# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

**Leo Mores Student Chapter**

**of the Society of Professional Journalists**

**at Iowa State University**

**Ames, Iowa 50011**

## Article I: Name

This local chapter shall be known as the Leo Mores Student Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists at Iowa State University. The Iowa State University Chapter is an autonomous affiliation of the Society of Professional Journalists, headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana.

## Article II: Purpose

The chapter shall foster the growth of journalism at Iowa State University by providing the community with a social and professional point of contact for journalistic interests. The chapter shall encourage collaborative development among its members and shall engage in education on the latest developments in the various branches of journalism and communication.

## Article III: Statement of Compliance

The Leo Mores Student Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists abides by and supports established Iowa State University policies and state and federal laws, and it follows local ordinances and regulations. The chapter agrees to annually complete the President’s Training, Treasurer’s Training and Adviser Training (if required).  

## Article IV: Non-discrimination Statement

Iowa State University and the Leo Mores Student Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists do not discriminate on the basis of genetic information, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, race, ethnicity, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or status as a U.S. veteran.  

## Article V: Membership

Membership is open to any registered student in good standing with an interest in journalism and its related fields at Iowa State University who agrees to abide by the requirements of this constitution, as well as those of Iowa State University and the Society of Professional Journalists.

## Article VI: Risk Management

The vice president of the chapter serves as the risk-management officer. The role of the risk-management officer is to (a) help minimize potential risks for club activities, (b) recommend risk-management policies or procedures to the chapter, (c) submit documentation to ISU’s Risk Management Office and (d) ensure that Iowa State University policies are followed at all of the organizations events, (e) ensure that proper waivers and background checks are on file with Risk Management for events (if applicable).

## Article VII: Officers

1. The following are elected as officers of the chapter by the procedures outlined in Article 8 and therefore become members of the Executive Committee:
   1. The president presides as the chair at all local chapter meetings and is responsible for the ideological and financial well-being of the chapter. The president has the authority to appoint committees, to delegate responsibility as appropriate, to act upon local chapter interests as necessary and to oversee the goals and aspirations of the active membership. The president plans all meetings, along with the Executive Committee, and communicates with the faculty adviser in regards to important issues.
   2. The vice president presides as the chair in the absence of the president. The vice president maintains close communication with the president and assists the other officers in the performance of their duties. The vice president also attends all relevant university-wide and LAS meetings.
   3. The treasurer maintains accurate financial records concerning local chapter activities and has a thorough understanding of all financial transactions and forms. The treasurer shall make a report of the financial status of the chapter at each meeting. In the absence of both the president and vice president, the treasurer serves as the chair at the local chapter meeting.
   4. The secretary keeps minutes of chapter meetings and distributes them to the active membership through the president. The secretary shall submit reports of chapter activities to the national organization through the president. The secretary is responsible for notifying the Society of Professional Journalists headquarters of chapter election results. In the absence of the president, vice president and treasurer, the secretary serves as the chair of the local chapter meeting.
2. The following are elected as additional officers of the chapter by the procedures outlined in Article 8:
   1. The social chair keeps the active membership informed about chapter social activities and is responsible for signing up the chapter in university functions.
   2. The historian maintains a scrapbook of pictures and various other items to serve as a history of the chapter’s events.
   3. The webmaster maintains the chapter’s website and updates information on the website in a timely manner.
   4. The public relations officer promotes the organization’s events.
   5. The graduate liaison works to promote the organization among graduate students in the Greenlee School and the university.
3. All officers are to be present at meetings unless excused by a majority of the members of the Executive Committee.
4. The active membership has the right to impeach any officer if the officer’s actions or activities warrant dismissal.
5. To be an officer: (a) A student must have a minimum cumulative grade-point average (GPA) as stated below and meet that minimum GPA in the semester immediately before the election/appointment, during the semester of election/appointment and during all semesters while in office. For undergraduate, graduate and professional students, the minimum GPA is 2.00. For this provision to be met, at least six credit hours must have been taken for the semester under consideration.   
   (b) A student must be in good standing with the university and enrolled: at least half time (six or more credit hours), if an undergraduate student (unless fewer credits are required to graduate in the spring and fall semesters) during the term of office; and at least half time (four or more credits), if a graduate level student (unless fewer credits are required in the final stages of their degree as defined by the Continuous Registration Requirement) during their term of office. (c) A student is ineligible to hold an office should the student fail to maintain the requirements as prescribed in (a) and (b).

## Article VIII: Committees

1. The Executive Committee consists of seven members: the president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, faculty adviser, public relations officer and immediate past president. If there is no immediate past president, the most recent past president of the Iowa State University Chapter will serve on the Executive Committee. If there are no past presidents of the Iowa State University Chapter, this seat will be filled by special election. The winner of this election shall hold the title of Officer Without Portfolio.
2. Additional committees shall be organized at the discretion of the president and may become amended to this section of the constitution.
3. Committee members shall consist of any active members in the Iowa State University Chapter.

## Article IX: Dues

1. National dues are set by the Society of Professional Journalists, Indianapolis, Indiana.
2. The amount for local dues will be set by the student officers of the chapter. Dues are payable at the first meeting of the chapter year. Payment of dues entitles the member to active member status and voting privileges.
3. Local dues are set at $5.
4. Local dues shall not exceed $5, unless an increase is confirmed by a majority of the student board members.
5. If local chapter dues are not paid by the end of the second meeting of the chapter year, the individual’s membership will be revoked, and the individual will no longer be able to participate in chapter activities until the dues are paid.
6. Use of all dues shall be for activities of the Iowa State University chapter and for the betterment of the chapter.
7. Payment of national dues is a requirement for membership in the ISU Chapter. They, too, must be paid by the second meeting each year. Students are directed to http://spj.org/join.asp to pay their national dues. The SPJ sets the cost of the national dues, not the local chapter.

***Article X: Finances***

1. The Leo Mores Student Chapter shall maintain a healthy budget, meaning that expenditures cannot exceed the amount of money the Leo Mores Student Chapter has in its account.
2. All monies belonging to this organization shall be deposited and disbursed through a bank account established for this organization at the Campus Organizations Accounting Office and/or approved institution/office (must receive authorization via Campus Organizations Accounting Office). All funds must be deposited within 48 hours after collection. The adviser to this organization must approve and sign each expenditure before payment.

## Article XI: Meetings

1. The chapter shall have a minimum of six meetings per chapter year. The chapter year shall run from the beginning of the fall semester through the end of the spring semester.
2. The Executive Committee will determine time and location of the meetings with input from the active membership.
3. All meeting minutes shall be sent by e-mail to all active members with email addresses on file and posted on the chapter’s website no later than 72 hours after the meeting. This message shall also include the time, place and purpose of the next meeting.

## Article XII: Voting procedures and elections

1. A quorum is defined as more than one-half of the active membership and must include one elected officer.
2. A simple majority of the quorum is required for the election of officers and for matters other than constitutional reform and impeachment of chapter officers. A two-thirds majority of the active membership is required for amendment of the constitution and for impeachment of the chapter officers. Voting may take place by either of two methods:
   1. If a quorum is present at a meeting, then voting may take place at that time.
   2. If a quorum is not present at a meeting, then all matters (except officer election) that require voting will be subject to electronic voting. Electronic voting will take place one week after the minutes for the previous meeting have been made available. After the one-week waiting period, the president (or president’s designee) will post the question to all active members via electronic mail. Voting will take place within a one- week window beginning with the day the question is posted. Votes will be made via electronic mail directly to the president (or president’s designee). Results of the vote will be announced at the next meeting, as well as by electronic mail to all active members with addresses on file.
   3. If electronic mail vote is authorized, then the president or a designee of the president shall retain copies of all electronic mail ballots for a period of one year.
   4. If a quorum is not met via electronic voting, then the matter shall be tabled until the next meeting. No chapter business can occur without a quorum.
3. Nominations of active members qualified to hold officer positions will be accepted from the active membership during the first meeting after spring break or sent to the president (or a president’s designee) within one week after the minutes of that meeting have been posted. A list of nominees will be sent by the president to all active members within 48 hours after the deadline for nominations has passed.
4. Election of officers will take place at the next meeting after the nomination deadline during which a quorum of the membership is present.
5. If an officer position becomes vacant, then the remaining Executive Committee members shall recommend an active member to fill the vacancy. A majority of the Executive Committee is required to fill a vacancy in this fashion. If no candidate receives a majority, then the president shall make the selection to fill the vacancy. In either case, the member selected to fill the vacancy must be ratified by a simple majority of the quorum present at the next chapter meeting. Should the selection to the vacancy not be ratified, an election to fill the vacancy must be held immediately according to Article XII, Sections 3 and 4.

## Article XIII: Approving Expenditures

1. Expenditures of the Iowa State University Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists of less than fifty dollars ($50) may be authorized by a majority of the Executive Committee.
2. Expenditures of the Iowa State University Chapter of fifty dollars ($50) or more shall require the approval of a simple majority of a quorum present.

***Article XIV: Adviser***

1. The adviser is an Iowa State University faculty member who advises the student members of the Leo Mores Student Chapter.
2. Duties: (1) The adviser maintains communication and meets with officer(s) regularly; (2) supports awareness and approval of financial expenditures; (3) ensures that the organization is operating in conformity with the standards set forth by Iowa State University and Student Activities Center; (4) encourages student participation in SPJ regional and national activities, including the Mark of Excellence Awards; (5) provides leadership by promoting the highest expectations for ethical and legal considerations in the journalism profession; (6) promotes student ambassadorship for the First Amendment, freedom of expression, and democracy through voluntary activities including participation in Iowa State University’s annual First Amendment Day; and (7) encourages students to take part in community service.
3. Appointment: The Leo Mores Student Chapter selects its own adviser of record, who is subsequently appointed by the director of the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication. The president of the chapter is responsible for conveying the request to the director of the Greenlee School. The term of appointment is determined by the director of the Greenlee School. The Iowa State Daily student media adviser may serve as the day-to-day adviser of the chapter.

## Article XV: Nonprofit Operation

The Leo Mores Student Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists is organized and operated exclusively as a nonprofit entity, and no portion of its earnings shall be used to the benefit of any individual who is an active member.

## Article XVI: Dissolution

Upon dissolution or disbandment of the Leo Mores Student Chapter, all funds and properties in excess of liabilities and expenses of dissolution will be distributed as determined by a majority of the active members.

## Article XVII: Ratification

This constitution became effective upon ratification by two-thirds of the people present at the chapter meeting on March 6, 2017.