

BYLAWS MODEL

This is an example of basic Bylaw Articles. Bylaws provide the framework for an organization. This is only an example and you should construct your bylaws in a way that makes the most sense for your organization. Your organization's bylaws should reflect its realities and aspirations.

However, your bylaws **must** include:

- (1) the name of your organization;
- (2) the date the bylaws were adopted/revised;
- (3) that the organization will comply with all of the University of San Diego's policies and regulations;
- (4) the university's policy on non-discrimination in its entirety;
- (5) a statement that membership is open to all current USD law students (you may also choose to include faculty and/or staff);
- (6) titles, duties, and eligibility of officers
- (7) the process for election/selection/removal of officers and term limits for each position.

These seven requirements are highlighted in yellow below.

Please note: No student organization can require a student member or officer to disclose their academic status or GPA, and student organization bylaws should not have any such requirement. The Academic Rules do not allow a student who is on Academic Supervision to serve as an officer in a student organization (Academic Rule I.M.1., I.M.2., and I.M.3.). Questions about this Academic Supervision restriction should be directed to the Assistant Dean for Law Student Affairs by individual students who are interested in seeking a position as an officer in a student organization.

Bylaws of the [name of organization]
Date adopted
Revised date [if any]

Article I: Name of Organization

This article shall state the name of the organization.

Article II: Purpose

This article should state the purpose and objectives of the organization. You can think of this as the organization's mission statement. This article **must** also state that the organization will comply with all of the University of San Diego's policies and regulations.

Article III: Membership

This article should state the qualifications for membership. In addition, this article should state whether or not dues and fees are mandatory for the membership, and specify the amount if so. This is also the article where you can choose to lay out different forms of memberships your organization may have. If you do have different kinds of membership, each type of membership should be

clearly differentiated in sections within the bylaws and include information on who qualifies for the different forms of membership and what limitations there are.

Your bylaws **must** state the following

- Policy on Non-Discrimination: The University of San Diego is committed to upholding standards that promote respect and human dignity in an environment that fosters academic excellence and professionalism. It is the policy of the university to maintain an educational and work environment free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment.

To that end, the university and this student organization prohibit and do not tolerate unlawful discrimination against or harassment of university employees, students or applicants for membership to this student organization on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, pregnancy, age, physical disability, mental disability, or other characteristic protected by federal or state law, unless a particular characteristic is a bona fide requirement of the position.

All members of the university community are expected to uphold this policy. Engaging in unlawful discrimination or harassment will result in appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the university.

- Membership is open to all current full-time or part-time students at the University of San Diego School of Law.

EXAMPLE:

Section 1: Any current full-time or part-time student or faculty or staff member at the University of San Diego School of Law may become a member of the organization upon payment of a new membership fee of ten dollars (\$10.00). Upon payment of the prescribed new membership fee, that new member shall be classified as an active member.

Section 2: All active members are eligible to vote in elections and other organization matters, and receive the student organization monthly newsletter.

Section 3: There shall be no dues or fees for membership in the organization, other than the new membership fee prescribed in Article III, Section 1, of these bylaws.

Section 4: [State the Policy on Non-Discrimination]

Article IV: Officers

This is your opportunity to lay out different officers you may have in your organization. This article should also discuss the duties and limitations of the officers, any terms that come with being an officer, how officers are appointed or elected, qualifications, or anything else you feel is relevant. You should break up this article into appropriate sections. You may choose to do this by category (Titles, Duties, Terms) or by position.

This article must contain:

- The number and titles of officers (including the SBA Representative)
- Duties of all of the officers
- Eligibility requirements of the officers
- Terms of offices and term limits (if any)
- Method of filling vacancies
- Method of removing an officer

EXAMPLE:

Section 1: The officers of this organization shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Program Chair.

Section 2: [List the duties of each officer].

Section 3: Only upper-division students who have held active membership for a minimum of one academic semester are eligible to hold office. [Be sure to clearly lay out if different positions have different eligibility requirements].

Section 4: No member shall hold more than one office at a time and no member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office. A leadership term runs for an entire academic year, starting and ending on May 15.

Section 4: If the office of the President should become vacant for any reason, the Vice President shall fill that vacancy for the remainder of the term. If any office other than the President shall become vacant, that vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the President for the remainder of the term.

Section 5: An officer may resign from a position by tendering resignation to the president of the organization. An officer may be removed from a position upon submission of a written complaint to the president by any active member of the organization and a two-thirds (2/3) vote taken by all active members. For such a complaint to be filed, the officer must demonstrate a lack of interest by not fulfilling their officer duties or missing two (2) organization meetings/events without a legitimate excuse, within one semester.

Article IV: Officer Selection

In the section you should include all information regarding election and voting procedures. This article must contain:

- Method of nomination or application
- Method of election or selection

EXAMPLE:

- Section 1: Officer selection shall occur during the Spring semester and be concluded by April 10.
- Section 2: The method of nomination shall be by application submitted to the President by the announced date. The process to apply to be an officer will be emailed to all active members by March 31 of each year. The application shall include a list of positions for which the member is applying, resume, and statement of interest.
- Section 3: Officers of the organization shall be elected by secret ballot by the outgoing officers to service for one academic year.
- Section 4: The newly selected officers will be transitioned into their new leadership roles following a transition meeting and shall remain in office until their successors are elected.

Article V: Meetings

This article should contain the essential facts concerning meetings: when held, who shall preside, the number or percentage of members comprising a quorum for transacting business. Be sure to tailor this section to the realities of your student group as not all groups need to have regular meetings.

EXAMPLE:

- Section 1: The regular meetings of the organization shall be held on the first Tuesday of each month from September to April, unless otherwise ordered by the organization.
- Section 2: The regular meeting on the first Tuesday in April shall be known as the annual meeting and shall be for the purpose of electing officers and receiving reports of officers and committees.
- Section 3: Special meetings can be called by the President or by the request of five active members of the organization. At least two (2) days notice shall be given to all members.
- Section 4: Sixty (60) percent of the entire active membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- Section 5: The President of the organization shall preside at all meetings of the organization.

Article VI: Parliamentary Authority

This article should state the parliamentary authority by which it will follow (if any). The parliamentary authority establishes the organization's rules of order and in addition an organization can adopt special rules of order as they are needed. Again, be sure to tailor this section to the realities of your student group as not all groups have a need for this type of section.

EXAMPLE:

Section 1: The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

Article VII: Amendment of Bylaws

The bylaws should always prescribe the procedure for their amendment, and require at least that advance written notice is given in a specified manner, and that the amendment be approved by a two-third vote. The manner prescribed for giving advance written notice should suit the needs of the particular student group.

EXAMPLE:

Section 1. These bylaws can be amended at any regular meeting of the organization by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.