

Texas Christian University
Woman's Club

By-laws and History

January 1985

Acknowledgement is given to the By-laws Committee: Arlene Sollenberger, Marion Snyder and Mary Charlotte Faris, who re-wrote the By-laws; and to the 1984/85 Executive Board for their diligent study and planning toward changes in the By-laws, which were approved November 14, 1984.

By-laws

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of the organization shall be the Texas Christian University Woman's Club.

ARTICLE II

Object

The object of this Club shall be to encourage greater interaction and friendship among the members, with special attention given to the welcoming and orientation of newcomers.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 1. Membership of this Club shall be made up of (1) women actively associated with the University in one or more of these ways:

- (a) Faculty, either full-time or part-time, having the rank of instructor or above
- (b) University Staff (i.e., professional staff), either full-time or part-time
- (c) Board of Trustees member
- (d) Wives of men serving the University in these ways

and (2) women in any of the above categories who have officially retired from active association with the University, or whose

husband has officially retired from active association with the University. A member shall not cease to be eligible for membership because of the death of her husband.

Section 2. Active membership is automatically established the first year of association with the University and continues so long as a person remains qualified and pays annual dues.

Section 3. Upon recommendation of the Executive Board, life membership may be conferred upon any person who has rendered long and valuable service to the Club.

Section 4. Any Club member who becomes a non-resident may continue membership upon payment of annual dues.

ARTICLE IV

Dues

Section 1. Members shall pay annual dues of ten dollars (\$10). Dues shall be payable June 1 of each year and shall become delinquent if not paid by October 15. Names of members whose annual dues remain delinquent throughout the remainder of the Club year shall be dropped from the roll of membership without action of the Club.

Section 2. A member shall be responsible for payment of whatever reservations she makes for any Club function for which a charge is made, unless such reservations are cancelled within the time limit set by the reservations

committee. A member having received notice from the Treasurer that she is in arrears of payments of such obligations and who then remains in arrears throughout the remainder of the Club year shall forfeit her membership, and her name shall be dropped from the roll of members without further action of the Club.

ARTICLE V

Meetings

Section 1. The Club shall meet formally at least four times during the academic year, unless otherwise ordered by the Executive Board. One meeting shall be a business meeting for the election of officers. This shall be called the Annual Meeting and shall occur in the Spring.

Section 2. Other business of the Club shall be handled by the Executive Board and reported at the Club meetings.

Section 3. Special meetings can be called by the President or by the Executive Board. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least three days notice shall be given.

Section 4. Twenty (20) members of the Club shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VI

Officers and Elections

Section 1. The officers of the Club shall be a President, a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President, a Third Vice-President, a

Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, and a Treasurer, each of whom shall be elected by the Club, and a Parliamentarian who shall be appointed by the President.

Section 2. At a Fall meeting of the Executive Board, three members and one alternate shall be elected to serve as a nominating committee, which shall be reported to the Club. It shall be the duty of the committee to nominate one candidate for each office to be filled at the Annual Meeting, at which time additional nominations from the floor shall be permitted.

Section 3. Voice vote shall prevail at election of officers. Elected officers shall serve for one year, or until their successors are elected, and their term of office shall begin immediately after their installation, which shall take place at the last meeting of the year.

Section 4. No member shall hold more than one office at a time, and no elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 5. The Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the newly elected President from the membership before the installation of officers. She shall assume office on appointment. No limit shall be placed on the number of consecutive terms for which she can be appointed to serve in this office, provided that she remains qualified.

Section 6. A vacancy in any elective office shall be filled by the Executive Board. In case of a vacancy in the presidency the First Vice-President shall call a meeting of the Executive Board and act as President until a

new President is selected by the Board. Officers named in this way shall serve until the end of the unexpired term.

ARTICLE VII

Duties of Officers

Section 1. The President shall preside at all meetings, call special meetings and Executive Board meetings, appoint standing committee chairmen not designated by the bylaws, appoint special committees, and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. At the end of the Club year she shall see that each officer instructs the person elected to succeed her regarding the duties involved in the office.

Section 2. The First Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in her absence, shall serve as chairman of the Program Committee, and be responsible for any publicity about the meetings.

Section 3. The Second Vice-President shall serve as chairman of the Yearbook and Membership Committee and shall be an ex-officio member of the Nominating Committee. She shall keep an accurate and up-to-date roll of members.

Section 4. The Third Vice-President shall serve as chairman of the Newcomer Orientation Committee, working with the President and Corresponding Secretary during the summer and early fall in welcoming newcomers to the TCU campus.

Section 5. The Recording Secretary shall keep a record of all meetings of the Club and of

the Executive Board, and preserve all records and papers of the Club until such a time as they are placed in the Archives of the TCU Library.

Section 6. The Corresponding Secretary shall assist the President and the Third Vice-President in welcoming new members to the Club and shall be responsible for all official communications in written form.

Section 7. The Treasurer shall serve as chairman of the Finance Committee. She shall collect and receive all dues, contributions, reservations by check, and other monies of the Club. She shall pay all bills. She shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements as the Club shall authorize. She shall present a written report at the Annual Meeting and written reports at Executive Board meetings. She shall render an annual report which shall be audited at the close of the Club year.

Section 8. The Parliamentarian shall settle all points in procedure according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, and shall install the officers who are elected during her term of office.

ARTICLE VIII

Committees

Section 1. The following standing committees of the Club shall be appointed by the newly elected officer who serves as chairman of that standing committee promptly after her installation:

- (a) The Program Committee, which shall be

composed of the number of members deemed desirable by the President and the First Vice-President. It shall be the duty of the Committee to plan the annual program of the Club, with the approval of the Executive Board, and to assign hostesses for each of the meetings of the Club year. The Committee's report shall be submitted to the Executive Board at its first meeting of the fiscal year, which begins in June.

- (b) The Yearbook and Membership Committee, which shall be composed of the number of members deemed desirable by the President and the Second Vice-President. It shall be the duty of this Committee to prepare the material for the yearbook, arrange for its printing, and have it ready for distribution on or before the first meeting of the Club year.
- (c) The Newcomer Orientation Committee which shall be composed of the number of members deemed desirable by the President and the Third Vice-President. It shall be the duty of this Committee to welcome and assist in orienting newcomers to Fort Worth and TCU.
- (d) The Finance Committee, which shall be composed of the Treasurer, the immediate past Treasurer, and one other member. It shall be the duty of this Committee to prepare a budget for the fiscal year and to submit it to the Executive Board at its first meeting of the fiscal year. The Committee can, from time to time, submit to the Executive Board supplements

to the budget for the current fiscal year.

Section 2. The following standing committee chairmen shall be appointed by the President immediately following her installation. The chairman of each committee is responsible for appointing her committee:

- (a) The Federation Committee, which shall be composed of a chairman and one other member. It shall be the duty of the chairman to attend the regular monthly meetings of the Federation of Women's Clubs of Fort Worth and to inform the Club of any pertinent proceedings of that body. The second member shall act as alternate.
- (b) The Courtesy Committee, which shall be composed of the number of members deemed desirable by the President and the chairman. It shall be the duty of this Committee to act as greeters at the club meetings and to furnish name tags. This Committee shall assist with the welcoming of newcomers, and respond with appropriate courtesies for the membership when needed.
- (c) The Reservation Committee, which shall be composed of a chairman and as many co-chairmen and members as necessary to handle the duty of the Committee, which is to notify members of the meetings. If reservations are called for, it shall be the responsibility of the Committee to accept reservations and report them to the chairman of the meeting by the deadline set. If reservations are by check, it is the responsibility of the Committee to prepare

the alphabetized reservation list, collected by the Treasurer, for the chairman of the meeting.

- (d) The Special Interests Committee shall be composed of the number of members deemed necessary by the President and the chairman. It shall be the responsibility of this Committee to assist current special interest groups (hobby, bridge, etc.); to start new groups when interest is indicated; to divide groups which have become too large; and to assist the First Vice-President with small group meetings for special interests. This Committee shall be responsible for promoting and collecting commitments of special interest groups at the opening meeting and for resource people to lead them if necessary.

Section 3. An Auditing Committee consisting of a chairman and two additional members shall be appointed by the President. It shall be the duty of the Committee to audit the annual report of the Treasurer after the final Club meeting and before June 1 of that year.

Section 4. A Nominating Committee of three members and an alternate shall be elected by the Executive Board and reported to the Club in the fall. It shall be the duty of this Committee to nominate one candidate for each office to be filled and to present these nominations for a vote at the Annual Meeting.

Section 5. Such other committees as the Club or the Executive Board shall from time to time deem necessary to carry on the work of

the Club shall be appointed by the President.

ARTICLE IX

The Executive Board

Section 1. The officers of the Club, the chairmen of the standing committees (four of whom are elected officers), and the immediate past President of the Club shall constitute the Executive Board.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall conduct the business of the Club, fix the hours and place of the meetings of the Club, make recommendations to the Club, and perform such other duties as are specified by these bylaws. The Executive Board shall be subject to the orders of the Club and none of its acts shall conflict with action taken by the Club.

Section 3. The meetings of the Executive Board shall be called by the President or ordered by the Board itself upon the written request of three members of the Board.

ARTICLE X

Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable, unless they are inconsistent with these bylaws or any special rules of order which the Club may adopt.

ARTICLE XI

Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1. These bylaws can be amended at any regular business meeting of the Club by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous meeting. Consideration seriatim of extensive revisions of the bylaws can be waived by general consent of the assembly, provided the Executive Board has recommended such revision, after having considered it seriatim.

Section 2. The results of amendments to the bylaws which affect membership shall not be retroactive.

ARTICLE XII

Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the Club at any future time, its assets shall be given to Texas Christian University. A special committee appointed at that time would designate the specific use of the funds.

Revised Fall, 1984
Adopted November 14, 1984

The Club thanks Joan Swaim for her extensive research and careful writing of the history of the TCU Woman's Club. Joan was remarkably well qualified for the task as a third-generation member of the Club. Both her mother and grandmother were members, and all three served as President of the Club.

Club Minutes and further documentation of the Club's history may be found in the TCU Library Archives.

History

THE TCU WOMAN'S CLUB

The Texas Christian University Woman's Club held its first meetings in 1920-21 under the leadership of its first president, Miss Elliott Todhunter, an instructor in the Fine Arts Department. Written records of the formation of the Club, its original Constitution and By-laws, and the proceedings of that initial year and the six years following have been lost, but Minutes from 1926 to the present (1984) give testimony to the service and devotion of Club members to the University and to the community of which it is a part.

The Club's name has an interesting history, coming full circle now in 1984 to the original Texas Christian University Woman's Club. Early references to the name in minutes and yearbooks show no particular distinction between the use of TCU Woman's Club and TCU Faculty Woman's Club. The names are used interchangeably in the records until 1947, although the 1944 revision of the Constitution and By-laws states clearly that the "name of this organization shall be the Faculty Woman's Club of Texas Christian University."

The growth of the University, in part, affected the nature of the membership and, thus, the naming of the organization. The Club was formed and guided through its early history by women whose connections with TCU were various. There were members among the teaching faculty, administrative staff, professional staff, secretarial staff, and mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters in all of these categories. The term "faculty" was used in a general sense covering professors, instructors, business office professionals, administrative officers, dormitory matrons,

librarians, dietitians, and administrative secretaries. As the number of University support staff grew and interest in Club membership increased, there seems to have been concern that the goals of the Club and common interests of its members were in danger of being diffused to the point of ineffectiveness. Thus, in 1944, the name was officially established to include the word Faculty, and eligibility for membership was more clearly defined.

In recent years, the University has identified three personnel categories: Faculty, those holding rank of instructor or above; University Staff, made up primarily of administrative and professional support staff; and General Staff, which includes all other areas of support services. Because both Faculty and University Staff members and wives of those members are eligible for membership, the inclusion of Faculty in the Club's name was confusing and considered a misnomer. Current By-laws (Fall of 1984), therefore, have returned the Club's name to its original Texas Christian University Woman's Club.

The primary purpose of the group until 1984 seems to have been essentially as was stated in the Constitution and By-laws from 1944 to 1984: "...to encourage social activities among its members and to give...assistance to the social life of the University." The purpose of the Club as stated in the By-laws rewritten in the Fall of 1984 reads: "...to encourage greater interaction and friendship among the members, with special attention given to the welcoming and orientation of newcomers."

Activities of the Club recorded from 1926 through the mid-seventies, indicate that it not only served as a forum for social exchange among the University women, but, more importantly, that it did, indeed, play a vital role in the social life of the University. The latter role diminished as the University structure became more complex, and as women became part of the work force in our society. In recent years, Club sponsorship of campus-wide social events has been limited.

The Christmas Dinner was recorded as "a new affair" in December, 1929, and was an established tradition by 1937, at which time it became a joint endeavor of the woman's group and the University's Social Committee. For several years during the late thirties and early forties, the party was held in the school cafeteria, with the President of the University as Master of Ceremonies. Santa Claus, played by a young biology professor, distributed presents to all diners. As the group became larger, informality gave way to a more formal occasion with elaborate food preparation and decorations, and staged programs presented by some segment of the performing arts. From the outset, however, the Christmas social was a time of fellowship and good cheer among the University family. The Club was forced to discontinue the tradition in 1984 due to increasing costs and lack of financial support from the University. The Chancellor's Christmas Open House, begun in 1983, serves as a replacement for the event.

Another annual event of the Club that continues in modified form to the present, is the tea for newcomers. Begun in 1926, this social affair at the beginning of the Fall semester originally

included the entire faculty and was held in honor of all faculty new to the campus. As the faculty grew in number and a University social office was established, the Club's reception for new faculty became a regular fall meeting of the Club to which only women new to the campus were invited. The University took charge of the larger affair that welcomed all new faculty and professional staff.

Because the needs of newcomers as they made their move to Fort Worth and TCU were not being met by the University, the Club decided to assume that responsibility and assist these new people in every way possible. The purpose of the Club was revised, in the new 1984 By-laws, to include "... the welcoming and orientation of newcomers", and a new office with standing committee was created (Third Vice-President for Newcomer Orientation) to carry out these summer and fall responsibilities to newcomers.

Two other Club affairs that had long traditions were the tea in April honoring senior women, and the Guest Day Tea. The first Senior Women's Tea was in April, 1934 and, with the exception of a few scattered years, was held each Spring until 1972. There was a decreasing need for this occasion as campus social groups proliferated, each honoring its women graduates. The increasing number of graduates and corresponding increased expense also contributed to the removal of this annual event from the Club calendar.

Actually, the tea honoring senior women was only one of several Club efforts to include students in its activities. In 1933, the

Club year was planned "with a view to contributing something to the social life of the students of the University." Subsequently that year, three parties honoring various phases of student life were held. Emphasis on entertaining student groups continued for several years, climaxing in 1937 with a "chuck-wagon dinner" honoring the entire student body and class officers.

In March 1930, a "Guest Day Tea" was held in a member's home, as were most early meetings of the Club. With the exception of a few years, the tea was scheduled annually until 1979, and for many of those years, it was not only popular with Club members, but it was also a highly regarded and anticipated Fort Worth social event. Oral history accounts indicate that all guests invited to the initial tea were individual friends of Club members. Later, after the entertainment became an annual affair, guests were invited by Club members, by the Club itself, and by the University administrative offices. Invitations included women who were, or whose husbands were, leaders in Tarrant County civic and industrial affairs, presidents of local colleges and universities, TCU Board members, and presiding officers of other local women's organizations.

Attendance at the Guest Day Tea early grew to such proportions that a larger space than the members' homes could provide was sought. The TCU Library, the "parlors" of Jarvis Hall, Waits Hall and Foster Hall, the Brown-Lupton Student Center Ballroom, and even the Daniel-Meyer Coliseum's Ex-Lettermen's Lounge, all served as sites for the "high tea." A record attendance of six hundred members and guests was noted in February, 1963. Through the late

sixties and early seventies, expense accelerated and attendance declined, so that by the Club year 1978-79, this occasion was being phased out of the calendar as a regular event. Guests are still invited to special events of the Club, as a way of bringing together the campus and community.

In addition to its regular monthly meetings, the TCU Woman's Club often volunteered or responded to requests to sponsor or support University and University-related social events, especially in its early years. Recorded among these activities are: assistance of Club members in 1928 at the Young Matron's Missionary Society bazaar; a 1929 tea given during a meeting of the "Association of Colleges" held in Fort Worth; a 1931 tea for ladies attending the Mathematics Association meeting on the campus; also in 1931, with the Music Club, a joint sponsorship of an operetta to be presented on campus; 1931-33 sponsorship of "Sunday evening musicales"; responsibility for the 1933, 1934, and 1935 President's and Faculty Reception, an annual gala during which the University's senior officers together with the Faculty welcomed students and families; and a 1937 tea honoring the Woman's Athletic Association which met in Fort Worth that year. In May, 1954, the Club initiated an annual dinner party honoring faculty and professional staff retirees. Direction of the dinner was taken over, in 1961, by the Office of the Faculty Social Director, but the tradition continued through 1983 as the Candlelight Dinner.

Although the Club's current participation in civic affairs is virtually non-existent, there is evidence in its history that it was active in that arena. When both University and Community were young, the close alliance of

town and gown is reflected in the Club's endorsing, planning and financing of community projects. Nowhere is this more evident than during the World War II years, 1941-1945. When the school was called upon to participate in the community's war effort, the Woman's Club responded by appointing a Red Cross Committee which established and staffed, on the campus, a Red Cross Surgical Dressing Room, the volunteers of which made, folded, and boxed volumes of soft surgical materials to be sent to the war front. Club members also served as volunteers for the Office of Civil Defense, acting as rationing clerks and telephone operators and serving in blood donor centers and in U.S.O.'s. They responded it seems, to all requests, collecting "books for the soldier boys," "apples and cookies for service men," saving waste fats, growing "victory gardens," and generously contributing to funds such as the Foster Parents' Plan for War Children, Inc.

The TCU Woman's Club has been and continues to be a member of the Fort Worth Federation of Women's Clubs and participates in community projects through this membership. Of course the University itself, its administrative officers, faculty and staff are very active in Fort Worth community organizations. TCU/Ft. Worth Week, an annual event of long standing continues to exist.

The Texas Christian University Woman's Club, like the University itself, has had a long, useful life because of the substance of its social and educational programs and the quality of its membership. The leadership of the group has always responded to the needs

of the University, and to the needs of its members by seeking to provide for the inevitable variety of interests of such a group, but it has also given something more--an appreciation for and a sense of belonging to the rich heritage of Texas Christian University, founded in 1873.

Joan Swaim
Fall, 1984



TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY