

Constitution for the University of Chicago
Earl B. Dickerson Chapter

Black Law Students Association

ARTICLE I: GROUP NAME

Section 1: The name of this organization shall be the Black Law Students Association (BLSA).

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

Section 1: The purpose of this organization shall be to articulate, promote, and discuss issues of concern to black law students and to facilitate the interaction between black law students, current members and alumni of the University of Chicago Law School and the Chicago community.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership.

1. Membership is limited to currently registered University of Chicago law students.

Section 2: Eligibility.

1. Currently registered University of Chicago law students who are committed to the purpose of this organization shall be eligible for membership.

ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

Section 1: Executive Officers.

1. The executive officers of this organization shall be President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Section 2: Qualifications for office.

1. Executive officers shall be currently registered law students at the University of Chicago and eligible members of this organization, as defined in Article III, Section 2 of these bylaws.

2. Candidates for executive office will have actively participated in the organization's events during their first year. Active participation includes, but is not limited to, attendance at general body meetings, sponsored social and community service events, and lunch series.

Section 3: Terms of office.

1. The term of service for each office shall be one (1) year, beginning at the completion of the spring quarter.

Section 4: Duties of officers.

1. President.

The President shall be the chief executive officer and official voice of this organization. The President is responsible for making sure that all aspects of programming are executed. The President is responsible for setting the tone for the organization, working with the vice president on programming, and working with each committee chair on projects throughout the year. The President serves as a member on all committees.

The president is responsible for meeting with the administration and helping on diversity initiatives, promoting BLSA and establishing connections outside of the Law School (attending meetings with community groups or Bar Associations), and developing priorities and themes for the year. The president spends a significant amount of time fielding e-mails and phone calls from law firms, community members, and prospective students. The President also meets at least once with the Dean of the Law School to discuss future plans and works on the CCBLSA subcommittee.

2. Vice President.

The Vice President of BLSA has generally been in charge of programming. The VP reserves rooms for these events with the Dean's office, orders any food or refreshments for the event, and confirms set-up with the law school staff. The VP also assumes any other roles delegated by the President (e.g., coordinating a firm reception). Finally, the VP should also attend all BLSA events and be prepared to act on behalf of the President in his or her absence.

The Vice President shall also be responsible for Black History Month programming. Those duties include: establishing a theme for Black History Month, organizing and chairing the Black History Month Committee, developing programming for the month, and coordinating publicity.

3. Treasurer.

The treasurer is responsible for handling the finances of the organization. To ensure BLSA receives funding, Treasurer should meet all mandatory deadlines set by the Law school and

University. The responsibilities of this position include: budgeting money for the school year; requesting funding from LSA and SGFC; filing reimbursements for member expenses; and maintaining BLSA's accounts. The treasurer also orders food for events, and meets with BLSA's RSO advisor across the Midway.

4. Secretary:

The BLSA Secretary is the organization's point person on communications between individual members, the board, and the membership. More specifically the Secretary's duties include: 1) Correspondence: picking up, routing, responding and disseminating information to the membership; 2) Records: taking and disseminating notes of meetings, recording membership rosters; 3) Elections: conducting elections or other votes; 4) Assisting the President and VP in the general conduct of BLSA business and 5) Preparing a bi-weekly e-mail bulletin

Section 5: Vacancies

If for any reason an officer cannot serve, the Executive Board shall appoint a custodian of the office who will serve the duration of the term.

Section 6: Election of Officers.

1. Officers shall be elected by eligible members, as defined in Article V, Section 1 of these bylaws (Eligible Voting Members). Notice of the election shall be given at least two (2) weeks prior, and the election shall occur during the month of April.

Section 7: Removal of Officers.

1. The President may remove any officer who is not fulfilling her/his duties, as defined in this Article VI, Section 4. The President, however, must supply one (1) warning to the officer and allow her/him sufficient time for correction before removing her/him from office. The sufficient time for correction shall be determined by the President on a case-by-case basis, but shall not exceed thirty (30) days.

2. Any officer may be removed by three-fifths (3/5) vote of the officers. The officer being voted upon may not participate in this vote. To challenge the officers' findings, the officer under review may request a subsequent vote by the general body, requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote for removal.

3. Elected officers are required to give notice to the President or Secretary if unable to attend meetings or fulfill other duties. After three unexcused absences, officers may be removed from office by the President.

ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS

Section 1: Elections.

1. In order to participate in elections, students must be members as defined under Article III, Section 1.

ARTICLE VI: FUNDING

Section 1: All funds collected shall be deposited with BLSA's accounts.

Section 2: The treasurer shall be the primary officer designated to handle this organization's financial matters.

ARTICLE VII - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1: Executive Board.

1. There shall be an Executive Board of this organization, which shall have all the powers and duties of this organization when the full membership is not in actual session.

Section 2: Executive Board Membership.

1. The Executive Board shall consist of the following members: a. All Executive Officers of BLSA. b. The Chairs of all standing and special committees.

Section 3: Executive Board Organization

1. The President shall be the President of the Executive Board and the Secretary shall be the Secretary of the Executive Board.

Section 4: Executive Board Meetings

1. The Executive Board shall convene in special meetings in the following manner: a. At the call of the President and at such time and in such place as the President may designate; or, b. Upon request submitted to the President of a majority of the members of the general membership and at such time and in such place as they may designate.
2. The Secretary shall give notice of regular and special meetings by e-mail.

ARTICLE VIII: COMMITTEES

Section 1: Standing Committees

1. The standing committees of the organization will be the Alumni, Social, Community Service, Academic, Historian/Webmaster
2. Each committee will have a chairperson who is a currently registered law students at the University of Chicago and eligible members of this organization, as defined in Article III, Section 2 of these bylaws.

Section 2: Special Committees

1. The President can appoint chairs of special committees; this includes, but is not limited to, appointing a 3L Representative.

Section 3: Terms of Office

1. The term of service for each office shall be one (1) year, beginning at the completion of the spring quarter.

Section 4: Duties of the Chairperson

1. Alumni Chair.

Main Duties: 1) planning and executing events with Alumni; 2) planning, writing (other members will assist w/ article writing) and distributing the Quarterly Alumni Newsletter; 3) assisting the President and Vice President w/ respect to anything involving alumni (often a

contact point when alums want to speak at the Law School or want BLSA to participate in various outside events/activities, etc.).

2. Social Chair.

The social chair is responsible for the coordination of activities for the social enjoyment of the chapter members, including but not limited to study breaks, dinners with partner firms and/or organizations, Black History Month wine mess, and the Black History Month Bar Review.

This person will also be the delegate to the CCBLSA committee. These duties can include: keeping BLSA informed of CCBLSA's activities, coordinating our BLSA's participation in CCBLSA activities, representing our BLSA's interests on the committee, and taking on responsibilities in CCBLSA's initiatives throughout the academic year. The Social Chair can also form a subcommittee to assist in the planning for the CCBLSA gala.

3. Community Service Chair.

As the title indicates, a person holding this office is meant to be the coordinator for BLSA's community service activities. Oftentimes an outside organization will contact the president/VP regarding a potential service opportunity and the community service chair will become the contact person to organize the event. There is also flexibility to plan activities on your own.

The community service chair is responsible for organizing two mandatory events; the Collegiate Scholars Program and Clothing Drive

4. Academic Chair:.

The academic chair has the overall responsibility to act as a resource for 1Ls by providing advice on professors, classes, study aids, finals, outlining and job searching. Specific duties include: compiling the 1L study guide, collecting and distributing study aids, assigning mentors, resume/cover letter review, and helping with Bigelow assignments.

5. Historian/Webmaster.

The BLSA historian is responsible for attending and documenting BLSA events via camera. The BLSA historian is also responsible for updating all information on the BLSA website. Website duties include soliciting, receiving and posting new outlines to BLSA's database of outlines, updating the events page and adding the pictures to our collection online.

ARTICLE IX: REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1: 1L Representatives

1. At least two 1L Representatives are to be elected at the beginning of the school year. There must be at least one 1L Representative serving on the executive board during the autumn and winter quarters.
2. The duties of the 1L Representative will be determined by the President. These duties shall include, but not be limited to, the following 1) Serve as a liaison between the 1L class and the executive board; 2) Attend all required executive board meeting; 3) Participate in requested committees.

ARTICLE X: PARLEMTARY PROCEDURE

Section 1: Rules

The rules contained in the simplified Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the organization in all cases for which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this organization's Constitution.

Section 2: Parliamentarian

The vice president will serve a parliamentarian during meetings that he or she does not preside over.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Amendments

1. Bylaws may be amended at a regularly scheduled meeting by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the eligible voting members present.
2. The bylaws may be amended at a non-regularly scheduled meeting by a unanimous vote of the officers.

Section 2: Notice

1. Notice to amend the Bylaws shall be given fourteen (14) days prior to any meeting at which such a change is to be voted upon.

Parent Organization: National Black Law Student Association