



# **Executive Council & Division Chair Handbook**

**2025**

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# Executive Council Handbook

Developed by the Leadership Development Committee

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## Welcome to the Executive Council (EC)

Congratulations on becoming a member of the Executive Council! This handbook provides some information that you might find helpful as you move into your new role.

### Some HFES Basics

HFES operates through a partnership between staff and HFES members who volunteer their time. Volunteers are drawn from the membership of HFES. Staff members are employed by Smithbucklin and HFES has a contract with them to provide support to the Society. The office is located in Washington DC (although some staff are located in other Smithbucklin offices) and people refer to the DC office as the “Central Office.”

On the volunteer side, the Executive Council or EC runs the Society. The EC is composed of 12 individuals, each of whom serves a 3-year term. Each year, HFES members elect 4 individuals: A president, a secretary-treasurer, and two members at large. The individuals elected as president and secretary-treasurer serve one year as “elect” (e.g., president-elect), a second year in the role (e.g., president), and the third year as “immediate past” (e.g., immediate past president). At-large members also serve three-year terms, so two are in their first year, two are in their second, and two are in their third. The role of the EC is to develop strategic goals for the Society and establish mechanisms to achieve those objectives (typically through committees, TGs, task forces, etc.).

On the staff side, the Society is headed by an Executive Director, whose role is to implement the policies and procedures established by the Executive Council under the direction of the President and the Secretary-Treasurer. The Executive Director is supported by staff members who have defined areas of expertise. Information on the current Executive Director and areas of expertise for individual staff members can be found [here](#).

In addition to the Executive Council and staff, the activities of the Society are organized into Divisions: Scientific Publications, Technical Standards, Internal Affairs, Education, and Outreach. The organizational chart showing the activities governed by the EC and by the Divisions can be seen [here](#).

The roles and responsibilities of members and employees of the Society who are serving on any group within the Society are governed by two documents: our [by-laws](#) and our [Operating Rules](#) (or ORs). The by-laws are a legal document that sets forth the key rules and regulations that govern HFES. Bylaws can only be changed through a vote of the entire membership. Operating rules describe how committees, divisions, etc. work on a day-to-day basis. Operating rules can be amended by a vote of the Executive Council.

### What does the EC do?

As the Board of Directors for HFES, the EC is responsible for:

- Managing the Society’s affairs
- Determining the strategic direction of the Society
- Establishing policies for the Society
- Identifying resource needs
- Maintaining fiduciary responsibility
- Ensuring that the actions taken are legal

They do this through regular meetings and the exchange of information through various channels (outlined below) throughout the year.

## Roles

All members of the EC are considered “directors” of the Society, akin to a Board of Directors for a non-profit association. As such, there are several responsibilities that you are taking on, as outlined in this PowerPoint presentation (and you can reach out to the Executive Director should you have any questions about this).

In addition, there are specific duties associated with each position on EC. Appendix A provides a list of the specific duties associated with each of the following roles: president, president-elect, past-president, secretary-treasurer, secretary-treasurer-elect, immediate past secretary-treasurer, and member at large.

## Operations

### Meetings

The Executive Council meets with HFES staff members every month (virtually) and twice a year in person (for two days each time). Those meetings are where the Society leadership makes decisions about our annual activities and budget and where they make plans for the upcoming year. Meetings use Robert’s Rules of Order (see Appendix B for a summary of relevant information) and follow an agenda that is shared before the meeting, along with relevant materials needed for an informed discussion of the issues. Individuals in all meetings are asked to act within our government culture (see Appendix C).

### Communications Tools

The EC makes use of several forms of communication:

- Email
- the Executive Council Community (on HFES Connect)
- Board Effect

As a member of the EC, you will be subscribed to the EC Community. You will also receive an invitation to create an account on Board Effect. The agendas for all EC meetings and minutes will be found on Board Effect. Once you have been elected to the EC, someone from Smithbucklin will reach out with instructions on how to access Board Effect.

## Appendix A: Specific Duties for Each Role

### Duties of the President

- Serve as Chief Executive Officer of the Society
- Preside over all meetings of the Society and Executive Council
- Appoint or direct the appointment of all committee chairs not otherwise specified in the by-laws, with the advice and consent of the Council
- Supervise the Executive Director in the management of the non-fiscal business of the Society
- Represent HFES to other societies and organizations
- Prepare to deliver the keynote address at the annual meeting when their term as president ends.
- Prepare and participate in HFES Town Halls (quarterly)
- Attend monthly EC conference calls
  - Review all material on the agenda, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend special EC conference calls
- Respond to issues that require quick response from S-T, Executive Director
- Attend mid-year EC meetings (typically 2 days over a weekend in April)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend the annual EC meeting (typically 2 days before the start of the annual meeting)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Chair of the Executive Committee
- Chair of the Arnold M. Small and Betty M. Sanders President's Distinguished Service Award Committee
- Member of the Finance and Budget Committee
- Chair of the IEA Representatives Committee and attend IEA meetings
- Member of the Nominations and Elections Committee

### Duties of the President-Elect

- Act as an understudy to the president in preparation for assuming the duties of the president
- Assume the duties of the President during the President's temporary absence
  - E.g., Chair EC meetings in the absence of the president
- Chair the Policy and Planning Committee
  - Appoint one member to the Policy and Planning Committee who will serve a three-year term.
- Chair the HFES Representatives and Liaisons Committee
- Chair the Strategic Planning Day at the mid-year EC Meeting
- Member of the Executive Committee
- Member of the Finance and Budget Committee
- Member of the IEA Representatives Committee and attend IEA meetings
- Member of the Nominations and Elections Committee
- Member of the Arnold M. Small and Betty M. Sanders President's Distinguished Service Award Committee
- Attend monthly EC conference calls
  - Review all material on the agenda, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend special EC conference calls
- Respond to issues that require quick response from the President, S-T, Executive Director
- Attend mid-year EC meetings (typically 2 days over a weekend in April)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend the annual EC meeting (typically 2 days before the start of the annual meeting)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.

- Recruit and nominate chairs of committees for the presidential year.
- Report on plans for the coming year at the Annual Business Meeting of the Society during the HFES Annual Meeting

### Duties of the Immediate Past President

- Deliver keynote address at the annual meeting where they become immediate past president.
- Attend monthly EC conference calls
  - Review all material on the agenda, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend special EC conference calls
- Respond to issues that require quick response from the President, S-T, Executive Director
- Attend mid-year EC meetings (typically 2 days over a weekend in April)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend the annual EC meeting (typically 2 days before the start of the annual meeting)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.

### Duties of the Secretary-Treasurer

- Chair the Finance and Budget Committee
  - work closely with the Executive Director to prepare for budget presentation to EC before mid-year and annual meetings (virtual)
  - review monthly financial statements (email)
  - review/meet to discuss budget request exceptions as needed (virtual)
  - review external audit presentation (virtual)
  - prepare mid-year committee report (February)
  - review investment policy and actions (~1/year, virtual)
  - know financial standing when reviewing special budget requests
- Chair the Crisis Management Committee
  - work closely with ED and other relevant individuals (e.g., Prestige is sometimes involved when meeting planning/contracts are involved) to gather financial data relevant to the current situation.
  - survey membership as necessary
  - prepare scenarios to inform decision-making, etc.
- Attend monthly EC conference calls (work with ED to prepare for budget items on the agenda)
- Attend special EC conference calls (respond to issues that require quick response from the President and S-T and Executive Director)
- Attend mid-year EC meetings (review finance and budget report prepared by ED, present overview of financial position, contribute to deliberations in decision making,
- Attend annual EC meetings (review finance and budget report prepared by ED, present overview of financial position, contribute to deliberations in decision making,
- Attend mid-year division report meetings (contribute to deliberations of special budget requests from committees and task force)
- Submit biannual Finance & Budget Committee report (February/September)
- Submit biannual Crisis Management Committee Report (February/September)

### Special Note:

- Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for the Secretary-Treasurer to receive phishing emails that look like they are coming from the HFES president (maybe even the Executive Director) and ask for money to be transferred to another organization/entity as a donation or to pay a bill. Please be sure to check the email address these emails are coming from and to double-check with the President and Executive Director. We do not engage in money transfers via email.

## Duties of the Secretary-Treasurer-Elect

- Chairs the Nominations and Election Committee (this committee deals with all things related to the nominations/elections process for the Executive Council)
  - -work with the Executive Director to send out a call for EC nominations (late April, early May) -contact nominees for confirmation and bio sketch and platform material (June) -prepare ballot (June-July)
  - -send out a ballot to members (July)
  - -count votes and get 2 other committee members to help verify the count (August) -contact winners to ask if accept the position (August)
  - -inform responsibilities and perks of serving on EC, etc. (August)
  - -prepare and submit the mid-year committee report (February)
- Recommend any edits to Operating Rules related to Nominations/Elections
- Serve on the Finance and Budget Committee (this committee deals with the Society's aspects of the Society's current and projected budget and investments)
  - review monthly financial statements (email)
  - review/meet to discuss budget request exceptions as needed (virtual)
  - Meet on occasion to discuss the budget presentation with ED (pre-midyear/pre-annual meeting, virtual)
- Serve on the Crisis Management Committee (this committee typically creates/reviews a plan for emergencies. In the past this was something simple like ensuring there was a plan in case there was an emergency at an HFES meeting (e.g. someone has a medical event), more recently it had a significantly larger role with the pandemic and has included not only health considerations but also dealing with the financial implications of changing/canceling meetings/contracts/etc.) - attend committee meetings (# of meetings depends on the current situation)
- Attend monthly EC conference calls (1 hour/monthly, virtual)
- Attend special EC conference calls (infrequent, e.g., special EC topic, virtual)
- Attend mid-year EC meetings (a weekend in the spring, typically around the time of the Healthcare Symposium. May be onsite the weekend before the HCS or maybe a different weekend at the Smithbucklin headquarters in Washington, DC).
- Attend Annual EC meetings (Sunday, in-person or virtual if needed)
- Attend Mid-year Division Report meetings (virtual)

## Duties of the Immediate Past Secretary-Treasurer

- Serve on the Finance and Budget Committee
- Serve on Crisis Management Committee
- Attend monthly EC conference calls
  - Review all material on the agenda, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend special EC conference calls
- Respond to issues that require quick response from the President, S-T, Executive Director
- Attend mid-year EC meetings (typically 2 days over a weekend in April)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend the annual EC meeting (typically 2 days before the start of the annual meeting)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.

## Duties of Members-at-Large

- Attend monthly EC conference calls
  - Review all material on the agenda, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend special EC conference calls

- Respond to issues that require quick response from the President, S-T, Executive Director
- Attend mid-year EC meetings (typically 2 days over a weekend in April)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.
- Attend the annual EC meeting (typically 2 days before the start of the annual meeting)
  - Review all submitted reports, contribute to deliberations and decision-making.

## Duties of Division Chairs

- Coordinate and manage the activities in the division they chair
- Meet regularly with chairs of committees within the division.
- Serve as a liaison between the Executive Council and the committees within their division.
  - convey discussion and action items from each Council meeting and strategic direction to their committees and task forces
  - convey information in the opposite direction (committee output, both ongoing activities and initiatives in response to strategic direction) to Council
  - coordinate committees within their division to avoid duplication of effort and maximize joint efforts
- Serve as a liaison to other division chairs for activities that span divisions
- Attend EC Meetings. This includes monthly video conferences, both days of the annual Executive Council meeting, and the mid-year Executive Council meeting (to include the strategic planning day)
  - NOTE: Failure to attend at least part of 2 consecutive “face-to-face” (annual and mid-year) Executive Council meetings for other than good cause shall be sufficient cause to consider that the division chair may be failing to perform the duties of office.



## Appendix B: Tip Sheet for Using Robert's Rules of Order in a Meeting

### Tip Sheet for the Business of Meetings

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#### Types of Motions:

1. **Main Motion:** Introduce a new item
2. **Subsidiary Motion (what HFES calls a "friendly amendment"):** Change or affect how to handle a main motion (vote on this before the main motion)
3. **Privileged Motion:** Urgent or important matter unrelated to pending business
4. **Incidental Motion:** Questions procedure of other motions (must consider before the other motion)
5. **Motion to Table:** Kills a motion
6. **Motion to Postpone:** Delays a vote (can reopen debate on the main motion)

#### Every Motion Has 6 Steps:

1. **Motion:** A member rises or raises a hand to signal the chairperson.
2. **Second:** Another member seconds the motion.
3. **Restate motion:** The chairperson restates the motion.
4. **Debate:** The members debate the motion.
5. **Vote:** The chairperson restates the motion, and then first asks for affirmative votes, and then negative votes.
6. **Announce the vote:** The chairperson announces the result of the vote and any instructions.

**TIP!** If the board is in obvious agreement, the chairperson may save time by stating, "If there is no objection, we will adopt the motion to..." Then wait for any objections. Then say, "Hearing no objections, (state the motion) is adopted." And then state any instructions. If a member objects, first ask for debate, then vote, and then announce the vote.

#### Requesting Points of Something

Certain situations need attention during the meeting, but they don't require a motion, second, debate, or voting. It's permissible to state a point during a meeting where the

chairperson needs to handle a situation right away. Board members can declare a Point of Order, Point of Information, Point of Inquiry, or Point of Personal Privilege.

- **Point of Order:** Draws attention to a breach of rules, improper procedure, breaching of established practices, etc.
- **Point of Information:** A member may need to bring up an additional point or additional information (in the form of a non-debatable statement) so that the other members can make fully informed votes.
- **Point of Inquiry:** A member may use a point of inquiry to ask for clarification in a report to make better voting decisions.
- **Point of Personal Privilege:** A member may use a point of personal privilege to address the physical comfort of the setting such as temperature or noise. Members may also use it to address the accuracy of published reports or the accuracy of a member's conduct.

A member may make a motion to reconsider something that was already disposed of; however, the reconsidered motion may not be subsequently reconsidered. A motion to reconsider must be made during the same meeting and can extend to a meeting that lasts for more than one day.

No motion is made to call the meeting to order. The Chair just calls the meeting to order and asks for a roll call.

When it appears that there is no further business in a meeting of a society that normally goes through a complete order of business at each regular meeting, the chair, instead of waiting or calling for a motion to adjourn, can ask, "Is there any further business?" If there is no response, the chair can then say, "Since there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned."

Action	What to Say	Can interrupt speaker?	Need a Second?	Can be Debated?	Can be Amended?	Votes Needed
Introduce main motion	"I move to..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	"I move to amend the motion by...." (add or strike words or both)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Move item to committee	"I move that we refer the matter to committee."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Postpone item	"I move to postpone the matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Object to procedure	"Point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decision
Recess the meeting	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Adjourn the meeting	"I move to adjourn the meeting."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Request information	"Point of information."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Overrule the chair's ruling	"I move to overrule the chair's ruling."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Extend the allotted time	"I move to extend the time by ____ minutes."	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
Enforce the rules or point out incorrect procedure	"Point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Table a Motion	"I move to table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority

Verify voice vote with count	"I call for a division."	No	No	No	No	No vote
Object to considering some undiplomatic matter	"I object to consideration of this matter..."	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Take up a previously tabled item	"I move to take from the table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
*Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move to reconsider our action to..."	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move to suspend the rules and consider..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Close the meeting for executive session	"I move to go into executive session."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Personal preference- noise, room temperature, distractions	"Point of privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	No vote

## Appendix C: Governance Culture Statement

# Governance Culture Statement

### ***Shared Attitudes, Values, Goals, and Practices***

The HFES Executive Council has committed to the values and behaviors reflected in the statements below. We:

- Listen with intent; engage in respectful dialog with kindness where every opinion matters; emerge as one voice
- Support innovation, strategic thinking, and sound management of Society resources
- Value trust and foster collaboration between Executive Council members, management, and committees
- Foster an environment where all feel comfortable sharing their opinions and experiences
- Value diversity, equity, and inclusion and cultivate a welcoming environment
- Enjoy combining Society business with fun
- Are informed, engaged, open, and prepared to actively participate in Council and Society business
- Challenge ourselves to innovative thinking
- Make decisions that are evidence-based / knowledge-based
- Honor the past while embracing future opportunities
- Demonstrate integrity in all actions and decisions

The Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, founded in 1957, is the world's largest scientific association of human factors/ergonomics professionals. HFES serves the needs of members and the public by promoting and advancing the discovery and exchange of knowledge concerning the characteristics of human beings that apply to the design of systems, products, tools, and environments of all kinds. HFES advances the science and practice of designing for people in systems through knowledge exchange, collaboration, and advocacy.

HFES envisions a future of systems that work for humans by design, grounded in science.

***Approved March 20, 2022***