***Silver Circle***

Date of Origin: February 1994

*Fall 2019 Bylaw Revisions*

1. **Purpose**
2. To foster a healthy spiritual community for people of different spiritual paths.
3. To educate the University, the local community, and others about pagans and paganism.
4. To provide a safe space and foster a welcoming environment for those interested in pagan beliefs and practices, We also wish to support the free exchange of ideas: this includes meeting grounds, spiritual ceremonies, rituals and learning opportunities
5. To promote understanding, acceptance, and tolerance of non-harmful\* various spiritual beliefs while still focusing on pagan religions
6. To encourage and support the development of one’s own spiritual and life path.

\*This clause is intended to exclude religions that encourage or allow criminal behavior.

 It is our ultimate goal as a group to teach those who want to learn, listen to those who want to speak and answer questions whenever we have the appropriate answer.

1. Definitions
	1. ‘The group’ refers to the set of persons including active members, new members, and officers of Silver Circle.
	2. ‘The officers’ refers to the four elected (Two Co-Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer) and other appointed officers of Silver Circle.
	3. ‘The organization’ refers to Silver Circle as an organization recognized by the Pennsylvania State University and the State College/Centre County community.
	4. ‘The University’ from henceforth refers to The Pennsylvania State University and the students, faculty, and staff thereof.
	5. ‘Active member’ from henceforth refers to any person that has met the requirements to become a full active member of Silver Circle.
	6. ‘New member’ from henceforth refers to any person who has not yet met the requirements to become a full active member of Silver Circle.
	7. ‘Quorum’ from henceforth refers to at least one half of the active student membership, minus half of the elected officers.
2. **Membership**
3. The membership shall be divided into active and associate members*.*
4. Only currently registered students are eligible for active membership. Only active members may hold office, vote, preside, officiate, or solicit funds on behalf of the organization.
5. All others interested in furthering the purpose of Silver Circle, including but not limited to, faculty, staff, and community members, shall be associate members.
6. The organization shall have at least 10 active student members at all times.
7. New Membership and Recruitment
	1. Any and all new members will be given full disclosure during recruitment, including but not limited to the disclosure of the following:
		1. New Membership Manual (if applicable)
		2. Schedule of New Member Events and Activities (if applicable)
		3. A list of responsibilities
		4. A copy of the University Hazing policy, prescribed by Policies and Rules for Student Organizations. This document is available upon request by the Office of Student Activities.
	2. All members, including but not limited to new members and recruits, reserve the right to refrain from participating in any activities without consequence, based upon personal/religious beliefs, personal values, or moral reserve as defined by the member.
	3. Any and all interaction/activity between members and/or new members will be limited to guidelines stated by university policy, as well as local, state, and federal laws.
8. To become/remain an active member a person must:
	* 1. Pay the semester dues, amount to be determined by the officers at the recommendation of the Treasurer each semester. These can be set to $0, and the revenue will go into the Unrestricted funds. (This may be waived on a case-by-case basis due to personal hardship or other extenuating circumstances by the officers.)
		2. Dues for non-students will be the same as the dues set for students.
9. Privileges reserved for Active Student Members include:
	* 1. Full participation in decisions made by the group. Ergo, they may have the ability to vote.
		2. Eligibility to hold office in the organization. (Full-Time students only)
		3. Access to the organization’s membership list.
		4. Access to the private email listserv.
		5. The right to motion for a general vote on any issue.
		6. Ability to check out materials from the Silver Circle Library.
		7. Full participation in all events, workshops, and rituals.

COUNTED TOWARDS QUORUM

1. Privileges granted to Active Non-Student Members include:
	* 1. Full participation in decisions made by the group. Ergo, they may have the ability to vote.
		2. Access to the organization’s membership list.
		3. Access to the private email listserv.
		4. The right to motion for a general vote on any issue.
		5. Ability to check out materials from the Silver Circle Library.
		6. Full participation in all events, workshops, and rituals.

NOT COUNTED TOWARDS QUORUM

1. Privileges granted to all non-active participants in the Organization include:
	* 1. Eligibility to debate issues and serve on Committees.
		2. Access to information shared by the group regarding the community and other events of interest.
		3. The right to participate in, and vote on, some of the organization’s events including social, educational, and other open activities, or events NOT supported by Silver Circle’s treasury.
		4. Eligibility to access the group listserv
2. **Officers**
3. Undergraduate candidates must be full-time, officially registered active student members to be selected as officers at the time of the appointment or election. Officers may change from full-time to part-time, or vice versa, after becoming an officer. Student organizations may establish and apply additional eligibility criteria for appointed or elected leaders/officers, but should first seek approval from the Office of Student Activities.

B.Offices

1. The President is the spokesperson for the organization. The President presides at all meetings. Duties include:
	* + 1. Preparing agendas for the General and Officer Meetings
			2. Keeping the General Meetings on task.
			3. Coordinating Community Service efforts.
			4. Appointing additional officers (to be approved by all elected officers)
			5. Controlling the operation of the public and members only email listservs.
			6. Handle contact with individuals outside the University (guest lecturers, etc.)
2. The Vice-President shall serve as President when the President is unable to do so. Duties are the same as President’s.
3. The Treasurer shall be charged with handling all organizational finances. Duties include:
	* + 1. Appropriation of funds for Silver Circle events as needed including, but not limited to, arrangement of purchase orders, reimbursements, and collection of dues.
			2. Keeping track of the organization’s account balances in a professional manner (i.e.: the Official Ledger) and reporting this information weekly at the General Meeting.
			3. Coordinating fundraising efforts.
4. The Secretary shall be charged with recording meeting minutes and corresponding with members. Duties include:
5. Taking minutes of the General and Officer Meetings.
6. Meeting minutes must go out to the listserv to later than the Monday after said meeting.
7. Keeping a record of attendance for the General Meetings.
8. Placing hard copies of both of these into the appropriate folders in the Silver Circle office
9. Organizing the designing and distribution of flyers.
10. The Web Team Coordinator shall be charged with maintaining the organization’s online presence.
11. Silver Circle may also have any or none of the following appointed positions:
	* + 1. The Sergeant at Arms. Duties include:
12. Assisting the Co-Presidents in keeping the meeting orderly.
13. Asking disruptive attendees to leave at the direction of the elected officers, calling security if it becomes necessary.
	* + 1. Historian. Duties include:
14. Collecting and cataloguing the minutes, attendance, events, and rituals at the end of each year.
15. Putting these records in an organized fashion into a binder, which will be kept in the office for reference for a period of ten (10) years.
16. Organizing and cataloguing the reference materials in the SC office, including the operation of the Silver Circle library.
17. Keep a scrapbook of pictures and stories from Silver Circle events, making sure to abide by the rules laid out in article XII.
18. Maintain a master contact list for members and former members.

C. Filling unexpired vacancies:

1. Any officer may resign their post for any reason, in which case a new election must be held.
	* 1. Officers must give 2 weeks or more notice before their resignation becomes effective.
		2. The election may be held no less than 2 weeks after the meeting in which the resignation is announced, in which time nominees may come forward.
2. Current officers MAY NOT be nominated to replace a departing officer
3. Persons MAY NOT nominate themselves in the case of such an election.
	* 1. The person elected to replace the departing officer will serve only the remainder of the incomplete term, but may stand for re-election at the end of the year.
4. Officers may be removed from office by a 2/3 vote at a General Meeting.
5. This vote MUST be proposed and seconded by the organization’s adviser.
6. The vote may take place at the same meeting in which the motion has been made and seconded.
7. If the vote carries the officer is removed from office immediately, nominations are taken for replacements, and a new election must be held within 1 week to replace the officer, in which time the office remains vacant.

**IV. Meetings**

Guidelines for Meetings are as such:

1. General Meetings for Silver Circle will be held weekly at a time and place to be determined at the start of every semester.
2. Adequate advance notice must be given to all active members.
3. Officer Meetings will be held weekly in the Silver Circle office at a time to be determined at the start of every semester. These meetings are mandatory for all officers. At these meetings the following will be discussed:
4. Agendas for upcoming General Meetings.
5. Social topics and activities for upcoming General Meetings.
6. Any potential ritual planning or coordination with the committee assigned to upcoming rituals
7. Other topics of concern to the officer corps.
8. Excessive absence of an officer from officer meetings.
9. The group reserves the right to evaluate an officer’s performance after the third missed meeting.
10. At one Officer Meeting per semester, at a date to be determined by the officers, time will be taken to review and discuss these by-laws. These will be referred to hereafter as Review Meetings.
11. The agenda for General Meetings will be as follows:
12. Officer Reports: The officers will report on their actions pertaining to Silver Circle and the status of their responsibilities.
13. Committee/Workshop Reports: The Chair of each committee, or organizer of each workshop, will report the activities, progress, and success of their meetings. Mention will also be made by officers regarding upcoming workshops or committees needed.
14. Official Business: Anyone with news or announcements relating to official Silver Circle functions may request the floor and present it at this time.
15. Unofficial Business: Issues not directly related to official Silver Circle functions may be presented at this time.
16. Social or Educational Topic: A topic either chosen in advance by the group or during the meeting will be discussed by the group until such time as the meeting is declared “degenerate.”
17. “Degeneration”: The meeting will be declared “degenerate” once the officers believe that the discussion has become chaotic and disorganized. Once this is declared, the meeting is over
18. These rules of order will be observed during General Meetings:
19. During any general meeting a Co-President or the Sergeant at Arms (ie Secretary or Treasurer) will act as a Pointer, making sure everyone has a chance to speak on a given issue.
20. When members desire to be heard, they may indicate this and the Pointer will direct them to speak at the appropriate time.
21. Silver Circle will not tolerate any harassment of any type during meetings. Violators will be asked to leave the meeting in accordance with University policy.
22. Issues to be voted upon by the group may be voted upon during the same meeting at which they are discussed unless they involve amendments to the by-laws or the election/removal of officers. Such matters will be voted on no earlier than the next general meeting after they are proposed and discussed during the next available officer meeting.
23. Special Meetings may be called when a topic is brought to the attention of the officers or advisor
	1. Anyone is allowed to come to the Officers/Advisor with inquiries or requests for a special meeting.
	2. Officers are responsible for listening and respecting inquires and calling special meetings.

**V. Voting**

1. Only active members may vote.
2. Votes are conducted at the General Meetings and may be done if and only if a quorum (half the number of membership minus half the number of officers) exists.
3. Votes are taken by show of hands or secret ballot, and a simple majority (any more than 50%) decides, unless specified elsewhere by bylaw procedure.

**VI. Finances**

1. All organizational funds are to be deposited and handled exclusively through the Associated Student Activities (ASA) in 240 HUB.
2. This organization will not have an off-campus account(s)
3. This organization shall collect dues that will not be excessive.
4. Amount to be determined by the officers at the recommendation of the Treasurer each semester. These can be set to $0, and the revenue will go into the Unrestricted funds. (This may be waived on a case-by-case basis due to personal hardship or other extenuating circumstances by the officers.)

**VII. Elections**

1. Elections will take place every spring semester with no less than four (4) weeks remaining of classes.
2. The election process will be as follows:
	* 1. Nominations are taken at a General Meeting and remain open through the listserv until the next General Meeting. Nominations must be made and seconded by Active Members. Candidates may not nominate themselves. Candidates may also decline their nomination.
		2. At the meeting following nominations all candidates for officer positions will be given a chance to speak and answer questions from the group.
		3. Elections will take place by secret ballot at the same General Meeting, with a simple majority deciding each vote.
3. Officer candidates must meet the following qualifications:
	* 1. Full-time student at Penn State.
		2. Minimum of one semester of active membership in Silver Circle.
		3. Co-president Candidates must know they will be able to serve their office for the entire academic year.
4. No one involved in conducting the elections may be an official candidate

**VIII. Amendments to the Constitution**

1. The Bylaws may be amended by the Officers during the semesterly Review Meetings. The occurrence of one of these meetings MUST be announced to the group at the General Meeting beforehand so the group may make suggestions to the Officers.
2. Any amendment to the By-Laws must be approved by a General Vote during a general meeting.
3. All amendments are subject to the approval of the Office of Student Activities to ensure that they align with University policies and rules.

**IX. Parliamentary Authority**

1. “Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised” by Sarah Corbin Roberts shall be used in all cases not covered by this constitution.

**X. Accessibility of this Constitution**

1. Copies of this constitution shall be made available to anyone upon request.

**XI. Advisor**

1. This organization must retain an advisor at all times. The advisor will be a full-time Faculty or Staff member of The Pennsylvania State University, University Park campus and will be chosen by the organization.
2. This organization will choose an advisor through a majority vote.

**XII. Committees**

1. The Officers shall appoint the creation of committees to serve various functions throughout the semester.
2. Each of these committees must contain at least two active members.
3. A committee may, but is not required to, choose a chair. No person may chair more than one committee, and the chair must be an Active Member.
4. Committees will be required to develop a short purpose statement to state what the committee intends to accomplish, written or verbal.
5. All committees are created at the behest of the officers as the need arises, such as major events. There shall be no standing committees.
6. Committees must keep records of their meetings and report on their progress at the general meetings and report progress to the officer’s meeting if requested.
7. Major Events
8. All major events must be run and organized by a committee specifically created for that purpose.
9. Crisis Committee
10. The Crisis Committee, henceforth referred to as the CC, will be formed and meet at times of organizational crisis, under the authority of the current advisor.
11. Formation of the CC:
12. A general meeting will be called.
13. The CC will consist of six (6) to twelve (12) people chosen through the election process in the proceeding section
14. Election of CC members:
15. The Silver Circle general membership will be divided into affinity groups.
16. There should be one affinity group for each viewpoint on the crisis issue.
17. Each group will elect representatives to the CC such that each group has equal representation in the CC.
18. Responsibilities of the CC
19. Responsibly and neutrally represent the views of each affinity group.
20. Work toward a solution to the crisis that will be most beneficial to Silver Circle.
21. Procedures of CC meetings
22. The committee must make use of a Pointer in discussions, preferably a CC Chairperson that will be chosen by the officers.
23. Any decision made by the CC must pass a unanimous vote (allowing for abstentions) within the CC and a general vote during the following General Meeting.
24. Only committee members may attend the meetings.
25. Detailed minutes of the CC meetings must be taken and provided to the officers to be included in part in the minutes of the next General Meeting.
26. Decisions made by the CC must be implemented immediately upon passing the general vote.
27. During CC meetings and relating to business within the CC, officerships are considered irrelevant.

**XIII. Guidelines for Relations with Media and Other Non-Members**

* 1. The membership list of the Organization is confidential without exception. Officer names are made a matter of public record, and as such officer candidates must consent to their name being used publicly in relation to the Organization.
	2. The Organization will not tolerate any negative or attacking communications directed at other individuals or groups.
	3. Before inviting someone to become a member of the Organization, or giving information about the Organization to outsiders, a member should use his or her discretion to insure that the interests of those people are not contrary to the goals of the Organization
	4. Rituals and celebrations performed by individuals are private, and thus may be conducted however the individual desires. Public rituals are official Silver Circle functions, and thus must take into account the eclectic nature of the Organization and University Policy.
	5. When speaking to others in an official capacity about the subject of paganism, the following beliefs should be emphasized:
		1. There are multiple belief systems thus:
1. Every religion serves its followers well and is correct for them.
2. We do not try to convert members of other religions or paths.

**XIV. Use of the Organization’s Name**

1. Before the name of Silver Circle is associated with any project, activity, or statement to the media, the use of the Organization’s name must be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of the group.

**XV. Member Sanctuary Rights and Public Distribution of Information from Silver Circle Functions**

1. In order to ensure the sanctuary and safety of individual members of the Organization NO recording in ANY format intended for public distribution may take place at any Silver Circle General Meeting, committee meeting, or Silver Circle event without unanimous consent of the group present.
2. Recording of any format for public distribution is ONLY permissible at a place and time set for the express purpose of that recording.
3. The release of recordings (of any type) of the personal experiences of an individual group member without the express permission of that member is not permitted. The telling of a personal experience during a Silver Circle event DOES NOT constitute permission to record or distribute that information.