

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTER
OF THE
JOINT SERVICES CONFERENCE ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS (JSCOPE) ¹

¹ Note: The Organizational Charter was adopted by the Membership at Large at JSCOPE VII on 11 January 1985. The Charter was subsequently amended at JSCOPE XI on 13 January 1989.

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Preamble

The Joint Services Conference on Professional Ethics (hereinafter, JSCOPE) is a voluntary association which seeks to promote sound ethical reasoning by military professionals. JSCOPE exists both by virtue of its members' commitment to professional military ethics and the continued willingness of service commanders to support the members' involvement. The JSCOPE emphasis is on analysis, discussion and education, with the intent of identifying and clarifying the ethical principles which should guide the actions of military professionals.

ARTICLE I - STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

In order to promote sound ethical reasoning by military professionals, JSCOPE undertakes to:

1. provide a viable forum for the discussion and exchange of ideas relating to professional military ethics;
2. foster the rigorous and systematic analysis of military issues of ethical significance;
3. clarify the ethical norms and related behavioral expectations which should guide and constrain the conduct of military professionals;
4. enhance the quality and scope of military ethics instruction;
5. develop an essential resource in the form of expertise in professional military ethics; and
6. afford service commanders informed, timely, sophisticated and yet applied analyses of the ethical impact of military service practices.

ARTICLE II - ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Section 1 - JSCOPE activities in furtherance of its objectives include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. sponsoring an annual conference, the purpose of which is to both: (a) pursue a contemporary issue in professional military ethics through the vehicle of keynote addresses, paper presentations and related discussion; and (b) conduct a business meeting of the membership;
2. encouraging scholarship and research in professional military ethics;
3. serving as a liaison channel for individuals and groups in both the military and civilian realm that are involved with professional ethics;
4. supporting the educational programs in ethics afforded by the military services, with the goal of developing a comprehensive ethics program which can then be tailored to the needs of individual service elements;
5. developing a library of academic and military service materials relating to both the substance of and educational approaches to professional military ethics; and
6. organizing a speaker's bureau of individuals whose expertise qualifies them to deliver addresses and/or consult on professional military ethics issues.

Section 2 - JSCOPE activities may also include the following:

1. publishing a professional journal of military ethics which will feature the proceedings of the annual conference as well as academic and professional articles of significant merit; and
2. reviewing service regulations and policies in order to afford military commanders timely and competent analyses of their ethical significance and impact.

ARTICLE III - ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Section 1 - Membership

1.1 - Eligibility

The sole criterion for membership is an interest in professional military ethics. Any person who wishes to join may do so by requesting to be included on the mailing list. Requests should be sent to the Department of Philosophy and Fine Arts, HQ USAFA/DFPFA, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80840-5701 where the permanent files of JSCOPE are maintained. The organization seeks a broad range of membership, including representation from command, staff and line elements within the military sector, and from both academic and non-academic orientations within the civilian community, as well as international members both military and civilian.

1.2 - Status

A member's currency of involvement determines his/her membership status. "Active" members are all new members and all existing members who either attend a JSCOPE conference or otherwise correspond with the organization within the three-year period prior to the annual conference. "Inactive" members are those individuals who join the organization yet do not maintain their currency of involvement according to the foregoing alternative criteria. Inactive members are not eligible for election to the Executive Board and may not receive JSCOPE mailings if the associated cost places an undue strain on the organization budget.

Section 2 - Governance

The JSCOPE Executive Board is responsible for the direction and overall management of organizational affairs. Detailed provisions concerning the Executive Board are set forth in Article IV.

Section 3 - Committees

The Membership at Large or the Executive Board may establish ad hoc committees of volunteer members who will undertake a specified project under the direction of a chairperson appointed by the Executive Board. The scope of an ad hoc committee's authority to act on behalf of the organization is limited to the express terms of its mandate. An ad hoc committee is automatically dissolved upon the discharge of its mandate or otherwise at the direction of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE IV - EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1 - Composition

The Executive Board is comprised of eight Members as follows: one representative elected from each of the five branches of the United States Armed Forces (i.e., the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard); one representative (who may be associated with any of the five military services) appointed by the JSCOPE Institutional Sponsor; one representative elected from the civilian membership; and one representative appointed by the Canadian Armed Forces.

Section 2 - Election of Board Members

2.1 - Eligibility

Active membership status is a prerequisite for election to the Executive Board. An additional prerequisite is that only military members currently on active duty are eligible for election as the representative of their respective services.

2.2 - Election Rules

Elections are held at the annual business session with each member present entitled to one vote. A quorum must be present to hold elections. Each candidate requires a nomination and a second. Voting is conducted by a show of hands, unless the presiding officer decides on his/her own initiative or upon request to conduct the voting by secret ballot; the order of election is determined by the presiding officer. In all elections the winning candidate is the member who receives a plurality of votes cast. After the general election, the Executive Board Members meet in closed session to elect a Chairperson from among the military members elected as representatives of the five branches of the U.S. Armed Forces.

2.3 - Terms of Office

The Chairperson is elected for a three-year term of office; all other Board Members are elected for two-year terms. Incumbents may be reelected. Any Board Member, including the Chairperson, is subject to recall with or without cause by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at the annual business session. In the event that a Board Member resigns, is recalled or is otherwise unable to complete his/her term of office, the Chairperson may appoint a substitute Member to serve until an election is held at the next annual business session.

Section 3 - Scope of Authority

The direction and overall management of the organization is entrusted to the JSCOPE Executive Board. The Board is authorized to formulate both substantive and procedure policy in consultation with the Membership at Large or the Institutional Sponsor, as appropriate. Furthermore, the Board is empowered to act for the organization in all legal and financial matters.

Section 4 - Individual Duties

4.1 - Chairperson

As the ranking Member of the Executive Board, the Chairperson ordinarily presides over both the annual business session and the meetings of the Executive Board. The Chairperson also serves as the principal spokesperson for the organization in the course of its interaction with outside entities within and without the military sector.

4.2 - Institutional Sponsor Coordinator

The Institutional Sponsor (currently the National Defense University) will appoint a Coordinator to serve on the JSCOPE Executive Board. The responsibilities of the Coordinator include:

- a. serving as liaison between the Institutional Sponsor and JSCOPE;
- b. all JSCOPE conference arrangements (e.g., billeting, facilities, transportation, banquet details, registration materials, etc.); and
- c. participating as an Executive Board Member.

4.3 - Board Members

All Executive Board Members participate fully in the policy-formulation process and may undertake additional duties at the direction of the Chairperson and/or Executive Secretary. Each Board Member also serves as an important liaison channel with his/her respective military service or the civilian community, as appropriate. In the absence or incapacity of both the Chairperson and the Executive Secretary, the senior elected military Board Member present presides over organizational meetings.

Section 5 - Permanent Secretariat

The Permanent Secretariat function will be performed by officers in the Department of Philosophy and Fine Arts at the U.S. Air Force Academy. This function has the objective of preserving the records, mailing lists, and resource materials of the organization and constitutes a permanent mailing address for JSCOPE. The function of the Secretariat involves responsibility for:

1. the membership roster, which includes the name, professional affiliation, address, phone number and status of all members;
2. the organizational correspondence file, which includes a copy of all correspondence written to or on behalf of the organization;
3. the agenda for all business sessions and Executive Board meetings as directed by the Chairperson;
4. the minutes for all business sessions and Executive Board meetings; and
5. the JSCOPE library of ethics resources and materials.

Section 6 - Conduct of Business

6.1 - Deliberations

The Executive Board may deliberate in formal or informal meetings, or by telephone consultations and conferences. The only requirement for deliberations is that every Board Member is afforded a reasonable opportunity to consider, discuss and vote on all substantive matters within the Board's cognizance.

6.2 - Substantive Matters

Substantive matters include, but are not limited to, the significant decisions relating to the organization's fundamental character, overall management, future direction and/or financial affairs. JSCOPE Ethics Recommendations are also classified as substantive matters. The Chairperson makes the final determination as to whether the matter is substantive.

6.3 - Voting Procedures

The Executive Board seeks to conduct its business by consensus whenever possible. In the absence of consensus, substantive issues are resolved as a function of voting with the following special majority concurrence required: five (5) votes including that of the Chairperson, or six (6) votes without that of the Chairperson. If a Board Member is unable to vote for any reason, the requirement is reduced to four (4) and five (5), respectively; if two Board Members are unable to vote, the requirement is reduced to three (3) and four (4), respectively.

Section 7 - JSCOPE Ethics Recommendations

The Executive Board may forward an Ethics Recommendation to any appropriate element within the military command or staff structure in either of two situations: (1) the Membership at Large passes a resolution expressing its consensus on a particular issue of concern relating to professional military ethics, and the Executive Board, which considers all such resolutions passed, deems the resolution worthwhile and actionable; or (2) the Executive Board, acting on its own initiative, formulates a resolution which its Members consider worthwhile and actionable. When such a recommendation is made without consultation with the Membership at Large, it shall be identified as such.

ARTICLE V - ANNUAL BUSINESS SESSION

Section 1 - Purpose

The organization's annual business session is held each year during the JSCOPE conference. The business session affords members an opportunity to review and consider JSCOPE's status and activities as well as to participate in organizational management and planning.

Section 2 - Agenda

The agenda is prepared in advance by the Executive Board. Required agenda items include scheduled elections, proposed topics for the forthcoming year's conference and all new business matters.

Section 3 - Conduct of Business

3.1 - Presiding Officer

The Chairperson of the Executive Board ordinarily presides over the annual business session; another Board Member presides at the Chairperson's request or in his/her absence or incapacity.

3.2 - Quorum

A quorum is a simple majority of the members registered and in attendance at the annual conference. A quorum is required to transact new business and/or to hold elections; if a quorum is not present, the business session is restricted to the required reports and discussion thereof.

3.3 - Voting

Each member present at the business session is entitled to one vote. Members in an active status who cannot attend may communicate their votes on published agenda items in advance in writing to any Executive Board Member who will cast their votes accordingly. Substantive motions require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, while routine procedural motions merely require a simple majority of those present and voting. Members who arrange to vote in absentia are considered present and voting.

3.4 - Procedure

The presiding officer has two procedural options relating to the business session: (1) conduct the session informally with the emphasis on open, unstructured discussion as a way of achieving consensus; or (2) conduct the session on a more formal basis according to the rules of parliamentary procedure set forth in Article VI. The determination of which procedural option to employ is within the sole discretion of the presiding officer to whom the proper conduct of the session is entrusted. Under both procedural options, any of the presiding officer's procedural rulings are subject to challenge upon a motion from any member present; if the motion is seconded, the challenge is put to an immediate vote without discussion, requiring a two-thirds majority of those present and voting for passage.

Section 4 - JSCOPE Ethics Resolutions

The Membership at Large may formulate, consider and adopt a resolution expressing its consensus on a particular issue of concern relating to professional military ethics. Upon adoption, the resolution is published in the JSCOPE conference proceedings and is automatically reviewed by the Executive Board in order to determine whether the resolution should be forwarded to an appropriate element within the military command or staff structure as a JSCOPE Ethics Recommendation.

ARTICLE VI - PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE (Optional)

Section 1 - Order of Business

Unless modified by the presiding officer, the order of business at the annual business session and at meetings of the Executive Board is as follows:

1. convening and call to order;
2. an overview of the proceedings of the last business session or meeting;
3. any required Executive Board elections;
4. action on old business;
5. action on new business (including the subsequent year's conference topic); and
6. recess or adjournment.

Section 2 - Conduct of Business

2.1 - Quorum

A quorum is required to transact new business and/or to hold elections at the annual business session; if a quorum is not present, the business session is restricted to the required reports and discussion thereof. A quorum is a simple majority of the members registered and in attendance at the annual conference.

2.2 - Member's Participation

Each member present may address the membership during the conduct of business whenever recognized by the presiding officer. It is the responsibility of the presiding officer to afford every member a reasonable opportunity to be heard and to ensure that all points of view relating to substantive matters are represented in discussion.

Section 3 - Motions

Unless precluded elsewhere in these rules, a proper motion from the floor is in order at any time during the session or meeting once a member is recognized by the presiding officer. Motions require a second and then are either open to discussion if substantive or put to an immediate vote if procedural. In the ordinary conduct of business, a substantive motion is followed by one or more procedural motions, e.g., motions to table, divide the question, close debate, and/or adjourn. Motions to amend are considered substantive for the purpose of these rules. The presiding officer may rule a motion out of order if, in his/her judgment, the motion is intended to disrupt and/or does in fact disrupt the orderly conduct of business.

Section 4 - Special Parliamentary Points

4.1 - Point of Order

A member may rise on a point of order at any time (even while another member has the floor). The sole purpose of a point of order is to bring to the immediate attention of the presiding officer a significant error in the interpretation and/or application of parliamentary procedure. Once the presiding officer recognizes a member on a point of order, the member briefly explains his/her grounds and the presiding officer then rules on the point of order.

4.2 - Point of Personal Privilege

A member may rise on a point of personal privilege at any time (even while another member has the floor). The sole purpose of a point of personal privilege is to bring to the immediate attention of the presiding officer any circumstance which is adversely impacting the member's ability to participate in the session or meeting. Once the presiding officer recognizes a member on a point of personal privilege, the member briefly explains his/her grounds and the presiding officer will then undertake reasonable measures to remedy the situation if appropriate.

4.3 - Point of Parliamentary Inquiry

A member may rise at any time, except when a fellow member has the floor, on a point of parliamentary inquiry. The sole purpose of a point of parliamentary inquiry is to ask the presiding officer to clarify any parliamentary rule which has immediate relevance to the ongoing conduct of business. Once the presiding officer recognizes a member on a point of parliamentary inquiry, the member briefly states his/her question and the presiding officer then responds as appropriate.

Section 5 - Voting

Each member present at the business session is entitled to one vote. Members in an active status who cannot attend may communicate their votes on published agenda items in advance in writing to the Executive Secretary who will cast their votes accordingly. Substantive motions require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting, while routine procedural motions merely require a simple majority of those present and voting. Members who arrange to vote in absentia are considered present and voting.

Section 6 - Challenges

The procedural rulings of the presiding officer are subject to challenge upon a motion from any member present at the business session or meeting. If the motion is seconded, the challenge is put to an immediate vote without discussion, requiring a two-thirds majority of those present and voting for passage.

Section 7 - Supplemental Rules

Except as otherwise provided in this Article, the current revised edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall supplement and amplify the present rules; in the event that the two sources differ in any respect, the Charter governs in all cases.

ARTICLE VII - CHARTER ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT

Section 1 - Adoption

Initial adoption of the Charter requires an expression of unanimous consensus among the members present at the annual business session. If unanimous consensus is not forthcoming after appropriate clarification and compromise, the presiding officer may call for ratification by a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting.

Section 2 - Amendment

Once ratified, the terms of the Charter may be amended only by a two-thirds majority of those members present and voting at the annual business session. Motions to amend the Charter are submitted in writing to the Executive Board prior to the business session and are not in order from the floor. Amendment motions take the form of a petition and require three (3) signatures in addition to the sponsor.