

American Mathematical Society

Executive Committee

General Description

- Committee is standing.
- Number of members is seven: The President, President Elect or Immediate Past President, and Secretary are *ex officio* members. Four members are elected by the Council, one each year to serve a four-year term. See Article V, Section 1 and Article VII, Section 4 of the Bylaws.

Principal Activities

From the Bylaws:

Article V, Section 2. The Executive Committee of the Council shall be empowered to act for the Council on matters which have been delegated to the Executive Committee by the Council. If three members of the Executive Committee request that any matter be referred to the Council, the matter shall be so referred. The Executive Committee shall be responsible to the Council and shall report its actions to the Council. It may consider the agenda for meetings of the Council and may make recommendations to the Council.

The Council has delegated the following powers and spheres of action to the Executive Committee (the bracketed date indicates the minutes in which the record of the enabling action appears):

1. Approve recommendations of editorial committees concerning numbers of pages to be published, interim editorial appointments, etc. [1/62 Council].¹
2. Prepare the Council agenda from tentative agenda supplied by the Secretary, make recommendations on items on which it can agree and on which little contention is expected, and prepare arguments pro and con for the Council on controversial items [1/62 Council].²

¹The Secretary notes that almost all members of editorial committees are appointed by the President, upon the recommendation of the Editorial Boards Committee. The editorial positions approved by the Council are chairs of those eight editorial committees mentioned in Article III, Section 1, of the Bylaws, which carry automatic Council membership with the post, and also the Books Review Editor of the *Bulletin*. The Executive Committee would make interim appointments only to those positions.

²The Secretary notes that this is impractical in the stated form because it consumes too much elapsed time. The Executive Committee exercises this function by forwarding items with recommendations or arguments from its meetings to the Secretary for inclusion in the agenda and from time to time instructs the Secretary on the manner in which an item should be presented. The Executive Committee reviews a draft of the January Council agenda at its November meeting, and the review of the spring Council agenda is conducted by the President and, with respect to individual items, by interested parties.

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3. Approve invitations to give special lectures such as the Gibbs Lecture and Colloquium Lectures on recommendation by the appropriate selection committees [8/75 Council]. The Executive Committee has instructed selection committees to inform the Executive Committee about preliminary results on the pool of candidates under consideration. The Executive Committee has the opportunity to comment but then leaves decisions to the selection committees [11/84 ECBT].
4. Approve winners of prizes, such as Bôcher, Cole, Veblen, Birkhoff, Wiener, and Steele, on recommendation by the appropriate selection committees [8/75 Council]. The Executive Committee has instructed selection committees to deliberate and then report its recommendations to the Executive Committee [1/06 Council].
5. Receive reports of committees of the Council that recommend no action [8/75 Council].
6. In the event of a tie in the election of members to the Editorial Boards Committee or the Nominating Committee, the tie will be broken by a vote of the Executive Committee [1/17 Council].

Other Activities

Each elected member of the Executive Committee serves ex officio at some point in their term in the following capacities:

During third year of term: Member of the ECBT Nominating Committee. This Committee is responsible for evaluating and making nominations to the ECBT regarding appointment or reappointment for the positions of Secretary, Associate Secretary, Treasurer, and Associate Treasurer. The Committee's business is done by email and phone.

During second and third years of term: Member of Long Range Planning Committee. The LRPC reviews the function and priorities of the Society, normally is the group that initiates consideration of changes to governance procedures, and focuses on other specific issues from time to time at the request of the President or Chair of the Board. The LRPC usually meets twice a year, at the time of semi-annual ECBT meetings.

Meetings

The Executive Committee meets twice a year for 1½ days, the majority of the meeting being joint with the Board of Trustees. These meetings take place in May and November, on Friday afternoon and Saturday, usually the weekend before Memorial Day weekend and the weekend before Thanksgiving at the Providence Headquarters (occasionally the May meeting is in Ann Arbor). These meetings cover such things as setting institutional and individual member dues, setting journal pages, policy questions, operating plans, and major new programs and initiatives.

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If necessary, the Executive Committee has additional meetings in person or by other means (e.g., email, telephone conference call), but these are rare.

Voting Procedures

Voting procedures for the EC are outlined in detail in Article V, Sections 2 and 3 of the Bylaws. Pertinent excerpts are:

From Article V, Section 2: If three members of the Executive Committee request that any matter be referred to the Council, the matter shall be so referred.

From Article V, Section 3: Each member of the Executive Committee shall have one vote. An affirmative vote on any proposal before the Executive Committee shall be declared if, and only if, at least four affirmative votes are cast for the proposal.

Inasmuch as there are seven members on the EC, it is clearly possible that these two provisions might come into conflict. To avoid such a conflict, the EC adopted the following procedural rule in November 1981:

When the Executive Committee is considering whether to act on a proposal under Article V, Section 3, of the Bylaws, or to refer it to the Council under Article V, Section 2, the latter issue shall be resolved first.

Reimbursement of Expenses

This Committee has been designated at **LEVEL B**. An explanation of travel expense reimbursement for members of this Committee is available here:

www.ams.org/about-us/governance/board/level-b-voucher.pdf

Staff Support

Staff support is provided by the [Secretary's Office](#).

Miscellaneous Information

The Council has provided the following procedure for the election of members to the Executive Committee. As soon as the composition of the Council for the following year is known (i.e. about 20 November) the Secretary conducts a straw ballot in which each Council member may suggest names as candidates for the Executive Committee. (It has been helpful in conducting the straw ballot to point out the amount of work involved and to ask persons who would regard it as burdensome to decline the opportunity of candidacy.) The Secretary tabulates the result and provides it as an aid to a nominating committee of two selected by the President. The nominating committee, not bound by the result of the straw ballot, names two candidates. (The committee works by telephone or email, so this is done quickly.) The Secretary then conducts a mail ballot to determine the new member of the Executive Committee.

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The time to conduct the election is on the order of 70 days past the time (20 November) that election results are known. Thus members of the Executive Committee of years $n-1$ and n , serving until their successors are elected, are active, roughly speaking through February of year $n+1$. This covers both business by mail and, if necessary, extension of terms as Council members. A term which is extended in this manner is as member at large.

Authorization

An ad hoc Committee on Reorganization made several recommendations in April 1948, including the establishment of an Executive Committee on the line of the one that now exists. The Committee was discharged but a Committee on the Bylaws was authorized. In September 1948 a proposed revision, including a new article V on the Executive Committee as now constituted, was presented. The printing of the Bylaws of 1949 includes the new Article V but the intervening reports of meetings are vague about when the change was adopted. It was effective 1 January 1950.

Council minutes of January 1962

Council minutes of 1965, page 913

Council minutes of January 1971, page 10

Council minutes of August 1975, pages 3 and 4

Executive Committee and Board of Trustees minutes of November 1981, item 5.7

Council minutes of January 1982, item 4.3

Council minutes of August 1983, items 4.2 and 4.3

Executive Committee and Board of Trustees minutes of November 1984, items 6.15 and 8.2

Council minutes of January 1994, item 3.3.2

Council minutes of January 1997, item 3.5.1

Long Range Planning Committee minutes of November 22, 2002, item 3.

Council minutes of January 2003, item 4.9.1

Council minutes of January 2006, item 4.2.8

Council minutes of January 2017, item 6.2

Current and Past Members

A list of current and past members of the Executive Committee since 1989 is available here:

www.ams.org/about-us/governance/committees/ec-past.html