



AMIA Academic Forum Purpose, Policies and Procedures

Academic Forum Mission

The mission of the AMIA Academic Forum is to foster the development, growth and improvement of academic units that educate students and conduct research in the discipline of biomedical and health informatics. The Forum provides a vehicle for academic units dedicated to biomedical and health informatics to interact, consider, and act jointly on issues important to them. This can include collecting data from individual units, recommending best practices related to education, scholarship, faculty development, faculty retention, and advocating within and in collaboration with AMIA for the interests of Forum members. The Forum provides a venue that facilitates collaboration among different academic units to further their objectives for education and research.

Context

Academic units in biomedical and health informatics currently exist in many forms. There are major differences with respect to:

- **Scope:** Some limit themselves to informatics as applied to specific aspects of health or health care, whereas some include the entire spectrum of health care; some emphasize foundational scientific principles, and some emphasize more pragmatic work;
- **Composition:** Some draw on faculty members from a variety of primary departments, whereas others have a core group of faculty members who identify primarily with the academic unit;
- **Administrative placement:** Some units are longstanding departments or centers, whereas others are emerging within their organizational enterprise.
- Academicians in biomedical and health informatics are a similarly diverse group, with differences in their formal training, scholarly activities, and expectations for teaching, for research, and for clinical and institutional service.

There is wide variation in requirements for appointment and promotion of faculty, in faculty compensation, and in institutional support for scholarship. The character of academic work in informatics appears to often be dependent on particular institutional idiosyncrasies, rather than on articulated policies and goals of the academic units or on recognized professional standards.

As biomedical and health informatics becomes a sustained component of the research and education missions of organizations including universities and academic medical centers, and as informatics becomes a core component of new federal initiatives in health care and health related research, it will become increasingly important for associated academic units to articulate standards and policies for education and scholarship. At the same time, the larger organizations in which these units are embedded will need to develop an enhanced understanding of the nature of academic work in informatics, and of the support that these units and their associated faculty members require to be successful.

Goals

- The Forum will provide leadership to promote biomedical and health informatics as a well-recognized academic discipline;
- The Academic Forum will provide guidance and assist with efforts to develop, sustain and enhance educational and scholarly activities in biomedical and health informatics, in and amongst its member units.
- The Academic Forum will identify and communicate to its member units information on opportunities for professional development, conferences and workshops, and other relevant academic activities.

A. Membership and Representation

For the purposes of this document a unit is defined as an organizational grouping that has direct administrative responsibility for and directly supports at least one educational program leading to a degree or certificate or provides postdoctoral training. Examples of units include but are not limited to schools, colleges, programs, departments, divisions, centers, institutes and fellowship programs.

The Academic Forum membership is composed of units with a strong interest in academic biomedical and health informatics. Units that wish to join the Academic Forum will self-declare for membership by contacting the AMIA staff and providing brief documentation of their qualifications. The Academic Forum Executive Committee reviews applicant units' credentials and approves membership as per the Academic Forum Bi-laws. Units designate up to two Designated Representatives. Designated Representatives must be regular AMIA members in good standing.

The Academic Forum has four categories of membership:

Full Program Member:

A unit with one of the following:

- An academic unit of an educational organization that is offering an educational program leading to one or more degrees or certificates in a biomedical and health informatics area or
- A unit of an organization that offers a fellowship or residency training program in a biomedical and/or health informatics field or
- A unit of an organization that provides post-doctoral training as a component of its research activities.
- Different units from the same umbrella organization (e.g. a University) that offer a different degree, certificate or training program are eligible for separate and distinct full memberships.

Emerging Program Member:

- Units that are intending to become one of the types of units listed under full membership.
- Emerging program membership is limited to two consecutive years.
- The criteria of an Emerging Program will be determined by the Executive Committee, reviewed from time-to-time, and posted on the Academic Forum website.

Affiliate Member:

- Units that have an interest in the goals of the Academic Forum but do not necessarily provide educational programs or engage in research activities, e.g., accreditation bodies, foundations, and government agencies.

Community Member:

- Communities provide an organizational framework within the Academic Forum Designated Representatives and other AMIA individual members to affiliate amongst specialized areas within education, research, training, administration, and practice. The unit of membership is a program.
- Academic Forum Full Member Programs can affiliate with an Academic Forum Community at no additional charge as follows:
 - Membership in a Community shall be coordinated with the Community leadership and the Designated Representatives from Full Members.
 - A Community shall have no more than two community appointees per Full Member Program.
 - Community appointees must be regular AMIA members in good standing.
 - A Community appointee may or may not be an Academic Forum designated representative.
- General AMIA members (e.g., Non Designated Representatives) may also join a community provided the criteria and eligibility requirements defined by that community are met and the member is an AMIA member in good standing.
- Each Community will have one ex-officio seat on Academic Forum Executive Committee.
- The procedure for establishing a community is in Section K.
- Full Program, Emerging Program and Affiliate Members all designate a primary representative to the Academic Forum who participates as a liaison between the member and the Academic Forum. These members may also appoint a secondary representative to act in lieu of the primary representative when necessary and to participate in all Forum activities. All such Designated Representatives must be regular members of AMIA in good standing.

B. Dues

The Academic Forum is a self-sustaining membership organization within AMIA resourced through the collection of annual dues by AMIA. The dues for each category of membership are established by the AMIA Board of Directors in consultation with the Academic Forum Executive Committee during the annual AMIA budget process. Effective January 1, 2018, dues are:

- Full Program Member: \$4,000 per calendar year
- Emerging Program Member: \$1,500 per calendar year for no more than two consecutive years
- Affiliate Member: \$4,000 per calendar year
- Community Member (AMIA member who is not an AF Designated Representative) \$750 per calendar year

C. Governance

- The Executive Committee, which serves for a calendar year is comprised of the Chair, Chair-elect/Past-chair, Secretary, an At-Large Member, AMIA Board of Directors a liaison appointed by the AMIA Board Chair (ex-officio and non-voting), Community Member Liaisons (ex-officio and non-voting), and AMIA President and CEO (ex-officio and non-voting)
- All voting members of the Executive committee must be Designated Representatives from Full Program Members of the Academic Forum. (Not ex-officio members)
- The Chair serves a single two-year term.
- The Chair-elect who serves a one-year term and who becomes the chair at the expiration of the term of the current Chair.

- The Past chair is the position assumed by the current Chair upon expiration of his or her term and the term of service is one year.
- The Secretary serves a two-year term with no more than two consecutive terms.
- The At-Large member serves a two-year term with no more than two consecutive terms to alternate with the Secretary's term.
- The Chair-elect, the Secretary and the At-Large member are elected by the Full Members of the Academic Forum.
- Unscheduled vacancies for elected members of the Executive Committee positions may be filled by a majority vote of the remaining Executive Committee for the remainder of the term associated with the vacant position.
- If a member of the Executive Committee relocates to an organization or unit that is not a Forum member, or the Member that an Executive Committee member represents allows its membership in the Forum to lapse, the Executive Committee member shall vacate his or her position.
- All matters coming before the Executive Committee will be determined by a simple majority, given that at least three voting members of the Committee are present.

D. Election Rules and Procedures

- Only Designated Representatives from Units that are Full Program Members of the Academic Forum are eligible for positions on the Executive Committee.
- Prior to the AMIA Annual Symposium, the Executive Committee will appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of three Designated Representatives from Full Program Members at least two of which are not members of the Executive Committee.
- The Nominating Committee will extend a Call for Nominations to Forum members for the Executive Committee open elective positions that will become vacant as of the beginning of the following calendar year. The Nominating Committee will select the two most-qualified candidates from amongst the nominations received as well as from invitations the Committee may extend for each open position.
- The Nominating Committee shall forward to the Executive Committee a draft slate of candidates for each open position at the Business Meeting of the Academic Forum at the AMIA Annual Symposium.
- The Chair will call for any additional nominations at that time and then close the nominations. Nominees recommended to the Nominating Committee but not included on the recommended slate who still wish to run in the election must be nominated from the floor during the meeting. Members may self-nominate.
- The voting for the open positions will take place after the close of the Annual Symposium and will employ an electronic ballot supplied by AMIA. All eligible voters will receive an electronic notice of the election at his/her preferred email address. The notice will contain directions for casting a vote using the electronic balloting process
- Each Full Member Program shall be allowed one vote for each open position. Generally, the primary designated representative serves as the voting member.
- Voting shall be open for a minimum period of 14 consecutive days.
- AMIA staff will monitor the election and report the results to the Nominating Committee. The Chair of the Nominating Committee will report the election results by written or email notice to the Executive Committee.
- The election shall be awarded to the candidate for each position who receives the largest number of votes.

E. Other Voting Procedures

On occasion, there may be the need for a formal vote on matters coming before the Academic Forum other than election of officers. In that case the following rules will apply:

- Only Full Members of the Academic Forum may cast a vote with one such vote per member organization.
- Notification of the upcoming vote with a description of the issue on which the vote is to be taken will be distributed in advance to all members.
- Emerging Members and Affiliate Members may participate in all discussions of the matter leading up to such a vote.
- The voting will take place electronically through means supplied by AMIA and shall be open for a period of at least one week.
- In the event that such a vote takes place as a result of deliberations at a scheduled meeting of the Academic Forum and a quorum of at least 50% of Full Members is present, notification will not be required and voting will be conducted by paper ballot.
- In the event that the vote involves a change to the Policies and Procedures, approval of at least 50% of all Full Members is required.

F. Duties of the Executive Committee shall be:

- To plan and conduct meetings for Academic Forum members.
- To report annually to the AMIA Board following either meetings or actions taken by the Academic Forum.
- To appoint and dissolve task forces to address specific business of the Academic Forum.
- To work with AMIA staff to provide services of benefit to members of the Forum.
- To collaborate with the AMIA staff in preparation of the annual budget requesting funds through AMIA's annual budget process.
- To determine on an ongoing basis the qualification for membership. The Executive Committee will reassess annually its current policies and will define membership criteria that will maximize value to Forum members and benefits to the informatics community at large.
- To review and approve applications to join the Academic Forum for Full Members, Affiliate Members, and Emerging Program Members.
- To disqualify members who no longer qualify for their designated membership category or due to nonpayment of membership fees.

G. Duties of Executive Committee Members

Chair

- The Chair presides at all meetings of the Executive Committee.
- The Chair or his/ her designee from the Executive Committee shall be a member, ex officio, with vote, on all task forces of the Academic Forum.
- The Chair or his/ her designee from the Executive Committee will present an annual report to the AMIA Board of Directors.
- The Chair or his/ her designee from the Executive Committee will preside at the Annual Conference of the Academic Forum and at the Business Meeting at the AMIA Annual Symposium.

Chair-elect

- The Chair-elect (or Immediate Past Chair in the absence of the Chair-elect) performs the duties of the Chair during the absence or disability of the Chair.

Secretary

- The Secretary maintains, or causes to be maintained, minutes of meetings, records of activities, a list of the membership, or any other records required by AMIA.

At-Large member

- Supports the Purpose of the Academic Forum
- Attends Executive Committee meetings
- Serves as liaison to task forces
- Administers policies and procedures of the Academic Forum

H. Meetings

- The Academic Forum will hold a business meeting open to all members in conjunction with the AMIA Annual Symposium.
- The Academic Forum will hold an annual conference each year at a location and date determined by the Executive Committee.
- Additional meetings will be scheduled as deemed appropriate.
- The Executive Committee meets at least quarterly in person or via teleconference.

I. Task Forces

- The AMIA Academic Forum achieves its goals by appointing task forces that perform specific duties as established by its membership
- Member dues are allocated to enable task forces to carry out their charge.
- A task force shall be disbanded by the Executive Committee once the specific duty has been accomplished.
- The Chair will appoint members to a task force.
- Task forces report their activities and recommendations in writing to the Executive Committee prior to deliberations with the full membership.

J. Changing these Rules and Procedures

Changes to the policies delineated in this document require majority votes of the Executive Committee, of the voting members of the Academic Forum, and of the AMIA Board of Directors. Such changes will be presented in writing and, upon final approval by the AMIA Board of Directors, will result in new versions of this document.

K. Establishing and Sustaining Communities with the Academic Forum

When a group of AMIA members wish to form an official Community named groups within the Academic Forum for a given purpose the following process applies:

1. A proposal shall be prepared and submitted to the Executive Committee that specifies the following:
 - A Community name
 - A statement of purpose and goals
 - Profile of likely membership and the relationship to academic informatics
 - A proposed leadership structure which at minimum must include a person who is going to serve as Chair and ex-officio liaison to the Executive Committee
 - Communities will be encouraged to have additional leadership structure for sustainability.
 - Policies, procedures, and the governance structure should conform to AMIA policies and procedures for governance.
 - A description of proposed activities.
2. Proposals will be submitted to the Academic Forum Executive Committee for review and approval. The Executive Committee may want to discuss the proposal with representatives of the proposed community at some point during the review process.
3. Upon approval by the Executive Committee, the proposed Community will be put to a vote of the Academic Forum's voting members as specified in Section E.
4. If approved, a Community Chair is an ex-officio member of the Academic Forum Executive Committee.
5. The Community is required to hold elections according to guidelines in Section E.
6. The Community Chair is responsible for keeping the Community Web site up-to-date and monitoring e-mail discussion lists in conjunction with AMIA staff. These tasks may be delegated to another Community leader, but the Chair remains ultimately responsible.
7. Each Community must exhibit ongoing behavior that is consistent with the continued need for the Community to exist.
8. All members of the Community must be regular members of AMIA in good standing.
9. Community dues are collected and administered by AMIA. Dues are used to support AMIA staff and administration of the community.
10. Additional financial support for a Community's benefit shall be discussed with the Community Leadership and the AMIA staff.
11. Communities shall be discontinued by a majority vote of the Academic Forum Executive Committee and endorsement of this action by the AMIA Board of Directors.

L. Relationship to AMIA

- The Academic Forum is a membership unit of AMIA.
- Specific AMIA staff will be appointed by the President and CEO of AMIA to provide necessary support for the Academic Forum.
- AMIA staff will be responsible for supporting operations of the Academic Forum including, but not limited to, meeting scheduling, developing agendas, assistance with meeting minutes, membership management, programmatic activities, financial management, and other logistics.