

# By-Laws of OUSFG

Last amended Michelmas 2014.

Title of Society: the Oxford University Speculative Fiction Group

Purpose of Society: To bring together readers of science fiction, fantasy and associated fields for their mutual benefit and enjoyment and to provide facilities for this purpose.

## 1 In General

### 1.1 Terms

- A. In these by-laws the terms “person” or “persons” shall denote any or all members in accordance with item C.
- B. Hereinafter, the terms “society” or “group” shall denote only the Oxford University Speculative Fiction Group.

### 1.2 Conditions

- C. The membership shall be in accordance with Proctoral regulations and shall be bound by the terms of the constitution of the society and by these by-laws.
- D. All members of this society are but shadows of fish.
- E. This society is not subject to the static paradigm.
- F. Peter shall be able to act at interrupt speed.

## 2 Organisation

### 2.1 Official Positions of the Society

- 1. There shall be three offices of the society,
  - (a) President (item 22),
  - (b) Secretary (item 23),
  - (c) Treasurer (item 24).

The holders of these offices shall be known as office holders.

- 2. In addition to the offices, there shall be four posts,
  - (a) Ghost in the Machine (item 25),
  - (b) Librarian (item 70),
  - (c) Video Representative (item 62),
  - (d) Speaker-to-Animals (item 64).
- 3. There shall exist titles that the society may confer upon members. Some titles shall be enshrined within these by-laws, but others existing only until the next general meeting of Hilary term can be created at the passing of a motion at any general meeting without putting them in the by-laws and thus enforcing future generations to continually fill the positions.

4. Offices and posts are official positions of the society, as are those titles enshrined in the by-laws. The Senior Member (item 19) also holds an official position.
5. All official positions will be elected for the duration of three terms (except where such an election is to fill an office, post or title left vacant by a resignation or dismissal), at the Annual General Meeting, with the exception of alternate procedures mentioned elsewhere in these by-laws.
6. Any member of the group duly seconded may stand as a candidate for an official position that is elected at a general meeting.
7. Nominations for the official positions must be made at least one week before the general meeting. A nomination will be considered to have been received if it is the possession of one of the officers.
8. Any duly seconded member may stand for any previously uncontested official position at the general meeting.
9. There shall be a title “Genital Piercing Officer”. The holder of this title will be required to revive the conversation should it flag. The Genital Piercing Officer is not an office holder in the constitutional sense.
10. There shall be a title “Beard of OUSFG”. The holder of this title will be required to attempt to grow a beard.
11. There shall be a title “Invisible” of OUSFG. The holder of this title will be told what to do at the appropriate time. This member shall also be gifted with a name as an invisible, which is the only name by which they are to be referred to in any official OUSFG business.
12. There shall be a title “Dead Hand of the Past”, or simply “Dead Hand”. The Dead Hand shall be a tool of the Council of the Wizeden (see item 77).
13. There shall be a title “Living Foot of the Future”, which shall be conferred at the AGM following the year in which the post shall be held.
14. There shall be a title “Chief of Special Projects”.
15. There shall be a title “Evil Doctor Tim”. Evil Doctor Tim’s rôle shall be to persuade people to do things for the society (such as stand for committee posts, or run meetings).
16. There shall be a title “Bugbear Prodder”. The holder of this title shall make incorrect use of language where possible.
17. There shall be a title “Bugbear Tender”. The holder of this title shall pontificate about incorrect use of language and put a stop to it where possible.
18. There shall be a title “CAG”. The holder of this title shall maintain a hanger of Vipers and ensure the repelling of all Raiders.
19. There shall also be a Senior Member, who shall be a resident member of the congregation. The Senior Member is not elected and shall remain Senior Member while still eligible or until the committee decide to replace the Senior Member. The Senior Member has the right to stop being Senior Member at any point. The Senior Member shall not be financially responsible for the society. The Senior Member does not have to fulfill any other requirements for membership to be a member of the society, and shall always be a member of the society whilst Senior Member.
20. In the beginning there was the OUSFG word, and the word was X. Where X is chosen by vote at each AGM for the subsequent year.

## 2.2 Duties

21. In addition to the duties outlined below, all office holders of the society will fulfil the duties outlined for the offices within the constitution.
22. The President will preside at meetings of the committee, and will organise ordinary meetings of the society. The President will also be responsible for organising the banquet of Hilary term, as under item 67. The President should provide sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll for the members. [Note: these can take any form.]

23. The Secretary will deal with any forms or letters that may be sent by the Proctors or by any other correspondent with the group. The Secretary will also be in possession of a current copy of the constitution and the by-laws and will inform Daily Information of the events for each term (sending a schedule through pigeon post). The Secretary will also be responsible for organising the punt party in Trinity term, as under item 68.
24. The Treasurer will be responsible for the maintenance of the society accounts, the collecting of membership fees, and giving notice of lapse of membership to those whose membership expires. The Treasurer will be [MESSAGE REDACTED] responsible for the organisation of the Christmas party (see item 66. With the agreement of the committee, the Treasurer can delegate responsibility for joint ventures to another member. The Treasurer, Secretary and President shall be signatories to the society chequebook, which shall be in the possession of the Treasurer.
25. The Ghost in the Machine will be responsible for the maintenance of the society web site.
26. The duties of the other posts of the society are detailed in item 3.

## 2.3 The Committee

27. There shall be a committee comprising eight positions (excluding those eligible under item 28).
  - (a) There shall be a President, as under items 1a and 22.
  - (b) There shall be a Secretary, as under items 1b and 23.
  - (c) There shall be a Treasurer, as under items 1c and 24.
  - (d) There shall be a Ghost in the Machine, as under items 2a and 25.
  - (e) There shall be a Librarian, as under items 2b and 70.
  - (f) There shall be a Video Representative, as under items 2c and 62.
  - (g) There shall be a Speaker-to-Animals, as under items 2d and 64.
  - (h) There shall be a Senior Member, as under item 19.
28. The committee shall also have the power to co-opt up to two members onto the committee.
29. The Genital Piercing Officer may on occasion be upgraded from a title to a post (see items 12 and 77). On such occasions, the Genital Piercing Officer becomes a member of the committee.
30. The committee shall run all the day-to-day affairs of the group, and will take decision accordingly, advised by any subcommittees they may create. Such subcommittees shall comprise at least three people of whom at least one must be a committee member and shall speak for the said subcommittee at the meetings of the committee.
31. There will be at least two meetings of the committee each term, one of which will take place in the two weeks before any general meeting.
32. Written notice of any committee member's absence should be sent to all committee members at least one day in advance.
33. All proceedings at committee meetings are confidential except for any report of the committee. An abstract of the matters discussed and decisions made at committee meetings shall be available to the membership on request.
34. The committee shall have the power to suspend a person's membership for up to a total of EIGHT weeks in any one academic year, and they may in more serious cases expel from the group any member deserving such action.
35. Any member wishing to appeal any verdict reached under items 34 or 73 shall have the right to appeal to the Senior Member. The Senior Member may then call a general meeting, at which the appeal shall be put to the vote. Members who have been expelled have direct right of appeal to a general meeting.

## 2.4 Meetings and Voting

36. The chairperson of the general meeting shall be the President or any person duly delegated by the President, or by the committee if the President is not available, and will not be eligible to vote except as under 45.
37. The chairperson of any OUSFG meeting shall have the absolute authority to decide whether to be called chairman, chairwoman, chairthing or merely chair.
38. All those whose memberships are in order and who are not otherwise proscribed from voting shall be eligible to vote at meetings and hold official positions (see item 2.5). Each member shall have one vote, regardless of any official position held.
39. Any motion to expel a member as under 34 shall require two-thirds of the committee in favour.
40. Any member putting forward a motion either
  - (a) to be reinstated to whatever (s)he has been expelled or dismissed from, or
  - (b) to quash a verdict under 34 or 73

must have two-thirds of those members who are present at a general meeting in favour of the motion.

41. All motions to change the constitution or by-laws must be passed by a two-thirds majority of those members present at a general meeting. These amendments come into effect at the end of the term in which the general meeting is held (or earlier if the committee so wishes).
42. All other motions in committee or at a general meeting require only simple majorities to be passed.
43. Voting in all matters at general meetings will be secret ballot and STV if any member present so wishes. This may be done for an entire meeting or on a vote-by-vote basis.
44. In the event of a tied vote at a committee meeting, the President shall have the casting vote.
45. In the event of a tied vote at a general meeting, the chairperson shall have the casting vote, and shall exercise this vote to break the tie.
46. The chairperson and one committee member or ordinary member duly appointed shall act as returning officers at the general meetings.

## 2.5 Memberships

47. A member of the society will be considered inactive if they have attended fewer than three meetings in the three previous terms. Inactive members are no longer eligible to vote and will not appear on the list of current members, although they may still be required to make a speech if attending the banquet and remain entitled to have a society wake held in their honour (item 69). Inactive members will be automatically reinstated to full membership at the beginning of the third meeting they attend in any consecutive three term period, provided their membership is still applicable at this time.
48. There shall be four basic lengths of memberships within the group: termly (item 49), yearly (item 50), life (item 51) and eternal (item 52). There shall be two additional categories distinct from and compatible with each of these; quantum (item 53) and retrospective (section 54 membership). There shall also be inanimate (item 56), ineffable (item 57) and hereditary (item 58) memberships, which are of different types and act as modifiers of membership as set out below. Modifiers of membership may not be purchased unless a length of membership is already held, whereas additional categories may.
49. Termly membership shall last until the end of 9th week at the end of the term in which termly membership was bought.
50. Yearly membership shall last until the end of 9th week at the end of the Trinity term at the end of the academic year in which yearly membership was bought.

51. Life membership expires upon clinical death, so individuals revived from cryogenic suspension will no longer be considered members unless they have paid for a new membership or are in possession of eternal membership.
52. Eternal membership does not expire; resurrected/reincarnated members will be considered still to be members conditional on the evidence indicating their identity satisfying at least one half of the committee.
53. Quantum membership shall entail that, should a counterpart/alternate self of that member cross into this universe from another, that any such counterpart/alternate self shall be a member here. The counterpart theory which is to be used is that expounded in the philosophical papers of David Lewis, if at all. This membership also permits a member to remain a member if the member were to go back in time and alter events so that the member never existed, although the non-existent quantum member will not be eligible to vote nor to occupy a committee position.
54. Retrospective membership shall entail that the member shall be a member from the beginning of the member's life or the dawn of time, whichever is the later. This does not entitle the member to retrospective actions at meetings the member failed to attend. Retrospective membership may also be bought without the member possessing any of the other forms of membership, in which case the membership shall be considered to have terminated upon the payment of the subscription.
55. Any individual member possessing quantum, retrospective and eternal membership shall be recognised as one of the Ancient Order of Fools, and shall be treated with a certain amount of caution, if not respect.
56. Inanimate membership shall entail that the member cannot vote or otherwise participate at official meetings: such membership shall be compatible with any of the lengths. Life membership shall however expire instantly since an inanimate member shall be *ipso facto* considered clinically dead. This membership is also compatible with both quantum and retrospective membership. Inanimate membership shall cost half the current cost of the length of membership it modifies.
57. Ineffable membership shall be a requirement for continued membership upon any member who becomes an entity of "above-local" existence (e.g. omnipresent; a god or deity of any sort; a chemical element; a subatomic particle type; etc.). Non-local entities cannot be created by vote. Ineffable membership shall cost a reasonable small amount, in line with quantum or retrospective membership, as a prophylactic measure, but any member who has become above-local shall be required to pay an amount twenty times this figure for ineffable membership if the member does not yet possess it.
58. Hereditary membership shall cost half the current cost of the length of membership it modifies. If an hereditary member has no length of membership, that member shall be able to purchase a length of membership at half the current cost. An hereditary member with no length of membership shall not be allowed to vote nor hold any official position of the society.

Consider the unary relations  $H$ ,  $I$  and  $J$ :

$H$  is true of  $x$  if  $x$  is an hereditary member of the society

$I$  is true of  $x$  if  $x$  is a member of the society

$J$  is true of  $x$  if  $x$  obtained hereditary membership in a non-hereditary manner

Consider the binary relation  $P$  such that  $P$  is true of  $(x, y)$  if  $x$  is the parent of  $y$ .

We assert that:

$$(\forall x)(J(x) \supset H(x))$$

$$(\forall x)(H(x) \supset I(x))$$

$$(\forall x)((J(x) \vee (\exists y)(P(y, x) \wedge H(y))) \equiv H(x))$$

59. There shall also be Fred and Freya memberships, conferred by general acclaim in accord with the committee. These memberships entitle the member to attend meetings, etc. as any ordinary member. Any such member attending the banquet must make a speech. Fred memberships shall be reserved for non-living entities. Freya memberships shall be reserved for living entities.

## 3 Society Business

### 3.1 Events

60. The ordinary meetings of the society may consist of, but are not limited to, library meetings, video meetings, author meetings and discussion meetings. Any other meetings deemed appropriate by the committee may also occur.
61. At least once a week during full term there shall be a library meeting (item 71), unless exceptional circumstances prevent this. The Librarian is responsible for organising these meetings.
62. The society may show videos to its members, and only its members. The Video Representative is responsible for organising the location and obtaining the videos.
63. Members of the society may prepare a discussion for the rest of the society.
64. The society may invite authors to speak to the society. The Speaker-to-Animals is responsible for organising these meetings.
65. The extraordinary meetings of the society occur once a term, not including general meetings. These are the Christmas party in Michaelmas term, the banquet in Hilary term and the punt party in Trinity term. Each of the three officers is responsible for one of these events each, as detailed in item 2.2.
66. The Christmas Party traditionally occurs on Saturday, 7th week of Michaelmas term. It is primarily organised by the Treasurer.
67. The banquet occurs in Hilary term. It is primarily organised by the President. [MESSAGE REDACTED]
68. The punt party occurs in Trinity term. It is primarily organised by the Secretary. [MESSAGE REDACTED]
69. Should any member hear of the death, heretofore unheard of, of any member, the news should be immediately reported to the society. Upon receipt of this news, preparations should be made for a society wake. Finance for appropriate beverages and bakery goods can be derived from ticket sales. If the news is received late, the wake should occur retroactively.

### 3.2 The Library

70. The committee shall appoint a Librarian who will be in charge of the library and who will be a committee member (as under item 27e). The term of office of the Librarian shall be as long as the committee and/or the Librarian see fit.
71. Members have the right to use the library according to the rules and regulations of the library. The committee shall have the power to redraft the rules and regulations at a committee meeting without a general meeting. In the absence of an official record of these rules and regulations, it can be assumed that any member may borrow an unlimited number of items from the library for an unlimited amount of time, provided that the member shall return any item on request from a committee member. Regular meetings shall be held whereby members shall have access to the library.
72. The committee shall have the power to buy or sell books and magazines or do whatsoever it regards as beneficial to the library.
73. The committee shall have the power to fine any member who has transgressed the rules and regulations of the library. The amount of such fines will be decided by the committee and will be made known to members. In the absence of such notification, it can be assumed that no fines will be charged. The committee shall also have the power to charge members for the replacement of books or other items borrowed if they are not returned within the stipulated time.

Lemon Curry [a recipe]

### 3.3 Council of the Wizeded

74. There shall exist a shadowy organisation behind the scenes of the society. This shall be known as the Council of the Wizeded, or merely the Council. Only those detailed under item 75 shall be in the Council. The Council shall exist merely to determine when the society becomes boring. They shall have no other purpose, and shall have no power other than that detailed in item 77.
75. Only active members of the society who have been members for at least five years are entitled to belong to the Council of the Wizeded. Of these, only those who have turned up to at least one society meeting a term for the previous three terms, or three society meetings in the current term shall belong to the Council. If, during any given term, a member belonging to the Council of the Wizeded does not turn up to a society meeting, that member shall no longer belong to the Council of the Wizeded until such time as that member has again fulfilled the previously stated requirements. The Senior Member shall not belong to the Council of the Wizeded unless the Senior Member fulfills requirements for membership other than being merely Senior Member. Any member eligible who does not wish to belong to the Council may leave it at any time.
76. The oldest member belonging to the Council of the Wizeded shall be termed the Haggard One. The Haggard One shall chair any official meetings of the Council of the Wizeded. If the Haggard One does not wish to be the Haggard One, then the next oldest member belonging to the Council of the Wizeded shall be the Haggard One instead.
77. The Council of the Wizeded have the power to activate the Dead Hand of the Past. They may use this power when they deem the society to have become boring. The Council of the Wizeded must hold an official meeting and a majority vote in favour of activation must be passed before the Dead Hand can be activated. The Haggard One shall inform the Dead Hand that activation has occurred. Upon activation, the Dead Hand shall upgrade the Genital Piercing Officer from a title to a post, and the Genital Piercing Officer shall thus join the committee, to try and prevent the society from remaining boring. The Genital Piercing Officer shall remain a post and on the committee only until the next general meeting in Hilary term.

As above, so below.

Discuss.