



Constitution & Bylaws of the Phalanx Honor Society

Article I: Name and Purpose

- a. The name of this society shall be the Phalanx Leadership Honor Society.
- b. The purpose of the society shall be to honor those students who have distinguished themselves among their peers in the areas of leadership, service, and devotion to the alma mater; to band them together in a spirit of good fellowship, and thus to create a greater interest in student activities and better the standing of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the college world.

Article II: Terms

- a. Herein this document,
 - i. The Phalanx Leadership Honor Society shall be referred to as Phalanx.
 - ii. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute can be referred to as the Institute.

Article III: Membership

- a. Equal Opportunity and Hazing
 - i. It is the policy of Phalanx to provide, to the maximum extent feasible, equal opportunity to all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, disability, military status, veteran status, genetic information, genetic predisposition, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis prohibited by law.

- ii. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute complies with all federal, state and local non-discrimination laws and is committed to providing a working, living and learning environment free from discrimination on any basis prohibited by law.
- iii. Hazing, reckless or intentional endangerment to health, or forced consumption of alcohol or other drugs for the purpose of initiation into or continuing membership of Phalanx is strictly prohibited.

b. Membership

- i. Part A – Eligibility for membership is outlined in Article VIII.
- ii. Part B – Rights and Responsibilities of Membership

1. Inactive Members

- a. Inactive Members are students who have been fully initiated into the society. However, they have no voting rights and pay no dues.
- b. Inactive Members become Alumni Members of upon cessation of full-time student status.

2. Active Members

- a. Active Members have full voting privileges and are expected to participate in the operations of the society including, but not limited to, selection of new members.
- b. Active Members can become Inactive Members if they are no longer found to be upholding the expectations of the organization (Article I.b.) or if they do not remit their dues. Notwithstanding, inactive members may regain active status as long as they are full-time students as determined by the Institute's Registrar and have submitted their dues to the Treasurer.
- c. Active Members become Alumni Members upon cessation of full-time student status.

3. Honorary Members

- a. Individuals who have increased the welfare of the Institute by their personal activity, including but not limited to Alumni, Faculty, and Staff, may be selected by the Active Members as Honorary Members.
- b. Honorary Members may attend regular meetings dealing with the operations of Phalanx, on the Advisory Board and attend Tapping. However, they may not attend meetings concerning the selection of new members or special meetings.

4. Alumni Members

- a. Any Inactive Members, including those who never become Active Members and who cease to be full-time students, shall be considered Alumni members. Alumni members shall have the same rights and privileges granted Honorary Members. These rights and privileges are designated in Article III.b.v.

5. Probationary Members

- a. Probationary Members are students who have been nominated and duly selected into the society as per Article VIII, but have not yet been tapped into the organization.
- b. Probationary Members become Active Members upon being tapped into the organization and submitting their Induction Fees as defined in Article IX.a.i.
- c. Probationary Members may be granted voting rights on matters outside of the selection process of new members of Phalanx, White Key, Honorary Phalanx, and Who's Who by a simple majority of the Executive Board. Should the active members wish to allow Probationary Members to participate in the selection process for the Darrin Award, approval to do so must be by referendum (Article XII.a.v).

Article IV: Officers

a. Positions and Duties

- i. The President shall:
 1. Preside at all meetings
 2. Enforce the Constitution and Bylaws
 3. Appoint committees and act as their honorary chairperson
 4. Call for special meetings
 5. Solicit nominations
 6. Act as the public representative of Phalanx in the community
- ii. The Vice President shall:
 1. Assist the President when called upon
 2. Preside over the Tapping Ceremony

3. Perform the duties of any officer in his or her absence
 4. Indoctrinate new members concerning Phalanx operations, policies, and practices
- iii. The Secretary shall:
1. Maintain on file an updated copy of the Phalanx Constitution and Bylaws
 2. Take attendance and minutes during all meetings
 3. Handle official Phalanx records and correspondence
 4. Maintain the accurate membership list
 5. Handle any social media and website updates
- iv. The Treasurer shall:
1. Be responsible for all funds and securities belonging to Phalanx
 2. Pay all authorized warrants
 3. Keep all financial records
 4. Promptly collect all moneys and dues owed Phalanx
 5. Report on the financial status of Phalanx at each meeting.
- b. Elections
- i. Only Active Members may be nominated for an office.
 - ii. No individual may hold more than one office position simultaneously.
 - iii. The officers shall be nominated and elected at the last regular meeting of the academic year. Vacancies during the academic year shall be filled by election at the meeting following knowledge of the vacancy or at a special meeting.
 - iv. Election of officers is by a majority vote of the total number Active Members in attendance.
 - v. The term for officers shall begin the day after the spring commencement ceremony and conclude at the following commencement.
- c. Resignation
- i. An officer may resign if he or she finds it impossible to fulfill the obligations of the office. The resigning officer must immediately notify the other officers, who will bring up the situation at the next meeting or call for a special meeting at their discretion.
- d. Removals

- i. An officer can be suspended by compiling two consecutive unexcused absences. At this time the position will be considered vacant and it shall be filled in accordance with Article III.b.
- ii. Officers and officers-elect may be removed for cause by a 2/3 vote, rounded up, of the total number of Active Members.

**Article V:
Advisory Board**

- a. The Advisory Board shall be composed of at least three Honorary or Alumni Members of Phalanx.
- b. The chair of the Advisory Board will be appointed by the Phalanx President, as long as the choice approved by all other Phalanx Officers at the time.
- c. A member of the Advisory Board will act as the Co-Chairperson of the Alumni Board.
- d. The Advisory Board will advise and assist in the organization of official Phalanx events and assist in the verifying of membership selection requirements. The Advisory Board may also assist with the transition from one slate of officers to the next.
- e. The Advisory Board will have regular meetings and communication with the President of Phalanx, who will then report back to the other Phalanx Officers on any important topics discussed at the meeting.
- f. The Advisory Board will ensure that the Phalanx Officer Board is upholding the values and responsibilities of the Phalanx Honor Society.

**Article VI:
Alumni Board**

- a. The Alumni Board shall be comprised of at least four Alumni Members of the organization, of which at least two having been Alumni Members for no more than five years (deemed Young Alumni Members).
- b. The Alumni Board (or members of) will be in attendance for one or all of the annual events hosted by Phalanx (i.e. Homecoming & Reunion, and Tapping)
- c. One of the two Young Alumni Members will serve as Co-Chairperson of the Alumni Board
- d. The Alumni Board shall assist with Phalanx fundraising initiatives, specifically targeting Alumni Members as donors, and will assist with alumni outreach, and advise the organization of sound operation and communication with its alumni body.

**Article VII:
Voting and Meetings**

a. Voting and Quorum

- i. Each Active Member, as defined in Article III.b.iv, may cast one vote.
 1. Pursuant to Article III.b.vii., Probationary Members may cast one vote.
- ii. Any Active Member may request for a closed ballot on any matter at any time.
- iii. Quorum shall be defined as 1/3, rounded up, of the total number of Active Members or five (5) members, whichever is greater.
- iv. Any referendum shall require an affirmative vote by 2/3, rounded up, of the total number of Active Members and Probationary members, if applicable. Any matter not specifically designated as a voting requirement in this Constitution or the Bylaws shall be considered a matter of Referendum.
- v. All Active Members will partake in a preliminary round of voting which shall consist of e-mailing an electronic voting form along with all nominations for all eligible nominees to all Active Members. The voting form shall consist of a “Yes,” “No,” and “Up for Discussion” ranking of each nominee.
- vi. A meeting will be held approximately one week after the preliminary voting form was sent out in order to discuss the results of the preliminary vote and to select nominees.
- vii. Selection shall be based on a holistic view of each nominee, centering on strong leadership, service, and devotion to the alma mater
 1. Duration of commitment and leadership position(s) held in each activity or organization a nominee is involved with will be taken into account
- viii. All nominations and voting is confidential and shall only be discussed between Phalanx Active Members and Advisors (if needed).

b. Electronic Voting

- i. At the discretion of the Phalanx President, s/he may propose a motion to vote on a matter via e-mail so long as this matter is not a part of the selection procedure for Phalanx Inductees, White Key Award Recipients, Honorary Phalanx Members, Who’s Who Award Recipients, or the Darrin Award Winner, as defined in Article VIII and IX.
- ii. Any motion to be voted on via e-mail must be sent to all Active Members.
- iii. Motions made through e-mail do not require a second.
- iv. With the proposal of a motion, the President must establish a voting period of at least 24 hours and no more than 7 days. Once this time period has been set, it cannot be altered.

- v. Quorum must be reached in the time period set by the President in order for an electronic vote to be valid and binding.
- vi. In order for an Active Member's vote to be valid, his or her response e-mail must clearly indicate affirmative, negative, or abstention and be sent to all Active Members.
- vii. The discussion thread of any electronic medium where the motion in question was discussed shall constitute the minutes of the meeting. The discussion thread and any electronic voting is to be considered confidential for the recipients intended, and may not be shared outside the organization.
- viii. Votes sent in electronically must be sent from your RPI email.

c. Meetings

- i. Regular meetings shall be held at least once every two months during the academic year at the discretion of the Active Members.
- ii. Special meetings may be called at any time by the President, by the request of two other officers, or by 1/3 of the active members.
- iii. Meetings may only be conducted in the presence of quorum as defined in Article VII.a.iv. No discussion or action whatsoever may be taken in the absence of quorum.
- iv. Active Members shall be notified at least 48 hours in advance of a regular meeting and 18 hours in advance of a special meeting.
- v. The Secretary shall record meeting minutes of all meetings, except selection meetings, including records of attendance and voting. Only records of attendance shall be recorded for selection meetings.
- vi. The official language of all meetings shall be English unless, by unanimous vote of all those present at the meeting, an alternate language is preferred.

**Article VIII:
New Member Selection**

a. Requirements

- i. Students who meet the following requirements are eligible for selection into White Key.
 - 1. A member of either the Freshman or Sophomore cohort, as determined by the registrar.
 - 2. In good academic and judicial standing with the Institute at the time of review.
- ii. Students who meet the following requirements are eligible for Regular Membership into Phalanx.

1. Junior, Senior, or Graduate student status—determined by the registrar—as of the fall semester prior to the start of the selection process. Students who graduate in December, may also be nominated and considered for Phalanx membership in the spring semester following their December graduation date.
 2. In good academic and judicial standing with the Institute.
 3. Have attended RPI for at least two consecutive semesters.
- iii. Any person affiliated with RPI who has been actively associated with the Institute for at least five (5) years is eligible for selection for Honorary membership into Phalanx.
 - iv. Any candidate may be nominated for any award (Phalanx, White Key, Who's Who, Honorary and the Darrin Award) by any member of the campus community who writes down the nominee's name and submits it to the Phalanx President during the annual selection process.
 - v. In the event that a candidate qualifies for multiple awards, the membership will determine which of the award(s) to review the candidate for.
- b. Nominations can begin at the discretion of the Executive Board, but nominations automatically close at which time the Active membership is notified of the candidates.
 - i. Nominations from the floor can be taken by a two-thirds majority of members present at a selection meeting.
 - c. Official action can not be taken on candidates without Quorum.
 - d. All Active Members of Phalanx have the responsibility to read through all nominations, directly verify all references, and aid in the selection process of future inductees and award recipients, unless a valid excuse is approved by the President
 - e. Strict confidentiality shall be maintained regarding the selection process; information concerning references or the status of the proceedings shall not be released under any circumstances. At the conclusion of the selection process, only the names of those selected shall be released. Release or discussion of any other information, such as the names of other nominees or reasons for selection decisions, is prohibited.
 - f. Phalanx shall not discriminate against any field or classification of a candidate's student activities or involvement. Phalanx members shall use their judgment to uphold the organization's purpose Article I,B.
 - g. The number of members selected for tapping into the society each year shall be at the discretion of the Active membership at large.

**Article IX:
Operations and Bylaws**

- a. Induction Fees
 - i. A one-time induction fee of \$20.00 for White Key and \$30.00 for Phalanx is collected during the month of the Tapping Ceremony.
- b. Dues
 - i. Dues for Active Members shall be \$10 per year, payable by the end of September.
 - ii. Recipients of White Key do not pay dues.
 - iii. The Treasurer is responsible for keeping a record of when dues have expired and need to be collected.
- c. Selection Procedure for Awards and Honors
 - i. The organization shall annually select membership into Who's Who in the fall semester, and into Phalanx, White Key, Honorary Phalanx and the Darrin Award in the spring semester.
 - ii. The Advisory Board shall compile a list of those that have been nominated for each award and honor.
 - iii. At this point, the advisor will reach out to the individual nominees, ask them to either accept or decline their nomination, and gain permission from the nominee to confirm that the nominee meets the requirements of Article VIII.
 - iv. The nominations of those nominees who have accepted their nomination and meet the requirements of the award/honor are then sent back to the President.
 - v. At this time, the President will compile the nominations and distribute them to the members a week prior to the first selection meeting.
 - vi. The qualifications for membership of each nominee shall be discussed and voted on individually, following an established rubric that identifies the nominee's leadership, service and devotion to the alma mater.
 - vii. Each active member will submit a preliminary yes or no decision to the President.
 - viii. These binary decisions will be used to create a ranking of the nominees.
 - 1. In the event that a definitive ranking is not possible, a preliminary discussion will be held on those nominees.
 - ix. A meeting will be held to discuss the rankings

- x. After discussion of all the candidates, a vote shall be taken. Only those Active Members present for the entire discussion shall vote on that particular candidate.
 - 1. A simple Majority of these members shall elect the candidate into the society.
 - 2. Any Active Member who has nominated an individual, or has a personal relationship (relative, significant other, close friend, fraternity/sorority member) with a nominee shall abstain from the voting of that individual.
- xi. Discussion of candidates is limited to the Active Phalanx Members present at the selection meeting. Outside communications are not permitted during any selection meetings.

**Article X:
Amendments**

- a. An amendment or bylaw change must be proposed and distributed to the Active Membership at least one week prior to the meeting at which action is to be taken on it.
- b. A 3/4 vote of Active Members in attendance is required to ratify or amend this Constitution.
- c. Bylaws are contained in Article IX.
 - i. A simple majority vote is required to adopt or change any bylaws for this organization.
 - ii. Bylaws may also be removed from the constitution and consolidated into a separate document by the same vote.

This Constitution & Bylaws was approved on the 19th of February, 2019.