

North American Society for the Study of Romanticism

CONSTITUTION

Origins:

The North American Society for the Study of Romanticism was established on October 25, 1991, at the University of Western Ontario, by Tilottama Rajan and Angela Esterhammer (Co-founders) together with graduate student colleagues in Romantic studies.

Purpose:

The Society aims to provide a forum for the discussion of Romanticism and to encourage a wide variety of theoretical approaches to the field. Its members work in a number of disciplines as well as a range of countries and regions and are drawn primarily from the United States and Canada, although members from other countries are also welcome. To further its goals, the Society will organize conferences, normally every year and usually held in either the United States or Canada. It will establish a convenient and efficient medium for distributing information regarding member activities, news of conferences, and other information of interest to members. It will also provide other informational services, such as a directory, to members via its website. The Society is a non-profit organization affiliated with the journal *European Romantic Review*, which is an independent entity that collaborates with the Society in recognition of their association. The *Review* includes an annual conference issue which publishes the best graduate student paper at the NASSR conference; however, NASSR does not derive revenue from the journal or have any say in its publishing arrangements. The Society collects membership fees to cover its own costs, to cover the cost of member subscriptions to *ERR*, to subsidize the annual conference, and to cover bursaries to enable graduate students to attend the annual conference. It aims at reaching a broad membership and to that end will make every attempt to offer reduced membership fees to graduate students and retired members.

Organization and Appointment of Board and Officers

The work of the Society will be conducted by a Board, which will consist of the following:

- a Chair
- a Vice-Chair
- a Secretary
- a Treasurer
- a representative from *ERR* (ex-officio)
- two representatives of Canadian scholars
- two representatives of American scholars
- one representative of international scholars
- two representatives of scholars of Romanticism beyond English-Language Writing (such as history, philosophy, science, visual arts, or music)
- two representatives of graduate student scholars

The nine scholars representing various constituencies will be elected by the membership at large. Terms for faculty members and independent scholars will be three years; terms for graduate students, two years. Terms on the Board shall be staggered and nonrenewable; those who have served on the Board may serve again after an interval of five years.

Each Chair will serve for four years – two years initially as Vice Chair and two as Chair. The Chair shall rotate between Canadian and American scholars. When a Chair begins his or her term as Chair, he or she, consulting with Senior Advisors (see just below), will appoint a Vice Chair from among members of the Society who are serving on the Board or who have done so in the past ten years.

The Senior Advisors, those who have experience in administering the affairs of the Society, will serve as the Society's "institutional memory" and may be called upon by the Chair and Board for advice. The Advisors may include the Co-founders of the Society and Chairs after they complete their terms. Past Chairs will serve terms of six years as Advisors, so that the total number of Advisors will, after an initial period, consist of at least three but no more than five.

The Chair, in consultation with the Vice Chair, and with the advice of the Senior Advisors and the Board, will appoint two members to serve as Secretary and as Treasurer. The Treasurer will manage the Society's accounts, which are held in Canada. The Secretary and Treasurer will each be appointed for five years, a term or terms that may be renewed with mutual consent.

Responsibilities of the Board

The Board shall consider how the Society might serve the academic interests of the profession, the goals and procedures of the Society, and such specific items as conference sites and ways in which the annual conference can best be made to reflect the concerns of the Society. Members of the Board will remain in communication with the Chair throughout the year as necessary, and will, together with the Senior Advisors, meet at the annual conference, and at the discretion of the Chair, at other times throughout the year. Organizers of the immediately preceding and current conferences, as well as upcoming conferences, shall be invited to participate in the open portion of this annual meeting.

The Board will be responsible for nominating or for overseeing the nomination of future members of the Board and shall confirm the willingness of these candidates to stand for election before submitting a list of nominees to the Secretary for inclusion in a ballot. All members of the Society will be invited to submit nominations for future members of the Board, whether of faculty and independent scholars or of graduate students. Faculty and independent scholar nominees must be scholars who are members of the Society and have been so for several years; graduate student nominees must be members of the Society. Nomination suggestions to the Board as well as ballots shall include information regarding each nominee's university affiliation, rank (or stage of PhD in the case of graduate students), area of research, and previous activities for the Society or at its conference.

Responsibilities of the Chair

Along with the Vice Chair, the Secretary, and the Treasurer, the Chair will be responsible for executing or overseeing the ongoing activities of the Society, including handling its correspondence, expanding membership and maintaining membership and other records, administering elections, publishing news, and providing other information to members. The Chair and Vice Chair, with the help of the Board and the advice of the Senior Advisors, will also be responsible for securing organizers for upcoming conferences, sustaining caucuses focusing on under-represented areas of special importance to the Society, maintaining links and collaborations with affiliated or sister societies, and occasionally arranging supernumerary conferences. The Chair may assign specific tasks, such as handling links to affiliated societies, to members of the Board and to Senior Advisors especially qualified to carry them out.

The Chair will maintain the Conference Guidelines document, share it with upcoming organizers, and update it as necessary; moreover, the Chair and Vice Chair, along with a Senior Advisor, shall meet, if at all possible, with the organizers of each upcoming conference two years in advance. The Secretary and Treasurer will also coordinate with organizers.

This document replaces the Constitution passed at the end of the first annual conference, on August 29, 1993, and will take effect from January 1, 2021.