

Five College Learning in Retirement (FCLIR) Bylaws

**The FCLIR Operations Manual is a
companion document to the Bylaws.**

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of the organization is FIVE COLLEGE LEARNING IN RETIREMENT (FCLIR).

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

Founded in 1988, FCLIR is a self-governing community dedicated to providing adults with opportunities for lifelong learning requiring the active participation of those enrolled. These opportunities and other offerings are designed to inspire shared experiences, cultivate friendships, and build meaningful social connections.

FCLIR is organized under the auspices of Five Colleges, Incorporated (FCI), a consortium of Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. FCLIR is a program of FCI. FCI manages all funds, has signatory authority for all contracts, and disburses cash subject to approval by the FCLIR Treasurer. Major items for outreach and communications will be reviewed with FCI before finalizing, printing, or distributing.

FCLIR welcomes, as members and guests, persons of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex or gender (including sexual orientation, gender identity and expression), disability, religious belief, and socio-economic status. Further, FCLIR does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex or gender (including sexual orientation, gender identity and expression), disability, religious belief, or socioeconomic status.

ARTICLE III MEMBERS

Section 1: Eligibility and Admission: Members of FCLIR are those persons who have completed membership applications and have paid the applicable dues.

Section 2: Classes of Membership: All members are voting members. Associate members have a reduced membership fee and may participate in all FCLIR activities except fall and spring seminars and workshops.

ARTICLE IV COUNCIL

Section 1: Authority: Council is composed of ten members and is the governing body of FCLIR. Council has general authority to manage all educational, organizational, and budget matters of FCLIR, including membership fees.

Section 2. Membership and Voting: Council will be comprised of representatives of each standing committee (Finance, Initiatives and Activities, Communication, Curriculum) and elected members at large. A committee representative cannot be a representative elected from the membership at large. A majority of Council members will be comprised of elected representatives. A representative of FCI may attend Council meetings without voting privileges except when Council is in executive session.

Section 3. Administrative and Executive Functions: Two Council Co-Chairs are responsible for overseeing the execution and completion of all administrative and executive functions. Council may appoint members either of the Council or not on Council to fill needed administrative and executive functions.

Section 4. Eligibility: All members are eligible to serve on Council. No member may serve for more than five consecutive years on Council.

Section 5. Annual Council Organizational Meeting: Outgoing Council and Incoming Council members will meet in June for an organizational meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to instruct the Incoming Council regarding any unresolved issues and other important matters. The joint Council members will participate in selecting from the Council the following positions for the new FCLIR year: two incoming Council Co-Chairs, the Secretary, and the Program Coordinator Primary Contact. A Council member may fill more than one position. The Incoming Council will decide how decision-making will take place, set the meeting calendar, set which rules of order will be used for regular and special membership meetings, and facilitate all other organizational needs.

Section 6. Meetings: Council will meet at least ten times in a calendar year and at other times when convened by the Council Co-Chairs. Any five members of Council may call for a special meeting of Council. A majority of Council members constitutes a quorum. Council may call itself into executive session by a majority vote for all or part of any meeting at which confidential matters may be discussed. Any member of FCLIR may observe a council meeting except when Council is in executive session.

Section 7. Operations Manual: Council will maintain an Operations Manual that describes administrative policies and procedures of FCLIR.

ARTICLE V LEADERSHIP

Section 1. Council Co-Chairs: The two Council Co-Chairs each serve a one year term. They may serve consecutive one year terms. They are responsible for overseeing the execution and completion of all administrative and executive functions.

Section 2. Secretary: The Secretary is responsible for recording minutes of all membership and Council meetings and distributing minutes of the meetings to members of Council. Approved minutes will be kept by the Program Coordinator and made available to any member upon request.

Section 3. Treasurer: The Treasurer is selected by the Finance Committee. In conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer of FCI, the Treasurer oversees the finances of FCLIR. The Treasurer makes periodic reports to Council and the membership.

Section 4: Program Coordinator Primary Contact: The Program Coordinator Primary Contact is responsible for providing primary communication with the Program Coordinator on all FCLIR needs. The Program Coordinator Primary Contact has the authority to make day to day decisions on items being discussed with the Program Coordinator.

ARTICLE VI SELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Section 1. Elected Council Members: Three new Council members are elected each year for two-year terms. Nominations to Council may be submitted by seminars, committees or members of FCLIR with the consent of the nominee. Members will vote by online ballot following the annual meeting. Each member may vote for no more than three nominees. The three nominees receiving the highest number of votes will be elected. Council will inform the membership how and when elections will occur.

Section 2. Committee Council Members: Each standing committee will name one representative to serve on Council for one year.

Section 3. Elected Council Member Vacancies: If a vacancy occurs in an elected position on Council, the candidate in the most recent election who received the next highest number of votes after those elected and is still eligible and willing to serve for the remainder of the vacated term, fills the position. If no such candidate is available, Council may appoint a member of FCLIR to serve for the remainder of the term.

Section 4: Committee Council Member Vacancies: If a vacancy occurs in an appointed position on Council, the committee whose representation is vacated will identify a new representative to serve for the balance of the one-year term.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1: Establishment of Committees: All committees operate under the authority of Council. Council has authority to establish ad hoc committees. Any change to standing committees requires an amendment to the Bylaws.

Section 2: Committee Responsibilities: Committees may determine their own membership and leadership. Committees will submit to Council a list of members, the committee leadership, and the committee Council representative by May 31. After that date, any changes to the committee shall be reported to Council.

Section 3: Communications Committee: The Communications Committee is responsible for communications related to the recruitment and retention of members.

Section 4: Curriculum Committee: The Curriculum Committee is responsible for the development, review, and support of fall and spring seminars and workshops.

Section 5: Initiatives and Activities Committee: The Initiatives and Activities Committee is responsible for all social events and programs other than fall and spring seminars and workshops.

Section 6: Finance Committee: The Finance Committee is responsible for reviewing the finances and fiscal policy. The committee prepares and proposes an annual budget to Council.

ARTICLE VIII MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1: Structure of Meetings: Council may choose to hold membership meetings in-person, virtually, or hybrid. Council will determine how and when voting will take place.

Section 2: Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting is held prior to June 1 to review the previous year, the state of the organization and to consider future planning.

Section 3: Special Meetings: Council may convene a Special Meeting of the members at any time deemed necessary. Members may call for a Special Meeting by presenting a petition to Council endorsed by ten percent (10%) of the membership. Council will schedule a Special Meeting within forty (40) days of receiving said petition.

Section 4: Notification: Members will receive a minimum of fifteen (15) days notification of Special Meetings and the Annual meeting, including the agenda and any necessary explanatory material.

Section 5: Voting: To validate a membership vote, thirty percent (30%) of the membership must cast a vote. If validated, a simple majority will pass the vote. The exception to this will be amendments to the Bylaws (see Article IX)

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

Section 1: Proposing Amendments: A member, committee, or Council may propose an amendment to these Bylaws by written submission presented to Council.

Section 2: Presentation to the Membership: Any amendment which is approved by Council or an amendment submitted with an accompanying petition signed by at least ten percent (10%) of the membership, will be presented to the membership.

Section 3: Notification: The membership will be sent the proposed amendment together with explanatory materials at least fifteen (15) days before the Annual Meeting or Special Meeting which is set to consider the proposed amendment.

Section 4: Voting: Council will determine how and when voting will take place. To validate an amendment vote, thirty percent (30%) of the membership must cast a vote. If validated, and the proposed amendment is approved by sixty percent (60%) of those voting, it becomes part of these Bylaws.

Date: Approved May 21, 2025