

H/M House Bylaw Proposal

Compiled by Seth Dorfman with extensive borrowing from the Butler Committee

ARTICLE I: DEFINITIONS

- A. This organization shall be known as the “Hibben/Maggie Graduate Student Committee,” hereafter abbreviated as “H/M Committee” or “Committee.”
- B. Add Statement of Purpose Here
- C. Resident: In these By-Laws, a “resident” is defined as someone meeting all of the following criteria:
 - 1. He or she is, or within the last 30 days was, a graduate student of Princeton University, or is the spouse or domestic partner of someone who is, or within the last 30 days was, a graduate student of Princeton University. [Legislative Intent: Students who graduate or otherwise cease to be students may be considered residents for an additional 30 days as long as they meet the other requirements.]
 - 2. He or she lives in H/M and is known to the Housing Office of the University as a full tenant (not a sublettor) of the apartment in H/M where he or she lives.
- D. The “H/M House” or “House” is comprised of all residents of H/M.
- E. Committee Member and Committee
 - 1. The H/M Committee is comprised of “elected officers” and “appointed officers” as detailed in the following sections of these bylaws.
 - 2. Those holding these offices shall be known in these By-Laws as “Committee members”. “Officer” is synonymous with “Committee member”.

ARTICLE II: Committee Meetings

- A. The Committee shall hold a house meeting at least once each calendar month, at a time and place that is publicized no later than seven days in advance to all H/M residents. Exactly one of these meetings per month shall be designated the Committee’s official “house meeting”. The Committee may convene additional meetings if it chooses.
- B. The monthly house meeting is open to all H/M residents. The monthly house meeting is further open to any others invited by the Chair.
- C. Unless otherwise stipulated in these bylaws, all decisions at Committee meetings shall be made by the Committee, in consultation with residents in attendance, by a majority vote of committee members present with the following weights:
 - 1. Elected officers: two votes
 - 2. Appointed officers: one vote
- D. If the Chair is absent from the meeting, then as its first order of business, the Committee shall elect from among those Committee members present an Acting Chair, who shall be charged with running the meeting.

ARTICLE III: Elected Committee Officers

- A. Chair: The chair runs the H/M committee. Specific duties include:
 - 1. Organize and oversee Committee meetings. Specifically:
 - a. Schedule meetings and remind Committee Members and all residents of meetings.
 - b. Set the agenda for each meeting. The agenda should include all open business from previous meetings along with new business that has arisen

since the previous meeting.

2. Act as a spokesperson for the Committee.
 3. Respond on behalf of the Committee to concerns addressed to the Committee. Bring these concerns forward for discussion with the entire Committee when appropriate.
 4. Oversee the rest of the Committee Members to ensure that Committee business is taken care of in a timely manner. Remind Committee Members of unresolved issues. At least once a year, review the written instructions that are maintained by other Committee Members (see “General Duties”) to make sure they are complete and up-to-date.
 5. Step in where needed to keep the Committee running smoothly; e.g. in the case of a vacant Committee position, a Committee member who is failing to fulfill her duties, or unforeseen responsibilities that do not fall to a specific Committee member.
 6. Ensure that these bylaws are faithfully executed.
 7. Review these By-Laws annually to ensure that they continue to reflect the Committee’s desired practices. Propose appropriate changes if necessary.
- B. Secretary/Treasurer: The S/T maintains committee records, both financial and administrative and communicates such information to residents when appropriate. Specific duties include:
1. Maintain the H/M House website.
 2. Take minutes at all Committee meetings and post them on the website and in high traffic common spaces.
 3. Maintain e-mail lists both for the Committee’s internal use and for communicating with residents.
 4. Maintain important information about life in H/M and community facilities and resources. (e.g. mail and addressing, the laundryroom, the community room, the dolly, trash and recycling, the committee, etc.). This information shall be posted on the website and distributed to residents during move-in.
 5. Prepare an annual budget for Committee approval at the beginning of each fiscal year.
 6. Confirm that University funding is received at the beginning of each fiscal year.
 7. Apply for external funding when needed for social events and other Committee activities.
 8. Maintain financial records for each of the Committee’s accounts:
 - a. Maintain an independent record of all transactions that have occurred, are pending, or are anticipated.
 - b. Regularly review and reconcile monthly statements for each account with the Committee records, ensuring that all transactions, deposits, and checks/payments are being recorded in a timely manner.
 - c. Regularly monitor the balance in each of the Committee’s accounts, and track transactions against each line-item in the annual budget.
 - d. Keep track of balances for any sub-budgets separately from the rest of the Committee funding. This separation should also be clearly reflected in the Treasurer’s monthly written report.
 9. Provide a written report at each monthly Committee meeting, which must show

every credit and debit, along with a brief description, and the balance for each of the Committee's accounts and sub-budgets. Ensure that these reports are archived for future reference.

10. Ensure that any authorized expenditures are submitted to the University for reimbursement or are reimbursed from Committee funds.
 11. The S/T must observe the following guidelines:
 - a. The S/T alone will be responsible for writing checks. No signed blank checks may be issued.
 - b. Reimbursements are only allowed if receipts are presented. Any exceptions must be approved by the Committee.
 - c. Copies of all receipts are to be made and kept with the account records before reimbursement is made.
- C. Social Chair. The responsibility of the Social Chair shall be to organize and coordinate all social events sponsored and organized by the Committee. Specific duties include the following:
1. Register each event with the Graduate School.
 2. Prepare a budget for each event in advance, detailing anticipated expenses and sources of funding. Assist the S/T in applying for any necessary funding from other organizations.
 3. Procure any food, drinks, or other supplies needed.
 4. Publicize the event.
 5. Set up for the event, run the event itself, and clean up afterwards. The Social Chair may recruit help from other Committee Members and residents for these tasks.
 6. Additionally, the Social Chair shall also act as a liaison between the Committee and other residents who want to organize their own (possibly Committee-sponsored) events for the H/M community.

ARTICLE IV: Appointed Committee Officers

- A. In order to encourage the participation of as many H/M residents as possible, the committee shall be empowered to appoint any resident to non-elected committee positions by unanimous consent of elected committee members.
- B. Each appointed member shall be charged with a written list of duties at the time of appointment.
- C. The term of office for each appointed officer shall last until a date set in the initial appointment. This date shall be no later than the end of the elected officers' regular term.
- D. If the duties of an appointed officer overlap with those of an elected officer, the elected officer shall maintain ultimate responsibility for the task in question.
- E. Possible examples of appointed officers include: webmaster, GSG representative, reservations coordinator, co-social chair.

ARTICLE V: General Officer Duties

- A. In addition to the specific duties for each office, committee members, both elected and appointed, shall be expected to:
 1. Attend each monthly Committee meeting unless a valid conflict arises.

2. Help with all social events that are sponsored and organized by the Committee unless a valid conflict arises.
 3. Complete his or her term of office except in the case of graduation or unforeseen circumstances; in either case, three months' notice should be given to the Committee.
 4. Maintain an up-to-date set of written instructions on how best to complete the position's duties. These notes should be sufficiently detailed to allow the successor to the position to replicate the Committee Member's work. These instructions should also include archived records of past activities and other useful information.
 5. Train the successor for his/her position, passing on all instructions, archives, and materials for the position, and answering any questions the successor may have.
- B. All Committee Members may (and are encouraged to) recruit others to assist informally with their positions. However, the Committee Member has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that their responsibilities are being fulfilled.

ARTICLE VI: Officer Elections and Recall

- A. Officers shall be elected annually, for a term that begins at the October house meeting and ends at the October house meeting the following year.
- B. There shall be no limit to the number of terms for which an individual may be elected as an Officer.
- C. All residents are eligible to run for elected office.
- D. Election Committee
 1. All committee officers not running for election comprise the "election committee."
 2. A committee officer or resident not running for election shall be designated by the committee as the "election committee chair" during or prior to the September house meeting.
 3. The election committee must have at least two members. If all committee officers are running for election, both committee members shall be residents not running for election appointed by the committee.
 4. The election committee shall:
 - a. Solicit, compile, and post candidate statements on the website and in high traffic common spaces.
 - b. Ensure that the election procedures are followed properly. The election committee has the final word in the event of a dispute.
 - c. Distribute and count ballots.
- E. Election Calendar
 1. An election timetable with specific dates for balloting, the close of nominations, and the announcement of official candidates will be approved by the committee at the September house meeting and announced to the house immediately afterwards.
 2. Nominations will remain open for at least a week following the announcement of the election timetable.
 3. Balloting will be open for at least three hours per day on three different days. The required hours must fall between 6PM and 11PM Sunday-Thursday.

4. Elections shall conclude prior to the October house meeting.
- F. Balloting
1. All residents shall be eligible to vote by secret ballot.
 2. Voting may be done online and/or by paper ballot at the discretion of the election committee.
 3. H/M elections may use either a plurality or instant-runoff preferential voting system at the discretion of the election committee. The voting system must be clearly explained on the ballot.
 4. In the event of a tie vote, there will be a runoff election between the two candidates with the most votes. If the runoff election cannot be concluded before the October house meeting, the transfer of office shall occur immediately following the conclusion of the runoff election.
- G. Vacancies and Special Elections
1. In the event of a vacancy in one of the elected officer positions:
 - a. Prior to the July monthly meeting: a special election shall be held to fill the vacant office for the remainder of the regular term.
 - b. During or after the July monthly meeting: the remaining elected officers shall appoint a replacement by unanimous consent for the remainder of the regular term in office.
 2. Special elections shall following the same procedure as general elections with the following modifications:
 - a. Tasks that normally occur before or during the September house meeting shall occur as soon as possible after the vacancy becomes known.
 - b. The resident elected to fill the vacancy shall take office immediately upon election.
- H. Censor and Recall
1. Any elected or appointed officer may be censored by either a two-thirds vote of the committee or a petition bearing the signatures of twenty percent of house residents.
 2. Any officer censored by petition may be removed from office by a three-fourths vote of the committee.
 3. Any officer censored by committee may be removed from office by either:
 - a. A petition bearing the signature of forty percent of house residents.
 - b. A four-fifths vote of the committee at the house meeting immediately following the meeting at which the censor resolution was adopted.
 4. Censor and recall by the committee must take place at a meeting open to all house residents.
 5. In the event of a motion to censor or recall the chair, an acting chair shall be chosen by the other members of the committee to preside over the section of the meeting concerning the censor or recall motion.
 6. Prior to a vote on a censor or recall motion, the charges shall be presented in full followed by at least ten minutes during which the accused committee member shall have a chance to defend himself/herself.

ARTICLE VII: Housing Preferences

- A. Housing draw priority granted by the graduate school shall be given to all the elected officers.
- B. At the February monthly meeting, additional priority slots allocated by the housing office shall be distributed to any deserving appointed officers by a vote of the committee.
- C. The list of officers granted housing priority shall be publicized to the house immediately following the February meeting. If any officers on the list are censored prior to the March monthly meeting, the censored officers shall be striped of their housing preferences upon recall.

ARTICLE VIII: Bylaw Amendments

- A. Amendments may be proposed by either a two-thirds vote of the committee at a meeting open to all house residents or a petition bearing the signatures of twenty percent of house residents.
- B. Approval by committee: Proposed amendments may be approved by a four-fifths vote of the committee at the two consecutive monthly house meetings following successful amendment proposal. The wording of the amendment must be identical during both votes.
- C. Approval by referendum: Proposed amendments may be approved by supermajority (a majority of house residents, both voting and nonvoting) in a special election. This election shall use the same procedure as general elections, where applicable.

ARTICLE IX: First Time Caveats

- A. These bylaws shall be approved by a majority of voting house residents.
- B. The first general elections shall take place concurrently with the bylaw approval vote and will be aided by the GSG.