

# National Council on Family Relations

## Section Bylaws



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## **ARTICLE I: PURPOSE**

Sections promote NCFR's mission and the common interests of NCFR members in specified family areas. Sections provide a means of increasing communication and interaction among NCFR members of similar interest within the framework of the larger organization. Sections recognize research and scholarly work (especially by students), mentoring and service contributions by professionals and students.

## **ARTICLE II: GOVERNANCE**

The bylaws of the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) shall govern the National Council on Family Relations Section Bylaws in all of its practices. The NCFR Section Bylaws shall not conflict with the bylaws of the National Council on Family Relations. Every amendment to the NCFR Bylaws shall become effective and binding on all the NCFR Sections.

### **Section 1: Section Formation**

A section of NCFR shall be formed when a preliminary statement of intent to establish a new section has been filed with the NCFR Board, and when at least 150 active NCFR members with a family section-related specialty have registered their intent for board consideration. A section shall remain solvent as long as it maintains 100 registered members and abides by NCFR regulations on sections. If membership is below 100 for two consecutive years, the section shall be considered insolvent.

### **Section 2: Section Maintenance**

The minimum section organizational requirements shall include a statement of purpose; the election by the section of a chair, chair-elect, secretary/treasurer, and students and new professionals representative(s) at the time of the regular NCFR elections; and a membership meeting to be held concurrently with the NCFR Annual Conference. Officers shall be elected for a period of two years in accordance with established board procedures. Candidates for the section offices of chair-elect and secretary/treasurer shall have been members of the section for a minimum of two years. Candidates for the section office of students and new professionals representative(s) shall have been members of the section for a minimum of one year. Candidates must be current dues-paying section members. Section chairs shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has lapsed since prior service. Student members shall not be eligible for the offices of chair-elect or secretary/treasurer. Section purposes are subject to NCFR Board confirmation and shall be on file at NCFR headquarters. A year-end report, a work plan, and membership meeting minutes shall also be filed with NCFR headquarters annually.

### **Section 3: Conference Representation**

Each section shall have a representative to the NCFR Annual Conference Program Committee who shall serve as the annual conference chair for the section. The section chair shall be a member of the NCFR Annual Conference Program Committee, be responsible for the preparation of the section program for the annual conference, or appoint a section member in consultation with the section executive committee and the NCFR Annual Conference Program Chair to assume this responsibility.

### **Section 4: Publications**

Sections cannot produce publications for non-section members without approval of the NCFR Board of Directors.

The Sections currently operating under the National Council on Family Relations Section Bylaws are as follows:

#### **Advancing Family Science Section (AFS)**

- A. The purpose of the Advancing Family Science Section is to expand, strengthen, and enhance the Family Science discipline and profession. This section will focus on the disciplinary and professional concerns rather than subject-based concerns that are the domain of the previously existing interdisciplinary sections.

- B. All members of this section are governed by the section's document, "Ethical Principles and Guidelines", and they shall abide by this document and any amendments to it. Approved 1994

### **Families and Health Section (FH)**

- A. The purposes of the Families and Health Section are to:
1. Facilitate excellence in family health research, practice, education, theory and policy development.
  2. Promote dialogue between and among practitioners, educators, and researchers interested in families and health.
  3. Promote advocacy for family health policies and programs at the local, state, national and international levels.
  4. Encourage/promote dialogue and collaboration with other sections within NCFR.

### **Family and Community Education Section (FCE)**

The Family and Community Education Section supports and unites the members of NCFR who are involved with and interested in the translation of research into effective community education and engagement for individuals, couples, and families. The purpose of the section is to encourage dialogue and share evidence-informed resources about methods, materials, programs, and processes for enriching and improving the lives of individuals, couples, and families across the life course.

### **Family Policy Section (FP)**

The Family Policy Section devotes itself to promoting effective social action for individuals and families by monitoring pressing policy issues, evaluating the potential impacts of new policies, working for effective change, and creating strategies to educate and raise awareness resulting in improved quality of life for individuals, families and society.

### **Family Therapy Section (FT)**

- A. The primary purposes of this section are to:
1. Unite members of NCFR who share common interests, goals and purposes in family therapy.
  2. Improve the practice of family therapy through the promotion of: a) open dialogue between clinicians, and researchers relative to family therapy theories, research, practice and training; b) the integration of theory, research and practice; and c) effective, efficient and ethical practice methods.
  3. Encourage the further development of theory, research, practice and training in the field of family therapy.
  4. Provide a forum, through the planning and sponsoring of relevant sessions during the annual conference of NCFR, for: a) presentations that integrate theory, research, and practice; b) critical examination of new assessment methods and therapy techniques; and c) collaborative activities with family scientists in other NCFR sections.
  5. Promote an interchange, at both a state and national level, between family therapists associated with NCFR and other related organizations which sponsor and promote activities for family therapists.

### **Feminism and Family Science Section (FFS)**

The purpose of this section is to integrate feminist scholarship and perspectives into theory, research, and applied work with families.

### **International Section (IN)**

- A. The purpose of the International Section of the NCFR shall be to generate a better understanding of the unique variations of family process throughout the world by:

1. Promoting cross-national family research;
2. Facilitating communication amongst international family scholars;
3. Sharing information on current and proposed research projects;
4. Sponsoring educational cross-national family programs, presentations, and seminars at universities in different countries;
5. Maintaining ties with international organizations engaged in family research.

**Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Families Section (REDF)\***

*\*Previously Ethnic Minorities Section (EM)*

The Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Families Section unites those members of NCFR who are concerned with issues pertaining to racially and ethnically diverse families, to help increase their participation in the organization and annual programs of NCFR, and to help create a better understanding of the variations in families from diverse ethnic groups.

**Religion, Spirituality, and Family Section (RSF)**

The purpose of this section shall be to unite those members of the NCFR who are concerned with issues pertaining to religion, spirituality, and families.

**Research and Theory Section (RT)**

The purpose of the Research and Theory Section is to facilitate the development and communication of theory and research in all content areas related to families in all their variety of forms.

**ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP & FINANCES**

**Section 1: Eligibility**

All current members in NCFR shall be eligible for membership in one or more sections upon paying section membership dues for each section joined.

**Section 2: Termination of Membership**

Any person whose membership in NCFR remains unpaid shall be suspended from membership in any section where they currently hold membership.

**Section 3: Finances**

- A. Each section will receive a yearly operating budget from NCFR.
- B. NCFR will incur all travel-related expenses for the section representative to attend the spring annual conference program planning committee meeting.
- C. Annual fixed expenses will/could include:
  1. Section non-designated awards
  2. Sponsoring of speakers or presenters at the annual conference
  3. Refreshments at section annual meeting
- D. Sections are able to retain unspent funds from the annual operating budget for future expenditures.
- E. Requests for expenditures shall be referred to the section executive committee prior to preparation of the section annual budget.
- F. The section shall not be responsible for debts except as authorized by the section executive committee and NCFR shall not be responsible for unauthorized debts. All expenditures shall be approved in advance by the secretary/treasurer of the section before payment by NCFR headquarters. According to the NCFR Section Governance Handbook, requests for reimbursement shall be sent to the Director of Finance at NCFR headquarters within 30 days of incurrence.
- G. Section officers will receive quarterly financial reports from NCFR headquarters.

## ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS & DUTIES

### Section 1: Officers

The officers of the section shall be a chair, a chair-elect, secretary/treasurer, students and new professionals representative(s) and past chair, serving as the section executive committee. The chair-elect, secretary/treasurer, and students and new professionals representative(s) shall be elected by the members of the section for a two-year term in accordance with established NCFR bylaws. Candidates for the section offices of chair-elect and secretary/treasurer shall have been members of the section for a minimum of two years. Candidates for the section office of students and new professionals representative(s) shall have been members of the section for a minimum of one year. Candidates must be current dues-paying section members. Section chairs shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has lapsed since prior service. Student members shall not be eligible for the offices of chair-elect or secretary/treasurer.

The section has the ability to add additional elected or appointed officers if approved by the entire section executive committee. Examples of additional officers are: Communications Specialist (social media), Nominations Officer, Awards Officer, etc.

### Section 2: Duties of the Officers

- A. **CHAIR** – The chair shall be the official representative of the section in the activities of NCFR. The chair shall preside at all meetings of the section and the section executive committee, and shall call special meetings when necessary. The chair shall be an ex-officio member of all committees of the section, except the nominations committee. The chair shall be a member of the NCFR annual conference program committee, be responsible for the preparation of the section program for the annual conference, or appoint a section member in consultation with the section executive committee and the NCFR Annual Conference Chair to assume this responsibility.
- B. **CHAIR-ELECT** – The chair-elect shall preside at meetings in the absence of the chair, act for the chair in the chair's absence or disability and perform such other duties as are requested by the chair. The chair-elect may work with the chair to identify reviewers and oversee the process of proposal review for the annual conferences and shall, with the chair, make final recommendations regarding the section's programming for the annual conference. The chair-elect shall chair the awards committees and be responsible for all section awards.
- C. **SECRETARY/TREASURER** – The secretary/treasurer shall be responsible for keeping minutes of meetings, keeping an accurate record of all section assets, liabilities, and financial transactions managing the budget of the section in cooperation with NCFR's Director of Finance. An annual financial report should be included in the section annual meeting minutes.
- D. **STUDENTS AND NEW PROFESSIONALS REPRESENTATIVE(S)**: The students and new professionals representative(s) shall be responsible for serving as a liaison with the NCFR Students and New Professionals Leadership Council and for representing the concerns of student and new professional members of the section. Students and new professional representative(s) shall serve on the nominations committee.
- E. **PAST CHAIR** – The past chair shall serve as the chair of the nominations committee. The nominations committee shall consist of the past chair, the students and new professionals representative, and one other assigned member of the section, who is selected by the past chair and approved by the current chair.
- F. **ALTERNATE DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS** – The section executive committee has the ability to assign duties of the officers as they think would help with the efficiency of the section. Example: The section chair may be assigned as the chair of the awards committee instead of serving on the NCFR program committee and being responsible for the preparation of the section program. The section chair-elect may be assigned to attend the NCFR program committee meetings, work with the chair to identify reviewers and oversee the process of proposal review for the annual meetings and may, with the chair, make final recommendations regarding section programming for the annual meeting.

### **Section 3: Election of Officers**

Nominations – A nominations committee shall present a slate of at least two candidates each for the offices of chair-elect, secretary/treasurer, and students and new professionals representative(s) to the section members biennially. Candidates for the section offices of chair-elect and secretary/treasurer shall have been members of the section for a minimum of two years. Candidates for the section office of students and new professionals representative(s) shall have been members of the section for a minimum of one year. Candidates must be current dues-paying section members. Section chairs shall not be eligible for re-election until at least one year has lapsed since prior service. Student members shall not be eligible for the offices of chair-elect or secretary/treasurer.

- A. Nominees must give their consent and be willing to serve before their names may be placed on the ballot.
- B. Elections – Voting shall be by electronic ballot and a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. Elections shall be biennially through the NCFR office. Each section member shall have one vote. Votes for write-in candidates are allowed.

### **Section 4: Terms of Office**

The terms of office of the chair, chair-elect, secretary/treasurer, students and new professionals representative(s), and past chair shall each be two years. The chair-elect will, after serving two years in that position, assume the position of chair for the subsequent two years. After completing the office of chair, that person will move to the office of past chair for the subsequent two years. Officers shall assume office at the close of the annual meeting. No person shall serve two consecutive terms in the same office.

### **Section 5: Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy in the chair due to absence, incapacity, death, resignation, or removal from office, the chair-elect shall assume the duties of the chair. In the event of a vacancy in any other office, the section executive committee shall appoint a member to fill the office for the unexpired term.

### **Section 6: Removal from Office**

Any officer who fails to perform their duties adequately or who otherwise is unable to serve may be relieved of their duties by a majority vote of the section executive committee. In the event of a vacancy in the chair position due to removal from office, the chair-elect shall assume the duties of the chair. In the event of a vacancy in any other office, the section executive committee shall appoint a member to fill the office for the unexpired term.

## **ARTICLE V: SECTION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & MEETINGS**

The section executive committee shall be composed of the officers of the section, which are chair, chair-elect, secretary/treasurer, students and new professionals representative(s), and past chair. The section executive committee shall have the responsibility for implementing policies and programs established by the membership of the section. The section executive committee has power to act for the section membership between annual meetings. The annual meeting shall be held in conjunction with the NCFR Annual Conference.

## **ARTICLE VI: SECTION COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1: Nominating Committee**

The nominating committee shall be made up of the past chair, the students and new professionals representative, and one member of the section. This committee shall prepare the slate of nominees to be voted on by the section members biennially through the NCFR headquarters.

### **Section 2: Program Committee (possible section committee)**

The program committee shall include the chair or chair-elect or an appointed committee chair from among the section members, and other appointed section members. This committee will be responsible for the planning and

implementation of the annual meeting program, with input from section members. The section chair or chair-elect and other appointed section members shall represent the section on the NCFR program planning committee, and one section representative shall attend the spring conference planning committee meeting and meetings during the NCFR annual conference, as designated by NCFR.

### **Section 3: Awards Committee (possible section committee)**

The awards committee shall be chaired by the chair-elect and shall include at least 3-4 additional section members (at least one of whom shall be a past recipient of a section award). The chair-elect is responsible for the development and submission of the call for award nominations. Presentation of these awards should follow the procedures outlined in the NCFR Awards Manual.

### **Section 4: Ad Hoc Committees**

There shall be such ad hoc committees as shall be deemed advisable by the section executive committee. These special committees shall be appointed by the chair in consultation with the section executive committee. A student and new professional representative shall be appointed to serve on each section committee.

## **ARTICLE VII: SECTION FUNCTIONS**

In order to promote the accomplishment of NCFR's purposes, functions of sections shall be:

- A. To elect section officers on the national ballot.
- B. To plan and conduct programs at the annual conference.
- C. To submit proposals for special projects to the NCFR Board.
- D. To establish committees for special activities.
- E. To communicate with section constituents.
- F. To supply names of individuals competent to represent the section in legislation, public relations, research, and other areas when contacted by NCFR Board members or NCFR staff.
- G. To provide representation for any priority issues of concern to the section.
- H. To support the NCFR focus groups when and as appropriate.

## **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

Provisions of these bylaws not governed by the bylaws of NCFR may be amended by a majority vote of section members with the exception of Article II, Section 4, where a section's name and purpose are listed, which can be amended by a majority of the votes cast by the section members of the section affected by the change

## **ARTICLE IX: INCLUSION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Programmatic activities and operational activities of NCFR will be conducted in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of (for example) ability and disability; age; bilingualism and multiculturalism/English language learners; body size and condition; customs and traditions; educational, disciplinary, or career status; ethnicity, race, national origin, or cultural identity; gender, gender identity, and gender expression; geographical background and location; indigenous or immigration status or identity; marital status, relational status (including singlehood, and family structure or identity; objective and subjective worldviews and standpoints; political ideologies and affiliations; religion./no religion, spirituality and affiliations, and faith; sexual orientation, identities, and expressions; socioeconomic status, residential status, social class, employment, and national service.

[Note: the aspects of diversity are listed alphabetically, but not in any order of priority.]

Note: Please check the NCFR Bylaws and the NCFR Sections Governance Handbook for further information related to general governance of the NCFR Sections.