

The Constitution of the Massachusetts Association for Recreational Sports

- I. **Name:** The name of this organization shall be the Massachusetts Association for Recreational Sports (MARS).
- II. **Mission:** The mission of the MARS is to support the mission of the National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) and other professional associations that serve college, university, or other not-for-profit recreational sports professionals and students in providing educational programs, experiences and opportunities that foster the development of quality recreational programs, facilities, and services for diverse populations. MARS members demonstrate their commitment to excellence by utilizing resources that promote ethical and healthy lifestyle choices.
- III. **Purpose:** The MARS is comprised of recreational sports programs, none of which is for profit. The purposes for which this Association is organized are all within the meaning of Section 501(c) (6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and include:
- A. To encourage and assist in the development of quality recreation programs, facilities, and services for diverse populations by developing programs that improve the recreational sports process
 - B. To encourage and promote recreational sports processes that educate students and persons engaged in the recreational sports process
 - C. To encourage, promote, and assist in the development of recreational sports programs for participation by individuals in educational institutions, recreation leagues, military facilities, and other similar not-for-profit organizations
 - D. To promote and encourage programs that foster a positive attitude towards lifetime fitness as necessary and beneficial to all aspects of human development;
 - E. To assist in the development of appropriate standards of curriculum designed to educate recreational sports professionals, teachers, and educators;
 - F. To assist in the development of stronger instructional base in the area of recreational sports programming for physical educators and recreation professionals;
 - G. To encourage, assist, and educate faculty members, students, and other persons in educational institutions to promote and offer a complete recreational sports program of intramural and extramural competition for the vast majority of individuals who cannot or choose not to compete at a varsity level; and
 - H. To engage in any lawful activity for which corporations may be organized under Massachusetts laws.
- IV. **Categories of Membership:** Any student or professional at an institution of higher education in Massachusetts, whose interests are consistent with the mission of the Association, may become a member of the Association. Prospective members should correspond their interest to the Massachusetts State Director to be added to email and contact lists. The only dues that will be collected are those associated with attending the MARS State Workshop. **All members have the right to vote on matters of state business.**
- V. **Association Meetings:** All Association meetings shall be open to Association members in accordance with the parliamentary authority for matters of procedures governing Association meetings as outlined in this document.
- A. **Annual Business Meetings:** The Association shall hold no less than one (1) annual business meeting to present, discuss and vote on Association matters and conduct elections. The annual business meeting of the Association will be held at the MARS Annual State Workshop. In the absence of a State Workshop, the annual business meeting of the Association will default to the NIRSA Region 1 Conference. The State Director shall prepare the order of business for the annual business meeting. Any member may request an agenda item be added to the agenda. All requests to add agenda items must be made in writing to the State Director at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the Annual State Workshop or special meeting.

The State Director shall preside over the annual business meeting, and this meeting shall be used to: receive the State Director's annual report on the state of the Association, including a financial report and committee reports; announce election results for new officers in election years; and for the transaction of such other business as may be brought before the Association.

- B. Quorum at Association Meetings: Votes at the State Work Shop will be considered official votes regardless of the number of attendees.
- C. Order of Business: The order of Business at any regular meeting of the members shall be: (a) reading and acceptance of financial or other reports, (b) unfinished business, (c) new business, (d) adjournment.
- D. Parliamentary Procedure: Robert's Rules of order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedures not specifically covered by this constitution. Robert's Rules on calling the question will not be recognized by the Association. In an effort to encourage consensus-based decision-making, both sides will have adequate time to present their positions. The State Director or presiding officer will determine when appropriate discussion time has expired.

VI. Special Meetings

- A. NIRSA Regional and NIRSA National MARS Meeting – The State Director shall have the responsibility of calling a MARS meeting of the members at the NIRSA Regional and National conference. These meetings will be held directly following the Region I Business Meeting.

The State Director shall prepare the order of business for the annual business meeting. Any member may request that an agenda item be added to the agenda. All requests to add agenda items must be made in writing to the State Director at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the Annual State Workshop or special meeting.

The State Director shall preside over these meetings, and they shall be used to: receive the State Director's Association updates, including a financial report and committee reports; and for the transaction of such other business as may be brought before the Association.

- B. Annual Officer Meeting(s).
 - a. Bi-annually at the state workshop a meeting will be held with the newly elected MARS Officers and the out going MARS Officers.

The outgoing State Director shall prepare the order of business and preside over this Officer Meeting. This meeting shall be used to: transfer power to the new officers, review the responsibilities of each officer position, discuss ongoing initiatives of the MARS Officers, and highlight potential areas for the incoming Officers to address.

- b. Annually the MARS Officers will meet with the State Workshop Host Committee and a representative of the previous year's Host Committee (this meeting shall be held between the regional and February 1 of the host year).

The State Director shall prepare the order of business and preside over this State Workshop Meeting. This meeting shall be used to: organize a task calendar for the organization of the State Workshop, cover any issues the previous State Workshop Host Committee experienced, and assign responsibilities for each of the tasks on the calendar.

VI. Voting by the Membership

- A. General – All MARS members present at the Annual State Workshop shall have one (1) vote in any election, or any amendment, or on any order of business. Voting members shall consist only of those graduate students and professionals from Massachusetts higher education institutions who have paid the state workshop registration fee. Those who have never attended a MARS State Workshop and are attending for the first time free of charge will still be recognized as voting members.

- B. Amendments – All current members shall be eligible to vote on amendments to the constitution of the Association, and may cast one ballot or vote. Amendments must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of all members casting votes.

- C. Association Business – All members eligible to vote in attendance at the Annual Business Meeting may vote on Association Business matters and cast one vote in person. The majority of those casting votes must approve motions for a vote to be considered an act of the membership. For election procedures please see Constitution VII G.

VII. Governance

- A. Officers: The Officers of the MARS shall include the following:

State Director:

The State Director shall be the chief executive officer of the MARS and direct the affairs of the Association, serve as liaison with the NIRSA Region 1 Representative/ Regional Director, attend State and Regional NIRSA and MARS professional development functions, and coordinate the annual state workshop for the MARS. The State Director shall manage all communication and provide annual reports to the membership. The term of the State Director shall be two (2) years.

Secretary:

The Secretary of the MARS shall assist the State Director in organizing and administering all state functions, keep the minutes of all business meetings of the Association, develop and distribute a quarterly newsletter, and act as the official MARS Historian. The term of the Secretary shall be two (2) years.

Treasurer:

The Treasurer of the MARS shall manage and account for all the funds and financial matters of the Association including: membership dues, program registration, or other revenues, Association expenses, and oversee and report on tax preparation and all other related duties that involve Association financial matters. The Treasurer will submit a financial report to the State Director upon request. The Treasurer shall also notify the membership of pending elections and conduct and account for Association elections. The term of the Treasurer shall be two (2) years.

State/Provincial Student Leader:

The student leader of MARS have the following duties according to the NIRSA guidelines:

- Coordinate/Implement student development opportunities and programs within respective state/province
- Coordinate/Implement Student Lead-on Programs at respective state/provincial workshops, *if possible*
 - **Present** at State Workshops, *if possible*
- Assist host institution and State/Provincial Director
- Assist in the coordination/implementation of Region Student Lead On
 - Attend Region Student Lead On, *if possible*
- Assist Regional Student Leader and region specific tasks
- Attend Regional meetings and conference calls as planned
- Work with other State/Provincial Student Leaders to encourage communication within the region
- Recruit new student members throughout the state/province
- Liaise with your State/Provincial Engagement Coordinators
- Recruit Engagement Coordinators at institutions throughout the state/province
- Distribute Engagement Coordinator NIRSA educational material
- Maintain constant communication with Engagement Coordinators
- Submit materials for newsletters, handouts, and other student development tools
- Brainstorm new ideas to recruit and engage students within the region
- Recruit for new incoming State/Provincial Student Leader

The term of the student leader shall be one (1) year.

- B. **Qualifications for Office:** Officers will be elected prior to the annual State Workshop via an electronic vote. Nominees for office must be members of MARS in good standing for a minimum of one (1) year, or be running unopposed, with the exception of the original slate of candidates. Nominees for office in MARS for less than (1) year may be elected if no other current MARS member in good standing is in for the position.
- C. **Authority and Responsibility:** The Officers will serve at the pleasure of the members. The Officers shall have supervision, control and direction of the affairs of the Association, shall determine its policies within the limits of the constitution, and shall have discretion in the disbursement of the Association's funds to conduct the business of the Association.
- D. **Indemnification:** Any person (and their heirs, executors, or administrators of such person) made or threatened to be made a party to any action, suit or proceeding by reason of the fact that he/she is or was an officer of the Association shall be indemnified by the Association against any and all reasonable expenses including attorney fees incurred in the defense of such action, suit or proceeding; except in relation to matters as to which it shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding that the officer is liable for intentional or gross negligence as determined by a court of law or arbitrator.
- E. **No Conflict of Interest:** There shall be no undisclosed conflict of interest between any officer and/or employee of the Association, nor any undisclosed interest of any kind in anything (motion or otherwise) in which an officer must make any decision. And, no officer may vote or otherwise participate in the consideration of any motion in which they have an interest.
- F. **Removal from Office, Removal from membership and Filling Vacancies:** Officers or members may be removed from office/membership, when their actions are deemed harmful to the Association, by an act of the membership, which requires a vote of impeachment by a minimum of two-thirds (2/3) of the current membership present at an Association meeting. In the event that an Officer may not be able to complete his or her term or is removed from office by an act of the membership, vacancies would be filled as follows:

If the State Director cannot complete his or her term or is removed from office, the Secretary will assume the role of the State Director until the next state business meeting when an election will be held to fulfill the remainder of the State Directors' term;

If the Secretary or Treasurer cannot complete his or her term or is removed from office, the State Director will appoint a Secretary or Treasurer for the remainder of their term.

- G. Nominations and Elections: MARS members may nominate themselves or other members for Officer's positions. A call for nominees will be posted in the quarterly newsletter preceding the Annual State Workshop as well as be announced at the NIRSA National Conference MARS Business meeting. Nominees for office must be members of the Association for a minimum of one (1) year membership is recognized as being a professional in the state.

Call for nominees will end 75 days before the state workshop. Any qualified member interested in running for office must contact the state treasurer by this time.

Elections for open positions will be held biannually via electronic submission. Ballots will open 45 days prior to the state workshop and will remain open until 15 days before the state workshop.

The candidates chosen to fill the MARS Officer positions will be those with the most votes for each position.

Back-to-back terms are:

1. A standing MARS Officer cannot hold the same office for consecutive terms.
2. State Treasurer and State Secretary may only run for the office of State Director immediately following their term.
3. The State Director cannot serve on the executive board for consecutive terms.
4. If no one applies for the candidacy of one of the offices, then the current officer may stay in that position.

VIII. Finances

- A. Dues and Other Revenues: Modifications to the annual dues for all categories of membership shall be determined by the Officers of the MARS and be approved by a favorable vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members casting votes at the annual business meeting. The Treasurer is responsible for the collection of dues, accounting and management of dues, reporting to the membership on all revenues collected, and notification of members on renewal.
- B. Deposit of Funds: Funds shall be deposited with an institution that is federally insured. Any officer or their designee may authorize expenditures on behalf of the Association in accordance to the approved budget.
- C. Distribution of Funds: Funds shall be distributed at the discretion of the MARS Officers by a favorable two-thirds (2/3) vote. Any budget allocations requiring less than 10% of the MARS reserves can be approved at the sole discretion of the Officers without the approval of the Membership. Any annual giving or requests over 10% of the existing funds must be approved by a vote of the membership. It must be a two-thirds (2/3) of the members casting votes.
- D. Events, proposals, and requests for funds will be considered that further the Mission of the MARS.
 - i. All requests should be submitted in writing to the State Director.
 - ii. Any giving in perpetuity should be added to the Constitution as an amendment.
 - iii. Annual Budget: The budget for the coming year must be submitted by the Treasurer and approved by the membership at the annual business meeting.

IX. Ratification:

The Constitution of the MARS will become the official operating document of the MARS, following a review by the founding members and approval by an official vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the original roster of the Association's membership.

X. Affiliations:

The MARS is affiliated with the NIRSA in that the State Director serves as the liaison to the NIRSA, the NIRSA Region 1 Representative/ Regional Director. Most MARS members are also members of NIRSA and/or affiliated organizations and these affiliated organizations have similar goals. However, the MARS is independent in its operation and governance, finances, and programming.

XI. Development of Committees:

The MARS, by resolution adopted by a majority of the membership, may designate one or more committees to complete projects, develop programs and otherwise serve the membership. Standing committees shall include but not be limited to the following: 1) Extramurals, 2) State Workshop Program Development, 3) Awards, and 4) Governance.

XII. The MARS Pioneer Student Scholarship Program:

The Massachusetts Association of Recreational Sports (MARS) Pioneer Student Scholarship Program has been developed to provide students with financial assistance for attending the Region 1 Conference and NIRSA National Conference. By design, this scholarship provides the state association with opportunities to offer assistance to those students who excel in their academic, co-curricular, and recreational pursuits.

- A. Scholarship Selection Committee: The Scholarship Committee will consist of at least three professional members of MARS and two non-MARS members appointed by the MARS Leadership Team. The State Director will act as an ex-officio member, voting only to break any ties that occur during the selection process.
- B. Execution of Awards: Scholarships will be awarded on an annual basis. Two student-based (one graduate student, one undergraduate student) scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$250.00 (Regional Conference) and \$250.00 (Annual Conference). The Scholarship Committee, along with the MARS Officers, will determine award winners. Students may use the award to attend the NIRSA Region 1 Conference & Annual Conference.
- A. State Student Leader Conference Stipend: A stipend to total no more than \$300 will be available to the State Student Leader to facilitate their duty to attend and present at the State Workshop (\$50) and Region 1 Conference (\$250). The State Student Leader will be expected to serve on the Scholarship Selection Committee thereby ineligible to apply for a Pioneer Student Scholarship

XIII. The MARS Rolling Scholarship Program: The Massachusetts Association of Recreational Sports (MARS) Rolling Scholarship Program has been developed to provide professionals and students with financial assistance for attending and/or hosting an event in relation to their profession, i.e.: NIRSA conferences, leadership schools, clinics, intramural championships, etc. By design, this scholarship provides the state association with opportunities to assist those members who want to excel in their recreational and co-curricular pursuits, but need help getting to the next level.

- A. Scholarship Selection Committee: The Scholarship Committee will consist of two co-chair professional members of MARS and two non-MARS members appointed by the MARS Leadership Team. The two co-chairs will then choose a small group for the two-year term to be part of their committee. The State Director will act as an ex-officio member, voting only to break any ties that occur during the selection process.
- B. Execution of Awards: Scholarship will be awarded on a rolling basis. The scholarship amount per applicant will be determined during each rolling period and will be determined based on the health of the MARS budget, the number of applications received, and the quality of application

Governing Board Signatures and Date:

President

Treasurer

Secretary

Amended on 10/29/2020