

Understanding the Past and Shaping the Future of MALCS: the 2012 Bylaws Proposal

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2011-2012 MALCS Chair
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In 2010, the MALCS Executive Committee suspended the MALCS bylaws in order to engage in a major revision of the document. It became clear that the bylaws, last revised in 1991, were in need of updating. We spent approximately one year discussing and producing a draft. We presented that draft at the 2011 Institute where we facilitated discussions during two workshops and the business meeting. We have spent the time since engaging in more discussions and revisions based on the feedback we received at the Institute.

We made many changes to the bylaws. Many changes were our attempt to “clean up” the document—essentially to resolve stylistic and structural issues. Other changes were meant to bring the document in line with current practices including, for example, providing more complete outlines of officer roles and responsibilities. Still other changes were intended to articulate the cultural context and/or philosophic direction of the organization.

We present the complete draft on our [website](#) for your consideration. What follows is a listing of major changes proposed in this version of the bylaws.

We propose adding “Afro-Latina” to the list of mujeres supported by MALCS.

Article II, Section 1: “The primary goal of the organization is to support Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, Native American and Indigenous activists and scholars in higher education and community leadership.”

We propose a shift in the membership section creating space for gender non-conforming Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, and Native American and Indigenous people to be members.

Article III, Section 1. We understand that identity is a complex matter in the twenty-first century. Traditional categories have been problematized. Clear lines have been blurred. New formations have emerged. Having said that, we also understand that historically Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, Native American and Indigenous women have been discriminated against and underrepresented in institutions of higher education. As a result of this history, MALCS shall be open to Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, and Native American and Indigenous women and gender non-conforming people who support the goals and objectives of the organization as stated in Article II, and who pay the appropriate membership dues.

At the moment, we make critical decisions at the Summer Institute. We propose that we allow some business to be conducted between Institutes.

Article IV, Section 3. If necessary, other national business may be conducted between summer institutes (or special national meetings) via secure electronic formats. The Executive Committee must ensure opportunities for membership to learn about and engage in discussion about business matters conducted in this way.

We propose shifting officer terms, with the exception of chair-elect, to two-year terms. (Chair-elect remains a three-year commitment as chair-elect, chair, ex-officio.)

Article VIII, Section 5, Subsection B. The Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Membership Coordinator serve 2-year terms.

Article IX, Section 3, Subsection A. At-large representatives shall be elected at the Summer Institute and serve two-year terms with staggered start dates and end dates to ensure office continuity;

We propose the addition of three standing committees.

Article XII, Section 1. The Executive and Coordinating Committees of MALCS have three standing committees. Membership may include members of the Executive Committee, Coordinating Committee, or other MALCS members with an interest in the work of the standing committee.

- A. Communications Team. The task of this standing committee is to develop and recommend to the Executive Committee a strategic and implementation plan to ensure a stable and vibrant community employing communications technologies
- B. Funds Development Committee. The task of this standing committee is to develop and recommend to the Executive Committee a strategic and implementation plan to secure the long-term financial security of the organization including strategies for soliciting and securing endowed and grant funds.
- C. Nominations Committee. The committee will be responsible for notifying members of open positions, recruiting and accepting nominations, and preparing a slate of nominees for the national election

We considered other changes as well but opted not to recommend those at this time.

Last year, concerned about the economic circumstances of our institutions, we proposed making the Institute a biennial event. Almost all who responded were deeply concerned. For many, the work we do at the Institute encourages and sustains us throughout the year. We decided to keep the Institute an annual event and redouble our efforts to recruit host institutions.

At virtually every Institute, there are questions about the role of allies at the Institute and in the organization. We entertained proposing a membership category for allies. One reason we considered this is that we all know a number of people who are not Chicana, Latina, Native or Indigenous women but are very committed to our mission and goals. We also wondered if it might useful to have a broader membership base in order to successfully petition for large foundation grants. We realized after preliminary discussion that we could not put forward a proposal of this sort without have more, much more, conversation among the membership. We hope to prompt such conversation in the coming years.

And some closing thoughts

This has been a long process, but it has been exciting as well. It has given us the opportunity to reflect on the history and the mission of MALCS and all of those mujeres who have contributed over the decades to its success. At the same time, it has provided space for us to anticipate and plan for the future of MALCS. We hope that you will join us in robust discussion about these bylaws, a document intended to serve as critical foundation for our organization in the coming years.

Thank you.

MUJERES ACTIVAS EN LETRAS Y CAMBIO SOCIAL

By-laws

Proposed Revision July 2012

PREAMBLE

Nosotras, Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social, afirmamos nuestra dedicación al trabajo de unificar nuestra actividad académica con nuestra participación y compromiso en la vida comunitaria. Nos dedicamos a sobresalir en la academia para así servir mejor a nuestras comunidades.

We, Women Active in Letters and Social Change, affirm our dedication to unify our academic activity and our participation within and commitment to community life. We are dedicated to excel in academia to better serve our communities.

ARTICLE I: NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social, hereinafter referred to as MALCS.

Section 2. The main office of the organization shall be located at 1404 66th Street, Berkeley, California 94702 until the Executive Committee of the organization selects a different site.

ARTICLE II: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Section 1. The primary goal of the organization is to support Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, Native American and Indigenous activists and scholars in higher education and community leadership. To that end, the organization has five objectives.

- A. To recruit Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, Native American and Indigenous women to higher education and advanced studies and to support them in those endeavors.
- B. To develop and strengthen local chapters to involve Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, Native American and Indigenous women at all levels of the educational system.
- C. To encourage and promote the production and distribution of research on Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, Native American and Indigenous women.
- D. To promote the development and institutionalization of Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, Native American and Indigenous Women's Studies.
- E. To encourage and promote endeavors that support social justice-based knowledge production and activism.

Section 2. We pledge to acknowledge, value and employ feminist principles and frameworks in our organizational practices.

Section 3. The formal activities of the organization include the Summer Institute; *Chicana/Latina Studies: The Journal of Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social*; www.malcs.org, the website of the national organization; and the activities of local chapters.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. We understand that identity is a complex matter in the twenty-first century. Traditional categories have been problematized. Clear lines have been blurred. New formations have emerged. Having said that, we also understand that historically Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, Native American and Indigenous women have been discriminated against and underrepresented in institutions of higher

education. As a result of this history, MALCS shall be open to Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, and Native American and Indigenous women and gender non-conforming people who support the goals and objectives of the organization as stated in Article II, and who pay the appropriate membership dues.

Section 2. Membership dues are set by the Executive Committee.

- A. Membership dues will be paid annually.
- B. Membership dues entitle members to vote, to be eligible to present at the Summer Institute, to receive a one-year subscription to *Chicana/Latina Studies: The Journal of Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social*, and to participate in members' email and web-based discussions.

Section 3. Membership shall terminate upon occurrence of any of the following events.

- A. Resignation of the member.
- B. Failure to pay annual dues.
- C. If and when the Coordinating Committee determines that the member has, in a material way and to a serious degree, obstructed the goals and purposes of the organization.

Section 4. Scholars and activists whose work is allied with the goals and objectives of the organization as stated in Article II may participate in plenary sessions at the Summer Institute and subscribe to *Chicana/Latina Studies: The Journal of Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social*.

ARTICLE IV: MEETING OF MEMBERS AND VOTING

Section 1. The national meeting of members shall be held annually during the Summer Institute.

Section 2. A special national meeting of the membership may be called at any time by a majority of the Coordinating Committee. Routine business may be conducted at these meetings. Any other business—particularly business with significant implications for the organization—may be discussed with recommendations and proposals forwarded to the Executive Committee for later consideration and action.

Section 3. If necessary, other national business may be conducted between summer institutes (or special national meetings) via secure electronic formats. The Executive Committee must ensure opportunities for membership to learn about and engage in discussion about business matters conducted in this way.

Section 4. Paid members are entitled to vote in accordance with the by-laws.

- A. Voting may be by hand, card, or voice; by print; or by secure electronic ballot.
- B. The form of voting will be determined by the Executive Committee.
- C. Decisions require a 2/3 majority of total members voting.
- D. Proxy voting is not allowed.

ARTICLE V: CHAPTERS

Section 1. Chapters may be formed at educational institutions and/or in a region/area.

Section 2. Chapters exist for the following purposes.

- A. To sponsor activities that promote the goals of the organization.
- B. To encourage and recruit membership for the national organization.

Section 3. All chapter activities must be in alignment with the mission and bylaws of the national organization.

Section 4. All chapters must be recognized by the Executive Committee and must update and maintain communication with the national office.

Section 5. Chapter meetings will be held at the discretion of each chapter.

ARTICLE VI: MALCS Journal

Section 1. *Chicana/Latina Studies: The Journal of MALCS* is the official journal of the organization. *Chicana/Latina Studies* provides space for Chicanas/Latinas of the Americas who have been historically marginalized. It is receptive to all scholarly methods and theoretical perspectives that examine, describe, analyze, and interpret our experiences. It publishes interdisciplinary research articles, creative writing, art, commentaries, and reviews of books, performances, and conferences.

Section 2. MALCS members receive a journal subscription as part of their annual membership.

Section 3. Nonmembers may subscribe to the journal.

ARTICLE VII: SUMMER INSTITUTE

The Summer Institute is a special time and place for membership in that it is a focused opportunity for members to meet in person to foster our community—networking with each other, theorizing our shared experiences, planning for ongoing and new initiatives, offering our expertise and encouragement. We hold onto this as precious space as our presence within and across the various professions is still too rare—our voices too infrequently heard, and our work still invisible within the institutions, agencies, and businesses we have entered. We ask our members and our allies to honor the space we have created to support women and gender non-conforming Chicanas, Latinas, Afro-Latinas, Native American and Indigenous people in higher education and community leadership.

ARTICLE VIII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is a volunteer body that, in consultation with the national membership, functions as the decision-making body of the organization.

Section 1. The MALCS Executive Committee shall consist of the chairperson, the chairperson elect, the ex-officio, the treasurer, the recording secretary, the membership coordinator, and the administrative coordinator.

Section 2. All members of the Executive Committee are required to attend meetings including the mid-year meeting (typically scheduled in conjunction with an Executive Committee visit to the site of the Summer Institute) and Executive and Coordinating Committee meetings during the Summer Institute.

Section 3. All members of the Executive Committee have voting rights.

Section 4. The lead editor for *Chicana/Latina Studies: The Journal of MALCS* serves in an advisory capacity to the MALCS Executive Committee.

Section 5. Executive Committee Terms of Office

- A. The Chairperson serves a 3-year term (as Chairperson-elect, Chairperson, Ex-Officio).
- B. The Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Membership Coordinator serve 2-year terms.
- C. The Editor and the Administrative Coordinator serve terms that are determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 6: Duties of the Officers of the Executive Committee

A. The Chairperson shall

1. preside at all meetings of the Executive and Coordinating Committees;
2. implement the policies and procedures of the organization;
3. represent the organization in all matters, but is to take no position which is contrary to these by-laws;
4. together with Administrative Coordinator, sign all contracts approved by the Executive Committee;
5. in consultation with the Executive Committee, appoint staff and volunteer positions;
6. in consultation with the Executive Committee, appoint ad hoc committees;
7. in consultation with the Executive Committee, appoint the historian to the coordinating committee;
8. request General, Special, Executive and Coordinating Committee meetings;
9. retain General Counsel, as needed;
10. send copies of all correspondence and other matter received by the organization and copies of all matter sent by the organization to the National Office/Administrative Coordinator;
11. prepare or cause to be prepared all written or typed or printed matter pertaining to and on behalf of the organization;
12. serve on the Editorial Board of *Journal of Chicana/Latina Studies*;
13. assume the office of Ex-Officio after the term expires.

B. The Chairperson-Elect shall

1. support the chair in the implementation of the policies and procedures of the organization;
2. assume the duties of the Chairperson, in the absence of the Chairperson;
3. in consultation with the webjefa and communications team, be responsible for making recommendations to the Executive Committee on editorial policy, publishing and functionality of the MALCS' digital presence and for working with webjefa and communications team to assure implementation of said decisions;
4. be responsible for promoting MALCS' digital publications and recruiting writers for those publications;
5. call a meeting of the Executive Committee for the purpose of determining whether the Chairperson is unwilling or unable to perform the duties of the Chair; such a meeting must be called in writing with no less than five (5) days notice, and only when the Chair-Elect has a good cause to believe that the Chairperson is unable or unwilling to perform the duties of the Chair;
6. assume the duties of Chairperson if so directed by the Executive Committee;
7. assume the office of Chairperson when the Chairperson's term expires.

C. The Ex-Officio shall:

1. bring to conclusion projects started but not completed during term of office;
2. assist with transition of officers (information, resources);
3. serve on, and initially convene, the Nominations Committee;
4. conduct special projects;
5. together with the Administrative Coordinator, liaison between the Summer Institute Site Committee and the EC;
6. in the absence of Chair and Chair-Elect, the ex-officio will facilitate meetings.

D. The Treasurer shall:

1. in collaboration with the Administrative Coordinator, regularly review, report, and reconcile financial documents and statements for the organization;
2. in consultation with the Administrative Coordinator, advise and consult with the Executive Committee regarding budgetary constraints, financial policy, audits, development strategies and activities;
3. make recommendations on all routine and non-routine financial matters;
4. review any items or requests with financial implications that are made to the National Office, Executive Committee and/or Coordinating Committee;
5. chair the Funds Development Committee;
6. in the absence of Chair, Chair-Elect, the Ex-Officio, the treasurer will facilitate meetings.

E. The Recording Secretary shall:

1. keep the minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Executive Committee, Coordinating Committee, and National Business Meeting;
2. distribute minutes to the Executive Committee and the membership within (30) days after adjournment of each meeting;
3. in collaboration with the Chair, prepare the agenda for all meetings;
4. compile, organize, and deliver all documents to Administrative Coordinator and to the MALCS archives at UCLA;
5. collect and keep contact information on chapters, caucuses, officers and awards.

F. The Membership Coordinator shall:

1. conduct a yearly membership drive before the Summer Institute;
2. in collaboration the Communications Committee and Webjefa, be responsible for making recommendations to the Executive Committee on the uses and functionality of the listservs and email lists and other social media;
3. be responsible for maintaining moderation of public and members listservs;
4. work in consultation with webjefa to create and maintain the content of the MALCS website's membership section;
5. serve as a liaison between MALCS Executive Committee and the Historian;
6. serve as a liaison between MALCS Executive Committee and chapters including soliciting reports and chapter activities for publication on MALCS website.

G. The Administrative Coordinator is a position appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of office determined by the Executive Committee. The Administrative Coordinator shall

1. collaborate with the Executive Committee to fulfill the mission of the organization;
2. represent the organization;
3. in collaboration with the Treasurer, oversee the financial records and processes of MALCS;
4. sign all checks issued by the organization;
5. collect all monies due to the organization and advise the Executive Committee of the monies received from members and all other sources;
6. seek funding opportunities and coordinate development efforts;
7. recommend staff and volunteer positions to the Executive Committee;
8. submit quarterly and biannual budget reports;
9. provide administrative support to implement and maintain the policies and procedures of the organization;
10. oversee and coordinate staff, interns, and volunteers;

11. in collaboration with the Lead Editor for the Journal assure the accuracy of the journal distribution list;
12. serve as liaison between the Executive Committee and the fiscal agent;
13. serve as point of contact for the site committee organizing the Summer Institute;
14. coordinate the membership and registration processes for the site committee organizing the Summer Institute; and
15. serve on the Nominations Committee.

H. The Lead Editor for the Journal is a position appointed by the Executive Committee for a five-year term of office. The Lead Editor shall:

1. serve as a non-voting member of the Executive Committee;
2. provide an institutional home for the journal;
3. solicit manuscripts and manage the editing process for *Chicana/Latina Studies: The Journal of MALCS*;
4. follow the policies and procedures manual for *Chicana/Latina Studies: The Journal of MALCS* in the production of the journal;
5. follow the home institution's policies and procedures that impact the production of the journal;
6. provide an annual status report;
7. provide and present an annual budget report;
8. provide any membership information which has been updated during the course of journal business to the administrative coordinator and the membership coordinator;
9. collaborate with the Administrative Coordinator to assure the accuracy of the journal distribution list;
10. represent the organization at professional venues.

ARTICLE IX: COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Coordinating Committee is an advisory body and shall be comprised of all Executive Committee members, Caucus representatives, at-large representatives and other appointed positions. The Coordinating Committee promotes the general well-being of the organization including supporting the Executive Committee as it works to develop and promote the organization. This may include assisting with the implementation of policies and procedures and other matters of organizational development. The Coordinating Committee will meet at least twice during the Summer Institute.

Section 2. There will be a representative from each of the four caucuses: LBTQ (Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer), Undergraduate Students, Graduate Students, and WINC (Women's Indigenous Native). Caucus representatives shall

- A. be elected by their constituents;
- B. attend the Summer Institute;
- C. attend meetings of the Coordinating Committee scheduled at the Summer Institute;
- D. organize and facilitate a meeting of the caucus at the Summer Institute;
- E. recommend and organize workshops, panels, and themes for future institutes;
- F. prepare and submit reports to Secretary on their respective activities;
- G. submit articles, announcements and posts for publication on the MALCS website or other digital venues;
- H. keep the chair and recording secretary informed of current contact information.

Section 3. There will be three representatives elected at-large for members including but not limited to those who do not find representation in an existing caucus or who represent emerging interests or developing regions. These representative positions should offer the national membership and the

Executive Committee additional perspectives and information from a broad range of interests and voices. Representatives shall

- A. be elected at the Summer Institute and serve two-year terms with staggered start dates and end dates to ensure office continuity;
- B. attend the Summer Institute;
- C. attend meetings of the Coordinating Committee scheduled at the Summer Institute;
- D. recommend and organize workshops, panels, and themes for future institutes;
- E. identify pertinent topics in relation to their special interest and regions;
- F. prepare, report, and submit reports to Secretary;
- G. submit announcements and items of interests from their region for publication on the MALCS website or other digital venues;
- H. elected at-large representatives will train incoming at-large representatives in duties;
- I. keep the chair and recording secretary informed of current contact information.

Section 4. Duties of Other Appointed Positions Serving on the Coordinating Committee

- A. The Webjefa shall
 1. be appointed by the Executive Committee for a tenure of 3 years with possibility of reappointment;
 2. serve on the Communications Team;
 3. maintain communication with the Chair-elect, the chair of the Communications Team, and the Administrative Coordinator,
 4. maintain, update, and manage the organization's website;
 5. coordinate journal updates with the Lead Editor or her designee.
- B. The Historian shall
 1. be appointed by the Executive Committee for a tenure of 3 years with possibility of reappointment;
 2. in communication with the Secretary and Administrative Coordinator, maintain an organized record (print and/or electronic) of documents of historical significance to MALCS including such items as newspaper clippings, photographs, notice of events, Institute materials, articles, etc.
 3. create and supervise historical projects;
 4. serve as a liaison between MALCS and the host institution of the archive;
 5. at the conclusion of the term, turn over all relevant historical materials to the Administrative Coordinator and the official MALCS archives at UCLA.

Section 5. The Coordinating Committee serves a “checks and balances” function for the organization. In that role, the Coordinating Committee, with a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the committee, may call a special meeting of the membership if it has determined that the Executive Committee is not serving the best interests of the MALCS membership.

ARTICLE X: QUALIFICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, AND APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICERS

Section 1. All officers whether elected or appointed must be current members of MALCS.

Section 2. For elected positions, the Executive Committee will appoint a nominations committee at the Summer Institute for the next election cycle. The Nominations Committee will be made up of the chair,

the administrative coordinator, and three at-large members. Nominations Committee members will serve a two-year term.

Section 3. The Nominations Committee will be responsible for notifying members of open positions, accepting nominations, and preparing a slate of nominees for the national election. Nominees must accept nomination to stand for election.

Section 4. Members may self-nominate as well.

Section 5. The general body shall vote on these nominees. Nominees must win by a simple majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Executive Committee will determine the election through a vote of the sitting Executive Committee and the Coordinating Committee.

ARTICLE XI. TERMINATION OF ELECTED AND APPOINTED POSITIONS

Membership on the Executive Committee/Coordinating Committee shall terminate upon occurrence of any of the following events.

- A. Replacement of the member in an election.
- B. Written resignation of the member.
- C. Failure to pay annual dues.
- D. If and when the Executive Committee determines that the member has, in a material way and to a serious degree, obstructed the goals and purposes of the organization.

ARTICLE XII. STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Executive and Coordinating Committees of MALCS have three standing committees. Membership may include members of the Executive Committee, Coordinating Committee, or other MALCS members with an interest in the work of the standing committee.

- D. Communications Team. The task of this standing committee is to develop and recommend to the Executive Committee a strategic and implementation plan to ensure a stable and vibrant community employing communications technologies
- E. Funds Development Committee. The task of this standing committee is to develop and recommend to the Executive Committee a strategic and implementation plan to secure the long-term financial security of the organization including strategies for soliciting and securing endowed and grant funds.
- F. Nominations Committee. The committee will be responsible for notifying members of open positions, recruiting and accepting nominations, and preparing a slate of nominees for the national election.

Section 2. Other standing committees may be appointed by the Executive Committee as needs emerge.

ARTICLE XIII: AD HOC COMMITTEES

The Executive and Coordinating Committees of MALCS may appoint adhoc committees to study issues that emerge within MALCS and/or that impact the broader Chicana, Latina, Afro-Latina, and Native and Indigenous women's communities.

ARTICLE XIV: ARCHIVES

The archives are located at UCLA.

ARTICLE XV AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

Section 1. All members of the organization may propose changes to the bylaws and submit them to the Coordinating Committee for consideration.

Section 2. Prior to the membership vote, the Executive Committee shall request comments and recommendations from the general membership. Should any member disagree with the amendments, she has the right to recall or propose change to the amendments.

Section 3. Members will be provided with a one-year period to review and discuss proposed changes.

Section 4. Changes to the by-laws require a 2/3 vote of the voting population.