

Proposed NSNA Bylaws Amendments

Proposed bylaws amendments are voted on at the 2009 NSNA House of Delegates which convenes in Nashville, TN, April 15, 17 and 18, 2009. The following proposed amendments (and rationale) to the NSNA Bylaws were submitted by the Student Nurses Association of Pennsylvania by the February 4, 2009 deadline.

Current Bylaws	Proposed Amendments	Rationale (continued)
<p>Article IV</p> <p>Section 2. Categories of Constituent Membership: Members of the constituent associations shall be:</p> <p>1. Active Members:</p> <p>a) Students enrolled in state approved programs leading to licensure as a registered nurse.</p> <p>b) Registered nurses enrolled in programs leading to a baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing.</p> <p>c) Active members shall have all the privileges of membership.</p> <p>2. Associate Members:</p> <p>a) Pre-nursing students, including registered nurses, enrolled in college or university programs designed as preparation for entrance into a program leading to an associate degree, diploma or baccalaureate degree in nursing.</p> <p>b) Associate members shall have all the privileges of membership except the right to hold office of president and vice president at state and national levels.</p> <p>Section 3. Categories of Non-Constituent Membership:</p> <p>a. Sustaining Members: Sustaining membership shall be open at the national level to any individual or organization interested in furthering the development and growth of NSNA, upon approval of the Board of Directors. This membership category is not open to those eligible for active and associate membership. Sustaining members shall receive literature and other information from the national office.</p>	<p>Amend Section 2, 1b by striking the entire sentence. Renumber Section 2, 1c to Section 2, 1b.</p> <p>Amend Section 2, 2a by striking “including registered nurses.” The amended sentence would read: Pre-nursing students enrolled in college or university programs designed as preparation for entrance into a program leading to an associate degree, diploma or baccalaureate degree in nursing.</p> <p>Amend Section 3, 1 by inserting the words, “including, but not limited to, registered nurse enrolled in college or university programs leading to an associate, diploma, or baccalaureate degree” after the word “individual.” The amended sentence would then read: Sustaining membership shall be open at the national level to any individual, including, but not limited to, registered nurse enrolled in college or university programs leading to an associate, diploma, or baccalaureate degree, or organization interested in furthering the development and growth of NSNA, upon approval of the Board of Directors.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Rationale</p> <p>The NSNA is a pre-professional nursing organization, therefore individuals who have attained their registered nursing licensure should not be granted full membership with the same privileges as those students for whom this organization was created. Other organizations represent the needs of registered nurses. These individuals are eligible to join these organizations (i.e. the American Nurses Association). With this amendment, those individuals who are registered nurses enrolled in baccalaureate programs will be able to join NSNA as a sustaining member.</p> </div>	<p>The number of members in this category has never been substantial; therefore the financial implications to NSNA are low. Historically these individuals have served in the elected offices in disproportionately high numbers, which has a negative impact hindering the opportunity for non-licensed students to further their leadership abilities.</p> <p>Most importantly this bylaw is in conflict with the American Nurses Association and our own policies. NSNA is opposed to professional nursing organizations offering a student membership category, and for years the ANA has agreed not to initiate a student category with voting rights to their membership. NSNA has also urged ANA to recognize their autonomy “as an independent organization and is strongly discouraged from creating a mechanism for voting representation of NSNA chapters, or for any other mechanism for recruiting student nurse members in competition with NSNA.” (<i>Getting the Pieces to Fit</i>, 2008-2009, p. 30) NSNA must reciprocate by not offering a voting membership category for RNs. A collegial relationship with our professional associations must remain intact.</p> <p>Above all, registered nurses are considered professionals and thus should hold membership in their professional organizations, without holding membership in a pre-professional organization such as NSNA. At the present time, these individuals are eligible to hold office simultaneously in both the pre-professional and the professional organizations, which is not in the best interest of NSNA, its constituent states or local chapters. It creates a conflict of interest situation.</p>