

## United States Association of Collegiate Fencing Clubs (USACFC) Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the USACFC?

The United States Association of Collegiate Fencing Clubs (USACFC) was established in 2003 to educate and promote fencing at the collegiate level throughout the United States. The organization began with 13 teams and has grown to over 45 teams since its inception. The USACFC was formed as a Nonprofit Corporation in 2005. Each year the organization holds a national fencing championship in the host city of one of the member colleges. The main purpose of the USACFC, per its Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, includes being “organized for non-profit, charitable or educational purposes, namely to foster national fencing competition at the collegiate level, to organize an annual national championship, and to promote the like, within the meaning of Sections 501(c)(3) (or corresponding Section of any future Federal Tax Code) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or any successor law, and rules and regulations issued by the IRS pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code or any successor law (the “Code”)...”

### What is the USACFC Board of Directors?

The Board of Directors manage the business and affairs of the USACFC. There are seven (7) Directors.

- Five (5) Directors shall be selected by a majority of those Directors present at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Corporation, and each Director shall be elected for a one (1) year term and until his/her successor shall be elected and shall qualify.
- Two (2) At-Large Directors shall be elected by majority vote of the member schools present at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, and each At-Large Director shall be elected for a one (1) year term and until his/her successor shall be elected and shall qualify.

### Why are the Directors selected this way?

From 2003-2013 the USACFC had Directors and Officers that were directly elected each year by the membership. This was plausible with just 13 teams in the beginning, but became more complex as the organization grew to 45 teams. In 2013, the teams discussed and agreed to move to a new governing structure. There were several reasons for this, including:

- **Legal:** A governing format with Board-selected Directors allow for the USACFC to obtain non-profit, tax-exempt status with the IRS and its guidelines. The major benefit of this non-profit, tax-exempt status is that it helps keep costs down and allows the organization to grow as desired. It makes it easier to get grants and sponsorships from organizations that exclusively focus on giving to non-profits. This keeps costs down for member schools and allows the USACFC to get venues that enable events of our size. For example, almost every venue the USACFC has used for National Championships in the past several years is completely out of our price range if we were paying “sticker” price. Only through grants given to the organization as a non-profit entity have we been able to book venues to accommodate all our members. Voting memberships (voting on all issues or on all directors) complicate the governance of nonprofits. For example, they must keep up with providing legally-required notices and documentation for meetings of large groups of members, keep rosters, etc. Failure to comply with these requirements even once threatens the entire organization’s legal status.
- **Practical/Operational:** Teams agreed that it did not make sense to put the Board in a position where there can be a radical leadership change that removes all institutional knowledge. We

have seen the benefit of this decision play out in the past several years in terms of consistent format, ending times, staffing, vendors, and venues. The structure maintains experienced Board members who know what to expect and can use their experience to much more efficiently run the organization and events. The tasks are monumental and take years to learn – and we are *still* learning. Stable Boards of Directors tend to have the experience to know organizational rules, regulations, and procedures, so the organization can be consistent and follow the law and its own rules. Also, this stability has many benefits for the teams and for the USACFC's dealings with 3rd parties. For example, the USACFC is trying to set a regional rotation based on the very small number of venues in the nation that fit our budget and space requirements. Continuity with regard to whom those venues and vendors speak to on a yearly basis is critical. As a result, the format is good for long-term planning over years, as opposed to electing people for one year. Our organization plans events 2-3 years in advance, so having Directors bouncing on and off the Board would be inefficient and put the ability to run these large events at risk.

- **Including membership:** Most nonprofits and charities are self-perpetuating boards, NOT elected Boards. Many fencing divisions, such as the National Intercollegiate Women's Fencing Association (NIWFA), operate with an ongoing board of self-selected Directors. Still, USACFC members wanted to recognize the desire for direct input, which is why there are two At-Large Board Members elected by the membership.

Consequently in 2013, then-USACFC President Bruce Capin (from the University of Florida), along with other USACFC leadership and with the overwhelming support of the member teams, signed the paperwork to make the USACFC a non-profit corporation with the 5-2 Board structure and himself as President. The organization's initial Directors were Bruce Capin, Marshal Davis, Scott Tundermann, Bob Grieser, Daniel Crocket, Mike Garrison, and Emil Petruncio. Since then, the five (5) Board-selected and two (2) member-selected Directors have been elected annually by either the Board-selected Directors or member schools.

### **Who is on the USACFC Board of Directors?**

For the 2016-2017 season, the Board included six people (one Board seat was vacant):

- Scott Tundermann
- Bob Grieser
- Marshal Davis
- Daniel Lascar
- Emil Petruncio (At-Large)
- Mike Garrison (At-Large)

The Officers, who may or may not also be on the Board but perform specific duties, included:

- President: Scott Tundermann
- Treasurer: Bob Grieser
- Secretary: Walter McClean
- Tournament VP: Brandon Rochelle

Other Officers may include a Vice President, Historian, Webmaster, and committee chair-people.

### **What does the Board of Directors actually do?**

The Board's primary mission is to put on the USACFC National Championship held annually in April. Specific duties include, without limitation, selecting and contracting with fencing venues and vendors, managing legal and insurance responsibilities, selecting and hiring a bout committee and referees, managing team registration, dues, and entry fees, managing the event's expense and budget, filing annual taxes with the IRS, appointing officers, determining event format and rules, budgeting, paying

bills, ensuring that the organization's rules are being followed consistently and in accordance with applicable laws, and communicating with member teams.

In practice, the President (selected by the Board) leads these efforts and the Directors and other Officers assist him/her. In the rare instance where the Board needs to vote on something that the President cannot manage directly, quorum for the vote is the majority of Directors in office and then a majority vote determines the outcome.

### **What are the requirements to be on the Board of Directors?**

The requirements are the same for Board-selected and member school-selected Directors; a person of at least full age (18) that has been nominated and elected by a majority of either the existing Board-selected Directors or member schools. The vast majority of Directors have always been representatives of member schools, but that is not strictly a requirement. For example, the Board and/or member schools can choose to consider those outside of USACFC member schools in pursuit of diversity, impartiality, and outside perspectives for the organization. Many non-profit Boards, including those in the fencing community, have outside directors. For fencing in particular, it is quite common to have unaffiliated individuals running conferences and college fencing organizations. The NCAA and its conferences are run by independent individuals unaffiliated with its member institutions, but have representatives of various colleges and universities still involved.

### **This sounds like fun! How can I participate?**

If you actually thought the question above then you are just our kind of weird! The Board is always seeking to add officers to help put on the event. Currently the USACFC has a President, Treasurer, and Secretary but has, in the past, also had a Vice-President, Historian, Webmaster, and other positions. If any of these positions interest you, or you think of a new way to contribute, then please e-mail President Scott Tundermann ([scott.tundermann@gmail.com](mailto:scott.tundermann@gmail.com)) and copy Secretary Walter McClean ([wfmcl@gmail.com](mailto:wfmcl@gmail.com)).

"I can't commit the time to getting involved right now but there is something USACFC-related that is incredibly important to me! What should I do?"

That's fine! You don't need to join the USACFC as a Director or Officer to get your or your team's concerns addressed. E-mail President Scott Tundermann ([scott.tundermann@gmail.com](mailto:scott.tundermann@gmail.com)) and/or any of the current Directors and Officers (contact information listed below). Tell us your ideas! If you would like to address the entire Board, let us know and we will schedule you some time to speak during the next Board meeting. The majority of new ideas and changes come directly from member schools, and then the Board reaches out to teams to gauge their opinions. For example, in 2015, some schools approached the Board wanting to change the format for the individual events. The Board determined that most teams were supportive so went ahead with a format tweak in 2016. At the end of the day, the Board exists solely to hold this large fencing tournament for member teams. Tell us how we can do it better!

### **2016-2017 Board of Directors and Officers**

- Scott Tundermann ([scott.tundermann@gmail.com](mailto:scott.tundermann@gmail.com))
- Bob Grieser ([armyfencing@aol.com](mailto:armyfencing@aol.com))
- Marshal Davis ([MDavis@powelltrachtman.com](mailto:MDavis@powelltrachtman.com))
- Daniel Lascar ([daniel.lascar@gmail.com](mailto:daniel.lascar@gmail.com))
- Secretary: Walter McClean ([wfmcl@gmail.com](mailto:wfmcl@gmail.com))

