

The Bylaws and Constitution of the *SOCIEDAD HONORARIA HISPÁNICA*

(revised 7/31/2004)

Article I Name and Classification

Section 1. The name of this organization is the Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica, also known as the Spanish National Honor Society, or the Portuguese National Honor Society, and shall be referred to in this document as “the Society.”

Section 2. The purpose of the Society is to recognize high achievement in Spanish and Portuguese by students of secondary schools and to promote continuity of interest in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian studies.

Section 3. The Society is classified as a national and international academic honor society in the study of high school Spanish and Portuguese and is sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, Inc. (AATSP)

Section 4. Each unit of the Society located in a secondary school is designated as a Chapter. The name of the Chapter, preferably that of an important Hispanic literary or historical figure, shall be chosen by the Chapter Sponsor. Chapter names may not be duplicated within a state and must be approved by the National Director. The person in charge of the Chapter is the Chapter Sponsor. In special cases two or more schools in one school district may form a Chapter. In such cases a teacher from each school serves as Co-Sponsor.

Article II

Qualification of Secondary Schools and Chapter Sponsors

Section 1. All accredited public and non-public secondary schools are eligible for membership in the Society. Application for membership from a secondary school seeking a Chapter is made on an official form provided by the National Director.

Section 2. The initial charter fee for school membership is established by the National Council. No monthly or annual dues or assessments are charged the schools affiliated with the Society.

Section 3. In order to remain an Active Chapter of the Society, the Chapter Sponsor must remit student membership fees to the National Director each school year, together with the names of the respective students to be initiated.

Section 4. If a Chapter fails to initiate at least one member each school year, the Chapter is placed on inactive status. In order to reinstate the Chapter to active status a reactivation fee must be paid. If the Chapter remains on inactive status for a period of five years or more, withdrawal of the charter may result.

Section 5. A sponsor who does not have an Active Chapter may affiliate with an active chapter in the area in order to promote Chapter activities.

Section 6. Sponsors and Co-Sponsors of Chapters must be members in good standing of the AATSP.

Article III Qualifications for Chapter Membership

Section 1. A regularly enrolled student of a secondary school (grades 9-12) who has maintained an honor average in the study of Spanish or Portuguese for at least three semesters is eligible for membership in the Society. Sponsors should also include character, leadership, seriousness of purpose, cooperation, honesty, service and commitment to others in the criteria for selection into the Society. The student must be enrolled in the study of the language at the time of initiation. If the school is on Block Scheduling, the student must have a full year of Spanish or Portuguese during the year of induction. No initiation is to take place earlier than the tenth grade.

However, in exceptional cases, such as a ninth grade student who is enrolled in the highest level course of Spanish or Portuguese offered by the student's school, a ninth grader may be initiated during the second semester of the ninth grade, at the sole discretion of the National Director of the Society, if the student has maintained an honor average in the study of Spanish or Portuguese from the time of enrollment until the day of initiation. In such cases, the Chapter Sponsor shall submit to the National Director an official transcript of the student's course, showing the first semester grade, together with a letter of recommendation by the student's teacher stating the reason for the requested ninth grade initiation.

Section 2. The Society does not conduct business with students or parents. All local decisions concerning membership are to be handled by the Chapter Sponsor in accordance with school policies, which include decisions made by the Board of Education, the Principal or the Department Chair.

Section 3. The student membership fee payable before initiation is established by the National Council. Each student member will receive a Certificate of Membership.

Section 4. If a member does not continue the study of Spanish or Portuguese, the student may remain in the Society as an Associate Member until graduation at the discretion of the Chapter Sponsor.

Section 5. A member may be removed from the Chapter at the discretion of the Chapter Sponsor for failure to maintain an honor average, misconduct or insubordination or other serious infraction.

Section 6. Associate Members may enjoy limited privileges and benefits in the Society. They may not vote, hold office, or be eligible to receive scholarship or travel awards of the Society. Only members currently enrolled in Spanish or Portuguese may participate in the awards program of the Society. If the school is on Block Scheduling, the member applying for an award must have the equivalent of a full year of Spanish or Portuguese during the year of the application.

Section 7. Honorary Membership may be granted to a person in the school or community who has demonstrated an interest in the promotion and advancement of the purposes of the Society. The fee for honorary membership is established by the National Council and shall be in an amount equal to the student membership fee. Each Honorary Member shall receive a Certificate of Membership.

Article IV National Organization

Section 1. The Society consists of the National Council and the School Chapters.

Section 2. The National Council consists of a President, a Vice President, a National Director or Directors, four Regional Directors, the Editor of *ÁAlbricias!*, the National Director of SHA, a Web/Technology Director, and the Executive Director of the AATSP.

Section 3. In order to be eligible to serve as an officer, a person must have served for at least one year as a Chapter Sponsor and be the Sponsor of an active chapter of the Society at the time of his or her election. If at any time an officer no longer serves as Chapter Sponsor, except for the National Director who is not required to be a Chapter Sponsor, he or she may complete the respective term of office upon approval of the National Council. Vacancies, except in the office of President (See Article VII, Section 3), are filled by the National Council.

Section 4. All elected officers are chosen by majority vote.

Section 5. Members of the National Council shall not receive any compensation for their services, but by resolution of the National Council they receive a fixed sum for the expenses for attendance at the annual or special meetings of the National Council. Compensation may be granted by resolution of the National Council if a Council member serves the Society in an official capacity. Compensation for the services of the National Director and the Editor of *ÁAlbricias!* shall be granted by such resolution.

Article V Legislative National Convention

Section 1. The legislative body of the Society is the National Council, which meets each year to approve policies for the progress and welfare of the Society. The meeting is held in conjunction with that of the AATSP.

Section 2. The National Council has the power to call a special National Convention.

Section 3. Each member of the National Council has the right to speak and vote at the National Convention. Each member of the National Council shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members of the Council. The rights of the ex officio members of the Council shall be identical to those of the elected members. The president may vote in all matters and business of the Council, and may vote to create or break a tie. Voting rights of a Council Member cannot be delegated nor exercised by proxy.

Section 4. Chapter Sponsors are invited to attend the meeting of the National Council, but shall not be present in executive sessions and may not speak unless placed on the Agenda by the National Director before the meeting, and may not vote.

Article VI Powers and Duties of the National Council

Section 1. The National Council is the governing body of the Society and shall have supervision, control and direction of the property, activities, business and affairs of the Society, its committees and publications; it shall determine its policies and changes therein. The policies and actions of the National Council shall be subject to the direction and approval of the Meeting of Members. Matters of general policy shall be approved by the Executive Council of the AATSP.

Article VII Powers and Duties of the Officers

Section 1. The President shall be the chief executive officer and the official representative of the Society, shall preside at all meetings of the National Council and at all business meetings of the Society, and shall perform such duties as pertain to the office of President. The President appoints the Chairperson and new members of the Nominating committee, nominates and appoints active Chapter Sponsors for the position of State Directors, solicits a yearly report from each State Director to be filed between April 15 and May 1, and makes other necessary appointments with the approval of the National Council. The President judges the State Director of the Year entries. The President is elected for a term of three years and will be retained as a member of the National Council for an additional year to serve in the capacity of Consultant to the incoming President. The term of office begins January 1. The President is not subject to reelection for a consecutive term of office.

Section 2. The Vice President performs the duties of the President if the latter is unable to serve. The Vice President is to remain cognizant of all business and policies of the Society and will serve as chairperson of one of the awards offered by the Society, as designated by the President and approved by the National Council. The Vice President is elected for a term of three years and will be considered as one of the candidates for the presidency on the completion of his or her term of office. The term of office begins January 1. The Vice President is not subject to reelection for a consecutive term of office.

Section 3. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President during his or her term of office, then the Vice President shall succeed to the office of President for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office, without any further action therefore and with all rights and responsibilities of the office. The term of office shall be for the remaining period of the former President's term of office, plus the period of time necessary to complete one full three (3) year term as President and until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and qualified, or until his or her earlier displacement from office by resignation, removal, or otherwise.

Article VII

Powers and Duties of the Officers – *cont.* –

Section 4. The National Director, who also acts as the Secretary of the National Council, has charge of the business management and correspondence of the Society, is custodian of all funds, collects charter and membership fees and other moneys due the Society, pays all moneys owed by the Society, and keeps an account of all receipts and disbursements for presentation to the National Council and the Executive Council of the AATSP on June 30 and at the end of each fiscal year (December 31). No major expenditures are made without the previous consent of the National Council. At the National Convention the National Director shall report on the financial condition and state of affairs of the Society to the Meeting of Members and at other times when called upon by the President. The National Director, elected by the National Council for a term of three years, is subject to reelection by the National Council for two additional three-year consecutive terms. The term of office begins January 1.

Section 5. The Editor of *ÁAlbricias!* is responsible for editing and publishing all materials that appear in the publication, and is responsible for preparing the Application Packet for awards and contests which is sent to all Sponsors of Active Chapters. The Editor of *ÁAlbricias!*, elected by the National Council for a term of three years, is subject to reelection by the National Council for two additional three-year consecutive terms. The term of office begins January 1.

Section 6. The Regional Directors with the Vice President will serve as Chairpersons and administer the special awards and contests of the Society. They will contact the State Directors of their area and sponsors of new chapters in their region to introduce themselves and open lines of communication. The Regional Directors are elected for a term of three years. The term of office begins January 1. The Regional Directors are not subject to reelection for a consecutive term of office.

Article VIII

State Directors

Section 1. The President appoints a State Director in each state or territory of the United States and in each country in which Chapters of the Society are located.

Section 2. The State Director is to represent the National Council in his or her territory and will cooperate with the National Council in carrying out the purposes of the Society.

Section 3. The State Director will maintain communication with existing Chapters in the state or territory and promote new chapter growth and reactivation of old chapters.

Section 4. Term of office shall be for three years and is subject to reappointment for two additional three-year consecutive terms.

Article IX Nominating Committee

Section 1. The President, in consultation with the National Director, appoints a Nominating Committee consisting of three persons: one or two outgoing members of the National Council, one Chapter Sponsor or State Director of the Year, to serve for one year, none of whom shall be the incumbent of any position to be filled. One of these persons is designated by the President as Chairperson.

Section 2. The Committee nominates candidates for President, Vice President and Regional Directors. The slate of nominees shall be delivered to the National Director and the President by April 1. Upon approval of the slate of nominees by the National Council, the National Director shall prepare and distribute a ballot with blank spaces for writing in the names of other candidates. The ballot may be printed in *ÁAlbricias!* and, to be counted, must be signed and returned to reach the National Director by December 1.

Article X Insignia

Section 1. The insignia of the Society is the official one of the AATSP, as represented on the medals which may be awarded for excellence in Spanish and Portuguese. If pins are desired, they are to be ordered by the Chapter Sponsor directly from the official AATSP jeweler as listed in *Hispania*.

Section 2. The seal of the AATSP is the official seal of the Society, and it may be used in conjunction with any other seal upon approval of the National Council.

Section 3. The motto of the Society is: Todos a una.

Section 4. The colors of the Society are red and gold.

Section 5. The flower of the Society is the carnation.

Section 6. Society emblem patches may be obtained from the National Director for an amount approved by the National Council.

Article XI Publications

Section 1. The official publication of the Society is *ÁAlbricias!* It shall be sent to all sponsors of Active Chapters and to any former President upon request addressed to the National Director.

Article XII Amendments

Section 1. Any proposed amendment to this Constitution must be signed by three officers or Chapter Sponsors of the Society and sent to the National Director by January 15. The National Director arranges for publication in *ÁAlbricias!* of such proposed amendment.

Section 2. Any amendment so published may be adopted by two-thirds (2/3) of the officers and Chapter Sponsors present and voting at the Meeting of Members at the General Session of the Society at any National Convention.

Article XIII Chapter Constitution

Section 1. Each Chapter of the Society must adopt a constitution for its individual government, but no part of it shall be in opposition to the stated aims and requirements as expressed in this Constitution.

Section 2. Each Chapter of the Society must keep a copy of its Constitution and Bylaws regarding name of the Chapter, qualifications for membership, and reasons for removal from the Chapter. The document should include nomination process and duties of officers, committee and chapter activities. Bylaws should include information necessary for running the Chapter within the parameters of the school setting.

Article XIV Chapter Regulations

Section 1. Collection of dues for local purposes must have the approval of the Chapter Sponsor and local school authorities.

Section 2. No Chapter may impose any obligations of secrecy upon its members.

Section 3. With the approval of the Chapter Sponsor and of school authorities, a Chapter may adopt projects for raising funds or for advancing the cause of the study of Spanish and Portuguese, but always in accordance with the purposes of the Society.

Section 4. No student shall be initiated before the student's name and initiation fee are submitted to the National Director.

Section 5. Initiation ceremonies shall follow the official ritual unless permission is given by the National Director for a substitute form.

Section 6. The National Director is empowered to revoke the charter of any Chapter that has been inactive for five years or more. The names of those Chapters may then be used by any new Chapters in the same state.

Article XIV Chapter Regulations – *cont.* –

Section 7. The Secretary of the Chapter and the Chapter Sponsor shall keep complete records of all meetings, projects and services rendered by the Chapter.

Section 8. Each Chapter shall promote the purposes of the Society not only in Spanish and Portuguese classes in the school, but also in the community whenever possible.

Section 9. The Chapter Sponsor is to sign the list of names of new members (typed or printed) which is sent to the National Director with the student membership fees.

Section 10. A Chapter member may be removed from the Chapter at the discretion of the Chapter Sponsor for failure to maintain an honor average, misconduct or insubordination or other serious infraction of school rules.

Section 11. When a Chapter Sponsor changes schools, it is his or her responsibility to leave with another teacher or school official all records of the Chapter and to arrange for its continuance the following year. Any change of Chapter Sponsor within a school is to be reported to the National Director.

Section 12. Sponsors of Active Chapters may award the Certificado de Excelencia to initiated members, winners in the National Spanish Examinations, or to the initiated member who has achieved the highest grade point average in Spanish or Portuguese for that school year. Duplicate certificates are awarded in case of ties. The number awarded is limited to ten per cent of current initiates. The certificates may be obtained from the National Director of the Society at no cost.

Section 13. Sponsors of Active Chapters may award the Certificado por Servicios to recognize initiated members who have rendered meritorious service to their Chapter. The number awarded is limited to ten per cent of current initiates. The certificates may be obtained from the National Director of the Society at no cost.

Section 14. Sponsors of Active Chapters may award the Premio de Honor to the best graduating senior member of the Chapter. The certificate may be obtained from the National Director of the Society at no cost, and will be sent upon receipt of the student's name. Each Chapter may receive only one certificate each year.

Article XV Emergency Bylaws

Section 1. Additional regulations for facilitating the government of the Society and the activities of the Chapters may be prepared by the National Council whenever the exigencies for such regulations may arise.