

**Suffolk University Law School
Student Bar Association
Bylaws**

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1.1 **Applicability of Bylaws**

The bylaws of the Student Bar Association may contain any provision for managing and regulating affairs of the Student Bar Association that is not inconsistent with the SBA Constitution.

1.2 **Enactment of Bylaws**

Proposed by-laws should first be evaluated in committee before being delivered to the BOG for enactment. Enactment of new bylaws requires a two-thirds vote of those voting members of the Board of Governors present or proxied.

1.3 **Amendment of Enacted Bylaws**

Any bylaw may be amended or annulled by a two-thirds vote of those voting members of the Board of Governor's Meeting present or proxied.

1.4 **Amendment of Bylaw Proposals During BOG Meetings**

A bylaw **proposal** may be amended at the BOG meeting before voting on the said bylaw with an “offer to amend” by the Chief Justice, followed by a seconded motion to amend and a subsequent majority vote by the voting members of the BOG. The amended bylaw may then be voted on in accordance with § 1.2 of these bylaws. Such amendment of bylaw proposals shall be reserved for minor changes. Request for substantive changes to bylaw proposals shall be sent back to the bylaws committee before voting on such bylaws.

(Note: This allows for a proposed bylaw to be amended at the BOG meeting in the case of a minor disagreement in the language or substance of the proposal, instead of forcing the bylaw proposal back to committee before a vote can be held on it. The Chief Justice must first “offer to amend” the proposed bylaw, otherwise a vote should be held on the originally offered version).

1.5 **Suspension of Bylaws**

- (a) These bylaws may be temporarily suspended and unsuspending by a two-thirds vote of those voting members of the Board of Governors.
- (b) Suspension may only last for the duration of the instant meeting. Bylaws will automatically be unsuspending upon conclusion of the instant meeting.

2.1 BOG Meetings

- (a) Meetings will begin promptly at 9:00 pm on the last Wednesday of every month. In the event that the meeting runs later than 11:50 pm, the agenda shall be suspended until 9pm on the following night.
- (b) All persons in attendance should be respectful and courteous. Any person engaging in vulgar and disrespectful behavior may be asked to leave.

2.2 Agenda of BOG Meetings

- (a) The President will present an agenda for each BOG meeting. If you have an item for the agenda, submit it to the Secretary by 5pm on the Friday preceding the BOG Meeting.
- (b) The Secretary shall deliver the agenda for the BOG meeting electronically to all SBA members by 5:15 pm the Friday before the meeting.
- (c) The agenda order is as follows:
 - Call to Order
 - Roll Call
 - Exec Announcements and Reports
 - Committee Announcement Reports
 - Old Business
 - New Business
 - Final Announcements
- (d) Any SBA member who seeks to amend the agenda after it has been set, but before the meeting has commenced, may do so by submitting a special request to the President along with reasons for the request. The President holds the right to decline a request to amend the agenda. If such request is denied, the issue sought to be added to the agenda may be addressed as part of “New Business” at the end of the BOG meeting.
- (e) Any voting member of the BOG who seeks to amend the agenda after the BOG meeting has commenced must have a seconded motion to amend followed by a majority vote. Otherwise the issue may be addressed as “New Business.”

2.3 Question and Debate Session

- (a) Following each announcement or report, there will be a question-and-answer session followed by a debate session.

- (b) During the question-and-answer session, any person present at the meeting may ask questions of the presenting person or committee. Debate should be reserved for debate session.
- (c) During debate session any person present at the meeting may speak, but no one may speak a second time until everyone who wants to speak has had an opportunity to speak at least once. Opinions should be kept brief, direct, and relevant to the specific issue being debated.
- (d) During debate session, persons present at the meeting shall be respectful of all other opinions.
- (e) Debate session may be ended with a seconded motion. A debate session may only last for 25 minutes, but may be extended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Board of Governors.
(Notes: No motion is required to commence or end Q&A. Q&A begins when the proposal is finished and ends when there are no more questions. There is no time limit for Q&A. No motion is required to commence debate, debate begins when Q&A ends. A seconded motion is needed to end debate session. A voting session is not required, voting members may choose to end debate without holding a subsequent voting session.)

2.5 Voting

A seconded motion is required to hold a vote. There must be an opportunity for question-and-answer session and debate session on an issue before the issue may be voted on.
(Note: SBA CONST. Art. VII § 5 requires voting majorities to be calculated by those voting members of the BOG that are present or proxied and who vote yea or nay. Abstentions are not counted in the calculation of majorities.)

2.6 Proxies

- (a) Any voting member of the BOG who will not be attending the BOG meeting must submit an official proxy form to the Secretary no later than 6:00 pm the day of the meeting or the proxy will be forfeited. Proxies may be submitted electronically or by paper.
- (b) Any voting member of the BOG who attends the BOG meeting, but must leave before conclusion of the meeting, is **required** to submit an official proxy form to the secretary before leaving. *(Note: The meeting **must** conclude with as many functional votes as it begins to ensure that those votes do not drop below the 2/3 quorum required for the meeting to commence. Note: The Secretary will have copies of the proxy form at the BOG meeting for those who must leave early).*

2.7 Conflicts of Interest

- (a) Any voting member of the BOG who also serves as President of another student organization must **abstain** from voting on funding or sanctions relating to that student organization.
- (b) Any voting member of the BOG who serves on the executive board of another student organization in a position other than president must **disclose their position** prior to voting on funding or sanctions relating to that student organization.
- (c) The President of the SBA may not serve as president for any other student organization. (*Note: But may hold any other e-board position*).
- (d) The Treasurer of the SBA may not serve on the executive board of any other student organization. (*Note: This pertains to **any** e-board position*).

3.1 Club Recognition and Appropriations

- (a) Any club who meets the requirements laid out in SBA Const. Art. 9 § 1(A)(1)-(3) shall not be denied recognition by the Student Bar Association.
- (b) The Board of Governors may deny appropriations to any officially recognized club.
(*Note: Every student organization has a right to exist regardless of its relevancy to the study of law; however, the BOG is not obliged to provide funding for every recognized club*).

3.2 De-authorization of Clubs

- (a) All student organizations must meet the requirements laid out in Article IX(1)(A) of the SBA Constitution. Failure meet those requirements will result in de-authorization of the club by the Board of Governors.
 - (1) Membership of each organization shall be determined by the Appropriations Committee during the budgeting process.
- (b) The status of organizations will be evaluated each year at the annual BOG budget meeting. Any organization failing to meet the minimum requirements will be denied funding and de-authorized at that budget meeting.
- (c) Organizations must be given two weeks notice prior to de-authorization and allowed to petition the BOG for consideration at the budget meeting. Failure of an

organization to petition the BOG at the budget meeting will result in automatic de-authorization.

- (d) Upon de-authorization, an organization may appeal the decision of the BOG.

3.3 Budget Expenditures for Student Organizations

- (a) The executive board of every student organization must be aware of their allotted funding and avoid incurring expenses beyond that budget.
- (b) Any student organization that foresees a budget shortfall within their organization must submit an application to the SBA Appropriations Committee for supplemental funding **BEFORE** incurring such expenses.
- (c) Clubs who have exceeded their budget will be given an immediate warning by the SBA Treasurer to cease all expenditures and apply for supplemental funding.
- (d) SBA Sanctions are determined as follows:
 - (1) No Sanction
Clubs that heed the first Treasurer's warning and are approved for Supplemental funding to cover the budget overture and any additional expenditures for the fiscal year will be subject to no discipline.
 - (2) Level 1 Sanction
 - (i) Clubs that heed the first treasurer's warning and apply for supplemental funding, but are denied, will be given a Level 1 Sanction for the following SBA fiscal year.
 - (ii) Under Level 1 Sanctions a club will be responsible for reimbursing the amount overspent out of next year's budget, but club members will not be held personally responsible for any expenditure.
 - (iii) Clubs remain eligible for supplemental funding for the fiscal year in which Level 1 Sanctions are imposed.
 - (3) Level 2 Sanction
 - (i) Clubs that ignore the first warning from the SBA Treasurer and continue to spend funds in excess of their budget without approval of supplemental funding will be given a second warning by the SBA Treasurer to cease spending and will be subjected to a meeting with the SBA Treasurer, Director of Appropriations and the Dean of Students, in which the club president will be required to attend.
 - (ii) If such club ceases excess spending immediately following the second Treasurer's warning and required meeting, and does not overspend without the approval of supplemental funding following that warning, the club will only be placed on Level 1 Sanctions.

- (iii) If such club continues spending in excess of its allotted budget after the second treasurer's warning and required meeting, and without approval of supplemental funding, the club will be subject to Level II Sanctions.
 - (iv) Under Level II Sanctions, (1) clubs will be responsible for reimbursing the amount overspent and not approved for supplemental funding out of the following year's budget where such funds are spent **before** a meeting with the Dean, (2) club members may be held personally responsible for excess spending not approved for supplemental funding, where such expenditures occur **after** a meeting with the Dean.
 - (v) The BOG may overturn the imposition of Level II Sanctions with a 3/4 majority vote where such sanctions cause unduly harsh personal economic hardship upon club members. In such instances, the club shall receive no budget for the following year.
 - (vi) Clubs remain eligible for supplemental funding for the fiscal year in which Level II Sanctions are imposed, or where the Level II alternative of (d)(3)(iv) is imposed.
- (e) Clubs subject to SBA Sanctions will be allowed to appeal said sanctions and budget deductions at the BOG meeting. All clubs will be notified of this opportunity two weeks prior to the next BOG meeting.
- (f) **Treasurer Discretion**
The Treasurer has discretion to issue checks for supplemental funding requests without immediate approval from the BOG; however, the treasurer shall warn the petitioning club that approval of such funds are subject to the BOG at the next meeting, and such approval is necessary to avoid SBA sanctions. If the BOG declines the supplemental funding request after funds have already been distributed, sanctions will be imposed pursuant to sections (d)(2) and (d)(3).
- (g) **Avoidance of Sanctions**
To avoid SBA sanctions, clubs should seek approval of supplemental funding by the BOG before excessive spending or requesting issuance of a check from the Treasurer. Clubs that request issuance of a check from the Treasurer for funds that exceed their allotted budget bear the risk of being denied supplemental funding by the BOG and subsequently incurring sanctions. It is recommended that club treasurer's request periodic updates from the SBA treasurer on the balance of their allotted budget.

3.5 Membership Policies

- (a) Any Student Bar Association – recognized organization is eligible to request funding so long as its membership policy does not violate the Student Bar Association Constitution and by-laws.

- (b) Any exclusivity of membership practice may not violate the Student Bar Association Constitution and by-laws.

(Note: For example, a law fraternity may bar membership to a student because the student is already a member of another law fraternity, but not due to the student's "race, color, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status, or marital status.")

4.1 Graduation Chair

The Vice-President of the SBA shall also serve as chairman of the graduation committee. The Vice-President's appointment to graduation chair will automatically take effect at the beginning of the Spring term. Third year day and fourth year evening SBA representatives will be automatically appointed as co-chairs of the graduation committee. The graduation chair may appoint any member he/she sees fit to serve as a regular member of the graduation committee.

Grievance Committee

5.1 Submission of Charges: How

A Grievance Committee may be formed by the submission of written charges at any time to the Chief Justice against a Board of Governors/Executive Committee member. Said charges shall explain the subject Board of Governors/Executive Committee member's alleged wrongdoing within the scope of their Student Bar Association office.

5.2 Submission of Charges: Who

A student organization, or a student who is not a Board of Governors/Executive Committee member (a section representative, an executive committee director or associate chair), may submit charges against a Board of Governors/Executive Committee member only after finding a member of the Board of Governors/Executive Committee to sponsor them.

5.3 Transparency and Fairness

The Chief Justice shall make reasonable efforts to ensure members of the grievance committee are non-partial, committed to the long-term health and reputation of the Student Bar Association and Suffolk University Law School, and conduct themselves and their investigation with professionalism and fairness. Upon forming the Grievance Committee, the subject Board of Governors/Executive Committee member, the Student Activities Coordinator, and the SBA President and Vice President shall all immediately be notified of the charges submitted and the Grievance Committee's membership.

5.4 Recommendations

The Grievance Committee, upon writing their final report, may recommend one of three options:

- a. no action recommended
 - (1) The Grievance Committee feels that it would be unjust or inappropriate to discipline the accused Board of Governors/Executive Committee member in regards to the charges filed against them, or that the charges alleged have no merit.
- b. censure
 - (1) The Grievance Committee feels that the Board of Governors/Executive Committee member should be publicly reprimanded for inappropriate behavior in their SBA role. Censure serves merely as a condemnation and has no direct effect on the validity of the Board of Governors/Executive Committee member's office or duties.
- c. removal from office
 - (1) The Grievance Committee feels that the Board of Governors/Executive Committee member has acted inappropriately within their role in the SBA, and should be removed from said office.

5.5 Chief Justice's Impeachment

The Council of President's Liaison shall serve in the Chief Justice's place in the event that the Chief Justice is the Board of Governors/Executive Committee member or one of several Board of Governors/Executive Committee members whose alleged actions the Grievance Committee has been charged with investigating.