

Title:	Chair of the Board
Work Credit:	Full hours in dining (half hours in dining as Chair-elect the year before office) Choice of housing and dining co-op
Payroll:	Stipend equal to \$3,600 per semester (less taxes)
Time Required:	80-120 hours/month (20-30 hours/week); more time during the beginning of each semester and when contentious issues are being discussed
Responsible to:	OSCA Board, General Membership
Support People:	Board Representatives, Operational Officers, Business Coordinator
Elected by:	General Membership in early Spring
Sit on Appointments:	Committee Coordinators (as interest and availability allow), Education & History Coordinator (one Officer), Education & Training Coordinator (one Officer), OSCA/College Liaison (Rent Contract negotiation years), Student Administrative Assistant, Winter Term Officers

General Responsibilities

The Chair of the Board is one of the four Officers of OSCA. The Chair is responsible for coordinating all activities related to the operation of the Board of Directors. While all four Officers work to keep the Board informed in terms of OSCA’s structure, policies, and relationship with Oberlin College, it is specifically the job of the Chair to make sure that Board members are informed about the consensus process, and how to participate in the Board. The Chair of the Board is also a general educational resource for consensus and facilitation for Board members and regular OSCA members.

Specific Responsibilities

- 1) Chair the Board of Directors and schedule all meetings of the Board with the input of the other Officers.
- 2) Compile Board packets to be reviewed by the Business Coordinator and Financial Manager (before going to print).
- 3) Hold at least one Proposal Planning Committee meeting per week at a regular time. It’s worth it to consider holding meetings during business hours to get employee input, or else allowing enough time for consultation.
- 4) Meet weekly with the other Officers.
- 5) Be available as a resource for the Board and OSCA’s general membership throughout the week by phone, email, or appointment.
- 6) Submit monthly stipend reports to the President for presentation to the Board (September, October, November, December, February, March, April, May).
- 7) Communicate with the other OSCA Officers and Staff with regard to OSCA events, staff position openings, and other announcements to be included in the Board packet.
- 8) Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the Board’s consensus process as well as general facilitation skills. Sometimes our system doesn’t have all of the answers!
- 9) Act as a resource for conflict resolution on the Board.
- 10) Ensure that all relevant people have been consulted with in the writing of proposals and caucuses, per OSCA’s Collaboration with Employees & Staff policy.

- 11) Attend College meetings as necessary.
- 12) Check your mailbox in the OSCA Office regularly.
- 13) Schedule appointments to provide additional Board training or process clarification for members of OSCA or the Board as needed.
- 14) Upon request, provide support for members who wish to hold ad-hoc discussion groups on Board issues. This could mean serving as a facilitator or helping the group find a facilitator.
- 15) Attend each co-op's Board night at least once per semester and give the Board Reps feedback to improve their facilitation in their co-ops.
- 16) Co-chair the Long Range Planning Committee with the President.
- 17) As one of the four Officers, one of your jobs is to act as a direct supervisor to OSCA's employees. In this capacity, meet with each of them each semester to set up lines of communication and support that work for all parties.
- 18) Sit on the Personnel Committee.
- 19) Complete a semesterly evaluation form for each employee and submit them by the required deadline.
- 20) Sit on the OSCA Foundation Board of Directors and attend all OF Board meetings.
- 21) Summarize the Board's activities at the end of the year in the Annual Corporate Report.

Timeline

Spring (after election):

- 1) Spend a lot of time with the current Chair of the Board, learning what they do and how they spend their time.
- 2) As necessary, accompany the current OSCA Officers at meetings within OSCA and between OSCA staff and Oberlin College.
- 3) Learn about the general relationships between Oberlin College employees and OSCA staff and employees.
- 4) Start planning for the Fall Board retreat with the help of the current Chair of the Board.
- 5) Learn how to put together a Board packet.
- 6) Learn about confidentiality and redacting minutes.
- 7) Learn from the current Officers about issues you may encounter as an Officer, including a history of OSCA's relationship with Oberlin College. Read documentation of past Officers' work.
- 8) Consider meeting up socially with the other Officers-elect: it's good to get to know them as people as well as professionally! You could also begin to share ideas and plans for the coming year.
- 9) Decide on a location for the Board retreat and consider booking the location.
- 10) Get access to the Board & Officers accounts on the OSCA server. Begin reviewing documents and past communications as early as possible to help in your training.

Summer:

- 1) Your term officially begins on the 1st of June. Be accessible via email over the summer.
- 2) Continue planning for the Fall Board retreat.
- 3) Based on goals set with other Officers, compile a list of Board projects and proposals for the coming year.
- 4) Read the Board Manual cover to cover.
- 5) Read the Officers training manual (once you arrive on campus).
- 6) Read documents on the Board server, including old Board packets and training materials.

- 7) Study consensus and facilitation. This may include consulting with other co-op systems about their Board processes and/or receiving mediation training.
- 8) Work on your public speaking. It's important to be clear and confident when addressing the Board.
- 9) Seriously consider attending the Fall NASCO Institute conference in order to get a better sense for how other co-ops run and how their Boards operate.
- 10) Consult with the other Officers to set initial goals for the upcoming year.

Beginning of Fall Semester:

- 1) Finish planning the Board Retreat. Confirm with Operations Managers that Board Representative elections will happen as early as possible in each individual co-op. Invite Board Reps as they are elected, as well as GMT staff, Committee Coordinators, employees, and any other relevant OSCA members. Put together an initial schedule for weekly meetings of the Board and meetings of the Proposal Planning Committee.
- 2) Meet individually with each Board Rep to check in about specific access needs and concerns/hopes for the semester.
- 3) Hold the Board retreat and Facilitation training. (If you don't feel qualified to lead the facilitation training, find someone to lead it.) Invite DLECs to attend.
- 4) Arrange for check-in meetings with each of the employees to confirm effective lines of communication and mutual understandings of support.
- 5) Continue to compile list of Board projects for the year.
- 6) Create sign-up sheets for the Board retreat, Proposal Planning Committee meetings, committees, minute-taking, inspiration, Board night scheduling, and Board projects.
- 7) Send an electronic copy of the current Board Manual to all employees, staff, and Board members.
- 8) Find out each committee's weekly meeting time. Inform Committee Coordinators when Board Reps join their committee. Inform Committee Coordinators of their responsibility to submit weekly summaries of committee meetings.
- 9) Compile a list of people who would like personal printed copies of the Board packet and submit this list to the Office Assistant.
- 10) Check in with staff and employees about any policies they want changed. Be a resource to help with changing policy.

Fall Semester, after the first few weeks:

- 1) Chair meetings of the Board of Directors and the Proposal Planning Committee.
- 2) Continue to compile a list of Board projects as issues arise.
- 3) Visit at least one co-op's Board night each week until you have been able to give feedback to every co-op's Board Reps. Consider returning to co-ops to check on Board Rep's progress. Contact Third World Co-op Board Reps well in advance to your planned date about the possibility of being invited to their space.
- 4) Compile Board packets to be reviewed by the Business Coordinator.
- 5) Each week, send the electronic Board packet to members of the Board and other staff and employees who request it.
- 6) Check your mailbox in the OSCA office on a regular basis.
- 7) Submit monthly activity reports to the President for presentation to the Board (September, October, November, December).
- 8) Collect weekly meeting summaries from Committee Coordinators.

- 9) With the President, coordinate weekly meetings of the Long Range Planning Committee, check regularly for newly elected committee representatives, and ensure that LRPC minutes or committee summaries are sent to you weekly.
- 10) Ensure that minutes or summaries from all committees are submitted to you (the Chair of the Board) by Monday evening, to be included in the Board packet.
- 11) Coordinate a semesterly meeting wherein Committee Coordinators convene to discuss short and long term projects.
- 12) After each Board meeting, notify the Business Coordinator and/or other relevant staff of the proposals that passed and any relevant amendments to those proposals.
- 13) Schedule any additional Board-related trainings that may need to occur, including the training of Board Reps who are elected mid-semester.
- 14) Keep track of Board members' attendance and hold them accountable for attending meetings.
- 15) If a co-op Board Rep resigns, ensure that a new representative is elected by the co-op and approved by the Board.
- 16) Be in communication with Third World Co-op's DLECs about the possibility of meeting in their space. Do this well ahead of the scheduled meeting in TWC.
- 17) Begin planning for the Spring Board Retreat. Consider things to change from the Fall Board Retreat, and think about reserving a space early.

Beginning of Spring Semester:

- 1) Finish planning the Board retreat. Invite Board Reps as they are elected, as well as GMT staff, Committee Coordinators, employees, and any other relevant OSCA members.
- 2) Hold the Board retreat and Facilitation training. (If you don't feel qualified to lead the facilitation training, find someone to lead it.) Invite DLECs to attend.
- 3) Put together an initial schedule for weekly meetings of the Board and meetings of the Proposal Planning Committee.
- 4) Meet individually with each Board Rep to check in about specific access needs and concerns/hopes for the semester.
- 5) Arrange for check-in meetings with each of the employees to confirm effective lines of communication and mutual understandings of support.
- 6) Compile list of Board projects for the rest of the year.
- 7) Create sign-up sheets for the Board retreat, Proposal Planning Committee meetings, committees, minute-taking, inspiration, Board night scheduling, and Board projects.
- 8) Send an electronic copy of the current Board Manual to all employees, staff, and Board members.
- 9) Find out each committee's weekly meeting time. Inform Committee Coordinators when Board Reps join their committee. Inform Committee Coordinators of their responsibility to submit weekly summaries of committee meetings.
- 10) Compile a list of people who would like personal printed copies of the Board packet and submit this list to the Office Assistant.
- 11) Check in with staff and employees about any policies they want changed. Be a resource to help with changing policy.

Spring Semester, after the first few weeks:

- 1) Chair meetings of the Board of Directors and the Proposal Planning Committee.
- 2) Continue to compile a list of Board projects as issues arise.

- 3) Compile Board packets to be reviewed by the Business Coordinator.
- 4) Each week, send the electronic Board packet to members of the Board and other staff and employees who request it.
- 5) Check your mailbox in the OSCA office on a regular basis.
- 6) Submit monthly activity reports to the President for presentation to the Board (September, October, November, December).
- 7) Collect weekly meeting summaries from Committee Coordinators.
- 8) With the President, coordinate weekly meetings of the Long Range Planning Committee, check regularly for newly elected committee representatives, and ensure that LRPC minutes or committee summaries are sent to you weekly.
- 9) Ensure that minutes or summaries from all committees are submitted to you (the Chair of the Board) by Monday evening, to be included in the Board packet.
- 10) Coordinate a semesterly meeting wherein Committee Coordinators convene to discuss short and long term projects.
- 11) After each Board meeting, notify the Business Coordinator and/or other relevant staff of the proposals that passed and any relevant amendments to those proposals.
- 12) Schedule any additional Board-related trainings that may need to occur, including the training of Board Reps who are elected mid-semester.
- 13) Keep track of Board members' attendance and hold them accountable for attending meetings.
- 14) If a co-op Board Rep resigns, ensure that a new representative is elected by the co-op and approved by the Board.
- 15) Well in advance of the scheduled Board meeting in Third World Co-op, contact the DLECs for permission to meet in the space.
- 16) Ensure that the Chair of the Board-elect receives thorough training (after election).
- 17) Submit monthly activity reports to the President for presentation to the Board (February, March, April, May).
- 18) Revise this job description by the final meeting of the Personnel Committee.
- 19) Submit a year-end report of the Board's activities to the President for inclusion in the annual Corporate Report.
- 20) Save all electronic files relevant to your position on the OSCA server before the end of the year.

General Suggestions

- As an Officer of this organization, you should never forget your role in supporting OSCA's employees. These people depend on OSCA for their livelihoods, and it is imperative that this never be forgotten or dismissed.
- Hang out with your co-officers! I promise, even if you have to have a when-to-meet to make it work, it's worth it.
- The Board can be an incredibly flexible body. It can act as a space for discussion and planning, in addition to its main capacity as a body for passing proposals. The Board does delegate some of this work to other committees, but the Board will be a much safer, more inviting, and effective space to Board reps when the Board Chair opens up the space to hypothesize and come up with new ideas for OSCA as an organization.
- Your role on the Board is to convey relevant information and to act as a multi-partial facilitator when other Board members cannot. Although you may choose to voice your personal opinions on the Board, you should be careful not to take sides when discussions become heated. In these situations, employ your best conflict-resolution strategies to help move the discussion forward.

- Sometimes, contrary to the above, it is imperative that the Board not become a battleground. You should not allow ideological conflicts over controversial proposals to drag Board meetings late into the night. This will be draining and exhausting to everyone, especially yourself. When time permits, intervene in discussions that have become an extended back-and-forth between a smaller number of individuals by helping the parties involved find an alternative forum to work out their differences. Offer your mediation skills if needed.
- Ultimately, unless you are an unprecedented level of superstar, you will always be striving to find a good balance between giving the space for Board Reps to be decision-makers, preventing burnout caused by extended meetings, and being the mouth of the legal restrictions that OSCA faces. This can be exhausting work, and it's important to know you will never find a balance that works incredibly well for everyone involved. Try your best, and work to address harm where it's been caused, and I promise you will be doing an inspirational job.
- You will need to be an expert on the Bylaws and Continuing Policy, but no one can memorize the entire Board Manual. Have your Manual with you at all times. Carrying a laptop with a searchable PDF of the Board Manual will make your life a lot easier.

Approved by the Personnel Committee