

CONSTITUTIONAL AND BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be known as the Chicago-Kent Chapter, Black Law Student Association
(Herein referred to as “Association”).

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization shall be to promote the educational needs and goals of Black law students at Chicago-Kent College of Law in such a manner as to enhance the development of professionally component, legally trained individuals responsive to the needs of the Black community.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Eligibility

Membership in the organization shall be open to those persons who are students currently matriculating at Chicago-Kent College of Law who have demonstrated interest in and concern for the Black Community.

Section 2 – General Membership

General Membership in the organization is open to all eligible persons who express a desire to affiliate with the organization.

Section 3 – Transfer of Membership

Membership in the organization is individual and not transferable.

Section 4 – Termination of Membership

- A. A member at any time may file in writing a statement of resignation from the organization.
- B. Members may be suspended or excelled by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting membership for conduct injurious to the organization.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP FEES

Section 1 – Initial fee

All members may be assessed dues in an amount to be set by the Executive Board.

Section 2 – Annual Fees

Annual membership dues in the amount set by the Executive Board shall be assessed to each member. Special assessments may be charged to each member upon approval of a simple majority of the members present.

ARTICLE V – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Section 1 – Officers

Officers of the organization shall consist of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Community Service Chair, and Academic Support Chair, CCBLSA/Black History Month Chair, Evening Division Liaison, and First Year Representative. These elected officers, together with any appointed officers, shall constitute the Executive Board.

Section 2 – Election and Term

Officers shall be elected annually during the April meeting. Nominations shall be made from the floor for any member of the organization provided such persons shall agree that their names be placed in nomination. New officers shall have agreed that their names may be placed in nomination. New officers shall take office on May 1st of the year elected. Election and tenure in office is contingent upon maintaining good standing in the organization. Elections may be conducted via an online format. Candidates must submit a candidate statement to the President and Secretary.

Section 3 – Vacancies

If for any reason an officer cannot serve, the Executive Board shall appoint a custodian of the office who will serve the duration of the term.

ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

Section 1 – President

The President shall preside over all meetings of the organization and of the Executive Board and shall be responsible for coordinating activities of all officers and performing such other duties as would normally be performed by the chief officer of an organization. Decisions that require an immediate response must be presented to the Executive Board with a deadline. If the Executive Board does not respond within the allotted amount of time, the decision shall be made by the President.

Section 2 – Vice-President

The Vice President shall assume the duties of the President in his or her absence. In addition, the Vice-President shall be responsible for updating and drafting provisions of this Constitution according to the amendments, corrections, and revisions agreed upon by the Executive Board and the voting membership.

Section 3 – Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for following: receipt and disbursement of all monies approved by the Executive Board; developing and submitting a semester budget proposal to SBA and any subsequent financial documents required by the SBA; submitting a financial statement at each regular meeting; submitting the books for audit upon request by the Executive Board; surrendering the books in good order to his or her successor when the latter has been duly installed into office. All checks must be approved and signed by any two of the Treasurer, the president, or the First Vice-President. The Treasurer shall submit a financial summary in writing to the general membership monthly and during the annual meetings.

Section 4 – Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for the following: keeping all non-financial records of the organization; taking minutes of the meetings; notifying members of all chapter meetings; maintaining correspondence between BLSA and outside organizations, including keeping the email of the organization; maintaining the BLSA listerv and annually updating the BLSA chapter directory. The Secretary shall surrender his or her records in good order to his or her successor when the latter has been duly installed into office.

Section 5 – Community Service Chair

The Community Service Chair shall be responsible for the following: coordinating community service activities on behalf of the chapter; submitting all proposed community service activities to the Executive Board for approval; and, ensuring that the chapter meets or exceeds the community service requirements mandated by the National BLSA Constitution.

Section 6 – Academic Support Chair

The Academic Support Chair shall be responsible for the following: maintaining the BLSA library; matching BLSA buddies/1L mentoring program; addressing the academic support for the chapter's students; and keeping BLSA membership aware of scholarly journals, articles, meetings and speakers that are of interest to Black students.

Section 7 – Executive Board

The Executive Board shall be comprised of all duly elected and appointed officers. Each member of the Executive Board shall have a vote equal to that of each other Board member. The Executive Board shall recommend general policies to the organization within the limits of this Constitution. Such policy recommendations shall be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting for approval by the general membership. A special meeting may be called if such is deemed necessary. A minimum of four (4) members of the Executive Board is required to conduct business. Resolutions must be approved by a minimum of three (3) affirmative votes. The Executive Board is responsible for appointing representatives to speak on behalf of the organization. No general member may speak for the organization unless appointed by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII – MEETINGS

Section 1 – Regular Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held monthly, September through April, unless otherwise determined by the membership. Notification of any meeting should be made at least one week in advance.

Section 2 – Special Meetings

Upon written request to the Secretary by one-third (1/3) of the membership or one third (1/3) of the Executive Board, the President must call a Special Meeting. The Secretary shall appropriately notify all members of the special meeting no less than 48 hours prior to the date of the meeting.

Section 3 – Membership Voting Eligibility

A. Quorum

A quorum (the number of members required to be present in order to conduct business) shall consist of not less than a majority of the total number of present members eligible to vote. Only members in good standing are eligible to vote. Eligibility to vote is determined according to the conditions specified in the Constitution. Each member shall have a vote equal to that of every voting member. A majority vote shall consist of 51% of the quorum present and voting.

B. Absentee Voting

Members who are unable to vote in person shall be entitled to vote by written absentee ballot personally delivered or emailed to the Secretary at least 24 hours prior to the time of voting.

ARTICLE VIII – COMMITTEES

Section 1 – Standing Committees

The standing committees of the organization shall be the following (1) By – Laws Committee, (2) Community Service Committee, (3) Social/ Events Coordinating Committee, (4) Finance/Marketing/Fundraising Committee, (5) Graduation Banquet Committee, and (6) Admissions and Scholarships Committee. The Executive Board shall appoint the chairpersons of these committees unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution.

A. By – Laws Committee

This committee shall be responsible for updating, drafting, and presenting BLSA’s by-laws to the membership.

B. Community Service Committee

This committee shall plan organize and facilitate community service programs such as Adopt-a-School, Community Legal Clinic, and mentoring affiliations.

C. Social/Events Coordinating Committee

This committee shall be responsible for assigning and confirming logistics for BLSA events, such as room reservations and program plans. Responsible for planning social events for the BLSA membership, including at least one inexpensive event per semester in which all members may participate.

D. Finance/Marketing/Fundraising Committee

The committee shall be responsible, along with the Treasurer, for overseeing the collection, recording, and tracking of all monies for all organization and responsible for all fundraiser events. The committee oversees the printing and dissemination of event tickets, coordination of fundraiser programs, and writing of contracts for vendors.

Responsible for advertising BLSA’s fundraisers (e.g. bake sales, the sale of BLSA business cards, tee shirts), speaker events, and cultural events.

E. Graduation Banquet Committee

This committee shall be responsible for coordinating the annual graduation celebration/ banquet. Planning includes having tickets and invitations printed, securing a location for the banquet, arranging for a speaker, ordering plaques

and certificates, and selecting and purchasing senior gifts. The chair of this committee is usually a 2L and makes banquet arrangements with the input and assistance of the graduates.

F. Admissions and Scholarships Committee

This committee shall be responsible for keeping the chapter aware of admissions and scholarship issues of particular concern or interest to our membership. This committee gathers and updates information regarding admissions and scholarships, and coordinates efforts to assist the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid in recruiting and marshaling scholarship monies for new law students at Chicago-Kent.

Section 2 – Special Committees

The Executive Board may create Special committees as necessary.

ARTICLE IX – PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

Section 1 – Rules

The rules contained in Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern the organization in all cases for which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with this organization’s Constitution.

Section 2 – Parliamentarian

As provided Article VI, Section 2, The Vice-President shall serve as Parliamentarian at all meetings other than those over which he or she presides.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of eligible members present and voting at any regular meeting of the organization. Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed by petition of at least one-fourth (1/4) of the voting members of the organization or by the Executive Board. An amendment so proposed shall be filed with the Secretary at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting at which it is to be introduced. A proposed amendment shall not be voted upon until the next regular meeting following the meeting at which it was introduced. Approved amendments shall become effective immediately.

ARTICLE XI – EFFECTUATING CLAUSE

This Constitution shall become effective immediately upon ratification by a majority of the Executive Board and a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Amendment 1

Membership once established for an annual dues paying period shall not be terminated for other than just cause, notwithstanding graduation and other separations from Chicago-Kent College of Law.

Ratified November 3, 1974