

BLACK LAW STUDENTS BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

DEFINITIONS

Adequate Notice: Examples of adequate notice include verbal or written communication to any member of the executive board, committee chair, BLSA advisor, organization bulletin board, or via electronic communications to all BLSA members (including email and posting on the BLSA website), and inclusion in any regularly published schedule of events prepared by the institution of Vermont Law School (i.e., The Forum).

Current Membership: Members that have financially satisfied the dues requirement in which at that time, all rights and privileges shall be extended to them as such.

Funds Eligible Student Group: A Recognized Student Group that has taken the extra measures to be authorized by the SBA Senate to be eligible to receive funding from the SBA.

Official Capacity: Representing the organization in any form or fashion that distinguishes one as a current member of said organization with all rights, benefits and privileges there with.

Official Meeting Times: Includes all Regular and Special Meetings of the organization, Budget Meetings, and any and all events designated by the executive board in accordance with the governing rules.

Presiding Officer: The person who runs a meeting of the organization and who is responsible for controlling the floor. The Presiding Officer will only vote in the event of a tie vote.

Quorum: The minimum number of members who must be present for the vote to be valid or a meeting to be legally held.

Ratification: The process by which the organization approves of bylaw changes and amendments. This process is outlined in § 12.2.

Recognized Student Group: Are defined as groups on campus that have been recognized under Bylaws governed by the Student Bar Association at Vermont Law School. These groups are eligible to use the name "Vermont Law School" in their title; be assigned space in Vermont Law School buildings and on Vermont Law School grounds for meetings and other sponsored events; and address the Senate as an organization and seek its assistance in all matters relevant to the SBA.

Regularly Scheduled Meeting: The meetings of the organization that occur on a regular scheduled basis. The executive board in accordance with at least 80% approval of the voting body should agree on these meeting times.

Special Committee: Temporary Committees established by the voting body to address specific needs of the BLSA and its members.

Student Bar Association (SBA): All students of Vermont Law School who are enrolled as candidates for the Juris Doctor Degree (J.D.), the Masters of Studies in Environmental Law (M.S.E.L.), the Master of Law (LL.M), and any other degree programs authorized by Vermont Law School.

Voting Body: includes all members that have satisfied the requirements enumerated in article III of this constitution. Those members shall have voting authority and input in to decision making policies associated with the BLSA organization.

Super Majority Yes Vote: Once the quorum is reached, with quorum levels set in the subsections of the Bylaws, two-thirds of the membership present vote yes for the proposed recommendation or voting issue before the body.

Vermont Law School Community: The VLS Community includes the SBA, the Faculty, and student body.

ARTICLE II.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 2.1 Name

The name of the organization shall be the Vermont Law School Black Law Students Association (hereinafter referred to as Organization, Black Law Students Association, or BLSA)

§ 2.2 Objectives

The purpose of BLSA is to articulate and promote the professional goals and needs of minority law students; to encourage and foster professional competence; to focus upon the relationship between minority law students and the law structure; to instill in minority law students a greater awareness of and commitment to the needs of the minority community; to influence American law schools, legal associations to use their expertise and prestige to bring about change within the legal system in order to make it responsive to the needs of the minority community and to do any and all things necessary and lawful

for the accomplishment of these purposes. Furthermore, it is the focus of the Vermont chapter of the NBLSA to collaborate with other fund eligible student organizations to promote diversity, enhance cultural awareness, and to impact on the institution, community and region in accordance with the mission of both BLSA and NBLSA.

§ 2.3 Anti-discrimination

BLSA shall not discriminate on the basis of ancestry, color, or race; cultural or ethnic background; economic circumstance; ideological, philosophical, or political belief or affiliation; marital or parental status; national or regional origin; physical disability; religion, or religious or denominational affiliation; sex; sexual orientation; or age. Furthermore, BLSA shall not encourage or condone discrimination, either implicitly or explicitly, and shall actively discourage discrimination on any such basis.

ARTICLE III.

MEMBERSHIP

§ 3.1 Regular Membership

All students of Vermont Law School, who are enrolled as candidates for the Juris Doctor Degree (J.D.), the Masters of Studies in Environmental Law (M.S.E.L.), the Master of Law (LL.M), and any other degree programs authorized by Vermont Law School, are eligible to become regular members of BLSA. Such members, upon satisfaction of financial dues –unless qualified under the hardship provisions, are entitled to the full benefits of membership and to attend all meetings.

§ 3.2 Honorary Membership:

Honorary membership shall be extended to any person nominated by the executive board and approved by a simple majority vote of general voting body. Typically, this membership right may be extended to guest speakers or performers as a token of gratitude and appreciation (i.e., honorary doctorate).

§ 3.3 Inactive membership

Inactive membership shall consist of any chapter that does not fulfill the necessary requirements of Article III of this Constitution.

§ 3.4 Classification of Active Membership

- A. Active membership of this Organization shall consist of any student who has fulfilled the payment of its dues obligations for that academic semester, which entitles them to all rights and privileges of this Organization defined herein.
- B. All other members will be classified as non-voting.

§ 3.5 Faculty Representation

The Advisor of this organization must be a faculty member or administrator at Vermont Law School. Furthermore, any faculty member of the Law School may be appointed as an advisor for the organization, as a non-voting member. The rationale for limiting advisor representation to the mentioned entities is embedded in the belief that such individual will foster and promote an effective communication between the organization and the Vermont Law School administration.

§ 3.6 Membership Dues

Such regular member who is registered for the Fall Semester shall pay to the Treasurer of the Law School, as Membership Dues (semester or for the academic year), a non-refundable fee (as set by the executive board), due and payable at the start of each semester. The amount of the Membership Dues is subject to increase only by a majority vote of the executive board. The treasurer shall publish adequate notice of the current dues prices at least ten (10) days prior to the first scheduled meeting. Any deviation from this notice requirement shall be brought to the attention of the Executive Board and addressed in a duly fashion (i.e., the voting process among Executive Board to approve or reject the varied date).

§ 3.7 Rights of Membership and Privileges

Only active members of the organization shall have the right to vote, the right to hold office, or the right to represent this Organization in an official capacity (official capacity as defined in the above definition section).

Recognition Award: Active members will be eligible at the summation of Vermont Law School legal course curriculum, for the organization's annual recognition award. Awards will be nominated by the voting body (excluding honoring members) and decided on by the committee chair and or executive board.

§ 3.8 Rights reserved to the Membership

A. Referendum

By submitting a petition to the Secretary, any member may require a vote by general referendum on any issue regarding BLSA, including its policies and appropriations. A majority vote on a referendum shall be controlling and conclusive. When in conflict with a vote of the executive board, the referendum shall prevail. The Secretary shall hold such voting within fourteen (14) days (excluding vacation periods) after receipt of the petition. Any dispute regarding referendums shall be submitted to the Parliamentarian. An appeal from the Parliamentarian shall go to the Advisor and be binding as a final determination.

B. Recall

The elected Members may be removed from office by the general voting body through the process of recall. The same provisions shall govern a recall as a referendum, except:

1. A Super Majority Yes Vote is required to recall a voting member of the Senate; and
2. A petition for recall must clearly set forth all charges and must allege at least one of the following:
 - a. A willful violation of any provisions of these Bylaws, or
 - b. Malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of office.

C. Access to Information

All members of BLSA have the right to review and have access to the by-laws, constitution, or any other documentation compiled by the members of BLSA in the name of BLSA. Information about the organization shall also be published on the website. The website shall include:

1. The BLSA Bylaws;
2. Rules and Policy Statements;
3. Mission Statement
4. Current Members
5. Current and Future Projects
6. Officers

§ 3.9 Dues

1. **Payment of Dues:** In order to constitute active membership, as stated in §3.3, each member shall remit payment of dues. Dues shall be submitted to the treasure no later than the official time frame set by the executive board each semester. The executive committee shall determine the amount of the dues required of each member.
2. **Hardship Provision:** Payment of dues shall be a prerequisite obligation of active membership (Article III). Except, where hardship situations exist. Wavier of dues for hardships shall be considered only after:
 - a. The Executive Committee certifies that a hardship situation exists and
 - b. The membership agrees to waive payment of dues.
3. **National Dues:** All local chapters shall pay dues pursuant to NBLSA constitution and Article III, of the chapter Constitution. The National Board shall determine this amount. Every year the national board will set a regional dues structure that will apply to every region. That amount will be added to the national dues structure to make a single payment. Every region shall have a check mailed to them by the national treasurer for the portion of the dues nationals has collected once every two weeks. The national treasurer will be relieved of this duty as of

the last week in November. (S)He will resume this weekly payment schedule for the first week in January. During the time the treasurer is not required to send regular regional dues checks, any regional officer may request a list of new chapters that have paid their dues.

- a. Exception to Payment of Dues: In the event that a member is unable to meet the dues requirement, due to extenuating circumstances, that chapter may petition the Board for waiver or modification of dues payment. The chapter shall submit a written explanation and an alternative proposal for waiver or modification of said dues to the Chairperson of the Credentials and Membership Committee, the National Secretary, the national Treasurer, and its respective Regional Director, who shall then evaluate the merits of the proposal and present a report at the following board meeting. At that meeting, the board shall determine by a two-thirds vote whether to accept, reject or modify the chapter's petition.
- b. During the interim between filing of the petition and evaluation by the Board, the member chapter is to have active status.
- c. Waiver of modification of the dues payment requirement by the Board, and compliance therewith, will satisfy the dues payment for that fiscal year.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

§ 4.1 Officers

- The officers of this organization shall be the Officers shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, and Historian.
- The positions of President, Vice President, and Treasure shall be elected by simple majority vote of the membership.
- The positions of Parliamentarian, Secretary, and Historian shall be appointed by executive board and approved by the voting members.
- The Historian and Parliamentarian are non-voting members in all voting outside the capacity of executive board meetings.
- Each officer shall compile the executive board.

§ 4.2 Powers of the Executive Board:

The Board shall have a general power to administer any and all programs, business projects, and matters pertaining to or concerning the Association as pursuant to article VII; section 7.1.

- A. The Board shall have the power to create such positions and such committees as it deems necessary to carry out the business of the Association. Such persons and

committee chairpersons shall be appointed by the president from the active membership subject to the approval of the Board.

- B. Any decision of the Board shall be made at a duly called meeting at which there is a quorum.
- C. Pursuant to Article XIII of this Constitution, the Board is empowered to discipline any officer who is negligent in the discharge of his or her duties to the Association.

§ 4.3 Qualifications for office

Officers shall be currently registered students at Vermont Law School and eligible members of this organization, as defined by § 3 of these bylaws.

§ 4.4 Terms of Office

All Executive Officers shall hold office for a term of one (1) academic year, commencing on May 1st and terminating on April 30 of the following year.

§ 4.5 Vacancy of Officers -Elected Positions Which Have No Candidates

In the event that no candidate is elected for an elected Executive Committee position at the election date aforementioned the President can nominate an individual and seek approval of such candidate from the voting body, or general nominations can be conducted and submitted to the secretary (in the absence of the secretary, then this function shall be governed by the executive board) and a secret ballot vote shall be conducted.

§4.6 Succession of Officers

Each Executive member shall submit typed, detailed reports to the Historian outlining all actions taken on behalf of BLSA in fulfillment of their duties at the commencement of there duties (i.e., president's log, treasure's budget records, secretary's files, parliamentarian's amendments).

The Executive Committee shall create a BLSA Operations Manual consisting of detailed outlines submitted by each Executive Committee member outlining their duties and responsibilities, implementation procedures, problems encountered during their tenure, suggestions for more efficient mechanisms for performing their duties and any other relevant information that will aid and guide subsequent BLSA Executive Committees.

The BLSA Operations Manual shall be distributed and explained in detail to the incoming Executive Committee at the Transitional Meeting in April.

§4.7 Duties and Responsibilities

A. President

The President of this organization will be responsible for exercising general authority over the business and activities of the Organization (i.e., chairing all meetings, serving as the BLSA representative, serving as ex-officio member of all organization committees; performing such functions and exercising such further duties as the Board may assign). In addition, the President shall also appoint committee chairpersons and such other agents as is deemed necessary to carry out the business and promote the mission of the Black Law Students Association. Furthermore, the President, when acting as the presiding officer, shall vote only in the case of a tie vote within the governing body.

1. Duties and Responsibilities:

- i. To possess the chief responsibility of actively pursuing, and ensuring that, issues of concern BLSA are addressed to the administration at Vermont Law School and the Student Bar Association
- ii. To ensure that the Roles of the executive board and each member are actively pursued;
- iii. To call to order and act as Presiding Officer of any regular and special meetings of the Executive Committee or special committee;
- iv. To read and comply with all provisions of these Bylaws and the NBLSA standing rules and by-laws;
- v. To know and employ in all meetings proper parliamentary procedure as indicated within these Bylaws;
- vi. To meet with VLS Administration to discuss and vigorously pursue issues of concern to the organization;
- vii. To appoint chairs of standing and special committees with majority consent of the voting body, unless otherwise specified within these by-laws;
- viii. To issue instruction to the committees and to ensure that their duties are faithfully executed;
- ix. To approve the signing of BLSA checks by the Treasurer;
- x. To serve as emergency signor of checks in the absence of the Treasurer.
- xi. To chair the Executive Committee;
- xii. To keep the BLSA informed and to assure access to information regarding the SBA and the Senate;
- xiii. To attend/partake in at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all Official Meeting Times; and
- xiv. To determine and post the agenda for all BLSA meetings, subject to the majority's approval of the executive board;

B. Vice- President

The Vice-President shall assist the President with all activities of the Organization and shall chair all meetings that the President or the appointed Chair is unable to facilitate. In the event the President is unable to complete a term of office, the Vice-President shall serve in the capacity as acting President for the remainder of the term. One of the primary responsibilities of the Vice-President/Co-Chair shall be to promote and incorporate the chapter's participation in activities, meetings, and other functions hosted by the National Black Law Students Association (i.e., The Thurgood Marshall Moot Court, The Frederick Douglas Moot Court Competition, and National Conventions). In addition, the Vice President shall obtain any valuable information from the National Association (i.e. scholarships, internships) and disseminate said information among the members of the organization. The Vice-President/Co-Chair may collaborate with Vermont Law School (VLS) Student Career Services Coordinator/Dean of Student Affairs and Diversity to locate and disseminate information concerning study abroad and other Diversity Internship/Externship opportunities. If the Vice President/Co-Chair is unable to perform the majority of the mandatory duties, an acting Vice-President shall be elected by a simple majority of the Executive Committee. Lastly, attend/partake in at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all Official Meeting Times.

C. Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining the records of BLSA. He or she shall be responsible for the maintenance and distribution of minutes and agenda for all meetings of the Executive Committee and general meetings. The agenda and minutes must be sent out via electronic mail, or best available mode of communication transfer, at least five days prior to the date of the next scheduled meeting. The Secretary is required to incorporate resolutions and constitutional amendments passed into the Constitution prior to the transitional meeting. The Constitution incorporating such changes is to be distributed to each member as well as be on record in the official BLSA office. In the event the Secretary is unable to complete their term of office, a replacement will be chosen per § 4.5. Moreover, the Secretary shall keep on file all reports, records, and meaningful correspondences as well as provide an account of the number of general members for the purpose of establishing quorum at each meeting.

1. Duties and Responsibilities

- i. To read and comply with all provisions of these Bylaws and the NBLSA Standing Rules and bylaws;
- ii. To take minutes of all Regular and Special Meetings of the organization;
- iii. To post such minutes subject to amendment and approval by the voting body, with copies to the members (can be via email), within five days after approval, including the name and vote of each party;

- iv. To record attendance at all meetings for inclusion in the minutes;
- v. To keep on file and reserve all committee reports and all minutes of BLSA meetings;
- vi. To keep on file and reserve all opinions of the Parliamentarian;
- vii. To keep official membership rolls and records of attendance;
- viii. To notify the membership of all meetings;
- ix. To handle all correspondence of the organization;
- x. To receive and promptly distribute all organizational mail;
- xi. To take responsibility and account for BLSA keys;
- xii. To chair the Elections Committee;
- xiii. To see that all elections/referendums follow the election procedures in these Bylaws and the Standing Rules;
- xiv. To ensure that prior to each election candidates have a public forum to express their views in a manner determined by the executive board in the Standing Rules;
- xv. To attend/partake in at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all Official Senate Meeting Times; and
- xvi. To perform other duties as indicated in the Standing Rules and those that the Senate may assign from time to time.

D. Treasure

The Treasurer shall have custody of the funds and securities of BLSA and shall see to it that they are deposited in such bank as the Executive Board designates. The Treasure shall receive all monies associated with the regular transactions of the organization (i.e., chapter dues, national dues, and all registration fees). The Treasure shall implement a process (with the simple majority approval of the Executive Board) in which monies shall be requested and delegated within the organization. Every member will be required to adhere to such process incorporated by the Treasurer or face administrative review. Furthermore, the Treasurer shall assure that entries are regularly made in the financial records accounting for all monies received and disbursed by BLSA. In addition, the Treasurer shall make regular financial reports to Executive Board and the general body. The signatures of both the President and Treasurer shall be necessary to validate all checks issued by BLSA in excess of \$250.00 or for checks' issued for other than normal operating expenses. In addition, the Treasurer shall submit an organizational budget for the year at the first regularly scheduled Board meeting, to include; statement of accounts, statements of unpaid bills with explanation, statement of income, a detailed account of how all funds were used, and a detailed account of all anticipated expenses based on future organizational needs, history, and accounting for emergencies. The Treasure shall attend at least one budget workshop hosted by the Treasure of the Student Bar Association for the purposes of becoming proficient in the fund request process. The Treasure shall host a

meeting with the Executive Board to review each semester budget request before submission to the Student Bar Association (SBA) and as well as educate the members of the Executive Board of the budget request process instituted by the SBA. In the event the Treasurer is unable to complete their term of office, a replacement will be chosen per § 4.5. Lastly, if permissible, the treasure aspire to be a member of SBA's finance committee.

1. Duties and Responsibilities

- i. To advise members, the SBA, and student groups on financial considerations affecting BLSA;
- ii. To read and comply with all provisions of these Bylaws and the NBLSA Standing Rules and bylaws;
- iii. To have in charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the SBA (not withstanding president's authority);
- iv. To hold the checkbook of and serve as the signor of checks for BLSA;
- v. To prepare the General Fund Budget for presentation to the Executive Committee, Advisors and SBA according to these Bylaws and the Standing Rules;
- vi. To prepare Budget request for presentation to the Finance Committee and Senate according to these Bylaws and the Standing Rules;
- vii. To pay all bills authorized by the executive board;
- viii. To deliver funds consistent with the budgeting procedures adopted by the executive board;
- ix. To keep permanent records of all receipts and expenditures of the organization;
- x. To keep the books open to the membership for examination in his/her presence;
- xi. To ensure the proper application of these Bylaws and the Standing Rules to the fundraising efforts of the organization;
- xii. To submit a financial statement at all Regular Meetings of the organization and to provide monthly summaries with copies to all members of the Senate (can be performed via email or via power point technology);
- xiii. To prepare an annual report for presentation during the last week of classes in the spring semester;
- xiv. To deliver funds promptly once they are allocated and requested consistent with the budgeting procedures as adopted by the treasure and approved by the executive committee;
- xv. To serve as representative during SBA Budget workshops and meetings (when requested);

- xvi. To attend/partake in at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all Official Meeting Times; and
- xvii. To perform other duties as indicated in the Standing Rules and those that the Senate may assign from time to time.

E. Parliamentarian

The parliamentarian is responsible for providing the proper rules of order in disputes over parliamentary procedure at the direction of the President as a means to maintain the peace and sanctity of all organizational meetings. The Parliamentarian is also responsible for updating the Constitution and Bylaws with all adopted proposals and resolutions as well as serve as the Chairperson of all meetings/committees concerning the constitution and bylaws of the organization. The parliamentarian shall be the final authority, to decide all questions of interpretation and construction of the parliamentary authority and procedural rules of this Organization. The interpretation of the Parliamentarian can be revoked with a 2/3-majority vote and which at that time an amended interpretation can be asserted by any member of good standing and voted on by the general voting body. Furthermore, the Parliamentarian shall be responsible for providing all members with the current procedural rules and ensure that each member receives a copy of the student handbook if one had not been provided. The Parliamentarian must also have an updated copy of the current edition of Robert Rules of Order as well as a current copy of the By-Laws and Constitution of both the National and Local chapters of the Black Law Students Association at every regularly scheduled meeting. The Parliamentarian shall be a non-voting member in the organization, except while serving within the capacity of executive board activities. The President shall appoint a Parliamentarian from the membership at or before the first Regular Meeting of the organization over which the President presides. The appointment shall be subject to a majority approval of the voting body.

1. Duties and Responsibilities

- i. To read and comply with all provisions of these Bylaws and the NBLSA Standing Rules and bylaws;
- ii. To resolve ambiguities in, to clarify, and to interpret the Bylaws and Standing Rules;
- iii. To attend/partake in at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all Official Senate Meeting Times; and
- iv. To perform other duties as indicated in the Standing Rules and those that the executive board may assign from time to time.

2. Constitution and Bylaws Committee: The parliamentarian may create a Constitution and Bylaws Committee composed of no less than three (3) members shall be appointed at the first regular meeting.

- 1. Formulate and distribute guidelines and procedures governing the manner in which proposed constitutional and bylaw amendments

- are to be a) structured or written b) submitted, and c) distributed;
and
2. Put proposed constitutional and bylaw amendments in proper form, eliminating duplication where similar amendments are offered in logical sequence; and
 3. Coordinate and supervise the constitutional and bylaw amendment session.

F. Historians

The Historian shall be responsible for coordinating all community affairs projects undertaken; and maintaining a scrapbook of the Organization activities throughout the term; and photographing all Organizational activities; and Publishing and circulating to local newsletter(s). Moreover, the Historian shall be bound by the duty obligations just as other officers are bound by the enumerated duty obligations.

Article V

Impeachment of Officers

§ 5.1.

Any member of the Executive Committee failing to attend three (3) Executive Committee meetings, general meetings or submit three (3) written reports each semester shall be subject to disciplinary actions and sanctions. Such actions and sanctions may include impeachment.

Impeachment must include an effort to notify the officer subjected to disciplinary action at or prior to the general meeting and a hearing will be held regarding such impeachment procedures. The impeachment must be approved by a two thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Committee.

Article VI

Meetings of the organization

§ 6.1 Frequency

The voting body must meet at a regularly scheduled day and time at least twice per month during the months of September through November, and February through April. All meetings of the organization shall be open to the members of the student body to attend with the approval of the executive board.

§ 6.2 Quorum Requirement for Official Meetings

A quorum shall exist when one more than half the voting members are present. The Secretary shall inform the President or Presiding officer when a quorum is present at the beginning of meetings of the voting body and from time to time if a quorum question is raised.

§ 6.3 Scheduling

At least one meeting a month shall be scheduled during regular school hours.

§ 6.4 Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called at the request of the President of BLSA, the Executive Board, the Advisor, the Dean of the Law School, or majority of the voting body.

§ 6.5 Notice

Notice of a meeting shall be given at least five days prior to Regular Meetings, and at least twenty-four hours prior to Special Meetings. The agenda shall be posted electronically (as a means to keep within the institutions policy of avoiding waste and promoting economic and time efficiency), or on the BLSA bulletin board at least seventy-two hours before a Regular Meeting and twenty-four hours before a Special Meeting. All members of the organization are encouraged to submit issues for discussion and to participate in meetings of the general body.

§ 6.6 Proxy

A Voting Member who plans to be absent from a meeting may provide written notice to the Secretary prior to any meeting that they have given their proxy to vote to another Voting Member or Executive Officer pursuant to guidelines established in the by-laws. Proxies do not contribute to any quorum requirement. The proxy member may not vote more than two (2) proxies per option.

ARTICLE VII

COMMITTEES

§ 7.1 Executive Committee,

The Executive Committee shall consist of the president, vice president, secretary, treasure, parliamentarian, and historian and shall have the power to administer any and all programs or business matters concerning BLSA. The Executive Committee shall have the power to make immediate decisions on such matters that further the mission of BLSA. The voting body has the authority to overturn any decision made by the executive board with a majority 2/3 votes. In addition, the Executive Committee shall have the power to create such other committees, as it deems necessary to carry out the business of BLSA. The Executive Committee shall assist the President in guiding the direction of the voting

body and developing the agenda. It shall meet on a regular basis at least as often as the Regularly Scheduled Senate Meetings and as indicated in the Standing Rules.

§ 7.2 Special Committees

The voting body shall create special committees as needed to address specific needs of the organization and its members. Each special committee shall stand until the next cabinet takes office or until dissolved by the current members. The voting body may make appointments to Special Committees when the committee is created or the Senate may delegate to the Executive Committee or to the President the authority to make such appointments at their discretion.

§ 7.3 Committee Member Duties and Responsibilities

All elected and appointed committee chairs shall attend at least one meeting a month of the organization or per request of the executive board. It is the responsibility of the Chair of each standing and special committee to make minutes of the meetings (or have someone act as the committee Secretary for this purpose) and it is the Chairs' responsibility to submit minutes to the Secretary either by email or delivery at a regular meeting (noting at least the attendance, time, and place and matters discussed and any votes taken or recommendations by consensus). The committee members shall attend all committee meetings unless there is a valid reason not to attend that should be so reflected in the committee minutes. The committee members shall strive to insure that the interests of the members of the organization are properly represented.

ARTICLE VIII

VOTING

§ 8.1

All active members are eligible to vote in all regular and special elections.

§ 8.2

A vote shall only take place when a quorum exists.

§ 8.3

A quorum shall exist when twenty percent (30%) of the general membership is present.

§ 8.4

Except as otherwise specified, a majority of the vote will decide all matters

§ 8.5

Simple Majority Vote: For the purpose of this document, a simple majority vote shall be defined as: at least one more than half of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote, excluding blanks and abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present.

§ 8.6

Two-Thirds Vote: For the purpose of this document, a two-thirds vote shall be defined as: at least two-thirds of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote, excluding blanks and abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present.

§ 8.7

Three-Fourths Vote: For the purpose of this document, a three-fourths vote shall be defined as: at least three -fourths of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote, excluding blanks and abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present.

§ 8.8

When there is not a quorum for voting:

Either the presiding officer can make a motion that the normal rules of quorum requirements be suspended for that specific meeting with the approval of a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the attending voting members.

No voting shall take place and rescheduling occurs with the secretary disseminating notice among the voting body requesting their presents at the future date.

Article IX

Election Procedures

§ 9.1

Those members seeking election to Offices shall be required to sign a statement before being officially recognized as a candidate. That statement will include; 1) a statement of the fiduciary duty of Board Members of the Association; 2) a description of the duties of the particular office; and 3) a pledge to fulfill requirements of the Bylaws.

§ 9.2

The executive board may oversee the election process if an election committee is not established for such purposes. This committee can be created at the will of the executive board or the general voting body. An Elections Committee shall be composed of no less than five (5) members. It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Formulate and distribute qualifications, guidelines, and procedures governing;
 - a) candidate eligibility and b) campaign activities; and

2. Determine the eligibility of each candidate
3. Candidates currently seeking election to a National Office of the Association are barred from membership on the Elections Committee.

Article X

BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

§ 10.1 Procedure

Any voting member/member in good standing may propose amendments to the Bylaws.

- A. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the executive board and then disseminated throughout the voting body at any Regular Scheduled Meeting.
- B. In order for proposed amendments to be voted on by the organization
 1. The proposed amendments shall also include a petition containing the valid signatures of 75% of the current members, OR
 2. Receive a majority vote of approval by the voting body.
- C. Timing of Vote
 1. A vote of the SBA shall take place between fourteen and thirty days from the date of submission at a Regular Meeting.
 2. Adequate notice of the vote shall be posted at least one week prior to the vote.

§ 10.2 Ratification

Adoption of proposed amendments occurs only by a vote of the current membership of BLSA. The quorum requirement for a ratification vote is two-thirds of the current membership of the organization. Ratification passes with a super majority yes vote.

ARTICLE XI

EFFECTIVE DATE

§ 11.1 Time of Implementation

These Bylaws take effect immediately upon ratification by the SBA and replace all other Constitutions and/or Bylaws.

ARTICLE XII

Parliamentary Authority

§ 12.1

Robert's Rules of Order: The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws and any special rules of order the Association may adopt.

§ 12.2

Parliamentary Authority shall be utilized and enforced by the presiding officer in any official BLSA meeting, engagement, or formal setting.

§ 12.3

Parliamentarian shall interpret any ambiguous wording within the parliamentary proceedings, constitution, and bylaws, as well as assist in the maintenance in the peace, and sanctity of all BLSA meetings.

ARTICLE XIII

Disciplinary Proceedings

§ 13.1

Grounds: Failure to perform the duties of the office as prescribed in this Constitution and Bylaws, or conduct detrimental to the well being of this Association shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action. The Association is empowered to make and enforce its own rules and to require that its members and officers refrain from conduct injurious to the Association or its purposes.

§ 13.2

A. Recommendation: Any member of BLSA may submit to the executive board (or the designated committee established to accommodate such matters) a written recommendation that an officer or member be disciplined for conduct outside of the mission of BLSA/NBLSA that are detrimental to the existence of the organization both financially, publicly, or derogatory.

§ 13.3

B. Hearing: The executive board (or designated committee), acting on such recommendation, voting by a simple majority may call a hearing on the merits of the recommendation at the next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special meeting to determine whether there are grounds for disciplinary action against the officer or general member in question. Such member shall be given reasonable, written notice and an opportunity to defend him/herself at said hearing.

§ 13.4

C. Discipline: If grounds for disciplinary action exist, censure or impeachment of the member in question shall be appropriate. Impeachment: Impeachment is in order upon a two-thirds vote of the Board or a two-thirds vote of the General Membership.

§ 13.5

D. Censure: Censure shall be in order upon two-thirds vote of the Board.

Article XIV

Catchall Provisions

§ 14.1

The Catchall Provisions state that if a situation may arise in which the Vermont Law School chapter of BLSA constitution conflicts with the NBLSA constitution (only in matters of national policy or national procedure); then the national constitution shall be deemed supreme law. All other matters pertaining to VLS chapter of BLSA organization shall be governed respectively by the executive board pursuant to the provisions enumerated within this constitution.

§ 14.2

For any situation that is not enumerated in the VLS chapter of the BLSA constitution or in the National Black Law Students Association constitution, then the executive board shall remedy the situation by any means deemed necessary and proper to resolve the issue with the majority approval (via simple majority vote) of the general voting body.