

Black Law Students Association

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Law

As amended September 4, 2013

PREAMBLE The Black Law Students Association (BLSA) is a forum for sharing and solving problems unique to Black students in the law school community. BLSA has made a commitment to proportionate representation in the professional arena, supported by sponsoring workshops and symposia and by supplying individualized assistance. BLSA sponsors social events throughout the year, and BLSA speaks on behalf of the needs of Black students to the administration, faculty, and student body. The Black Law Students Association is affiliated with the National Black Law Students Association, the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers and the UNC Alliance of Black Graduate and Professional Students.

ARTICLE I

ORGANIZATION NAME

The Organization shall be known as the Black Law Students Association at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Association shall be to utilize the collective resources of its members to promote and develop a cooperative learning environment through:

- a. academic growth, support and scholarship
- b. professional growth and development
- c. social support
- d. networking opportunities
- e. community service
- f. increased presence of Black students and faculty
- g. encouragement and participation in recruitment of Black students and faculty BLSA shall take the necessary and appropriate acts to accomplish these purposes.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERS

Section 1

Eligibility for membership: Membership shall be open to all matriculated Black law students and to any other law students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. All such persons who subscribe to the purposes mentioned in Article II shall be eligible to join BLSA.

Section 2

Membership

Membership in BLSA shall consist of all persons:

- 1) who meet the definitions of eligible membership found in Article III, Section 1, and
- 2) who pay the full amount of dues by the requisite date in Article IX, Section 2.

Section 3

Rights of Membership

Members shall have the right:

- 1) to participate in all functions and activities of BLSA,
- 2) to vote in all matters relating to action by BLSA,
- 3) to hold office within BLSA, and
- 4) to represent BLSA in an official capacity.

Section 4

Once a member has paid their annual dues, their membership is valid from the third Monday of September of the year they are paid, until the first day of classes of the subsequent year.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

Section 1

Elected Officers: The elected officers of this Association shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and at the option of BLSA, any additional officers may be elected pursuant to Article XII.

Section 2

Ability of Officers:

- a) All members who qualify for membership under Article III, Section 2, for the semester before their election shall be eligible to be nominated for office.
- b) An officer must remain a member for the entire term of his or her officer or be removed pursuant to Article V, Section 6.

Section 3

Duties and Authority of the President: The duties and authority of the President shall be:

- a. To act as official spokesperson for BLSA;
- b. To preside at meetings of BLSA and act as chairperson of the Executive Committee;
- c. To call special meetings of BLSA or any committee as deemed necessary;
- d. To appoint chairpersons of all standing committees and special committees, and to appoint any executive assistant, including Minority Law Day Coordinator;
- e. To perform such other functions and exercise further duties as may be voted for time to time by BLSA or Executive Committee;
- f. To exercise general executive authority over the business and activities of BLSA;
- g. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all BLSA committees;
- h. The President shall be responsible for conducting a transitional meeting before the installation of the new officers.

Section 4

Duties and Authority of the Vice-President: The duties of the Vice-President shall be:

- a. To perform all the duties of the President in his or her absence, disability, or resignation;
- b. To oversee alumni relations
- c. To schedule BLSA events (including general body and Executive Committee meetings, outreach events, and social activities)

Section 5 Duties and Authority of the Secretary: The duties of the Secretary shall be:

- a. To give due notice of all meetings of the general body and the Executive Committee;
- b. To record the minutes of all general body and Executive Committee meetings;
- c. To keep a list of all BLSA members;
- d. To submit the minutes to general body and the Executive Committee at all regular meetings or whenever required by either body;
- e. To post a copy of the minutes of all BLSA meetings in a conspicuous location;
- f. To coordinate external communication of information.
- g. To ensure proper parliamentary procedures are executed and answer all questions concerning such procedures;
- h. To act as chairperson of the Constitutional Committee.

Section 6

Duties and Authority of the Treasurer: The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

- a. To receive all monies of BLSA and promptly deposit the same in the name of BLSA in a separate account(s) in a responsible bank or other responsible student depository;
- b. To act as the Chief Financial Officer of BLSA;
- c. To make authorized disbursements on behalf of BLSA;

- d. To submit reports to BLSA and the Executive Committee at all regular meetings, or whenever required by either body, covering the financial condition of BLSA, showing receipts and disbursement, and any outstanding accounts unpaid since the last report;
- e. To give receipts for all membership fees paid;
- f. To serve as chairperson of the Fundraising Committee.

ARTICLE V

COMMITTEES

Section 1

The Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall have general control of the affairs of BLSA subject to the authority of BLSA as a whole and the provisions of this Constitution. The Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, an ex-officio Faculty Advisor, a First Year Representative and such other members to be elected at the annual election meeting of BLSA as BLSA By-Laws may decide.

Section 2

Duties of the Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall render a report to BLSA at the regular meeting of BLSA and whenever otherwise required by BLSA.

The further duties and powers of the Executive Committee shall be:

- a. To appoint special committees from time to time;
- b. To fill all vacancies in BLSA until an election is held;
- c. To remove delinquent chairpersons or members from committees standing or special.

Section 3

Quorum of the Executive Committee: The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be one-third – fifths ($3/5$) of its membership.

Section 4

Standing Chairpersons: The standing chairperson of BLSA shall include a chairperson for: Fundraising, Academic Support, Constitution, Pro Bono, and Public Relations. Other necessary chairpersons may be established at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Chairpersons may establish a committee as needed.

- a. Fundraising

b. **ACADEMIC CHAIR.** The Academic Support Committee shall study educational conditions affecting Black people and minority groups in the law school and neighboring community, and design programs to meet those specific conditions.

c. **CONSTITUTION.** The Constitution Committee shall be chaired by the Secretary and shall preside over the amendment process. The committee shall also mediate all constitutional disputes. If mediation is unsuccessful, the committee will present options to the Executive Committee, for final resolution by the general body.

d. **PRO BONO.** The Pro Bono Committee shall seek and identify the various problems encountered by minorities in the community and program activities in conjunction with the Academic Support Committee to increase the legal knowledge of those in the community enabling them to overcome these problems.

e. **PUBLIC RELATIONS.** The Public Relations Chair's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, maintaining external communications, updating organization's website, creating biyearly newsletter, and maintaining social media accounts.

Section 5

Term of Office: Members of the Executive Committee and of the several standing committees shall hold office for one year or until their successors are elected and qualify.

Section 6

Vacancies and Removals: Any member of the Executive Committee or any standing committee or special committee who does not perform his or her required duties for three consecutive meetings or is absent from three consecutive meetings without notice, may be removed by the Executive Committee. A member of any standing or special committee may be directly removed by the chairperson for dereliction of duty.

ARTICLE VI

FACULTY ADVISOR

There shall be a Faculty Advisor to BLSA in accordance with the college or student government regulations relating thereto.

ARTICLE VII

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1

ELECTION MEETING: All officers and members not otherwise appointed shall be elected by an electronic ballot and shall hold office for one year or until their successors are elected and qualify. No candidate for office shall occupy the chair at the election meeting.

Section 2

Notice of Election Meeting: Each member shall receive written or electronic notice of the annual election meeting at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

Section 3

Nominations: Nominations shall be made at the nominating meeting which shall be at least fourteen (14) days prior to the election date.

A forum will be held (7) days prior to the election date. At which time, each candidate will be allotted (3) minutes to advocate for themselves. After each candidate for a particular position has spoken there will be five (5) minutes dedicated to Q & A.

The election will be done electronically. Each BLSA member who has paid their dues will receive an email on the election date by 9am, and will have until 8pm that evening to respond. After 8pm the ballot will be closed and no submissions will be accepted.

Section 4

Annual Meeting: Officers elected at the election meeting shall be installed at the next regular meeting.

Section 5

Eligible Voters: The number of eligible voting member of BLSA shall be established before voting begins.

ARTICLE VIII

MEETINGS

Section 1

Regular Meetings: Regular meetings shall be held at least once a month and such other special meetings as may be required.

Section 2

Special Meeting: Special Meetings may be called at any time and place within three days of such meeting.

Section 3

Nomination Meetings: The Nomination Meeting shall be held during the month of March of each year, except as otherwise agreed upon by the Executive Committee. Written notice of the time

and place of the Nomination Meeting shall be sent by the Secretary to all members of the Chapter at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the date of the Nomination Meeting.

Section 4

Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a month at such times and places as it shall determine. Special meetings of the Executive Committee may be called by the President, Secretary, or three members of the committee on two days notice.

Section 5

Standing Committees: The standing committees shall meet regularly at least once a semester and at such times and places as they determine. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson.

ARTICLE IX

DUES AND FEES

Section 1

Dues: To become a full member of BLSA, a person must pay both National and Chapter dues, by the dates set by NBLSA and UNC BLSA. The amount of dues will be determined annually by both NBLSA and UNC BLSA.

Section 2

Late Payment of Dues: Late fees will be determined by (NBLSA and UNC BLSA)

ARTICLE X

QUORUM

The number of members necessary to constitute a quorum at all meetings of BLSA shall be as follows:

Three-fifths of the Executive Committee plus 30% of the membership.

ARTICLE XI

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Order of Business: Unless altered or suspended at any meeting by the majority vote of the members present, the following shall be the order of business at all general body BLSA meetings.

Ascertainment of members present
Reading of minutes of previous meeting

Reports of Officers
Reports of Committees
Elections
Unfinished Business
New Business

Rules of procedures proscribed in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern BLSA meetings, except as otherwise herein provided.

ARTICLE XII

SCHEDULING AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Section 1

Schedule: The fiscal and business year of BLSA shall be governed pursuant to Student Bar Association Rules.

Section 2 Installation of Officers: The officers elected at the Election meeting shall be installed at the next meeting of BLSA immediately following the election.

ARTICLE XIII

BY-LAWS

BLSA may adopt or amend by-laws not inconsistent with this constitution provided that: (1) written notice of the proposed amendment or by-law shall be given to all members at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting at which the same is to be acted upon, or (2) the proposed amendment shall be approved at two successive regular meetings of BLSA.

ARTICLE XIV

AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

Provided there is a quorum, this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members present at the regular meeting, provided the proposed amendment is submitted to the Executive Committee sixty (60) days prior to the regular meeting. The executive committee shall publish such proposals and give a copy to each member.

ARTICLE XV

SEVERABILITY

Any article or section thereof found to be invalid, does not render the entire Constitution invalid.