

Rationale

The NIRSA Board has been approached by states and provinces that wish to either change regions or form a new region. Currently, the specific make-up of the NIRSA regions is detailed in the NIRSA Bylaws, and any change in the bylaws requires the issue to be presented to the full NIRSA membership for a vote. By removing the specific make-up of the regions from the bylaws, the NIRSA Board of Directors will be able to make decisions on requests regarding regional composition. The proposed bylaws have been reviewed by legal who concur that this authority is something that is appropriately vested in an association's governing body.

A change to regional configuration is most concerning to the members that are directly impacted; however, because the current process entails a vote of all members, the decision is ultimately dictated by a majority who are not directly impacted by the request or fully educated on the rationale for the change. This is not effective governance for our association.

Having a process that thoroughly vets any regional change, and having the decision made by members who stand to be most impacted, allows our association to be more nimble to member's needs. This better facilitates having well-informed voters and has the best interests of the whole association in mind.

Currently, no definitions of a region exist in the Bylaws. The proposed amendments to the bylaws reference a Board approved policy that includes a definition of what constitutes a recognized NIRSA Region and a process for entities to propose a new region or request a change from one region to another. This new policy lays out a plan that provides for more involvement and engagement of members at the grassroots level, than if they voted on a proposed bylaw amendment. For example, in 2016, 35% of NIRSA professional members voted in the electronic elections. The Board approved policy for creating a new region or moving from one region to another, requires a petition of support signed by greater than 50% of the NIRSA professional members from the requesting state, province, country or area.

The NIRSA Board has been vetting ideas since the summer of 2015 and developed a proposed policy with input from the Regional Realignment Task Force, Canadian Region Task Force, NIRSA Bylaws Committee, and the Member Network. The new policy will detail a process for any state, province, or country to make a proposal to change regions. A proposal will need to capture rationale for the change, input from regional leaders, and a petition of support from members in the affected area. The Member Network will review the proposal and provide members an opportunity to comment. The final decision for the change will then be made by the NIRSA Board of Directors. Should the proposed bylaw amendments pass, the approved policy for regional composition can be found here:

<http://nirsa.net/nirsa/wp-content/uploads/nirsa-regional-composition-policy.pdf>

Amended Bylaws: Red Lined

Article II, Section 1. Membership.

- E. Student Leadership Team. The Student Leadership Team, consisting of eligible student members serving as the NIRSA Student Leader and the ~~six~~ Regional Student Leaders shall be eligible to vote on all matters subject to vote by the membership. The Student Leadership Team, as a membership category, does not pay dues.

Article II, Section 18. Regional Configuration.

The Association shall be divided into ~~six~~ (6) regions for the purpose of conducting regular professional development activity and to elect regional representatives and student regional leaders to the Member Network. ~~The number of regions, composition of each region, and process for realignment of regions shall be in accordance with Association policy as determined by resolution of the Board. The current composition of each region is as listed in Exhibit A and may be updated as needed. The regions are as follows:~~

~~Region I: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Europe, Iceland, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Brunswick, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Pennsylvania, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Rhode Island, and Vermont.~~

~~Region II: Africa, Alabama, Atlantic Islands, Bahamas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Indies, and West Virginia.~~

~~Region III: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Ontario, and Wisconsin.~~

~~Region IV: Arkansas, Central America, Kansas, Louisiana, Mexico, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South America, and Texas.~~

~~Region V: Alberta, Colorado, Iowa, Manitoba, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, South Dakota, and Wyoming.~~

~~Region VI: Alaska, Arizona, Asia, Australia, British Columbia, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Japan, Nevada, New Zealand, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and the Yukon.~~

Amended Bylaws: Clean

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Article VI. Member Network.

- A. The Member Network shall be the primary vehicle for communication, constituent representation, networking and student/professional development. The Member Network shall be comprised of the following members
- i. One Regional Representative from each NIRSA Region (one eligible professional, professional life or emeritus member from each region elected by voting members within that region) serving two year terms. Regions shall elect **regional representatives to staggered two-year terms as determined by Association Policy. I, III, V shall elect regional representatives in odd numbered years; Regions II, IV, VI in even numbered years;**
 - ii. One Student Leader from each NIRSA Region (one eligible student member from each region elected by student voting members within that region) serving a one-year term;
 - iii. The NIRSA Student Leader (an eligible student member elected by all student voting members) serving a one-year term;
 - iv. The Past Presidents' Member Network Representative –serving a two-year term (elected by Past Presidents);
 - v. One member of the Board of Director as appointed by the President, will serve as the Board Representative to the Member Network; and
 - vi. The Chair of the Member Network. Rational to share with Members

Exhibit A

The number of regions, composition of each region, and process for realignment of regions shall be in accordance with Association policy as determined by resolution of the Board. The current composition of each NIRSA region is as follows and may be updated as needed:

Region I: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Europe and Iceland.

Region II: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, Africa, Atlantic Islands, Bahamas and West Indies.

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Region III: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and Ontario,

Region IV: Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Central America, Mexico and South America.

Region V: Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Alberta, Manitoba, Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan.

Region VI: Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, British Columbia, Yukon, Guam, Asia, Australia, Japan and New Zealand.

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