

## **Charter: Bryn Mawr College Fencing Club**

Drafted January 2007; Updated April 25, 2015

### **Purpose:**

The Bryn Mawr College Fencing Club (Vixens) is a competitive club that practices and teaches fencing in a supportive environment. We compete in individual tournaments, collegiate events including the Temple Open, and team events in the Baltimore-Washington Collegiate Fencing Conference (BWCFC), the United States Association of Collegiate Fencing Clubs (USACFC), and the National Intercollegiate Women's Fencing Association (NIWFA) in all three weapons (foil, epee, sabre). No previous experience or equipment required! Dues are required, but provisions can be made.

### **Membership**

The Fencing Club is open to all members of the Bryn Mawr College community, regardless of previous fencing experience. The Fencing Club welcomes and will gladly teach beginners. Dues will be required of all members, but provisions will be made in cases of financial hardship. Speak with the treasurer regarding any issues in paying dues or other money owed to the club. There is no limit on the number of members.

### **Duties of Members**

Members are expected to show up at all practices and tournaments possible, and should contact the team captains if unable to attend practice or tournaments. Members are expected to volunteer for tasks and generally help with the running of the club. They are expected to maintain a respectful and mature attitude towards their coaches, teammates, referees, and opponents.

### **Eligibility for Competitive Slots**

Competitive slots are often limited. It is therefore necessary to prioritize eligibility based on the following qualifications:

1. Show up consistently at practices, with priority given to those with the highest attendance out of the three weekly practices
2. Accept the coach's and squad captain's decisions concerning eligibility
3. Work well with all members of the team
4. Pay all dues and all money owed to the team, including for equipment, jacket, transportation or tournament fees, etc., before tournament unless other arrangements have been made

If an individual signed up to go to a tournament and can no longer attend, they should notify their squad captain and team captain as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours or the minimum regulations for that tournament. For example, the NIWFA requires teams to field full squads at risk of expulsion from the conference. If slots at the next tournament are limited, a member who did not provide due notice may be put at the bottom of the priority list to be eligible for a competitive slot. Squad captains will maintain records of this information.

In cases of large squads, seniority within the club may be an additional factor in determining who gets priority to compete in specific events. Any problems should be promptly communicated to the club President, Vice President, Team Captain and other involved parties.

## **Attendance**

Members are expected to attend at least 2 out of 3 weekly practices, held on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. For example, if a member attends all Tuesday and Thursday practices, they would have 100% attendance. When referencing attendance, listed percentages indicate the percent attended of 2 weekly practices. Exceptions can be made for academic events, job-related events, illness or injury, or religious, familial, or other commitments, and missing practice for any of these reasons will count as an excused absence if communicated to a captain in advance. Absences or late arrivals to practice must be promptly communicated to the team captains. If members have a minor injury or illness, they are expected to attend practice and may be given a lessened or altered workout. Homework or poor planning is not a legitimate excuse, and missing practice due to either of reasons will count as an unexcused absence. If a member has been absent for more than 2 weeks without contacting the captains, they will be contacted. Not contacting the captains will count as an unexcused absence, unless in an emergency situation or other reason. If the member is unable to contact a captain prior to practice, they are expected to do so as soon as possible.

Excused absences can be made up with squad workouts or by attending tournaments (which count as 2 practices). Attending tournaments non-competitively also makes up for absences. Members with 3 or more unexcused absences will not be eligible for a competitive slot if there is a limited number of fencers that can be sent to a tournament. Unexcused absences can only be made up with additional official fencing practice time (such as over breaks, or Friday practices).

To receive PE credit, members must attend 75% of practices; tournaments can be used to make up for excused absences, and count as 2 practices. Members can only receive 1 PE credit for fencing each year.

## **Squad Workouts**

On non-practice days, squad captains will lead workouts, including running and calisthenics. Squad workouts are intended to help the squad get exercise outside of practice, and to promote squad bonding and camaraderie. Members who do not have a PE class or other athletic club or activity are required to attend 2 squad workouts a week or work out independently. If a member cannot attend their squad captain's workout(s), they can attend another squad's workout(s); all of the times will be posted on the Facebook group. The squad captain should be consulted with any questions, or if a squad member is unable to attend the workouts.

## **Coach Job Description**

The coach is expected to show up for all practices and meets on time (unless arrangements are made in advance) and to notify the President, Vice President, and Team Captain of any absence in advance. At practice the coach is expected to provide varied drills and to divide their time evenly between all members. This plan should be responsive to the needs of the club concerning pace and difficulty. This plan should be modified as needed with feedback from the club members and officers, and modifications should be implemented immediately. The coach is expected to determine competitive slots and advise substitution during competition. The coach should be constantly willing to improve their knowledge of fencing and sports medicine.

The coach should maintain an attitude that is inspirational to the club, generates respect from the club, and reciprocates that respect. The coach should be approachable for any member, and should listen to the needs of the club.

### **Officers**

It is vital that people running for Office be able to carry out their duties. They must be committed to the club and to their work. If they are having trouble with their responsibilities then they should talk to the club President and Vice President. These Officers should be seen as co-coordinators, and should not have to do everything related to their particular job. It is important that each officer maintains a record of their time in office in the binder provided for that purpose. Officers may be from any class year, given that the nominee has been with the club at least one year (two for President) and has a record of 75% attendance with minimal unexcused absences the semester before nomination. While in office, officers must maintain a consistent record of 75% attendance. Officers may hold only one position per year, and during their tenure the Officer is not permitted to hold the position of Squad Captain. At the beginning of the year, new members should be made aware of the different positions and their responsibilities.

**The Executive Board** shall consist of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Fundraiser, and Team Captain.

**The Officers** shall consist of the Executive Board, squad captains, and Secretary.

**Decision-making Process:** The Executive Board, in consultation with the Secretary, Squad Captains, other club members, and/or the Coach, are responsible for decisions not directly relating to what happens in practice. This includes deciding practice times, cancellations, etc. The Secretary must attend all meetings of the Executive Board, and an Executive Board meeting may not be scheduled during a time the Secretary is unavailable. Any Executive Board meeting, unless discussing issues relating to specific members, should be open to the entire team. Any votes by the Executive Board will take place via paper ballot at the meeting, and any board members who were unable to attend can submit their vote at a later time.

**Elections** will be held annually for President, Vice President, Treasurer, Fundraiser, and Secretary. Any given candidate can only run for a single position per elections round. Nominations will be held the week before Spring Break, after which nominees will be given a chance to accept their nomination and provide a candidate statement, or decline the nomination. The election process will be run by either the out-going president or another senior, or the Secretary if needed. Paper will be passed around, either at practice, dinner, or a movie night, for those wishing to nominate themselves or somebody else for any office. The same paper will circulate again to give nominated members a chance to either accept or reject the nomination. Nominations can also be given or accepted via email to the club president within the nominations week. Votes will be taken via secure online poll. All dues-paying members with 50% or more attendance will have voting privileges. Emergency elections may occur in the case of a sudden vacancy. In the case of emergency elections, nominations will be made either through email or verbally. The new officers will be given time to learn their duties under the supervision of the old officers.

Nominees are given one week to accept their nominations and to submit a candidate's statement. Elections run for one week. Elections for all positions will have the following options: the names of all eligible candidates, an abstain option, and a no vote option. 50% of eligible club members must vote in any election for the results to be eligible, and furthermore any given position must have at least 50% 'active' votes (that is, votes for a candidate or a no vote, not an abstention) for that specific position's election to be valid. The 'no vote' option counts as an active vote against all running candidates for that position. In order to be elected, a candidate must receive simple majority (50%\_+1) of all active votes (that is, all yes or no votes, but not abstentions). In the event that no candidate receives simple majority, a runoff election will be held for 48 hours. In the event of a majority no vote, all running candidates will be disqualified for that position and a new nominations and elections round (each lasting 48 hours) will be held. Candidates who were not elected during the regular election are permitted to run in new elections rounds, if qualified and nominated.

Winners will be notified by email and have 24 hours to accept their nomination.

**President** is the liaison to the school and athletic administration as well as other schools and the USFA. They are in charge of coordinating with the other officers, especially with the Treasurer and Fundraiser at the beginning of the semester when budgets need to be written. They are also responsible for, among other things, reserving space for practice and social gatherings, organizing team social gatherings, advertising for the club, keeping attendance (and seeing to it that attendance is handed in on time), and calling meetings. They are the main contacts for the club and should be consulted if problems concerning the club occur. They are in charge of the master schedule for the club and should be consulted if other members would like to suggest or organize club events. The President must have been a member of the club for no less than two years at the time of election. The President and Vice President must be able to work together to divide up the work of running the club.

**Vice President** assists the president with any and all responsibilities of running the club. They should be considered in training for the role of President. The Vice President may not be a rising senior at the time of election and must have been a participating member with the club for at least one year at the time of election.

The President and Vice President will maintain and update the master binders for the club.

**Treasurer** is in charge of all monetary transactions, including the collection of dues. They must coordinate with the President and Vice President on equipment orders and budgets. They must also frequently communicate with the Fundraiser. The Treasurer is not, however, responsible for fundraising. They must keep up to date on the club's current financial situation. They must be present while equipment or fundraising orders are made or briefed on the transactions in advance. They are responsible for turning receipts into the Student Finance Committee (SFC) for reimbursement as well as complying with criteria outlined by the SFC for club funding.

The Treasurer should keep the proposed budgets, approved budgets, copies of receipts and other pertinent financial information in their binder. They should photocopy any receipts that need to be turned into the SFC and keep the copies in the binder.

Treasurer must be a rising sophomore or rising junior.

**Fundraiser** assists the Treasurer with their responsibilities. The Fundraiser is specifically in charge of fundraising in particular, and specifically: coordinates all fundraisers, including publicity, fielding questions, and research, ordering etc. for fundraisers. They must be in close communication with the Treasurer, especially at the beginning of each semester, in case any fundraising advances need to be requested. All monetary transactions must be discussed with the Treasurer.

The Fundraiser should keep information regarding sales on campus and the contact info for companies that fundraising items were purchased from as well as any other useful information.

Fundraiser must be a rising sophomore or rising junior.

**Team Captain** is a single club member who is interested in taking on the responsibility of assisting the coach during practices and leading practices in the coach's absence. The Team Captain may not hold any other Executive Board positions, and may not serve as a Squad Captain. The Team Captain should have a good understanding of the theoretical and technical aspects of fencing and should be able to clearly communicate that understanding to their teammates. The Team Captain is also responsible for coordinating the squad captains and coordinating tournaments. They will consult with the President, Vice President, and squad captains in making decisions. They will find information about local tournaments and distribute it to the club. They will work closely with the President and Vice President when hosting tournaments at Bryn Mawr, making sure space and all necessary equipment is available. They will obtain and distribute directions to those attending tournaments (both individual and team events). They will reserve vans from the college as needed, and also have the information about the procedures through which one obtains a van license.

The Team Captain will be appointed at the discretion of the coach from a pool of nominations from current officers.

**Squad Captains** will represent their respective squad during team events, as well as make decisions, with the input of other squad members, regarding substitutions and rotation. They will also be responsible for holding squad workouts (also known as "captains' practices") on non-practice days. Squad captains are also responsible for working to encourage good relations between members of their squads.

After consulting all squad members, squad captains are chosen at the discretion of the coach, team captain, and current squad captains, with selection usually being based on seniority and experience.

**Secretary** is responsible for attending all Executive Board meetings, and recording and distributing meeting notes over the email listserv within 24 hours of all meetings. They will facilitate communication between club members and the Executive Board. They will notify team members of upcoming open

Executive Board meetings and other events. They will organize Open Forum topics submitted by team members and take Minutes during the forum. The Secretary must conduct their duties in an even-handed way, and be able to separate any personal feelings from the responsibilities of the position. The Secretary does not have a vote in Executive Board decisions.

### **Volunteer Positions**

Volunteer positions will be open to new volunteers at the end of the semester, and can continued to be volunteered for at the beginning of the next year.

***Armors*** is in charge of keeping the club inventory up to date, posting the most recent copy of the inventory posted in the cabinet, keeping the cabinet orderly, noting which weapons need to be repaired on the “Repairs” sheet and making sure that weapons in need of repair are labeled. The Armorer will be required to learn some equipment repair skills, either from the coach or the previous Armorer. It will thus be their responsibility to impart this knowledge onto other club members (informally or in the form of armory demonstrations) and assist with equipment repairs.

They should also pay attention to whether or not the stash of pens and first aid supplies are getting low, and let President and Vice President know. They should keep updated copies of the inventory in their binder as well as notes about what needs to be repaired.

***Web Admin*** will be responsible for the maintenance of the club website/blog, Facebook group, and Facebook page for fans & alums. They will communicate with Information Services and the Help Desk for useful information and in the event of technical difficulties. The club will decide with them about what to put on the website and fan/alum page, including, but not limited to: information about practice times, tournament schedules, pictures and updates, and other public fencing information. The Web Admin should keep website related information in their binder.

***Assistant Fundraisers*** will assist the Fundraiser with their duties as needed. This positions is open to members of all years, including first years.

***Club Historian*** will be responsible for alumni relations and will work closely with the Fundraiser in fundraising through alumni. Club historian will also be responsible for researching the history of the club and compiling this information as needed. They will maintain a document of team traditions accessible to the club members.

### **Removal Procedures**

These procedures apply to all club members. Removal of club members will be decided by the executive board, in consultation with squad captains and the coach.

1. Resignation
  - a. Members: May resign from the club if they so choose without fear of harassment from the club. If resigning, the member should let an Executive Board member know.
  - b. Officers: Should an officer be unable to fulfill their duties, they must resign their position.
    - i. Emergency elections should be held to fill the vacant position.
2. Removal

- a. Grounds for removal for general club members:
  - i. Behavior including but not limited to:
    - 1. Insubordination
    - 2. Repeated unwillingness to participate
    - 3. Violation of honor codes
      - a. Not paying dues or any money owed to the club, including for equipment, jacket, transportation or tournament fees, etc., without extenuating circumstances
      - b. Negative/derogatory behavior, e.g. disrespect towards teammates. Members are expected to follow the social honor code, e.g. directly confronting others as necessary regarding any issues they may have.
    - 4. Part-time attendance issues: attending fewer than 25% of practices over the course of a semester
  - ii. Grounds for immediate vote by the exec. board for removal
    - 1. Unsafe conduct e.g. actions towards opponent w/o mask, actions interpreted by coach as excessive and deliberate
    - 2. Repeated disrespect towards club members, leaders, or coach.
- b. A member may be removed with the following procedure:
  - i. Team Captain and Squad Captains come to a consensus, and notify the exec. board and coach. Team Captain and coach speak with offending party and notify exec. board of the substance of the discussion.
  - ii. In the event that squad and team captains assess that the member in question has not made sufficient effort to address the issues in question, the Team Captain and coach speak with offending party a second time and notify exec. board of the substance of the discussion.
  - iii. In the event that squad and team captains assess that the member in question has not made sufficient effort to address the issues in question a second time, the Team Captain and coach shall address the exec. board
  - iv. The exec. board shall notify the member in question that their membership is under question and provide a time for the member to address the board directly.
  - v. The board may remove the member by simple majority vote, upon removal the treasurer shall refund any portion of dues remaining with the written decision of the exec. board.
- c. Grounds for removal for officers include:
  - i. Inability to fulfill duties
  - ii. Inability to maintain good membership standing (e.g. lack of attendance at practice, not paying dues without extenuating circumstances)
- d. A majority of Executive Board members may bring the question to remove an officer to the membership body for a majority vote.

### **Open forums:**

Open forums will be held at the beginning and end of the year, and during the year as needed. The open forums allow for discussion of relevant topics and input from team members. Members can submit topics for discussion to the Secretary, who will filter them and send out a list prior to the forum. Any

topics that would be inappropriate for an open forum will be discarded, and the Secretary will explain to the member an appropriate course of action regarding their topic. A member will be designated to call speaking order.

**Conflict between members:**

In the event of a conflict between 2 or more members, direct confrontation should be initiated as per the honor code. If a member does not feel comfortable with directly confronting someone, they can approach one of the officers if desired or follow the rules of conflict resolution (first approach an HA, then to the Conflict Resolution Committee Board, etc.). All involved parties should be present during the confrontation. Persons present must be directly involved or mediating the discussion.

**Source of Income:**

The Fencing Club will rely upon membership dues, fundraisers, SGA funds, and/or donations for income. This money will be used to purchase equipment and to fund club activities.

Dues are collected each semester. Dues are \$25 for new members, and \$50 for returning members. Unless previous arrangements have been made, money is due no later than 2 weeks after the request is made. The member must speak with the Executive Board if there are issues in paying dues or other money owed to the Club.

**Relations:**

Club members are discouraged though not prohibited from dating other club members, and all romantic relationships shall be carried out outside the sphere of the club. The coach shall not be romantically involved with any club member.

**Amendments to Charter:** If necessary, the Fencing Club will amend its charter by a simple majority vote. A review is held annually during the spring semester. In the event that urgent changes must be made to the charter, a 2/3rds majority vote of the active club members is sufficient to call a meeting to amend and reaffirm the charter at any point