

# 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

- Name.** The official name of this organization shall be Harvard Law School Student Government (hereinafter “Student Government”).
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Compensation.** No member of Student Government shall receive monetary compensation for their services.
- Higher Law.** Student Government shall act in accordance with federal, state, and local law.
- 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

- 99 the entire Student Body.
- 100 2. **Composition.** The Executive Board shall be led by Student Body Co-Presidents, and shall also consist of  
101 a Director of Student Organizations, Chief of Staff, Treasurer, and Director of Communications, all six  
102 (6) of whom shall be executive officers.
- 103 3. **Student Body Co-Presidents.** The Student Body Co-Presidents shall be the chief representatives and  
104 spokespersons for the Student Body; shall serve as the chief executive officers of Student Government;  
105 shall have the authority to enter into agreements with external organizations subject to a majority vote of  
106 the Student Council; shall create a budget for Student Government; shall chair the Executive Board; shall  
107 have the power to constitute and dissolve committees and select committee chairs; shall have the power  
108 to select, with the consultation of the Student Council, appointed officers of Student Government, and  
109 may remove them, but the Student Council may reinstate a removed appointed officer by a two-thirds  
110 (2/3) vote.
- 111 4. **Director of Student Organizations.** The Director of Student Organizations shall serve as the chief  
112 liaison to student organizations and journals on campus, oversee the process of recognizing the new  
113 student organizations, and shall chair the Student Funding Board to allocate funding to student  
114 organizations.
- 115 5. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall assist the Student Body Co-Presidents in managing the budget of Student  
116 Government, shall serve as a member of the Student Funding Board, and reasonably assist in all matters  
117 pertaining to budget or funding between the HLS administration and Student Body. The Treasurer shall  
118 prepare a monthly report on the budget for Student Government during the fall and spring semesters.
- 119 6. **Director of Communications.** The Director of Communications shall be responsible for recording and  
120 publicly publishing minutes for meetings of Student Government and the Executive Board, maintaining  
121 information on the membership of Student Government, and assisting the Student Body Co-Presidents  
122 with the logistics of Student Government functions. Functions include, but are not necessarily limited to,  
123 booking rooms, ordering food, maintaining Student Government social media forums, and sending  
124 emails to the student body.
- 125 7. **Chief of Staff.** The Chief of Staff shall be responsible for supporting the Co-Presidents in the  
126 organization and placement of members on committees, be the representative to the Harvard Graduate  
127 Council, and support the Co-Presidents in managing the needs of committee chairs and members.
- 128 8. **Appointed Cabinet.** The Student Body Co-Presidents may select appointed Cabinet officers, subject to  
129 the limitations of this Constitution. Cabinet officers shall be responsible for carrying out their functions  
130 as directed by the Bylaws, but may not exercise powers that conflict with this Constitution. Cabinet  
131 officers must be students, but need not be elected members of Student Government. No person may  
132 hold multiple appointed offices.
- 133 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.

## 178 179 ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS

### 180 181 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. In regard  
194 to the Class Marshal elections, in the event that there are candidates tied for the final spot, all  
195 tied candidates will be allowed to serve and execute the duties of the Class Marshal.

### 196 2. **Executives.**

- 197 a. During the spring semester of each year, Student Government shall hold an election for executive  
198 officers at the same time of elections for representatives.
- 199 b. The Student Body Co-Presidents shall be elected together as a ticket by a vote of the entire Student  
200 Body. The ticket that receives the most votes shall be declared the winner.
- 201 c. The Director of Student Organizations shall run independently, but may campaign with other  
202 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.
- 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.