

BYLAWS

Consortium of Higher Education Centers for Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies

ARTICLE I NAME & PURPOSE

The Consortium of Higher Education Centers for Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies (hereafter “Consortium”) endeavors to be the primary assembly and professional organization of center directors committed to securing, integrating, and advancing studies of Holocaust, genocide and human rights within the higher education landscape.

ARTICLE II HISTORY, MISSION, AND VALUES

SECTION 1: HISTORY

There are approximately two hundred centers dedicated to Holocaust, genocide and/or human rights studies located on the campuses of private and public universities and colleges across North America. These centers respond to the ongoing challenges of upholding rights, preventing genocide, and teaching the lessons of the Holocaust, thereby fulfilling an educational need for colleges and universities, their neighboring communities, and the world at large. With support for such centers at risk, and the scourges of racism, xenophobia and antisemitism rising, the value that these centers

add to the higher educational landscape is vital. However, to survive and thrive, these centers need leadership that a formal consortium provides as well as financial, institutional and research support.

In December 2017, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum assembled key stakeholders from these centers to foster exchange and to explore the potential for a more formal collaboration that would secure the existence of these centers and amplify their work. This summit determined that the establishment of a formal consortium was a viable and necessary endeavor. In December 2019, at its first regular meeting at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, members officially established the Consortium of Higher Education Centers for Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights Studies.

SECTION 2: MISSION

The Consortium provides a formal network of diverse academic centers dedicated to advancing public and scholarly research and education on the Holocaust, genocide, and human rights. It advocates on behalf of these centers in terms of individual support and legitimacy within host academic institutions, as well as in terms of content relevance at local, regional, national, and international levels. The Consortium facilitates and launches new networks and collaborations among specific centers that would share regional and state resources and develop projects, programs, and other defined initiatives. It helps cultivate and leverage opportunities and resources at the national level, including but not limited to financial support, professional development, curricular enhancements, job placement for students, and to train the next generation of Consortium leaders. Our vision is to secure these centers as vibrant research and educational programs, to integrate the subject areas across disciplines in the curricular and degree programs, and to support students and faculties who seek professional opportunities on and off campus as educators and activists in the fields of Holocaust, genocide and human rights studies.

SECTION 3: VALUES

Higher education centers dedicated to the study of Holocaust, genocide, and human rights are vital and irreplaceable resources for the colleges, universities, and communities they serve. They contribute to public education, teaching, research, policymaking, community engagement, and advocacy. The Consortium supports the growth of Holocaust, genocide, and human rights centers, endeavors to empower them, and stands for the following values:

- Recognition of fundamental equality of all people regardless of religion, ethnicity, class, nationality, gender, sex, social status, age, or (dis)ability
- Assurance of basic human rights for all people, especially among vulnerable, marginal, threatened, or at-risk communities
- Protection from harm and injustice, systemic and otherwise, especially when hateful ideologies are promoted and discriminatory acts carried out by social agents or political systems.
- Acknowledgment and commemoration of past and present traumas suffered in genocides, atrocities, and human rights abuses
- Commitment to the integrity of free and open scholarly inquiry in higher education and in public discourse

ARTICLE III

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: MEMBERSHIP

- A. Consortium membership consists of academic centers on college and university campuses dedicated to teaching, researching, and educational programming regarding the Holocaust, genocide, and/or human rights. Centers are represented by directors or their equivalents. The term “center” refers generically to a range of designations to an organization at colleges and universities whose primary purpose aligns with the mission of the Consortium. The term “director” refers generically to a range of leadership titles at higher education centers.

- B. To become a Consortium member, a director on behalf of a center will apply to the Executive Committee (hereafter “ExComm”) for approval. Applications should explain the center’s mission, programming, and main constituencies. Individuals planning to create a Holocaust, genocide, or human rights program or center are also eligible for membership. Membership is granted when over 50 percent of a quorum of the ExComm (see ARTICLE V, SECTION 8) votes in favor.
- C. Each center is represented by one (1) director (or their proxy) as a voting member.
- D. Membership requires the payment of annual dues, the amount of which is determined by the ExComm on a yearly basis.

SECTION 2: VOTING

- A. Voting members are center directors or their designated-in-writing proxy. Each center is represented by one vote. Universities with multiple centers (e.g. a Holocaust Center and a separate Human Rights Center) may have multiple voting members.
- B. Issues that require full Consortium votes will be brought by the ExComm to the general membership during the Consortium’s regularly scheduled conferences/meetings or electronically when required. All full Consortium affirmative votes require a majority (greater than 50 percent) of a Consortium quorum (30 percent of the total membership).
- C. Issues that require full Consortium votes include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Consortium Bylaw changes (see ARTICLE VII).
 - ii. Affirmation of new ExComm members.
- D. Consortium members also actively participate in the selection of regular meeting/conference locations, statements issued by the ExComm in the name of the Consortium, and other substantive issues brought to the attention of the ExComm. The ExComm will determine on a case-by-case basis whether such issues necessitate a formal vote.

SECTION 3: RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Consortium members are expected to support the mission and adhere to the values of the Consortium, to be engaged in the activities of the Consortium, to attend regularly scheduled meetings/conferences, and to avail themselves of their right to vote.
- B. Consortium members' engagement includes, but is not limited to, joining and contributing to Consortium subcommittees; networking and promoting collaboration among centers; hosting meetings; assisting the Consortium with the development of best practices for centers; informing the networks about significant developments at their campuses and communities that enhance or hinder their mission in higher education.
- C. Consortium members will inform the ExComm about changes regarding the directorship of a center or the status of a center. If directorships change, institutional voting rights are transferable.
- D. Consortium members are responsible for payment of annual dues.

SECTION 4: REMOVAL

If a Consortium member no longer meets membership qualifications outlined in ARTICLE 3, SECTION 1, membership will lapse automatically with immediate effect. With a two-thirds majority vote, the ExComm shall have the power to remove Consortium members who demonstrate inability, unwillingness, or lack of fitness to carry out their responsibilities as Consortium members. If a member voluntarily leaves the Consortium, the cancellation of membership will be immediate and will not require a vote of the ExComm.

ARTICLE IV MEETINGS

SECTION 1: GENERAL

The Consortium offers meetings for their members, including regularly scheduled conferences and virtual meetings.

SECTION 2: CONFERENCES

Regularly scheduled conferences (generally, but not exclusively biennial) are organized in collaboration with a lead local center in higher education. Locations will be determined by the ExComm in consultation with the full Consortium membership. Registration fees for the regular conferences are not included in the Consortium's annual membership fees. Regularly scheduled conferences may also be open to the public.

SECTION 3: AFFILIATIONS AND OTHER MEETINGS

The Consortium encourages and may support the formation of regional and/or international affiliates. Upon approval by the ExComm, these regional or international affiliates are expected to abide by the mission, values, and bylaws of the Consortium. Any use of the Consortium logo, name, or release of public statements in the name of the Consortium require the approval of the ExComm.

ARTICLE V

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SECTION 1: POWERS

The Executive Committee manages the day-to-day operations of the Consortium. The ExComm is headed by two Co-Chairs. It oversees various standing subcommittees, including but not limited to:

- A. Communications and social media
- B. Conference planning
- C. Fundraising and membership
- D. Resource-sharing, curricular and best practice development
- E. Advocacy and scholars-at-risk

Additional subcommittees may be established by vote of the ExComm.

SECTION 2: DUTIES

Members of the ExComm are expected to be actively engaged in the activities of the Consortium, including through participation in regular meetings and/or virtual conferences, and through sharing of resources of their home institutions where applicable and feasible. ExComm members will lead subcommittees and identify and cultivate future Consortium members.

SECTION 3: QUALIFICATIONS

ExComm members consist of current directors of academic centers on college and university campuses dedicated to teaching and researching the Holocaust, genocide, and/or human rights (see ARTICLE III, SECTION 1.A).

SECTION 4: NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- A. Except for those who serve *ex officio*, ExComm members are selected from among the Consortium's general membership.
- B. Nominations including self-nominations to the ExComm may be submitted to the current Co-Chairs. After the Co-Chairs obtain such nominations, they will be reviewed by the full ExComm. Members will be approved if they receive more than 50 percent of the votes of the ExComm.
- C. Once new ExComm members are approved by the ExComm, the nomination(s) go to the full Consortium membership for an affirmation vote (see ARTICLE III, SECTION 2.C.ii). When possible, these votes will coincide with regularly scheduled conferences/meetings. If there is a legitimate reason for why a nomination cannot wait until a regular meeting, the ExComm will organize an electronic vote of the general membership. Approval will occur when the nominee receives a majority (greater than 50 percent) of a Consortium quorum (30 percent of the total membership). Should this not occur, the ExComm may choose to revote, or to reject the nominee.

SECTION 5: TERMS

- A. ExComm members shall serve a term of four years. ExComm members may serve multiple terms. There is no formal term limit for members, but each ExComm member must be actively leading a higher education center to be eligible for membership.
- B. Co-Chairs are selected from within the ExComm and shall serve for three years (see ARTICLE IV, SECTION 9).
- C. *Ex officio* and honorary members (ARTICLE VI) shall serve at the discretion of the ExComm and have no specific term limits.

SECTION 6: NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

While the number of Executive Committee members will vary, there shall at no time be fewer than ten (10) or more than twenty (20), excluding *ex officio/honorary* members.

SECTION 7: VACANCIES AND RESIGNATIONS

Any ExComm member (excepting *ex officio* members) who misses three consecutive regularly scheduled ExComm meetings (conducted either in person or virtual/electronic) or multiple ExComm meetings and a Consortium conference may be asked to leave the Committee but may be re-nominated after one year's leave. Any ExComm member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Co-Chairs. Vacancies on the ExComm shall be filled pursuant to the procedures set forth in ARTICLE IV, SECTION 4 above.

SECTION 8: MEETINGS

The Executive Committee shall meet at least four times each year, via virtual/electronic meeting or in person. Co-Chairs are responsible for scheduling these meetings.

SECTION 9: QUORUM

A quorum of the ExComm is no less than one-half of the ExComm membership (excluding *ex officio* members). A quorum of the ExComm is required for the transaction of all business, excepting the adjournment of meetings. All actions performed or

decisions made by a majority present at a meeting at which there is a quorum shall be regarded as acts of the Consortium, except for those requiring the vote of all Consortium members (see ARTICLE III, SECTION 2).

SECTION 10: LEADERSHIP

A. CO-CHAIRS

- i. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Co-Chairs shall set the agendas and preside at all meetings of the ExComm and shall exercise and perform such other powers and duties as may be assigned by the ExComm. Co-Chairs will share equally in primary oversight of Consortium activities to ensure completion of tasks necessary to fulfill the Consortium's mission. Co-Chairs will supervise the creation of strategic planning documents, grant writing, and the activities of all standing committees. They will meet with the ExComm no less than four (4) times annually.
 1. The Co-Chairs shall consult with the ExComm in the development of meeting agendas, resolution of conflicts, and dismissals of members because of absenteeism or misconduct.
 2. In the absence of one Co-Chair, the other Co-Chair shall preside at meetings and have all such other powers and perform such duties as may be assigned by the ExComm as described above in this section.
- ii. **ELECTION AND TERMS OF OFFICE:** Co-Chairs will serve for a term of three years. Elections of ExComm Co-Chairs are conducted by the ExComm and only ExComm members have the right to vote. Co-Chair terms will be staggered to ensure continuity of leadership in the ExComm. Co-Chair nominees should have some administrative experience to be eligible.
- iii. **RESIGNATION AND UNSCHEDULED ELECTIONS:** In the event that a Chair resigns or is asked to step down by the majority vote of the ExComm, then the ExComm will immediately nominate a replacement and schedule an election. Elections and voting may be conducted electronically or in

person at a regularly scheduled conference or meeting. Candidates for Co-Chair may self-nominate or be nominated by any ExComm member.

B. SECRETARY

- i. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Secretary shall record minutes of all meetings of the ExComm and shall indicate in those minutes the time and place the ExComm convenes, the names of those in attendance, and all proceedings and business transacted thereat. The Secretary shall maintain a digital archive of all meeting minutes and transfer that archive their successor. The Secretary, or the Secretary's designee, shall give notice of all meetings to all members of the ExComm, and all regularly scheduled meetings to all general members.
- ii. **ELECTION AND TERMS OF OFFICE:** The Secretary will serve for a term of four years. Election of the Secretary is conducted by the ExComm and only ExComm members have the right to vote.

C. TREASURER

- i. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Treasurer will oversee the financial administration of the Consortium, review procedures and financial reporting, and advise the Co-Chairs and the ExComm on the financial status of the Consortium. The Treasurer acts as the primary liaison between the ExComm and any financial/fiduciary agent hired by the Consortium. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining any accounts of the Consortium and filing any forms required to maintain the Consortium's tax exempt status. The Treasurer will also act as a liaison between the Consortium and conference host chairs. The conference host will be responsible for providing a budget for the conference and all accounting including the collection of membership dues.
- ii. **ELECTION AND TERMS OF OFFICE:** The Treasurer will serve for a term of four years and may be reelected. Election of the Treasurer is conducted by the ExComm.

SECTION 11: COMPENSATION

In accordance with non-profit laws, no Co-chairs, ExComm members, or general members shall receive financial compensation for the duties and tasks as described above. They may, however, be reimbursed for costs that are directly related to the administration of the Consortium and are approved by the ExComm.

SECTION 12: AMENDMENTS

- A. Bylaws pertaining to the ExComm (ARTICLE V) may be amended or repealed at any time by the approval of two-thirds of the Executive Committee members. The ExComm must notify all Consortium members of any amendments or appeals at the next regularly scheduled conference or electronically.
- B. Each proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing to the ExComm at least 14 days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon. Members who are not physically present may vote for any proposed amendment by making their vote known in writing to the Co-Chairs. For purposes of this provision, electronic communication, such as electronic mail, will be acceptable. In all cases of absentee voting, it is the responsibility of the voting member to verify that the communication was actually received by the Co-Chairs.

ARTICLE VI

***EX OFFICIO* OR HONORARY MEMBERS**

Non-voting *ex officio* or honorary members may be invited to the Consortium and/or the Executive Committee. These individuals will be people of exceptional merit. These may include *emeritus* center directors as well as other experts and advocates relating to the areas of Holocaust, genocide, and/or human rights. *Ex officio* and honorary members are exempt from normal membership requirements, but they will be expected to provide counsel to the Consortium and to enhance the stature, credibility, visibility and/or influence of the Consortium.

ARTICLE VII
OTHER PROVISIONS

SECTION 1: AMENDMENTS TO OR REPEAL OF BYLAWS

- A. General Amendments or Repeals. Any Consortium member may propose amendment or repeal of some portion of the Consortium Bylaws. Each proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing to the ExComm at least 21 days prior to the regularly scheduled conference during which the amendment will be voted upon. Amendments or repeals shall be approved if the proposal receives the votes of at least sixty percent of the Consortium members. Members who are not physically present may vote for any proposed amendment/repeal by making their vote known in writing to the Co-Chairs. For purposes of this provision, electronic communication, such as electronic mail, will be acceptable. In all cases of absentee voting, it is the responsibility of the voting member to verify that the communication was actually received by the Co-Chairs.
- B. Revision of ExComm specific Bylaws may occur as described in ARTICLE V, SECTION 11.

These Bylaws were unanimously approved by the Executive Committee and take effect on July 10, 2020.