

**THE CONSTITUTION OF  
THE HARVARD LAW SCHOOL  
ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**

**Formed March 21, 2000**

**Revised March 28, 2022**

**I. Purpose**

1.0 The Harvard Law School Asian Pacific American Law Students Association (“APALSA”) exists to promote a greater understanding of Asian Pacific American culture, to serve as a vehicle for Asian Pacific American political activity, and to serve as a support network for Asian Pacific American students and the Harvard Law School community.

**II. Membership**

2.1 Membership is open to all Harvard Law School students and alumni.

2.2 Members are obligated to abide by this constitution and its by-laws.

2.3 Members must pay a membership fee to be determined each year by the executive board for that year’s membership.

2.4 Members have the right to participate in all events sponsored by APALSA and the right to vote in all APALSA matters brought before the general membership.

2.5 Members have the right to run for and hold office only if they will be attending school on the Harvard University campus during their term of office.

**III. Leadership Structure and Powers**

3.1 The executive board is the governing body of the organization and will consist of at least the following officers and chairs:

3.2 Two *Co-Presidents* are the representatives of APALSA. The Co-Presidents direct and facilitate all general events and affairs conducted by APALSA. The Co-Presidents will also call and oversee all meetings of the executive board and the general body.

- 3.3 A *Treasurer* is generally responsible for all financial matters of APALSA. The Treasurer will approve, in conjunction with the Co-Chairs, all APALSA-related expenses, including those associated with the annual conference. The Treasurer will also, along with the Co-Presidents, be responsible for drafting and submitting the budget.
- 3.2 An *Academic Chair* is responsible for providing academic support for APALSA members. Duties may include, but are not limited to, organizing academics-related information sessions, finals support sessions, maintaining the APALSA library and outline bank, and clerkship-related events.
- 3.4 Two *Professional Development Chairs* are generally responsible for providing employment information to APALSA members, organizing events to assist APALSA members in finding jobs, serving as a liaison between the current membership and the alumni board, and organizing alumni related events.
- 3.5 An *Alumni Relations Chair* is responsible as a liaison between the current membership and the alumni board, and organizing alumni related events.
- 3.6 A *Communications Chair* coordinates all communications and publicity, maintains the organization website, current membership directory, and APALSA alumni database, sends newsletters to the current membership and the alumni, and takes minutes at all executive board and general meetings. The Communications Chair works closely with other board members, especially the Professional Development Chair and Alumni Relations Chair, to expand the APALSA alumni database.
- 3.7 Two *Conference Chairs* are responsible for all matters related to the annual conference and coordinate support from the executive board.
- 3.8 Two *Sponsorship Chairs* obtain financing for APALSA's many social, political, and professional events including the annual conference. The Sponsorship Co-Chairs also serve as a liaison between APALSA and law firm sponsors, working to meet the financing needs of the APALSA membership while addressing any sponsor concerns and finding ways for sponsors to get more involved in APALSA events.

- 3.9 Two *Social Chairs* focus on recruiting 1Ls and maintaining active engagement of current members through social events, including parties, mixers, and both fall and winter retreats.
- 3.10 A *Membership Chair* implements events relating to the Sib Family program and works with the Co-Presidents in planning events that overlap with membership bonding, including General Body Meetings.
- 3.11 A *Political Chair* informs members of current issues relevant to Asian Pacific Americans and coordinates political and community activities for the members.
- 3.12 A *Public Interest Chair* informs members of public interest related issues relevant to Asian Pacific Americans and coordinates events and activities to promote interest and awareness of such issues.
- 3.13 A *Community Engagement Chair* is focused on greater Boston and Asian American outreach, including but not limited to voter engagement, Asian service organizations, and speaker events.
- 3.14 *1L Representatives* will serve as liaisons to the 1L class, plan 1L specific programming, and work with the Co-Presidents to serve as APALSA representatives for ASW. This position will be selected via written applications and interviews conducted by the Co-Presidents in the fall of any given school year. Co-Presidents may receive feedback from the rest of the board on candidates, but will have the final decision power. They may select between two to three 1L Reps.
- 3.15 *LL.M. Representatives* will serve as liaisons to the LL.M. class, plan LL.M. specific programming, and foster connections between JD and LL.M. students. This position will be selected via written applications and interviews conducted by the Co-Presidents in the fall of any given school year. Co-Presidents may receive feedback from the rest of the board on candidates, but will have the final decision power. They may select between one and two LL.M. Representatives.
- 3.16 Two *Justice Chairs* are responsible for planning events that incorporate politically minded and justice-oriented ideals into APALSA's programming, with special attention to underserved communities, racial solidarity, and racial and economic justice.

### 3.17 Removal of a Sitting Officer

3.17.1 Failure to abide by the principles and laws of the constitution and/or negligence of the duties required of a member of the board will be cause for removal.

3.17.2 The removal of a sitting officer requires more than two-thirds vote of the entire board, with the officer who is the subject of the vote not participating.

3.17.3 The executive board at its discretion may hold elections according to the procedures outlined in Section IV to replace the removed officer.

3.18 The above list of the offices is subject to an amendment of the constitution with the exception of the Co-Presidents and the Treasurer.

## **IV. Elections for Board Positions**

4.1 Elections will be held every spring no later than the third week in April or when the board decides.

4.2 Only current members may vote in an election. Absentee votes will be accepted on condition they are presented to the current board.

4.3 Members have the right to run for and hold office only if they will be attending school on the Harvard University campus during their term of office.

4.4 A member running for office who plans to spend all or part of his or her term of office away from Harvard Law School must disclose this fact at elections.

4.5 A member may run for more than one position; however, once elected for a position, he or she must hold only that position.

4.6 The length of election speeches and the order in which the positions are voted on shall be determined by the outgoing board.

4.7 No quorum will be required for the election to be valid.

4.8 To be elected, a member must win a majority of the direct and secret ballot votes of the members participating in the election.

- 4.9 For any position that is not filled by a majority, a run-off between the two highest vote winners will be immediately conducted. For any co-chair positions, if no candidate receives a majority, a run-off among the three highest vote winners will be immediately conducted.
- 4.10 The date of the turnover to the new board will be determined by the outgoing board, with the exception that the Treasurer position will be turned over at the end of the academic year.

## **V. Meetings**

- 5.1 The executive board will hold regular meetings as they require.
- 5.2 Two-thirds of the executive board must attend for the executive meeting to be official.
- 5.3 Upon request, the Co-Presidents and Treasurer will show the budget spreadsheet to other board members during board meetings. Continued access to the budget spreadsheet will continue to be limited to the Co-Presidents and Treasurer.
- 5.4 On general business matters, the executive board will decide by majority vote.
- 5.5 General meetings when the entire membership is invited will be held regularly as the board decides.

## **VI. Endorsements**

- 6.1 Financial contributions that do not constitute a political endorsement shall be decided by the board's typical procedures.
- 6.2 The board may choose to publicly sign statements, letters, and/or endorsements on behalf of APALSA with (a) a two-thirds majority of board votes cast and (b) at least one-half of the entire board voting in favor.
- 6.3 The board may choose to send a proposal to publicly sign a statement, letter, and/or endorsement for an opportunity for notice-and-comment with one-third vote of the entire board.

- 6.4 The board may choose to send a proposal to publicly sign a statement, letter, and/or endorsement to a general body vote with a majority vote of the entire board.
- 6.5 When the general membership votes on a proposal to sign a statement, letter, and/or endorsement brought before it by the board, a majority of the member votes cast is sufficient for the proposal to pass; no quorum is required.
- 6.6 Members may use the referendum procedures in Section 7 to bring a proposal before the general body for a vote.

## **VI. Referendums**

- 7.1 Any member may petition the board to consider signing a statement, letter, and/or endorsement on behalf of APALSA under Section 6.
- 7.2 Any member may petition to bring a proposal or a constitutional amendment up to a general body vote. Petitions require the signatures of at least ten members to be brought to a general body vote.
- 7.3 Constitutional amendment proposals brought by members are subject to the requirements of Section 8. For all other proposals, a referendum must be approved by a majority of the membership to pass.
- 7.4 The board must abide by and implement any referenda passed by the general membership, unless doing so would violate any laws, this constitution, or requirements of Harvard Law School.

## **VII. Ratifying and Amending the Constitution**

- 8.1 Amendments to the constitution may be proposed by either a two-thirds vote of the entire board or a referendum from the membership.
- 8.2 All amendments may be passed with a two-thirds vote of the entire board.