

Constitution of the Great Plains Honors Council¹

ARTICLE 1: NAME

This organization shall be known as the Great Plains Honors Council (GPHC). It works cooperatively with the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) as one of the regional divisions of that organization.

ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE

Mission: The Great Plains Honors Council will promote and recognize “honors” education in colleges and universities of Nebraska, Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

Definition: The GPHC is a non-profit, unincorporated academic association, organized exclusively for educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. The GPHC opposes discrimination on any basis except that of academic achievement or character, and it adheres to federal, state, and local laws regarding nondiscrimination.

Dissolution: Should the GPHC disband for any reason, after discharge and satisfaction of outstanding liabilities, the remaining funds and assets if any, shall be distributed and transferred only to such organizations or entities described by the terms of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States as shall be designated by the GPHC at the time of dissolution.

Loans: No loans shall be executed on behalf of the Council and no evidences of indebtedness shall be issued in its name.

¹ The 2005 GPHC Constitution was updated and altered by a vote of the Council in April of 2010. The new Constitution was reformatted in May of 2010.

ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this Council shall consist of two categories: institutional membership and honorary life membership.

Institutional membership shall be open to institutions of higher learning as well as to foundations and governmental agencies interested in honors and similar programs. Such institutions may become members upon application to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer and payment of appropriate dues.

Honorary life membership may be bestowed upon individuals who have made distinguished contributions to the advancement of honors education in the Great Plains region. The Executive Committee may nominate individuals for honorary life membership; such nominations shall be submitted to the voting membership of the GPHC for approval at any meeting or by mail ballot. Honorary life members shall be exempt dues; they shall have the right to vote and hold office in the Council.

ARTICLE 4: Governance

Section 1: General Authority.

The general governing authority of GPHC is vested in the voting membership when convened in the annual business meetings and on matters referred to the voting membership by mail ballot according to the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2: Voting Body.

Each institutional member in good standing shall appoint one faculty or staff member who will cast the vote of that institution. Those institutional members that are colleges or universities shall appoint in addition one student who will cast a vote on behalf of students at that institution. Only a student may cast the student vote for an institution; only a faculty/staff member may cast the faculty/staff vote. No person may cast more than a single vote.

The faculty/staff members and the students appointed by the various member institutions, together with any honorary life members, shall form the voting membership. Only those designated as voting representatives by their institutions and life members may cast ballots on any issue.

Section 3: Manner of Voting.

Voting at a general meeting of the Council may be by voice vote, by roll call vote, or by secret ballot. Any item of business may also be submitted to the voting membership of the Council for

a mail or email vote. In the case of a mail or email vote, ballots must be mailed no less than 25 days prior to the deadline by which they are due to be returned to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer; this deadline must be printed on the ballot itself.

Mail vote is required on the following transactions: election of officers and amendment of this Constitution.

ARTICLE 5: OFFICERS

Section 1: Titles.

The officers of the Council shall be a President, a Vice President, a Student Representative, and an Executive Secretary-Treasurer. The Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall serve for a term of two years; the terms for other offices shall be one year. For all officers, terms shall begin at the business meeting of GPHC held in conjunction with the national conference of NCHC, and shall expire at the following year's NCHC conference.

Section 2: Responsibilities.

The President shall be the chief executive officer of GPHC, and shall preside at meetings of the Council and the Executive Committee. The President shall serve as a liaison with NCHC, and shall represent GPHC before other Regional Honors Councils as well as governmental agencies and other associations concerned with higher education.

The Vice President shall assist the President, and shall assume the duties of President whenever the latter is unable to do so. The school or group of schools, hosting the GPHC convention will appoint someone to serve as the program chair for the regional conference. The program chair will serve as a member of the Executive Committee for the year of the conference. At the conclusion of the President's term of office, the Vice-President shall automatically assume the office of President.

The Student Representative shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee and shall serve as a spokesperson for student concerns. He/She shall have the authority to convene a student caucus whenever this seems appropriate or when requested by other students to do so.

The Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall keep minutes of meetings of the Council and the Executive Committee. S/He shall collect and manage all fees, dues, and other income collectible by GPHC, and shall serve as custodian of the Council's funds. S/He shall have the authority to disperse funds for operating expenses of the Council, and for such other purposes as may be specified in the By-Laws or authorized by the Executive Committee or by the Council as a

whole. The Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall report to the Council at each general meeting, and shall submit annually a complete and verified statement of the financial condition of the organization.

The headquarters of GPHC shall be the home institution of the Executive Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 3: Succession.

Upon completion of his/her term of office, the President shall assume the position of Immediate Past President and the Vice President shall become President. Upon completion of his/her term of office, the Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall become Immediate Past Secretary-Treasurer.

No individual may simultaneously hold more than one office; upon succession of an officer to another position, that officer's former position will be declared vacant, and will be filled as specified in the By-Laws.

In the event that both the President and Vice-President are unable to fulfill the duties of the Presidency, the Immediate Past President shall serve as Acting President until a new President shall be properly elected. In the event that the Executive Secretary-Treasurer cannot fulfill the duties of that office the Immediate Past Secretary-Treasurer shall assume that position temporarily until a new Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall be properly elected.

ARTICLE 6: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The President, Vice President, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, the Immediate Past President, and the Immediate Past Secretary-Treasurer, the program chair, plus the Student Representative, shall constitute an Executive Committee, which shall meet at least twice a year (ordinarily before the Council business meeting at the fall and spring conferences) to discuss issues of importance to the regional Council, to recommend legislative action to the membership of the Council, and to draw up an agenda for the next business meeting. The Executive Committee shall be a standing committee; however, upon its recommendation, the President may appoint ad hoc committees for any appropriate purpose.

ARTICLE 7: MEETINGS

The Council shall hold two general meetings each year. One meeting will ordinarily take place at the annual conference of the National Collegiate Honors Council; the other will occur in the spring at a regional conference, the date and location of which will be determined by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 8: AMENDMENTS

Any proposal to alter or amend this Constitution shall be referred to the Executive Secretary-Treasurer and the President, who will cast the proposal in suitable wording which clearly expresses the intent of the proposal and which is consistent with the other sections of the Constitution. Voting on any such change or amendment must be by mail or email vote; the Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall mail to all members ballots which clearly explain the proposed change, and which permit each member to vote either to approve or not to approve the change. Ballots shall be due to be returned no less than 25 days after they are mailed by the Executive Secretary-Treasurer; the due date must be printed on the ballot itself. Any such amendments that receive approval by a two-thirds majority of those voting shall be adopted as part of this Constitution.

ARTICLE 9: DISAVOWAL OF POLITICS

The GPHC will not endorse or promulgate propaganda, or otherwise attempt to influence legislation. It shall not carry on activities that would cause it to violate 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1: DUES AND VOTING RIGHTS

Section 1:

The minimum dues for institutional members shall be fifty dollars (\$50) per annum. Upon payment of dues, institutional members shall be considered to be in good standing, and shall have the right to appoint faculty/staff and, if an institution of higher learning, student voting representatives. Institutions may pay higher sustaining member dues as set at the GPHC regional meeting.

Section 2:

Institutional members whose dues have not been received at the time of a vote may be declared to be in good standing by the Executive Secretary-Treasurer upon their presentation of written evidence that requisitions to cover payment of the required dues have been submitted to the proper officers of the institution.

Section 3:

Any institutional member who is in arrears for two years shall be placed on probationary status; the Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall mail to each such institution notice of this fact. Institutions that remain in arrears for a third year shall be dropped from the rolls.

ARTICLE 2: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1:

The Executive Committee shall serve as a nominating committee, and shall nominate one or more candidates for every office in which a vacancy exists or is anticipated. Candidates may also be nominated by petition of two institutional members; such petitions must be received by the Executive Secretary-Treasurer by September 1 of any year in which an election is required.

Section 2:

All officers shall be elected by secret mail ballot. The Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall conduct the election at a date sufficiently early that the results may be announced before the NCHC national conference. Ballots shall be mailed to each voting member in good standing at least 25 days before the deadline for returning ballots; this deadline must be clearly shown on the ballot itself. Each ballot shall list the offices for which election is necessary, shall show the names of all candidates duly nominated for each office, and shall include a space for write-in candidates. On the day following the deadline for ballot return, the Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall count the ballots and announce the names of the candidate receiving the greatest

number of votes for each office. Ballots will be considered invalid if they are (1) returned blank, (2) returned after the deadline, or (3) for any office contains votes for more candidates than there are vacancies to be filled. However, a ballot in which no candidate is chosen for a particular office will be considered a valid ballot with respect to those other offices for which a candidate is chosen.

Section 3:

In the event of a tie vote for any office, members of the Executive Committee will cast secret ballots in an attempt to resolve the tie. Should the votes of the Executive Committee also be tied, the result of the election will be determined by the toss of a coin.

In the event that a member in good standing should appeal the results of an election, the Executive Committee shall consider the appeal, and shall have the authority to either: (1) resolve the appeal summarily; or (2) to refer the appeal to the membership of the Council; or (3) to declare the election invalid and to order a new election. While an appeal is pending, current officers shall retain their positions until the results of a valid election are announced.

Section 4:

In the event that an office becomes vacant (through the death, disability, or resignation of the incumbent), the steps to be taken will depend on the office in which the vacancy exists.

Should the office of President become vacant, the Vice-President shall immediately succeed to the Presidency, and the office of Vice-president shall be considered vacant.

Should the office of Immediate Past President or Immediate Past Secretary-Treasurer become vacant, the office shall pass to the individual most recently holding that office who remains an active member of GPHC.

Should the office of Vice-president, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, or Student representative become vacant, the President, in consultation with the other members of the Executive Committee, shall determine whether or not a special election is necessary. If it is determined that the welfare of GPHC requires a special election, the President shall cause such an election to take place; the procedure in this case shall be the same as that for a regular election.

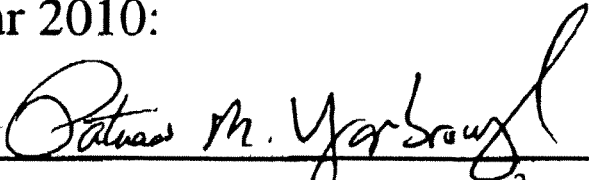
Whenever a vacancy occurs, the President shall have the authority to appoint an acting officer, who shall exercise the duties of the vacant office until a properly elected officer can be installed.

ARTICLE 3: AUTHORIZATION OF EXPENDITURES

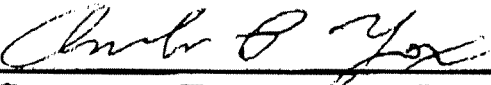
The Executive Committee shall have the power to authorize expenditure of GPHC funds for any purpose, which shall benefit the Council. In particular, allocation of funds, within limits determined by annual income and by principles of good financial practice, shall be encouraged for the following purposes:

1. To permit the student representative to the GPHC Executive Committee to attend regional and national conferences.
2. To permit representatives of GPHC to attend and participate in meetings of other regional conferences of NCHC.
3. To encourage student participation at national and GPHC regional conferences by providing grants to member institutions which sponsor student presentations at these conferences.

Signed in the Year 2010:



GPHC President Dr. Patricia M. Yarbrough²



GPHC Executive Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Andrew P. Yox³

² Dr. Patricia M. Yarbrough, the Director of the University Honors Program of East Central University.

³ Dr. Andrew P. Yox, the Honors Director at Northeast Texas Community College.