

# **International Sociological Association**

## **Research Committee on Sociology of Mental Health and Illness RC49**

### **Statutes**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Statutes were approved by participating members at the Research Committee business meeting at the ISA World Congress in Bielefeld, Germany, 1994. Subsequent revisions were approved by the RC49 members participating at the Research Committee business meeting at the ISA World Congress in Yokohama, Japan, 2014.

#### **ARTICLE ONE: PURPOSES**

1.1 The Mental Health and Illness Research Committee (hereafter called the Research Committee) is a non-profit constituent body of the International Association of Sociology (ISA) as defined by Article Four of the Statutes of the ISA. The Research Committee provides a structure for scholarly disquisition and research collaboration at the international level. The Research Committee does not endorse a particular definition of mental health and illness. Rather, the term is meant to be inclusive, ranging from serious psychiatric disorders to subjective feelings of well-being.

1.2 Research and teaching relevant to the Research Committee include all research and theories pertaining to the distribution of psychiatric and substance use disorders and problems among various population groups social and cultural factors associated with psychiatric and substance use disorders behaviors or actions taken by groups to maintain, enhance, or restore mental health or cope with mental illness, substance use disorders or resulting disability mental health professionals and the organization, finance, and delivery of mental health care services psychiatric and mental health practice as a social and cultural institution related to other institutions people's attitudes and beliefs, and social representations concerning mental health and illness, substance use and abuse, disability, and mental health care providers and organizations and cultural values and responses with respect to mental health and illness, substance use and abuse, and disability.

#### **ARTICLE TWO: OBJECTIVES**

2.1 As the only international organization of mental health and illness research officially recognized for sociologists, the Research Committee strives to include scholars from as many countries of the world as possible, and with backgrounds and philosophies that reflect the diversity of the field of mental health and illness.

- 2.2 To achieve the ends described here, the Research Committee purports:
- (a) to develop and maintain collaborative contacts between scholars involved in the research and teaching in the field of mental health and illness, and substance use and abuse,
  - (b) to facilitate the international dissemination and exchange of information on significant development in the socio-cultural research in mental health and illness and related areas,
  - (c) to facilitate and promote international meetings and research in the field of mental health and illness, and substance use and abuse,
  - (d) to increase the level of activities in under-represented countries and regions of the world through the Research Committee and its facilities.

### **ARTICLE THREE: MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 The Research Committee consists of an Executive Board, an Advisory Board, and individual members. The membership of the Research Committee is open to any scholar who is involved in research or teaching in mental health and illness and related areas as defined in Article 1.2, and who is accepted by the Executive Board. All Research Committee regular members in good standing share the same voting rights.

3.2 Members shall either be regular members or affiliated members

- (a) regular members shall be individuals or institutions in good standing within the ISA
- (b) affiliated members shall be individuals or institutions interested in the activities of RC49, who are not members of the ISA.

3.3 All **regular and affiliated members** of RC49 shall be entitled to vote as individual members in the discussions about organizational matters at the General Meetings according to the principle "one member, one vote" that means that one institution also has one vote.

3.4 All **regular and affiliated members** of RC49 shall be entitled to

- (a) participate in the scientific activities of the Research Committee
- (b) receive the newsletter issued by RC49 free of charge

3.5 All regular and affiliated members of RC49 shall be obliged to

- (a) uphold the present Statutes of RC49 and to adhere to the stipulations of the present Statutes,
- (b) conscientiously fulfill the tasks entrusted to them by the General Meeting or other bodies of RC49,
- (c) pay their fee for the respective period (i.e. 4 years). This fee shall be fixed by the Board of the Research Committee at each General Meeting for both individual members and organisations. The respective amounts to be paid shall be specified in the By-Laws to the present Statutes.

## **ARTICLE FOUR: EXECUTIVE BOARD**

4.1 The Executive Board, consisting of Officers and other Executive Board members, shall have the task of directing and carrying out the organizational responsibilities and day-to-day work of the Research Committee. All regular and affiliated members are eligible to be candidates for the Executive Board. All regular members are eligible to vote in the election of the Executive Board.

4.2

(a) The Executive Board will have a minimum of eight members: President, Past President, two Vice Presidents, Secretary/Treasurer, and other Board members. Members of the Executive Board must be from at least 5 different countries.

(b) President. The President presides at Executive Board meetings and Research Committee business meetings, oversees all operations of the Boards and the Committees, and regularly communicates with Board members and other Research Committee members about the Research Committee's agenda and operations. The President serves on the Nominations Committee and serves as the Program Chair of the Research Committee at the ISA quadrennial congress. The President also serves as an ISA Research Council member representing the Research Committee and performs duties accordingly. The President may delegate selected tasks and responsibilities to other Executive Board members at his/her discretion.

(c) Past President. The Past President regularly communicates with the President to ensure continuity in the Research Committee's agenda and operations, chairs the Nominations Committee, and serves on the Advisory Board ex officio.

(d) Vice Presidents. One Vice President serves as Program Co-Chair for the Research Committee at the ISA quadrennial congress, appoints session organizers and organizes paper submissions into sessions. The other Vice President initiates and coordinates interim conferences with conference organizers and research sections with research section chairs. The Vice Presidents monitor the agenda and operations of the Research Committee in accordance with the Statutes.

(e) Secretary/Treasurer. The Secretary/Treasurer keeps minutes of business meetings of the Research Committee, collects membership fees and disburses funds with the approval of the Executive Board, receives applications for membership, maintains and updates the mailing list, and communicates a report of the Research Committee's budget to Executive Committee members every two years.

(f) Other Board Members. Those Executive Board members not serving as officers function as brokers between the President, Vice-President and Secretary/Treasurer and members of the Research Committee in the region s/he represents. Each member takes an active role in the organization of the ISA quadrennial congress and other Research Committee activities. Duties designated to the President or Vice Presidents may be performed by other Executive Board members with approval from the Board.

4.3 Nomination Procedure

(a) To ensure participation of all regular and affiliated members, nomination shall be done by mail or email. To this end, the Secretary shall prepare a form to be sent to all

**regular and affiliated members** at least twenty weeks before the election day together with a list of all **regular members** of RC49.

(b) All **regular and affiliated members** of RC49 shall be entitled to nominate candidates for the Board. Nominated candidates shall be **regular members** of RC49. They shall confirm their preparedness to accept the respective position on the Board in case they are elected and to remain a regular member in good standing for the duration of their mandate, and shall return the nomination form to the Secretary, together with a brief curriculum vitae.

(c) The Secretary shall prepare a ballot listing all nominated candidates along with the respective positions on the Board. In case of several nominations for the same position, the nominated candidates shall be listed in alphabetical order. The ballot shall be sent to all **regular and affiliated members** of RC49 by mail at least ten weeks before the election day.

(d) **Regular and affiliated members** shall send their ballot by mail or email to the designated electoral officer(s). Ballots received later than two weeks before the beginning of the World Congress shall not be counted.

4.4 Terms. In order to be congruent with the duration of the ISA President, the RC president will change every four years. Executive Board members serve for a term of four years. They may be elected to two successive terms, provided that at least a portion of the Executive Board is replaced every four years. No Board members are allowed to serve over eight consecutive years, unless unanimously approved by the Executive Board. Such an approval is reserved for acting Board membership so that prolonged vacancy is avoided. Each member of the Board must at all times be: (1) a member in good standing of the ISA in accordance with the ISA Statutes, and (2) a member in good standing of RC49.

4.5 Temporary Vacancies in the Board between consecutive ISA World Congresses may be filled by appointment by the President, in accordance with ISA Statute 4.5. The places of any Board member not in good standing with either the ISA or RC49 may be declared temporarily vacant by the President, at the President's discretion, and the vacancy filled according to ISA Statute 4.5.

4.6 Presidential Vacancy. One of the Board members, identified by the Board, will assume the responsibilities of the President of the Board in the case of the death, incapacitation, resignation, or other inability of the incumbent to carry out the responsibilities of the office of the President.

4.7 Members of RC49 are obliged to pay their fees for the respective period (i.e. four years). The fee for the different types of membership shall be fixed by the Board at each General Meeting. The membership fees shall be specified in the By-Laws to the present Statutes.

4.8 Financial Statement. A statement of financial affairs will be given by the Treasurer every four years to the Board of RC49 and to the Business Meeting Assembly. The

Treasurer must be discharged of their financial responsibilities by the Business Meeting Assembly.

## **ARTICLE FIVE: ADVISORY BOARD**

5.1 Duties. Advisory Board members, comprising of a minimum of five senior scholars from at least four different countries and the Past President, ex officio are consulted regularly between ISA congresses on nominations, the Congress program, interim conferences, publications, and other Research Committee activities.

5.2 Election. The Advisory Board of the Research Committee is composed of a minimum of five senior scholars from at least four different countries and the Past President of the Research Committee, ex officio. The Advisory Board is nominated by the Nominations Committee of the Executive Board. The Advisory Board is elected by the Executive Board. Except for the Past President, no current member of the Executive Board may serve on the Advisory Board.

5.3 The Advisory Board members are given an honorary membership status at the time of election and are exempt from due Research Committee requirements.

5.4 Term: Advisory Board members serve for a period of four years, and may be elected successively.

## **ARTICLE SIX: COMMITTEES**

6.1 Committees within the Mental Health and Illness Research Committee are developed to fulfill specific functions of the Research Committee that may not require continuous participation for four years. In addition to ad hoc committees that may be voted into being by the Executive Board, the Research Committee will maintain two standing committees, the Nominations and the Publications committees.

6.2 Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee consists of the President, who chairs the Committee, the Past President, and two Executive Board members appointed by the President. The Nominations Committee nominates candidates to serve as Executive Board officers prior to the ISA quadrennial congress, prepares and performs the election at or following the congress, and announces the election results. The Nominations Committee also nominates an ISA Research Council alternate from the members of the Executive Board. Finally, the Nominations Committee nominates members of the Advisory Board in coordination with other members of the Executive Board.

6.3 Publications Committee. The Publications Committee consists of either the President or a Vice-President and at least two other members of the Executive Board. The Committee will select one of its members to chair. The chair will function as Editor-in-Chief of the Newsletter. The Publications Committee oversees operations of the Research Committee's Newsletter, and coordinates publications originating from the Research

Committee's quadrennial congress, interim conferences and workshops, and other scientific activities. The Publications Committee also is responsible for completing amendments to the Statutes as required.

## **ARTICLE SEVEN: MEETINGS**

7.1 Meetings are major vehicles by which to promote the Research Committee's objectives. Members' active participation is strongly encouraged.

7.2 ISA World Congress of Sociology. The Research Committee organizes sessions on mental health and illness at quadrennial congresses of the ISA. The sessions include both scientific presentation sessions and business meetings.

7.3 Interim Regional Conferences. Between ISA congresses, the Research Committee organizes interim research conferences on specific topics approved by the Executive Board. These interim conferences should represent the varied research interests of members from as many countries of the world as possible. Research sections may be organized around specific interests of the Research Committee members, or to establish working relationships between the Research Committee and other associations. The interim conference program chair reports a summary of the conference and submits conference proceedings, if available, to the chair of the Publications Committee after the conference.

7.4 Business meetings of the Research Committee will be conducted in a manner consistent with Articles 3 through 5 of the By-Laws of the ISA, except where these Statutes provide otherwise. In procedural matters not described therein. Research Committee meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order at the discretion of the President.

## **ARTICLE EIGHT: VOTING**

8.1 All regular and affiliated members both of the Research Committee and the ISA are eligible to vote. Votes taken by the Research Committee are decided by a simple majority of eligible participating members who attend a meeting in which voting takes place, or respond to a mailed ballot sent to all eligible members, except where otherwise provided for in the Statutes.

8.2 General membership voting at a meeting will be conducted by a show of hands, unless a motion among participating members is passed to conduct a secret ballot for the particular issue being decided.

8.3 Voting on Board issues, such as amendment ratification, Advisory Board membership, and filling vacancies, will be permitted by telephone or by mail for those Executive Board members unable to attend a meeting. However, the President may set a limit on the amount of time that may elapse before a vote is considered final.

## **ARTICLE NINE: AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES AND BYLAWS**

9.1 Any proposal for amendments to the Statutes or By Laws may be made by any member of the Board, or by any five members in good standing of RC49.

9.2 Such a proposal must be received by the Board at least one year before the World Congress.

9.3 The proposal will be circulated among all RC49 members, together with an explanation of its rationale, at least six months before the next World Congress. The Board will be entitled to propose amendments, to be circulated at least two months before the World Congress.

9.4 The proposed amendments will be put to the General Meeting and adopted if approved by a two-thirds majority.

## **ARTICLE TEN: NEWSLETTER**

The Board shall provide a newsletter or equivalent to the membership at least twice annually.

## **ARTICLE ELEVEN: RESEARCH COUNCIL DELEGATE**

The Board shall identify (1) the Research Committee's delegate to the ISA Research Council and other organizations and (2) the alternate delegate to the Research Council.

### **By Laws**

#### **Membership Fee**

In line with ISA practice, RC49 membership fees are collected for a period of four years. The membership fees are fixed as follows: US \$40 for members from category A countries, and US \$20 for members from all other countries and students. For a list of category A countries see currently valid ISA membership form.