

# CONSTITUTION

## Article I. NAME

The name of this organization is the Black Law Students Association (BLSA).

## Article II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Organization shall be to utilize the collective resources of the member chapters to:

1. To influence American Law Schools to use their legal expertise and prestige to effectively bring about changes in the legal system responsive to the needs of the Black Community.
2. Articulate and promote the professionals needs and goals of black law students.
3. Foster and encourage professional competence.
4. As an organization and as individuals, to bring our legal training to bear upon some of the problems, in the Black Community.

## Article III. MEMBERSHIP

### Section I

Eligibility for Membership: General Membership shall consist of any matriculated law student at the Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center who agrees to adhere to the purpose of the Organization.

### Section II

#### *Classification of Membership:*

Active membership of this Organization shall consist of any student who has fulfilled the payment of its dues obligations for that fiscal year, which entitles them to all rights and privileges of this

Organization defined herein.

### Section III

#### *Rights of Membership:*

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 the official capacity.

### Section IV

#### *Duties of Membership:*

Regular participation in the activities of this Organization is incumbent upon each member.

*Payment of Dues:* In order to constitute active membership, as stated in Article III, Section II, each member shall remit payment of dues. Dues shall be submitted no later than October 1

<sup>st</sup>  
of each year.

*Amount of Dues:* The amount of the dues required of each member shall be determined by the governing body.

## Article IV. VOTING

### Section I

For vote to take place a quorum must exist.

### Section II

A quorum shall exist when 20 percent (20%) of the general membership is present.

### Section III

Except as otherwise specified a majority vote will decide all matters.

### Section IV

For the purpose of this document, a simple majority vote shall be defined as greater than half of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote-excluding abstentions-at a regular or properly called meeting at which quorum is present.

### Section V

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 abstentions-at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present.

#### Section VI

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 abstentions-at a regular or properly called meeting at which a quorum is present.

### **Article V. OFFICERS**

#### Section I

##### ***Eligibility of Officers:***

Persons eligible to hold an office of the Executive Board (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") of this Organization must be an active member of the Organization for the entire term.

##### ***Financing:***

This Organization shall be financed primarily by dues, SBA funding, fundraising activities and donations.

#### Section II

##### ***Classification of Officers:***

The Officers of this Organization shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary and a Treasurer. These Officers shall perform duties prescribed by the Bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by this Organization.

#### Section III

##### ***Duties of Officers:***

###### **A. The President shall:**

1. Propose, coordinate, and execute the programs and activities of BLSA.
2. Act as the chief representative of BLSA.
3. Preside over all Executive Board and general meetings.
4. Have the power to call the special meetings of the Executive Board and shall convene such meetings upon the petition of three members of the Executive Board.
5. Have the power to call special meetings of the Body and shall convene such meetings upon the petition of 40% of the general members.
6. Remain neutral on matters before the body and vote only in case of a tie.
7. Have the power to establish ad hoc committee and delegate special duties to members of the body. And
8. Submit a comprehensive written report detailing the past years activities (May 1st-April 30th) to the Secretary before the final meeting in April and shall present it to the body at that meeting

###### **B. The Vice-President shall:**

1. Act as President during the temporary absence of the President and shall assume the Chair should the President's absence become permanent.
2. Co-sign all accounts with the Treasurer.
3. Attend all Student Bar Association (SBA) meetings and report on those meetings at the next general body meeting.
4. Coordinate BLSA Parent's/Partner Weekend in conjunction with the SBA.
5. Arrange speaking engagements drawing upon Black legal professionals.
6. Perform all other tasks as directed by the President.

###### **C. The Secretary shall:**

1. Record the minutes of the general body and Executive Board meetings and read the previous meeting's minutes at the next meeting or determined by the Body.

2. Enter approved minutes into a permanent ledger book.
3. Keep an accurate list of all current BLSA members and alumni members including addresses and phone numbers.
4. Receive all resolutions prior to the meeting in which they will be presented and record such resolution in the ledger.
5. Keep on file all reports, records, and meaningful correspondence.
6. Provide and account of the number of general members for the purposes of establishing quorum at each meeting.
7. Sit in the full capacity of the Chair in the Permanent absence of both the President and Vice-President until individuals are elected to those positions. The election shall be held at the next general body meeting.

**D. The Treasurer shall:**

1. Conduct all financial transactions, but may disburse funds only if such disbursement is by either the President or Vice-President.
2. Keep an accurate account of all income and expenditures in a permanent book.
3. Keep an accurate account of the general membership.
4. Present an official financial report at each general meeting.
5. Submit a comprehensive-written financial report to the Secretary before the final meeting in April and shall present it to the Body at the April meeting.

**E. The Public Relations Chair shall:**

1. Develop and implement a plan for the recruitment of BLSA members
2. Encourage cross-organizational partnership with student groups in the law center and University as a whole.
3. Encourage partnership and recognition within Nova Community and Community at Large
4. Plan activities and methodologies that increase the law center's awareness and recognition of the BLSA organization.
5. Research and introduce activities for BLSA membership, academic and professional development.
6. Coordinate with the e-board to publicize BLSA events.
7. Keep abreast of National BLSA activities.

Section IV

***Election of Officers:***

The Officers shall be elected by a majority of the voting members.

***Elections Procedures***

- A. Nominations elections for the offices listed in Article V. Section 1 of this Constitution shall be held during the first regular meeting of March each year.
- B. The election and nomination procedures shall be conducted and supervised by an election chair, appointed by the President. The election chair shall be a non-candidate.
- C. Written nominations shall be received at the nomination/election meeting.
- D. Nominees shall address and receive any questions Posed by the Body. Time limits for the address and question and answer period shall be determined by the Election Chair.
- E. The election shall be by secret written ballot.
- F. Officers shall be elected by a simple majority. If no one candidate receives a majority of the votes, there shall be a run off between the two candidates receiving the greatest number of votes.
- G. If any position remains vacant, the President shall appoint a member who is eligible to seek office to the position. The appointee shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

Section V

***Terms of Office:***

The Officers shall hold office for a term of one (1) year. A term of office shall commence May 1<sup>st</sup> And shall terminate April 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.

## **Article VI. MEETINGS**

### ***Organization Meetings:***

The Organization shall meet at least once a month. In case of emergency or urgent matters, any officer shall call a meeting no later than 24 hours before anticipated time. Meetings may be announced via posted flyer, word of mouth, and/or e-mail.

## **Article VII. CONVENTION DELEGATES**

### Section I

#### **The Convention Delegate(s) shall:**

1. Attend the Regional and national BLSA Conventions and shall represent the interests of The Nova Southeastern University BLSA Chapter.
2. Provide a full report of Convention highlights and financial expenses to the general body at the first meeting following the conclusion of each Convention,

### Section II

#### **Selection of Delegate(s)**

A. The Executive Committee shall select the delegate(s) based on the following criteria:

1. Meeting attendance;
2. Active involvement in BLSA sponsored activities;

B. The number of delegates selected to attend the Convention shall correspond to the total number of votes that the Chapter has on the regional or national convention level.

## **Article VIII. LEGISLATION**

### **Legislation:**

All legislation of the Organization will be initiated by the Officers and adopted by a simple majority vote by the membership.

## **Article IX. AMENDMENTS**

### Section I

***Adoption:*** The Constitution and Bylaws of the Organization shall be adopted by a simple majority vote by the membership.

### Section II

***Amendments:*** Any amendment(s) must be adopted by a simple majority vote of the membership.

A. Amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws shall be passed according to the rules et forth in Subsection A (1) and (2) below:

1. Constitutional Amendments shall be passed upon receiving a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership.
2. Bylaws Amendments shall be passed upon receiving a simple majority vote of the membership.

Constitutional and Bylaw Amendments to the Constitution shall be ratified and take effect immediately upon adoption by a simple majority of the membership.