

Columbia Asian Pacific American Law Students Association Constitution

Ratified on September 17, 2007

(Current as of November 17, 2023 revisions)

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PREAMBLE

The Asian and Pacific Islander American law students of the Columbia University School of Law establish this Constitution in order to bring about meaningful change and to promote and articulate the unique needs and issues facing the Asian Pacific American community.

ARTICLE I. Name of Organization

The name of this organization shall be the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, hereinafter referred to as APALSA.

ARTICLE II. Purpose of Organization

The purpose of APALSA shall be to:

- (1) foster and serve as a support network for Asian Pacific American law students and the Columbia Law School community;
- (2) recruit Asian Pacific American students into the law school;
- (3) work with other organizations toward the realization of common goals;
- (4) educate Asian Pacific American communities as to their legal rights and to inform them of past, present and developing issues which affect Asian Pacific American social, economic, and political development; and
- (5) educate and inform law students and the larger law school community about issues affecting the Asian Pacific American community.

ARTICLE III. Definition of Members

Any Columbia Law School student who participates in the activities of the organization, demonstrates a genuine interest in furthering the purposes of the organization, and pays his/her/their dues shall be considered a member of APALSA. Membership shall be open to all Columbia Law School students without regard to race,

ethnicity, color, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, political affiliation, or the general exercise of a student's right of free speech or association.

ARTICLE IV. General Membership Voting Procedures

Section 1. Only APALSA members as defined by Article III are entitled to vote at all general meetings.

Section 2. Voting shall be done in accordance with the By-Laws of APALSA.

ARTICLE V. Executive Board

Section 1. Composition of Executive Board

Clause 1. APALSA members shall be elected annually by the general membership for the following positions:

- (a) President
- (b) Vice President of Internal Affairs
- (c) Vice President of External Affairs
- (d) Vice President of Communications
- (e) Vice President of Finance
- (f) Vice President of Special Events
- (g) Special Events Chair
- (h) Private Sector Chair(s)
- (i) Public Interest Chair(s)
- (j) Judicial Chair(s)
- (k) Social Chair(s)
- (l) Membership & Academics Chair(s)
- (m) Pro Bono Chair(s)
- (n) Third-Year Representatives

Clause 2. The number of students designated to serve in each position, for positions (g) through (m), shall be specified by the outgoing APALSA Executive Board.

Clause 3. The President and Vice President of Internal Affairs shall be automatically inducted as the two Third-Year Representatives for the following year.

Clause 4. The acting APALSA Executive Board shall elect the following positions no later than October 15 of the academic year in which they serve on the APALSA Board:

(a) First-Year Representative(s)

(b) Transfer Representative(s)

(c) LL.M Representative(s)

Clause 5. The number of students designated to serve as Representatives shall be specified by the acting APALSA Executive Board.

Section 2. Election of Officials and APALSA Leadership

Clause 1. Only dues-paying APALSA members as defined by Article III are eligible to run for Executive Board positions.

Clause 2. Elections for all positions, except First-Year Representatives, Transfer Representatives, LL.M Representatives (see Clause 7), shall be announced at the penultimate general meeting of the academic year or the April general meeting, whichever comes first. Nominations shall either take place through a secret ballot for a period of no less than five academic days prior to the election meeting and/or through open ballot at the election meeting.

Clause 3. All persons receiving at least one nomination shall be placed on the general election ballot, pending his/her/their approval.

Clause 4. Voting shall be through secret ballot.

Clause 5. In order to be elected to the Executive Board, with the exception of the Representatives, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast for the particular position. In the event that no person receives a

majority of the votes, a run-off election shall be held between the candidates with the largest and second largest number of votes. The run-off election may include more than two candidates.

Clause 6. The new officials shall assume their positions by the end of the school year.

Clause 7. Election of the First-Year Representative(s), Transfer Representative(s), and LL.M Representative(s) shall take place at an APALSA Board meeting no later than October 15.

Clause 8. Executive Board positions without candidates may be filled through a special election or may be left vacant at the discretion of the outgoing and incoming President.

Clause 9. Upon a petition signed by two-thirds of the general membership, the issue of impeachment of the President shall be brought to a vote. Upon a three-fourths majority vote by the general membership, the President shall be removed.

Section 3. Nondiscrimination Policy

Leadership positions shall be open to all Columbia Law Students without regard to race, ethnicity, color, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, political affiliation, or the general exercise of a student's right of free speech or association.

ARTICLE VI. Meetings

Section 1. There must be at least two meetings of the general membership per semester.

Section 2. The number of Executive Board meetings must not be less than the number of general membership meetings.

ARTICLE VII. By-Laws

Issues and rules not herein addressed will be governed by the By-Laws of APALSA, insofar as the By-Laws are not inconsistent with the Constitution.

ARTICLE VIII. Amendment Process

Section 1. A proposed amendment shall become effective upon ratification by a majority of the votes cast.

Section 2. Voting shall be done in accordance with the By-Laws of APALSA.

ARTICLE IX. Ratification

Section 1. Constitution is valid upon ratification by a majority of the votes at a ratification meeting.

Section 2. Voting must be opened at a general membership meeting.

ARTICLE X. Standing Committees

Section 1. APALSA shall have six (6) standing committees: Private Sector, Public Interest, Judicial, Special Events, Social, and Membership & Academics.

Section 2. Committees shall be composed of the corresponding Executive Board Chair(s) and at least one Representative. Each Committee may further include general members of APALSA on a voluntary basis.

Section 3. The Executive Board Chair(s) within a Committee shall serve as the director of that Committee and the liaison between that Committee and the Executive Board, with the exception of the Special Events Committee, which shall be directed by the Vice President of Special Events. Executive Board Chairs will serve their functions and responsibilities as detailed in the By-Laws.

Section 4. Without good reason to do otherwise, Executive Board Chairs are expected to encourage general member participation in Committee events. However, Executive Board Chairs have final authority on whether or not a specific general APALSA member is allowed to work on the planning or execution of any specific event.

Section 5. General members have a right to attend monthly Committee meetings of their choice. This is meant to facilitate general member participation in Committee events and to encourage general members to have a real connection to the APALSA Executive Board.