

IT Society Constitution and Bylaws Committee report, September 2010

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I. Introduction

In the past several years, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee has noted bylaw changes that need to be made as they arise during the year, and then presented suitable proposed changes to the Bylaws at the last Board of Governors (BoG) meeting of the year. This year changes are proposed in the following three areas:

- Composition of Award Committees
- Amount of Chapter of the Year Award
- ISIT Student Paper Award

According to the Constitution (Article IX, Section 2):

Suitable Bylaws to this Constitution may be adopted by 2/3 vote of the Board of Governors in meeting assembled, provided that notice of the proposed change has been sent to each member of the Board of Governors at least 3 weeks prior to such a meeting, or a Bylaw may be changed by unanimous vote of the members of the Board of Governors either in meeting assembled or by communication from the President to each member and vote received through such communication.

Because the requirement for a three-week advance notice has not been met, a unanimous vote will be required to adopt each of these proposed Bylaw changes.

II. Composition of Award Committees

According to the minutes of the January (La Jolla) BoG meeting:

The [Nomination and Appointments Committee (NAC)] recommended that the Bylaws be changed to require only two officers (President and Junior Past President) and two past Wyner Award winners. . . .

The NAC recommended that the Bylaws be changed to require two BoG members (in addition to the two officers) on the Awards Committee. . . .

The BoG unanimously approved all of the NAC recommendations.

Consequently, we propose the following two changes to the Bylaws.

Proposed bylaw change: composition of Wyner Committee

Current text (Article V, Section 9)

Section 9. The Aaron D. Wyner Distinguished Service Award Selection Committee shall consist of the President, First Vice-President, Junior Past-President, and two members appointed by the Nominations and Appointments Committee before January 31st.

Proposed text (Article V, Section 9)

Section 9. The Aaron D. Wyner Distinguished Service Award Selection Committee shall consist of the President, Junior Past President, and three members appointed by the Nominations and Appointments Committee before January 31st. At least two members shall be former Aaron D. Wyner Distinguished Service Award winners.

Proposed bylaw change: composition of Awards Committee

Current text (Article V, Section 5)

The [Awards] Committee shall consist of at least nine members representing all major technical areas in the Society. At least four members shall have served as Associate Editors of the Transactions within the past three years. The First and Second Vice Presidents of the Society serve as ex-officio voting members of this Committee, with the First Vice President serving as Chair. The Committee will be appointed by the Nominations and Appointments Committee no later than January 31.

Proposed text (Article V, Section 5)

The [Awards] Committee shall consist of at least nine members representing all major technical areas in the Society. At least four members shall have served as Associate Editors of the Transactions within the past three years. The First and Second Vice Presidents of the Society shall serve as ex-officio voting members of this Committee, with the First Vice President serving as Chair. At least two members of the Committee (in addition to the two officers) shall be members of the Board of Governors. The Committee shall be appointed by the Nominations and Appointments Committee no later than January 31.

III. ISIT Student Paper Award

According to the minutes of the June (Austin) BoG meeting:

Giuseppe Caire indicated that the ISIT best student paper award is not yet in the bylaws, and there is no clearly understood procedure to run the award. This year there were 250 self-nominated papers with no pre-selection or consistent recommendation from the TPC regarding the student paper awards. The Awards Committee selected 43 papers to be further considered. The session chairs of these papers have been asked to provide feedback about the presentation quality, and the Awards Committee will also attend as many as possible. The large number of papers after the cutoff presents difficulties, and it is desirable that more pre-filtering be done by the TPC.

The discussions in general reaffirmed the importance and continuation of the ISIT best student paper award. The motion was made to formally codify the best student paper award in the society by-laws. The motion was carried by a majority vote.

The suggestion was made that instead of “best paper award” it can be named “outstanding paper award,” in recognition of the fact that strict ordering of the quality of conference papers is difficult.

After extensive discussion among the officers and in the Conference Committee, the following Bylaw is proposed:

Proposed bylaw: ISIT Student Paper Award

Proposed text (new Article XII)

Article XII. International Symposium on Information Theory Student Paper Award

Section 1. The International Symposium on Information Theory (ISIT) Student Paper Award shall be given annually for up to three outstanding papers at the ISIT for which a student is the principal author and presenter. This author must be a registered student at the time of paper submission to be eligible for this award. The criteria for the award shall include both content and presentation. The award consists of a \$500 honorarium to be divided equally between all student authors of the paper, and a plaque for each such author.

Section 2. The Awards Committee (AC) shall be responsible for selecting the winner(s) of this award, with the support of the ISIT Technical Program Committee (TPC). The ISIT TPC shall select between 8 and 12 eligible papers as finalists and notify the authors accordingly. These papers shall be scheduled by the TPC for presentation during the first three days of ISIT. The AC shall judge the presentations during the Symposium, select the award winner(s), and announce the winner(s) at the ISIT banquet (or other suitable occasion).

In conjunction with this change, the description of Awards Committee responsibilities should be amended as follows:

Current text (Article V, Section 5)

Section 5. The Awards Committee shall be responsible for submitting a recommendation to the Board for the Information Theory Society Paper Award according to Article VIII Section 2, and for the solicitation, processing and submission on behalf of the Society of nominations for appropriate IEEE awards and, as applicable, for awards outside of the IEEE.

Amended text (Article V, Section 5)

Section 5. The Awards Committee shall be responsible for submitting a recommendation to the Board for the Information Theory Society Paper Award according to Article VIII, Section 2, for the ISIT Student Paper Award according to Article XII, and for the solicitation, processing and submission on behalf of the Society of nominations for appropriate IEEE awards and, as applicable, for awards outside of the IEEE.