**Florida Digital Humanities (FLDH) Draft Mission and Bylaws[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**Mission**

Digital technologies have transformed how we seek and share information, build relationships and communities, and think about ourselves and our identities. These interactions between human beings and the world we live in is a core interest of the humanities disciplines (e.g., history, literature and writing, philosophy, religion, art, music, and others).

The Florida Digital Humanities Consortium is a collective of institutions in the State of Florida that seeks to promote an understanding of the humanities in light of digital technologies and research. The consortium provides a platform for studying and discussing digital tools, methods, and pedagogies as well as for educating teachers, faculty, and the public about the multiple, interdisciplinary ways humanities research and computing impact our world. It meets annually to identify issues of interest and to set goals for future collaboration and digital humanities research.

**Bylaws**

The following bylaws have been developed by the Steering Committee facilitators, and are presented for comment and approval.

*Last update to this draft: June 3, 2014.*

1. **Preamble**
   1. The name of this organization is “Florida Digital Humanities Consortium” (hereafter abbreviated “FLDH”).
   2. In all its activities, FLDH shall remain sensitive to the principles of diversity, inclusivity, and transparency.
   3. FLDH will have other purposes and objectives as decided by the FLDH Executive. These include:
      1. To provide an online portal ([www.fldh.org](http://www.fldh.org)) as an online meeting space forum for members of FLDH to discuss issues surrounding DH in various environments and to offer ideas on how to develop fertile surroundings when resources are more limited or nonexistent.
      2. Members of FLDH will share information about available tools of interest to the community.
      3. To organize events of interest to the FLDH community.
      4. To undertake other activities relating to its purposes and objectives or the promotion of FLDH as a community.
   4. FLDH shall be a non-profit organization; any funding received will be used to enable FLDH to further its purposes and objectives.
   5. The Electoral and Fiscal year at FLDH shall run according to the calendar year (January 1- December 31).
2. **Membership**
   1. Membership in FLDH is open to anyone interested in its goals.
   2. Membership is conferred by joining the FLDH portal ([www.fldh.org](http://www.fldh.org)).
   3. Individual members in good standing have the right to vote in FLDH elections and such issues as the Steering and Executive shall decide to poll the membership on.
   4. Members in good standing who meet additional eligibility criteria may stand for positions on the FLDH Steering Committee or serve as an Officer of the organization.
   5. The Chair of FLDH is the portal moderator and responsible for the good governance of the portal. This means that the Chair or his/her delegate has the authority to temporarily suspend or moderate activities or the accounts of individual members should conditions require (e.g. in order to reduce tensions or prevent abusive or inappropriate behavior). Any of these sorts of actions will include timely communication with the Steering and Executive groups as needed to support the overall needs of FLDH.
3. **FLDH Steering**
   1. Composition and election
      1. FLDH will be governed by an eight member Steering elected by its membership, which will work in concert with the larger Executive Council.
      2. Elections shall be held annually by electronic ballot before the end of January following an open nomination period.
         1. The precise system used for collecting nominations and conducting the election shall be left to the discretion of the Steering. Whatever system is chosen must reflect the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, and openness to diversity. In choosing a system, the Steering shall pay particular addition to avoiding a system that places excessive demands on user bandwidth or infrastructure.
         2. The election shall be preceded by a nomination period of at least two weeks (longer is permitted). During this period nominations will be solicited from the membership using the portal and other channels. The notice shall indicate that self-nominations are both welcome and common.
         3. In addition to this open nomination process, the Steering may also establish a nomination committee for soliciting nominations directly. Nomination by this committee shall provide no advantage to candidates over self-nomination or nomination through the open call.
         4. Nominees shall be asked to submit a voluntary candidate statement for publication to the FLDH website. The Steering may require these statements to conform to certain requirements (length, format, etc.), provided all candidates are required to adopt the same requirements for their statement. Candidates shall not be obliged to submit a statement.
         5. The election shall open after the nomination period has closed and the names (and optional candidates’ statements) have been published to the FLDH website.
         6. The ballot shall remain open for at least a week.
         7. The results of the ballot shall be announced via the portal as soon as the results are tabulated.
         8. Throughout the nomination and election period, the Steering shall try wherever possible to accommodate any infrastructure difficulties reported by individual members. This means that they have the right to extend deadlines or propose alternative (even ad hoc) methods or technologies for collecting nominations, publishing the statement and/or ballot, and collecting votes.
         9. Any exceptions, accommodations, or alternative arrangements shall be decided by a majority vote of the executive and reported as quickly as possible the membership. Where practical, such exceptions, accommodations, or alternative arrangements shall also be made available to all other members.
         10. In reporting such accommodations or alternative arrangements, the Steering shall be sensitive to issues of privacy. It is not required, for example, that the member for whom the accommodation, exception, or alternative arrangement was made be identified in any announcements.
      3. Elections are for two-year terms, which shall be staggered so that half the positions are open for election each year.
         1. In the first election (for the 2015-2016 Steering) all positions shall be open for election.
         2. Half the vacancies in this election shall be for a two-year term; half shall be for a one-year term.
         3. Separate elections shall be held for each term (i.e. Candidates must indicate if they are standing for election to a one-year term or a two-year term).
         4. All terms shall be renewable. Candidates elected to a one-year term shall not have that term count against any term limits (i.e. they will be allowed to serve for the maximum term limits +1 year).
      4. No member may be elected to the FLDH Steering for more than three consecutive terms (six years). After three elected terms, the member must wait at least one year before becoming qualified for re-election to the FLDH Steering.
         1. For members of the initial (2015) Steering, these term limits shall not include 2015. For members of this group, members will be allowed to serve consecutive terms through the end of 2023.
         2. For members elected to a term of a single year, either as part of the initial election or after, these term limits shall be exclusive of this initial year (i.e. members elected under this circumstances may stand for election four times for a maximum of 7 consecutive years).
      5. FLDH Steering members may resign from their commitments at any time but are expected to give adequate notice.
         1. In the case that a member resigns, the FLDH Executive at its discretion may decide to: to hold a special election; appoint a replacement; leave the position vacant.
         2. Members appointed or elected to replace a resigning member will serve for the remainder of the original member’s term, at which point they will be eligible for re-election.
         3. The time served as a replacement for a resigning member does not count against any term limits.
   2. Decisions
      1. Only elected members of the Steering have the right to vote in its decisions. Ex officio members and observers who have not also been elected to the Steering may not vote.
      2. The Steering will decide issues before it by a simple majority unless these Bylaws call for a higher standard or the Steering places additional restrictions on itself.
      3. For the purposes of these Bylaws, a “supermajority” is the votes of six out of the eight voting members of the Steering or an equivalent percentage of the total voting body should less than 8 members be eligible to vote (due to vacancies or conflicts of interest).
4. **Steering, Officers**
   1. The Steering will be responsible for appointing all other officers and subcommittees.
   2. The officers shall include (but need not be limited to)
      1. Chair
      2. Vice Chair
      3. Secretary (Project Management & Reporting)
      4. Host Institution Member (FLDH.org portal host)
      5. Principal Meeting (Events & Conferences) Member
   3. In selecting officers, the Steering shall keep in mind the principles of diversity, inclusivity, transparency, experience, and competence.
   4. The Chair shall be selected from the elected membership of the Steering.
   5. All other officers may be selected from the Steering or the membership at large. Officers must be members of FLDH as defined in the bylaws (i.e. they must be members of the portal).
   6. Officers who are chosen from the elected Steering remain members of the Steering and have the right to vote in its decisions.
   7. Officers who are chosen from the membership at large and have not been elected to the Steering become ex officio, non-voting members of the Steering.
   8. The Steering shall also have responsibility for staffing any subcommittees. These should include (but are not limited to):
      1. An editorial committee responsible for the FLDH website.
      2. An organizer/organizers for planning conference and poster sessions.
      3. Any other subcommittees that might arise from the members’ interests.
   9. Membership on these committees need not be exclusive: individuals may serve on more than one committee and the Steering may assign all tasks to a single subcommittee if it sees fit.
   10. No term limits apply to membership on subcommittees, though the principles of diversity and inclusivity shall be kept in mind in determining and renewing appointments and subcommittee members are expected to encourage renewal and the development of successors.
   11. The FLDH Steering may delegate the formation and staffing of subcommittees to others as it sees fit, although it shall retain final responsibility for all decisions.
   12. Officers or subcommittee members may be removed from office for cause by the Steering. Any such removal shall require a supermajority of the elected membership of the Steering (i.e. 6/8 votes). After the Steering has approved removal from office, the Chair must write to the affected person within three days explaining the grounds for removal.
5. **Steering, Chair**
   1. *Duties*
      1. The FLDH Steering will elect a Chair annually from among its members at the first meeting after the annual elections.
      2. Re-election is permitted. Because the Chair must be an elected member of the Steering, the term limits that apply to that position also govern election to Chair. Chairs must step down when their eligibility to serve as an elected member of the board expires.
      3. Removal from the office of Chair does not affect membership on the FLDH Steering or in FLDH itself. A Chair who has been removed from office is entitled to serve out his or her term as an elected member of the Steering and stand for reelection, subject to the language on term limits.
   2. *Duties*
      1. The Chair will convene, determine the agendas for, and chair meetings of the FLDH Steering. The Chair will also be a member ex officio of all such subcommittees as the FLDH Steering shall constitute. The Chair may delegate these tasks.
6. **Executive Council**
   1. The Executive will be responsible for discussing, working through, and voting on particular topics and issues related to the FLDH mission (e.g., where to hold meetings, funding initiatives, position statements in regard to higher education in Florida, etc.).
   2. Composition
      1. FLDH will be governed by an eight member Steering elected by its membership, which will work in concert with the larger Executive Council.
      2. The Executive Council may include up to two representatives for each institution. If two representatives are included for an institution, it is recommendable that the two representatives come from separate institutional units (e.g., the library and a teaching department) with the intention to foster collaboration within the institution as well as across FLDH through participation on the Executive Council.
   3. Duties/Role
7. **Events**
   1. FLDH will organize events befitting its mission, such as conference sessions at important relevant conferences.
   2. FLDH should not be held responsible for any financial obligations resulting from the organization of such events.
   3. MORE HERE ON THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL MEETING OR EVENTS AND CONFERENCES MEMBER AND/OR THE EXECUTIVE?
8. **Amendments to these bylaws**
   1. Amendments to these bylaws can be proposed by the FLDH Steering, Executive, or by the petition from the membership at large.
   2. A proposal for amendment by the membership requires the support of an elected member of the Steering or 10 members.
   3. Proposed amendments will be published on the FLDH website with a minimum 10 day period requesting comments by the FLDH membership.
   4. The FLDH Steering will discuss comments on the proposed amendments received from the FLDH membership incorporating changes agreed by a simple majority of the FLDH Steering.
   5. The agreed version of the amended bylaws will be presented as a whole to the FLDH membership for voting over a minimum 7 day period. The amended version of the bylaws will pass with a two-thirds majority of votes cast during the voting period, provided quorum has been met.
   6. Quorum for approval by the membership shall be 25% of the total membership.
   7. In the event quorum is not reached, the Steering may approve amendments to the Bylaws by a supermajority. In such a case, the Steering should consider carefully the results of the membership election, though it is not bound by it.

1. These were developed in part as based on the *Global Outlook::Digital Humanities* Bylaws: <http://www.globaloutlookdh.org/proposed-bylaws/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)