

Student Volunteer Work

Theological Student Series. No. 2

THE
PLAN OF ORGANIZATION
FOR THEOLOGICAL
STUDENTS



Wieder



THEOLOGICAL STUDENT SERIES. No. 2

THE PLAN OF ORGANIZATION
FOR A
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
AMONG
THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS



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THE
PLAN OF ORGANIZATION
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YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN
ASSOCIATION
AMONG
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I. The Place of the Association in the
Institution.

The Association should be the leading, and, where possible, the only student organization. Experience has shown that there are manifest advantages in having only one organization for all forms of student activity.

Instead of having one society for missions, another for the deepening of spiritual life and a third for social culture, all the student interests are more easily and effectively attended to by consolidation under the one Association with its missionary committee, its devotional committee, and its social committee. The following among other reasons may be given in favor of having only one student society in a theological institution:

1. "Organization is the means of distributing force most advantageously." It is better to have one strong organization than two or more weak societies.

2. It prevents possible friction and waste, and the theological institution is the last place where any opportunity for jealousy between two or more societies should be allowed.

3. It insures the interest of every student in every phase of Christian activity in the institution. If we assign to one society all the missionary functions and to another the devotional functions, there is danger that the missionary interests will be relegated to the men already most interested in missions. In one theological institution the missionary interests of the students were made over to the missionary society, the devotional interests to the prayer meeting committee, and the literary interests to the literary society. Members of one society felt little interest in and no responsibility for the work of the organizations to which they did not belong. A member of the prayer meeting committee said that he did not attend the meetings of the missionary society and was interested only in the devotional meetings.

4. It enables the institution to make a more comprehensive and symmetrical showing, and therefore to exert its proper influence on other institutions in the Association Movement. An Association that includes under it all forms of student activity, will exert a more helpful influence in conventions, publications, and through

the speeches of the traveling secretary than one that has only one or two functions.

II. The Purpose of the Association.

1. To deepen the spiritual life of the students. This should be accomplished by promoting personal Bible study, by organizing Bible classes, by holding devotional meetings and by distributing devotional literature.

2. To promote an interest in and consecration to the cause of missions—city, home and foreign. This should be accomplished not merely by disseminating information upon these subjects, through missionary meetings, mission study classes and missionary literature; but also by directing activity along the lines of city and home missions; by securing, through the Student Volunteer Band, recruits for foreign service from theological students, and by doing deputation work for foreign missions in churches and young people's societies.

3. To bring the students into organic relation with the World's Student Christian Federation. The greater includes the less. This implies not merely union with the world-wide brotherhood of students, but also the coming into touch with arts, science, theological, law and medical students in our North American Movement; and, most of all, the more effective co-operation of faculty and students in the general student interests of the local institution where the Association exists.

III. The Organization of the Association.

1. THE OFFICERS.

The officers shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. It seems best to have them elected in April so that they may have an opportunity to plan for the work of the following year. It is suggested that the President and Vice-President be chosen from the incoming senior class, and the Secretary and Treasurer from the incoming middle class.

2. THE COMMITTEES.

(1) *Regular Committees.*

(a) The Executive Committee shall be composed of the officers of the Association and one member of the faculty, chosen at the annual meeting of the Association, together with the chairmen of the Devotional and Missionary committees. This Committee shall have general direction of the work of the Association and shall co-operate with all committees. The President of the Association shall be chairman of this Committee.

(b) The Devotional Committee, appointed by the President, shall consist of three students, one from each class, and a member of the faculty. This Committee shall have charge of the student devotional meetings of the institution. It shall aim to promote the devotional study of the Bible.

(c) The Missionary Committee, appointed by the President, shall consist of five members, one from the faculty, one from each class, and the leader of the Student Volunteer Band. It

shall be especially responsible for the development of the missionary spirit of the Association, along the lines of city, home and foreign missions. It shall have charge of the missionary meetings, the missionary study classes, the missionary literature, and the neighborhood work.

The Student Volunteer Band shall consist of all the volunteers for foreign missions. It shall elect its own officers, subject to the ratification of the President of the Association. Its leader shall be a member of the Missionary Committee. In all cases the Volunteer Band should be organically related to the Association. It is really a part of its missionary department.

(d) The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer as chairman and one member from each of the other classes not represented by the Treasurer, these to be appointed by the President of the Association. This Committee shall secure funds for the current expenses of the Association and shall collect subscriptions for home and foreign missions.

(2) Special Committees.

Some Associations have, in addition to the regular committees, the following: The Social Committee and the Athletic Committee. Where these committees exist, their chairmen should be made members of the Executive Committee.

3. THE ESSENTIALS IN FORMING AN ASSOCIATION.

(1) The Article on the Name, which reads as follows, "The name of this organization shall

be the Young Men's Christian Association of .” The advantages of a uniform name are apparent to every thoughtful person. This name has been adopted by over five hundred student organizations in the United States and Canada, which have a membership of over 33,000 arts, science, law, medical and theological students.

(2) The Article on Membership. (See the Suggested Constitution at the end of this pamphlet.) Every student in the institution may be made *ipso facto* a member of the Association. Members of the faculty may be made *ex officio* members of the Association. Only evangelical theological institutions can be thus organized. In the case of institutions where it is not required that the students be members of evangelical churches, the active membership of the Association shall consist only of men; either students or instructors, who are members in good standing of an evangelical church. Only active members shall have the right to vote and hold office. Any student or member of the faculty may become an associate member by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any meeting.

This article on membership should be incorporated into the constitution to safeguard the movement, also in order that the theological institutions may have the privilege of affiliation and may be in line with the five hundred and fifty other student associations in the United States and Canada, and the eleven student move-

ments of the world, which have a similar membership test.

(3) The Article on Amendments. (See the Suggested Constitution.)

With the three exceptions above mentioned, each Association in a theological institution is at liberty to prepare its own constitution in accordance with its own local needs.

*A SUGGESTED CONSTITUTION

FOR A

Young Men's Christian Association

AMONG

Theological Students.

ARTICLE I.

NAME.

The name of this organization shall be the Young Men's Christian Association of———.

ARTICLE II.

OBJECT.

The object of this Association shall be:

- (1) To deepen the spiritual life of the students;
- (2) To promote interest in and consecration to the cause of missions—city, home and foreign; and
- (3) To bring the students into organic relation with the World's Student Christian Federation.

*While the constitution here given is simply a suggested constitution, it embodies the ideas and methods approved by the experience of some of the strongest Associations in theological institutions of different branches of the church both at home and abroad. The presumption should be in favor of following this constitution unless there be good reasons to the contrary. It is desirable to have uniformity as far as possible in the constitutions of the various Associations among theological students. It is of course understood that with the exception of Articles I., III. (Section 1) and IX., any desirable changes may be made in the constitution to adapt it fully to local conditions.

ARTICLE III.

MEMBERSHIP.

SECTION 1.—The active membership of the Association shall consist only of men, either students or instructors, who are members in good standing of an evangelical* church. Only active members shall have the right to vote and hold office.

*The word "evangelical" is to be understood as defined by the International convention, at Portland, in 1869:—

"Resolved, That as these organizations bear the name of Christian, and profess to be engaged directly in the Saviour's service, so it is clearly their duty to maintain the control and management of all their affairs in the hands of those who profess to love and publicly avow their faith in Jesus the Redeemer as divine, and who testify their faith by becoming and remaining members of churches held to be evangelical. And we hold those churches to be evangelical which, maintaining the Holy Scriptures to be the only infallible rule of faith and practice, do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (the only begotten of the Father, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, in whom dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and who was made sin for us, though knowing no sin, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree) as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved from everlasting punishment. [The International convention at Indianapolis in 1893, added the words "and to life eternal."]

"Resolved, That the Associations organized after this date shall be entitled to representation in future conferences of the Associated Young Men's Christian Associations of North America, upon condition that they be severally composed of young men in communion with evangelical churches (provided that in places where Associations are formed by a single denomination members of other denominations are not excluded therefrom) and active membership and the right to hold office be conferred only upon young men who are members in good standing of evangelical churches."

SEC. 2.—Any student or instructor may become an associate member by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any meeting.

ARTICLE IV.

OFFICERS.

SECTION 1.—The officers shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, chosen by ballot at the annual meeting of the association in April to serve one year. They shall enter office at the opening of the fall term. The President and Vice-President shall be chosen from the incoming senior class and the Secretary and Treasurer from the incoming middle class.

SEC. 2.—The President shall preside at all business meetings of the Association, and at all public meetings, when the Executive Committee have not specially arranged for a presiding officer. He shall see that the committees are organized and initiated in their work at once on entering office. He shall hold the chairmen of committees responsible for the work of their respective committees. He shall on retirement present a written report covering his term of office, together with recommendations concerning the future work of the Association.

SEC. 3.—The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the latter.

SEC. 4.—The Secretary shall keep full minutes of all business meetings of the Association and of the Executive Committee. He shall keep

a record of all the work done by the Association, and shall receive and file written reports of all committees. He shall conduct the correspondence of the Association, and shall render an annual report of the work done by the Association to the Committee for the Theological Section.

SEC. 5.—The Treasurer shall have charge of the funds of the Association. He shall collect all assessments or dues, and shall make payments only upon order of the Executive Committee. He shall keep a complete account of the receipts and disbursements of the Association.

SEC. 6.—If any vacancy occur in the offices it shall be filled by ballot at a special meeting called for that purpose.

ARTICLE V.

COMMITTEES.

SECTION 1.—The Executive Committee. The four officers of the Association and one member of the faculty, chosen at the annual meeting of the Association, together with the chairmen of the Devotional and Missionary Committees, shall constitute the Executive Committee. This Committee shall have a general direction of the work of the Association and shall co-operate with all committees. The President shall be chairman of this Committee.

SEC. 2.—The Devotional Committee, appointed by the President, shall consist of three students, one from each class, and a member of the faculty. It shall arrange and endeavor to interest

the members in general and class prayer meetings, and also have charge of all other devotional meetings. It shall aim to promote the devotional study of the Bible in classes and in private, and shall have charge of the devotional literature.

SEC. 3.—The Missionary Committee, appointed by the President, shall consist of five members, one from the faculty, one from each class and the leader of the Student Volunteer Band. It shall be especially responsible for the development of the missionary spirit of the Association, and shall aim to secure the active interest of every member in the cause of missions—city, home and foreign. It shall have charge of the missionary meetings, the mission study classes, the missionary literature and the neighborhood work.

SEC. 4.—The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer as chairman, and one member from each of the other classes not represented by the Treasurer; these to be appointed by the President. It shall secure funds for the current expenses of the Association and shall collect subscriptions for home and foreign missions.

SEC. 5.—The Federation Committee shall consist of the Secretary as chairman, one member of the faculty and one member from each of the other classes not represented by the Secretary; these to be appointed by the President. It shall bring to the Association the results of the experience of similar organizations in the World's Student Christian Federation, and shall

make the influence of the Association felt for good in the Student Association Movement.

SEC. 6.—Special committees may be created, and their work defined, by vote of the Association at any business meeting. They shall be appointed in the same way as the regular committees.

ARTICLE VI.

THE STUDENT VOLUNTEER BAND.

SECTION 1.—The Student Volunteer Band shall consist of members of the Association who purpose, if God permit, to become foreign missionaries. It shall elect its own officers, subject to the ratification of the President of the Association. Its leader shall be a member of the Missionary Committee. It shall be considered an organic part of the Association.

SEC. 2.—Its object is a threefold one: Fellowship in prayer, in preparation for life service and in aggressive work for the world's evangelization.

SEC. 3.—It shall hold regular meetings and shall endeavor to enlist new volunteers. It shall co-operate with the Missionary Committee in the circulation of foreign missionary literature, and shall have special charge, under the supervision of the Missionary Committee, of deputation work for the purpose of increasing missionary interest among churches and young people's societies. It shall prepare each year a foreign missionary prayer cycle, containing the names and stations of all the alumni who are at the time in the foreign mission fields. It shall co-operate with

the Missionary Committee in all the foreign missionary work of the Association, and shall render a report of its work at the annual meeting of the Association.

ARTICLE VII.

MEETINGS.

SECTION 1.—The Association shall hold an annual meeting in the month of April for the election of officers and for the hearing of reports from all committees, including the report of the work of the Student Volunteer Band.

SEC. 2.—In the first week of each term the Executive Committee shall meet to discuss and mark out the policy and work of the Committee for the ensuing term.

SEC. 3.—There shall be at least one devotional meeting of the Association each week.

SEC. 4.—There shall be at least one missionary meeting of the Association each month.

SEC. 5.—There shall be at least one federation meeting each year to consider the work and policy of the World's Student Christian Federation and of the Student Association Movement.

SEC. 6.—Special meetings may be called by the President or at the request of three members.

SEC. 7.—One-sixth of the membership of the Association shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VIII.

FINANCES.

SECTION 1.—Assessments or a membership fee shall be recommended by the Executive Com-

mittee, voted by the Association, and paid by the members to the Treasurer at such time or times as the Association may determine.

SEC. 2.—No debt shall be incurred by this Association.

ARTICLE IX.

AMENDMENTS.

Amendments to this constitution shall require for their adoption two weeks' notice and a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting, except that this article, Article I. and Article III. (Section 1) shall not be altered or repealed without the concurrence of the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations.

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