



**BYLAWS OF THE  
WORCESTER INSTITUTE FOR SENIOR EDUCATION  
AT ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY**

5.27.2021

**BYLAWS OF THE  
WORCESTER INSTITUTE FOR SENIOR EDUCATION (WISE)  
AT ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY**

**ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of the organization shall be WORCESTER INSTITUTE FOR SENIOR EDUCATION (WISE) AT ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY.

**ARTICLE II: AFFILIATION**

- 1) WISE is a program sponsored by the School of Graduate Studies of Assumption University, Worcester, Massachusetts.
- 2) It functions within the principles outlined in the mission of Assumption University and all its Policies.
- 3) This program complies with all Assumption University Policies, as well as State and Federal Laws prohibiting discrimination in employment and its educational programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, age, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, genetic information or family medical history, military status, or other legally protected status.

**ARTICLE III: PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Worcester Institute for Senior Education (WISE) shall be to provide high-quality Lifelong Learning opportunities for older adults. It will achieve this by being a member-directed learning center where peer learning and active participation are key concepts.

**ARTICLE IV: MISSION**

The Worcester Institute for Senior Education (WISE) at Assumption University is a nonprofit, member-directed organization that provides Lifelong Learning opportunities for older adults.

**ARTICLE V: VALUES**

WISE fosters a culture of teamwork, participation, respect, acknowledgment, inclusivity and transparency.

## **ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP**

- 1) Membership shall be open to all older adults upon payment of the specified dues as set by the WISE Council.
- 2) All Members who have paid their annual dues will have voting privileges.
- 3) Dues paying Members will obtain the benefits of membership at WISE for the duration that their Membership is valid.
- 4) The types of Membership and their relationships to the payment of dues is outlined in the Document, "WISE Policies".

## **ARTICLE VII: DUES**

- 1) The Membership dues are reviewed annually by the Finance Committee and approved by the Council.
- 2) The dues are based on the cost of running the program.
- 3) The dues are refundable up to seven working days prior to the start of the Courses.
- 4) The details of the dues are outlined in the Document, "WISE Policies".

## **ARTICLE VIII: ORGANIZATION**

### **A. Officers**

- 1) The Officers shall be:
  - a) The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
  - b) Proposed by the Nominating Committee, approved by the Council, and elected by a simple majority vote of Members present at the Annual Meeting.
  - c) Required to retain full year Membership in WISE for the duration of their terms.
  - d) Expected to attend a minimum of eighty percent of scheduled meetings of the Council every academic year.
- 2) Succession of Officers will adhere to the following guidelines:
  - a) President serves a term of two years.
  - b) Vice President serves a term for two years, who then becomes President for a term of two years.
  - c) In the event of a vacancy of the position of the President as a result of unforeseen circumstances, the Vice President shall assume the position of President, who will serve the remainder of the President's term and then will serve the two-year term of President.

- d) In the event of a vacancy of the position of the Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer, the President, in consultation with the Chair of the Nominating Committee, shall appoint someone to serve the remainder of the Officer's term.
- 3) Upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Secretary and the Treasurer, who are each elected for one term of two years, may each serve one additional term of two years.
- 4) The details of the Officers terms in office are provided in the Document, "WISE Leadership Appointments and Terms in Office".

## **B. Council**

- 1) The WISE Council shall consist of:
  - a) The Officers of WISE.
  - b) One Chairperson or authorized representative of each Standing Committee.
  - c) A maximum of eight Members-At-Large.
  - d) The Director, who shall be a non-voting Member.
  - e) Past Presidents, who are non-voting Members.
- 2) Chairpersons of Standing Committees are appointed by the President and may serve not more than two consecutive terms of two years each.
- 3) Council Members-At-Large:
  - a) Shall be proposed by the Nominating Committee, approved by the Council and elected by a simple majority vote of active members present at the Annual Meeting.
  - b) Their terms are two years.
- 4) The Council shall meet a minimum of five times per year.
- 5) The Council members must retain full year Membership in WISE for the duration of their terms, and are expected to attend a minimum of eighty percent of the scheduled Council meetings per year.
- 6) A simple majority of the Council Membership shall constitute a quorum.
- 7) The Council shall establish policies by a simple majority vote and oversee operations as appropriate.
- 8) Any WISE Member may attend any Council meeting but may not vote.

### **C. Executive Committee**

- 1) The WISE Executive Committee shall consist of its Officers.
- 2) The Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the President, and in case the President is absent, the Vice President or the Director shall call the meeting.
- 3) The Executive Committee shall have the power to act for the Council, prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Council.
- 4) A report of action(s) taken by the Executive Committee shall be provided to the Council at its next scheduled meeting.

### **D. Standing Committees**

- 1) The Standing Committees are:
  - a) Communications Committee.
  - b) Curriculum Committee.
  - c) Finance Committee.
  - d) Nominating Committee.
  - e) Special Events Committee.
- 2) Standing Committees shall be established or eliminated from time to time by a simple majority vote of the Council.
- 3) Chairpersons of Standing Committees are appointed by the President and may serve two consecutive terms of two years each.
- 4) In the event that a Committee Chairperson cannot be appointed upon the expiration of her/his term, then the President has the authority to reappoint the existing Chairperson, or another WISE Member as Acting Chairperson for an additional one-year term, and until a Chairperson can be appointed the following year.
- 5) Each Committee shall establish its own Membership and timetable for meetings and shall be accountable to the Council.
- 6) Each Committees' Membership and summary of its activities are reported annually to the Council.
- 7) The roles and responsibilities of the various Committees is outlined in the Documents:
  - a) "WISE Leadership Roles and Responsibilities" (updated as necessary).
  - b) "WISE Leadership Appointments and Terms in Office" (updated as necessary).
  - c) "WISE Charters and Memberships of Committees, Groups and Clubs" (updated annually at the September meeting of the Council).
- 8) In an effort to maintain transparency, these Documents, along with others, will be made available on the WISE Website.

- 9) The “WISE Leadership Roles and Responsibilities” document may be modified from time to time, and approved by a simple majority of the Council.
- 10) The President, Vice President and the Director of WISE are Ex Officio Members of all Committees, except the Nominating Committee.

**E. Special Committees**

- 1) Special or Ad Hoc Committees or Task Forces may be appointed by the President or the Council from time to time and charged to accomplish a specific function or to have a specific focus.
- 2) Each Committee or Task Force shall establish its own meeting timetable and shall be accountable to the Council.

**ARTICLE IX: FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year shall be June 1 through May 31 of the following year.

**ARTICLE X: MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP**

- 1) The Annual Meeting of the WISE voting Members shall be held in May of each year for the election of the WISE Officers and Council Members-At-Large as well as for conducting of business or planning as needed.
- 2) An extraordinary meeting of the WISE voting Members may be called by one of the following:
  - a) The President.
  - b) A simple majority of the Council.
  - c) Two thirds voting majority of the Membership by written or by electronic signature.
- 3) Meetings and voting may be held in person or electronically.
- 4) Only those who hold Membership in WISE for the entire academic year are eligible to vote.

**ARTICLE XI: HIRING OF THE DIRECTOR**

- 1) When the position of Director becomes vacant, the President of WISE shall inform the President, the Dean, School of Graduate Studies, and the Director of Human Resources of Assumption University.

- 2) The President of WISE will establish a Search Committee that will include a member from Assumption University, appointed by the President of Assumption University.
- 3) The President of Assumption University will interview the finalist put forward by the Search Committee. Upon the President's approval, the new Director will be appointed by the President of Assumption University.

**ARTICLE XII: APPOINTMENT OF CURRENT OR RETIRED ASSUMPTION FACULTY**

- 1) Prior to approaching a current or retired Assumption Faculty member to teach a course in the WISE program the President of WISE will inform the Assumption President or the Provost to receive approval for that Faculty member, before they can teach in the program.

**ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS**

- 1) Any amendments to the Bylaws shall be voted upon at the Annual Meeting or a specially called meeting in person or electronically for this purpose, provided that all members have been notified of the proposed change(s) at least fifteen days prior to the Annual Meeting.
- 2) These proposed amendments must be submitted to the WISE Council at least eight weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
- 3) These amendments shall be approved by the President of Assumption University prior to being approved by the WISE Membership.
- 4) Amendments shall be passed by a two-thirds vote of the Members present at an in-person meeting (including meeting by Videoconference), or by two-thirds of electronic votes which are returned to the Director.

**ARTICLE XIV: RULES OF ORDER**

- 1) All meetings shall be conducted according to the Revised Robert's Rules of Order.

**ARTICLE XV: ACCEPTANCE OF BYLAWS**

- 1) These Bylaws will be effective immediately upon acceptance by the WISE Membership.

| <b>BYLAWS APPROVED BY →</b> | <b>WISE Council</b> | <b>PRESIDENT, Assumption University</b> | <b>WISE Membership</b> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---|------------------------|
|                             | March 17, 2021      | March 18, 2021                          | May 27, 2021           |
|                             |                     |   |                        |
| Supersedes                  |                     |   |                        |
|                             | March 11, 2020      | April 1, 2020                           | June 15, 2020          |
|                             |                     |   | June 4, 2019           |
|                             |                     |   | June 15, 1994          |