

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT BODY OF HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

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.
7. **Higher Law.** Student Government shall act in accordance with federal, state, and local law.
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

30 elected members of the Executive Board. Students who are not members of Student Government shall
31 be able to participate in its activities, pursuant to rules established in the bylaws.

32 9. **Meetings.**

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

46 10. **Committees.** Student Government shall have the seven (7) standing committees, listed below, and may
47 form additional committees. Committees shall work to address specific issues affecting the Student Body.
48 Committees shall be led by a chair selected by the Student Body Co-Presidents. Membership in
49 committees shall be open to the Student Body.

- 50 a. Academic Affairs
- 51 b. Student Affairs
- 52 c. Student Organizations & Journals
- 53 d. Diversity & Inclusion
- 54 e. Health & Wellness
- 55 f. Community Service
- 56 g. Events

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58 **ARTICLE II – REPRESENTATIVES**

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

64 2. **Composition.**

65 a. There shall be the following elected representatives of various constituencies at Harvard Law
66 School:

- 67 i. There shall be four (4) representatives for third-year (“3L”) J.D. students;
- 68 ii. There shall be four (4) representatives for second-year (“2L”) J.D. students;
- 69 iii. There shall be one (1) representative for each first-year (“1L”) J.D. section;
- 70 iv. There shall be one (1) representative for 2L transfer students;
- 71 v. There shall be two (2) representatives for L.L.M. program students;
- 72 vi. There shall be one (1) representative for S.J.D. program students.

73 b. There shall be the following elected Class Marshals at Harvard Law School:

- 74 i. There shall be four (4) Class Marshals for third-year (“3L”) J.D. students;
- 75 ii. There shall be two (2) Class Marshals for L.L.M. program students.

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

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

83 5. **Term of Office.** All representatives shall serve for a term of one (1) year. The term of office shall expire
84 the first Monday in April, and new terms of office shall begin upon the expiration of the term of the
85 predecessor, with the exception of the LLM Representatives, whose terms of office shall run until their
86 class’s graduation date, and whose replacements will be elected in the subsequent year’s fall elections.
87 Should a representative assume office midway through the year, they shall serve for the remainder of the
88 term.

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

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ARTICLE III – EXECUTIVE BOARD

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97 1. **Purpose.** The Executive Board, under the leadership of the Student Body Co-Presidents, shall be
98 responsible for managing the internal affairs of Student Government, as well as advancing the interests of

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- the entire Student Body.
2. **Composition.** The Executive Board shall be led by Student Body Co-Presidents, and shall also consist of a Director of Student Organizations, Chief of Staff, Treasurer, and Director of Communications, all six (6) of whom shall be executive officers.
 3. **Student Body Co-Presidents.** The Student Body Co-Presidents shall be the chief representatives and spokespersons for the Student Body; shall serve as the chief executive officers 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. **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.
 5. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall assist the Student Body Co-Presidents 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.
 6. **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 Co-Presidents 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.
 7. **Chief of Staff.** The Chief of Staff shall be responsible for supporting the Co-Presidents in the organization and placement of members on committees, be the representative to the Harvard Graduate Council, and support the Co-Presidents in managing the needs of committee chairs and members.
 8. **Appointed Cabinet.** The Student Body Co-Presidents 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

134 the Student Council or the Executive Board, except the Student Body Co-Presidents, who shall receive
135 no vote on the Student Council. If an executive officer is acting as presiding officer for a meeting, they
136 may choose to refrain from voting. Appointed officers shall not receive a vote in the Student Council or
137 the Executive Board, unless they hold a seat on the Student Council or Executive Board that entitles
138 them to a vote, but may attend and speak in Executive Board meetings.

139 10. **Term of Office.** All Executive Board members shall serve for a term of one (1) year. The term of office
140 shall expire the first Monday in April, and the new terms of office shall begin upon the expiration of the
141 of the term of their predecessor. Should an Executive Board member assume office midway through the
142 year, they shall serve for the remainder of the term.

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

145 12. **Vacancies.**

146 a. In the event that one or both Student Body Co-Presidents vacate their position(s).

147 i. In the event that one of the Student Body Co-Presidents vacates their position, the
148 remaining Student Body Co-President may appoint a replacement for the remainder
149 of the term, subject to the approval of a majority of the Student Council.

150 ii. In the event that both Student Body Co-Presidents vacate their positions, the Student
151 Body shall elect new Student Body Co-Presidents in an emergency election to be led
152 by the Executive Council.

153 b. If the office of the Director of Student Organizations becomes vacant, the Student Body Co-
154 Presidents may appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term, subject to the approval of a
155 majority of the Student Council.

156 c. Vacancies shall be filled with all reasonable haste.

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158 ARTICLE IV – JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS

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160 1. **Impeachment.**

161 a. Executive officers and representatives may be impeached upon a vote by an absolute two- thirds
162 (2/3) of the Student Council for reasons of malfeasance in office, gross misconduct,
163 misappropriation of Student Government resources, or violation of the oath of office.

164 b. Student Government may not conduct a hearing and vote to impeach unless a written article of
165 impeachment outlining the reasons for impeachment has been signed by an absolute majority of the
166 Student Council at least seven (7) calendar days before the hearing and vote to impeach. Once
167 approved by an absolute majority of the Student Council, an article of impeachment must be voted

- 168 on by the Student Council.
- 169 c. Impeachment proceedings must permit the accuser(s) and the accused to have equal time to present
170 evidence and call witnesses, not less than twenty (20) minutes each.
- 171 d. The Student Government may create other procedures for conducting impeachment proceedings
172 that do not conflict with this Constitution.
- 173 2. **Removal Due to Ineligibility.** An executive officer, representative, or appointed officer shall be
174 automatically and immediately removed from office if they are no longer in good standing, or cease to be
175 a student, or miss four (4) Student Government meetings in a semester without a reasonable excuse.
- 176 3. **Judicial Proceedings.** The Student Government may create other judicial proceedings that do not
177 conflict with this Constitution.

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179 **ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS**

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- 181 1. **Representatives.**
- 182 a. During the spring semester of each year, Student Government shall hold an election for third- year
183 representatives, second-year representatives, and S.J.D. representative. Representatives in the spring
184 election shall be elected by the constituency that they will represent once they assume office. The
185 four candidates for third-year representatives, four candidates for second-year representative, and
186 single candidate for S.J.D. representative that receives the most votes shall be declared the winner.
- 187 b. During the fall semester of each year, Student Government shall hold an election for first-year
188 section representatives, transfer representative, L.L.M. representatives, Class Marshals, and any
189 representative positions unfilled in the spring election. Representatives in the fall election shall be
190 elected by the constituency that they represent. The single candidate for each first-year section
191 representative, single candidate for transfer representative, two (2) candidate for L.L.M.
192 representatives, six (6) candidates for Class Marshals, and any candidates for positions that were
193 unfilled in the spring that receive the largest number of votes shall be declared the winner.
- 194 2. **Executives.**
- 195 a. During the spring semester of each year, Student Government shall hold an election for executive
196 officers at the same time of elections for representatives.
- 197 b. The Student Body Co-Presidents shall be elected together as a ticket by a vote of the entire Student
198 Body. The ticket that receives the most votes shall be declared the winner.
- 199 c. The Director of Student Organizations shall run independently, but may campaign with other
200 candidates, and shall be elected by the entire Student Body. The candidate that receives the largest
201 number of the votes shall be declared the winner.
- 202 d. The Treasurer and Director of Communications shall be appointed by the Student Body Co-

203 Presidents, in consultation with the Student Council.

- 204 3. **Referenda.** Referenda may be put on the ballot for a vote of the entire Student Body. Referenda may be
205 placed on the ballot by (i) the submission of the Student Body Co-Presidents, (ii) a majority vote of
206 Student Government, or (iii) upon the submission of 300 student signatures to Student Government.
207 Referenda may be tied to other elections, or held as a separate election.
- 208 4. **Equal Suffrage.** All students shall have one (1) vote for every available seat for every position.
- 209 5. **Election Policy.** The Student Council may create rules to govern the administration of elections and
210 select persons to oversee the administration of the election. Any person overseeing the election must not
211 be a candidate for any office, and must remain impartial throughout the election. Any rule pertaining to
212 elections that restricts a person or group from running for office shall not affect an election that occurs
213 sooner than thirty (30) days before the new policy is passed.

214 ARTICLE VI – THE CONSTITUTION

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- 217 1. **Definitions.** Throughout this Constitution:
- 218 a. Use of the phrase “absolute majority” means a majority of the entire voting population;
- 219 b. Use of the phrase “majority” means a majority of voting population who participate in the vote;
- 220 c. Use of the phrase “absolute two-thirds (2/3)” means at least two-thirds of voting population;
- 221 d. Use of the phrase “two-thirds (2/3)” means two-thirds of voting population who participate in the
222 vote;
- 223 e. The phrase “student organization” does not include official student journals administered by the
224 Dean of Students office or student practice organizations administered by the Office of Clinical and
225 Pro Bono Programs.
- 226 f. The term “student” means a currently registered student at Harvard Law School who was admitted
227 to Harvard Law School.
- 228 g. The term “quorum” means a majority of the voting population.
- 229 2. **Ratification.** This Constitution shall, upon ratification, replace any existing Constitution of Student
230 Government and all other policies of Student Government that conflict with this Constitution.
231 Provisions of this Constitution pertaining to Elections shall not take effect until the following semester,
232 nor shall the passage of this Constitution nullify the election of any member of Student Government
233 elected in the spring. Any new positions that are created by this Constitution and not filled in the ratifying
234 election shall be considered vacant at the start of the new term.
- 235 3. **Supremacy.** This Constitution shall serve as the governing document of the Student Body, hold
236 supremacy over any conflicting documents or actions of Student Government, and be binding upon all

237 members of Student Government. This Constitution is not subject to motions of suspension.

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

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

244 6. **Amendments.**

245 a. This Constitution may only be amended by a majority of the Student Body voting on the question
246 during an election.

247 b. Amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted to a vote of the Student Body at the next
248 regular election, or during a special election called by Student Government, upon (1) a two-thirds
249 (2/3) vote of Student Government, or (2) presentation to Student Government of the signatures of
250 at least 300 students.

251 c. Amendments replace the material they amend.

252 d. The Student Government may establish other procedures for conducting an election to amend this
253 Constitution that do not conflict with this Constitution.