

**BYLAWS**  
of the  
Michigan State University  
College of Law  
Student Bar Association



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Michigan State University College of Law

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## **SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **SECTION 1.1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of these Bylaws is to provide effective operating procedures by which the organization has agreed to adhere.

## **SECTION 2: EXECUTIVE BOARD**

### **SECTION 2.1 PRESIDENT**

1. The President shall:
  - a. Preside over all meetings of the General Board and Executive Board SBA;
  - b. Have standing to vote only in the case of a tie;
  - c. Call special meetings at his or her discretion;
  - d. Appoint all committees not otherwise provided for in these bylaws;
  - e. Make provisions for the discharge of necessary duties of absent or suspended Executive Officers and SBA Senators;
  - f. Co-sign all checks on the treasury of the SBA that are more than \$250.00 that are not signed by the Administrative Director;
  - g. Enforce the rules and standard operating procedures of the SBA;
  - h. Carry out assignments and instructions given by vote of the SBA;
  - i. Act as liaison to the faculty and administration of the College of Law and Michigan State University; and
  - j. Serve as an ex officio member of all SBA committees.

### **SECTION 2.2 VICE PRESIDENT**

1. The Vice President shall:
  - a. Create and abolish committees not listed in these bylaws or otherwise standing committees subject to a vote of the Executive Board. Additionally, the Vice President shall:
    - i. Facilitate the planning of oversee all SBA committees except the Finance Committee.
    - ii. Have the authority to amend the responsibilities of those committees not codified in these bylaws.
    - iii. Act as an ex officio committee member of all SBA committees
  - b. Propose and present estimated table time hour requirements at the first General Board meeting of each semester to be voted on in accordance with the SBA Constitution;
  - c. Maintain all resolutions and bills passed;

- d. Maintain an official record of the attendance of all members of the SBA at all regular or special meetings;
- e. Notify members of the SBA and initiate expulsion measures when absences exceed the number allowed;
- f. Conduct and monitor secret ballot voting in conjunction with the Administrative Director;
- g. Attend all meetings of the Executive Board and of the General Board;
- h. Coordinate internal operations of the SBA with the President;
- i. Oversee all external liaisons and Senators to the SBA; and
- j. Maintain and update a record, both digital and physical, containing the SBA Constitution, SBA Bylaws, and adopted resolutions;
- k. Upon a Senator representative accumulating two (2) absences, the Vice President shall notify the member that he or/she has reached two (2) absences, and indicate to the Senator representative the consequences of exceeding the absence requirement;
- l. The Vice President, with support of the Executive Board, shall create any ad hoc committees as he or she deems necessary;
- m. Upon a Senator accumulating three (3) absences, the Vice President shall notify the member that he or she has reached the three (3) absences limit, and indicate to the Senator the consequences of exceeding the absence requirement; and
- n. Be an aide to the President.

### **SECTION 2.3 FINANCE DIRECTOR**

- 1. The Finance Director shall:
  - a. Chair the Finance Committee, which will be composed of no less than four SBA members in addition to the Finance Director. Such committee will recommend budgetary and fiscal policy to the elected body and should be selected at the first SBA meeting of the Fall Semester;
  - b. Chair the Special Fiscal Conference meeting that must occur at least twenty-four hours prior to the second SBA meeting to construct a budget for the SBA. The proposed budget must be debated and voted on by the full SBA;
  - c. Act as liaison between the student body and the Executive Officers of the SBA;
  - d. Propose the budget at the second meeting of each new school year, along with finance operating procedures, if any;
  - e. Provide a budget update including actual expenditures at the first SBA meeting in the Spring Semester;
  - f. Provide budget and financial statements at the last meeting of the Spring Semester;

- g. Provide for an appeals process, if necessary, in relation to the student organization funding allocations. The process shall be formulated at the discretion of the Director;
- h. Maintain all financial records of the SBA;
- i. Receive all money due to the SBA and give receipt thereof;
- j. Enforce cash-handling procedures noted in Appendix A of this Policy Manual;
- k. Render a financial report regarding financial activity subsequent to the last SBA meeting. This includes the balance of the SBA bank account, the total dollar amount allocated over the preceding week, and the remaining balance of the budget;
- l. Make such payments from the funds of the SBA as approved by the SBA;
- m. Make all books and records of the Finance Director open to public inspection upon written notice one week prior to such inspection;
- n. Be responsible for the completion and filing of any and all tax-related forms;
- o. Supervise and coordinate with the Fundraising Chair;
- p. Act as custodian of any and all financial records to be maintained for three years;
- q. Contact and coordinate with the College of Law Comptroller;
- r. Co-sign with either the President or Communications Director for all checks on the Treasury of the SBA that are more than \$250.00;
- s. Attend all meetings of the Executive Board and of the General Board; and
- t. Be an aide to the President.

#### **SECTION 2.4 COMMUNITY AFFAIRS DIRECTOR**

- 1. The Community Affairs Director shall:
  - a. Attend all meetings of the Executive Board and of the General Board;
  - b. Seek out and respond to student concerns;
  - c. Connect with members of other student organizations and update the SBA with current happenings in the College of Law; and
  - d. Be an aide to the President.

#### **SECTION 2.5 ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR**

- 1. The Administrative Director shall:
  - a. Record the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board and of the SBA meetings and make the minutes available to the Student Body;
  - b. Receive, compile, and make available the agenda to the SBA and the Student Body at least three days in advance of the next General Board meeting;
  - c. Conduct and maintain copies of all SBA correspondence to external parties;
  - d. Issue notice of meetings and agendas to the General Board and Student Body after consultation with the President;

- e. Co-sign all checks on the treasury of the SBA that are more than \$250.00 that are not signed by the President;
- f. Be an aide to the President.

### **SECTION 3: GENERAL BOARD**

#### **SECTION 3.1 SENATORS**

1. All Senators shall serve on at least one SBA committee.
2. The Parliamentarian and Committee Chairs are Senators, who have the right to vote and count towards the total number of senators for all purposes.

#### **SECTION 3.2 FIRST YEAR SECTION REPRESENTATIVES (1L)**

1. Section Representatives are jointly responsible for making announcements, conducting surveys or questionnaires, and any other duties incident to representing their respective classes or sections.

#### **SECTION 3.3. PARLIAMENTARIAN**

1. The Parliamentarian shall:
  - a. Hold their position for the duration of one academic year.
    - i. The Parliamentarian shall be selected through the same process as Committee Chairs,
    - ii. Executive Board Members are not eligible to serve as Parliamentarian.
  - b. Have the responsibility of maintaining parliamentary procedure along with the Robert's Rules of Order during meetings and advising the chair as required;
  - c. Advise the meeting chair on all matters of Robert's Rules of Order, the Constitution, and these Bylaws, and shall be consulted on such matters during General Board Meetings;
  - d. Not have the power to direct, lead, or chair General Board Meetings.
  - e. Have all the privileges and responsibilities of a regularly elected Senator, and shall not serve as a Committee Chair.

### **SECTION 4: COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS**

#### **SECTION 4.1 COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

1. A Committee Chairperson shall:
  - a. Schedule and preside over committee meetings;
  - b. Inform the Vice President of any committee updates;

- c. Inform the General Board of any committee specific updates; and
- d. Represent the interests of the committee to the Executive Board.

## **SECTION 4.2 LIAISONS**

1. Liaisons should report to the SBA any changes and updates as it pertains to their position;
2. The American Bar Association Law Student Division Representative shall:
  - a. Be appointed by the Executive Board of the SBA and confirmed by the SBA General Board;
  - b. Be a member of the ABA/LSD;
  - c. Represent the SBA in the Law Student Division of the American Bar Association;
  - e. Serve as liaison between the SBA, ABA, and the College of Law student body;
  - f. Increase awareness of and membership in the ABA/LSD at the College of Law;
  - g. Report to the SBA Vice President regarding the ongoing activities of the ABA; and
  - h. Provide a monthly oral or written report to be presented at the SBA General Board Meetings.
2. The Council of Graduate Students (COGS) Representative shall:
  - a. Be appointed by the Executive Board of the SBA and confirmed by the SBA General Board;
  - b. Represent the College of Law on the COGS' Full Council;
  - c. Report to the SBA Vice President regarding the ongoing activities of COGS; and
  - d. Provide a monthly oral or written report to be presented at the SBA General Board Meetings.
3. The Vice President shall add liaison positions as he or she deems necessary.

## **SECTION 4.3 STANDING COMMITTEES**

1. Duties of Committees:
  - a. All SBA committees are responsible to the Board and shall regularly report their activities to the Board;
  - b. All SBA committees must meet a minimum of one (1) time per semester; and
2. Internal Affairs Committee
  - a. Responsibilities and Duties of the Internal Affairs Committee Members
    - i. Members must attend all committee meetings pursuant to the Internal Affairs Committee's attendance policy;
    - ii. To determine whether proposed business should be on an agenda subject to all of the following constraints:
      1. The order of business does not contravene the policies of the SBA as set forth in the Constitution, these Bylaws, or by act of the General Board.

2. The order of business is formatted correctly into the form of a bill or resolution.
  3. The committee shall not have the authority to prevent a bill or resolution from consideration by the General Board due to its content, intent, or purpose or amend it to alter such.
  - iii. To refer any order that it deems in conflict with the above clause back to the member responsible for its introduction; and
  - iv. Submit all approved legislative business to the Administrative Director for inclusion on the agenda.
3. Finance Committee
    - a. The Finance Committee shall act to disburse funds to student organizations under the finance guidelines as set forth in these Bylaws.
  4. Barrister's Ball Committee
    - a. The Barrister's Ball Committee shall plan, advertise, and coordinate the Barrister's Ball this year;
    - b. The committee shall sign contracts with required vendors as early as practical.

## **SECTION 5: CONDUCTING BUSINESS**

### **SECTION 5.1 TABLE TIME HOURS**

1. Recommendation Process
  - a. The Vice President shall make a recommendations for a table time hours requirement.
  - b. The recommendation shall be introduced at the first meeting of each semester in the form of a bill.
  - c. Voting and approval of the table time hours requirement must be done at the following scheduled meeting.
  - d. The table time hours requirement shall be ratified by a 2/3 majority vote of voting SBA members if:
    - i. The vote will set table time hours at the beginning of the semester, or
    - ii. The vote will increase the hours to be served within the same semester.
  - e. The table time hours requirement shall be ratified by a majority vote of voting SBA members if there is no change or a decrease in the table time hours requirement.
2. Re-Assessment
  - a. After the midpoint of each academic semester, the Executive Board shall make an assessment of the table time requirement.
  - b. Upon review, the Executive Board may decrease the table time hour requirement promulgated at the beginning of the academic semester.



- c. The Executive Board's assessment must be announced at the first regularly scheduled meeting that occurs after the midpoint of an academic semester.
- d. The controlling table time hour requirement shall be the figure arrived at from Article III (L)(3), unless the Executive Board determines the table time hour requirement should be lower.
- e. If the General Board disagrees with the number of table time hours recommended by the Community Affairs Director, the General Board shall then discuss and decide how to correct the difference between an amount proposed by the General Board and that recommended by the Community Affairs Director
- f. If a representative fails to complete the required number of table time hours during either semester of their term, and that failure causes the representative to exceed the permitted number of absences, that representative is ineligible to serve on SBA the following academic year.

## **SECTION 5.2 SPECIAL MEETINGS**

- 1. Special Meetings
  - a. The President may call special meetings of the SBA at any time by request of the Executive Board or upon petition of any five (5) Senators who present their request in writing.
- 2. Three (3) days notice shall be given for special meetings.
  - a. Absences will be excused if a Senator is unable to attend
  - b. A quorum is required for any action to be taken.

## **SECTION 5.3 ATTENDANCE POLICY**

- 1. SBA members shall be allotted three (3) absences per a year.
- 2. Absences from, but not limited to, General Board meetings, Committee meetings, and allotted table time hours shall count toward a representative's absence total.
- 3. The Executive Board shall clarify to the General Board as to how absences will contribute to the total number of absences allowed. The Vice President, upon notice of an individual exceeding the total amount of permitted absences, must notify the removed representative immediately of their removal, and the opportunity to appeal.
- 4. If a SBA member fails to meet the minimum table time hours requirement, each missed table time hour will count toward one half (1/2) of an absence.
- 5. In the event of an emergency situation or school related function, an SBA member will not have the absence counted against their allotted absences as long as they inform the Vice President of the circumstance.

## **SECTION 5.4 APPEALS BOARD**

1. A Senator who has been automatically removed from office as a result of the absence policy may send or present a written appeal to the Vice President for the purposes of challenging the removal. Such an appeal must be made within a seven (7) day period after being notified of the removal.
2. Following the General Board SBA elections, the Executive Board shall create an appeals board pool consisting of six (6) senators total. The makeup shall consist of (2) senators from each respective class (1L, 2L, 3L). The selections of each senator are to be made at random and the appointment is to remain secret amongst the appeals board as well as to the General Board. However, the General Board must be informed that an Appeals Board Pool exists, and that appointments have been made.
3. Service in the Appeals Board Pool and subsequent Appeal Hearings is mandatory. The Executive Board may further incentivize service however they choose.
4. Once three (3) members of the Appeals Board Pool serve on an Appeals Board, they are removed from the pool and replaced by random selection as outlined in subsection (6).
5. Upon receiving an appeal, the Vice President shall create an Appeals Board consisting of three (3) Senators drawn at random from the Appeals Board Pool. The Appeals Board shall consist of one (1) first year Senator, one (1) second year Senator, one (1) third year Senator. At the appeals hearing, the Appellant Senator shall be given an opportunity to submit a written brief and give an oral presentation as to why they should not be removed from the SBA. The Appellant's Committee Chair shall also be present to testify at the appeal. Decisions by the Appeals Board are deemed final.
6. In the case of an Executive Board representative, the Appeals Board will remain the same, however, should the Vice President be the Appellant, the President will oversee the Appeals proceedings.
7. When an Appeals Hearing is held, the Executive Board must notify the General Board at the next General Board meeting of: i) the representative removed, ii) whether there was an appeal, and iii) the results of any such appeal.

## **SECTION 5.5 LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

1. Proposed Bills and Resolutions shall be:
  - a. Submit proposed legislation to the Internal Affairs Committee for review and then placed on the agenda for the next General Board meeting; and
    - i. The Internal Affairs Committee's role shall be subject to all of the following constraints:
      1. The order of business does not contravene the policies of the SBA as set forth in the Constitution, these Bylaws, or by act of the General Board.
      2. The order of business is formatted correctly into the form of a bill or resolution.

3. The committee shall not have the authority to prevent a bill or resolution from consideration by the General Board due to its content, intent, or purpose or amend it to alter such.
      - b. Be given two readings, and on the second reading be voted on and approved by a simple majority of the General Board.
  2. Resolutions are measures passed by a majority vote of the General Board to express the sentiments of the SBA on matters affecting the student body.
  3. Bills are binding measures passed by a majority vote of the General Board directing the actions and policies of the SBA within its legislative powers.

## **SECTION 6: FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **SECTION 6.1 FINANCE DISTRIBUTIONS**

- A. Subject to the Constitution, and other sections of this Policy Manual, the Finance Committee has, within its discretion, the power to distribute funds to requesting student organizations in accordance with the Funding Guidelines, as established by the Finance Committee and approved by the General Board.
- B. Notwithstanding section 1 of this section, except in subsection (c)(ii)(1), any Finance Committee approval of funds distribution which exceeds \$1500, shall be subject to a vote by the General Board of SBA
- C. In the event of an award in excess of \$1500, the Finance Director shall notify the requesting organization of the amount they have been conditionally awarded by the Finance Committee and of the voting requirement for amounts exceeding \$1500. No Appeals will be heard until the General Board has voted.
- D. Under section 3 of this section, the Executive Board will hear any and all appeals to the decision of the General Board. Because the Executive Board is the body to which all appeals will be made, the Executive Board shall not vote with the General Board.
- E. Notwithstanding Section 2(b) of this section, the Executive Board shall vote with the General Board if the votes of the Executive Board are needed to meet quorum.
- F. The vote conducted by the General Board shall be an up or down vote. The votes and results of the votes are classified as follows:
  - a. Should the General Board vote in favor of the amount proposed by the Finance Committee, the Finance Director shall notify the requesting organization of the amount they have been awarded and of their right to appeal under the SBA Financing Guidelines.
  - b. Should the General Board vote against the amount proposed by the Finance Committee, the Finance Director shall inform the requesting organization its event has been awarded \$1500 and will also inform the requesting organization of its right to appeal under the SBA Finance Guidelines.

- G. Under section D(1), the Finance Committee has the power to award funds to requesting organizations. It is this power that renders a General Board member's vote against the Finance Committee's initial award as a vote only to remove funding in excess of \$1500. A vote against the Finance Committee's initial award is not a vote to remove all funding.
- H. If the requesting organization wishes to appeal, they will be subject to the policies and procedures expressly stated in Section E.
- I. If an organization appeals the decision of the General Board, the appeal will be heard by the Executive Board subject to the appeals process explained in Section E.
- J. The decision of the Executive Board is final.

## **SECTION 6.2 FINANCE APPEALS**

- A. Any contested decision of Finance Committee or General Board regarding funding can be appealed to the Executive Board of SBA.
- B. Such an appeal request must take place in writing, no later than midnight on the second day following the Finance Committee final decision.
- C. In the event of a request being awarded in excess of \$1500, the appeal request must take place in writing, no later than midnight on the second day following the General Board vote, as provided in Section D of these Bylaws.
- D. Such a writing shall be no more than one (1) page in length with a 12 point font and shall state, with particularity, the reasons for the appeal and how the Finance Guidelines should be interpreted differently.
- E. An organization wishing to appeal to the Executive Board must send a representative to an Executive Board meeting no later than three (3) weeks after the original Finance Committee decision.
- F. If the amount awarded by the Finance Committee is in excess of \$1500 and therefore subject to a vote of the General Board under section D(2) of these Bylaws, the organization wishing to appeal to the Executive Board must send a representative to an Executive Board meeting no later than three (3) weeks after the General Board decision.
- G. A member of the Executive Board who is a voting member, or holds an executive board position within the organization appealing the Finance Committee or General Board decision, shall recuse themselves from voting on the appeal.
- H. The Executive Board, on receiving an appeal from the Finance Committee or General Board, must review the original finance application and the Finance Guidelines under which it was rejected, or reduced. An appealable reduction must substantially affect the nature of the proposed event.
- I. The Executive Board shall consider the Finance Committee Guidelines in the appeal, as published to the Student Organizations.
- J. All appeal decisions rendered by the Executive Board shall be considered final.
- K. This includes any appeals for amounts regulated under Section D(2)-(3).