

CONSTITUTION OF THE COLLEGE OF LAW STUDENT SENATE

The student body of the College of Law,

*Prompted by the desire to promote understanding among students, faculty,
administration and alumni,*

Recognizing the interest in unifying the students of the Law School,

Considering the need to coordinate the activities of student organizations,

Establish this Constitution.

ARTICLE I

This organization shall be known as the Law Student Senate of the Syracuse University College of Law, hereinafter referred to as the Senate.

ARTICLE II

- Sec. 1. The Senate shall be the governing body of the Law School student body and student organizations.
- Sec. 2. The Senate shall have the power to formulate policies, manage the affairs of the student body, and have all powers prescribed by, and necessary for the proper execution of, those responsibilities as prescribed by this Constitution.
- Sec. 3. The Senate shall have no power or jurisdiction over complaints related to racial or sexual matters or Judicial Board matters. Student concerns in these matters shall be referred to the proper College of Law administrative offices.

ARTICLE III

- Sec. 1. The Senate shall be comprised of elected Senators from each class, the Law Student representatives to the Syracuse University Senate, the Officers of each class, and the Officers of the Senate.
- Sec. 2. Each class shall elect one Senator for every thirty students. If the number of students in a class is not evenly divisible by thirty, an additional Senator shall be elected if the remainder exceeds fifteen.
- Sec. 3. The First and Second year class members shall elect a Senate President, Senate Vice-President, Senate Secretary, and Senate Treasurer.
- Sec. 4. Each class shall elect a Class President and Class Vice-President.

- Sec. 5. The First and Second year class shall elect two representatives to the Syracuse University Senate in accordance with that body's Constitution and Bylaws.
- Sec. 6. The Senate President, Senate Vice-President, Senate Secretary, and Senate Treasurer shall constitute the Executive Board.
- Sec. 7. The Senate President, Senate Vice-President, Senate Secretary, Senate Treasurer, and the Class Presidents shall constitute the Board of Governors.

ARTICLE IV

- Sec. 1. The Executive Board shall administrate the affairs of the Senate and establish the agenda for each meeting.
- Sec. 2. The Senate shall meet at the discretion of the President, provided that a meeting is called at least once every three school weeks.
- Sec. 3. The President shall preside over the Senate. In the absence of the President, the presiding officer shall be the next senior Senate Officer. The order of Senate Officers for the current session is President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- Sec. 4. All Senate members in attendance, with the exception of the Presiding Officer and the Law Student representatives to the Syracuse University Senate, shall be entitled to vote on all business coming before the Senate for its decision. The Presiding Officer shall only vote to break a tie. No senate member may vote by proxy.
- Sec. 5. A quorum shall consist of one-half plus one of the voting members of the Senate.
- Sec. 6. The President shall appoint a parliamentarian to give advice and direction to the Senate on procedural matters and the application of Senate rules in accordance with this document, the Senate Bylaws, and Robert's Rules of Order.
- Sec. 7.
- (a) Attendance by Senate members is mandatory for all official meetings.
 - (b) Prior written notice of non-attendance shall be delivered to the President or Secretary as per his or her direction.

- (c) Any member missing more than one meeting a semester, without written notice approved by the President or Secretary, may be subject to an expulsion notice.
- Sec. 8. Attendance for Class Senate meetings shall be promulgated by each class in accordance with this document and the Bylaws of the Senate. Each individual class attendance policy shall be submitted to the Senate President within three weeks of the first Senate meeting. Any member of Senate found in violation of the policy shall be subject to an expulsion notice.
- Sec. 9. Meetings of the Senate shall be open to the entire Law School community. The President may close a session at his/her discretion. Any Senator may move to close a session. A two-thirds majority of the members present shall be necessary to close a session.

ARTICLE V

- Sec. 1. Entering First year class members shall elect two Student Panelists to serve on the College of Law Judicial Board pursuant to Article IX. The term of office will expire on the last day of April of the following year.
- Sec. 2. First year class members shall elect three Student Panelists to serve on the College of Law Judicial Board pursuant to Article IX. The term of office will expire upon the graduation of the panelist or two academic years after election. A student panelist of the judicial board may not serve in any other elected Senate office.
- Sec. 3. The Student Panelists of the Judicial Board shall constitute the Senate Constitutional Council.
- Sec. 4. In April, the Council shall select one of its members to serve as Chief Judge in accordance with the procedures established by the Council.
- Sec. 5. Upon ratification of this Constitution, or upon the vacancy of the officer prior to the end of the academic year, the Council shall select one of its members to serve as Chief Judge in accordance with the procedures established by the Council.
- Sec. 6.
 - (a) The President of the Senate shall make initial rulings on the interpretation of this Constitution and Senate Bylaws.
 - (b) The Senate, by a vote of a two-thirds majority, may override or amend the decision of the President.

- (c) The Senate Constitutional Council shall be the final arbiter of the interpretation of this Constitution and the Senate Bylaws in accordance with procedures established by the Council.
- Sec. 7. Pursuant to the procedures enumerated in Section 6 of this Article, any member of the College of Law student body may file a complaint of a Constitutional violation in accordance with the procedures established by the Council. The Council shall hear the complaint no more than ten school days after its filing and issue a ruling nor more than five school days from the date of the hearing.
- Sec. 8. The President, by authority of that office, or at the direction of a majority of the Senate, may request an advisory opinion of the Council on the constitutionality of a proposed amendment to the Senate Bylaws or any action of the Senate in relation to the Constitution or Bylaws. The Council will report its findings no more than ten school days after receiving such a request.

ARTICLE VI

- Sec. 1. The President shall name all chairs of Senate standing and ad-hoc committees. All chair appointments shall require the approval by a majority vote of the Board of Governors.
- Sec. 2. Membership on committees shall be open to any Senate member and may be open to any interested member of the College of Law student body at the discretion of the Senate, with the exception of the Senate Affairs Committee, which may only be open to Senate members.
- Sec. 3. The Senate shall have 5 permanent standing committees:
 - (a) The Service Committee
 - (b) The Social Committee
 - (c) The Cultural and Ethnic Affairs Committee
 - (d) The Community Service Committee
 - (e) The Senate Affairs Committee

ARTICLE VII

- Sec. 1. In April, the President-elect shall appoint a student ABA representative, subject to the approval of a majority vote of the Board of Governors. The student selected must be from the class just completing the first year of law school.

Sec. 2. In April, the President-elect shall appoint a Student Prosecutor and an Assistant Student Prosecutor, subject to a majority vote of the Board of Governors. The students selected must be from the class just completing the second year of law school.

ARTICLE VIII

Sec. 1. Amendments to this Constitution may be initiated by a two-thirds vote of the Senate or by petition to the Senate signed by not less than twenty-five percent of the student body. There shall be adequate publication of the proposed amendments for a period of two weeks before a referendum.

Sec. 2. This Constitution is amended by a two-thirds vote of those members of the student body who vote on the referendum.

ARTICLE IX

Sec. 1.

- (a) Elections for Senate Officers, Class Officers, Class Senators, Law Student University Senators, and First year Class Judicial Board panel members shall be held annually during April, on a date to be determined by the Board of Governors.
- (b) Elections for Class Officers, Class Senators, and Judicial Board panel members for the entering first year class shall be scheduled during the first six weeks of the fall semester.

Sec. 2.

- (a) An election committee, chaired by the Senate President, will be composed of five Third year members of the Senate. The committee shall schedule a date for nominations. The committee shall make petition available at least ten days before elections. The committee shall circulate, collect and validate petitions, disseminate information regarding elections and conduct the elections. The Election Committee may void a suspect petition by a unanimous vote of the committee.
- (b) Any member of the First or Second year class shall be eligible for Senate Office positions, with the exception that the Senate President must be elected from the Second year class. Any member of each respective class shall be eligible to be elected as a Class Officer, Class Senator, Law Student University Senator, or Judicial Board panelist, as defined under Articles III & V. Any person running for a Senate Officer position is not eligible to run for a Class Officer position concurrently.
- (c) Officer candidates may run concurrently for an Officer position and Class Senator. Candidates elected to more than one position shall be seated in the highest office position. The ranking of offices are as follows: (1) Senate Officer, (2) Class Officer, (3) Class Senator, (4) Law Student

University Senator, (4) Judicial Panel Member. No Officer/Senator may serve as a College of Law Judicial Board Panelist. If a student is elected to both offices, they must resign from, or only accept election to, one of the offices.

- (d) Nominations for Senate Officers and Law Student University Senators require petitions signed by ten members of the First Year class and ten members of the Second Year class. Nominations for Class Officers, Class Senators, and Judicial Board panelists require petitions signed by fifteen members of that class. The signature of an individual may appear on petitions of more than one candidate for the same office.
- (e) All First and Second year students may vote in elections held according Section 1(a) of this Article. All entering First Year students may vote in any elections held according to Section 1(b) of this Article. Vote shall be by secret ballot. Plurality of votes cast shall be sufficient to elect members. Class Officers, Class Senators, and Judicial Board panelists shall be elected only by members of the respective classes.
- (f) All elected members shall take office by the last week of April in a concurrent meeting with all members of the prior Senate.
- (g) In the event a vacancy should occur in the office of Senate President, the Senate Vice-President shall immediately succeed to that office. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Class President, the Class Vice-President shall immediately succeed to that office. Any other vacancies in the positions of Senate Vice-President, Senate Treasurer, Senate Secretary, Class Vice-President, Class Senator or Judicial Board Panelist shall be filled by the candidate who received the next highest vote total in the previous election. In the event any Senate or Class officer or Law Student University Senator vacancies still exist, these positions shall be filled by nomination by the Senate President and confirmed by a majority vote of the Senate. In the event any Class Senator or Judicial Board panel vacancies still exist these positions shall be filled by the nomination by the appropriate Class President and confirmed by a majority vote of the appropriate Class Officers and Senators. In the event a vacancy still exists in any position, a special election shall be held within fifteen school days (excluding reading and final examination periods) of the date such vacancies occurs.

Sec. 3.

- (a) If the Election Committee shall determine, by unanimous vote of the committee, than an election is invalid due to procedural defects or other reasons, it shall hold a new election within 4 school weeks (excluding reading and final examination periods) of the date such election was deemed invalid.
- (b) The Election Committee shall make a determination of validity within five school days after the election. The committee must post written notice within one day after such determination, stating the reasons for the new election.

- (c) If such a new election is held, only those candidates who were eligible at the time of the first election shall be eligible to be elected in the new election.

Sec. 4.

- (a) Any student may challenge Election Committee determinations. Such challenge must be made in writing to the election committee, within five school days. While such a challenge or an appeal therefrom is pending, no newly elected official may be installed.
- (b) If the Election Committee deems it necessary to make a determination on the challenge, it must do so within five school days of the challenge.
- (c) Any student shall be competent to appeal to the Senate any determination of the Election Committee based on a challenge. Such an appeal must be made in writing to the Senate President within five school days following the Election Committee's determination. If, however, the Election Committee shall make no determination within the five day period after the challenge, an appeal may be taken to the outgoing Board of Governors and its decision shall be final, subject to review by the Senate Constitutional Council.

ARTICLE X

Sec. 1.

- (a) A member of Senate can only be removed from his/her position after the issuance of an expulsion notice pursuant to a procedure set forth in this Constitution and/or Bylaws.
- (b) The expulsion notice must list the charges against the Senate member. When deciding on expulsion, both in the Senate and the Senate Constitutional Council, the legitimacy of the basis for the charges and what is alleged must be considered.
- (c) At the next Senate meeting after the issuance of an expulsion notice, the Senate may entertain a motion to expel the member. A two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass. Failing a two-thirds vote, the matter shall end and the motion cannot be tabled.
- (d) Should the motion to expel the member be based on a violation of the attendance policy and pass by a two-thirds majority, unless appealed, the position shall be considered vacant. An expulsion based on violation of the attendance policy may be appealed to the Senate Constitutional Council within five days.
- (e) Should the motion to expel the member not be based on violation of attendance policy, upon a two-thirds majority of the Senate approving the expulsion, the matter must be referred to the Senate Constitutional Council for adjudication. No member can be expelled for reasons other than violation of the attendance policy without the expulsion being sustained by the Senate Constitutional Council.

- (f) The Senate Constitutional Council, upon notification that the Senate has voted to expel a member by two-thirds majority for reasons other than violation of attendance policy or that an expulsion based on violation of the attendance policy has been appealed, shall hold a hearing regarding the expulsion. During adjudication or appeal, the member remains in his/her office. The hearing shall be held within 10 days of the approval of the motion to expel the member. A decision must be rendered within five days after the hearing. All interested parties shall be afforded the opportunity to speak.
- (g) Following a hearing, a majority vote of the Senate Constitutional Council shall sustain the expulsion and the member's position shall be considered vacant. Failing a majority vote, the expulsion shall be deemed invalid, the member shall not be expelled on that basis, and the matter shall end. Any ruling of the Senate Constitutional Council on matters of expulsion is final.
- (h) Vacancies created by an expulsion shall be filled pursuant to Article IX.

ARTICLE XI

This Constitution shall become effective upon its ratification by a two-thirds majority of the ballots cast in a general election. Upon ratification of this Constitution, all prior constitutions shall be null and void.

Approved by the Senate: March, 2000

Ratified by the Student Body: April, 2000

Amended: Senate Approval: February, 2002/Ratified: April, 2002

This Constitution is effective April 15, 2002

Amended: Senate Approval: January 26, 2005/Ratified: February 15, 2005

This Constitution as amended is effective: February 15, 2005