

Constitution

STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER

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PREAMBLE

We, the students of The University of Houston Law Center, in recognition of our shared responsibility and partnership with students, administration, faculty, and staff to fulfill the Law Center's mission, do hereby adopt and establish this Constitution for The University of Houston Law Center Student Bar Association.

ARTICLE I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1: Name

(a) The name of this organization shall be The University of Houston Law Center Student Bar Association and may also be referred to as the "SBA."

Section 2: Purpose

(a) The purpose of the SBA shall be to serve as the primary voice and advocate for the student body at the University of Houston Law Center; to represent their interests before the administration, faculty, and external entities; to assist the administration and faculty in maintaining a proper academic atmosphere; to promote student well-being and success; to foster a sense of community through various programs and initiatives; and to perform other duties as needed.

Section 3: Definitions

(a) "University", "UHLC", or "Law Center" shall mean the University of Houston Law Center.
(b) "SBA" shall mean the University of Houston Law Center Student Bar Association or the Student Bar Association at the University of Houston Law Center.
(c) "SGA" shall mean the University of Houston Student Government Association or the Student Government Association of the University of Houston.
(d) "Day(s)" shall refer to any class day, including Friday, during an academic semester as reflected in an official UHLC Academic Calendar.
(e) "Assembly" or "the Assembly" shall mean the Assembly of the Student Bar Association.
(f) "Officers," "Executive Board," "Executive," or "E-Board" shall mean the Executive Board and/or its members of the SBA.
(g) "Associates," shall mean all appointed associate positions and the Chief-of-staff that are housed within the Assembly.

Section 4: Non-Discrimination

(a) The SBA shall not discriminate and shall discourage discrimination on the basis of, but not limited to, ancestry, citizenship, creed, economic background or status, ethnic identity, ethnicity, gender expression, gender identity, intellectual ability, national origin, philosophy, physical ability, veteran status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.
(b) The SBA shall provide accessibility accommodations upon request and may coordinate with University partners to determine the best accommodation option.

Section 5: Parliamentary Authority

(a) The rules contained in the latest version of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the SBA during a meeting of the Assembly or when applicable unless they are inconsistent with this Constitution or its associated By-Laws.

Section 6: General Membership

(a) All students currently enrolled at the University of Houston Law Center are Active Members of the SBA.
(b) All students currently enrolled at the University of Houston (regardless of enrollment in the University of Houston Law Center) who paid membership dues on or before May 1, 2025, are Legacy Members of the SBA.
(c) All other students currently enrolled at the University of Houston who are not otherwise enrolled at the University of Houston Law Center are inactive members.

ARTICLE II: EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1: Composition

(a) The Executive Board of the SBA shall consist of the following Officers: President, Internal Vice President, External Vice President, Finance Director, Communications Director, Executive Events Director, and Accessibility & Engagement Director.
(b) No one shall hold more than one (1) Officer position concurrently.

Section 2: General Duties and Powers

(a) The Officers shall make themselves available, upon request, to the student body and administration of the Law Center.
(b) With a simple majority approval, the Officers may approve an Executive Order by the President.
(c) The Officers shall represent the SBA to any UHLC department or administrator and any external entity, as necessary.
(d) They shall, in good faith, advocate for and implement the decisions of the Assembly and the student body.
(e) They shall act as administrators of the SBA and enact policy directed towards its functioning unless otherwise delegated by this Constitution or its associated By-Laws.
(f) They shall assist the External Vice President in administering elections as necessary.
(g) They shall collectively possess the authority to interpret and construe the Constitution and By-Laws.
(h) They shall promote and preserve the image of the SBA.
(i) They shall provide updates on external activities to the Assembly on a monthly basis or upon request.
(j) Each Officer shall have one (1) vote on all matters which require voting.
(k) They shall manage, direct, and support the Associates who report to them as designated in Article III.
(l) They shall fulfill all duties associated with their membership on, or chairmanship of, any Standing Committee as prescribed in Article V.
(m) They shall maintain vendor relationships as necessary for the execution of their respective duties and shall coordinate with the Finance Director to ensure all related transactions are properly documented and accounted for in accordance with SBA financial policies.

Section 3: President

(a) They shall serve as the SBA's Chief Executive Officer, and Chief Liaison to the Law Center administration and faculty.
(b) They shall coordinate SBA business on a directional basis and keep other Officers on task.

(c) They shall represent one (1) of the two (2) votes on the Division Assembly given to the SBA by the Law Student Division of the American Bar Association. The President must attend the annual Division Assembly meeting, the 13th Circuit Fall Roundtable, and the 13th Circuit Spring Conference, as necessary.
(d) They shall call and preside over meetings of the Executive Board.
(e) They shall serve and/or appoint all student delegates to serve on any Law Center committees and any committee outside of the Law Center, as requested.
(f) They may appoint individuals to represent the SBA on their behalf.
(g) They may propose the creation of a committee, with a simple majority approval of the Assembly, along with its Chair and membership.
(h) They may issue Executive Orders, with a simple majority approval of the Officers, when it is not practical to call a meeting of the Assembly or when this document does not instruct appropriate action.
(i) They may create programs and initiatives for the SBA.
(j) They may, with a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours' notice, call a special session of the Assembly as necessary.
(k) They may invite individuals to serve as *ex officio* members on the Executive Board.

Section 4: Internal Vice President

(a) They shall coordinate SBA business on a day-to-day basis and keep the Assembly members on track in their duties.
(b) They shall serve as the Presiding Officer and are essential for conducting an Assembly meeting. When the Internal Vice President is absent, the President will preside over Assembly meetings.
(c) They shall manage and coordinate all Representatives elected to membership in the Assembly.
(d) They shall assist in any matters as assigned by the President.
(e) They may create programs and initiatives with the President's consent.
(f) They shall coordinate and oversee any standing programs of the SBA (ex., 1L Mentorship).
(g) They may appoint individuals to help coordinate standing programs of the SBA.
(h) They shall support and promote all promotional, marketing, and visual identity efforts in coordination with the Public Relations Committee.
(i) They shall be charged with encouraging engagement from SBA members in SBA's ongoing initiatives, events, and activities.
(j) They shall be charged with developing SBA's leadership and processes, including planning SBA's leadership team-building events and regularly reviewing the SBA governing documents.
(k) They shall coordinate with student leaders within the Law Center to determine what they desire from SBA, communicate these desires to the Executive Board and Assembly, and work to realize them to the best of their ability to enhance the value of SBA.

(l) They may call upon the External Vice President for assistance when necessary.
(m) They shall work with the President and External Vice President to facilitate a smooth transition between Executive Board administrations.

Section 5: External Vice President

(a) When not subject to Section 11 of this Article, they shall assume the duties of the President caused by their prolonged absence or incapacity, in respect to representing the SBA to external parties and at events
(b) They shall manage and coordinate all Liaisons invited to membership in the Assembly.
(c) They shall assist in any matters as assigned by the President.
(d) They shall swear in all elected members of the SBA.
(e) They may create programs and initiatives with the President's consent.
(f) They shall be charged with coordinating sponsorships, communicating with alumni, and directing the external affairs of the SBA.
(g) They shall be charged with oversight of the SBA's sponsored programming, including but not limited to alumni panels, practitioner events, networking opportunities, and Lunch & Learn series.
(h) They shall administer the elections of the SBA, which entails preparing the ballots, counting the votes, holding an election information session, and certifying the results.
(i) They may make election rule recommendations to the Assembly no later than one (1) regular meeting before the respective election to be certified by a simple majority vote of the Assembly.
(j) They shall represent one (1) of the two (2) votes on the Division Assembly given to the SBA by the Law Student Division of the American Bar Association and serve as the ABA Representative.
(k) As the ABA Representative, they shall liaise with the Law Student Division of the American Bar Association and represent UHLC and the SBA as a member of the Division and the 13th Circuit.
(l) They shall work with the President and Internal Vice President to facilitate a smooth transition between Executive Board administrations.

Section 6: Finance Director

(a) They shall serve as the SBA's Chief Financial Officer and Accountant, including submitting qualifying expenses to the Law Center for reimbursement, maintaining financial records, paying bills and invoices, managing the UHLC Foundation Account, and presenting periodic financial reports to the Executive Board.
(b) They shall draft and submit the annual budget proposal for approval to the Assembly, with advice and consent from the Executive Board.
(c) They shall provide budgetary updates to the Assembly on a monthly basis or upon request and shall generally maintain accurate financial records.

(d) They must approve expenses for all events and may veto any event on that basis, except in the case of a unanimous vote by the President, Internal Vice President, and External Vice President to overrule such veto.
(e) They shall be the only Officer, save and except for the President, to have access to the SBA external bank account, and shall be one of the named cardholders for the account.
(f) They shall work with the External Vice President on managing sponsorship funds and securing outside funding.
(g) They shall assist in any matters as assigned by the President, Internal Vice President, or External Vice President.

Section 7: Communications Director

(a) As the SBA record keeper, the Communications Director is one (1) of the two (2) Officers (the other being the Presiding Officer) who are essential for the conduct of an Assembly meeting.
(b) Unless this document or an Executive Order instructs otherwise, they shall maintain the SBA membership list as of May 1, 2025.
(c) They shall support the Internal Vice President by leading content creation and editing, developing promotional and media campaigns, and assisting in the distribution of SBA communications across relevant platforms.
(d) They shall manage and maintain the SBA website in coordination with the President and Internal Vice President, ensuring functionality, accessibility, and timely updates.
(e) They shall prepare and publish the SBA Newsletter regularly and ensure its timely distribution across appropriate communication platforms.
(f) They shall serve as the official custodian of record for the SBA.
(g) They shall supervise and support the Public Relations Committee in maintaining brand consistency, cross-platform coordination, and strategic outreach efforts, and may delegate tasks or request assistance as needed.

Section 8: Executive Events Director

(a) The Executive Events Director shall be the primary social programming Officer who organizes and executes at least two (2) signature social events, one in the fall and another in the spring semesters with assistance from the Large Events Associate.
(b) They shall make recommendations to the Assembly and implement the Assembly's final decisions as they relate to social programming. The recommendation shall include, but is not limited to, the event's name, theme, venue, fees, entertainment, food, drink, insurance, security, and other issues.
(c) They shall staff and manage volunteers for all programming and shall be present during all signature events to provide assistance as necessary.
(d) They shall retain final authority over all SBA social programming decisions. The Large Events Associate and Small Events Associate shall implement programming decisions only upon the approval of the Executive Events Director.

(e) They shall receive a substantial budget to carry out the Executive Board's decisions in coordination with the Events Committee.

Section 9: Accessibility & Engagement Director

(a) They shall proactively engage the Law Center student body and administration to ensure student programming and resources are equitably administered alongside the Internal Vice President.
(b) They shall build a positive rapport with affinity-based organizations within the Law Center.
(c) They shall use their position to elevate the student body's concerns to the Law Center administration.
(d) They shall report incidents at or involving the Law Center that concern Article XI of this constitution directly to the President and Executive Board.
(e) In reporting and/or discussing such incidents, they shall keep personal information confidential unless they have the individual's express consent.
(f) They shall maintain complaints from students regarding Article XI issues and coordinate with the Law Center administration to seek solutions.
(g) They shall work with the Community & Outreach Associate, Executive Events Director, and Small Events Associate to create events geared towards maintaining the standards set forth in Article XI.
(h) They shall be charged with the continuous improvement of the Assembly and SBA operations to better foster a safe environment at all SBA-sponsored events.
(i) They shall advance the mission of the Student Life Committee, coordinating with its members to ensure that SBA's non-social programming, student advocacy, and community engagement efforts are executed in alignment with the SBA's strategic goals.

Section 10: Power of Appointment

(a) With advice and consent of the Executive Board, the President and Internal Vice President shall have the joint power to appoint all Associates that serve on the Committees housed within the Assembly, and any liaisons as deemed necessary to meet the administrative needs of the SBA.
(b) The President shall have sole discretion to appoint the Chief-of-Staff.
(c) The following positions are appointed under this section:
    (i) Chief-of-Staff
    (ii) Social Media Associate
    (iii) Merchandise Associate
    (iv) Small Events Associate
    (v) Large Events Associate
    (vi) Health & Wellness Associate
    (vii) Community & Outreach Associate
    (viii) Senior State Bar of Texas Representative
    (ix) Junior State Bar of Texas Representative

(d) Appointments may be made following the transition of power, within the first month of the academic year, or immediately following a vacancy.
(e) The President, with input from the Internal Vice President, shall also have the power to appoint individuals to serve on Law Center Committees and Committees outside the Law Center as requested.
(f) Duties and powers of all appointed positions shall be outlined in Article III and Article IV and its associated By-Laws.
(g) All appointed positions shall serve at the pleasure of the President but may only be removed or dissolved by simple majority approval of the Executive Board.
(h) If an appointed position is not filled or has been vacated, the President may reallocate the associated duties to another appointed position, as deemed necessary.
(i) In the event of an irregular vacancy, eligible members may apply for nomination. Following the confirmation of a successor to an irregular vacancy, the successor is automatically installed.

Section 11: Line of Succession

(a) In the event that any Officer position is vacant, the next Officer in the line of succession shall assume the vacant position's duties and responsibilities. All active SBA members will be notified within 48 hours of such transfer of power.
(b) Upon assuming the duties of a vacant position through succession, the succeeding Officer shall vacate their previously held position. The vacated position shall then be filled in accordance with the applicable election or appointment procedures outlined in this Constitution and its associated By-Laws.
(c) The line of succession for the Executive Board shall be as follows:
    (i) President
    (ii) Internal Vice President
    (iii) External Vice President
    (iv) Finance Director
    (v) Accessibility & Engagement Director
    (vi) Communications Director
    (vii) Executive Events Director
    (viii) Chief-of-Staff
(d) If any of the aforementioned positions cannot or do not wish to fulfill a role through succession, they shall notify the current ranking Officer of the SBA, and the vacant position shall then be filled in accordance with the applicable election or appointment procedures outlined in this Constitution and its associated By-Laws.
(e) These roles are assumed until the next respective Election or upon removal from Office.

ARTICLE III: ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Section 1: General Duties and Powers

(a) The Associates and Chief-of-Staff shall represent the SBA to any UHLC department or administrator and to any external entity, as necessary.
(b) They shall, in good faith, advocate for and implement the decisions of the Executive Board, the Assembly, and the student body.
(c) They shall promote and preserve the image of the SBA.
(d) They shall, regularly or upon request, provide updates on their activities to the Assembly and the Executive Board.
(e) They shall fulfill all duties associated with their membership or chairmanship on any Standing Committee as prescribed in Article V.
(f) No person shall hold more than (1) Associate position concurrently.

Section 2: Chief-of-Staff

(a) The Chief-of-Staff shall serve as the primary point of contact between members and officials of the SBA and the President and Internal Vice President.
(b) They shall assist the President and Internal Vice President in all matters as assigned, including but not limited to:
    (i) Keeping them informed on all SBA matters;
    (ii) Coordinating interactions with university officials and external entities;
    (iii) Managing their respective calendars;
    (iv) Overseeing the ongoing events/actions performed by other SBA officials; and
    (v) Overseeing the planning and execution of special projects as assigned by the President or Internal Vice President.
(c) They may serve as the meeting coordinator by requesting and compiling agenda items, taking and distributing meeting minutes, sending out the "call" of meetings, making necessary reservations, and taking attendance.
(d) They shall manage the SBA office, receive mail directed to the SBA email account, and maintain miscellaneous supplies and equipment as necessary.
(e) They shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Executive Board.
(f) They shall have regular meetings with the President and Internal Vice President to ensure alignment and effective communication with their goals.

Section 3: Social Media Associate

(a) The Social Media Associate shall report to and serve under the direction of the Communications Director.
(b) They shall oversee the SBA's official digital and social media presence, ensuring consistent, professional, and timely communication across platforms.

(c) They shall be responsible for creating, scheduling, and publishing content on SBA's official social media accounts, including but not limited to event promotions, important deadlines, announcements, and initiatives.
(d) They shall assist the Internal Vice President and the Communications Director in creating and distributing SBA promotional materials.
(e) They shall collaborate with the Communications Director and Events Committee to advertise SBA events and programming in a timely and visually engaging manner.
(f) They shall ensure that postings align with SBA branding, values, and relevant university policies, and shall coordinate with the Communications Director, Internal Vice President, and President for content approval when necessary.
(g) They shall also assist other relevant positions in developing and implementing engagement strategies to increase student awareness and participation.
(h) They shall serve as a resource to other SBA officials and student organizations for the promotion of SBA co-sponsored events and initiatives.

Section 4: Merchandise Associate

(a) The Merchandise Associate shall report to and serve under the direction of the Communications Director.
(b) They shall manage and oversee the SBA's merchandise program, including the design, production, distribution, and sale of official SBA merchandise.
(c) They shall coordinate with the Communications Director to ensure all merchandise aligns with SBA branding standards and visual identity guidelines.
(d) They shall manage the SBA's merchandise platform and oversee inventory, order fulfillment, and sales tracking.

Section 5: Community & Outreach Associate

(a) The Community & Outreach Associate shall report to and serve under the direction of the External Vice President.
(b) They shall serve as the Public Service and Philanthropic Programming Officer, responsible for working with various nonprofits and organizations, on and off campus, to set up opportunities for SBA members and UHLC students to get involved.
(c) They shall serve on the Student Life Committee to facilitate planning service-oriented events, including those coordinated with outside organizations.

Section 6: Health & Wellness Associate

(a) The Health & Wellness Associate shall report to and serve under the direction of the Accessibility & Engagement Director.
(b) They shall plan and execute programming focused on the physical and mental well-being of the student body, including but not limited to wellness events, stress relief initiatives, and mental health awareness campaigns.
(c) They shall coordinate with the Law Center's Office of Student Affairs and other relevant University offices to promote and connect students with available health and wellness services.

(d) They shall coordinate and promote intramural opportunities to build community among the student body.

Section 7: Large Events Associate

(a) The Large Events Associate shall report to and serve under the direction of the Executive Events Director.
(b) They shall plan and administer the SBA's large-scale signature social events, including but not limited to Barrister's Ball and the Halloween Bash.
(c) They shall make recommendations to the Executive Events Director regarding all large-scale event programming decisions. The recommendation shall include the event's name, theme, venue, fees, entertainment, food, drink, insurance, security, and other issues.
(d) They shall work and coordinate with the Accessibility & Engagement Director to ensure compliance with relevant SBA guidelines and policies at events they oversee.
(e) They shall staff and manage volunteers for social programming and shall be present during said events to aid as necessary.

Section 8: Small Events Associate

(a) The Small Events Associate shall report to and serve under the direction of the Executive Events Director.
(b) They shall administer smaller events not otherwise administered by the Executive Events Director.
(c) They shall make recommendations to the Executive and implement their final decisions related to social programming. The recommendation shall include the event's name, theme, venue, fees, entertainment, food, drink, insurance, security, and other issues.
(d) They shall work and coordinate with the Accessibility & Engagement Director to ensure compliance with relevant SBA guidelines and policies at events they oversee.
(e) They shall staff and manage volunteers for social programming and shall be present during said events to aid as necessary.
(f) They will coordinate with the External Vice President to host panels and other small events with external sponsorships and with the Internal Vice President to host other small events focused on community engagement and internal development.

Section 9: Senior/Junior State Bar of Texas Representatives

(a) The Senior/Junior State Bar of Texas Representatives shall report to and serve under the direction of the External Vice President.
(b) They shall serve in the State Bar of Texas commissions, acting as liaisons between the State Bar of Texas and Law Center students.
(c) They shall serve in this capacity for a two-year term: the first year acting as the Junior State Bar of Texas Representative, learning from the existing Senior Representative, and the following year acting as the Senior Representative, providing guidance to the new Junior Representative.
(d) They may organize panels, membership drives, section mentorship events, and other events emphasizing the services provided to law students and attorneys by the State Bar of Texas.

(e) They shall work with the Small Events Associate and other SBA officials as needed to plan and execute events related to their duties.
(f) The State Bar may provide State Bar Representatives with funding and administrative support for their events and promotional materials, such as t-shirts.
(g) State Bar Representatives shall have substantial independence and flexibility concerning when to hold events and what events to bring to the Law Center.
(h) The State Bar shall pay for both State Bar Representatives' attendance at the State Bar's annual meeting, as necessary.

ARTICLE IV: THE ASSEMBLY

Section 1: Composition

(a) The Student Bar Association Assembly shall consist of the Officers, Associates, and Representatives as outlined in Section 7 of this Article.
    a. Each full-time and part-time 1L section shall have up to two (2) representatives.
    b. Each 2L and 3L class shall have up to one (1) representative, and the Part-Time class shall have up to one (1) representative.
    c. Upon a simple majority vote by the Executive Board, a Representative may be added to any constituent group.
(b) Liaisons are invited to membership in the Assembly as outlined in Section 8 of this article.

Section 2: General Duties and Powers

(a) They shall represent the concerns and interests of the student body at the Law Center.
(b) They shall carry out the object of the SBA and possess the authority to enact, enforce, and amend the governing documents as outlined in Article X.
(c) They shall administer the affairs of the SBA, assess and charge fees for services and events, and authorize the spending of SBA funds not otherwise governed by this document.
(d) They shall confirm or deny all nominations made to them by the President, as outlined in this document and the associated By-Laws.
(e) They shall approve or amend the annual budget proposal presented by the Finance Director.
(f) They shall perform duties prescribed in the Constitution and By-Laws, except for *ex officio* members and those enrolled part-time.
(g) They shall complete tabling hours for and participate in SBA programming and membership drives.

Section 3: Meetings

(a) Unless otherwise ordered, the Assembly must hold regular meetings during the fall and spring semesters, except during final exam periods.
(b) A meeting may be held virtually, where an in-person meeting would otherwise be impractical.
(c) The President or Internal Vice President may call a special session of the Assembly upon forty-eight-hour notice.

Section 4: Quorum

(a) A quorum of the Assembly shall equal half the total number of current Officers, Associates, and/or Representatives plus one.
(b) A quorum is required for the Assembly to exercise voting power.

Section 5: Voting

(a) Each present member of the Assembly, including Officers, Associates, and Representatives, shall have one (1) vote on all matters that require voting in the Assembly.
(b) Members of the Assembly, having an approved absence under the relevant By-Law, shall be authorized to vote by proxy, provided they notify and register their vote with the Internal Vice President and Chief-of-Staff in advance.
(c) In the event of a tie, the President shall cast a tiebreaking vote.
(d) The Presiding Officer, usually the Internal Vice President, will determine the manner and form of voting.
(e) The Presiding Officer may call for a special vote of the Assembly, which may occur outside of the meeting via secured means, including electronic voting.

Section 6: Finances

(a) Any fees for services or events assessed by the Assembly must be collected and accounted for according to the SBA governing documents and all relevant Law Center and University of Houston accounting procedures.

Section 7: Representatives

(a) They shall review, discuss, consider, and take any necessary action through the Assembly on all issues that concern the Law Center and/or its student body.
(b) They shall represent and communicate the opinions and needs of the student body to the Assembly, Law Center administration, faculty, and staff as organized through their respective Officers or Associates.
(c) They shall attend all Assembly meetings, table for events as necessary, serve on committees, and attend other mandatory SBA events as designated by the Officers.
(d) They may be assigned to assist specific Officers, Associates, and Committees where needed.
(e) They may occasionally bring special projects and advocacy items to the Executive Board or Assembly for adoption.

Section 8: Liaisons

(a) A Liaison is an individual with a preexisting role defined by their membership in, or leadership of, an external organization or community who is invited to participate in the Assembly.
(b) They may be officially designated as members of the Assembly through joint recognition by the President and External Vice President. Liaisons may be designated at any time the President and External Vice President deem necessary.
(c) Named Liaisons are external roles that are automatically given distinction as a recognized Liaison. They include the Student Government Association College of Law Senator.
(d) All Liaisons are *ex officio* members of the Assembly with no voting power.
(e) Liaisons may attend any session of the Assembly to provide reports to the Assembly with any pertinent information from their respective communities.

ARTICLE V: COMMITTEES

Section 1: Standing Committees

(a) The SBA shall maintain the following Standing Committees, which are permanently established and shall remain in continuous operation throughout each academic year:
  (i) Events Committee
  (ii) Finance Committee
  (iii) Public Relations Committee
  (iv) Student Life Committee
(b) A quorum, defined as more than half of the committee's voting membership, is required to conduct any business requiring a vote. However, a quorum is not necessary to hold a meeting.
(c) All substantive committee decisions shall require a simple majority vote of present voting members, unless specifically overruled by voting procedures contained in each Standing Committee's specific provisions.
(d) Committee members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings unless excused by the Chair.

Section 2: Standing Committee Membership

(a) Each Standing Committee shall have a consistent membership consisting of designated Officers and Associates as specified in the sections of this article.
(b) The Internal Vice President may assign Representatives to serve on any Standing Committee at their discretion, subject to approval by a simple majority of the Executive Board.
  (i) At minimum, (2) Representatives shall be appointed to each Standing committee, unless specifically overruled by each Standing Committee's specific provisions.
  (ii) No Standing Committee shall include more than one (1) Representative from the same constituency.
  (iii) Exceptions to this subsection may be granted by joint agreement of the President and Internal Vice President in the case of insufficient membership or interest in the Assembly.
(c) The President or External Vice President may assign Liaisons or any other SBA member to participate in any Standing Committee at their discretion, subject to approval by a simple majority of the Executive Board.
  (i) Any member assigned to a Standing Committee in this manner is granted voting power limited to the internal decisions of the committee. Such voting power will not extend to full assembly voting power.
(d) Once confirmed, a member will remain on their Standing Committee until:
  (i) They resign from the committee;
  (ii) They no longer hold their Assembly seat or appointed position;
  (iii) They are removed from the committee; or
  (iv) Their elected or appointed term in the Assembly ends.
(e) The President may remove Standing Committee members with a simple majority approval of the Executive Board.

(f) Each Standing Committee shall be chaired by the Officer designated in the relevant committee section below. The Chair shall:
    (i) Advance the committee's stated purpose in alignment with the SBA's strategic vision;
    (ii) Organize and conduct, at a minimum, monthly committee meetings during the Fall and Spring semesters before each scheduled Assembly meeting;
    (iii) Report on committee activities to the Assembly at each regular Assembly meeting;
    (iv) Set and distribute agendas, take attendance, and record minutes, which must be submitted to the Chief-of-Staff in a timely manner; and
    (v) Maintain decorum and may remove any individual acting in a disruptive or unruly manner. Committee Chairs may invite additional Officers, Associates, Representatives, and Members to participate in committee meetings temporarily.
(g) The President and Chief-of-Staff may attend any Standing Committee meeting in furtherance of their general oversight duties.

Section 3: Ad-hoc Committees

(a) An Ad-hoc Committee may be created by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board to fulfill any function that does not conflict with an Officer's authority or the responsibilities of another committee.
(b) The President shall appoint a Chair to lead the Ad-hoc committee. The Chair must be an active Officer or Associate. Any other individual may serve on an Ad-hoc committee at the Chair's discretion.
(c) An Ad-hoc committee may be dissolved by:
    (i) A two-thirds vote of the Assembly;
    (ii) A simple majority vote of the Executive Board; or
    (iii) Upon completion of the committee's mandate.
(d) The Chair shall submit a final report detailing the committee's purpose, activities, recommendations, and outcomes to the Executive Board within 30 days of the committee's dissolution.

Section 4: Events Committee

(a) The Events Committee is a permanent Standing Committee established for the purpose of planning and executing the SBA's official social programming calendar.
(b) The mandatory voting membership of the Events Committee shall consist of the:
    (i) Executive Events Director;
    (ii) Large Events Associate;
    (iii) Small Events Associate; and
    (iv) Finance Director.
(c) The Executive Events Director shall serve as the committee's Chair.
(d) The Events Committee shall be responsible for:
    (i) Creating a cohesive calendar of events for the academic year;
    (ii) Thoroughly planning and executing all approved SBA events; and
    (iii) Coordinating event design and engagement strategies to maximize community participation.

(e) As the committee finalizes the details of each event, it shall provide all necessary information to the Public Relations Committee for event promotion.
(f) The Executive Events Director shall maintain and present a current events calendar to the Executive Board for approval.

Section 5: Finance Committee

(a) The Finance Committee is a permanent Standing Committee established for the purpose of managing the SBA's budget and monitoring the SBA's financial practices.
(b) The mandatory voting membership of the Finance Committee shall consist of the:
    (i) Finance Director;
    (ii) Internal Vice President;
    (iii) External Vice President; and
    (iv) President.
(c) The Finance Director shall serve as the committee's Chair.
(d) The Finance Committee shall be responsible for:
    (i) Creating and presenting the SBA's master budget proposal for Assembly approval;
    (ii) Monitoring the SBA's financial practices for compliance with internal policies and University regulations;
    (iii) Maintaining and periodically evaluating the SBA's banking relationship to ensure it remains appropriate,
    (iv) Advising on fiscal strategy, funding initiatives, and the financial feasibility of programs; and
    (v) Advising on and overseeing fundraising strategies outside of sponsorships.
(e) Upon completion, the committee Chair shall submit the master budget proposal to the President for review and approval. Upon approval, the master budget proposal shall be forwarded to the Assembly for adoption by a simple majority vote.

Section 6: Public Relations Committee

(a) The Public Relations Committee is a permanent Standing Committee established for the purpose of managing and maintaining the SBA's brand identity, public image, and communications across all platforms.
(b) The mandatory voting membership of the Public Relations Committee shall consist of the:
    (i) Communications Director;
    (ii) Internal Vice President;
    (iii) Social Media Associate; and
    (iv) Merchandise Associate.
(c) The Communications Director shall serve as the committee's Chair.
(d) The Public Relations Committee shall be responsible for:
    (i) Developing and maintaining consistent SBA branding and visual identity standards;
    (ii) Overseeing the creation and distribution of SBA promotional and communications materials; and
    (iii) Coordinating with the Events Committee to execute promotional campaigns for SBA events and programming.

Section 7: Student Life Committee

(a) The Student Life Committee is a permanent Standing Committee established for the purpose of developing and executing non-social programming that promotes the well-being, professional development, and civic engagement of the UHLC student body.
(b) The mandatory voting membership of the Student Life Committee shall consist of the:
    (i) Accessibility & Engagement Director;
    (ii) External Vice President;
    (iii) Health & Wellness Associate; and
    (iv) Community & Outreach Associate.
(c) The Accessibility & Engagement Director shall serve as the committee's Chair.
(d) The Student Life Committee shall be responsible for:
    (i) Planning and executing philanthropy, wellness, and professional development programming for the student body;
    (ii) Serving as the primary venue for elevating student directives, concerns, and petitions to the Executive Board; and
    (iii) Coordinating with the Law Center administration and relevant University offices to connect students with available resources and opportunities.

Section 8: 1L Experience Committee

(a) The 1L Experience Committee is an external committee housed within SBA, established to enhance the first-year experience at the University of Houston Law Center. Its purpose is to assess and improve orientation and integration processes for 1L students, ensuring they receive the support and resources necessary for academic and social success.
(b) The committee shall consist of the following members:
    (i) Seven (7) students, ideally from a mix of graduating classes;

(ii) Up to two (2) representatives from the Career Development Office (CDO); and
(iii) Up to two (2) representatives from the Office of Student Affairs (OSA).

(c) Student members shall be appointed by the Chair with advice from the President. CDO and OSA members shall be appointed by their respective offices.

(d) The committee shall be chaired by the Internal Vice President, who may delegate this role to another SBA official.

(e) The committee Chair is responsible for organizing meetings, setting agendas, and coordinating with OSA and CDO personnel.

(f) The committee shall meet: (1) at least once per month during the summer session and (2) at least once per semester during the academic year. The initial meeting should occur no later than the end of May.

(g) The committee is tasked with:
(i) Evaluating current 1L orientation and re-orientation programs;
(ii) Collecting and analyzing feedback from 1L students and faculty;
(iii) Proposing new initiatives or improvements to existing programs;
(iv) Collaborating with OSA and CDO to implement recommended changes; and
(v) Preparing a comprehensive report on the 1L experience to be submitted to the SBA, OSA, and CDO at the beginning of each academic year.

(h) The Chair shall report findings and recommendations to the SBA Assembly at least once per academic year or more frequently as necessary.

(i) Student appointments to the committee shall be for one academic year, renewable at the joint discretion of the President and Internal Vice President.

ARTICLE VI: FINANCES

Section 1: Disbursement of Budgeted Expenditures

(a) Budgeted expenditures shall be disbursed with the approval of both the SBA President and Finance Director.

Section 2: Disbursement of Unbudgeted Expenditures

(a) Unbudgeted expenditures over one thousand ($1000) dollars shall be disbursed with a simple majority approval of the Executive Board.
(b) Unbudgeted expenditures less than one thousand ($1000) dollars shall be disbursed with the approval of the SBA President and Finance Director.
(c) The Assembly can propose up to five hundred ($500) dollars in unbudgeted expenditures, which will be voted upon at the next meeting and approved by a simple majority vote.
(d) Any disbursement of funds, regardless of the amount, shall be undertaken by the SBA President or Finance Director in a manner approved by a simple majority of the Executive Board.

Section 3: Dissolution of the Organization

(a) Upon dissolution of the organization, assets will be directed, assigned, and distributed as required by University rules and regulations.

ARTICLE VII: ACCOUNTABILITY

Section 1: Organizational Grievances

(a) The SBA affirms that all individuals shall be treated fairly and consistently in all matters related to their organizational involvement.
(b) Grievances concerning the organization or any affiliated individual may be raised through:
    (i) Informal avenues, including but not limited to, written or verbal communication with the President or Internal Vice President.
    (ii) Formal avenues, including but not limited to, scheduled meetings involving the Office of Student Affairs (or another Law Center administrator) and the President.
(c) An individual may submit a written grievance (physical or digital) under this Article to notify the President of an alleged violation potentially warranting accountability proceedings.
(d) As a student-led organization, SBA mandates that accountability proceedings be initiated only after all reasonable alternatives, such as informal resolution, peer mediation, or administrative intervention, have been exhausted, found to be unavailable, or unfit for the particular matter.
(e) Retaliation in any form against individuals who submit, support, witness, or otherwise participate in the grievance process is strictly prohibited.
    (i) Any such retaliation is subject to separate grievance proceedings and/or may be treated as an aggravating factor in any pending matter.

Section 2: Initiation of Accountability Proceedings

(a) Any Officer, Associate, or Representative, with the exception of the President and Internal Vice President, may be removed from office in accordance with this Constitution and its By-Laws.
(b) Communications (printed, oral, or virtual), regardless of the delivery method, may serve as formal notice or warning for purposes of this Article.
(c) Grounds for initiating accountability proceedings include:
    (i) Neglect of duties;
    (ii) Recurring unprofessional conduct;
    (iii) Violations of Article XI, Section 3; and/or
    (iv) Egregious breaches of this Constitution and/or its By-Laws.
(d) If the basis of the proceeding is internal neglect of duty or recurring unprofessional conduct:
    (i) The President may initiate proceedings without a grievance, but only after:
        (1) Issuing two prior warnings, and
        (2) Documenting a record of such warnings.
    (ii) Once complete, a Letter of Determination must be issued explaining:

(1) The violations;
(2) The rationale for escalation; and
(3) The next steps.

(e) If the basis for the proceeding is a submitted grievance under Section 1 of this Article:
  (i) The President must meet with the involved parties individually to:
    (1) Determine the validity of the allegation(s);
    (2) Assess the feasibility of informal resolution; and
    (3) Conduct a substantive and procedural cost-benefit analysis of escalation.
  (ii) If warranted, a Letter of Determination must be issued, outlining:
    (1) The decision;
    (2) The rationale for escalation; and
    (3) The next steps.
(f) In all cases, the accused individual must be afforded an opportunity to resign before proceedings are finalized.

Section 3: Accountability Process

(a) After a proceeding is initiated, the President shall, within ten (10) days (unless otherwise impractical), schedule a hearing and issue a Notice of Accountability to the involved parties.
(b) Parties may submit additional materials for consideration.
(c) The President must:
  (i) Remind the accused of their right to resign prior to a final decision; and
  (ii) Inform the accused of the option to waive a formal hearing and have the matter decided based on the existing record, inclusive of any additional materials submitted.
(d) Failure by either party to appear or respond to a Notice of Accountability does not delay the process and constitutes a waiver of the right to participate.
(e) The Hearing Board, if necessary, is a three-person panel, duly selected and approved by the Executive Board, consisting of:
  (i) The President (or designee);
  (ii) One Associate; and
  (iii) One Representative.
(f) The Board must convene at least 72 hours prior to the hearing to review any preliminary materials submitted or already on file.
(g) If proceeding with a decision based on the record, the board deliberates privately on the hearing date and issues a written decision to the involved parties.
(h) If proceeding with a formal hearing, either party may designate a representative of their choosing. Such a proceeding will be carried out as follows:
  (i) The Chair reads the charges, explains rights, and addresses procedural questions.
  (ii) Opening Statements: Each party may speak for two (2) minutes.
  (iii) Presentation of Evidence:

(1) The accuser presents evidence and witnesses for a maximum of thirty (30) minutes.
(2) The accused presents defense evidence and witnesses for a maximum of thirty (30) minutes.

(iv) Rebuttals: Each party may present up to 2 (two) rounds of rebuttal evidence.

(v) Closing Statements: Each party may speak for two (2) minutes.

(vi) A decision will require majority approval of the Board, and deliberation will occur in one of the following ways:
(1) Private deliberation and issuance of a decision in person; or
(2) Consideration of the matter under advisement, providing a signed, written decision within a reasonable time following the hearing.

Section 4: Assembly Adoption of the Decision

(a) After the Hearing Board's decision, the Assembly shall convene in a special session to adopt, amend, or reject the decision and/or to reduce the recommended sanction(s) by simple majority vote.

(b) To impose additional sanctions, a two-thirds majority vote is required. The possible sanctions available during an accountability proceeding include, but may not be limited to:
(i) Removal from Office;
(ii) Reduction or Reassignment of Duties;
(iii) Probation While Remaining in Office;
(iv) Censure While Remaining in Office;
(v) Prohibition on Holding Future Office;
(vi) Dismissal of the Charges.

(c) Any member involved in the proceedings is ineligible to vote or participate in deliberations on the matter.

Section 5: Accountability of Senior Officers

(a) Notwithstanding Section 2(a) of this Article, the President and Internal Vice President may be removed from Office through the following process:

(b) Proceedings may be initiated upon a two-thirds vote of the remaining Officers of the Executive Board, with the written approval of the SBA Advisor.

(c) Upon initiation, the accountability process outlined in Sections 2 through 4 of this Article shall apply, with the following modifications:
(i) The Hearing Board shall be chaired by the SBA Advisor rather than the President; and
(ii) The Assembly shall adopt, amend, or reject the Hearing Board's decision by a two-thirds majority vote rather than a simple majority.

(d) In all cases, the accused Officer must be afforded an opportunity to resign before proceedings are finalized.

ARTICLE VIII: BY-LAWS

Section 1: Establishment

(a) The SBA shall establish By-Laws as necessary. Upon ratification, they shall serve as an addendum to this Constitution and supersede all other prior By-Laws of the SBA.

ARTICLE IX: INITIATIVES AND REFERENDUM

Section 1: Right to Statutory Initiative

(a) Students, upon petition of thirty (30%) percent of the total number of valid ballots cast in the most recent SBA general election, shall have the right of statutory initiative.

Section 2: Right to Referendum

(a) Students, upon petition of ten (10%) percent of the total number of valid ballots cast in the most recent SBA general election, shall have the right of referendum.
(b) Matters related to student fees do not require a petition and automatically go before the Student Body for a vote, following procedures outlined for elections.

Section 3: Assembly Call Referendum

(a) By a simple majority vote, the Assembly may refer any part of a pending action to the student body for a vote at the next General or Special Election.

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENT AND RATIFICATION

Section 1: Amendments

(a) This Constitution may be amended upon approval by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly, as outlined in the associated By-Laws. Any sponsor of an amendment proposal shall notify the Assembly no later than one (1) week before a scheduled meeting.
(b) This Constitution may be amended upon approval by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board only when it would be needlessly burdensome or impossible to convene the Assembly as outlined in the associated By-Laws.
(c) This Constitution may be amended upon approval by a two-thirds vote of the active membership. The sponsor must submit a petition to the Internal Vice President and Chief-of-Staff containing the names and dated signatures of at least ten percent of the active membership and the exact language to be inserted, modified, or stricken.

Section 2: Ratification

(a) This Constitution shall be ratified upon approval of the following entities: (1) two-thirds majority approval of the Assembly and (2) two-thirds majority approval of the Executive Board.
(b) This version of the Constitution and its associated By-Laws will take effect following ratification in June 2026. This Constitution and its associated By-Laws render all previous versions null and void. This Constitution was ratified on June 7, 2026.

ARTICLE XI: RISK MANAGEMENT

Section 1: Registered Student Organization

(a) SBA is a Registered Student Organization ("RSO"), not sponsored by the University of Houston or the University of Houston Law Center, that functions independently and receives minimal support from the University.
(b) SBA is a private entity and not an extension of the University.
(c) As an RSO, SBA may conduct business on its behalf, but SBA does not imply or suggest that it or its members are representatives or agencies with authority to make decisions or speak on behalf of the University.
(d) Information on University policy can be found in the University of Houston Student Handbook.
(e) Information on Law Center policy can be found in the University of Houston Law Center Student Handbook.

Section 2: Professionalism

(a) As an organization comprised primarily of future legal professionals, SBA requires all its members and guests to act professionally while attending or being involved in any SBA-operated or SBA-sponsored events, activities, and initiatives.
(b) The professionalism obligation shall extend to situations in which SBA interacts with or collaborates with other entities inside and outside the Law Center.

Section 3: Event Conduct & Expectations

(a) SBA is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all attendees at SBA-sponsored events, activities, and initiatives.
(b) Unruly, disruptive, or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated at any SBA-sponsored event, activity, or initiative.
(c) Conduct that compromises the safety, enjoyment, or integrity of SBA-sponsored events, activities, or initiatives may result in appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to immediate removal from the premises, referral to UHLC administration, and/or notification to security or law enforcement personnel.
(d) Any attendee or participant found violating University, Law Center, or SBA policies, including applicable codes of conduct, may be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in Section 4 of this Article.
(e) SBA Officers, event coordinators, and venue staff shall have the authority to address violations of this Section at their discretion, including issuing warnings, removing attendees, and escalating concerns as necessary.

Section 4: Consequences for Conduct Violations

(a) Any attendee removed from an SBA-sponsored event, activity, or initiative for violations outlined in Section 3 of this Article may, upon an affirmative finding by the Executive Board, be subject to a one (1) year ban from participating in any SBA-sponsored events, activities, or initiatives.
(b) Notwithstanding the right of the Executive Board to make a determination as outlined in Subsection (a), the SBA Advisor and/or Assistant Dean of Student Affairs shall have the right, upon consultation with the SBA President, to overrule such a determination.
(c) A removal decision may be made at the time of the incident by any SBA Officer present at the event, in consultation with venue staff and security, as needed. The decision shall be documented and reported to the Executive Board within forty-eight (48) hours.
(d) Upon review, the Executive Board may issue a written determination within a reasonable timeframe confirming or modifying the imposed ban. The affected individual may submit a written appeal to the SBA President and Advisor within five (5) days of receiving the determination.
(e) The SBA reserves the right to take additional actions as deemed necessary, including but not limited to notifying the UHLC administration, involving security or law enforcement personnel, and reporting the incident to the Office of Student Affairs.
(f) SBA will maintain records of all event removals and disciplinary actions for administrative reference and enforcement of future event restrictions.

Section 5: Law Center Building Policy

(a) The Law Center regulates facilities related to the John M. O'Quinn Law Building, the Law Library, and the grounds and parking lots surrounding the building. All SBA members and guests must treat Law Center facilities respectfully during all SBA events, activities, and initiatives held on or within Law Center facilities.

Section 6: Freedom of Expression

(a) SBA is committed to fostering an environment where free inquiry and expression are encouraged and supported. It is a nonpartisan organization that abides by the University of Houston's Freedom of Expression Policy.

Section 7: Photography & Videotaping

(a) By participating in any SBA-operated or SBA-sponsored events, activities, and initiatives, SBA members and guests impliedly consent to be photographed, videotaped, filmed, digitally recorded, or otherwise have their likeness captured for any marketing purposes as the SBA deems appropriate.

Section 8: Grievances

(a) SBA requires that all individuals be treated fairly and consistently in all matters related to their involvement or participation in SBA.

(b) SBA allows individuals to express their grievances through formal and informal avenues.
    (i) Informal avenues may include, but are not limited to, written or verbal communication with an SBA Officer(s).
    (ii) Formal avenues may include, but are not limited to, a scheduled meeting with the Executive Board, the SBA Advisor, or the Office of Student Affairs (or other Law Center administrator) with the President present.
(c) Retaliation, in any form, against an individual who submits, aids, witnesses, or is otherwise involved in the grievance process is strictly prohibited and may itself be grieved.

Section 9: Harassment & Sexual Misconduct

(a) SBA is committed to maintaining and strengthening an environment where SBA members and guests are free from harassment and sexual misconduct of any kind.
(b) Harassment and sexual misconduct are antithetical to the standards and ideals of SBA.
(c) Sexual misconduct is a broad term encompassing a range of nonconsensual sexual activity or unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature, including sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, dating violence, and domestic violence.
(d) SBA will take appropriate action to eliminate harassment and sexual misconduct from occurring, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects.

Section 10: Drugs & Alcohol

(a) As an organization interested in the intellectual, physical, and psychological well-being of the campus community, SBA deems it essential to curtail the abusive or illegal use of alcoholic beverages and drugs.
(b) All SBA members and guests shall comply with federal, state, and local laws regarding the distribution, possession, and consumption of alcoholic beverages and drugs during all SBA events, activities, and initiatives.
(c) SBA strongly encourages those experiencing substance abuse issues to reach out to an appropriate mental health professional or assistance organization, such as the Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program.

ARTICLE XII: ANTI-HAZING & NON-DISCRIMINATION

Section 1: Anti-Hazing

(a) Students and Student Organizations are prohibited from initiating, participating in, or being witness to hazing activity. Hazing is antithetical to the University's commitment to a positive educational environment.
(b) Participation in hazing activities is against the law. Violation of the University's hazing policy, whether on or off-campus, may subject participants, including students and student organizations, to arrest, prosecution, and/or disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion of students and the revocation of an organization's registration and/or recognition at the University.
(c) Consent to or acquiescence in a hazing activity is not a defense. The University strictly prohibits participation in hazing activities by any party, regardless of the existence of consent.
(d) Hazing activities do not contribute to the positive development or welfare of students. The University of Houston recognizes the act of hazing as illegal, irresponsible, intolerable, and inconsistent with the principles of higher education and basic human development.
(e) Information on the University's Hazing Policy can be found in the Student Life Policies section of the University of Houston Student Handbook.

Section 2: Non-Discrimination

(a) The University provides equal treatment and opportunity to all persons without regard to race, color, sex (including gender and pregnancy), genetic information, religion, age (over 40), national origin, ethnicity, disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender identity or status, gender expression, or any other legally protected class except where such distinction is required by law.
(b) The above statement reflects compliance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and all other federal and state regulations.

END OF DOCUMENT