessary for the conduct of the Association.
- F. The Board of Directors may appoint a Legal Counsel to act as attorney for the corporation as it deems necessary or in response to a request by the President.
- G. Nothing in this Article shall be understood as preventing the Board of Directors from assigning to any of its members such other duties as may, in the Board's judgment, be necessary in order to fulfill the purposes and carry out the management of the Association.

## **Article IX– Grants and Contracts**

- A. The Association may apply for, accept and administer grants or funds for projects in support of its purposes. It may also enter into contracts with organizations or other entities which will, in the judgment of the Board of Directors, result in activities which promote its purposes. It may employ staff, purchase equipment and supplies, incur expenses and issue reports and other publications as provided for in the particular grant or contract.

- B. The Association may make grants to individuals and organizations to support, in whole or in part, projects in fulfillment of its purposes. It may also join with other organizations in support of such projects.
- C. Any such grants and contracts must be reviewed by Legal Counsel,

## **Article X – Procedures for Conducting Meetings**

In all procedural matters not specifically referred to in these Bylaws, the Association shall conduct meetings in accordance with the most current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*.

## **Article XI – Dissolution**

Upon the unlikely event of the dissolution of this corporation, the remaining assets shall be distributed to one or more other organizations dedicated to carrying out similar programs and purposes and the records of the Association shall be deposited in the Social Welfare History Archives at the University of Minnesota.

## **Article XII – Possibility of Conflicting Provisions**

Provisions in these bylaws or any bylaws of chapters or affiliates which shall conflict with the laws of another country, state, or political unit shall be invalid for such chapters, affiliates or other units in the geographic or political area involved. Any such differences will be negotiated and issues resolved by the Board and the members of such units.

## **Article XIII – Effective Date of Bylaws and Procedure for Amendment**

- A. These Bylaws shall take effect upon their adoption at a regularly scheduled membership meeting or through a mail ballot or a ballot transmitted by electronic medium following their adoption by a meeting of the Board of Directors at which a quorum is present, two-thirds of those present and voting having approved them.
- B. Amendments to these Bylaws can be brought into effect through the following procedures:
  - 1. The text of proposed amendment(s) shall be circulated by mail or transmitted by electronic medium to all members of the Board of Directors, postmarked not less than twenty (20) days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered;
  - 2. The amendment shall then be considered by the Board of Directors at its meeting. A quorum being present, the amendment shall require a two-thirds majority of those voting in order to pass.
  - 3. The amendment shall go into effect upon its ratification by a majority of those present and voting at the next membership meeting of the Association. If, however, it is the judgment of the President that the Amendment is of an urgent or exigent nature, the amendment(s) may go into effect, on a temporary basis, upon its having been passed by the Board of Directors.

**A HISTORICAL NOTE:** *The original Bylaws of what was then called the "Committee for Advancement of Social Work with Groups" were approved and adopted by the Incorporators of the corporation--Ruth R. Middleman, Catherine P. Papell and Beulah Rothman on July 11, 1982. They were amended at the annual meetings of the organization in October 1985, October 1986, and October 24, 1987. A Committee to Revise the Bylaws was appointed by James A. Garland, Chairperson of the Association, in May 1993, including Catherine Papell, Charles Garvin and Marcos Leiderman, and approved by the Board on June 12, 1994 and by the membership at the Annual Membership meeting in October, 1995 except for Section B, Article IV and Section C6, Article V which were approved at the Annual Membership Meeting in October 1996. A Bylaws Revision Task Force, chaired by Ellen Sue Mesbur, was appointed in October 2006 by Nancy Sullivan, President of the Association, and approved by the Board on June 18, 2008 and by the membership at the Annual Membership Meeting on June 20, 2008.*