

Black Law Student Association Constitution

(Effective as of Spring, 2008)

The University of California Hastings College of the Law, Black Law Student Association has decreed to the annual adoption of the Constitution of the National Black Law Student Association (NBLSA) (see <http://www.nblsa.org/about/constitution>) upon agreement of the Executive Board to pay membership dues to NBLSA. The NBLSA Constitution will be followed in conjunction with Hastings BLSA Bylaws. If the Executive Board does not agree to pay NBLSA dues the NBLSA Constitution is suspended and for the purpose of Hastings BLSA the following bylaws supersede the NBLSA Constitution.

BYLAWS

Article I: Organization Name

The name of the organization shall be University of California Hastings College of the Law Black Law Students Association (hereinafter referred to as BLSA).

Article II: Organization Affiliation

BLSA shall be affiliated with the National Black Law Student Association (hereinafter referred to as NBLSA).

Article III: Purposes

It shall be the purpose of BLSA:

1. To articulate and promote the professional needs and goals of Black law students at the University of California Hastings College of the Law;
2. To foster professional competence among Black law students at the University of California Hastings College of the Law;
3. To provide an environment which will promote unity and camaraderie among Black law students.
4. To influence society as well as the legal community to bring about meaningful change in the legal system to meet the needs of the Black community.
5. To motivate and facilitate successful matriculation through the law school and bar passage process.
6. To create and maintain active relationships between BLSA other student organizations and the larger law school community.
7. To cultivate relationships with Black law students and Black attorneys.

Article IV: Membership

Section 1: Types of Membership

General membership in BLSA may consist of all matriculated students at the University of California Hastings College of the Law, who are committed to the purpose of this organization as stated in Article III of this constitution.

Active membership in BLSA shall be bestowed upon all dues-paying general members of BLSA.

Associate membership in BLSA shall be extended to all faculty and staff of the University of California Hastings College of the Law, who are committed to the purpose of this organization as stated in Article III of this constitution.

The general, active and associate members of BLSA shall constitute the general body of BLSA.

Section 2: Rights and Responsibilities of Members

General and associate members of BLSA are entitled to participate in all activities sponsored by BLSA, provided that where nonmembers are charged an entrance fee to a BLSA activity, general and associate members shall also be charged the entrance fee. General and associate members of BLSA shall not vote on BLSA business or in BLSA elections, and shall not hold any office in BLSA.

Active members of BLSA are entitled to participate in all activities sponsored by BLSA, are entitled to hold office in BLSA, and are entitled to vote on BLSA business and in BLSA elections.

All Active BLSA members shall be part of a standing committee.

All BLSA members are expected to regularly attend general body meetings of BLSA and support activities engaged in by BLSA.

Article V: Officers

The Administrative Officers of BLSA shall be the:

a) President/ (Co-President)

b) Vice-President

c) Secretary

d) Treasurer

e) Parliamentarian

f) Historian

The Administrative Officers of BLSA shall be elected annually for a term of one year to commence at the end of the finals period Spring Semester. Administrative Officers shall be the head of a standing committee except for the Parliamentarian. The Executive Board of BLSA shall be composed of the BLSA Administrative Officers.

Article VI: Meetings

The general body of BLSA shall meet at the discretion of the executive board, but shall meet at least once every month during the school year. Special meetings shall be called upon the directive of the President, or upon the directive of any two Executive Board members or five active members.

The Executive Board of BLSA shall meet at the discretion of the officers, but shall meet at least once every two weeks during the school year. Special meetings shall be called upon the directive of the Vice-President or upon the directive of any two Executive Board members.

Article VII: Quorum and Voting

A quorum shall consist of one-third plus one of the active members of BLSA. A simple majority vote of the quorum shall approve proposed BLSA activities or events presented to the general body. They will be presented at the discretion of the President, Vice-President and the chairperson of the committee sponsoring the event.

Article VIII: Impeachment

Any officer of BLSA may be impeached by BLSA for failure to properly execute his or her duties as enumerated in the Constitution and/or By-Laws of BLSA, or for failure to follow a directive given by the general body or the executive board.

Article IX: Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at any regular general body meeting of BLSA upon a two-thirds vote of the quorum present, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the general body.

Article X: Adoption and Rescission

This Constitution shall be adopted or rescinded by BLSA upon a two-thirds vote of all active members.

**BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA HASTINGS COLLEGE OF THE LAW
AMENDMENTS**

Section 1: Membership and Dues

1.1: General members of BLSA shall be required to pay membership dues in order to achieve active member status in BLSA. The amount and schedule of payment of dues shall be determined by the treasurer subject to approval from the executive board. Dues shall include NBLSA dues as well as Hastings BLSA dues.

Section 2: Duties of Administrative Officers

2.1: The duties of the **President/ Co President** shall include, but shall not be limited to: chairing all regular and special general body meetings; channeling issues to appropriate committees for consideration; serving as an ex-officio member of each committee; serving as a spokesperson for BLSA.

2.2: The duties of the **Vice-President** shall include, but shall not be limited to: chairing all regular and special executive board meetings; fulfilling the responsibilities of the President in those instances where the President is unable to serve; assuming the office of President in the event that the President either resigns or is impeached; serving as an ex-officio member of each committee.

2.3: The duties of the **Secretary** shall include, but shall not be limited to: compiling a list of all general members of BLSA; taking minutes at all regular and special meetings of the executive board and general body; filing minutes from all executive board and general body meetings in the BLSA office; sending an electronic copy of the minutes from all regular and special meetings of the general body to all members and sending electronically the minutes from all regular and special executive board meetings to BLSA's executive board; managing all mail distribution; distributing a copy of the BLSA constitution to all members.

2.4: The duties of the **Treasurer** shall include, but shall not be limited to: collecting and disbursing all BLSA funds; maintaining an accurate record of active (dues-paying) members; submitting an annual budget request to the Director of Student Services and to ASUCH; creating a written budget detailing the allocation of BLSA funds among the general body, administrative officers, and standing committees; maintaining an accurate record of BLSA revenues and expenditures; give a financial report at every executive board meeting and twice a semester at general body meetings.

2.5: The duties of the **Parliamentarian** shall include, but shall not be limited to: maintaining order during executive board and general body meetings; ensuring that

parliamentary procedure is followed at all executive board and general body meetings; deciding questions of parliamentary procedure at executive board and general body meetings; ensure BLSA functions under the constitution. The parliamentarian shall be a first-year student and serve as a representative for the first-year students.

2.6: The duties of the **Historian** shall include, but shall not be limited to maintaining a documentation of BLSA events; managing all affairs of the BLSA office, including the BLSA board located in the basement hallway and helping to maintain the BLSA website in conjunction with HBSA Mentorship Programs Website Committee.

Section 3: Standing Committees

4.1: Ad hoc committees shall be formed upon a majority vote of the quorum present at any general body meeting of BLSA. At such time, the general body shall also elect a chairperson to the committee. The executive board shall determine the duration of the committee's existence, determine the purpose of the committee and determine the term of the chairperson's office not to exceed one school year.

4.2: It shall be the responsibility of the **Fundraising Committee** to raise funds for BLSA activities. As such, the duties of the committee shall include, but shall not be limited to: planning fundraising events, soliciting funds from alumni, university resources, businesses and law firms.

4.3: It shall be the purpose of the **Social Committee** to foster a spirit of congeniality and camaraderie among BLSA members. As such, the duties of the committee shall include, but shall not be limited to: organizing and implementing social and recreational events recommended by BLSA; hosting receptions for individuals brought to the law school by BLSA; cultivating relationships between BLSA and other student organizations.

4.4: It shall be the responsibility of the **Academic Committee** to provide academic support to BLSA members. Duties of the committee include but are not limited to maintaining an outline bank; setting up group study sessions; organizing educational panels.

4.5 It shall be the purpose of the **Outreach Committee** to foster relationships with others so that BLSA may give back, uplift others and help bring about meaningful change in the Black community. Duties of the committee shall include but are not limited to: maintaining BLSA's involvement with Student of Color Outreach Day, and A Day at Law School.

4.6: It shall be the purpose of the **Alumni Committee** to create and maintain active relationships with the alumni. Duties of the committee include but are not limited to

working with the HBLSA Mentorship Program Alumni Outreach Committee to keep current the contact database of all BLSA members current and Alumni.

4.7: Committees shall meet at the discretion of their respective chairpersons.

Section 5: Budget

5.1: Administrative officers and committee chairpersons shall propose an operating budget to the BLSA treasurer and President prior to the first executive board meeting of the academic year. The budget approved by the treasurer and Executive Board shall be presented to the BLSA general body for approval by a quorum. Upon authorization of that budget, committees shall plan and implement activities at their discretion. The treasurer shall disburse money allocated to a committee upon the request of that committee for the purpose of approved activities.

5.2: Money not allocated to the administrative officers, or committees shall remain in the BLSA general fund. BLSA general funds shall be spent upon a majority vote of the executive board.

Section 6: Executive Board

6.1: The Executive Board shall be composed of the BLSA administrative officers.

6.2: All Executive Board members are expected to adhere to the directives of the executive board and the general body.

6.3: The Executive Board of BLSA shall have general supervision of BLSA in the absence of the general body.

6.4: Executive Board meetings shall be open to the general body.

Section 7: Order of Business

7.1: BLSA general body meetings shall include, but shall not be limited to: reports from all committees to the general body, reports from the Executive Board to the general body, voting on all new business.

7.2: BLSA general body meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order--- Newly Revised.

Section 8: Elections

8.1: The annual election of BLSA officers shall take place in April.

8.2: The Executive Board plus one active member is to oversee the annual election of BLSA officers. The duties of the board shall include: determining the elections calendar; regulating the nomination of candidates; organizing a forum for the presentation of candidate platforms; planning the election; tabulating cast ballots; notifying the general body of the election results.

8.3: There shall be a forum arranged at a regular general body meeting or otherwise, at which nominations shall be made and nominees shall accept or decline their nominations for office. Only active members may accept nominations for office. An active member can only accept a nomination for one office.

8.4: There shall be a forum arranged at a regular general body meeting for the presentation of candidate's platform.

8.5: Write-in candidates (candidates not nominated but still wanting to run) shall be allowed, provided that the write-in candidates are active members.

8.6: The election shall be by secret ballot. Only active members shall be allowed to vote. The ballots will be tabulated at the regular general body meeting in which the presentation of the candidate's platform and the voting takes place.

8.7: A candidate shall be elected to office if that candidate receives a greater number of eligible votes than any other candidate for that office. In the event that a candidate runs unopposed, 50 percent plus one of the ballots cast shall be required to elect that candidate to office.

8.8: In the event of a tie, there shall be a run-off election between the two candidates for that office that received the highest number of votes.

8.9: In the event that no candidate is elected to an office, that office shall remain vacant until the first general body meeting of the subsequent school year, at which time the position shall be filled, if possible, by general body vote.

8.10: Absentee ballots will be accepted via electronic mail but the vote of the absent member will not be by secret ballot. The absent member must email at least 3 Executive Board members plus the active member assigned to help with elections with the candidates for which they voted.

8.11 For the **2008-2009** elections the election procedure will not include a forum for nominations. Write in candidates are preferred

Section 9: Impeachment

9.1: The impeachment process shall be initiated by an active member filing charges against an officer. Such charges must be filed in writing with the President, or if such

charges are against the President, with the President. The petition containing such charges shall be signed by at least twenty-five percent of the active members.

9.2: The officer receiving the petition shall notify the officer, against whom such charges have been filed. The officer receiving the petition shall also determine the date of a hearing to be held before the general body for the purpose of determining whether to impeach the charged officer. Such hearing shall be called not less than seven days after receipt of the charges, and not more than fourteen days after receipt of the charges. The officer receiving the petition shall chair that hearing.

9.3: The charged officer shall have the opportunity to speak at the hearing. The general body shall have the opportunity to question the charged officer, liaison or committee chairperson.

9.4: At the close of the hearing, the active members shall vote on the issue of impeachment. A two-thirds vote of all active members shall be required to impeach an officer.

Section 10: Resignation

10.1: An executive board member shall tender resignation in writing to the president of BLSA. The president shall promptly notify the general body of the resignation.

10.2: The BLSA president shall make a temporary appointment to fill the vacant position. The position will be permanently filled at an election held at the next general body meeting.

Section 11: Amendment

11.1: The By-Laws shall be amended by the majority vote of the quorum present at any regular general body meeting, provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing.

Section 12: Adoption and Rescission

12.1: These By-Laws shall be adopted or rescinded by a two-thirds vote of the quorum present at any regular general body meeting.