



The Constitution of the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law Student Bar Association

Preamble

This association of students shall be known as the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law Student Bar Association. The purpose of our association shall be to cultivate camaraderie among the student body, foster a comfortable and professional atmosphere for achieving a quality legal education, and establish a just and efficient form of student government.

Article I: Supremacy

§ 1. Supremacy

The Executive Board, Board of Officers, Representatives, and Elections Commission shall hold this Constitution as supreme rule for the Student Bar Association, and shall not establish bylaws or operating procedures inconsistent with this Constitution.

Article II: Membership

§ 1. Membership

All full-time students currently enrolled in the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law shall be members of the Student Bar Association.

§ 2. Officer Composition

The Student Bar Association Officers shall be comprised of the following positions:

- i.** President
- ii.** Vice President
- iii.** Secretary
- iv.** Treasurer
- v.** Villanova University Senator
- vi.** Two Event Coordinators

- vii. Student Groups Liaison
- viii. Bar Association Representative(s)
- ix. Intramurals Chairperson
- x. Three At-Large Representatives
- xi. Four 3L Class Representatives
- xii. Four 2L Class Representatives
- xiii. Six 1L Class Representatives
- xiv. Affinity Representatives

§ 3. Structure

a. The Executive Board

The Executive Board is the leadership of the Student Bar Association, and encompasses the following positions:

- i. President
- ii. Vice President
- iii. Secretary
- iv. Treasurer

b. Board of Officers

The Board of Officers are those members who enact the Student Bar Association's objectives under the leadership of the Executive Board, those positions encompass:

- i. Villanova University Senator
- ii. Two Event Coordinators
- iii. Student Groups Liaison

c. Representatives

The Representatives represent specific interests with the Law School and ensure inclusion and participation within the Student Bar Association; those positions are as follows:

- i. Bar Association Representative(s)
- ii. Intramurals Chairperson
- iii. Three At-Large Representatives
- iv. Four 3L Class Representatives
- v. Four 2L Class Representative
- vi. Six 1L Class Representatives, equally divided amongst the sections

vii. Affinity Representatives

§ 4. Position Duties

A. President

The President shall have the authority to set the date, time, place, and agenda of all Board of Officer meetings. The President, or his or her designee, shall preside over all meetings. The President serves on the budget committee, organizes and appoints SBA members to committees within the SBA, and appoints students to various faculty committees. The President runs the 1L Mentor-Mentee Program. The President shall monitor and respond to emails sent to the Student Bar Association email account, unless otherwise assigned to the Secretary. The President also meets directly with members of the administration and faculty to discuss student concerns.

B. Vice President

The Vice President assists the President with his or her duties, presides over meetings when the President is unable to attend, serves on the SBA executive board and the SBA budget committee, and also meets regularly with members of the administration to discuss student concerns. The Vice President also organizes the Outline Bank and collects additional outlines prior to the end of every semester.

C. Secretary

The Secretary sends the weekly “SBA Newsletter” email to the Law School; transcribe, transmit, and maintain the minutes of every meeting; oversee all social media communications for the Student Bar Association; and monitors the Student Bar Association email account. The Secretary serves on the SBA executive board and the SBA budget committee. The Secretary shall maintain the Executive Binder, and keep file of all minutes he or she takes as well as those from prior semesters.

D. Treasurer

The Treasurer oversees the annual SBA budget, and presides over bi-annual budget hearings. The Treasurer also handles the SBA checking account, signs SBA checks, and reimburses student organizations for approved expenses. The SBA Treasurer shall not hold a similar treasurer position in any other student organization at the same time. The Treasurer serves on the SBA executive board and the SBA budget committee.

E. Senator

The University Senator attends monthly University Senate meetings on main campus and represents the law school at the University level. The University Senator represents the law school to the other Philadelphia law schools and coordinates activities between them and the law school. The University Senator also organizes the apparel sale.

F. Event Coordinator

Event Coordinators supervise the planning and preparation of Student Bar Association events. These events include, but are not limited to, Barristers Ball, TG's, the Ed Huber Activity Fair, the Blood Drive, Villanova Basketball ticket sales, as well as any other event in the Commons, Student Lounge, or the Blank Rome Dining Hall.

G. Student Groups Liaison

The student group liaison is the SBA's contact person for the heads of the various student organizations. The student group liaison informs the various groups about budget issues, requirements, and policies; assists student groups with recruitment; manages table reservations in the cafeteria; maintains the basement bulletin; and holds the key and maintains the schedule for Room 106b. The Student Groups Liaison is responsible for encouraging participating groups to turn in budget request forms and Student Organization Recognition Forms ("SORFs") to the Director of Student Affairs, to ensure funding and recognition for the upcoming school year. The Student Groups Liaison shall also and organize, publicize, and supervise the Ed Huber Student Activities Fair, which requires:

- a. Consulting with the Director of Student Affairs;
- b. Coordinating with events and facilities management to set a date, time, place for the event;
- c. Creating a layout for placement of each table at the fair, assigning tables to each participating group;
- d. Communicating with heads of student organizations to ensure proper registration and staffing for each group's table;
- e. Publicizing the event through email, social media, and class announcements; and

H. Intramurals Chairperson

The Intramurals Chairperson organizes the various intramural and recreation

events hosted by the Student Bar Association. The activities organized by the Intramurals chair are meant to relieve stress and foster goodwill with the law students. The Intramurals Chairperson shall coordinate, at minimum, the following events:

- a. Intramural basketball,
- b. One flag football tournament, and
- c. The North Grounds Softball League.

I. Class Representative Positions

Class Representative positions are intended to secure Student Bar Association positions for the 1L and 2L class. These members must relay information from the meetings by way of class announcement, and assist other Officers in carrying out their duties.

J. Bar Association Representative(s)

a. The Bar Association Representative(s) is responsible for registering Law Students as members of the various Bar Associations as well as Novus, and keeps law students informed about new developments with Bar Association activities, events, policies, and procedures. The Bar Association Representative is charged with maintaining contact, at the very least, with the following Bar Associations:

1. American Bar Association,
2. Pennsylvania Bar Association,
3. Philadelphia Bar Association, and
4. Montgomery County Bar Association.

b. The bar association representative is also responsible for facilitating legislative action that positively impacts law students at both the state and federal level. The bar association representative oversees the progress of this legislative action and works towards enacting law student objectives through the creation and use of an advocacy team to influence policy at the state and federal level.

K. At Large Representatives

The President shall accept nominations for At-Large Representatives from the general membership, ordinarily during election time, following the commencement of the academic school year or preceding the end of the academic year. The President will appoint At-Large Representatives by confirmation of a simple majority of the Executive Board and Board of Officers.

L. Affinity Representatives

Affinity representatives simply relay the questions and concerns of the below listed Affinity groups to the Student Bar Association during meetings. Affinity organizations may elect one member to the Student Bar Association, should no other member of that group hold an Officer position on the Student Bar Association. Recognized student groups may be added to the list below by petition of that Group's executive Board, subject to approval by a simple majority of the Student Bar Association's Officers. Affinity organizations are defined as follows:

- a.** Asian Pacific Law Students Association (APALSA)
- b.** Black Law Students Association (BLSA)
- c.** Hispanic American Law Students Association (HALSA)
- d.** Jewish Law Students Association (JLSA)
- e.** Middle Eastern Law Students Association (MELSA)
- f.** OutLaw

§ 5. Voting Rights

All Officers listed in Article II § 2 are voting members of the Student Bar Association.

Article III: Events

§ 1. Mandatory Events

The following events are mandatory, as traditions rooted in the Law School as well as the Student Bar Association:

- i.** Barrister's Ball (one per academic year)
- ii.** TG's (at least two per semester)
- iii.** The Ed Huber Student Activities Fair (one at the beginning of every Fall semester)
- iv.** Apparel Sale (at least one every academic year)
- v.** Wellness Week (one near the end of every semester)

- vi. Blood Drive (one every semester)
- vii. Karen Spence Award (at least one every academic year)
- viii. SBA Member of the Semester Award (at least once every semester)
- ix. SBA End of the Year Dinner/Senior Superlatives (once at the end of the spring semester)

§ 2. Event Schedule

Prior to the beginning of the semester, the Executive Board along with the Event Coordinators will establish the dates of that semester's events, and have that schedule approved by the necessary members of the Law School Administration.

Article IV: Meetings

§ 1. Frequency

The President shall convene meetings, at the time most convenient for the Officers of the Student Bar Association, not less than once every two weeks while class is in session.

§ 2. Agenda

An agenda should be available to any Student Bar Association Officer, before the meeting commences.

§ 3. Record/Minutes

A written record must be taken at all SBA meetings, and preserved by the SBA Secretary.

§ 4. Quorum

- a. A meeting shall not occur without two members of the Executive Board, and at least five Officers.
- b. Meetings may not take place without the consent of the President.

§ 5. Attendance

a. Meetings

Executive Board Members and Officers are required to attend every Student Bar Association meeting, except unless excused for good cause by the President.

b. Events

Executive Board Members and Officers are required to attend the following events, absent excusal for good cause by the President:

- i. Barristers Ball;
- ii. The Ed Huber Student Activities Fair; and
- iii. Every “TG.”

c. Excused Absences

- i. Executive Board Members and Officers must email the Secretary to explain good cause for missing a meeting.
- ii. Absences are only excused upon affirmation by the Student Bar Association President, or by his or her designee.
- iii. Absences may be excused retroactively.
- iv. Absences deemed “unexcused” may be appealed to the Budget Committee and a majority vote may override the President’s determination that said absence was unexcused.
 1. The treasurer may vote in this vote.
 2. Interested parties may not vote.

§ 6. Dean’s Meeting

The President shall invite the Dean or the Vice Dean of the Law School to at least one meeting every semester. During that meeting, the Dean is invited to provide an appraisal of the Law School’s well-being, and answer questions posed by Student Bar Association Officers.

§ 7. Character

All full-time students currently enrolled in the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law shall be members of the Student Bar Association, and are welcome to attend SBA meetings.

Article V: Budget

§ 1. Budget Creation

- a.** The SBA Treasurer shall provide a budget, allocating sufficient funds for the Student Bar Association to host the mandatory events for that semester, while at the same time providing sufficient funds for the various recognized Student Groups to attract membership and host events. Student Groups are considered “recognized” upon timely completion of the SORF.
- b.** The process for creating the budget is as follows:
 - i.** The SBA Treasurer will send out an email that provides the Student Groups Handbook and the Budget Request Packet and provide a deadline for return of the Budget Request Packet.
 - ii.** The SBA Treasurer will host a general meeting for Student Groups, whereby those groups must send at least one board member to hear an explanation of SBA’s budgeting plan and expectations for the academic year.
 - iii.** The SBA Treasurer will set up Budget Hearings with representatives from each Student Group who can explain the events that that group has proposed for the semester. The SBA Treasurer will go over the RFP process and the ways in which the SBA credit card may be used.
 - iv.** The Treasurer will create a budget for each Student Group, including SBA and distribute that budget via email in a timely manner to each group, Nancy Whalen, and Nicole Garafano.
- c.** Budgets shall be allocated to Student Groups after considering the following factors:
 - i.** Size of the Organization;
 - ii.** The feasibility of the Organization’s prospective budget;
 - iii.** That Group’s ability to host events to the benefit of the entire Student Body; and

iv. Any discretionary policies enacted by the Budget Committee.

§ 2. Budget Committee

- a. The Budget Committee shall hear and vote on any and all appeals arising out of the budget process.
- b. The Budget Committee shall be comprised of the Executive Board.
- c. The Budget Committee determines the discretionary rules for any semester's budget allocation.
 - i. Discretionary rules expire at the end of the academic school year, or upon the election of a new Treasurer.
 - ii. The Treasurer must inform all Student Groups of discretionary policies during the one-on-one meetings with Student Groups required by Article V § 1(b).

§ 3. Budget Appeals

Student Groups may appeal Student Organization budgetary allocations at any time to the Budget Committee. Student Groups should recognize that appeals made after the Treasurer circulates the semester's budget will not result in substantial deviations from the circulated budget, absent gross negligence or misconduct on the part of the Treasurer.

§ 4. Budget Committee Hearing

- a. The complaining party may address the Budget Committee, but is not permitted to attend the Budget Committee vote.
- b. Complaining Student Organizations must draft a Document of Appeal including:
 - i. The Student Organization's name;
 - ii. The Organization's Membership List;
 - iii. Description of the issue with sufficient clarity to hold the hearing without the complaining party; and
 - iv. An explanation of how the event in dispute advances the Student Group's stated purpose.
- c. The document must be provided to the Treasurer, in a timely manner.

- d. The appeal, once provided to the Budget Committee, must be addressed within ten (10) days.
- e. It is the Secretary's duty to inform the complaining party of the results of the hearing in a timely manner.

§ 5. Budget Committee Vote

- a. All issues brought before the Budget Committee are determined by majority vote.
- b. The Budget Committee may not hold a vote without the entirety of the Executive Board present.
 - i. Any tie on the Budget Committee is resolved in favor of the President's vote.

§ 6. Required Materials

Upon being recognized as a Student Group for a particular semester, the Treasurer must provide every Student Group:

- i. The Student Groups Handbook;
- ii. A Student Group Budget Request Packet; and
- iii. A written declaration of the discretionary allocation criteria established by the Budget Committee.

Article VI: Elections

§ 1. Elections Commission

The Honor Board shall appoint an Elections Commission, comprised of the Honor Board President and not less than two additional Honor Board members, to proctor all Student Bar Association Elections.

- a. **Purpose.** The purpose and duty of the Elections Commission is to host elections in conformity with this Constitution and the Honor Board Election Rules.
- b. **Method**
 - i. The method of voting may be paper or electronic ballot, or any other means determined by the Executive Board and approved by the

Elections Commission.

- ii. All general elections are decided by majority vote.
- iii. All positions are held until the final day of the spring semester, unless otherwise specified by this Constitution.

§ 2. Election Frequency

There shall be one election held every semester.

a. Fall Election

- i. Fall elections shall determine 1L positions, and any other vacant position at that time.

b. Spring Election

- i. Spring elections shall determine all positions for the following year.

§ 3. Eligibility

- a. All full-time students within the law school may run for Officer positions in elections, subject to the following limitations:

- i. No Student Bar Association Officer may simultaneously hold a position on the Honor Board;
- ii. Only 1L's may run for 1L Representative Positions;
- iii. Only 2L's may run for 2L Representative Positions;
- iv. Only 3L's may run for 3L Representative Positions;
- v. The Treasurer must be a 2L; and
- vi. In order to run for an Executive Board position, except Treasurer, a candidate must have served one full year as an elected Officer of Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law's Student Bar Association.

- b. All full-time students within the law school may vote in every general election, and no timely vote may be disregarded.

§ 4. Tie – Elections

a. Executive Board Positions

- i. Any tie shall be resolved by paper ballot by those Officers serving during the current semester, or should the tie occur in the spring, those Officers serving in the following semester.
 - 1. The winner shall be determined by a simple majority.
 - 2. That vote shall not take place unless $\frac{3}{4}$ of all Officers eligible to vote are in attendance.
- ii. The candidates who tied may not vote in, nor be present for, the anonymous vote.
- iii. The candidates who tied may make a speech, lasting no longer than eight minutes, before the vote.
- iv. The vote shall be proctored by the Elections Commission.
 - 1. The results of that vote shall remain anonymous.
 - 2. The current President may monitor the count of the anonymous vote.

b. Non-Executive Board Positions

- i. Non-Executive Board positions, when vacant due to lack of candidates or resignation, remain vacant until the following election.
- ii. The Executive Board may vote to appoint an individual to fill the vacant position until the next election.

§ 5. Emergency Elections

- a. In the case of a vacancy on the Executive Board, the remaining Executive Board Officers will direct the Honor Board to hold an emergency, school-wide election.
- b. The election shall take place as soon as reasonable possible.
- c. Emergency elections shall comply with all provisions of this Constitution.

§ 6. Referendums

- a. A. Referendums, binding or otherwise, may be attached to any election proctored by the Honor Board.

- b. Referendums may be posed by any member of the Executive board or Board of Officers.
- c. Binding referendums must be approved by a majority of the Executive Board.

Article VII: Removal, Resignation, and Recall

§ 1. Removal For Absences

- a. In the case of more than four absences (meetings and events included) for any Officer, procedure for removal is as follows:
 - i. Report by the Secretary on the nature of the absences, not exceeding five minutes;
 - ii. An opportunity for the member in question to make a statement, not exceeding five minutes;
 - iii. Questions;
 - iv. Discussion outside the presence of that member; and
 - v. Vote.
 - 1. All Officers may participate in the vote.
 - 2. The vote must be attended by $\frac{3}{4}$ of all voting members.
 - 3. The vote is determined by a simple majority.
- b. The President may veto any vote for removal based upon absences.

§ 2. Removal for Cause

- a. In the case of egregious misconduct, a simple majority of the Executive Board and Board of Officers may remove any Officer, by supermajority vote.
- b. Removal for Cause votes are mandatory upon a member's:
 - i. Honor Board Violation;
 - ii. Expulsion; or
 - iii. Felony Arrest.

§ 3. Resignation

Any Officer may resign by providing a signed letter of resignation to the Secretary, to be read at the following meeting.

§ 4. Recall - Illegitimate Elections

In the event of an illegitimate election, supported by sufficient foundation and evidence as determined by the Elections Commission, the Elections Commission shall order a re-election as soon as possible. The Elections Commission shall have the authority to determine whether the entire election shall be recalled (“total recall”) or whether particular positions require re-election (“partial recall”).

a. Total Recall

In the event of a total recall, the current Executive Committee members and Officers shall retain the positions until a new election yields legitimate victors.

b. Partial Recall

In the event of a partial recall, the legitimate victors shall take their Offices, and current position and office holders shall retain the contested positions and offices until a new election yields legitimate victors.

c. Interim Vacancy

If a current Officer has been legitimately elected to a new position or office, and the election for his or her former office was found to be illegitimate and requiring re-election, then the Officer shall take the new position of office, and the Office for re-election shall remain vacant until special elections yield a legitimate victor.

Article VIII: Amendments and Safeguarding

§ 1. Amendments to the Constitution

- a.** Any and all amendments to this Constitution must be first approved by the Executive Board by unanimous vote.
- b.** Once passed by the Executive Board, the Officers must pass the Amendment by $\frac{3}{4}$ vote, with at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of all Officers, and all Executive Board members present.

§ 2. Safeguarding of the Constitution

The Executive Board is tasked with keeping safe this Constitution, and acting only in accordance with its directives.

Article IX: Ratification

§ 1. Ratification

This Constitution shall be enacted upon attaining simple majority of those Student Bar Association members voting on ratification.

Respectfully submitted on this __the day of _____ 2016, on behalf of the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law Student Bar Association 2016.