

Constitution and Handbook Committee

The Committee consists of one member from each state in the Association.

Purpose: To study the Constitution and Bylaws of the Southeastern Library Association and recommend revisions to keep them up to date. To maintain an updated handbook for the use of the officers, Board, committee chairmen and the membership.

Duties:

1. To receive suggestions for changes in the Constitution and Bylaws and ascertain their appropriateness.
2. To maintain contact with the Board and act upon recommendations by the Board and members for revision.
3. To review periodically the Constitution and Bylaws and recommend needed revisions to the Board.
4. To prepare proposed revisions for presentation to the Board for action.
5. To arrange for publication of proposed revisions in *THE SOUTHEASTERN LIBRARIAN* with Board recommendations and comments.
6. To assist in presenting proposed revisions to the membership and arrange for ballots when required.
7. To revise the Handbook biennially for updated information.
8. To expand the information included where needed to make the Handbook a useful document for new officers and chairmen. It should include history and duties of each office/committee and the Conference Handbook with the duties of personnel involved in conference planning.

History: When the Southeastern Library Association was organized in 1920-22, it operated under a very informal constitution. Apparently, no changes were necessitated to the Constitution until 1940 when it was felt it should be amended to allow the appointment of an executive secretary. Martha Parks apparently served as chair of a committee to amend the Constitution, 1940-46. At that time she was listed as chair of the Committee for Constitutional Changes and/or Constitutional Revision Committee. By 1948 the Board felt that a more formal constitution was needed for the growing Association. One of the responsibilities given to the Committee on Committees was the planning of a new constitution. During 1948-50, Mrs. Augusta Richardson served as chair of the Constitution Subcommittee of the Activities Committee. This committee submitted a new Constitution and Bylaws at the 1950 meeting and the new document was adopted. From 1949 a Constitution Committee has been appointed each biennium. The Constitution was revised in 1956 to allow the organization of Sections in the Association. It was revised in 1970, making the Constitution a stronger legal document. In 1980, the Constitution was completely rewritten by a committee including members from every member state.

The Handbook was created by a special Handbook Committee chaired by Mary Louise Rhey during the 1970-72 biennium, incorporating an operational manual, developed by President Hoyt Galvin and Executive Secretary Ann Cobb in 1963. Afterwards, the committee was called the Handbook Revision Committee. A name change to Handbook Committee and standing committee status was approved by the Board in 1981.

The 1982 Handbook was published and distributed to the entire membership. The 1982 Handbook Committee included a new history that was extensively researched, and sections were revised and expanded to reflect changes made in the 1980 revised Constitution.

The 1988 Handbook Committee updated information and designed a handbook that could be added to without a complete reprinting of the main content. Because of extensive changes and additions in the next few years, another revision was created in 1992, with the same flexibility designed into it.

In 2010, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee was combined with the Handbook Committee to become the Constitution and Handbook Committee. The newly formed Constitution and Handbook Committee immediately began work on a new revision of the Handbook to be posted on the Association website. This work is still in progress.