CONSTANCE SLAUGHTER-HARVEY CHAPTER OF THE BLACK LAW
STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
University of Mississippi

Constitution

ARTICLE I: NAME AND AUTHORITY

Section 1

Name: This Association shall be known as the Constance Slaughter-Harvey Chapter of the National Black Law Students Association, Inc. University of Mississippi Chapter (hereinafter “the Chapter.”)

Authority: This Constitution regulates the Chapter, including but not limited to its members, the Executive Board, and all standing and ad hoc committees. It is the intent of this instrument to guide the Chapter and to supplement the purpose, duties, and rights stated in the national and regional Black Law Students Association Constitutions (hereinafter “national and regional”).

Article II: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Chapter shall be:

1. To promote the professional, academic, and political needs and goals of black law students.
2. To instill in the black law student and black attorney a greater awareness to bring about meaningful change and commitment to the legal needs of the black community.
3. To utilize our collective resources and do all things necessary to accomplish the goals and support the programs of the local, regional, and national Black Law Student Associations.
4. To provide a united front and develop future black leadership.

Article III: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

Membership:

A. Eligibility of Membership:
   i. Membership in the Chapter shall be available to all currently enrolled students at the University of Mississippi School of Law.
   ii. Membership in the Chapter shall not be denied based on an individual’s race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, military/veteran status, or any other status protected by federal, state, and/or local law or the University of Mississippi School of Law policy.
iii. Membership in the Chapter may be revocable for misconduct, such as, but not limited to, misconduct in direct conflict with either federal, state, local law; or the University of Mississippi School of Law policy; or the purposes of the Chapter.

iv. Prior to revocation, the President and Faculty Advisor must notify the accused member in writing regarding the allegations and pending investigation. The member shall have a hearing before the Executive Board. A finding of misconduct by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board shall result in revocation of membership. A dismissed member may appeal the Executive Board’s decision to the general voting members. The general body, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, may amend the Executive Board’s decision. Dismissed members are eligible again for membership after two academic semesters.

B. Classification:

i. General Members shall consist of all members who have paid their dues to the Chapter and National Black Law Students Association by the required deadline set by the Executive Board.

ii. Honorary Membership may be granted to a non-student through the initiative of the Executive Board with the approval by simple majority of the General membership. An Honorary Member will be entitled to only those privileges approved by the Executive Board.

C. Rights:

i. General Members shall have the right to vote on all matters brought before the general body and the use and promotion of the BLSA name. General Members have the right to participate in the election of BLSA officers, run for local, regional, or national office.

D. Voting:

i. Each member eligible to vote as prescribed in Article III Section C shall have one vote in all matters presented before the body. Any member may give written proxy to another voting member by the deadline established by the Executive Board. The proxy must be certified by the Parliamentarian.

E. Dues

i. The Chapter dues shall be established by the Executive Board prior to September 15th of each school year or upon receipt of guidance from the regional or national BLSA.

ii. The deadline for submission of dues may be on a date established by the Executive Board but shall be submitted within one (1) week prior to the deadline for the submission of national dues.
Article IV: EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1

**Composition:** The Executive Board shall be composed of the following officers: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, parliamentarian, and two first-year representatives.

Section 2

**Powers of the Executive Board:** The executive board shall have the general power to administer any and all programs, business projects, and any other matters pertaining or concerning the Chapter.

A. **Appointment:** The executive board shall have the authority to appoint any committee heads or staff positions and such committees as it deems necessary to effectuate the goals and policies of the Chapter.

B. **Decisions:** Any decisions of the executive board shall be made at a duly called executive board meeting at which there is a quorum. Board members must attend each Chapter meeting. If a member is unable to attend, he or she must submit a legitimate excuse within a reasonable time of the meeting.

C. **Interpretations:** The executive board shall have the final authority, subject to the power of the General Body to review and overrule, modify or revise any decision of the executive board by two-thirds vote, to decide all questions of interpretation and construction of this Constitution and its By-Laws, the Parliamentarian’s authority, and the procedural rules of this Chapter.

Section 3

**Officers:**

A. **Election of Officers:** Candidates for any Chapter Executive Board officers must be in current good standing at the University of Mississippi School of Law as evidenced by a letter of good standing from the Law School Registrar. Chapter officers shall be elected by a majority of the general members votes. The election shall occur no later than one week before the annual BLSA banquet. If no banquet is scheduled, then three weeks before the end of the Spring semester.

B. **Succession:** If the President is unable to complete a term of office, the Vice President shall assume the role of President. The general body shall, by majority vote within a reasonable time, select a new vice president from among its members who have completed over 30 credit hours of academic coursework and meet the requirements of Article IV Section 3(A).

If any officer other than the President is unable to complete a term of office, a special election shall take place within a reasonable time to fill the vacancy.
C. **Term:** The officers shall serve for a term of (1) year, commencing the day after spring commencement, and terminating the day of spring commencement of the following year.

D. **Transition:** There shall be a mandatory transitional meeting of the current and newly elected Chapter officers at the conclusion of the spring semester on a date set by the outgoing Executive Board.

E. **Removal:**
   i. The failure of any Executive Board officer to attend at least one third (1/3) of the Chapter meetings within one semester without legitimate excuse within a reasonable time shall be subject to removal.

   ii. Any officer who fails to fulfill their responsibilities and duties as an officer of the Chapter or who fails to promote the purpose and goals of the Chapter may be removed by a majority vote of the executive board, subject to a two-thirds (2/3) vote for removal by the general body.

**Article V: AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1**

**Ratification:** The Constitution and By-Laws of this Association shall be ratified by two-thirds (2/3) of the general members present, and shall become effective immediately.

**Amendments:** Additions and/or repeals of this Constitution require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the general membership, except for additions to and/or repeals of Article II which shall require a unanimous decision by the General Body.

**By-Law Amendments:** Additions to and/or repeals of the By-Laws of this Constitution require a two-third (2/3) vote general membership.

**Article VI. COMMITTEES**

**Section 1**

**Standing Committees and Special Committees:**

A. The standing committees of the Chapter shall be the Constitution and By-Laws committee, the banquet committee, the fundraising committee, community service committee and the historical committee.

B. Such other committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the President of the Chapter, as the executive board or the Chapter shall from time to time deem necessary to carry on the work of BLSA.

C. The chairpersons of all standing and special committees shall be appointed by the
President of the chapter, subject to the approval of the executive board.

D. The executive board may delegate such appointive powers as are necessary to facilitate the organization and operation of a committee.

E. All committee decisions may be reviewed and revised, overruled, or modified by the executive board, subject to final approval by the General Body.

Article VII. Dissolution

Section 1

A. The Chapter may be dissolved at any time by resolution approved by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the General Body at a special meeting convened for the purpose.

B. Upon the dissolution of this organization, assets shall be distrusted for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.
BY-LAWS

Article I: OFFICERS

Section 1

Duties:

A. President: The President shall be responsible for:
   i. Assisting Chapter with implementing projects on a local level.
   ii. Representing the Chapter at relevant conferences and meetings that occur regionally and nationally.
   iii. Exercising general executive authority over the business and activity of the Chapter.
   iv. Appointing and establishing committees, as provided for in the Constitution, to further the goals and purposes of the Chapter.
   v. All other authority needed to implement the goals and purposes of the Chapter as they see fit.

B. Vice-President: The Vice-President shall be responsible for:
   i. Assisting the President in implementing the goals and purposes of the Chapter.
   ii. Overseeing and advising the standing and special committees.
   iii. All other authority given to them by the president.

C. Secretary: The Secretary shall be responsible for:
   i. Maintaining a current list of all members.
   ii. Keeping the minutes at all meetings and making them readily available to all members.
   iii. Overseeing attendance to determine general members.
   iv. Assisting the President and Chapter in any other manner needed to
implement the goals and purposes of the Chapter.

D. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall be responsible for:
   
i. Collecting all dues, dispersing all funds, and receiving all monies from all BLSA entities raised, or otherwise gained, through BLSA related business.
   
   ii. Overseeing the implementing of local fund-raisers.
   
   iii. Making a full financial report to the Board and the general members at designated meetings.
   
   iv. Assisting the President and Chapter in any other manner needed to implement the goals and purposes of this Chapter.

E. **Parliamentarian:** The parliamentarian shall be responsible for:
   
i. Keeping order and peace at all meetings and functions.
   
   iii. Overseeing attendance to determine general members.
   
   iv. Assisting the President and Chapter in any other manner needed to implement the goals and purposes of the Chapter.
   
   iv. Chairing the Constitution and By-Laws Committee.
   
   v. Interpreting the Constitution and By-Laws subject to the rules in Article IV section C of the Constitution.

F. **First Year Representatives:** The First-year Representative shall be responsible for:
   
i. Overseeing the interests of the first-year class in regards to the Executive Board.
   
   ii. Encouraging participation and involvement of the first-year class.
   
   iii. Assisting the President and Chapter in any other manner needed to implement the goals and purposes of Chapter.

Section 1.2: STANDING COMMITTEES

Duties:

A. **Constitution & Bylaws Committee:** This committee shall be responsible for:
i. Assisting the Parliamentarian in amending and revising the Constitution as needed to implement the goals and purposes of the Chapter.

B. Banquet Committee: This committee shall be responsible for:
   i. Planning and executing the end of the year banquet which includes the following:
      • Creating and acquiring sponsorship for the Ad Booklet.
      • Obtaining a location for the banquet.
      • Organizing the banquet dinner.
      • Acquiring a speaker.
      • And any other actions required in planning and executing the banquet.

C. Fundraising Committee: This committee shall be responsible for:
   i. Organizing and overseeing all fundraising events.
   ii. Organizing and executing at least two (2) fundraising events per academic year.

D. Community Service Committee: This committee shall be responsible for:
   i. Organizing and overseeing all community service related events.
   ii. Organizing and executing at least two (2) community service events per academic year.

E. Historical Committee: This committee shall be responsible for:
   i. Creating a BLSA newsletter
   ii. Updating the website
   v. Filming and photographing BLSA events.

Article II: Advisor
A. The advisor of the Chapter shall:
   i. Be selected from full-time faculty or administrative staff members at the University of Mississippi School of Law
   ii. Actively support the Chapter

Article III: FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Section 1
Bank Account:
A. Signatures: The Treasurer and the President must maintain a dual-signature account. The Board may also grant signing authority (in conjunction with the Treasurer or President)
to two (2) additional Board members.

B. **Location:** The Chapter dues shall be maintained at a bank located in the city of Oxford, Mississippi.

**Section 2**

A. **Discretionary Spending:** The President shall have the authority to make non-budgeted expenditures, so long as they do not expend more than three hundred dollars ($300.00) within a semester. The President shall submit financial statements as to how the funds were used.

B. **Limits:** Any expenditure other than those authorized by the President under the Discretionary Spending provision of Article III, Section 2.

**Article IV: CHAPTER DUTIES**

**Section 1**

**Participation:**

A. **Communication:** The Chapter shall maintain regular communication with the Region, indicating the Chapter’s activity and insuring the information is disseminated in a timely manner.

B. **Notification of New Officers:** Chapters shall notify the Regional Secretary of its new officers no later than 30 days after their election.

**Section 2**

**Convention:**

A. **Delegations:** All Chapters must register at least one (1) delegate or proxy at the Regional Convention. Delegates shall attend at least a majority of the plenary sessions at the Convention.

   i. Delegates may be chosen based on general participation and contribution to the Chapter and shall be approved by a majority vote of the general body.

B. **Other Requirements:** Chapters registering a team(s) to participate in the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition shall also register at least one (1) delegate.

**Article V: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

Robert’s Rules of Order: The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly revised shall govern the Chapter in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and these By-Laws, and any special rules of order the Chapter, or the National or Regional BLSA Association may adopt.

**ARTICLE VI: GRIEVANCES**
For the purposes of promoting and maintaining comradery, peace, and order within the Chapter Article VI shall apply to all grievances that are not successfully resolved between the grieving member(s) and the member(s) that caused the grievance.

Section 1
A. In General: All grievances shall be submitted via official Chapter email or by written notice to the parliamentarian as required in the sections of this article.
B. Any grievance shall be reviewed anonymously by the Executive Board unless the submitter and the other party otherwise elects for their name to be recognized.
C. Any and all grievances filed against any general, or chapter officer may be appealed to the general body make the final decision by a simple majority vote.

Section 2 Against Fellow Members and Committee Chairpersons
A. Any grievance against any member of the Chapter shall be reviewed by the Executive Board, the Parliamentarian shall forward notice of grievance to all the Executive Board members and the Chapter advisor along with a recommended resolution.
B. Grievances shall take no longer than seven (7) calendar days to be reviewed and acted upon by the Executive Board. The Executive Board’s decision shall be binding on the parties.
C. If the grievance between the parties are not resolved within seven (7) calendar days, the Chapter advisor may make a binding resolution amongst the parties.

Section 3 Against Executive Board Member
A. Any grievance against an Executive Board member of the Chapter shall be submitted via email to each member of the Executive Board and the Faculty Advisor.
B. The Faculty Advisor’s resolution shall be binding on the parties of the grievance.

Section 4 Failure to Resolve Grievance
A. Any failure by the Executive Board, including the failure of the Parliamentarian and/or the Executive Board to uphold the anonymity by the parties, and any failure to resolve the grievance in a timely manner, may result in a failure of a duty specifically stated in this Constitution.

ARTICLE VII: SCHOLARSHIPS
The following scholarships may be awarded annually as long as scholarship funding is available.

i. One first year general member in good academic standing shall have the right to be considered for the Executive Scholarship in the amount of one thousand dollars ($1000) to be presented at the annual banquet.
ii. One second year general member in good academic standing shall have the right to be considered for the W. Howard Gunn Scholarship in the amount of one thousand dollars ($1000) to be presented at the annual banquet.
iii. One third year general member in good academic standing shall have the right to be considered for the Constance Slaughter-Harvey Scholarship to be presented at the annual banquet.