PREAMBLE

We, the students of Harvard Law School, do hereby constitute the Harvard Law School Student Government in order to defend the welfare of the Student Body, advocate for policy changes for the benefit of the Student Body, and promote shared student governance.

ARTICLE I – STUDENT GOVERNMENT

1. Name. The official name of this organization shall be Harvard Law School Student Government (hereinafter “Student Government”).

2. Definition. Student Government is an independent, student run organization established to further Harvard Law School students’ rights while working with the University. Student Government is a service organization intended to serve the needs of the Student Body.

3. Authority. All power vested in this Constitution shall be derived from the Student Body of Harvard Law School. All students shall be members of the Student Body. Student Government shall have the authority to speak and act on behalf of the Student Body, shall be empowered to pass resolutions to express the will of the Student Body, and shall administer the establishment, funding, and dissolution of student organizations.

4. Non-Discrimination Clause. Student Government shall not discriminate because of race, color, creed, religion or nonreligion, national origin, gender, age, physical or mental ability, political identification, socioeconomic status, familial status, gender identification, sexual identity, or sexual orientation. Student Government shall have the power to expand, but not diminish, these protections.

5. Multiple Offices. No person, except on a temporary, limited basis, shall simultaneously hold multiple elected positions within Student Government, nor hold multiple appointed offices, nor be a representative and an executive officer. Committee membership shall not constitute an office.

6. Compensation. No member of Student Government shall receive monetary compensation for their services.


8. Structure. Student Government shall consist of a Student Council and an Executive Board, and may also consist of an appointed Cabinet. The Student Council shall consist of several elected representatives and
elected members of the Executive Board. Students who are not members of Student Government shall be able to participate in its activities, pursuant to rules established in the bylaws.

9. Meetings.
   a. The Student Council shall meet no less than once per month during the fall and spring semesters at a date, time, and place prescribed by Executive Board. Meetings shall be commenced by a call to order of the presiding officer. The Student Council may only vote or transact business upon the attainment of a quorum.
   b. All meetings and votes of the Student Council shall be held in open session and minutes shall be made public. During a meeting, the Student Council may move into closed session by a majority vote, but may not take any binding votes during closed session.
   c. Attendance at meetings is mandatory for all members of Student Government, unless they can provide a reasonable excuse for non-attendance to the presiding officer.
   d. At meetings of the Student Council, attendance shall be taken and publicly recorded in the minutes.
   e. Members of the Student Council shall reserve the right to express their formal reservations of votes or actions in the minutes by transmitting them to the Director of Communications within 48 hours of a meeting.

10. Committees. Student Government shall have the seven (7) standing committees, listed below, and may form additional committees. Committees shall work to address specific issues affecting the Student Body. Committees shall be led by a chair selected by the Student Body President. Membership in committees shall be open to the Student Body.
   a. Academic Affairs
   b. Student Affairs
   c. Student Organizations & Journals
   d. Diversity & Inclusion
   e. Health & Wellness
   f. Community Service
   g. Events

ARTICLE II – REPRESENTATIVES

1. Purpose. Representatives shall be responsible for advancing the interests of the constituency that its members represent and the broader Student Body. Representatives are responsible for attending meetings
of Student Government, supporting its activities, and actively soliciting input from constituents and the broader Student Body.

2. **Composition.**
   a. There shall be the following elected representatives of various constituencies at Harvard Law School.
      i. There shall be four (4) representatives for third-year (“3L”) J.D. students.
      ii. There shall be four (4) representatives for second-year (“2L”) J.D. students.
      iii. There shall be one (1) representative for each first-year (“1L”) J.D. section.
      iv. There shall be one (1) representative for 2L transfer students.
      v. There shall be two (2) representatives for L.L.M. program students.
      vi. There shall be one (1) representative for S.J.D. program students.

3. **Voting.** All representatives shall receive one (1) vote on all substantive and procedural matters before the Student Council. If a representative is acting as presiding officer for a meeting, they may choose to refrain from voting.

4. **Election.** In order to stand for election as a representative, a student must, in the normal course of his or her academic program, expect to be a member of the represented group during his or her term. Only those students who would be eligible to stand for election to a representative position may vote in an election for that position.

5. **Term of Office.** All representatives shall serve for a term of one (1) year. The term of office shall expire the last day of classes of the spring semester, and new terms of office shall begin upon the expiration of the term of the predecessor. Should a representative assume office midway through the year, they shall serve for the remainder of the term.

6. **Vacancies.** Should a vacancy arise during a representative’s term of office at some point after the annual fall election, Student Government shall have the power to appoint a replacement to serve for the remainder of the term by an absolute majority vote of the Student Council after an open application to the Student Body. Replacements must conform to the eligibility requirements as the position they seek to fill.

**ARTICLE III – EXECUTIVE BOARD**

1. **Purpose.** The Executive Board, under the leadership of the Student Body President and Student Body Vice President, shall be responsible for managing the internal affairs of Student Government, as well as advancing the interests of the entire Student Body.

2. **Composition.** The Executive Board shall be led by a Student Body President and Student Body Vice President, and shall also consist of a Director of Student Organizations, Treasurer, and Director of Communications, all five (5) of whom shall be executive officers.
3. **Student Body President.** The Student Body President shall be the chief representative and spokesperson for the Student Body; shall serve as the chief executive officer of Student Government; shall have the authority to enter into agreements with external organizations subject to a majority vote of the Student Council; shall create a budget for Student Government; shall chair the Executive Board; shall have the power to constitute and dissolve committees and select committee chairs; shall have the power to select, with the consultation of the Student Council, appointed officers of Student Government, and may remove them, but the Student Council may reinstate a removed appointed officer by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

4. **Student Body Vice President.** The Student Body Vice President shall assist in carrying out the Student Body President’s duties, and shall serve as Student Body President if the Student Body President is absent. The Student Body Vice President shall be the presiding officer over meetings of the Student Council, and may designate another member of Student Government to serve as presiding officer for a meeting.

5. **Director of Student Organizations.** The Director of Student Organizations shall serve as the chief liaison to student organizations and journals on campus, oversee the process of recognizing the new student organizations, and shall chair the Student Funding Board to allocate funding to student organizations.

6. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall assist the Student Body President and Student Body Vice President in managing the budget of Student Government, shall serve as a member of the Student Funding Board, and reasonably assist in all matters pertaining to budget or funding between the HLS administration and Student Body. The Treasurer shall prepare a monthly report on the budget for Student Government during the fall and spring semesters.

7. **Director of Communications.** The Director of Communications shall be responsible for recording and publicly publishing minutes for meetings of Student Government and the Executive Board, maintaining information on the membership of Student Government, and assisting the Student Body President and Student Body Vice President with the logistics of Student Government functions. Functions include, but are not necessarily limited to, booking rooms, ordering food, maintaining Student Government social media forums, and sending emails to the student body.

8. **Appointed Cabinet.** The Student Body President may select appointed Cabinet officers, subject to the limitations of this Constitution. Cabinet officers shall be responsible for carrying out their functions as directed by the Bylaws, but may not exercise powers that conflict with this Constitution. Cabinet officers must be students, but need not be elected members of Student Government. No person may hold multiple appointed offices.

9. **Voting.** All executive officers shall receive one (1) vote on all substantive and procedural matters before the Student Council or the Executive Board, except the Student Body President, who shall receive no
vote on the Student Council. If an executive officer is acting as presiding officer for a meeting, they may choose to refrain from voting. Appointed officers shall not receive a vote in the Student Council or the Executive Board, unless they hold a seat on the Student Council or Executive Board that entitles them to a vote, but may attend and speak in Executive Board meetings.

10. **Term of Office.** All Executive Board members shall serve for a term of one (1) year. The term of office shall expire on the last day of classes in the spring semester, and the new terms of office shall begin upon the expiration of the term of their predecessor. Should an Executive Board member assume office midway through the year, they shall serve for the remainder of the term.

11. **Eligibility.** All students in good standing who will be students for the full duration of the term of office shall be eligible to run for any executive officer position, or be selected for an appointed officer position.

12. **Vacancies.**

a. If the office of Student Body President becomes vacant, the line of succession shall be the following: Student Body Vice President, Director of Student Organizations, Treasurer, Director of Communications, Director of Diversity, and Director of Events. Should the line of succession fail to produce a replacement, the representatives shall select a new Student Body President from among the Student Body, including Student Government.

b. If the office of the Student Body Vice President becomes vacant, the Student Body President may appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term, subject to the approval of a majority of the Student Council.

c. If any other elected officer position becomes vacant, Student Government shall publically post an application for the position to the Student Body, and select one of the applicants by an absolute majority vote.

d. Vacancies shall be filled with all reasonable haste.

**ARTICLE IV – JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS**

1. **Impeachment.**

a. Executive officers and representatives may be impeached upon a vote by an absolute two-thirds (2/3) of the Student Council for reasons of malfeasance in office, gross misconduct, misappropriation of Student Government resources, or violation of the oath of office.

b. Student Government may not conduct a hearing and vote to impeach unless a written article of impeachment outlining the reasons for impeachment has been signed by an absolute majority of the Student Council at least seven (7) calendar days before the hearing and vote to impeach. Once approved by an absolute majority of the Student Council, an article of impeachment must be voted on by the Student Council.
c. Impeachment proceedings must permit the accuser(s) and the accused to have equal time to present evidence and call witnesses, not less than twenty (20) minutes each.

d. The Student Government may create other procedures for conducting impeachment proceedings that do not conflict with this Constitution.

2. **Removal Due to Ineligibility.** An executive officer, representative, or appointed officer shall be automatically and immediately removed from office if they are no longer in good standing, or cease to be a student, or miss four (4) Student Government meetings in a semester without a reasonable excuse.

3. **Judicial Proceedings.** The Student Government may create other judicial proceedings that do not conflict with this Constitution.

**ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS**

1. **Representatives.**

   a. During the spring semester of each year, Student Government shall hold an election for third-year representatives, second-year representatives, and S.J.D. representative. Representatives in the spring election shall be elected by the constituency that they will represent once they assume office. The four candidates for third-year representatives, four candidates for second-year representative, and single candidate for S.J.D. representative that receives the most votes shall be declared the winner.

   b. During the fall semester of each year, Student Government shall hold an election for first-year section representatives, transfer representative, L.L.M. representatives, and any representative positions unfilled in the spring election. Representatives in the fall election shall be elected by the constituency that they represent. The single candidate for each first-year section representative, single candidate for transfer representative, two (2) candidate for L.L.M. representatives, and any candidates for positions that were unfilled in the spring that receive the largest number of votes shall be declared the winner.

2. **Executives.**

   a. During the spring semester of each year, Student Government shall hold an election for executive officers at the same time of elections for representatives.

   b. The Student Body President and Student Body Vice President shall be elected together as a ticket by a vote of the entire Student Body. The ticket that receives the most votes shall be declared the winner.

   c. The Director of Student Organizations shall run independently, but may campaign with other candidates, and shall be elected by the entire Student Body. The candidate that receives the largest number of the votes shall be declared the winner. The Treasurer and Director of
Communications shall be appointed by the Student Body President, in consultation with the Student Council.

3. **Referenda.** Referenda may be put on the ballot for a vote of the entire Student Body. Referenda may be placed on the ballot by (i) the submission of the Student Body President or Student Body Vice President, (ii) a majority vote of Student Government, or (iii) upon the submission of 300 student signatures to Student Government. Referenda may be tied to other elections, or held as a separate election.

4. **Equal Suffrage.** All students shall have one (1) vote for every available seat for every position.

5. **Election Policy.** The Student Council may create rules to govern the administration of elections, and select persons to oversee the administration of the election. Any person overseeing the election must not be a candidate for any office, and must remain impartial throughout the election. Any rule pertaining to elections that restricts a person or group from running for office shall not affect an election that occurs sooner than thirty (30) days before the new policy is passed.

**ARTICLE V – THE CONSTITUTION**

1. **Definitions.** Throughout this Constitution:
   a. Use of the phrase “absolute majority” means a majority of the entire voting population;
   b. Use of the phrase “majority” means a majority of voting population who participate in the vote;
   c. Use of the phrase “absolute two-thirds (2/3)” means at least two-thirds of voting population;
   d. Use of the phrase “two-thirds (2/3)” means two-thirds of voting population who participate in the vote;
   e. The phrase “student organization” does not include official student journals administered by the Dean of Students office or student practice organizations administered by the Office of Clinical and Pro Bono Programs.
   f. The term “student” means a currently registered student at Harvard Law School who was admitted to Harvard Law School.
   g. The term “quorum” means a majority of the voting population.

2. **Ratification.** This Constitution shall, upon ratification, replace any existing Constitution of Student Government and all other policies of Student Government that conflict with this Constitution. Provisions of this Constitution pertaining to Elections shall not take effect until fall of 2016, nor shall the passage of this Constitution nullify the election of any member of Student Government elected in the spring of 2016. Any new positions that are created by this Constitution and not filled in the ratifying election shall be considered vacant at the start of the new term.
3. **Supremacy.** This Constitution shall serve as the governing document of the Student Body, hold supremacy over any conflicting documents or actions of Student Government, and be binding upon all members of Student Government. This Constitution is not subject to motions of suspension.

4. **Residual Clause.** Student Government may exercise additional powers not inconsistent with this Constitution, nor barred by explicit school policy, nor barred by federal, state, or local law.

5. **Bylaws.** The Student Government may establish bylaws and other operating procedures, including rules of parliamentary procedure, and policies that do not conflict with this Constitution to establish the structure and proceedings of Student Government. Bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of Student Government.

6. **Amendments.**
   a. This Constitution may only be amended by a majority of the Student Body voting on the question during an election.
   b. Amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted to a vote of the Student Body at the next regular election, or during a special election called by Student Government, upon (1) a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Student Government, or (2) presentation to Student Government of the signatures of at least 300 students.
   c. Amendments replace the material they amend.
   d. The Student Government may establish other procedures for conducting an election to amend this Constitution that do not conflict with this Constitution.