

## ***NSNA Shared Governance Model***

Shared governance is a system of rules and policies that serve to engage individuals and groups to participate in decision-making. The responsibility and accountability for decisions is shared by members of the group. The objective of shared governance is to afford those who are impacted when a decision is made to have an opportunity to express opinions and participate in the decision-making process.

Shared governance is:

- Accountability for decisions
- Respect for differences of opinion
- Knowledge of resources on shared governance
- Legitimate participation in the decision-making process
- Researching issues before coming to a decision

Shared governance is not:

- One person making all the decisions for others
- Failing to carry out the responsibilities of one's office

<b>The tools of NSNA's shared governance model include:</b>
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- Local, state, and national laws and regulations;
- Articles of Incorporation;
- *NSNA Bylaws, Policies and Procedures (Getting the Pieces to Fit 2010-2011)*;
- *NSNA Code of Ethics (Code of Professional Conduct; Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct and Interpretive Statements)*;
- *Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for Students of Nursing* and grievance procedure guidelines;
- *Getting the Pieces to Fit (NSNA Handbook)*;
- *NSNA Business Book*;
- *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised*;
- *Guidelines Booklets for Program Areas*;
- Historical traditions.

<b>Publications available on <a href="http://www.nсна.org">www.nсна.org</a> click on Publications</b>
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## National Student Nurses' Association, Inc.

### Shared Governance Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Q. What is shared governance?**

A. Shared governance is a system of rules and policies that serve to engage individuals and groups to participate in decision-making. The responsibility and accountability for decisions is shared by members of the group. The objective of shared governance is to afford those who are impacted when a decision is made to have an opportunity to express opinions and participate in the decision-making process. **Shared governance is:**

Decision making by

- Accountability for decisions
- Respect for difference of opinions
- Knowledge of resources on shared governance
- Legitimate participant in the decision-making process
- Researching issues before coming to a decisions

Shared governance is not:

- One or two people making all the decisions for others
- Failing to carryout the responsibilities on one's office

#### **Q. What are the tools of shared governance?**

A. There are several tools that assist in the shared governance decision-making process. They include, but are not limited to:

- local, state, and national laws and regulations;
- articles of incorporation;
- NSNA bylaws, policies, and procedures (Guidelines Booklet);
- NSNA code of ethics (Code of Professional Conduct; Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct);
- *Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for Students of Nursing* and grievance procedure guidelines;
- *Getting the Pieces to Fit* (NSNA Handbook);
- *NSNA Business Book*;
- *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised*;
- Guidelines Booklets for Program Areas;
- Historical traditions.

**Q. Why is it important to learn about and participate in shared governance?**

A. Shared governance, as practiced by members of the NSNA, is similar to governance models used by many professional associations, and is similar to governance structures at colleges, universities, and healthcare delivery organizations. Many hospitals are using shared governance models for decision making by staff nurses. Shared governance is one of the many criteria used when evaluating hospitals for Magnet Hospital status. By learning about shared governance as a student, new graduates can transfer the skills and knowledge to the practice setting, to professional organization involvement, and to community activities.

**Q. How do NSNA members learn about shared governance?**

A. One of the best methods for learning shared governance is through guided practice. NSNA provides many leadership opportunities and offers students and faculty resources to enhance learning about shared governance. Just as hospitals and community health agencies serve as sites for clinical experience, participating in NSNA shared governance serves as a practicum for gaining leadership experiences. Participation in NSNA shared governance fosters the development of leadership attributes and management skills needed in integrated health systems; skills learned in NSNA are transferable to other settings.

**Q. How can I find out more about NSNA's shared governance model?**

A. Visit [www.nсна.org](http://www.nсна.org) and [www.nснаleadershipu.org](http://www.nснаleadershipu.org) for more details or contact:

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**Are you ready to take the Shared Governance Quiz? See next page.**

## National Student Nurses Association



### Shared Governance Quiz

#### True or False

1. Bylaws are rules adopted by an organization chiefly for the governance of its members and the regulation of its affairs.
2. Bylaws can be amended by the board of directors as long as proper notice is given.
3. If the method for amending bylaws is not included in the Bylaws, the board of directors may determine how to amend the bylaws.
4. The board of directors has the fiduciary responsibility for the business of the organization.
5. The House of Delegates approves the organization's annual budget.
6. Non-profit organizations are not allowed to have a profit at the end of the fiscal year.
7. It is not necessary for non-profit organization board members to sign a conflict of interest statement.
8. When a legal action is taken against members of a board of directors in an organization that is not incorporated, the board members may be sued as individuals.
9. The role of the organization president during a board meeting is to serve as the facilitator of the meeting.
10. The organization's mission statement is part of its strategic plan.
11. The organization's members are responsible for approving the strategic plan.

See answers on next page.

## Answers to Shared Governance Quiz

1. True

Bylaws are a codification of the rules that are adopted and followed by the organization. They are the official rules and regulations which govern an organization. Bylaws are prepared at the time of incorporation, along with the charter. Incorporation is a process by which an organization receives a state charter, allowing it to become a corporation. A charter is the document, filed with a U.S. state by an organization's founders, describing the purpose, place of business, and other details of the organization (**also called** articles of incorporation).

2. False

Bylaws are amended with proper notice by the members of the organization generally at the annual meeting. The details of how bylaws may be amended are included in the organization's bylaws.

3. False

Bylaws should include a section on parliamentary authority to address areas not covered in the bylaws. *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* is generally cited as the parliamentary authority in bylaws.

4. True

The Board of Directors, upon election, accepts the trusteeship of the organization's assets and assumes responsibility for decisions related to those assets. In addition, the Board of Directors performs administrative functions related to the assets (i.e. bank accounts; check writing; arranging for annual audit). Administrative tasks related to financial matters are generally the role of the treasurer. In organizations that employ staff, the executive director serves as the Board's agent for administrative functions.

5. False

The Board of Directors, as fiduciary of the organization's assets, is responsible for passing the annual operating budget for the organization. The Board of Directors is responsible for reporting the financial condition to the members at the annual meeting of the association. In most organizations, the bylaws require that an organization conduct an annual audit. This is done by an outside auditing firm using generally accepted accounting principles.

6. False

Non-profit organizations may have an excess of revenue over expenses. The term non-profit means that the members do not receive any financial gain (or profit) from their membership. In contrast, in the case of a for-profit corporation, the share holders, or owners, may gain profit from the shares they hold in the company. When non-profits have an excess of revenue over expenses, they often place funds in reserve. It is prudent for non-profit organizations to keep at least 50% of their annual operating budget in reserve.

7. False

Board members in both for-profit and non-profit organizations must accept responsibility to prevent bias and conflicts of interest in their decision making process. The Board has a responsibility for maintaining objectivity. Conflict of Interest policies should reflect state and local laws and must cover financial interests, gifts, gratuities and favors, nepotism, and other areas such as political participation and bribery. These rules must also indicate how outside activities, relationships, and financial interests are reviewed by Board of Directors. A conflict of interest may arise when board member makes decisions out of self interest or in the interest of only part of the association instead of for the common good of the whole organization; and/or when a board makes a transaction with a business or organization that has a financial connection with a board member or a board member's family.

8. True

Unincorporated associations and their members can be liable for contracts made by officers or members on behalf of the association; negligent or unintentional tortuous acts committed by members in furtherance of association business; and debts incurred on behalf of the association. An association that is incorporated enjoys all of the benefits of being a corporation including liability for contracts, debts, and tortuous acts which is limited solely to the corporation itself and its assets, and not to individual members.

9. True

The role of the president is defined in the bylaws of the association. The president often serves as chair of the board of directors meetings and is responsible for facilitating the meeting. The president does not make motions and may not speak to issues unless he/she turns the chair over to the vice president. The president, as chair of the meeting, does not vote except to break a tie.

10. True

The mission statement is a summary of the organizations' reason for being, including, who we are, what we do, for whom we do it, and why. The strategic plan includes the organization's mission and vision, environmental scan, gap analysis, benchmarking, strategic issues, goals, method and timeline for reaching goals.

11. False

The Board of Directors is responsible for creating, approving, modifying and evaluating the association's strategic plan.