



American Society of Criminology

2026 ELECTION

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY

Over many months, the ASC Executive Board has been thoroughly and thoughtfully reviewing the society's policies and governing documents. We have identified a number of items in the Constitution that should be updated for a variety of reasons including legal compliance, consistency, clarity, and alignment with best practices in nonprofit governance. It is the responsibility of the membership to vote on Constitutional amendments, and so we present you with the Executive Board's proposal for consideration. The following items will be included on the 2026 ASC election ballot.

You will see below that we have divided the items into five votes, and a rationale is provided for each of the proposed revisions. Following the narrative explanation is a marked-up copy of the current Constitution that reflects what the updated document will look like if the membership supports the recommendations. We look forward to broad participation in the election.

Vote 1

1. Add a Secretary position to the Board.

Rationale: ASC is subject to California Nonprofit Corporation Law, which requires that ASC have a Secretary who is an officer. Adding the Officer position is, therefore, not optional. While it is not required that the Secretary serve on the Executive Board, it is conventional for all Officers to be Directors. The role of the Secretary in ensuring minutes are taken and posted, voting is done properly, and so on is crucial in terms of the effective functioning of the Board.

Vote 2

- 1. Make the Treasurer an elected, rather than appointed, position, and make the Secretary an elected position.**

Rationale: Elections are more democratic than appointments, and this would eliminate differentiation across Board positions.

- 2. Give all Board members a vote, except the Executive Director.**

Rationale: This allows full participation of all elected Board members. It is conventional for the Executive Director to serve on the Board, but without vote. This will convert the existing Treasurer position to a voting position and allow the person in the new Secretary position to vote.

Vote 3

- 1. Revise and simplify the language describing the Board's purpose. Clarify that the President and Treasurer are governance and oversight roles, not management positions.**

Rationale: The Board's role is strategic oversight, but the current description focuses on administration and specific tasks. The revised language appropriately describes the responsibilities of a nonprofit Board and its leaders and is aligned with practice.

Vote 4

- 1. Specify that the President chairs the Executive Committee.**

Rationale: This is current practice, and it should be formalized.

- 2. Revise the description of the Executive Committee, as follows: Delete the specification that the committee only acts at the request of the President.**

Rationale: There may be requests of the Executive Committee that come from sources other than the President.

- 3. Change the name from Nominating Committee to Nominations Committee for consistency with other documents.**

Rationale: This committee is referred to as the Nominating Committee in the Constitution, but the Bylaws and policy documents refer to it as the Nominations Committee. These documents should be aligned.

- 4. Change the number of appointed members of the Nominations Committee from "not less than five" to six for consistency with other documents and easy rotations.**

Rationale: While the Constitution says that the committee will have "not less than five" members, the policy manual specifies that the committee will consist of six members who will serve three-year staggered terms, with two members rotating out each year. The six-person model is consistent with current practice for the Nominations Committee as well as with the models for other committees.

5. Include the executive director as an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Executive Committee, the Nominations Committee, and the Publications Committee.

Rationale: It is conventional for the executive director to serve as a non-voting member of all committees to ensure the committees have access to relevant organizational information and resources. Further, this allows the executive director to coordinate across Society activities.

6. Consistent with current practice and stated policy, change the person who appoints Nominations Committee and Publications Committee members from President to President-Elect.

Rationale: This is to align the Constitutional provision with current practice, which is that each year the incoming President appoints committee members to serve when the President-Elect becomes President.

7. Eliminate repetition.

Rationale: To avoid inconsistencies, each topic should be addressed just once. Right now, for example, it is stated that the Vice President chairs the Publications Committee under the section about the Vice President as well as in the section about the Publications Committee, and this repetition should be removed.

Vote 5

1. Clarify the petition thresholds for creating and dissolving divisions.

Rationale: There are currently two versions of the constitution in circulation, one with 5% and one with 3%. This vote is to confirm the 5% threshold.

CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY

PREAMBLE

The American Society of Criminology is an international organization whose members pursue scholarly, scientific and professional knowledge concerning the measurement, etiology, consequences, prevention, control, and treatment of crime and delinquency.

I. NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

The name of the Society is the American Society of Criminology.

II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- A. To bring together in one multi-disciplinary society, persons actively engaged in research, teaching, and/or practice in the field of criminology.
- B. To foster criminological scholarship, research, education, and training within academic institutions and within the divisions of the criminal justice system, including public and private agencies concerned with crime, justice, and corrections.
- C. To encourage scholarly, scientific and practical exchange and cooperation among those engaged in criminology.
- D. To serve as a forum for the dissemination of criminological knowledge.
- E. To conduct an Annual Meeting.

III. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

- A. The Executive Board ~~shall administer the affairs of the organization. It shall consist of the following:~~
 1. ~~The elected officers, who shall be voting members:~~
 - a. President
 - b. President-Elect
 - c. Immediate Past President
 - d. Vice President
 - e. Vice President-Elect
 - f. Nine (9) ~~elected~~ counselors
 2. ~~The appointed officers, who shall be ex-officio members:~~
 - a. Executive Director (non-voting)
 - b. Treasurer
 - c. Secretary
- B. Open Meetings: Members of the Society may attend the Executive Board Meetings without having voting rights. The Board may go into executive session by a vote of a majority of the Board.
- C. The Executive Board shall: ~~1. Form the policies and practices of the Society. 2. Oversee the Annual Meeting of the Society and the program for this meeting. 3. Oversee the budget and audits of accounts of the Society. 4. Oversee the publications, personnel, and committees of the Society.~~ **exercise all corporate power and fiduciary responsibility over the affairs of ASC and is responsible for the**

overall strategic direction and policymaking of the Society, except as otherwise stated by statute, the Articles of Incorporation, this Constitution, or the Bylaws.

- D. A quorum of the Executive Board shall consist of half plus one (1) of the total number of members.
- E. The actions of the Executive Board shall be adopted by a majority vote of the Board, unless specified elsewhere in this document.
- F. The President, President-Elect, Vice President, and Immediate Past President shall constitute an Executive Committee to act on behalf of the Board, ~~at the request of the President,~~ in between meetings of the Board. The Executive Director shall serve as a **non-voting ex-officio** member of the Executive Committee. **The President chairs the Executive Committee.**

IV. OFFICERS

A. President:

- 1. The President ~~shall be the Chief Executive of the Society,~~ shall represent the Society at formal gatherings, shall preside over the meetings of the Executive Board, shall preside over the Annual Meeting, and shall appoint, subject to the approval of the Executive Board, such committees as deemed necessary.

B. Vice President:

- 1. The Vice President shall preside over the meeting of the Society in the absence of the President and shall be empowered to conduct all necessary business of the Society in the event that a vacancy exists in the office of the President, or upon the disability of the President.
- 2. ~~The Vice President shall chair the Publications Committee.~~

C. President-Elect and Vice President-Elect:

- 1. The President-Elect shall become the President at the end of the predecessor's Presidential term of office.
- 2. The President-Elect shall appoint the Program Chair for the Annual Meeting subject to ratification by the Executive Board.
- 3. The Vice President-Elect shall become the Vice-President concurrent with the President-Elect assuming the presidency.
- 4. In the event that the Vice President must assume the duties of the President, the Vice President-Elect will assume the remaining term of the Vice President and will also serve their own term.
- 5. If the Vice President-Elect must assume the duties of the President-Elect, the Vice President-Elect will become President when the President-Elect would have taken office unless at the time the President-Elect can serve.
- 6. If the Vice President-Elect vacates their office for reasons other than replacing the Vice President, the Board may act to fill that position.
- 7. If the Vice President vacates their office for reasons other than replacing the President, the Board may act to fill that position.

8. In the event an Executive Counselor cannot serve all or part of his or her term, the President shall appoint the next runner-up from the same election for the remainder of the term.
- D. Executive Counselors:
1. Executive Counselors have no specific responsibilities per se, other than those assigned to them by the Society leadership on an individual basis. The general responsibilities lie in attending and participating in the Board Meetings (nine in all spread out over the three-year term in office) and being involved in the governance of the Society during their term in office.
 2. ~~Executive Counselors serve as voting members of the Executive Board.~~
- E. ~~Treasurer:~~
1. ~~The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Executive Board for a term of three (3) years.~~
 2. ~~The Treasurer shall serve as the Chief Financial Officer for the Society.~~
- F. Executive Director:
1. The Executive Director shall coordinate the activities of Society committees, divisions, and representatives, implement Board policies, oversee the operations of the Society office and staff, oversee the disbursement, investment, and accounting of Society funds, oversee the preparation of the annual budget and all other financial documents, reports, and forms, authorize payments and, with the approval of the President, enter into contractual arrangements on behalf of the Society, and oversee the management and operation of the Annual Meeting.
- G. Qualification of Officers:
1. Any active member of the Society in good standing shall be eligible to hold office.
- H. Any elected officer of the Society may be removed during their term by a membership referendum initiated either by at least three-quarters (3/4) vote of the Executive Board (11 votes) or by a petition of at least ten (10) percent of the members. Fifty-one percent of the membership shall be required to vote affirmatively for removal to occur.
- I. Current members of the Executive Board shall be ineligible to receive any awards of the Society, including selection as a Fellow, during their term in office. However, if a current Board member is nominated for either the Michael J. Hindelang Outstanding Book Award or Joan Petersilia Outstanding Article Award, their nomination shall be considered during the first year following their service on the Board.

V. ELECTIONS

- A. The President-Elect with the approval of the Executive Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee of ~~six not less than five (65)~~ **six (65) voting** members to oversee development of a slate comprised of at least two (2) nominees for each office **except the Executive Director**, such appointments reflecting the diversity of the Society membership. The President will designate one (1) member as Chair. **The Executive Director serves as a non-voting member of the committee.**

- B. Newly elected persons shall take office at the close of the Annual Meeting following their election.

VI. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Active members shall be:
 - 1. Those engaged in the discipline of criminology, as defined in the Preamble.
 - 2. Members in good standing. In order to participate in the nominations and/or voting processes of the Society, a member of the Society must be an Active, Retired, or Life member in good standing. To maintain membership in good standing, a Society member must pay annual dues for the current calendar year.
- B. Student members shall be: Those studying in appropriate disciplines in colleges and universities.
- C. Honorary members shall be: Those persons who make exceptional contributions to criminology and are so approved by the Executive Board.
- D. Retired members shall be: Those retired persons who have been Active members for not less than ten (10) years.
- E. Life memberships shall be: Available to those who have been Active members for at least five (5) years.

VII. DIVISIONS:

- A. Divisions may be organized to represent major professional interests that lie within the scope of the Society as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution.
- B. A Division may be established whenever **five (5) percent** or more of the members in good standing of the Society petition the Executive Board and receive Board approval.
- C. A Division shall be dissolved by the Executive Board when (a) the number of members with the Division falls below **five (5) percent** of the members of the Society in good standing averaged over a two (2) year period, or (b) the Division votes to recommend dissolution.
- D. A Division shall have a chair and such officers as it may desire.
- E. A Division shall establish and maintain its own rules of procedure within the framework of the Society's Constitution and By-Laws and shall establish and set dues. Each Division shall file with the Executive Board a copy of its current Constitution, By-Laws, policies and operating procedures, as well as a list of its current officers and committees.
- F. A Division shall not enter into contracts or make public statements on behalf of the Society.

VIII. SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

The Society may publish a refereed journal entitled Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Journal, and a refereed journal entitled Criminology & Public Policy. It may also publish a newsletter. These shall be distributed to all members in good standing.

- A. Publications Committee:

1. Composition. The Publications Committee shall consist of the Vice President as Chair, the Vice President-Elect, and four (4) members appointed by the President-Elect, with the Editors and Editors-Elect, in years when such exist, of the journals as ~~ex-officio~~ (non-voting) members. **The Executive Director serves as a non-voting member of the committee.**
2. Powers. The Publications Committee shall recommend to the Executive Board of the Society on such matters as editors, publishers, and publishing arrangements. It shall generally oversee the operation of the Society's publishing activities.

IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

- A. Due notice of proposed amendments to the Constitution having been given, any section of this Constitution may be amended by at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members who cast a ballot.
- B. Procedure for Amending the Constitution
 1. Proposed amendments must be presented to the Executive Board which shall vote upon the amendment, and then present the amendment to the Executive Director
 2. When presented to the Executive Director, the proposed amendment must bear the signatures of a majority of the members of the Executive Board, or alternatively, the proposed amendment must bear the signatures of five (5) percent of the members of the Society.
 3. The Executive Director shall notify the membership of the pending vote and shall arrange for the ballot.
- C. Any By-Laws shall become effective when approved by at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board in each of two (2) consecutive Board meetings.
- D. At least every five years, the Board will conduct a review of the Constitution, ByLaws, and the Policies and Procedures Manual.