

**JEFFERSON UNITARIAN CHURCH**  
Golden, Colorado

**Standing Rules and Policies**  
**of the**  
**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COUNCIL**

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## **Standing Rules and Policies of the SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY COUNCIL**

### **Rule 1 Definition, Adoption and Amendments**

Standing rules are administrative policies. They are adopted by majority vote of the Social Responsibility Council (SRC) and may be amended by majority vote with notice and a two-thirds vote without notice. Standing rules include those made by a motion that establishes them even if the motion does not specifically state that it is creating a standing rule.

Adopted May 21, 2008

### **Rule 2 Authority**

The Board of Trustees (hereafter referred to as the Board) delegates to the Social Responsibility Council the authority to act on all matters relating to JUC social action activities as stated in the Standing Rules of the Board of Trustees and further noted in the Standing Rules of the Social Responsibility Council.

### **Rule 3 Charter**

#### **Social Responsibility Vision**

As Unitarian Universalists with a proud history of repairing the world, we cannot be content to be mere occupants of time and space. We are ill content to wear our religion only in our heads and hearts, we want it to be expressed with our hands. The social responsibility program is not a special interest group, but an integral part of congregational life. The whole congregation is accountable and has ultimate responsibility for this program as much as for worship, mutual ministry, and religious education. In the prophetic church, they are one. (Gilbert, Richard S.; *The Prophetic Imperative: Social Gospel in Theory and Practice*, Skinner House Books, 2000)

An organizational and operational social outreach model, as proposed by Rev. Richard Gilbert, enables JUC to expand its social service oriented program into a broader range of social justice activities. The model addresses systemic social change in our wider communities and promotes congregational ownership of social action projects at JUC.

We visualized a progression ranging from service projects to congregational advocacy for change, to activism in dealing with issues of social and economic justice at local, national, and international levels. This expanded range of activities and the concept of congregational ownership, combined with the potential for grants from the Taguchi Social Action Endowment Fund, provides a powerful and inspirational working environment for social outreach activities.

Our ultimate goal is that all aspects of social action become deeply embedded in the total life of the church and that our efforts, in some small part, contribute to the repair of what is broken in our world.

#### **Scope of the Social Responsibility Council**

The SRC coordinates and administers all social action activities for JUC. It formulates and oversees the process for congregational approval of social responsibility activities that are aimed at achieving congregational support and participation.

Task Forces organize to plan and carry out multiple types of activities that entail social service, education, and advocacy in defined programmatic areas. Each Task Force identifies its goals and general plans for the year in a written proposal, presented to the SRC for review and to the congregation for adoption. Task Forces are responsible for implementation of their own objectives.

Smaller efforts that involve lower budget, fewer volunteers, or a single defined activity are designated as projects. Projects will be publicized and supported by the SRC, but taken to the congregation for approval only when deemed appropriate by the SRC. All social responsibility activities sponsored by JUC must be approved by the SRC and should be designated as either a project or a Task Force. Those approved by the congregation are eligible for financial and organizational support by the SRC and JUC's ministers and other professional staff.

In addition to project and Task Force activities, the SRC as a whole or any of its adopted entities may take a position on issues of conscience and may make recommendations to the congregation regarding taking a position. Likewise, the SRC or its entities may form an alliance with other organizations that promote goals and values in line with their own.

### **Goals of the Social Responsibility Council**

The SRC provides a structure that assists, promotes, and guides social responsibility at JUC on behalf of the congregation. The Council strives to achieve the following specific goals.

- Facilitate congregational involvement in social outreach.
- Ensure that social responsibility becomes and remains an integral component of the life of the congregation so that even those who are not personally involved understand and support what the social action groups are doing.
- Increase congregational understanding of means we can use successfully, in the context of our church community, to promote social changes that express our UU values.
- Develop a comprehensive program over time that encourages Task Force activities in the five areas of social action activity—social service, social education, social witness, social advocacy, and community organizing.
- Administer an effective, but flexible, process for nurturing new projects and maintaining existing activities that the congregation wishes to support.
- Evaluate ongoing social action activities and encourage development in new areas as needed.
- Employ the democratic process for decision-making with representation from all Task Forces involved in social action activities.
- Serve as a cheerleader for all Projects and Task Force activities.

### **Responsibilities of the Social Responsibility Council**

The SRC is responsible for the administration and coordination of social action activities at JUC, including communication with the Board of Trustees, the ministers and the congregation in accordance with the bylaws. It administers the social action portion of the operating budget. It meets on a periodic basis to resolve operational issues such as:

- Making decisions on budget expenditures.
- Proposing special plate collections and nominating recipients to the Board.
- Communicating in advance with the finance committee all fundraising efforts.
- Coordinating church resources among the Task Forces (for example, physical space).
- Planning, coordinating and scheduling of all-church activities (for example, fundraisers and YRE participation in SRC events).
- Sharing of information about Task Force progress, including year-end reports.
- Promoting a position or partnering with external organizations to support causes that promote the ideals and goals of the SRC, including fundraising or financial support.
- Establishing ad hoc groups to address an urgent social action need in a timely way.

The SRC administers a process for individuals who formulate a goal and a plan to receive congregational support. In general, the process applies to adoption of proposals for Task Forces that define a specific set of milestones to be accomplished in a defined period. However, proposals for projects with a more limited time-span and involvement of resources are not precluded from adoption as long as they support UU values and have the potential of becoming an agent for change. Persons or groups applying for project status need to engage the congregation through participation possibilities, have a social justice component, and may request funding from the SRC or other JUC funding. They will be eligible for a table in the commons on a space available basis.

The process for adoption of Task Forces by the congregation must be repeated each year for Task Forces that wish to continue their work. The process is as follows:

- Each group seeking adoption as a Task Force submits a proposal that follows the guidelines set out in this document.
- The SRC reviews the proposals as a body and makes recommendations. Some proposals may go through revision after receiving feedback.
- The SRC determines the exact procedures to be followed for the selection process and defines the criteria for adoption. These criteria will be discussed each year and may be changed to accommodate changing circumstances or suggestions for improvement. The timing of the selection process will be coordinated with the church budgeting cycle.
- The SRC publicizes the proposals and actively solicits congregational involvement in the process, including educating church members on their role and the meaning of their vote.
- The SRC designs a democratic procedure to select those proposals to be adopted by JUC for the coming year.
- Task Forces periodically report on their activities to the SRC throughout the year and provide a year-end report to be included in the SRC Annual Report.

Amended: November 15, 2012

## **Social Responsibility Council Organization**

### **Officers**

The Council Chair is recommended by the Leadership Nominating Council (LNC) and appointed by the Board. Other SRC officers, as outlined below, are selected by the SRC from the general membership of JUC. The voting representative from any given Task Force may not be an SRC officer. The chair or a designated representative from the SRC will serve as an ex-officio member of the Taguchi Social Action Fund Board of Directors and as a Program Council representative.

**SRC Chair** - For purposes of continuity, the SRC chair is appointed for a two-year term. The SRC Chair is responsible for coordinating SRC activities, convening and chairing Council meetings, and issuing a consolidated annual report. The Chair shall:

- Call for agenda items and create agenda for SRC meetings.
- Keep an updated calendar to bring to SRC meetings for coordination.
- Facilitate SRC meetings.
- Work with other officers as needed.
- May attend Program Council meetings - submitting SRC reports, bringing back Program Council reports to SRC Member of SRF Steering Committee.
- Submit compiled annual report.
- Liaison with Office - Communication, Calendaring, Advocating.
- Alternate signer on reimbursement requests.
- Attend Path to Membership classes to promote SRC Contact person for general social justice questions and requests from organizations outside the church.

**SRC Vice-Chair** – Appointed for a one-year term, it is desirable that during the terminal year of the Chair's leadership, the vice-chair be in line to assume the position of the out-going chair. The SRC Vice-Chair assists the Chair as needed, and performs Chair functions when the Chair cannot be present.

**SRC Secretary** – Appointed for a one-year term, the SRC Secretary maintains and distributes minutes of Council meetings to SRC members and to the JUC office for distribution to the Board and ministerial staff. The secretary is responsible for issuing Council correspondence.

**SRC Treasurer** – Appointed for a one-year term, the SRC Treasurer is responsible for creating a Council budget, tracking all Council expenditures, and issuing periodic reports to the general Council membership and the Board. The SRC Treasurer is an authorized signed for the SRC General Fund. Each Task Force is responsible for tracking its expenditures and reporting them to the Council. (Note that all income/receipts will be deposited by JUC staff income secretary and the JUC bookkeeper will keep accounts of all SRC transactions.)

**SRC Communication Officer** - Appointed for a one-year term, the SRC Communications Officer is responsible for keeping the congregation aware of Council activities, and helping to publicize Task Force and project activities as needed in conjunction with the JUC Communications Group.

Amended: September 8, 2011; November 15, 2012

### **Conducting Business**

At least one Task Force representative from each Task Force must attend Council meetings and participate in guiding JUC social action policies. Each Task Force has one vote on the Council, and voting members of the SRC are comprised of five officers and one member from each Task Force. All SRC meetings are open to the JUC membership.

After selection of the Chair, he or she will call an initial organizational meeting open to the congregation for the purpose of selecting the remaining officers. Thereafter, decisions require a quorum consisting of 50% of the voting members for a general meeting and two-thirds of the voting members for officer election.

### **Guidelines for Proposals**

**Task Force Status:** A JUC group that wishes to be recognized as an official Task Force submits a proposal to the SRC. Each proposal should include:

- a definition of the problem/issue to be addressed by the group
- a statement of the group's goal(s)
- a statement of the UU principles that guide or motivate the action
- a description of the activities/strategies planned to address the problem
- an assessment of the scope of the project in terms of the time scale envisioned
- an estimated budget for the planned activities
- an estimate of the volunteer effort required and an assessment of known volunteer participation
- a commitment to send a representative to all regular meetings of the SRC
- a commitment to submit a year-end report to the SRC and congregation that evaluates the progress toward attaining stated goals.

**Project Status:** A JUC member or group can propose an activity to the SRC for sponsorship. Such project proposals may be presented informally to the SRC, but must define what the

contribution will be to the overall program of social action at JUC, what resources will be needed, and how the project expresses UU values.

Adopted: April 2005

#### **Rule 4 Task Forces (updated May 19, 2013)**

##### **4.1 Eating Ethically (EETF)**

This task force serves as a resource for information on growing, buying, and preparing fresh nutritious meats, dairy and produce. We promote and support sustainable, local, organic and biodynamic agriculture and research the interrelated issues that affect our health, the health of our environment and water supply. We also seek compassion and justice in the production, ownership and distribution of food.

##### **4.2 Housing & Poverty (H&PTF)**

The Housing and Poverty Task Force, guided by the UU principles of justice, equity and compassion in human relations and respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person, strives to show JUC members and friends the face of poverty in our local community. We provide opportunities for JUC members and friends to respond to needs in Jefferson County primarily by promoting projects in partnership with local social service agencies. We work with Jeffco Partners for Interfaith Action, Family Promise, Family Tree Housing and Family Services, The Action Center, and the county's programs and interfaith coalitions, which address homelessness. This task force is JUC's conduit to the otherwise unseen in our community and provides opportunities for personal interaction with those in need through unconditional giving.

##### **4.3 Peace, Liberty and Justice (PL&JTF)**

Throughout our world, examples abound of public policies that are antithetical to our fundamental UU principles. JUC has a long, established history of action in areas of social, political and economic justice. Circumstances in our society and our world warrant a renewed commitment, as well as our direct action, to promote and bring about liberty and justice through peaceful solutions. We also examine proposed legislation at the national, state and local level and address issues relevant to our UU principles and beliefs.

##### **4.4 Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSCTF)**

This task force seeks to raise funds for and promote the work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. The UUSC addresses social and environmental justice and human rights issues in the US and around the world. The task force strives to educate JUC members and friends on current social justice and human rights issues, to spur individuals to become advocates for change, and to raise money to support these programs. The Guatemalan Scholarship Program is an example of this in the congregation.

##### **4.5 Projects**

These are groups that the SRC defines as activities that involve a lower budget, fewer volunteers, or a single defined activity and are also supported by the SRC.

Task Forces adopted at the May 19, 2013 Congregational Meeting

## **Rule 5 Task Force Procedures**

The basic premise that the Task Forces operate under is

- 1) that their charter is only for a year at a time, and
- 2) their charter is granted by the congregation and, once endorsed, enables them to use the resources of the church (operating budget, bulletin board, website link, *The JUC Crier* space, Sunday service exposure, ministerial support).

The reason for ongoing task forces needing to be renewed each year is to ensure that there are still a minimum number of people (5) at a grass roots level committed to the success of the project (thus allowing for the natural birth and death of task forces). Secondly, to ensure that they have used the church's resources wisely to carry out the plan they made last year and that they have a plan for the upcoming year.

The process is as follows:

1. The Task Force turns application in to SRC officers.
2. Officers ensure that it meets guidelines set out in the SRC Charter and, in the case of a continuing Task Force, determines whether they have fulfilled their goals from last year. This is one reason we ask for your year-end report as part of your application, but in most cases, we are already well aware of your activities. Chair forwards approved applications to all SRC members.
3. SRC members read applications and, in April meeting, vote on whether to recommend them to the congregation.
4. Congregation receives handout at May Congregational meeting summarizing the task forces being recommended by the SRC and congregation votes to endorse (or not!). The vote is taken on all Task Force proposals as a group.
5. The task forces' new charters begin on July 1 at the beginning of the church year.
6. The SRC submits a year-end report to the office for distribution to the congregation along with the year-end reports from all of the other church councils and committees. This is compiled from the year-end reports that you submit as part of your application (although some task forces have asked for and received an extension). Note: all of your year-end reports have been submitted as one piece by the SRC Chair; however, the office may send requests to each task force. If they send a request to you, you may refer them to the Chair.