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**BYLAWS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS SECTION
OF
THE SOCIETY OF WOMEN ENGINEERS**

ARTICLE I – NAME AND OBJECTIVES**

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the GRAND RAPIDS section (hereinafter called “the section”) of the Society of Women Engineers (hereinafter called “the Society” or “SWE”).

Section 2. Objectives

The section is an organizational unit whose purpose is to further the objectives of the Society.

Section 3. Powers

The section is empowered by the Society to pursue the objectives of the Society under these bylaws and in consonance with the Society bylaws.

Section 4. Non-discrimination

In accordance with the Society’s policies and purposes, the section shall not discriminate in connection with its membership and its services to the public at large.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Members

Members of the section are those members of the Society assigned to the section. All members of the section shall have the right to attend all in-person section and executive council meetings.

Section 2. Grades of Membership

Members shall have the same membership grade in the section as they have in the Society and voting privileges as specified in the Society bylaws.

Section 3. Business Meeting

A meeting of the general membership to conduct the business of the section may be called by the president, the executive council, or by a group of five percent or five¹ of the voting members of the section, whichever is greater. At least thirty days written notice shall be provided to all members prior to such a business meeting.

Section 4. Quorum

Fifteen² voting members or thirty percent of the voting members of the section, whichever is less, shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of the business of the section.

ARTICLE III – OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers³**

The officers of the section are the president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

Section 2. Eligibility and Term of Office**

- A. The officers must be voting members of the Society who are assigned to the section. The president and vice president must also be non-collegiate members of the Society. Collegiate members who will be assigned to the section may be candidates for positions other than president or vice president provided they will be members of the section and will qualify for professional membership before the start of the term of office; however, they must meet these requirements in order to serve.⁴
- B. Section officers shall serve for a term of one fiscal year, to coincide with the Society's fiscal year.
- C. Officers may⁵ hold more than one office provided that there is a minimum of three⁶ elected officers of the section. No one may hold the office of president and treasurer at the same time.

Section 3. Duties^{7}**

- A. The president shall:
1. Represent the section before the public and preside at meetings of the section and its executive council;
 2. Appoint the chairs of all committees, with the approval of the executive council, except the chair of the nominating committee;
 3. Approve the appointment of all committee members, except the members of the nominating committee;
 4. Authorize the disbursement of section funds within the budget approved by the executive council;
 5. Be an authorized signatory on all section accounts;
 6. Coordinate activities and execute the business and policies of the section between meetings;
 7. Review and approve the year-end section financial report;
 8. Provide oversight and guidance to the committee chairs as assigned, and
 9. Perform other duties normally associated with the office of president or as may be assigned by the executive council or the governance documents.

- 88
- 89 B. The vice president shall:
- 90 1. Assume the duties of the president if the president is temporarily unable to serve;
- 91 2. Provide oversight and guidance to the committee chairs as assigned; and
- 92 3. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the president, the executive
- 93 council, or the governance documents.
- 94
- 95 C. The secretary shall:
- 96 1. Maintain the records of the section;
- 97 2. Provide oversight and guidance to the committee chairs as assigned; and
- 98 3. Perform other duties normally associated with the office of secretary or as may
- 99 be assigned by the president, the executive council, or the governance
- 100 documents.
- 101
- 102 D. The treasurer shall:
- 103 1. Be responsible for the collection, distribution, and safekeeping of section funds;
- 104 2. Prepare, maintain, and report as directed on the financial position of the section
- 105 in relation to the approved budget;
- 106 3. Submit a financial report to the Society in accordance with established
- 107 procedures;
- 108 4. Provide oversight and guidance to the committee chairs as assigned; and
- 109 5. Perform other duties normally associated with the office of treasurer or as may
- 110 be assigned by the president, the executive council, or the governance
- 111 documents.
- 112
- 113

114 Section 4. Nomination and Election⁸

- 115 A. The executive council shall elect at least two members to serve on the nominating
- 116 committee. The nominating committee shall select its own chair, who must be a
- 117 non-collegiate member of the Society but does not need to have been elected to the
- 118 committee by the executive council.
- 119
- 120 B. Members of the nominating committee may not become candidates during their
- 121 tenure of service on the nominating committee.
- 122
- 123 C. ⁹The nominating committee shall propose at least one qualified candidate for each of
- 124 the officer positions. The slate shall be presented to the members of the section by
- 125 mail, electronic mail, or posting on the section web site by April 15 of each year.
- 126
- 127 D. Additional candidates may be nominated by petition¹⁰, provided that:
- 128 1. The member is eligible for the position;
- 129 2. The member has given written consent to being placed on the ballot;

- 130 3. A minimum of two percent or five of the voting members of the section,
131 whichever is greater, have signed a petition or endorsed an email to place the
132 candidate's name on the ballot; and
133 4. The petition, together with the written consent, is submitted to the chair of the
134 nominating committee by April 30 or fifteen days after the slate is announced to
135 the members of the section, whichever is later.
136
137 E. The chair of the nominating committee shall arrange for the distribution of ballots to
138 occur at least twenty-one days prior to the required return date for the vote. Voting
139 may be by mail, electronic mail or web-based provided that mail ballots are sent to
140 those without electronic access. The chair of the nominating committee shall select
141 a tellers committee to receive and count the votes, and to report the results to the
142 president.
143
144 F. The voting members of the section shall elect the section officers.
145
146 G. A plurality shall elect for each office. Write-in votes for eligible candidates shall be
147 allowed. In the event of a tie, the election for that position shall be determined by lot,
148 conducted by the chair of the nominating committee.
149

150 Section 6. Vacancies

- 151 A. A vacancy in the office of president shall be filled by the vice president for the
152 remainder of the term.
153
154 B. A vacancy in the office of vice president¹¹, secretary, or treasurer shall be filled by
155 election by the executive council.
156
157

158 **ARTICLE IV – EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**¹²

159 Section 1 Composition

160 The governing body of the section shall be the executive council. The officers of the
161 section shall constitute the executive council.¹³ An individual holding more than one
162 position on the executive council has only one vote and counts as a single person for
163 the purpose of a quorum.
164

165 Section 2. Duties

166 The executive council shall:

- 167 1. Transact the business of the section;
168 2. Implement section policies as determined by the membership;
169 3. Elect the members of the nominating committee;
170 4. Approve the appointment of all committee chairs, except the chair of the
171 nominating committee; and
172 5. Approve the section budget and authorize expenditures not included in the
173 approved budget.

174
175 **Section 3. Conducting Business**

176 A. The executive council shall meet regularly to conduct the business of the section
177 upon the call of the section president or by written petition of at least one-third of the
178 voting members of the executive council.

179
180 B. Unless otherwise restricted by law or these bylaws, the executive council may also
181 conduct business by telephone, mail, electronic mail, fax, or other electronic devices.

182
183 **Section 4. Quorum**

184 A. A quorum shall be a majority of the members of the executive council then in office,
185 but not less than three, one of whom is the president or vice president.

186
187 B. No member of the executive council may vote by proxy.

188
189 **Section 5. Removal**

190 Any officer may be removed for cause by a vote of two-thirds of the voting members of
191 the section responding to a recall ballot, provided that votes have been received from at
192 least the number of members required for a quorum. Such removal shall be effective
193 immediately upon the recording of such vote. Removal procedures not covered by law
194 or these bylaws shall be developed and approved by the executive council.

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196
197 **ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES**

198 A. The executive council may establish committees as the need arises¹⁴.

199
200 B. The chairs of the committees shall be appointed by the president. The members of
201 the committees shall be appointed by the chair of the committee with the approval of
202 the president.

203
204 C. The executive council shall prepare a description of the duties and reporting
205 relationships of each committee.

206
207 D. Each committee chair shall present a status report to the membership when
208 requested by the executive council contact. Each committee chair shall also prepare
209 an annual report providing input to the section's final report to the Society.

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211
212 **ARTICLE VI – DISSOLUTION****

213 In the event of dissolution, the assets of the section shall be first used to pay any
214 remaining debts, after which any remaining funds shall be disbursed to SWE sections,
215 the SWE members at large organization, the Society, or SWE endowment funds as
216 recommended by the section's executive council and approved by the SWE board of
217 directors.

ARTICLE VII – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the parliamentary authority specified in the Society bylaws shall govern this section in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the section may adopt.

ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENT**

- A. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a meeting or of the ballots received prior to the stated deadline.
- B. Amendments may be proposed by a majority of the executive council or five voting members of the section. All proposed amendments must be submitted to the secretary.
- C. Written notice, delivered either by mail or electronically, must be given to all members of the section at least thirty days prior to the date of the meeting or the specified date for voting to be completed.
- D. Amendments adopted by the section shall be sent to the Society secretary according to established procedures, and shall become effective after approved by the Society secretary.
- E. Required sections are marked with a double asterisk (**) and conform to the professional section bylaws template. Changes to these sections of the professional section bylaws template shall become part of these bylaws upon approval of the Society¹⁵. The section secretary shall incorporate such changes into the section bylaws and forward the updated bylaws to the Society secretary within six months of notification of the change to the section bylaws template.

¹ Sections may change this to use a number or percent that is appropriate for the size of the section. Do not change both the number and percentage.

² Sections may change this to use a number or percent that is appropriate for the size of the section. Quorum needs to be greater than what just the officers could meet on their own. Do not change both the number and percentage.

³ The officers shown here (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) are the minimum positions. "Secretary" and "Treasurer" titles must not be converted to "Vice President" titles. President elect may be added or replace vice president. The secretary and treasurer positions may be officially combined (otherwise this option already exists in the next paragraph of this section.) Other officer positions, such as multiple vice presidents or multiple secretaries, or directors, may be added as deemed appropriate to

carry out the activities of the section. Titles like Historian, Webmaster, Girl Scout Coordinator, Social Coordinator, and Fundraising Coordinator are not appropriate officer titles. If having multiple vice presidents, the bylaws must include a means for identifying who takes over in the absence of the president and in a vacancy in the presidency. It is not acceptable to have the executive council make this selection. If multiple secretaries are added, one of them must be designated to handle bylaws revision in Article VIII. All positions elected by the membership must be included in the bylaws.

⁴ This is the preferred wording to enable flexibility should the section need it. By using this language, collegiate members who expect to be members of the professional section and qualify for professional membership before the start of the term of office may be nominated (either by the nominating committee or by petition) for positions other than president or vice president, but to serve they must be elected and meet the eligibility requirements prior to the start of the term of office. Collegiate members attending graduate school and not employed full time in an engineering position or a field related to engineering will also be able to hold office in the section if they are members of the section and otherwise qualify for professional membership in the Society. If the section wishes to restrict candidates only to non-collegiate members of the Society assigned to the section, change this paragraph to read "The officers must be non-collegiate members of the Society who are assigned to the section. All candidates must meet these eligibility requirements at the time of nomination."

⁵ This is the preferred wording to enable flexibility should the section need it. Some sections may want to prohibit officers from holding more than one office at a time. Then change this paragraph to simply read "Officers shall hold only one office at a time."

⁶ If a section adds several officers to their EC then in the EC article the minimum number for quorum needs to be increased; the number here in this article should match to avoid potential shortfalls in meeting quorum.

⁷ Additional duties may be added as needed to define the organizational structure. These additional duties should not be procedural in nature. The template duties are intentionally generic; the specifics of these duties should be covered in a procedures document. This allows greater flexibility for the section. When adding a duty that you feel is absolutely required, add it prior to the last one in the template, so that "Perform such other duties ..." is always the last one listed.

⁸ This is a highly recommended process for nominations and elections; the section may choose to adopt it or modify it, as long as the rights of all members are upheld and the provisions are in the section's bylaws. If modifying this section, follow the same outline as the template. Deadline dates should be chosen to conform to the section's business schedule, keeping in mind that there is a fifteen-day period allowed for petition candidates and that new section officers must be reported to Society headquarters by the end of the fiscal year. Any major changes to this section will most likely have to be reviewed by the parliamentarian before the can be approved.

⁹ If section utilizes a business meeting to vote in person, wording here may be: "The slate shall be posted on the section website at least seventeen days prior to the April business meeting and additional candidates may be nominated at the April business meeting from the floor."

¹⁰ If section utilizes a business meeting to vote in person, petition wording may be replaced with nominations are taken from the floor at the April business meeting. If the floor nominee isn't present, her/his written acceptance could still be accepted.

¹¹ If section has a president elect, need to add language similar to what is used in the Society bylaws for president elect.

¹² These provisions are minimums and cannot be removed. Additional provisions may be added provided that they are not in conflict with the Society's bylaws.

¹³ Other elected positions may be added to the executive council, such as directors. If other elected positions are added, be sure other sections of the bylaws are revised accordingly. May add, "Committee chairs shall be non-voting members of the executive council."

¹⁴ No standing committees are included in the template, as they are not required for defining the essential structure and flow of authority within the section. Committees are very important in the operation of the section, and can be better defined in a separate document, such as a procedures document, which can be easily revised as the needs of the section require.

¹⁵ The template will not change unless (1) the Society bylaws change and the template change is for compliance, or (2) the template is changed by the board following at least 60 days notice to all sections of an anticipated change.