

BYLAWS of the Student Bar Association of Vermont Law School

1 **ARTICLE 1. DEFINITIONS**

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3	Adequate Notice:	Examples of adequate notice include publication in the
4		VLS Forum, notice on the SBA bulletin board, electronic
5		communications to all students (including email and
6		posting on the SBA website), and inclusion in any regularly
7		published schedule of events prepared by the school.
8	Continuing Classes:	Those students advancing in the next academic year to the
9		second and third year classes of the Juris Doctor Program.
10	Funds Eligible Student Group:	Groups on campus that have been recognized under
11		§4.5(B) of the Bylaws by the Senate.
12	Official Senate Meeting Times:	Includes all Regular and Special Meetings of the Senate,
13		Budget Meetings, and any and all events designated by the
14		Senate in the Standing Rules or from time to time decided
15		by a majority vote to be official.
16	Presiding Officer:	The person who runs a meeting of the Senate and who is
17		responsible for controlling the floor. The Presiding Officer
18		will only vote in the event of a tie vote.
19	Quorum:	The minimum number of members who must be present for
20		the vote to be valid or a meeting to be legally held.
21	Ratification:	The process by which the SBA approves of bylaw
22		amendments is outlined in Article 12.
23	Recognized Student Group:	Groups on campus that have been recognized under §
24		4.5(A) of the Bylaws by the Senate.
25	Regularly Scheduled Senate	
26	Meeting:	The meetings of the Senate that occur on a regularly
27		scheduled basis.
28	Senate:	Governing body of the SBA comprised of positions
29		authorized by the Bylaws in § 4.2.
30	Special Committee:	Temporary SBA Committees which are authorized by the
31		Bylaws in § 6.2.
32	Standing Committee:	Permanent SBA Committees which are authorized by the
33		Bylaws in § 6.1.
34	Student Bar Association (SBA):	All students of Vermont Law School who are enrolled as
35		candidates for the Juris Doctor Degree (J.D.), the Masters
36		of Environmental Law and Policy (M.E.L.P.), the Master of
37		Law (LL.M), and any other degree programs authorized by
38		Vermont Law School, excluding on-line degree programs.
39	Majority Vote:	More than half of the votes cast excluding abstentions.
40	Super Majority Yes Vote:	Two-thirds of the votes cast excluding abstentions.
41	Vacancy:	A vacancy occurs when someone has resigned by
42		delivering a letter of resignation to the President, been
43		removed pursuant to the Bylaws, or is no longer enrolled at
44		Vermont Law School.
45	Vermont Law School Committees:	Committees formed by the VLS Administration and
46		published in the Student Handbook.

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47 **Vermont Law School Community:** The VLS Community includes the SBA, the Faculty, and
48 the Staff.
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50 **ARTICLE 2. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

51 § 2.1 Name

52 This Association shall be known as the Student Bar Association of Vermont Law School,
53 hereinafter referred to as the “SBA.”
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55 § 2.2 Objectives

56 The purpose of the SBA is to support and encourage academic excellence and
57 professional growth among students; ensure the attainment and preservation of the rights
58 of the individual student to acquire a quality legal education in a just and reasonable
59 manner; and serve as the vehicle for interaction and communication between the students
60 and the faculty, administration, alumni, and the community.
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62 § 2.3 Antidiscrimination

63 This SBA shall not discriminate on the basis of ancestry, color, or race; cultural or ethnic
64 background; economic circumstance; ideological, philosophical, or political belief or
65 affiliation; marital or parental status; national or regional origin; physical disability;
66 religion, or religious or denominational affiliation; sex; sexual orientation; gender
67 identity and expression; or age. The SBA shall not encourage or condone discrimination,
68 either implicitly or explicitly, and shall actively discourage discrimination on any such
69 basis.
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71 **ARTICLE 3. MEMBERSHIP**

72 § 3.1 Regular Membership

73 All students of Vermont Law School who are enrolled as candidates for the Juris Doctor
74 Degree (J.D.), the Masters of Environmental Law and Policy (M.E.L.P.), the Master of
75 Law (LL.M), and any other degree programs authorized by Vermont Law School, shall
76 be regular members of the SBA, excluding on-line degree candidates.
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78 § 3.2 Membership Dues

79 Regular members registered for the Fall Semester shall pay to the Treasurer of the Law
80 School Annual Membership Dues in the form of a non-refundable fee. This fee is due and
81 payable with tuition each Fall Semester. The amount of the Membership Dues is subject
82 to increase only by a majority vote of the SBA through a referendum ballot.
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94 § 3.3 Rights Reserved to the Membership

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A. Referendum

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Any member of the SBA may call for a vote by general referendum on any issue regarding the SBA, including its policies and appropriations.

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1. An SBA member shall submit a petition to the SBA Secretary containing the valid signatures of at least twenty percent (20%) of current SBA members and the item to be voted on.
2. The SBA Secretary shall notify the SBA within twenty-four hours of receipt of a valid petition.
3. The Secretary shall arrange for a vote to be held within fourteen (14) days (excluding vacation periods) of receipt of the petition.
4. SBA members are required to sign a voter roll before voting in any election. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
5. A general referendum open to all SBA members shall then be held. A majority vote on a referendum is controlling and conclusive. When conflicting with a vote of the Senate, the referendum shall prevail.
6. Any dispute regarding referendums shall be submitted to the Elections Committee. An appeal from the Elections Committee shall go to the Honor Code Committee. The determination of the Honor Code Committee is binding.

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B. Recall

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Any Senate member may be removed from office by the SBA through the process of recall. A recall shall be governed by the same provisions as a referendum, except:

1. A Super Majority Yes Vote is required to recall.
2. A petition for recall must clearly set forth all charges and must allege at least one of the following:
 - a. A willful violation of any provisions of the Bylaws or Standing Rules, or
 - b. Failure to comply with his/her specific duties and responsibilities in the Bylaws or Standing Rules, or
 - c. Malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of office.
3. The petition and recall of class-specific positions shall be restricted to members of the electing class.

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C. Access to Information

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1. All members of the SBA have the right to review and access the following:
 - a. The Bylaws and Standing Rules;
 - b. Policy Statements and resolutions;
 - c. All periodic reports regarding expenditures and allocations made by the Treasurer to the Senate;
 - d. A current statement indicating the financial condition of the SBA; and

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- 140 e. Copies of the minutes of all Senate meetings of the current academic year.
141 2. This information shall be kept by the SBA in an easily accessible format, such as
142 a school-approved information sharing website (e.g. TWEN or Blackboard).
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144 D. Senate Meetings

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146 1. All SBA members shall have the right to attend all Senate meetings.
147 2. All SBA members shall have the right to submit issues to the SBA Secretary for
148 discussion at meetings of the Senate and the SBA.
149 3. All SBA members shall have the right to address the Senate, pursuant to the
150 Standing Rules. The right to address the Senate shall remain if the Standing Rules
151 are suspended.
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153 **ARTICLE 4. ORGANIZATION OF THE SENATE**

154 § 4.1 Role of the Senate

155 The Senate shall be the governing body of the SBA and shall formulate its policies and
156 supervise its activities. It shall have all powers prescribed by and necessary for the proper
157 execution of the Bylaws including, but not limited to the following:
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161 A. To consider resolutions and policy statements regarding any and all issues of concern
162 to the SBA, generally no sooner than seven (7) days from the time of proposal, these
163 issues include but are not limited to:
164 1. The law school's status/recognition and any plans/planning to improve such
165 status/recognition;
166 2. Academic grading issues and testing procedures;
167 3. Professorial evaluations and evaluation follow-up;
168 4. Posting of grade information; and
169 5. The efficiency, costs, and availability of services provided, utilized, and needed
170 by the SBA.
171 B. To appropriate all SBA funds;
172 C. To establish its own procedures in the Standing Rules consistent with the Bylaws;
173 D. To establish standing and special committees pursuant to the Bylaws;
174 E. To ratify or reject by majority vote any student membership to a standing committee;
175 F. To require reports (written or verbal as directed by the Bylaws, the Standing Rules, or
176 the Senate) from the Standing Committees, Special Committees, and from any
177 organization receiving appropriations from the SBA;
178 G. To enter into contracts on behalf of the SBA according to rules adopted by the Senate
179 in the Standing Rules;
180 H. To enforce the disciplinary rules and code of conduct embodied in § 4.3;
181 I. To provide and foster a harmonious academic and social environment amongst
182 members of the law school community.
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184 § 4.2 Structure of the Senate

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186 The Senate shall consist of the following:

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A. Executive Officers

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. In addition to other duties, the Executive Officers of the SBA shall have the collective power and responsibility to provide executive direction for the SBA and the Senate to ensure its smooth operation.
2. To read and comply with all provisions of the Bylaws and Standing Rules.
3. Executive officers are each accorded one vote in the Senate. The President or the presiding officer shall vote only to break a tie.
4. The SBA President and SBA Treasurer shall not serve as President or Treasurer, or serve the functions of President or Treasurer, of any Funds Eligible group.
5. Executive officers shall be responsible for adequately preparing next year's officers for an efficient transition and for proper execution of their future duties.
6. To attend in at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all Official Senate Meeting Times.
7. To perform other duties as indicated in the Standing Rules and those that the Senate may assign.

B. President

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To actively ensure that issues of concern to the SBA are addressed by the Senate.
2. To ensure the Senate complies with § 4.1.
3. To call to order and act as Presiding Officer of any Regular and Special Meetings of the Executive Committee, Senate, and/or the SBA.
4. To know and employ in all meetings proper parliamentary procedure as indicated in Article 10 of the Bylaws.
5. To meet with VLS Administration on a regular basis, as set out in the Standing Rules, to discuss and vigorously pursue issues of concern to the SBA.
6. To appoint chairs of Standing and Special Committees subject to majority consent of the Senate.
7. To issue instruction to the Committees and to ensure that those duties are faithfully executed.
8. To approve the signing of SBA checks by the Treasurer by a process pursuant to the Standing Rules.
9. To serve as emergency signor of checks in the absence or unavailability of the Treasurer. Emergency, absence, and unavailability shall be defined in the Standing Rules.
10. To chair the Executive Committee.
11. To assign Executive Officers to meet with corresponding Deans and Vice Presidents of the administration as permitted by the administration and the Standing Rules.

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- 231 12. To enforce the findings of the Bylaws Committee pertaining to violations of the
232 Bylaws or Standing Rules.
233 13. To keep the SBA informed and to assure access to information regarding the SBA
234 and the Senate.
235 14. To determine the agenda for all Senate Meetings subject to the majority's
236 approval upon challenge.

237 C. Vice President for Student Affairs and Operations

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239 Duties and Responsibilities:

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241 1. To perform the duties of the President of the SBA in the event of her/his absence.
242 2. To temporarily perform the duties of the President in the case of a vacancy until
243 an election is held pursuant to the Bylaws.
244 3. To oversee and ensure communication with Standing Committees, Special
245 Committees, Vermont Law School Committee Representatives, and the Town
246 Liaison.
247 4. To meet with the Deans at least once a semester and as otherwise necessary to
248 stay up-to-date on the administration's activities.
249 5. To address any and all concerns of the student body and relay these concerns to
250 the administration.

251 D. Vice President for Student Activities

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253 The Vice President for Student Activities shall chair the Student Activities
254 Committee and meet with the student leaders to ensure coordination of group events.
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256 E. Treasurer

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258 Duties and Responsibilities:

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260 1. To advise the Senate, the SBA, and student groups on financial matters affecting
261 the SBA.
262 2. To have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the SBA.
263 3. To hold the checkbook of and serve as the signor of checks for the SBA.
264 4. To prepare the General and Student Activity Fund Budgets for presentation to the
265 Finance Committee and Senate in accordance with the Bylaws and the Standing
266 Rules.
267 5. To pay all bills authorized by the Senate.
268 6. To keep permanent records of all receipts and expenditures of the Senate;
269 7. To keep the books open to the SBA for examination.
270 8. To submit a statement of financial standing at all Regular Meetings of the Senate;
271 9. To prepare and deliver monthly and annual financial reports.
272 10. To deliver funds promptly once they are allocated and requested consistent with
273 the budgeting procedures as determined by the Standing Rules.
274 11. To chair the Finance Committee.

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F. Secretary

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To take minutes of all Regular and Special Meetings of the Senate.
2. To post the minutes subject to amendment and approval by the Senate.
3. To record Senate attendance at all meetings for inclusion in the minutes.
4. To maintain and reserve all committee reports and all minutes of Senate meetings.
5. To maintain and reserve all opinions of the Parliamentarian and/or the Bylaws Committee.
6. To acquire and maintain a listing of all students from the Registrar.
7. To notify the SBA of all meetings.
8. To handle all correspondence of the Senate.
9. To receive and promptly distribute all Senate mail.
10. To gather and maintain historical records of the Senate.
11. To coordinate all publicity for the Senate.
12. To maintain a current list of Standing Committee, Special Committee, and Vermont Law School Committee members and their responsibilities.
13. To chair the Elections Committee.
14. To see that all elections/referendums follow the election procedures in the Bylaws and the Standing Rules.
15. To ensure that prior to each election candidates have a public forum to express their views in a manner determined by the Senate in the Standing Rules.
16. To serve as custodian of the official seal of the SBA.

G. Voting Senate Members

1. Senators

- a. There shall be five Senators elected from each of the three Juris Doctor Classes (1L, 2L, and 3L) and one Senator from each of the non-Juris Doctor programs in existence at Vermont Law School and included within the SBA.
- b. Each Senator shall have one vote in the Senate.
- c. Duties and Responsibilities
 - i. To confer with non-voting and voting membership on questions of importance before the Senate.
 - ii. To read and comply with all provisions of the Bylaws and the Standing Rules.
 - iii. To take polls or seek the opinions of their constituents and other members of the SBA with regard to proposed SBA legislation, rules, procedure, or proposed or considered actions.
 - iv. To introduce SBA legislation, suggestions, or criticisms at Regular or Special Meetings of the Senate.
 - v. To participate as a member of at least one Standing Committee;
 - vi. To attend/partake in at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all Official Senate Meeting Times.

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- 321 vii. To perform other duties as provided in the Standing Rules and those that
322 the Senate may assign.
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- 324 2. Town Liaison
- 325 a. There shall be one Town Liaison elected from the membership at-large of the
326 SBA.
- 327 b. The Town Liaison shall have one vote in the Senate.
- 328 c. Duties and Responsibilities:
- 329 i. To serve as representative of the Law School to the South Royalton Board
330 of Selectmen, the Town Clerk, the School District, and local merchants
331 within the Town.
- 332 ii. To be known to those parties and coordinate with student-town functions
333 in order to foster productive community relations.
- 334 iii. To attend regular Royalton Select Board meetings and the annual
335 Royalton Town Meeting as a representative of the SBA.
- 336 iv. To report to the Senate and Vice President for Student Affairs and
337 Operations appropriate information, requests, or complaints.
- 338 v. Otherwise to have the same duties and responsibilities as Senators
339 pursuant to §4.1.
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341 H. Non-voting Senate Members

342 1. Student Trustees

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345 One student from each of the 2L and 3L classes shall be elected to serve on the
346 Board of Trustees of Vermont Law School. Student Trustees serve on an equal
347 basis with other members of the Board of Trustees, which includes full voting
348 rights and fiduciary duties in all matters before the Board. The Student Trustees
349 shall:

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- 351 a. Be aware of and be ready to commit to the necessary time commitments prior
352 to running.
- 353 b. Commit to serve the full term and shall not actively pursue any opportunities
354 that may conflict.
- 355 c. Seek to represent the views of the SBA before the Board.
- 356 d. Attend at least one Senate meeting a month and when requested by the SBA
357 President.
- 358 e. Inform the SBA of issues before the Board.
- 359 f. Seek input at the Regularly Scheduled Senate Meeting prior to each scheduled
360 Board of Trustees meeting.
- 361 g. Participate in one Town Hall or other open meeting each semester to provide
362 information and solicit feedback from the SBA.
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2. Student Members of Vermont Law School Committees

There shall be one representative from each of the J.D., M.E.L.P., and LL.M. classes elected to the following Vermont Law School Committees: Honor Code, Code of Conduct, Curriculum, Faculty Hiring, and any other Committee established by the VLS Administration.

- a. Each Student Member of a Vermont Law School Committee shall have one vote on his/her respective Committee. They shall be non-voting members of the Senate.
- b. Duties and Responsibilities:
 - i. To represent the SBA as members of their respective Committees.
 - ii. To read and comply with all provisions of the Bylaws and the Standing Rules.
 - iii. To keep the Senate and Vice President for Student Affairs and Operations informed on a regular basis of the activities of their Committee.
 - iv. To attend at least one meeting per month of the Senate and additionally as requested by the Executive Committee or the Senate.

3. Parliamentarian

- a. The President shall appoint one Parliamentarian at the first Regular Meeting of the Senate subject to the majority approval of the Senate.
- b. The Parliamentarian shall be a non-voting member of the Senate.
- c. Duties and Responsibilities:
 - i. To read and comply with all provisions of the Bylaws and the Standing Rules.
 - ii. To resolve ambiguities in, to clarify, and to interpret the Bylaws and Standing Rules.
 - iii. To write opinions based on his/her interpretation of the Bylaws and Standing Rules, which shall be binding unless revoked by the Parliamentarian or a Super Majority Yes Vote of all current members of the Senate.
 - iv. To provide instruction and information to the Senate on conduct and participation during Senate Meetings, this should include a training session for new Senate members on Robert's Rules of Order.
 - v. To chair the Bylaws Committee.
 - vi. To attend/partake in at least seventy-five percent (75%) of all Official Senate Meeting Times.
 - vii. To perform other duties as indicated in the Standing Rules and those that the Senate may assign.

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- 413 4. American Bar Association/Law Student Division (ABA/LSD) Representative
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415 a. The President shall appoint one representative to the ABA/LSD subject to the
416 majority approval of the Senate.
417 b. The ABA/LSD Representative shall be a non-voting member of the Senate.
418 c. Duties and Responsibilities:
419 i. To represent the SBA before the American Bar Association Law Student
420 Division.
421 ii. To read and comply with all provisions of these Bylaws and the Standing
422 Rules.
423 iii. To keep the Senate, the Vice President for Student Affairs and Operations,
424 and the SBA informed of the activities of the ABA/LSD.
425 iv. To chair the ABA/LSD Committee.
426 v. To attend at least one meeting per month of the Senate and additionally as
427 requested by the Executive Committee or the Senate.
428 vi. To perform other duties as indicated in the Standing Rules and those that
429 the Senate may assign.
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431 5. Faculty Representation 432

433 The Faculty of the Law School may appoint a faculty representative to the Senate
434 as a non-voting member.
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436 6. Administration Representation 437

438 The Administration of the Law School may appoint an administrative
439 representative to the Senate as a non-voting member.
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441 7. Other Non-voting Senate Members 442

443 The President may appoint additional non-voting Senate members as described in
444 the Standing Rules. All such appointments shall be subject to majority approval of
445 the Senate.
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447 § 4.3 Removal 448

449 The Senate shall have the authority to remove any Executive Officer, Voting Senate
450 Member, Student Member of Vermont Law School Committees, and any appointed
451 Senate position.
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- 453 1. Any Senator may submit a petition for removal to either the SBA President or the
454 SBA Secretary containing the valid signatures of twenty-five percent (25%) of voting
455 Senate members.
456 2. A petition for recall must clearly set forth all charges and must allege at least one of
457 the following:
458 a. A willful violation of any provisions of the Bylaws or Standing Rules, or

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- 459 b. Failure to comply with his/her specific duties and responsibilities in the Bylaws or
460 Standing Rules, or
461 c. Malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance of office.
- 462 3. The SBA President or the SBA Secretary shall post adequate notice to the individual,
463 the Senate, and the SBA no less than seven (7) days prior to any removal vote.
- 464 4. Removal requires a Super Majority Yes Vote of the total number of voting members
465 currently holding office. This vote shall occur at the next Regularly Scheduled Senate
466 Meeting following the petition for removal and posting of adequate notice.

467 § 4.4 Vacancies

468 Except where provided for within these Bylaws, vacancies shall be filled according to the
469 following procedures:

470 A. Elected Positions:

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- 475 1. The Senate will decide by majority vote whether to fill vacancies of elected
476 positions by appointment or by special election by the next Regularly Scheduled
477 Senate Meeting following notice of the vacancy.
- 478 a. Appointments shall be made by the President subject to majority approval of
479 the Senate. Should the President fail to make an appointment at the next
480 Regularly Scheduled Senate Meeting after the Senate determines an
481 appointment shall be made, the Senate may appoint and elect candidates by
482 majority vote.
- 483 b. Special elections shall be organized by the SBA Secretary in accordance with
484 the Bylaws and Standing Rules. Special elections are governed by § 8.1 of the
485 Bylaws.
- 486 2. Vacancies in the following positions may only be filled by a special election:
487 President, Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, and Board of Trustees
488 Representatives.
- 489 3. Class specific positions shall only be filled with members of the respective class.
- 490 4. Vacant Executive Committee positions shall only be filled with members of the
491 current 2L and 3L classes.
- 492 5. Town Liaison shall be filled from the SBA at-large.
- 493 6. Adequate notice of vacancy shall be issued to the Senate and the SBA that
494 describes the vacancy and the procedures that will be followed in filling the
495 position.
- 496 7. The President may make special temporary appointments to fill vacancies of
497 Student Members of Vermont Law School Committees when the Senate is not in
498 session. Upon return to session, the Senate shall promptly fill the position.

499 B. Appointed or Selected Positions:

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- 502 1. The President shall appoint or select a replacement to fill such vacancies from the
503 SBA at-large.
- 504 2. Appointments and selections shall be official upon the approval of the Senate.

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505 3. The President may make special temporary appointments or selections to fill
506 vacancies when the Senate is not in session. The Senate shall approve or decline
507 such appointments or selections as soon as is possible.
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509 § 4.5 Student Groups

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511 Student Groups may be approved as a Recognized Student Group. Once approved as a
512 Recognized Student Group, that group must seek approval as a Funds Eligible Student
513 Group in order to receive SBA funding. Groups receiving academic credit from Vermont
514 Law School, including but not limited to Academic Moot Courts, Vermont Law Review
515 and Res Communes, shall be exempt from governance by these rules.
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517 A. Recognized Student Groups

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- 519 1. A Recognized Student Group may:
 - 520 a. Use the name “Vermont Law School” in its title;
 - 521 b. Be assigned space in Vermont Law School buildings and on Vermont Law
522 School grounds for meetings and other sponsored events; and
 - 523 c. Address the Senate as an organization and seek its assistance in all matters
524 relevant to the SBA.
 - 525 2. A group may seek to become a Recognized Student Group:
 - 526 a. The group shall give proper notice to the SBA Secretary that they seek
527 Recognized Student Group Status at the next Regularly Scheduled Senate
528 Meeting.
 - 529 b. The group shall also present a print and electronic copy of the group’s bylaws
530 to the SBA Secretary. The documentation shall include a mission statement
531 identifying the group’s purpose(s) and goal(s), a list of officers, and a
532 statement of how the group intends to further the mission of the SBA.
 - 533 c. The SBA Secretary shall present the proposal to the Senate.
 - 534 d. A majority vote of the Senate shall be required for recognition.
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536 B. Funds Eligible Student Groups

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- 538 1. Only a Recognized Student Group that has existed for sixteen weeks, excluding
539 the summer term, may become Funds Eligible.
 - 540 2. A Recognized Student Group may seek to become a Funds Eligible Student
541 Group
 - 542 a. The group shall give proper notice to the SBA Secretary that they seek Funds
543 Eligible Student Group Status at the next Regularly Scheduled Senate
544 Meeting.
 - 545 b. The SBA Secretary shall present the proposal to the Senate.
 - 546 c. A majority vote of the Senate shall be required for Funds Eligible status.
 - 547 3. To remain Funds Eligible, a group shall submit the following to the SBA
548 Secretary prior to each Fall Semester’s budget application due date:
 - 549 a. A current list of officers;
 - 550 b. An electronic copy of their bylaws; and

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- 551 c. A printed copy of their bylaws if amended since the previous submission.
552 4. Groups shall keep on file and open to examination accurate records of the groups'
553 finances.
554 5. Groups shall attend finance meetings as stipulated in the Standing Rules.
555 6. Groups in proper standing shall have the privilege of maintaining a webpage on
556 the VLS site, provided that it is kept reasonably current.
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558 C. Loss of Status

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560 1. Groups failing to comply with any provisions of the Bylaws or the Standing Rules
561 shall lose Funds Eligible status. To regain Funds Eligible status, groups shall
562 reapply pursuant to §4.5(B).
563 2. Groups failing to comply with any non-financial provision of the SBA Bylaws or
564 the Standing Rules shall lose Recognized Student Group status. To regain
565 Recognized Student Group status, groups shall reapply pursuant to §4.5(A).
566 3. Any member of the Senate, upon receiving information of a Group's failure to
567 comply with the Bylaws or Standing Rules, shall notify the Parliamentarian. The
568 Parliamentarian shall convene a meeting of the Bylaws Committee, which shall
569 determine any change of status and notify the SBA Secretary.
570 4. The SBA Secretary shall notify the Senate of any change to a Group's status at
571 the Senate's next regular meeting.
572 5. A Group may contest the loss of status under the following procedures:
573 a. The Group shall submit a petition with supporting evidence to the Executive
574 Committee within seven (7) days of the Secretary's notification to the Senate.
575 b. The Executive Committee shall make a recommendation to the Senate to
576 uphold or vacate the decision of the Bylaws Committee.
577 c. A Super Majority Yes Vote of the Senate is required to vacate the decision of
578 the Bylaws Committee.
579

580 **ARTICLE 5. MEETINGS OF THE SENATE**

581 § 5.1 Frequency

582 The Senate must meet at a regularly scheduled day and time at least twice per month
583 during the months of September through November, and February through April. All
584 meetings of the Senate shall be open to the SBA.
585
586
587

588 § 5.2 Quorum Requirement for Official Meetings

589 A quorum shall exist when one more than half the voting members are present. The
590 Secretary shall inform the President or presiding officer when a quorum is present at the
591 beginning of Senate meetings.
592
593

594 § 5.3 Scheduling

595 At least one meeting a month shall be scheduled during regular school hours.
596
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598 § 5.4 Special Meetings 599

600 Special meetings may be called at the request of the Dean of the Law School, the SBA
601 President, or at least twenty-five percent (25%) of voting members of the Senate.
602

603 § 5.5 Notice 604

605 A. Notice of a meeting shall be given at least three days prior to Regular Meetings of the
606 Senate, and at least twenty-four hours prior to Special Meetings.

607 B. The Secretary shall distribute the agenda to all SBA members and post electronically
608 at least two days prior to a Regular Meeting and twenty-four (24) hours prior to a
609 Special Meeting.
610

611 **ARTICLE 6. COMMITTEES** 612

613 § 6.1 SBA Standing Committees 614

615 Where not expressly identified, the President shall appoint the chair of the Committee
616 and its Senate representatives. Except as otherwise noted, the Chair may add any SBA
617 members to the committee he/she is chairing, subject to approval by the Executive
618 Committee or the Senate. Membership of the Finance and Elections Committee are
619 restricted to voting senators. The Executive Committee must provide to newly elected
620 Senators, promptly after they are elected, a list of all Standing and Special Committees
621 (with names of current chairpersons and members) and must offer them reasonable
622 opportunity to be appointed to the committee(s) of their choice.
623

624 A. **Executive Committee** –The Executive Committee shall be composed of the
625 President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer of the SBA. Membership is
626 restricted to these specific individuals. The Executive Committee shall assist the
627 President in guiding the direction of the Senate and developing the agenda. It shall
628 meet on a regular basis and as indicated in the Standing Rules. The Executive
629 Committee shall also recommend to the Senate individuals for recognition in the
630 Student Bar Awards in the spring semester.
631

632 B. **Finance Committee** –The Finance Committee shall be composed of at least one
633 Senator from each J.D. class and shall be chaired by the Treasurer. Its purpose will be
634 to review requests for funds and recommend allocation of available funds for
635 approval by the Senate.

636 1. No member of the Finance Committee shall be responsible for creating the budget
637 of any Funds Eligible Group, nor shall any member of the Finance Committee be
638 the President, Treasurer or function as the President or Treasurer of any Funds
639 Eligible group.

640 2. Any member of the Finance Committee who is also a member of a Funds Eligible
641 Group shall recuse himself/herself from voting and discussion relating to any
642 proposals from groups of which he or she is a member.

643 3. The Finance Committee shall have the following duties and responsibilities:

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- 644 a. Aid and assist the Treasurer in the preparation of the General Fund and
- 645 Activity Fund Budgets for approval by the Senate;
- 646 b. To convene to review funding requests;
- 647 c. To meet as needed to determine the status of the financial condition of the
- 648 SBA;
- 649 d. To make recommendations to the Senate on the recognition of Funds Eligible
- 650 Groups;
- 651 e. To recommend to the Senate particular levels of funding for each Funds
- 652 Eligible Group; and
- 653 f. To make recommendations to the Senate regarding the Finance section of the
- 654 Standing Rules.

655
656 **C. Bylaws Committee** –The Bylaws Committee shall be composed of at least one
657 Senate representative from each J.D. class and will be chaired by the Parliamentarian.
658 Its purpose is to review the Bylaws and Standing Rules and to determine if any
659 recommended changes to it are required. The committee will review standing rules to
660 determine if any recommendations for additions or revisions should be made. It shall
661 also hear any grievance pertaining to alleged violations of the Bylaws or Standing
662 Rules by officers, members, and committees of the Senate, or by any recognized
663 student organization. The committee’s findings and recommendations shall be
664 enforced by the SBA President..
665

666 **D. Elections Committee** –The Elections Committee shall be composed of at least one
667 Senate representative from each J.D. class and shall be chaired by the Secretary. The
668 purpose of the Elections Committee is to hold spring elections for the Continuing
669 Classes representatives and committee members, fall elections to elect new class
670 representatives and committee members and to fill any vacancies that arise after the
671 spring elections; and to hold special elections as they are needed. Duties and
672 responsibilities of the Elections Committee shall include:
673 1. Conducting all regular elections, special elections, and referenda pursuant to the
674 Bylaws and the Standing Rules;
675 2. Informing the SBA and the Senate when elections and referenda must occur;
676 3. Establishing polling places, which may include electronic voting, counting votes,
677 and posting the results pursuant to the Standing Rules.
678 4. In the event the Chair of the Elections Committee prefers not to serve during any
679 election due to a potential conflict of interest, or to avoid the appearance of
680 impropriety, the President may appoint a temporary replacement after receiving
681 official notice that the Chair decided to recuse himself or herself as the Chair. The
682 President’s appointment shall be approved by the Senate.
683 5. Any member of the SBA running for office shall not serve on the Elections
684 Committee.
685

686 **E. Student Activities Committee** –The Student Activities Committee shall be
687 composed of at least one Senate representative from each J.D. class and shall be
688 chaired by the Vice President of Student Activities. Its purpose is to coordinate the
689 calendar of activities of all recognized student organizations and ensure that a

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690 schedule of events is maintained on the bulletin board and the VLS web site; to
691 oversee the planning and execution of all SBA sponsored activities (including
692 periodic opportunities for meetings among class representatives and their
693 constituents), and to enforce the policy for use of SBA controlled public bulletin
694 boards.

695
696 F. **IT Committee** –The IT Committee shall be composed of at least three members of
697 the SBA membership at large and shall be chaired by the IT Representative, if one is
698 appointed by the President. Its purpose is to review the IT concerns of the SBA and
699 work with the VLS IT Department to maximize IT performance.

700
701 G. **Careers Services Committee** – The Career Services Committee shall be composed
702 of at least one representative from each of the J.D. classes and shall be chaired by the
703 Career Services Representative, if the President appoints one. The Committee shall
704 act as a liaison between the Office of Career Services and the SBA.

705
706 H. **ABA/LSD Committee** – The ABA/LSD Committee shall be composed of at least
707 one representative from each of the J.D. classes and shall be chaired by the ABA/LSD
708 Representative. The Committee shall act as a liaison between the ABA/LSD and the
709 SBA.

710 711 § 6.2 SBA Special Committees

712
713 The Senate has authority to create ad hoc committees, shall determine their mandates,
714 and may dissolve them. The President shall appoint a chair and members to each ad hoc
715 committee. Each committee is dissolved at the end of the academic year of after its
716 mandate is complete.

717 718 § 6.3 Committee Member Duties and Responsibilities

- 719
720 A. Committee chairs shall attend at least one Senate meeting a month, and as otherwise
721 requested. The Committee chair shall apprise the SBA of his or her activities and
722 solicit input from the Senate.
- 723 B. Committee chairs shall ensure that either minutes of the meetings or a meeting
724 summary are submitted the SBA Secretary and Vice President for Student Affairs and
725 Operations. The minutes or summary shall include those in attendance, the time, the
726 place, matters discussed, and any votes taken or recommendations by consensus.
- 727 C. Committee members shall attend at least seventy-five percent (75%) of committee
728 meetings.

729 730 **ARTICLE 7. APPROPRIATIONS**

731 732 § 7.1 General Provisions

- 733
734 A. The Treasurer shall receive Student Membership Dues from the Business Office at
735 the beginning of the fall semester. These dues shall be divided into three funds:

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- 736 seventy percent (70%) to the Student Activity Fund, twenty percent (20%) to the
737 General Fund, and ten percent (10%) to the Solutions Conference Fund.
- 738 B. The Senate must approve all budgets pursuant to the Bylaws and the Standing Rules.
- 739 C. The Senate may decide to fund any activity that will promote the intellectual,
740 physical, or social development of the Vermont Law School Community and/or the
741 Town of Royalton.
- 742 D. No Senate has the authority to approve an expenditure of funds that will occur
743 subsequent to the end of its term of office.
- 744 E. No Senate has the authority to approve an expenditure of funds that occurred prior to
745 the beginning of its term of office.
- 746 F. The entire portion of all funds that remains unspent at the end of the academic year
747 shall roll over to the following year as determined by the Standing Rules.
- 748 G. Further procedures on the allocation and spending of funds shall be governed by the
749 Standing Rules.

750

751 § 7.2 SBA Funds

752

- 753 A. The General Fund Budget for each semester shall be considered by the Senate at the
754 second Regularly Scheduled Senate Meeting of the fall semester.
- 755 B. The Solutions Conference Fund shall be distributed pursuant to the Standing Rules.
- 756 1. If the Senate determines that a Solutions Conference shall not occur during an
757 academic year, it may choose to rollover those funds to the General Fund. This
758 determination must occur at the last Regularly Scheduled Senate Meeting of the
759 Fall Semester.
- 760 2. If the Solutions Conference occurs in the Fall Semester, any unspent funds will
761 automatically rollover to the General Fund.
- 762 C. Allocations to Funds Eligible groups shall be determined by the Finance Committee.
- 763 1. Any Funds Eligible group desiring allocation of funds from the SBA shall submit
764 a budget request for the academic year to the Treasurer. Budget requests shall be
765 submitted to the Treasurer ten (10) days prior to the second Regularly Scheduled
766 Senate Meeting of the fall semester.
- 767 2. Groups shall be allocated funds for the full academic year. Funds not used for
768 anticipated Fall Semester events shall rollover to the General Fund in the Spring
769 Semester. Those funds shall be made available for Funds Eligible groups to
770 propose events to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall
771 determine which proposals to fund pursuant to the Bylaws and Standing Rules.
- 772 3. Allocations to Funds Eligible Groups shall be based upon factors including:
- 773 a. A review of how previous allocated funds were used toward budgeted events.
- 774 b. A review of how events went, including, but not limited to attendance and
775 other forms of feedback.
- 776 c. Anticipated events and projected costs of the SBA budget.
- 777 d. How the proposed allocation will benefit the intellectual and social well-being
778 of the Vermont Law School community.
- 779 4. A Funds Eligible group may appeal the decision of the Finance Committee
780 pertaining to its own budget to the Executive Committee.

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- 781 D. The Senate may change or amend the Finance Committee recommendation. The
782 Senate must adopt a Student Activity Fund Budget no later than the second Regularly
783 Scheduled Senate Meeting of the fall semester.
- 784 E. The Finance Committee may not consider budget applications for the Student
785 Activity Fund submitted after the budget application deadline.
- 786 F. Student groups may decide to reallocate funds for any purpose listed in their
787 approved budgets subject to any restrictions in the Bylaws and Standing Rules. A
788 student group proposal to reallocate funds from one event to another shall be subject
789 to approval by a majority of the Finance Committee. The approval process shall be
790 left to the discretion of the Finance Committee. Funds may only be reallocated within
791 the same Semester they have been approved for use.
- 792 G. Funds allocated for Fall Semester events that were not used shall be rolled over to the
793 General Fund and reallocated as provided for in § 7.3(E) of the Bylaws.
- 794 H. All groups and their activities using SBA funds must be open to all students and must
795 be prominently advertised.
- 796 I. All allocations of SBA funds approved by the Senate shall remain in the treasury until
797 groups receiving such allocation actually incur expenses or until proper
798 documentation is provided showing that funding is needed prior to the actual
799 occurrence of the expense. Allocations shall be approved in accordance with the
800 Standing Rules.
- 801 J. If the Senate or Finance Committee attaches any conditions to the allocation of funds,
802 the Finance Committee shall ensure that the group is aware of the conditions and that
803 the conditions are met. If these conditions are not met, the group may be subject to
804 sanctions under §4.5(C) and as provided for in the Standing Rules.

806 **ARTICLE 8. ELECTIONS OF THE SENATE**

807 § 8.1 Elections

- 808
- 809
- 810 A. Elections for President, Vice President for Student Activities, Vice President for
811 Student Affairs, Treasurer, Secretary, J.D. Senators from the continuing classes,
812 Board of Trustees Representatives from the continuing classes, Law School
813 Committee Representatives for the continuing classes, and the Town Liaison shall be
814 held by the first Friday in April.
- 815 B. Elections for the Master's Program Senator(s), J.D. Senators from the 1L class, Law
816 School Committee Representatives for the 1L, M.E.L.P., and LL.M classes, and any
817 vacancies from elections shall be elected or filled no later than four full weeks after
818 the start of the Fall Semester.
- 819 C. SBA members shall not run for multiple voting Senate offices during any one
820 election. The Secretary shall notify any SBA member nominated for multiple offices
821 and he/she shall select the office, if any, for which he/she will run.
- 822 D. All elections and referendum votes shall be by secret ballot.
- 823 E. SBA members are required to sign a voter roll before voting in any election.
824 Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- 825 F. Elections shall follow all other guidelines set forth in the Standing Rules.

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826 G. The term of office for all elected positions filled prior to the Spring elections shall
827 terminate at the adjournment of the final Regularly Scheduled Senate Meeting of the
828 Spring semester.

829
830

831 § 8.2 Third Year Students and Non-Juris Doctor Program Students

832

833 A. May not run for any office to become effective after March 1 of that academic year;

834 B. May vote in referendums;

835 C. May not vote in elections after March 1 of that academic year, including elections for
836 the Continuing Class positions; and

837 D. Every elected voting member of the Senate shall retain voting rights through the last
838 regular meeting of the Senate during that academic year.

839

840 § 8.3 Absentee Ballots

841

842 Currently enrolled SBA members who will be absent from Vermont Law School during
843 the election period are eligible to vote absentee.

844 A. Absentee ballots shall be made available upon request to the SBA Secretary during
845 the election period.

846 B. The SBA Secretary shall transmit an absentee ballot by regular mail or e-mail to each
847 eligible member who makes a timely request.

848 C. Absentee ballots shall be returned by regular mail or e-mail to the SBA Secretary
849 prior to the end of the election period.

850 D. The SBA Secretary shall maintain the confidentiality of the absentee voters.

851 E. Absentee voting shall be conducted pursuant to the Bylaws and Standing Rules.

852

853 **ARTICLE 9. HONOR CODE AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

854

855 The Bylaws incorporate by reference the current versions of the VLS Honor Code and
856 VLS Code of Conduct, which shall be posted on the SBA website and available at the
857 library circulation desk.

858

859 **ARTICLE 10. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

860

861 The rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall
862 govern the Senate and the SBA, so long as they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws or
863 Standing Rules adopted by the Senate.

864

865 **ARTICLE 11. STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE**

866

867 § 11.1 Generally

868

869 The Standing Rules shall be the rules under which the Senate and its Committees shall
870 operate. The Standing Rules shall define the rules, guidelines, and procedures for awards,
871 meetings, finances, attendance, elections, committees, vacancies, and any other activity
872 of the Senate or SBA.

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§ 11.2 Adoption and Amendments

Any member of the Senate may propose additions, changes, and deletions to the Standing Rules at a Regular Senate Meeting.

- A. A vote on the additions, changes, and/or deletions shall then take place between seven and twenty-one days from the date of proposal.
- B. Adequate notice of the pending vote shall be posted at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the vote.
- C. The quorum requirement for a vote is two-thirds of the current voting membership of the Senate.
- D. Additions, changes, and/or deletions shall take effect immediately upon a Super-majority Yes Vote.

ARTICLE 12. BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

Any member of the SBA may propose amendments to the Bylaws.

- A. Once the SBA Secretary has received a petition for amendments to the Bylaws containing the valid signatures of seventy-five (75) or more current members of the SBA OR the Senate has approved the amendments by a majority vote, a ratification vote shall be held on the issue.
- B. The Secretary shall hold such voting between fourteen (14) and thirty (30) days (excluding vacation periods) after receipt of the petition or the majority vote of the Senate.
- C. Adequate notice shall be posted at least one week prior to the vote.
- D. SBA members are required to sign a voter roll before voting in any referenda. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- E. The quorum requirement for a ratification vote is a simple majority of the current membership of the SBA. A ratification vote passes with a Super Majority Yes Vote.

ARTICLE 13. EFFECTIVE DATE

These Bylaws take effect immediately upon ratification by the SBA and replace all other Constitutions and/or Bylaws.

HISTORY OF BYLAWS

- 2012 April 10 – Full Update of Bylaws Passed by Student Bar Association vote.
- 2011 January 28 – Amendment of Bylaws Section 8.4 F to reduce the quorum requirement from super majority to simple majority.
- 2002 April 2 – Complete Redrafting of Bylaws: passed a unanimous vote of Senate and presented to the SBA for ratification vote beginning on April 17, 2002.
- 1999 Full Update of Bylaws Passed by Student Bar Association vote.
- 1985 Full Update of Bylaws Passed by Student Bar Association vote.