



MORTAR BOARD

NATIONAL COLLEGE HONOR SOCIETY

2025 SPECIAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

January 26, 2025

Guide to Governance

ABOUT THE SPECIAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Special National Conference (SNC) is a **virtual** conference held entirely by Zoom. The SNC has been held since 2012, and 2025 will mark the fourteenth Special National Conference.

Your chapter must have at least one collegiate delegate present at the SNC. All other collegiate members and advisors are encouraged to attend. [Advance registration is encouraged](#) so the unique Zoom link can be sent to attending members and advisors.

During the SNC, chapter delegates meet virtually and share information. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn from other chapters, members, and national leaders.

As a student-governed society, **YOU** (the collegiate members) also conduct the business of the Society. Each chapter in good standing will have one voting delegate at the SNC. Voting will take place around issues of governance (the Bylaws). Collegiate members will also elect members of the National Council.

The SNC will be hosted by the National Council, and the meeting will be conducted by National President Dr. Cassandra Lucas. Come prepared to share and learn!



Timeline

Sunday, January 26: Special National Conference is held
Sunday, January 26: Voting opens at end of SNC
Wednesday, January 29: Voting Closes at 11:59 p.m. Pacific

How to attend

The Special National Conference will be held via Zoom meeting on Sunday, January 26:

7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Eastern
6:00 – 7:30 p.m. Central
5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Mountain
4:00 – 5:30 p.m. Pacific
2:00 – 3:30 p.m. Hawaiian

How to prepare

1. Add the SNC on your calendar and gather officers and advisor(s) to attend and confirm your attendance [here](#).
2. Read this *Guide to Governance* completely.
3. Review the National [Bylaws](#).
4. Review the candidates for election (pages 9 & 10).
5. Prepare for questions you might like to ask or issues you might like to raise.
6. Prepare some thoughts about how your chapter will flourish in the upcoming term.
7. Prepare to hear national updates about the Society, as well as committee reports from the following committees:

- Standing Nominations Committee
 - Governance Committee
8. Ensure the chapter has no unpaid invoices so your chapter will be eligible to vote.
 9. The room will open 10 minutes prior to the start for networking and connecting.
 10. A benefit of the Society is our national presence and connection to other members. Please prepare to leave your camera on and engage during the conversation.

Casting your chapter's ballot

After the SNC, **your chapter will have three days to cast one ballot.** The highest-ranking officer registered from your chapter will be considered the official delegate. Voting will be conducted by electronic ballot using an online survey tool.

Voting opens on Sunday, January 26, 2025 during the SNC and closes on Wednesday, January 29, at 11:59 p.m. Pacific.

If your chapter fails to cast its ballot, the chapter's vote will be counted as an abstention. See the [Bylaws](#), Article XIII.

Eligibility to vote

To be eligible to vote on the issues raised at the SNC, a chapter must be in good standing. This includes having cleared accounts for any amount due in 2024. The National Office will reach out to you if your chapter's account is not cleared. The deadline to clear accounts is Friday, January 31, 2025.

Every chapter is required to attend the SNC.

Election guide

Electing the National Council

The Society's board of directors is called the National Council. It is composed of 10 elected officers whose terms run for two years, excluding the student representatives at-large whose terms are one year. Each year, Mortar Board's voting delegates are charged with the task of electing members to fill offices that will be vacated due to term expiration. At this SNC, 3 of the 10 offices are up for election.

Responsibilities of National Officers

Generally, a member of the National Council should:

- Affirm the mission and Purpose of Mortar Board
- Establish and maintain a comprehensive set of policies and procedures that reflect the Society's governance
- Select the Mortar Board chief executive and review annually
- Accept fiduciary responsibility, approve and monitor the budget
- Promote the organization nationally, regionally, and locally
- Contribute to the development of programs

Characteristics of qualified candidates

- Commitment to higher education and to the values of Mortar Board
- Computer literacy and skills to receive electronic communication
- Good communication skills--both verbal and written--and the ability to listen carefully
- Ability to evaluate, research, and propose solutions and make decisions with a group
- Demonstrates leadership skills and the ability to work with and attract others to the cause
- Past or current service to Mortar Board and experience with fundraising, donors, or volunteer service programs
- Service on other community or national boards

Duties of offices up for election this year (from the [Bylaws](#))

PRESIDENT-ELECT

The President-Elect shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President and coordinate the work of the standing and other committees. The President-Elect shall become National President immediately following their term or upon resignation of the President and, immediately following that term, serve a term on the National Council as Immediate Past President.

TREASURER

The Treasurer shall be responsible for reviewing the annual budget prepared by the Executive Director, reviewing all financial statements and transactions, ensuring the completion of required financial reporting forms, and ensuring that all gift and investment policies are followed. In addition, the Treasurer shall sit as an ex-officio member on the Mortar Board National Foundation Board of Trustees with voice and vote.

ALUMNI REPRESENTATIVE AT-LARGE

The Alumni Representative at-Large shall serve as a liaison to alumni members and chapters.

SPECIAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE BUSINESS

Proposed amendments to the *Bylaws of Mortar Board, Inc.* for consideration by chapters in January 2025

AMENDMENT 1

Action Proposed:

Allow for the **creation of** a National Chapter to provide additional support for students on campuses with a Mortar Board charter, or potential charter, to gain support from Mortar Board when a chapter is not currently active.

Justification:

This change would allow Mortar Board the **option** to create a National Chapter to allow qualified members the opportunity to join when an active chapter does not currently exist on campus.

- This will allow chapters who have a Mortar Board charter, but no active chapter, the opportunity to reactivate.
- This will allow prospective members who attend a college or university with no active chapter the opportunity to join the National Chapter.

- Additionally, prospective members who attend a college or university without a charter could be selected for membership, at the National level, with the intent to bring a chapter and corresponding charter to campus.

This change would also allow Mortar Board the ability to reactivate inactive chapters by allowing designated members the ability to review and select prospective members when an active chapter does not currently exist on campus to conduct selection.

Proposed Bylaws Changes

New language in **bold, language to remove has ~~strikethrough~~.*

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Collegiate Membership

Membership Qualifications

Section 1.1 – Members are selected by the collegiate chapters annually according to the criteria stated in these Bylaws and Mortar Board chapter operational guides. **Members in the national chapter may be selected by a committee appointed by the National Council according to the criteria stated in these Bylaws.**

ARTICLE VI

CHAPTERS

This Society shall be composed of collegiate chapters ~~and of~~, alumni chapters, **and/or the national chapter**. The organization and structure of which shall be set forth herein:

AMENDMENT 2

Action Proposed:

- Reduce the minimum number of members in a chapter to a recommended minimum collegiate chapter size of 15. (Add the word “recommended” and decrease from 20 to 15.)
- Eliminate the minimum percentage and go by the recommended number in terms of chapter size.

Justification:

Each chapter is uniquely different. We have small schools with very large chapters and large schools with very small chapters; the size of the university and student body rarely correlates with the size of the chapter. In addition, once candidates are selected for membership, the national yield averages 78%. More so, there is a natural attrition between paid members and members becoming actively engaged, with chapters reporting an average of 60% of paid members being actively engaged. It is important to have a recommended minimum size that is both achievable and helpful for chapter sustainability. However, language must allow for chapters to feel supported and not penalized (and therefore choose to “close”) if they are unable to meet the recommended minimum size.

Proposed Bylaws Changes

New language in **bold, language to remove has ~~strikethrough~~.*

ARTICLE VI

CHAPTERS

Section 1.2 - The **recommended** minimum number of members in a collegiate chapter shall be ~~15~~ **20**, ~~or 10% of the student body with junior standing, whichever is less.~~ The

maximum number of members of a collegiate chapter shall be 50 members or 1.5% of the student body with sophomore standing, whichever is greater, unless a greater maximum is allowed by the National Office.

AMENDMENT 3

Action Proposed:

- Eliminate the maximum chapter size to allow for chapters to choose to grow beyond 50 members without filling out an exception form.
- Eliminate the maximum percentage of 1.5% of the current junior class.

Justification:

Each chapter is uniquely different. We have small schools with very large chapters and large schools with very small chapters; the size of the university and student body rarely correlates with the size of the chapter. In addition, once candidates are selected for membership, the national yield averages 78%. More so, there is a natural attrition between paid members and members becoming actively engaged, with chapters reporting an average of 60% of paid members being actively engaged.

Proposed Bylaws Changes

New language in **bold, language to remove has ~~strikethrough~~.*

ARTICLE VI CHAPTERS

Section 1.2 - The minimum number of members in a collegiate chapter shall be 20, or 10% of the student body with junior standing, whichever is less. ~~The maximum number of members of a collegiate chapter shall be 50 members or 1.5% of the student body with sophomore standing, whichever is greater, unless a greater maximum is allowed by the National Office.~~

AMENDMENT 4

Action Proposed:

Eliminate the limitation to one selection per year to allow chapters to hold two selections per year without filling out an exception form.

Justification:

While the majority of chapters only hold one selection annually, more chapters are holding a second selection, or supplemental selection, to be more inclusive of membership and/or recruit additional qualified and interested members who would make great Mortar Boards. Currently, the Bylaws limit the amount of times a chapter can select new members to only one time annually. This is a chapter decision and chapters can *still choose* to only hold one selection per year.

Proposed Bylaws Changes

New language in **bold, language to remove has ~~strikethrough~~.*

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP Section 1 – Collegiate Membership Membership Qualifications

Section 1.1 – Members are selected by the collegiate chapters ~~annually~~, according to the criteria stated in these Bylaws and Mortar Board chapter operational guides.

ARTICLE VI CHAPTERS

Section 1.5 - New members shall be selected by the existing chapter **at least** once a year, ~~after the reporting of fall grades~~, following procedures established by the National Council as set forth in the current Mortar Board chapter operational guides. A unanimous vote standard may not be used.

2024-2025 National Leadership

National Council

- President: Cassandra Lucas (Purdue University, 1994)
- President-elect: Nathan Cordle (The University of Alabama, 2011)
- Vice President: Patience Whitworth (The Ohio State University, 2003)
- Secretary: Katie Verschelden (Kansas State University, 2002)
- Treasurer: Jenni Birch Szolwinski (Purdue University, 1993)
- Student Representative at-large: Sierra Malik-Misselhorn (University of San Diego, 2024)
- Student Representative at-large: Nanya Sinha (Carleton College, 2024)
- Student Representative at-large: Gabrielle Tessier (University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2023)
- Alumni Representative at-large: Wilson Chan (University of Louisville, 1989)
- Alumni Representative at-large: Leslie Ellis (Lenoir-Rhyne University, 2015)
- Immediate Past President: Kathryn E. Chick (Hood College, 2006)
- Foundation Representative: Barbara J. Arnold (The Pennsylvania State University, 1981)
- Executive Director: Kirsten F. Fox (The Ohio State University, 1996)

National Foundation Board of Trustees

- President: Barbara J. Arnold (The Pennsylvania State University, 1981)
- Vice President: Karen S. Stiner (San Diego State University, 1987)
- Secretary: Janet G. Farrington (University of Mississippi, 1964)
- Treasurer: Matthew Ross (The Ohio State University, 2001)
- Trustee: Mary Ruth Carleton (University of California, Berkeley, 1969)
- Trustee: Joni Comstock (Eastern Illinois University, 2016)
- Trustee: L. Susan Doss (The University of Alabama, 1985)
- Trustee: Craig Evers (The Ohio State University, 2001)
- Trustee: W. David Lasater (Ball State University, 1992)
- Trustee: Laura C. Simic (University of Oregon, 1985)
- Trustee: Bruce Ware (University of Mississippi, 1998)
- Trustee *ex officio*: Cassandra Lucas (Purdue University, 1994)
- Trustee *ex officio*: Jenni Birch-Szolwinski (Purdue University, 1993)
- Trustee *ex officio* and Executive Director: Kirsten F. Fox (The Ohio State University, 1996)

Region Coordinators

- Region 1: Hannah Giannini (University of South Alabama, 2020)
- Region 1: Vedant Kulkarni (Kansas State University, 2021)
- Region 1: Brendan Wall (Illinois State University, 2018)
- Region 2: Parker Brown (University of Mississippi, 2023)
- Region 2: Jaquilynn Huff (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2019)

- Region 2: Anne Mascia (University of South Alabama, 2021)
- Region 3: Robbie Kichak (University of Cincinnati, 2014)
- Region 3: Alexa Murray (The Ohio State University, 2014)
- Region 3: Kailee Weiker (Ohio Northern University, 2010)
- Region 4: Carina Huot (University of North Dakota, 2022)
- Region 4: Kailey Jerome (University of North Dakota, 2019)
- Region 4: Caitlyn Kant (Illinois State University, 2021)
- Region 5: Cadence Ciesielski (Kansas State University, 2021)
- Region 5: McCaleb Hart (Texas Tech University, 2021)
- Region 5: Reilly Roggendorff (Oklahoma State University, 2022)
- Region 6: Andrew Gray (University of Tulsa, 2021)
- Region 6: Kara Stogsdill (Illinois State University, 2023)

National Office Staff

- Executive Director: Kirsten F. Fox (The Ohio State University, 1996)
- Director of Collegiate Success: Trish Maxwell (The Ohio State University, 2024)
- Marketing and Communications Manager: Angela Powell
- Membership and Operations Manager: Ben Flox
- Philanthropy Coordinator: Liz Cook
- Administrative Coordinator: Olivia Beckett (The Ohio State University, 2024)

2024 – 2025 Mortar Board Inc. Standing Committee Members

Current collegiate students are eligible to serve on these committees.

STANDING NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

- Kathryn E. Chick, Chair (Hood College, 2006)
- Daniel Turner (Northern Illinois University, 1994)
- Sierra Misselhorn-Malik (University of San Diego, 2024)
- *National Office Representative:* Kirsten F. Fox (The Ohio State University, 1996)

STANDING GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

- Clay Mingus, Chair (Purdue University, 1997)
- Katie Verschelden (Kansas State University, 2002)
- Cadence Ciesielski (Kansas State University, 2021)
- Nanya Sinha (Carleton College, 2024)
- *National Office Representative:* Kirsten F. Fox (The Ohio State University, 1996)

STANDING COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING (DEI&B)

- Gabby Going, Chair (Eastern Illinois University, 2016)
- Candi Hironaka Pitts (Oregon State University, 1971)
- Vedant Kulkarni (Kansas State University, 2021)
- Tamika Lovelace (San Diego State University, 2021)
- Elizabeth Payton (Texas Tech University, 2023)
- *National Office Representative:* Trish Maxwell (The Ohio State University, 2024)

STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

- Gabrielle Tessier, Chair (University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2023)
- Nicole Brown (University of Wyoming, 2024)
- Morgan Butler (University of Mary Washington, 2024)
- Hayley Moree (University of Nebraska – Lincoln, 2024)
- Shelby Morlock (Texas Tech University, 2024)

- Rory Roberts (Agnes Scott College, 2024)
- Sarah Schmidt (The Ohio State University, 2024)

Candidates for National Council

The candidates for National Council slated by the Standing Nominations Committee:

Alumni Representative at-Large

Wilson Chan
University of Louisville, 1989

Degree(s):
B.S. in Information Science and Data Processing from University of Louisville

Recent Employment:
Enterprise Account Executive, Healthcare and Public Sector, at Veritas Technologies

Service to Mortar Board:

- Alumni Representative at-large, National Council, 2023-present
- Section Coordinator, 2017 – 2021
- Student Advisor to Council Meeting (now CAB), 1990



Treasurer

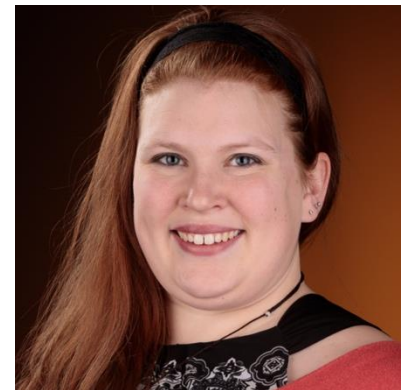
Kailee Weiker
Ohio Northern University, 2010

Degree(s):
B.S. in Business Administration from Ohio Northern University;
M.B.A. from Tiffin University

Recent Employment:
Payroll and Benefits Coordinator at Ohio Northern University

Service to Mortar Board:

- Region Coordinator, 2018-present
- Collegiate Chapter Treasurer, Ohio Northern University



President-Elect

Dr. Patience Whitworth
The Ohio State University, 2003

Degree(s):
B.S. in Business Administration and M.A. in Higher Education and Student Affairs from The Ohio State University; Ph.D in Education Leadership and Policy from The University of Vermont



Recent Employment:

Associate Vice Provost for Student Success and Strategic Initiatives at Carnegie Mellon University

Service to Mortar Board:

- Vice President, National Council, 2022 – present
- Section Coordinator, 2018 – 2022
- MBAA Lifetime/Torch Society Member, 2014 – present
- Member of Columbus Mortar Board Alumni Association, 2004-2008
- University of Vermont Chapter Advisor, 2014 – 2017
- Collegiate chapter president, The Ohio State University

Other business

Conference Advisory Board (CAB) Applications Due February 5

Mortar Board National Office is *now accepting applications* for current students (and recent graduates) to serve as Conference Advisory Board (CAB) members for the **virtual** 2025 National Conference **July 19 & 20, 2025**. CABs assist in the planning and execution of programming for the National Conference. A CAB's term runs from the time of appointment through the completion of the conference. [Learn more and apply by February 5.](#)

Applications for Region Coordinators and other volunteer opportunities

Interested in serving as a Region Coordinator or in a national volunteer role? [See more information here.](#)

Upcoming events

February 9 – 15: Mortar Board Week

Monday, February 10	Mortar Board Trivia (on Instagram)
Tuesday, February 11:	Volunteer & Alumni Event
Wednesday, February 12:	Career Connections: Networking – Make Connections That Matter
Thursday, February 13:	Advisor Meet-Up: Making Initiations Meaningful
Friday, February 14:	Mortar Board Info Session (for new or prospective members)
Saturday, February 15:	Celebrating Chapter Mortar Board Week Events (on Instagram)
Saturday, March 15:	Deadline for Fellowship Applications
Sunday, April 6:	National Virtual Initiation
Thursday, May 15:	Deadline for Award Submissions & Chapter Annual Report deadline
Sunday, May 18:	National Virtual Initiation
Weekend of July 19 & 20:	Mortar Board National Conference 2025

Plus, Advisor Meet-Ups, Career Connections, and more! [View all events.](#)

Graduation regalia

Beat the Rush! Order your official honor cord, medallion, or store from the [Mortar Board Store.](#)

Thank you!

MORTAR BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision: To be scholars ... chosen for leadership ... committed to service ... united for equity

Transformational Imperatives

Emphasize the equity themes of Mortar Board's Purpose

Develop and advance the professional and personal skills of members

Engage members for life

Goals

Brand Mortar Board to promote Transformational Imperatives
.....

Achieve and maintain financial stability at all levels
.....

Incorporate values of diversity, equity and inclusion into every aspect of Mortar Board
.....

Ensure Mortar Board's Impact

Strategies

Create & celebrate our history

Increase collegiate membership

Use diversity, equity and inclusion as a foundation for programming

Implement effective advising models at every chapter

