

Youth Adult Committee Bylaws

Preamble

We are the Ohio Meadville District Young Religious Unitarian Universalists. We have assembled these ideas to provide guidelines to be used while serving the youth of this district.

YAC Statement of Purpose

YAC exists for the purpose of encouraging youth empowerment and nurturing the self-esteem of youth. We exist to foster spiritual growth within the Unitarian Universalist faith. We exist to help youth gain a deeper understanding of the principles and purposes of Unitarian Universalism and also to help teach said youth how to apply said principles to their daily lives. We are youth organizing youth!

YAC Membership

To claim YAC membership (i.e. on income tax returns, etc.) the individual in question must have attended two YAC meetings in the past (not including those directly following conference) and the individual must sign the Membership Book in the presence of one youth co-chair and a YAC member.

Role of YAC Member

YAC members are individuals that should exemplify responsibility and leadership. They are to be role models to their YRUU peers. This means that YAC members have a greater obligation than other youth to enforce and uphold the rules. They are to be models of appropriate behavior at meeting and conferences, and failure to do so may be grounds for revoking membership to YAC.

YAC's Relationship to the Adults of the Ohio-Meadville District

YAC is a governing body committed to ensuring that conferences are a safe environment and, in turn, ensuring that conferences can continue to take place within this district. YAC will accept and welcome the advice of adults. Criticism, both positive and negative, should be brought to the attention of YAC co-chairs and respectfully dealt with according to policy. At conferences and meetings, adults are welcome and encouraged to stay. They are expected to participate fully. YRUU is the present and future generation of UU leaders. We give adults respect and we ask that we receive the same respect in return.

YAC Officials

YAC officials can be elected as deemed necessary. YAC official positions must be created by consensus, but officials can be elected by majority. Age range for youth positions is open (within conference age range), but when the official is no longer youth, he/she must resign regardless of how much of the two-year period has passed. All elected YAC officers will also be required to have signed the YAC membership book before or during the YAC

meeting of their election before the voting takes place. The following positions exist as of 8/15/03:

- Youth Co-Chairs

There are currently two youth co- chairs of YAC. During the first year of the term, the youth is the Communications Co- Chair. The role of this co- chair is to send out conference and YAC meeting flyers, edit the youth newsletter. The second- year co- chair is the Conference Dean. This person is the primary contact for YAC. They must find the conference and YAC meeting sites, plan and facilitate YAC meetings, and also deal with any last minute problems at conferences. Both co-chairs run conferences and deal with rule infractions should they arise.

- Adult Co-Chairs

The committee needs at least one adult volunteer, but more than one is preferable. Currently there are four adult co-chairs, one for every conference. According to District Board recommendation, an adult volunteer can serve only two consecutive years. At the end of the two year term, if no suitable replacement can be found, the committee should review whether the adult co-chair wishes to continue serving the committee and vice versa.

- Social Action Coordinator

This position is a two-year term. The age range is open (within conference age range). As with the YCR, the new SAC is elected by YAC and trained in the duties of the position by the out-going SAC. This position entails that the individual has an interest in expanding social action efforts within the YRUU community (and beyond). He/she must organize social action efforts among youth in the district and make sure that there is some social action related activity at each conference. Of course, he/she is not limited to just these things. He/she must have projects and conference activities approved by YAC.

- Youth Representative to the OMD Board of Trustees

This position is a one-year term, and is also elected by YAC. The Board Rep. is not currently a voting member of the Board, but should go to all the Board meetings to represent the interests of YAC and youth in the district. The representative must also keep YAC updated about Board resolutions pertaining to youth. The youth rep will also be responsible for planning the Youth Caucus at the OMD Annual Meeting. This position is elected during the Spring YAC meeting, as opposed to the rest of the positions which are elected at the Summer YAC meeting.

- Spirituality Coordinator

This position is a two-year term, and is also elected by YAC. This person is responsible for running Saturday Night Worship Planning Workshop at every conference, and seeing that said worship goes smoothly. He/she should help the host church plan the Friday Night Worship if they need guidance. The spirituality coordinator also serves as a resource for youth groups in the OMD, and can advise them on planning worships in their churches.

- Secretary

This position is a one-year term. This person is responsible for taking accurate and detailed minutes at all YAC meetings, including those held after a conference, and sending them to the Communications co-chair to be kept on record in the YAC binders.

-Touch Group Coordinator

This position is a one-year term. This person is responsible for assigning cleanup jobs and meeting locations for each touch group at each youth conference. They should also provide resources for discussion, games, and activities for touch group leaders. The touch group coordinator should find a liaison from the host church's youth group to help in the process if necessary.

Age Range and Age-Specific Conferences

The age range is 7th grade through age 19. Junior High spans the years from the beginning of 7th grade until the end of 9th grade. Senior High spans the years from the beginning of 9th grade until a person's 20th birthday. The overlapping year is in place to aid in the transition between programs. Adult YAC members must be over the age of 25. There are to be approximately five conferences per year: One all-ages conference in the spring (both junior and senior high), one senior high conference in the fall, one junior high conference in the fall, one all age social action conference in the winter, and one Leadership Development Conference in the mid- to late summer. Members of YAC must fall into the appropriate age range. Junior High YAC members will only be permitted to attend senior high conferences if they have a specific role (i.e. touch group leader, workshop leader) and have attended a leadership development conference. YAC is to use its collective discretion when deciding whether or not a junior high YAC member is responsible enough to attend a conference. Lastly, in order for 7th or 8th grade YRUUers to attend an all ages conference, they are required to have previously either a district junior high conference, a junior high cluster conference run by the DRE's, or a Summer Institute's youth program.

Rules and Infractions

YAC clearly prohibits the following at any meeting, conference, or YAC sponsored activity:

- Violence and Weapons

The act or attempt of battery, assaulting, or physically injuring another person with or without a weapon. Threats and aborted attempts should also be dealt with by YAC. Youth should not be in the possession of weapons at events.

- Use of Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco Products

Use or possession of any illegal drug, alcohol product, or tobacco product. Adult sponsors are prohibited from using these products, including tobacco, as well."

- Vandalism

Willful altering or destruction of property.

- Sex

YAC conference rules have always prohibited overt and covert sex. Clearly this prohibition includes the acts of intercourse and oral sex. Just as clearly, this rule does not exclude most forms of kissing or hugging. However, the inclusion of other forms of intimate contact are less clear and fall within a spectrum of acceptability.

- No Means No

YAC enforces the “No means No” rule, meaning any action can be stopped by the use of the word No. In the event that the action is not stopped, it is treated as a rule infraction.

- Site Specific Rules

Specific rules set forth by the host churches will be upheld in the same fashion as YAC rules, unless they conflict with YAC’s basic purposes, in which case a compromise will have to be reached between YAC and the host church prior to the conference.

In the event of a rule infraction at a conference or meeting, the perpetrator, his/her sponsor, and the youth and adult co-chairs will meet immediately. The allegations will be discussed and the co-chairs will determine the consequence(s). Depending on the severity of the rule infraction, the offender may be banned from one or more conferences, and/or sent home from a conference at his/her own expense. An employee of the host church (i.e. a minister, DRE, or MRE) will be notified immediately in the event of a rule infraction. In the event of a severe rule infraction, the Board of Trustees should be notified via the Youth Representative. YAC has set these standards for dealing with rule infractions to ensure that any action taken is fair and just. However, all rule infractions are different, and it is ultimately up to the youth and adult co-chairs to determine what, if any, consequence fits the circumstance. Also, all rule infractions are kept in confidentiality by the parties involved.

-The Red Feather Book

After any rule infraction, the perpetrator’s name, the details of the offense, and the action taken are recorded by the Conference Dean co-chair in “The Red Feather Book”. The purpose of the book is to inform subsequent co-chairs of youth who are barred from coming to conferences or who have previously broken the rules. The book is kept by the Conference Dean and is strictly confidential.

Funding and Budget

Admission price of conferences is determined during the conference planning meetings. Money from conferences goes from the registrar to the OMD Youth Programs Consultant. Reimbursement forms can be obtained from one of the co-chairs and resubmitted to her/him.

Newsletter

The newsletter was designed to keep OMD YRUU members informed of YAC's movements and decisions, as well as to provide information and forums district wide. Currently called "Coffee, Tea or Schmeh?" it is published in the OMD newsletter District Doings. It is edited by the Communications co-chair and anyone, youth or adult, is encouraged to submit articles, creative works, artwork, etc.

These bylaws are effective as of August 2009. They will be reviewed as necessary, but YAC will meet annually in the summer to examine bylaws, policies, and other vital issues. Amendments to the bylaws will be decided by a consensus or by a 2/3rd's majority vote in the event of a block.