

## **Policy regarding Sections and Special Interest Groups (SIGs)**

Effective January 1, 2011

### **Background**

The American Academy of Optometry includes groups of Fellows who wish to gather and communicate for the purpose of sharing information about specific areas of interest within optometry and vision science. To accommodate this social and information-gathering function, the Academy has created two types of groups that may exist, with specific requirements for each.

### **AAO Section Requirements**

There may be an unlimited number of Sections of the American Academy of Optometry. Groups of Fellows that meet the requirements listed below may petition the Board of Directors to become a Section. No Section shall exist that has not been approved by the Board. Sections in existence at the time of original passage of this policy need not apply to become a Section but will be reviewed annually and must meet the minimum requirements set out below in order to continue existing as a Section.

#### **Sections must, at minimum:**

- Have 100 Fellows verified every six years
- Have a Diplomate program
- Have a process for Diplomate renewal over a six-year period based on a uniform point system across Sections
- Produce five new diplomates every six years\*
- Have no more than two Diplomate tracks\*: clinical and research
- Propose and implement an Annual Meeting Symposium each year, which can be in partnership with one or more other Section(s) or Special Interest Group(s)
- Generate at least one newsletter per year, whether print or electronic
- Have elected officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, Past Chair (if applicable), Program Chair, Diplomate Chair
- Adopt standard Section Bylaws, as approved by the Academy Board of Directors
- Hold a Business meeting at the Annual Meeting
- Submit an annual Section activity report to the Board of Directors

### **AAO Special Interest Group Requirements**

There may be an unlimited number of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) of the American Academy of Optometry. Groups of Fellows that meet the requirements listed below may petition the Board of Directors to become a SIG. No SIG shall exist that has not been approved by the Board. SIGs may petition the Board to become a Section if they reach the threshold requirements as set forth for Sections.

#### **SIGs must, at minimum:**

- Have 25 Fellows verified every six years
- Propose and implement an Annual Meeting educational offering at least once every two years\*
- Produce at least one new or revised position paper every six years\*
- Distribute at least one newsletter per year
- Have elected officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Past Chair (if applicable)
- Adopt standard Special Interest Group bylaws
- Hold a business meeting at the Annual Meeting
- Submit an annual Special Interest Group activity report to the Board of Directors

(\*=exceptions can be petitioned to the Board of Directors)

**Bylaws of the xx Section**  
**American Academy of Optometry**

**Article I - Name and Purpose**

**Section 1.**

This section will be known as the xx Section (referred to hereafter as “the Section”).

**Section 2.**

This section will be appointed by the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Optometry (referred to hereafter as “the Academy”). The purposes of the xx Section will be to:

- Serve as a primary resource for the Academy for papers, posters, courses, information, and research regarding xx, and to advise the Academy on policy in these areas.
- Encourage inquiry and research into xx.
- Promote, advance and enhance the identity of optometry as a profession with expertise in xx.
- Encourage Academy Fellows to increase their competence in xx by recognizing as Diplomates those who demonstrate a broad base of knowledge and expertise in xx.

**Article II - Membership**

Any member of the American Academy of Optometry may become a member of the Section by participating in Section activities, attending the Section's meetings, and by paying any dues required by the Academy. A minimum of 100 Fellows, verified every six years, are required to form and maintain a Section.

**Article III - Officers**

**Section 1.**

The officers of this Section will be a Chair, Vice-Chair, Immediate Past Chair, Diplomate Chair, and Program Chair. These officers will constitute the Section’s Executive Committee.

**Section 2.**

Only Fellows of the Academy may run for elected office in the Section. Only Diplomates in the Section may serve as Diplomate Chair. Except for the Immediate Past Chair, the Section officers will be elected in even-numbered years by the Section members at the Annual Business Meeting of the Section. A majority of the votes cast for a particular office will be required for election to that office. An individual may serve only one consecutive term for each of the elected offices.

**Section 3.**

Terms of Office. All terms of office herein specified will begin at the close of each even-numbered year’s Annual Meeting of the Academy (at which the election takes place) and will end two years hence at the close of the Annual Meeting.

**Section 4.**

The Executive Committee can seek the removal from office of any officer for such cause as will preserve the

dignity and integrity of the organization. A majority of the Section officers will be required to petition the Academy to remove an elected Section officer. If an office becomes vacant by resignation, illness, death, or refusal to act, a replacement will be appointed by the Section Chair for the remainder of that officer's term. Should the office of the Section Chair become vacant, the Section Vice-Chair assumes the duties of the Chair.

## **Article IV - Duties of Officers**

### **Section 1.**

Section Chair. The Section Chair will:

- Preside at all meetings of the Section's Executive Committee;
- Appoint and/or approve the Chair of any committees within the Section who are to hold office during his/her term as Chair (e.g., xx);
- Submit and approve an annual budget for the Section to the Executive Director of the Academy;
- Superintend the performance of all activities of the Section and perform such other duties and acts that usually pertain to this office; and
- Communicate with the Section officers and membership.

### **Section 2.**

Section Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair will:

- Aid the Chair in the performance of his/her duties in such a manner and to such extent requested;
- Maintain minutes of all meetings of the Section;
- Raise funds from corporations, in consultation with the Academy Executive Director, to supplement the budgeted funds for the Section; and
- Upon the death or resignation or during disability of the Chair or upon refusal to act, perform the duties of the Chair for the remainder of his/her term or disability, as the case may be.

### **Section 3.**

Immediate Past Chair. The Immediate Past Chair will aid the Chair in the performance of his/her duties as requested.

### **Section 4.**

Diplomate Chair.

Refer to Diplomate Program (Article VI) below.

### **Section 5.**

Program Chair. The Program Chair will plan and superintend the programs of the Section at the Annual Meeting of the Academy during his/her term.

## **Article V - Meetings**

### **Section 1.**

The Annual Business Meeting of the Section will be held during the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Optometry.

### **Section 2.**

Ten members of the Section must be present at any meeting to constitute a quorum.

### **Section 3.**

All binding action(s) of the Section will be by a majority vote of the members present. All Section members may participate in voting, with the exception of voting on changes to the Diplomate program, in which case only Diplomates may vote.

### **Section 4.**

Except as may otherwise be required by the Bylaws of the Academy or Section, all meetings will be governed by the parliamentary rules and usages contained in the then current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article VI - Diplomate Program**

### **Section 1.**

The Diplomate Program Committee will include the Diplomate Chair, any necessary Diplomate Vice-Chairs (e.g., Clinical and/or Research Diplomate Vice-Chairs), and examination-specific Subcommittee Chairs (e.g., Case Reports, Written Examination, Oral Examination, and Diplomate Renewal). Each Subcommittee Chair will select Subcommittee members to carry out the work of that Subcommittee.

### **Section 2.**

The primary responsibilities of the Diplomate Chair will be to insure that the integrity and quality of the program are maintained and that the prescribed process for achieving Diplomate status is followed. The Clinical Diplomate Chair will be responsible for:

- Coordinating the overall activities of the Diplomate program;
- Continuously reviewing the candidacy process;
- Providing guidance to the officers and members of the Diplomate program committee;
- Recruiting members for the Diplomate program committees;
- Keeping the Academy office informed of the status of candidates and new Diplomates; and
- Performing such other duties and acts that usually pertain to this office.

### **Section 3.**

A minimum of five new Diplomates every six years are required to maintain a Section. In the event that this goal is not achieved, the Section must petition the Board of Directors for a waiver to this requirement.

## **Article VII - Miscellaneous Provisions**

### **Section 1.**

Section budgets are prepared and approved annually by a process set by the Board. All expenses incurred by the Section, before being forwarded to the Academy office for payment, will be approved by the Chair.

### **Section 2.**

The Section will maintain a Manual of Procedures. This Manual of Procedures shall not conflict with the Section Bylaws or AAO procedures.

### **Section 3.**

These Bylaws will become effective upon the approval thereof by the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Optometry and by this Section.

## **Article VIII – Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended from time to time by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Section present and voting at the Annual Business Meeting of the Section. No amendment so adopted will become effective until approved by the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Optometry.

## **Bylaws of the xx Special Interest Group**

### **American Academy of Optometry**

#### **Article I - Name and Purpose**

##### **Section 1.**

This Special Interest Group will be known as the xx Special Interest Group (referred to hereafter as “the Special Interest Group”).

##### **Section 2.**

This Special Interest Group will be appointed by the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Optometry (referred to hereafter as “the Academy”). The purposes of the xx Special Interest Group will be to:

- Serve as a primary resource for the Academy for papers, posters, courses, information, and research regarding xx, and to advise the Academy on policy in these areas.
- Encourage inquiry and research into xx.
- Promote, advance and enhance the identity of optometry as a profession with expertise in xx.

#### **Article II - Membership**

Any member of the American Academy of Optometry may become a member of the Special Interest Group by participating in Special Interest Group activities, attending the Special Interest Group's meetings, and by paying any dues required by the Academy. A minimum of 25 Fellows, verified every six years, are required to form and maintain a Special Interest Group.

#### **Article III - Officers**

##### **Section 1.**

The officers of this Special Interest Group will be a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Immediate Past Chair. These officers will constitute the Special Interest Group's Executive Committee.

##### **Section 2.**

Only Fellows of the Academy may run for elected office in the Special Interest Group. Except for the Immediate Past Chair, the Special Interest Group officers will be elected in even-numbered years by the Special Interest Group members at the Annual Business Meeting of the Special Interest Group. A majority of the votes cast for a particular office will be required for election to that office. An individual may serve up to two consecutive terms for each of the elected offices.

##### **Section 3.**

Terms of Office. All terms of office herein specified will begin at the close of each even-numbered year's Annual Meeting of the Academy (at which the election takes place) and will end two years hence at the close of the Annual Meeting.

##### **Section 4.**

The Executive Committee can seek the removal from office of any officer for such cause as will preserve the dignity and integrity of the organization. A majority of the Special Interest Group officers will be required to

petition the Academy to remove an elected Special Interest Group officer. If an office becomes vacant by resignation, illness, death, or refusal to act, a replacement will be appointed by the Special Interest Group Chair for the remainder of that officer's term. Should the office of the Special Interest Group Chair become vacant, the Special Interest Group Vice-Chair assumes the duties of the Chair.

## **Article IV - Duties of Officers**

### **Section 1.**

Special Interest Group Chair. The Special Interest Group Chair will:

- Preside at all meetings of the Special Interest Group's Executive Committee;
- Appoint and/or approve the Chair of any committees within the Special Interest Group who are to hold office during his/her term as Chair (e.g., xx);
- Submit and approve an annual budget for the Special Interest Group to the Executive Director of the Academy;
- Superintend the performance of all activities of the Special Interest Group and perform such other duties and acts that usually pertain to this office; and
- Communicate with the Special Interest Group officers and membership.

### **Section 2.**

Special Interest Group Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair will:

- Aid the Chair in the performance of his/her duties in such a manner and to such extent requested;
- Maintain minutes of all meetings of the Special Interest Group;
- Raise funds from corporations, in consultation with the Academy Executive Director, to supplement the budgeted funds for the Special Interest Group; and
- Upon the death or resignation or during disability of the Chair or upon refusal to act, perform the duties of the Chair for the remainder of his/her term or disability, as the case may be.

### **Section 3.**

Immediate Past Chair. The Immediate Past Chair will aid the Chair in the performance of his/her duties as requested.

## **Article V - Meetings**

### **Section 1.**

The Annual Business Meeting of the Special Interest Group will be held during the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Optometry.

### **Section 2.**

Five members of the Special Interest Group must be present at any meeting to constitute a quorum.

### **Section 3.**

All binding action(s) of the Special Interest Group will be by a majority vote of the members present. All Special Interest Group members may participate in voting.

### **Section 4.**

Except as may otherwise be required by the Bylaws of the Academy or Special Interest Group, all meetings will be governed by the parliamentary rules and usages contained in the then current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article VI - Miscellaneous Provisions**

### **Section 1.**

SIG Budgets are set annually in a process approved by the Board of Directors. All expenses incurred by the Special Interest Group, before being forwarded to the Academy office for payment, will be approved by the Chair.

### **Section 2.**

The Special Interest Group will maintain a Manual of Procedures. This Manual of Procedures shall not conflict with the SIG Bylaws or AAO procedures.

### **Section 3.**

These Bylaws will become effective upon the approval thereof by the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Optometry and by this Special Interest Group.

## **Article VIII – Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended from time to time by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Special Interest Group present and voting at the Annual Business Meeting of the Special Interest Group. No amendment so adopted will become effective until approved by the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Optometry.