

# **CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY OF SYSTEMATIC BIOLOGISTS**

## **ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this non-profit organization, incorporated in the State of Connecticut, shall be the Society of Systematic Biologists, hereafter the Society.

## **ARTICLE II. OBJECT AND OPERATION**

The objective of the Society shall be the advancement of the science of systematic biology in all its aspects of theory, principles, methodology, and practice, for both living and fossil organisms, with emphasis on areas of common interest to all taxonomists regardless of individual specialization. With this object in mind, the Society shall be organized and operated as a non-profit organization exclusively for scientific and educational purposes.

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

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

Anyone who is interested in the objectives of the Society is eligible for membership.

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

Membership is established by application to the Executive Vice President of the Society, accompanied by payment of the annual dues, as described in the instructions on our website.

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

The dues for all membership classes shall be established by a two-thirds vote of the Council.

### **Section 4. *Rights of Membership***

Members shall be entitled to vote in all general Society elections, to receive the Society's principal journal, to hold office in the Society, and to participate in other usual membership functions.

### **Section 5. *Suspension and Reinstatement***

Those whose annual dues are not paid within a reasonable period are no longer members of the Society and forfeit all membership rights. Such persons may be reinstated as members by payment of annual dues.

### **Section 6. *Emeritus Membership***

A member who has retired from gainful employment and who has been a member of the Society in good standing for a period of not less than 10 years may, upon application to the Executive Vice President, be designated an Emeritus Member. Emeritus Members shall have full rights of voting and participation in activities and may receive the principal journal of the Society at the student rate.

### **Section 7. *Patrons***

Any person may become a Patron of the Society by making an appropriate monetary contribution in an amount determined by the Council. Patrons shall be entitled to all rights of membership for life without further payment of dues.

### **Section 8. *Honorary Members***

Honorary Members, not to exceed a total of one percent of the membership, may be designated by the Council from members whose distinguished scientific work has notably advanced systematic biology. Honorary Members shall be entitled to all the rights of membership for life but are not liable for annual dues.

### **Section 9. *Sustaining Members***

Any person may become a Sustaining Member of the Society upon payment of twice the amount of the annual dues as set by the Society. Sustaining Members shall be entitled to vote, to participate in the usual membership functions, and to receive the Society's publications.

### **Section 10. *Family Membership***

Related members (e.g. spouses) may elect family membership for which the first member pays full dues and receives the Society's principal publication, and the subsequent members pay a reduced rate determined by the Council and do not receive the Society's principal publication. All Family Members shall be entitled to all rights of membership.

### **Section 11. *Student Members***

Any person who is currently enrolled as a student in a degree-granting institution is eligible for student membership in the Society upon annual presentation of student certification by an instructor and payment of dues as determined by the Council. Student Members shall have all rights of membership except the right to hold office.

## **ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS**

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

The officers of the Society shall be the President, President-Elect, Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Program Director, Awards Director, Editor, and Editor Elect. All officers must be members of the Society at the time of their election and during their whole term. All officers shall take office at the beginning of the calendar year and serve for the number of years determined by his/her office (unless elected to another office in the Society or until a successor is elected to that office), ending his/her term at the close of the appropriate calendar year.

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

The President advances to that office automatically from the office of President-Elect or, if necessary, is elected directly as President (see Section 4). The President shall preside at meetings of the Society and of the Council, and shall be a voting member of the Council, ex officio, during the term of office and during the following one year as immediate Past-President. The President shall appoint such committees, delegates, and special representatives of the Society as are necessary and appropriate.

### **Section 3. *President-Elect***

The President-Elect shall be elected by the membership from those members who, by their scientific achievement, are considered to be among the leaders in systematic biology. The President-Elect shall be a voting member of the Council, ex officio, during that term of office, and shall perform the duties of President during any period when the President is unable to fulfill the duties of that office.

### **Section 4. *Vacancies in the Offices of President and President-Elect***

In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the President-Elect shall succeed to the office and shall serve for the remainder of the term and for the regular term as President. A vacancy in the office of President-Elect shall be filled at the next annual election by the direct election of a President for the term normally succeeded to by the President-Elect. In the event of concurrent vacancies in both offices, the Executive Vice President shall serve as President of the Society until the next annual election.

### **Section 5. *Other Officers***

The Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Program Director, Awards Director, and Editor are elected by the council and each shall normally serve for a three-year term, and thereafter may be reelected for successive terms of one year. They shall discharge the customary duties of their respective offices, under the direction of the President and be responsible to the Council. They shall be governed by such rules and regulations, in addition to the Constitution and Bylaws, as the Council may promulgate. A vacancy in these offices may be filled by the Council with an interim appointee, and a regular replacement shall be elected and take office at the beginning of the calendar year. The editor elect serves one year concurrently with the outgoing editor. The editor elect receives manuscripts and the outgoing editor fills the journal with previously received manuscripts.

## **ARTICLE V. COUNCIL**

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

The government and operation of the Society shall be vested in a Council.

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

The Council shall consist of the President, the President-Elect, the most immediate living Past-President, the Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Program Director, Awards Director, Editor of the Society's principal journal, and 15 elected Councilors. Each elected Councilor shall serve for three years taking office at the beginning of the calendar year following the election. Five Councilors shall be elected each year to provide three classes serving staggered terms on the Council. Any vacancy among elected Councilors shall be filled by the normal procedure for electing Councilors at the next annual election. An elected Councilor shall not be eligible for reelection for one year after completing a full term of service. Elected Councilors must be members of the Society.

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

The President of the Society shall be Chairperson of the Council during the term of office, and the President-Elect shall be Vice-Chairperson. If both are absent, or unable to serve, the Executive Vice President shall serve. If all are absent or unable to serve, the Council shall select from its members a Chairperson pro tem.

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

The Council is empowered to act on all matters pertaining to the Society, except as otherwise provided by this Constitution and Bylaws. In the execution of its duties, it may: (1) acquire, hold, and dispose of, either in its name or in the name of its nominee, any property or other assets suited to further the interests of the Society; (2) execute contracts and solicit and receive grants in support of the Society's activities; (3) make, or cause to be made, all necessary arrangement for the meetings of the Society; and (4) exercise such other powers as required by this Constitution and its Bylaws and as required or desirable for the conduct of the Society's affairs.

#### **Section 5. *Duties***

The proceedings of the Council and the status of the Treasury shall be reported to the Society at each Annual Meeting and in an annual report to the entire membership.

#### **Section 6. *Prohibitions***

The Council shall not obligate the Society beyond the actual content of the Treasury, and shall not do anything that will abrogate the Society's status as a non-profit, scientific organization.

### **ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS**

Annual Meetings of the Society shall be held at such time and place as determined by the Council.

### **ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES**

#### **Section 1.**

The following Committees shall be appointed by the President pursuant to the conditions provided elsewhere in this constitution and/or in the by-laws: Awards in Systematic Biology, Initiatives and Long-range Planning, Nominating, Publication, and Coordinating. The Board of Trustees shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the executive council and elected by the council as discussed below Article VIII, section 2.

### **ARTICLE VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

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

All officers (except the Editor and Trustees) and all Councilors shall be nominated by a Nominating Committee consisting of the current President (or if unable to serve, the most recent available Past-President), who shall be the Chairperson, and two other members who are not members of the Council. These two other members are appointed by the President Elect in the months following the annual meetings. This will allow the committee to begin work in

September under the direction of the President, who will continue as the chair of the committee until its work is completed (at least three months prior to the annual meeting). The Committee shall secure two candidates or more for each position to be elected by the general membership (President-Elect, Councilors, and if necessary President), and one or more candidates for each position to be elected by the Council (Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Awards Director, and Program Director). Five members of the Society may nominate a candidate for President-Elect (and if necessary, President) or Councilor (see Bylaw 3). Any Councilor may nominate a candidate for Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Awards Director or Program Director (see Bylaw 4). The ballot should be finalized and sent to the council for approval by 15 March of each year. The membership shall be informed of the names of all nominees at least three months prior to the Annual Meeting.

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

The President-Elect, if necessary the President, and Councilors shall be elected by the members of the Society by a mail or electronic vote prior to the Annual Meeting. Candidates for Councilor receiving the most votes up to the number of positions on the Council to be filled shall be elected. Any vacated positions of uncompleted terms on the Council shall be filled by Council nominees receiving the most number of votes in the previous election.

The Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Awards Director, Trustees and Program Director are elected by a mail or electronic vote of the Council. The candidate for each must receive a majority of affirmative ballots to be elected.

All elections by mail or electronic vote are conducted by the Executive Vice President or his/her designee, who shall mail the appropriate ballots or initiate electronic voting to the general members and to the Council members at least two months prior to the Annual Meeting. To be valid, returned ballots must be postmarked at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting or meet the deadline designated for electronic votes. The votes shall be counted electronically or by the Executive Vice President or his/her designee. The Council may canvass the votes. The Council shall report the election results to the membership at the Annual Meeting and in the annual report to the membership.

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

A Search Committee consisting of the President-Elect, serving as Chairperson, the President, and the most immediate Past-President shall find candidates or a single candidate for the position of Editor. Candidates may be recommended by the Editor or any Council member. The nomination process shall be initiated no later than the Annual Meeting of the first year of the current Editor's tenure and shall be completed four months prior to the Annual Meeting at which the new Editor is elected. The report of the Search Committee for Editor shall be mailed to Councilors three months prior to the Annual Meeting. Election of the Editor shall be at a Council meeting at an Annual Meeting with Councilors voting for only one of the candidates. The candidate having a majority of votes is elected. If only one candidate is nominated, a two-thirds majority of affirmative ballots is required for approval.

## **ARTICLE IX. PUBLICATIONS**

The Society may, in the furtherance of its stated object, publish such journals, monographs, handbooks or other publications as the Council may determine, within the needs

and resources of the Society. An Editor shall be elected according to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE X. AFFILIATION**

The Council, at its discretion, may arrange for affiliation with an appropriate society or organization, especially for the purposes of scientific programs, provided always that the Society of Systematic Biologists shall retain its distinct entity as a Society and that nothing shall be done to alter this without the express consent of the membership. A society or organization eligible for affiliation shall be (a) one that is engaged in the advancement of some field of systematics, (b) a chapter of national honorary biological association, (c) an academy or museum, or (d) such other as the Council may deem appropriate.

## **ARTICLE XI. BYLAWS**

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

Bylaws to augment this Constitution may specify details and less fundamental provisions, but shall not alter the intended meaning of the Constitution or circumvent its provisions.

## **ARTICLE XII. DISTRIBUTION UPON DISSOLUTION**

In the event of dissolution of the Corporation, after all liabilities have been accounted for and discharged, any and all property remaining shall be conveyed or transferred to one or more domestic or foreign corporations, societies, or organizations engaged in activities similar to those of the Corporation as may be designated by the presiding judge of the highest court of the State of Connecticut, or a committee appointed by him/her; provided that any such transferee shall, as of the date of conveyance or transfer, qualify as an exempt scientific organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

## **ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS**

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

This Constitution can be amended only by a two-thirds majority of those Society members in good standing voting in a mail or electronic ballot.

### **Section 2. *Proposals and Consideration***

An amendment may be proposed by any member of the Society by a letter addressed to the Executive Vice President at least two months prior to an Annual Meeting. Members of the Council may propose amendments at any Council Meeting. Any proposed amendment to the Constitution must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council at a meeting before it is submitted to the Society membership for vote.

### **Section 3. *Time of Effect***

If approved by the Society membership, amendments to the Constitution take effect at the end of the Annual Meeting following the approving vote. Notice of the change shall be published in the annual report to the membership.

## **ARTICLE XIV. ENABLING ARTICLE**

### **Section 1. *Effective Date***

The Constitution and its accompanying Bylaws shall be adopted as in full force and effect at the close of the Annual Meeting that follows approval by two-thirds of those Society members in good standing voting in a mail or electronic ballot. At the time this Constitution and its Bylaws take effect they shall amend the existing Constitution and Bylaws of the Society by superseding and replacing them in their entirety.

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

Following revision of the Constitution, officers, councilors, and trustees will continue in their positions until the ends of their terms unless removed by 2/3 majority of the voting membership for good reason. When these terms of office have ended, new officers, councilors and trustees will be elected, appointed, or re-appointed following the rules (which will not necessarily have changed) laid out in the revised constitution. Appointed patrons, life members, and honorary members will also continue in their positions following constitutional revision. Similarly, payment schemes (e.g. payment of dues or other finances) set up prior to the most recent revision of the Constitution and Bylaws for the operation of the Society, shall remain in full force and effect under the new Constitution and Bylaws unless amended.

## **BYLAWS OF THE SOCIETY OF SYSTEMATIC BIOLOGISTS**

### **Bylaw 1. *Dues and Membership Rights***

The Council shall determine the amount of annual dues and/or rates for all classes of members. Annual dues shall be paid in advance upon presentation of an annual bill. Persons not paying dues by six months subsequent to the mailing date of the annual bill shall be dropped from membership.

### **Bylaw 2. *Funds and Budget***

The financial records of the Society shall be maintained by, and its funds deposited and/or invested by, the Trustees under the direction of the Council. The Treasurer shall prepare and submit to the Council at the Annual Meeting an annual report and a budget for this coming fiscal year that shall be approved by the Council.

The Society's fiscal year shall be the calendar year unless otherwise designated by the Council.

### **Bylaw 3. *Nominations by Members***

A call for nominations for President-Elect, if necessary for President, and Councilors shall be issued by the Past President via the Executive VP to the membership either in Systematic Biology or by paper or electronic mail, six months prior to the Annual Meeting. Such nominations shall consist of a brief statement of the qualifications of the nominee, evidence that the nominee is willing to serve and attend all council meetings during the term of office.

Recommendations are to be received by the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee and the Executive Vice President at least five months prior to the Annual Meeting.

#### **Bylaw 4. *Recommendations by Councilors***

Recommendations for the offices of Executive Vice President, Treasurer, Program Director, Awards Director, and Editor Elect may be made by Councilors. Such recommendations shall consist of a brief statement of the qualifications of the nominee and evidence that the nominee is willing to serve, and shall be sent to the Chairperson of the Search Committee at least two months before the committee must complete its work.

#### **Bylaw 5. *Council Proceedings***

The regular meeting of the Council shall be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Society. A meeting of the Council may also be held for exceptional circumstances, at the call of its Chairperson or on written request of three Councilors, at any other time and place, provided that written notice of the time and place be mailed electronically or by post to each Councilor at least 30 days prior to that meeting. Five Councilors shall constitute a quorum of the Council for transaction of business at any regular or exceptional meetings.

Business may be transacted by paper or electronic mail at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Council, provided that a majority of the Council votes. However, objection by three Councilors shall require deferment of action to the next regular Council meeting.

A meeting of the executive council (President, Past President, President Elect, Executive Vice President, Program Director, Awards Director, Editor, Editor Elect, one Trustee, and relevant invitees) shall be held early in the New Year to set the agenda for the annual meeting and to discuss goals, progress, and evaluate finances.

Proxy voting may not take place at regular or exceptional meetings of the Council or in mail votes.

#### **Bylaw 6. *Endowment Committee***

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

A Board of three Trustees, nominated by the President and elected by the Council, shall hold all of the funded property of the Society in trust with power to sell and to reinvest according to their judgment. Trustees shall be bonded at the Society's expense in an amount specified by the Council.

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

One Trustee shall be appointed for a term of three (3) years at each annual meeting. Trustees may serve multiple consecutive terms. The Trustees shall select their Chairman. Vacancies among the Trustees may be filled by election at any time by a majority vote of the council voting.

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

Transactions involving investments require approval by a majority of the Committee. It is the duty of each Trustee to protect and manage the Reserve Fund (Described in Bylaw 7) of the Society in a manner that seeks to obtain optimal performance in a diversified portfolio of stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and cash instruments. It is the Trustee's responsibility to try to the best of his or her ability to perform this duty in order to increase the value of the Reserve Fund and to provide revenue as requested by the Council for support of programs and



publications that enhance the science of systematics and the training of systematists. It is the further responsibility of the Trustee to provide accurate and current information and recommendations regarding the Reserve Fund to the Council so that body can make the most informed financial decisions possible on behalf of the membership. The Trustees are responsible for submitting to the Council an independent audit report for the Reserve Fund on an annual basis.

#### **Bylaw 7. *Reserve Fund***

Sec. 1. The funds and properties of the Society under the control of the Trustees shall be designated collectively as the reserve fund. A part of the reserve fund may, with the approval of the Council, be returned annually to the Executive Vice President and Treasurer for the conduct of the Society's business including student awards.

Sec. 2. All moneys received from Life Members and Patrons in consideration of their election as such, and all gifts for undesignated or designated purposes approved by the Council, shall be invested in the reserve fund.

Sec. 3. Bequests and trusts having for their object the advancement of systematics or the welfare of the Society of Systematic Biologists may be accepted and administered by the Society. Before acceptance of any such trust, the Council shall consider the object of the trust and all conditions and specifications attached thereto, and shall report its action to the Society. Bequests shall be added to the reserve fund of the Society and managed by the Trustees. Trusts shall be managed as agreed to in the trust instruments.

Sec. 4. Both the principal and income of the funded property of the Society shall be used solely to further study and dissemination of knowledge of systematics, as set forth in the name and Objects of the Society; but the funded property shall be administered and operated in such a manner that it will at all times maintain a tax exempt status under the provisions of the United States Internal Revenue Code, both for income tax and gift tax purposes.

#### **Bylaw 8. *Awards in Systematic Biology Committee***

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

The Committee shall select the winners of four awards of the Society: 1) The Ernst Mayr Award in Systematic Biology given for the outstanding paper presented at the annual meeting by a student member of the Society or a member who has received the Ph.D. degree within the last 15 months; 2) the "Awards for Graduate Student Research" which are given to assist students in the first two years of their systematics projects to aid in the collection of preliminary data needed to pursue additional sources of support; 3) The Mini-PEET awards to enhance expertise in taxonomy by transferring knowledge from older to younger taxonomists; and 4) Travel Awards to attend systematics workshops.

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

The Committee shall consist of at least three members: the Awards Director who assumes responsibility as committee chair, appointed for a three-year term as described above, and at least two additional members appointed annually by the Awards Director. The committee should include at least one person who served on a previous year's Committee.

#### **Bylaw 9. *Initiatives and Long-Range Planning Committee***

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

The Committee shall identify and prioritize initiatives and long-range goals, and shall advise the Council on the best ways to implement and fund the relevant programs

**Section 2. *Membership***

The Committee shall consist of five members. To ensure continuity, members will have staggered five-year terms. A new member will be appointed each year by the President and approved by the Council. The Chairperson of the Committee will serve a five-year term and may be re-appointed.

**Bylaw 10. *Publications Committee***

**Section 1. *Function***

The Committee shall identify desirable policies for the Society's publications, act for the Society in negotiating printing, publishing, and other contracts, and provide fiscal review of the Society's publication management. The Committee shall also work with the publisher or printer to promote and increase membership. The Editor, Editor Elect, and Managing Editor shall not be involved in contract negotiations with the publisher in order to maintain amiable relations with the current publisher.

**Section 2. *Membership***

The Committee shall consist of at least five members including a Chairperson, the Editor, the most recent past-Editor, the Managing Editor, and the Treasurer.

**Bylaw 11. *Coordinating Committee***

**Section 1. *Function***

The Committee shall coordinate future meeting plans with representative from other societies as necessary.

**Section 2. *Membership***

The Committee shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Executive Vice-President, Treasurer, and Program Director, plus similar officers from the scientific societies with which the Society is coordinating

**Bylaw 12. *Journal***

The principal journal of the Society shall be called *Systematic Biology* and shall be managed by an Editor who is elected by and is responsible to the President and Council. Appointment of an Editorial Board and Associate Editors is the responsibility of the Editor, with approval of the Council.

**Bylaw 13. *Appeal of Editorial Decisions***

A contributor to the journal may appeal to the Council to overrule editorial decisions made concerning his or her manuscript. In case of such an appeal the Council shall review all relevant information at its next regularly scheduled meeting. If two-thirds of those voting favor such action, the Council may direct the Editor to take any action on the manuscript that the Council deems appropriate. If the Council determines that the appeal is without merit, this

finding together with any explanatory information that the Council deems suitable shall be included in the minutes of the meeting.

#### **Bylaw 14. *Endowment Fund***

There shall be an Endowment Fund (formerly called Patrons-Endowment Fund), which shall consist of contributions from members, proceeds from sale of back issues of Society publications, and miscellaneous gifts. The annual earnings from this Fund, including interest, dividends, and gains from the sale of stock, shall be used in the general operations of the Society, including publication of the Society's journal. The principal of the Fund may be used for the same purposes if authorized by a majority vote, which may be conducted by mail or electronic mail, of all voting members of the Council.

#### **Bylaw 15. *Amendment***

Amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by any member of the Society by letter addressed to the Secretary at least two months prior to an Annual Meeting. Members of the Council may propose amendments at any Council meeting. Any proposed amendment to the Bylaws must be approved by a simple majority vote of the Council at a meeting or by mail or electronic mail ballot before it is submitted to the Society's membership for vote.

The Bylaws can be amended by a two-thirds majority of the Society's members voting in a mail ballot or, in an emergency, by a two-thirds majority of members voting at an Annual Meeting.

If approved by the Society membership, amendments to the Bylaws take effect at the end of the Annual Meeting following the vote.

#### **Bylaw 16. *History of Constitution and Bylaws***

The Constitution and Bylaws will be followed by a statement of when they were adopted initially, and of their publication in *Systematic Biology*, followed by dates of major modifications and dates of publication in *Systematic Biology*, and lastly by the date of this revision plus its publication.

### **HISTORY OF CONSTITUTION BYLAWS**

A temporary Constitution was adopted at the first meeting of the Society of Systematic Zoology on 29 December 1947. A permanent Constitution was adopted at the first Annual Business Meeting on 12 September 1948 (published in *Society of Systematic Zoology News Letter*, No. 3, November 1950). A series of constitutional changes were approved by the Council and published in the *News Letter* (No.4, April 1951); they were approved by the membership in 1951 (*Syst. Zool.* 1:39, 1952).

Further actions reported in *Systematic Zoology* concerning the Constitution are as follows: 1966, revised Constitution approved (16:105, 1967); 1969, amendments (19:313-314, 1970) approved (19:311, 1970); 1971, amendment (20:475, 1971) on incorporation approved; 1973, amendments (22:208-209, 1973) approved (23:302, 1974); 1976, amendments (24:403-405, 518-519, 1975) approved (24:518-519, 1975); 1977, updated Constitution published (26:253-256, 1977); 1978, emergency bylaw change approved (28:255-257, 1979); 1981, amendment (30:226-227, 1981) approved (31:237, 1982); 1982, some of proposed amendments (31:237, 1982) approved (32:100, 1983); 1983, updated Constitution published (32:103-106,

1983); 1984, numerous amendments approved (34:251, 1985); 1985, updated Constitution published (34:254-258, 1985); 1990, amendments on Society and journal names approved (40:251-252, 1991); this updated Constitution published (40:386-390, 1991); amendments on committees (46:770, 1997). Amendments on Article IV, VII, Extensive amendments to Bylaw 6, creation of bylaw 7, and renaming of bylaws 7-15 to 8-16. (2001); Constitution added to the Society Website in July 2004; Amendments to the Constitution proposed via electronic ballot April 2007 concerning the renaming of Secretary, Awards Chair, and Program Chair, changes related to January start date for officers, and spelling and wording simplification throughout. Approved by the membership May 2007 and posted on the website in June 2007 <[www.systematicbiology.org](http://www.systematicbiology.org)>. Three amendments to the Constitution were proposed via electronic ballot March 2008: 1) a statement was added under "Article IV. Officers" to read, "or until a successor is elected to that office" to match the description of officers terms elsewhere and to allow officers to be replaced if two-thirds of the council decides that the officers are not functioning effectively; 2) "ARTICLE VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS"- Wording was added to match the current practice that the nomination committee is appointed by the president elect, and that the president heads the nomination committee following the annual meetings; 3) "Bylaw 9. *Initiatives and Long-Range Planning Committee*"- Wording has been added to extend each term to five years to ensure greater continuity necessary for long range planning; this was requested by the executive committee at their March 08 meeting. These changes were approved by a majority of members voting electronically March-May 2008 and placed on the Society website in June of 2008.