

National Student Nurses' Association

COUNCIL OF STATE PRESIDENTS (COSP) Policies and Procedures (revised February 2009)

BACKGROUND

The Council of State Presidents (COSP) Planning Committee was originally formed by the 1983 House of Delegates as the State Presidents Steering Committee. The 1984 House of Delegates approved an additional trial period of three years, to 1987.

At the end of the three year trial, the COSP, in consultation with the NSNA Board Of Directors, evaluated the committee and recommended to change the name to the Council of State Presidents Planning Committee. This recommendation was passed by the 1987 NSNA House of Delegates.

The chair of the COSP Planning Committee serves as the chair of the COSP meetings. Since 1991, the COSP Planning Committee chair also serves as ex officio member of the NSNA board of directors without a vote.

The COSP Planning Committee is, in effect, a self-appointed committee with no control or oversight by the NSNA House of Delegate, Board of Directors, or NSNA Nominating and Elections Committee. The COSP Planning Committee is not a standing committee, since appointments are not made by the Board of Directors, and the members of the committee are not elected by the House of Delegates.

NSNA support for the COSP includes: provision of meeting rooms for COSP meeting; administrative support for the COSP Planning Committee to plan the COSP agenda (via conference calls); dissemination of the agenda; and provision of packets and materials for the meeting. The chair of the COSP Planning Committee is funded to attend all three NSNA Board of Directors meetings. State Presidents are generally funded by their states to attend the COSP meeting while they are serving on the Planning Committee.

COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

The NSNA Bylaws, Article VII, Section 8, states that:

- (a) There shall be meetings of state presidents of state student nurses' associations -held twice yearly, once in conjunction with the annual convention of the association, as well as once in the fall. This collective shall be called the NSNA Council of State Presidents.
- (b) The purpose of the NSNA Council of State Presidents shall be to discuss the priorities of the association, activities for the year, accomplishments, problems, and to share ideas. It shall also allow for the interchange and consultation between state presidents, the NSNA Board of Directors, and staff.
- (c) **Composition.**
 - 1. The members of the NSNA Council of State Presidents shall be the NSNA state student nurses' associations' presidents, or the designated alternates, and the members of the NSNA Board of Directors.

2. The following shall be invited to participate in the NSNA Council of State Presidents: presidents-elect of the state student nurses' association, members of the association staff and consultants.
3. Members of the NSNA, including state officers not specifically listed in 1 and 2 above, shall be admitted as observers to the NSNA Council of State Presidents.

(d) **Council of State presidents Planning Committee.**

1. The Council of State Presidents Planning Committee shall be composed of 4 state presidents **and the NSNA President who serves as an ex-officio without a vote.**
2. The chair of the Council of State Presidents Planning Committee shall be the chair of the Council of State Presidents meetings and shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors without a vote.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the committee include planning and conducting the Council of State Presidents at the MidYear Conference and national convention. The COSP Planning Committee chair serves as ex-officio member of the NSNA Board of Directors.

BUDGET

The budget for the COSP Planning Committee shall include national mailings (including the COSP Leadership Forum), two conference calls and provision of meeting space.

STAFF SUPPORT

The NSNA Membership Development Director provides staff support for the committee. Staff works closely with the chairperson to facilitate communication between the committee, state presidents and the NSNA Board of Directors. All official correspondence, arrangements for the conference calls and for the COSP meeting will be administered through NSNA headquarters.

ELECTION PROCEDURE

Purpose:

The COSP Planning Committee is elected by the state presidents to plan the meetings of the Council of State Presidents. The COSP Planning Committee is composed of four state presidents who are elected to represent presidents in NSNA's official election areas (north, south, east, and west) and the NSNA President. This ensures that all areas of the country have input into planning for the COSP meetings.

The COSP Planning Committee Chairperson also serves as an ex-officio member of the NSNA Board of Directors (Bylaws Article VII, Section 8 d2).

Term of Office:

The term of office for the committee chair is one year (April to April). The term of office for committee members is six months (April to November; November to April).

April: Election of the COSP Planning Committee (four members with one elected to chair the committee).

November: At the November meeting there is an election of the COSP Planning Committee (three members) with the exception of the COSP Chair, whose term is a full year.

No committee member shall serve more than two terms on the COSP Planning Committee with the exception of the COSP Chair who shall serve no more than one term (a full year) on the COSP Planning Committee.

Eligibility for Serving on the COSP Planning Committee

Only current state presidents or presidents-elect serving as the state's designated alternate shall be eligible for the COSP Planning Committee or Chair.

NSNA members who are elected while serving as Presidents-elect must be the state president by the COSP in which they participate.

NSNA members who are elected as a COSP Planning Committee member while serving as state president must remain as state president for at least three-quarters of the term of service on the committee (4 ½ months).

NSNA members who are elected as COSP Planning Committee chair while serving as state president must remain as state president for at least one half of the term of COSP Planning Committee service (6 months).

All candidates shall be NSNA members and must be enrolled in nursing school throughout at least three-quarters of their term of service on the committee in order to be eligible and must maintain this eligibility throughout their term of COSP Planning Committee service.

If NSNA members who are elected as a COSP Planning Committee member or chair are no longer able to fulfill the duties of their state as president, they are no longer eligible to remain on the COSP Planning Committee.

Process for Nomination and Election:

Elections take place during the election breakout sessions at the Council of State Presidents. State presidents or their designated representatives shall nominate and vote for the representative for their election area (north, south, east, and west). There shall be only one vote per state president or representative present at the meeting.

Eligibility for Voting:

The state presidents or their designated representatives vote for the representative for the committee from their election area. The state presidents or their designated representative and the NSNA Board of Directors will vote for the chairperson (Bylaws Article VII Section 8c1).

Only the members of COSP, the current COSP Planning Committee, and tellers shall be present in the election area. Voting will take place by secret ballot. The current COSP committee members facilitate the election procedures in each election area, and the tellers count the ballots and report to the COSP committee representatives.

Election of the Chairperson:

The chairperson shall be elected by the members of the COSP, and this person shall come from those newly elected committee members interested in serving as chairperson. Those running for chair shall have the opportunity to speak before the entire group before voting occurs. Voting will take place by secret ballot. The ballots shall be collected by appointed tellers and the results reported to the COSP Chairperson.

The candidate with the highest number of votes shall serve as Chairperson of the COSP Planning Committee and as *the* Ex-officio NSNA Board member. In the event of a tie, the election will be decided by a secret ballot vote between the two candidates. The candidate with the highest votes will be the Chairperson and the candidate with the second highest votes shall serve as an alternate COSP chairperson.

In the event of a tie between the two people with the second highest votes, the members of the COSP shall re-vote to break the tie. The Chairperson and alternate will be named at the COSP meeting at the Annual Convention in which they run.

Resignations:

In the event the chairperson must resign before his/her term is completed, or if he/she is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the COSP Chairperson, the Board of Directors shall select one of the remaining COSP Committee members to assume the role of COSP Chairperson for the remainder of the term, provided however, that the newly appointed COSP Chairperson shall have no authority to serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Board of Directors unless the Board so determines in accordance with Article V Section 6 of the NSNA bylaws.

In the event that a member of the COSP Planning Committee is unable to fulfill his/her responsibilities, that position shall be left vacant until the next appointed time for elections.

Responsibilities of the COSP Planning Committee Chair:

The COSP Planning Committee chair shall:

1. **Preside at the Council of State Presidents MidYear and Annual Convention meetings;**
2. **Preside during conference calls with the COSP Planning Committee and NSNA staff to set and implement the COSP agenda;**
3. **Serve as a liaison between the state presidents and the NSNA Board of Directors;**
4. **Serve on the NSNA Board of Directors as ex-officio without a vote;**
5. **Review policies related to COSP and the COSP Planning Committee and make suggested changes to the NSNA Board of Directors for consideration.**