

*The Constitution  
of  
The University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Ballroom Dance Association  
December 22, 2002*

**ARTICLE I: NAME, SEAT AND STRUCTURE**

- A. Name:** The name of the organization is The University of Wisconsin-Madison Ballroom Dance Association (herein called the “Association” or “UWMBDA”).
- B. Seat:** The seat of UWMBDA shall be the address of the incumbent president unless otherwise directed by the Executive Council.
- C. Structure:** UWMBDA is an open membership organization managed by an Executive Council (herein called the "EC" or "Council") consisting of elected delegates, as specified under this constitution.

**ARTICLE II: PURPOSES AND GOALS**

The Association seeks to promote the appreciation and recognition of ballroom dancing as a positive and constructive form of recreation, to encourage students of the University of Wisconsin-Madison to learn and improve upon social dance skills and participate in UWMBDA activities, to support students involved in ballroom dance programs at the University and to provide a non-alcoholic social outlet for the students of the University.

In furtherance of its purposes and goals, UWMBDA’s activities shall, by way of example, include:

1. Organizing and fostering social ballroom events locally.
2. Organizing and fostering programs which assist in the expansion of amateur ballroom dancing and assist in the elevation of dancing skills among amateurs.
3. Organizing and fostering events at which the consumption of alcoholic beverages is not promoted.

### **ARTICLE III: BYLAWS**

A set of bylaws shall be kept to provide detailed information on general policies established by this constitution. At a minimum, the bylaws must address the positions and duties of all members of the Executive Council, a sexual harassment policy, and the process for adjudicating complaints of misconduct. The bylaws may be amended or repealed by one of the two following procedures.

#### **A. Vote during a General Election Meeting:**

1. The Association's voting members must be notified of the proposed changes in the bylaws a minimum of two weeks prior to the General Election Meeting (GEM).
2. Voting members shall cast votes regarding the proposed changes in person during the GEM. Whether voting on proposed changes in the bylaws will take place prior to or following the election of officers is at the discretion of the EC.
3. Proxy voting and advanced registration of votes by other means shall not be permitted.
4. If fifty-one percent (51%) of the voting members present at the GEM cast an assenting vote, the changes will pass and shall take effect the day following the GEM unless a different date has been specified by the EC before the voting occurs.

#### **B. Special vote:**

1. A two-week voting period shall be set by the EC. This period may not begin any earlier than two weeks after the voting membership is notified of the proposed changes in the bylaws.
2. The voting members shall be notified of the proposed changes and of the voting dates.
3. Voting members of the Association shall register their votes by signing a voting record.
4. If fifty-one percent (51%) or more of those members voting cast an assenting vote, the changes will pass and shall take effect the day following the close of voting unless a different date is specified by the EC prior to the beginning of the voting period.

Changes to the bylaws may be proposed to the Association's membership either by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the EC or by a petition submitted to the EC by ten percent (10%) of the general members. In the event of such a petition the changes must be presented, with or without recommendations by the EC, to the voting members no later than two weeks after the petition is received by the EC, and the voting period shall commence no later than 30 days after the petition is received by the EC.

### **ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP**

- A. Eligibility:** Membership in the Association shall at all times be open without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, gender, sexuality, disability or national origin.
- B. Membership dues:** Any eligible person will become a member of UWMBDA upon payment of dues for the current semester or year. The Executive Council shall have the right to confer honorary or special membership. If special/free memberships are to be granted to an EC, that decision must be made by the previous EC before elections are held.

- C. Membership privileges:** Any member who is a student of the University of Wisconsin-Madison shall have the right to vote in any general or special election. All members (student or otherwise) shall be entitled to any other membership privileges determined by the Executive Council.
- D. Conduct:** Members shall abide by the rules and standards of UWMBDA and shall conduct themselves in a constructive, courteous and orderly manner. Members also have an obligation to keep UWMBDA informed of their current address for purposes of correspondence and notification.
- E. Establishment of a Sexual Harassment Policy:** Due to the physical nature of ballroom dancing and the fundamental structure of UWMBDA as a social club, dealing directly and quickly with issues of sexual harassment must be considered vital to the survival of UWMBDA.
1. Each UWMBDA EC must formulate a policy concerning sexual harassment, which will include, at a minimum: guidelines on what constitutes sexual harassment, how the EC will receive and investigate complaints, and how the EC will deal with offenders. This policy will be written into the Association's bylaws.
  2. The EC will do everything in its power to ensure that every UWMBDA member receives a written copy of this policy and recommendations on how to prevent sexual harassment. It is strongly recommended that a version of this information be posted and/or made available at every UWMBDA dance.
- F. Misconduct:** Anyone can, at any time, submit a formal complaint to any member of the EC concerning any UWMBDA member(s), or occurrence(s) at any UWMBDA function. The procedure to be conducted in response to the formal complaint: will be detailed in the Association's bylaws.

## **ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

- A. Function:** The function of the EC shall be to manage the affairs of UWMBDA. In the furtherance of this goal, the EC shall:
1. Investigate, evaluate, and propose to the voting membership such changes in organizational structure, rules, etc. as shall be advisable
  2. Provide a forum to identify problems, issues, and potential solutions and shall assist in developing options and alternatives for actions of the Association members.
  3. Interpret and enforce the existing enabling documents, bylaws, and rules of UWMBDA.
  4. Create and appoint committees for purposes and durations as needed, and assign committee chairpersons.
  5. Set membership dues.
  6. Plan club events and set event and meeting dates.
  7. Decide all financial matters for the club.

- B. Members:** There shall no fewer than seven (7) delegates of the Executive Council. The three standing positions shall be the President, Vice-President and Treasurer. The remaining positions shall be those deemed necessary by the EC and shall be described in the bylaws. The EC may create and appoint, at its discretion, additional positions on the Council. Such newly created positions will become permanent only by a change in the bylaws approved by the general membership. Only persons who have been duly elected to a Council position may vote in matters before the Executive Council. All other Council members shall be considered non-voting members. At any given time, no more than forty-nine percent (49%) of the EC may be non-voting members. A position may be shared by more than one delegate only when all positions have been filled. In such cases, the position will be considered as having only one delegate in the numbers required for quorum and action, and only one delegate may cast votes. If there are two delegates sharing a position, they are to decide between themselves how they will manage the casting of votes. The Council's three (3) standing positions (President, Vice-President and Treasurer) may not be shared.
- C. Meetings:** The EC shall meet periodically as needed when a meeting is called by the President or any three (3) voting delegates of the EC. Meetings of the EC shall be chaired by the President or, in the President's absence, by the Vice-President. Every effort shall be made to notify all voting delegates in advance of this meeting.
- D. Quorum and Action:** A majority of the voting delegates (51% or more) of the EC shall constitute a quorum. However, any action of the EC shall require an assenting vote by a majority (51% or more) of the voting members of the EC, regardless of how many of these members are present at the vote.
- E. Reporting:** Any member of the Association shall have access to the minutes of any EC meeting.
- F. Selection and Term:** Any member of the Association is eligible for nomination to office. Non-students may be considered for candidacy to the EC only for positions where there is no student presenting him or her self as a candidate. A non-student may not serve as President of the Association. Members of the EC shall be elected at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters. The exact date of the elections will be determined by the EC. Each elected officer will serve for the following semester plus the preceding break. Specifically, officers elected in the Fall will take office the day after the Fall semester ends and will serve until the last day of the Spring semester. Officers elected in the Spring will take office the day after the Spring semester ends and will serve until the last day of the Fall semester. In the event a newly elected officer is not available to serve during the break, the outgoing officer in that position may remain in power until a later date to be determined by the newly elected officer. In no event shall the outgoing officer remain in office past the first day of classes of the following semester. If during the Spring elections it is determined that neither the newly elected officer nor the outgoing officer are able to serve for the summer, an officer will be appointed to serve in that position for the summer. The exact dates of service will be determined by the newly elected EC. If an office is not filled at an election, the remainder of the EC may appoint someone to that position who will serve in a non-voting capacity. New

EC members who have been duly elected will be expected to inactively observe all meetings and functions pertinent to their respective offices until they take office.

**G. Election Procedures:** Elections shall be held at a General Election Meeting (GEM) consisting of not less than twenty percent (20%) of all voting (i.e. student) members. During the GEM, nominations and seconds may be accepted from any general member eligible to vote in the GEM. A nominee must receive a majority of the votes of the attending voting members to be elected to office. If no nominee receives a majority, the two nominees receiving the most votes will participate in a run-off election. All members eligible to vote in the GEM must be notified (if reasonably possible) of the GEM at least one (1) week prior to the date on which the GEM is to take place.

**H. Proxies:** Proxies may not be used for any purpose, at any time, relating to the EC.

**I. Removal and Vacancies:** In the event that an EC member loses his/her general membership, forfeiture of the EC office shall be automatic upon affirmation by the EC of loss of membership.

In the event an office is vacated, the EC shall select a replacement who will serve for the remainder of the semester in a non-voting capacity. Until a replacement is selected, the Vice-President shall assume the Officer's responsibilities and act as Interim Officer.

Selection of a replacement officer shall proceed as follows:

1. When it becomes known by the Council that a vacancy has been or will be created, an announcement period shall commence and will last for a minimum of two weeks or through the next two dances, whichever is longer.
2. During the announcement period members of the organization will be notified through announcements at dances, on the Association's web site, in e-mails, and in any other way deemed appropriate by the EC, that a vacancy on the EC needs to be filled.
3. A meeting date will be chosen by the EC for the selection of the replacement officer. This date may be a regularly scheduled meeting of the EC, or it may be a special meeting. The date chosen may not be before the end of the announcement period.
4. Persons interested in filling the position will be asked to contact Council and to attend the meeting during which a replacement will be selected. Non-students will be eligible for the position only if no student is presenting him or her self as a candidate for the position.
5. At the meeting during which the replacement officer is to be selected, the EC will hear personal statements regarding the reasons for applying and suitability of each of the interested candidates.
6. Anyone applying for the position who is unable to attend the meeting during which the selection is being made will be asked to provide the EC with a written statement prior to that meeting.
7. After hearing or reading each candidate's statement, the EC will discuss the candidates and whom might best fill the position. A vote will then be held to determine whom is to fill the vacancy.
8. A candidate must receive fifty-one percent (51%) or more of the votes cast by the voting members of the EC in order to be installed as the replacement officer.

9. If there are three or more candidates and none receives fifty-one percent (51%) or more of the votes during the initial voting, a run-off between the two candidates receiving the most votes will take place.
10. If there are only two candidates and neither receives fifty-one percent (51%) or more of the votes during the initial voting period one additional discussion session and voting period will be permitted, or the issue may be tabled for the next council meeting.
11. If after a run-off vote, or after a second discussion and vote period of a failed vote between only two candidates, there is still no candidate receiving fifty-one percent (51%) or more of the vote, the issue shall be tabled for reconsideration at the next council meeting.
12. It is permissible to convene a special meeting for the resolution of vacancy appointments. However, meetings shall be held no more frequently than once every seven days.

**J. Resignations:** Any member of the EC may resign at any time. Resignations shall be submitted in writing to the EC and shall become effective without approval at the time specified therein; if no time is specified, then upon receipt.

**K. Special Elections:** If at any the composition of the EC changes such that 1) there are fewer than seven (7) members, or 2) more than forty-nine percent (49%) of the members are non-voting members, a Special Election must be held to restore the Council to the numbers and proportions required for the conduct of club business. Such Special Elections shall be conducted by the following procedure:

1. A two-week period for holding the election shall be set. The Special Election shall begin at the earliest possible date, but no sooner than one week following notification of the voting membership.
2. The voting membership shall be notified that a Special Election is to take place and what the dates of the voting period are.
3. A minimum of one candidate shall be found for each Council position vacant at the time the Special Election is held. Any vacant position(s) may be filled only by persons eligible to be voting members or the Executive Council.
4. Voting members of the Association shall register their votes in person by signing a voting record.
5. Any candidate(s) approved by fifty-one percent (51%) or more of those members of the Association who vote in the Special Election shall become (a) duly elected voting member(s) of the Executive Council.

**L. Conflicts of Interest:** Members of the EC may not serve any other dance-related organization in any leadership or advisory capacity regardless of that organization's affiliation or lack thereof with the University.

**M. Compensation:** Members of the EC shall not be compensated in any manner for any work done on behalf of the Association during their tenure on the Council and for a period of one (1) year following vacation of service on the Council. The ONLY exception to this is the possible granting of free membership to members of the EC, which may be done under the following terms:

1. The EC serving for any given semester may vote to grant free membership to those persons serving on the EC in the following semester.
2. The granting of free memberships to the following semester's EC must be decided prior to the date on which elections for that EC are held.

## **ARTICLE VI: UWMBDA COMMITTEES**

- A. Creation of Committees:** The Executive Council may create committees for purposes and durations as are needed. Examples include dance programming, public relations, social outings and instruction committees. The chairs of these committees shall be designated by the EC.
- B. Committee Functions:** It shall be the duty of each committee to competently perform the duties ascribed to each by their respective chairs.
- C. Limitations:** Committees may not:
1. Incur debt on behalf of UWMBDA without the prior consent of a majority of the voting delegates of the EC.
  2. Circumvent or alter the rule, policies, or procedures as established by this constitution, the bylaws or the EC.
  3. Create rules, procedures, or policies for UWMBDA unless so directed by the EC.
  4. Exceed their prescribed duties or functions without the consent of a majority of the voting delegates of the EC.

## **ARTICLE VII: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

- A. Fiscal Year:** The financial year of UWMBDA shall be September 1 through August 31.
- B. Dues:** Members shall receive full rights and benefits of membership upon receipt of their dues.
- C. Books and Records:** The books and records of UWMBDA shall be open to inspection by any general member and by other such persons as may be approved by the EC. Copies of UWMBDA records, constitution and bylaws shall be available for viewing on the Association's web site, and for purchase by any interested member for a cost which covers the UWMBDA expenses for printing and mailing.
- D. Financial Authority:** Any member of the EC whose position is described in the bylaws shall have the authority to approve non-budgeted club related expenditures of under fifty dollars (\$50) no more than once between meetings of the EC. Should this privilege be abused the EC has the right to revoke it. Expenditures of fifty dollars (\$50) or more require EC approval.

## **ARTICLE VIII: INDEMNIFICATION**

The Executive Council may opt to obtain insurance or otherwise indemnify the voting members of the EC against liabilities, suits, or other actions taken against them for situations arising which are directly related to their service to UWMBDA. There shall be, however, no indemnification of any person found guilty of committing unlawful acts and no indemnification which would be unlawful or contrary to public policy.

## **ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended or repealed when BOTH of the following criteria are met: 1) Fifty-one percent (51%) of the voting membership give an assenting vote, and 2) The proposed changes receive an assenting vote by two-thirds (2/3) of the people who actually vote.

Voting occurs according to the following procedure:

1. Changes are proposed to the membership.
2. A start date for voting is determined. This start date can be no earlier than 4 weeks after the first day of classes for the semester.
3. Only people who are voting members of UWMBDA before this start date are eligible to vote on the changes.
4. Members may vote ONLY by signing a voting record.

Amendments may be proposed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members of the EC, or by a petition by ten percent (10%) of the general members. In the event of such a petition, the amendments shall be presented, with or without recommendations, by the EC to the general membership and the voting period must commence no later than thirty (30) days after the petition is received by the EC.

## **ARTICLE X: DISSOLUTION**

In the event that the Association should be dissolved, the association shall apply any assets it may have toward the full payment of all debts. Any assets remaining after all debts are paid in full shall be donated to the University's ballroom dance programs.