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National Latina/Latino Law Student Association Constitution

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Because we have suffered, and we are not afraid to suffer in order to survive, we are ready to give up everything—even our lives—in our struggle for justice.

— Cesar E. Chavez

ARTICLE I

NAME

This organization shall be known as the NATIONAL LATINA/LATINO LAW STUDENT ASSOCIATION, (hereinafter referred to as the “Association” or “NLLSA”).

HISTORY

While attending the 1996 Summer Law Institute in Guanajuato, Guanajuato Mexico, Latina and Latino student leaders held a series of meetings where they shared their respective struggles in law school. The culmination of these meetings was the resolution to hold a National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference. The Mexican-American Law Student Association (MALSA) at the University of New Mexico took on the responsibility of hosting this inaugural event in October 1997. The goals of this first conference were: 1) to build long-lasting relationships between future Latina and Latino attorneys; 2) to increase awareness of pressing issues affecting the Latino community both within and without the context of the “Law;” and 3) to strengthen our respective Latina and Latino Law Student organizations.

The conference was organized in part to confront alarming drops in enrollment of students of color in law school due to Proposition 209 (amending the California constitution to ban state-sponsored race-conscious affirmative action) in California and the Hopwood decision in the Fifth Circuit (holding that diversity may never be a compelling governmental interest justifying race-conscious affirmative action because this was not the controlling rationale in Bakke). The visionary actions of these bold law students are what led to the founding of the National Latina/Latino Law Student Association during the seventh annual National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference hosted by the La Raza Law Student Association de UCLA School of Law and the Chicano-Latino Law Review on October 12, 2003.

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ARTICLE II

MISSION STATEMENT

The National Latina/Latino Law Student Association will serve as a conduit for a collective Latina/Latino law student voice. We are a non-partisan organization driven by a progressive agenda that protects and advances the civil rights of Latinas and Latinos in law school and in our respective communities. As a consequence, NLLSA is dedicated to promoting and sustaining the academic success of Latina and Latino law students. However, we recognize that we cannot merely seek achievement for ourselves and forget about the progress and prosperity of our community; we are one and the same. Let there be no question that NLLSA is a progressive union whose Member Chapters will work nationally, regionally, and locally to bring about positive change within the law school community and society at large by addressing legal issues dealing with immigration, education (both K-12 and higher education), healthcare, gender equality, employment issues, and sexual orientation. NLLSA also acknowledges the diversity within the Latina/o community, and recognizes that our civil rights are furthered when we build coalitions with other communities. NLLSA is committed to combating all forms of prejudice, including discrimination based on color, race, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, and veteran status. Realizing that internalized oppressions only further divide us, we strive to actively engage and organize around these issues so we are accountable to and representative of all of our communities. To this end, the Association’s goals are to:

A. Articulate and promote the academic and professional needs and goals of Latina and Latino Law Students;
B. Influence the legal community to effectuate positive and substantive change in the fields of legal education and the representation of the Latino community;
C. Call for members, once attorneys, to make a commitment to facilitate the entry of current Law Students into the legal profession;
D. Instill within the Latina and Latino Law Student and Attorney the need to use her/his professional status to effectuate positive change within the Latino community by supporting efforts that include but are not limited to:
   1. the implementation of affirmative action and any similar programs that promote equal access and representation of Latinos and other people of color in education, government and employment as well as repealing and challenging legislation and case law that bars these efforts;
   2. supporting human rights initiatives and causes;
   3. advocating for workers’ rights;
   4. supporting amnesty movements for undocumented immigrants;
   5. promoting the implementation and improvement of bilingual education programs;
   6. supporting policy changes that will give Latina/Latino children access to adequate education in preparation for higher education;
   7. promoting gender equality, acceptance of alternative sexual orientations, and the dismantling of hetero-patriarchy (the social formation that structures desire and identity in order to promulgate male supremacy by
regulating the range of gender identities and sexual desires into a set of binary oppositions, e.g., male v. female / masculine v. feminine, where the existence of the first concept requires the subordination of the latter);
8. protecting the dignity of the Latino community. No Chapters or individual members shall stand idly by while egregious and incorrect information is being disseminated by those that are hostile to and/or ignorant of the Latino community; and
9. any and all causes, movements and agendas consistent with the progressive goals of this organization as conceived;
E. Establish strong, sustainable and respectful coalitions with students, attorneys, and organizations of color; and other organizations and individuals that espouse the goals that NLLSA represents.
F. Encourage Latina and Latino Law Students to pursue careers in the judiciary;
G. Adopt and implement a policy of economic independence; and
H. Do all things necessary and appropriate to accomplish the abovementioned purposes, for being of service is not enough. Latinas and Latinos in the legal profession must become servants of the people so that we can inspire their commitment in return.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Eligibility for Membership: General Membership shall consist of any matriculated Law Student who supports the principles enunciated in this Constitution enrolled at an accredited American Bar Association law school or of an “At Large” Chapter, defined in Article III, Section 1(A)(2), who is committed to the purpose of the Association as stated in Article II of this Constitution.

Section 1

Classification of Membership:

A. General Membership: shall consist of any matriculated Law Student who supports the principles enunciated in this Constitution enrolled at an American Bar Chapter Member law school, or of an “At Large” Chapter as defined herein:

1. Chapter Membership: shall consist of: (1) any American Bar Member law school whose petition is approved by the National Executive Board for admittance, or (2) any Law Student in the same locale whose petition is approved by the National Executive Board for admittance.
a. Active Membership: within this Association shall consist of all member chapters that have fulfilled the payment of its dues obligation for that fiscal year, entitling them to all rights and privileges of this Association defined herein.
b. **Inactive Membership:** shall consist of any member chapter that does not fulfill the requirement set forth under Article III, Section 1(A)(1)(a) of this Constitution.

2. **At Large Chapter:** is any active chapter that is not conjoined or accredited within an American Bar Member law school, but is recognized by NLLSA to be entitled to all rights and privileges of this Association defined herein.

B. **Regional Membership:** shall consist of six (6) geographical areas to be designated as follows: Pacific, Central, Mid-Atlantic, North Atlantic, Mountain, and South Atlantic. Regional membership shall be recognized where the National Executive Board approves the petition of a proposed region consisting of any Chapter, group of Chapters, or any Latino/a Law Student in the same locale for Admittance. The founding of the particular Regions and the election of the Region Representatives shall be the focus of the 2004 National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference in 2004.

1. The **PACIFIC REGION** shall be comprised of National Executive Board admitted law schools in the following states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon and Washington.

2. The **CENTRAL REGION** shall be comprised of National Executive Board admitted law schools in the following states: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Kansas, and Wisconsin.

3. The **MID-ATLANTIC REGION** shall be comprised of National Executive Board admitted law schools in the following states: the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

4. The **NORTH ATLANTIC REGION** shall be comprised of National Executive Board admitted law schools in the following states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

5. The **MOUNTAIN REGION** shall be comprised of National Executive Board admitted law schools in the following states: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming.

6. The **SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION** shall be comprised of National Executive Board admitted law schools in the following states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

**Section 2**

A. **Alumni Membership:** shall be limited to law graduates, as defined in Article III, section 4.

B. **Honorary Membership:** shall be extended to any person nominated by the General Membership who follows the goals of this organization as set forth in Article II, or is a member of an organization(s) that promotes the goals of this Association. Honorary membership shall be granted by a simple majority.
vote of the National Executive Board.

C. **Pre-Law Student Division**: The composition of the Association is to also include a pre-law division as a sub-section entitled the Pre-Law Division (hereinafter PLD). The PLD is to serve solely as a liaison program between prospective law students and active members in good standing of NLLSA.

Section 3

**Rights of Membership**: Only Members with General Membership standing shall have the right to be nominated as a delegate, vote for a delegate of their respective chapters, or hold a national office.

A. Alumni Members may participate in all activities of the Association except those enumerated in this section. Alumni Members will enjoy non-voting membership status except for those Active Members who have been elected into the Advisory Council.

B. Honorary Members shall have the same Rights of Membership as an Alumni Member, but shall not have members on the Advisory Council.

C. The PLD may participate in all activities of the Association except those enumerated in this section. The PLD may participate as non-voting members in all other activities of this Association.

Section 4

**NLLSA Alumni Association**: NLLSA shall work in conjunction with Alumni to create and sustain an Alumni Association which shall elect members to the Advisory Council. It shall be the task of the Officers of the Alumni Association to establish an organization that advances the goals of NLLSA, and whose procedures for electing members to the Advisory Council conform to those of NLLSA.

Section 5

**Duties of Membership**: Regular participation in the activities of this Association is incumbent upon each General Membership Chapter. Member Chapters must:

A. Implement and institutionalize a student recruitment program/project.

B. Establish and maintain an alumni network at their respective schools. However, if mitigating circumstances prevent these efforts, they must send a written explanation to the national board.
C. Petition and work with the administration of their respective schools to work towards plans to improve Latino law student recruitment, retention and actively seeking Latina/Latino candidates for teaching positions. Members shall also assist professors bidding for tenure when these professors have worked to advance the goals of NLLSA and/or have worked to recruit and/or retain law students of color.

D. Consistent failure to meet these duties can lead to suspension of a Member Chapter’s rights and privileges including but not limited to:
1. Loss of voting privileges during the National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference; and
2. Loss of eligibility to host the National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference for two (2) years; and
3. Ineligibility of its members to run for any National or Regional positions for one (1) year; and
4. Any other penalty deemed appropriate by a majority of the National Board.

E. The National Board is empowered to remove the suspension of any Member Chapter with a Majority vote at any time if sufficient evidence deems this act reasonable and prudent and in the best interest of NLLSA as a whole.

Section 6

Payment of Dues: In order to constitute active membership, as stated in Article III, Section 1(A)(1)(a), each chapter shall remit payment of dues to the Association. Dues shall be submitted not later than the end of the registration period for the National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference, to be held annually. The amount of the dues required of each chapter and the rules governing payment are to be determined by Article VIII, Section 2.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

Section 1

Eligibility of Officers: Persons eligible to hold an office of the National Executive Board (hereinafter referred to as the “National Board,” or the “Board”) of this Association must be a member of an active chapter of the Association for the entire term. Persons eligible to hold a position within the Advisory Council shall be dues paying members of the Alumni Association in good standing.
Section 2

Composition: The National Board shall be composed of six (6) National Officers, six (6) Regional Directors, and an Advisory Council composed of five (5) Alumni members. The National Officers and the Regional Directors shall each have one (1) vote. The Advisory Council combined shall have one (1) total vote.

A. Classification of National Officers: The Officers of the National Board shall be a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, a Recording Secretary, a Treasurer, a Director of Community Services, and an Attorney General. These Officers shall perform duties prescribed within the Constitution and subsequent Bylaws created under the parliamentary authority of this Association.

B. Duties of National Officers:

1. Chairperson: The Chairperson of NLLSA shall be responsible for:
   a. Exercising general authority over the business and activities of NLLSA;
   b. Chairing all National Board meetings;
   c. Serving, along with the Vice-Chairperson, as the National Latina/Latino Law Students Association’s representative in meeting with other organizations;
      i. The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson shall have joint discretion (meaning they must both agree) to assign other National Officers to represent NLLSA in meetings with other organizations. The Board shall have the power to oversee the assignments and to annul them if a simple majority of the Board finds they are problematic or inappropriate;
   d. Signing with the Treasurer all checks issued by NLLSA;
   e. Serving as ex-officio member of all NLLSA committees;
   f. Working with the National Vice-Chairperson to establish new Member Chapters of NLLSA in schools not currently represented;
   g. Appointing an Executive Director, and such other staff persons and committees in accordance with Article V, Section 2(A) of the Constitution; and
   h. Performing such other functions and exercising such further duties as the Board or the Assembly may assign.

2. Vice-Chairperson: The Vice-Chairperson shall be responsible for:
   a. Exercising general executive authority over the business and activities of NLLSA, and chairing all National Executive Board meetings in the event of the incapacity or absence of the National Chairperson;
   b. Serving as ex-officio member of all NLLSA committees;
   c. Serving as Chairperson of the National Conference Committee pursuant to Article VI(D)(1) of the Constitution;
   d. Coordinating with the Law School organization charged with hosting
the National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference and ensuring that all planning for the Conference goes smoothly;

i. In this capacity, the National Vice-Chairperson shall serve as liaison to oversee the outreach of students throughout the nation for the National Conference, and shall work with the hosts of the Conference to ensure that as many students from across the nation as possible can attend;

e. Serving, along with the Vice-Chairperson, as the National Latina/Latino Law Students Association’s representative in meetings with other organizations;

i. The Vice-Chairperson and the Chairperson shall have joint discretion (meaning they must both agree) to assign other National Officers to represent NLLSA in meetings with other organizations. The Board shall have the power to oversee the assignments and to annul them if a majority of the board feels they are problematic or inappropriate;

f. Working with the National Chairperson to establish new Member Chapters of NLLSA in schools not currently represented; and

g. Performing such other functions and exercising such further duties as the Board or the Assembly may assign.

3. Recording Secretary: The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for:

a. Maintaining and distributing minutes and agenda for all meetings of the Board and the Assembly;

b. Evaluating alternative dues petitions pursuant to Article VIII, Section 2 of the Constitution;

c. Distributing a copy of NLLSA’s Constitution to:

i. Each Board member at the first Board meeting; and

ii. Each Chapter registered at the National Convention;

d. Updating the Constitution immediately when amended and distributing new copies to the Board members and to each Chapter;

e. Professionally maintaining NLLSA’s website and ensuring that it is constantly up-to-date at least every three (3) months;

i. The Recording Secretary can assign someone to act as Web Master of the NLLSA homepage who shall have no voting rights. The National Board has the discretion to oversee such assignment and annul it if it is deemed problematic or inappropriate;

f. Coordinating internal and external communication of information;

g. Maintaining files and a filing system both electronically and in hard copies;

h. Serving as an ex-officio member of all Association committees;

i. Performing such other functions and exercising such further duties as the Board or the Assembly may assign.
4. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall be responsible for:
   a. Handling all of NLLSA's funds and securities and ensuring that they are deposited in such facility, and in such manner, as the Board may designate;
   b. Assuring that regular monthly entries are made in the financial records, accounting for all funds received and disbursed by NLLSA;
   c. Submitting the financial records of this Association to a certified public accountant, pursuant to Article VIII, Section 4 of the Constitution;
   d. Making regular quarterly financial reports to the Board;
   e. Co-signing, with the National Chairperson, all checks issued by this Association;
   f. Evaluating alternative dues petitions pursuant to Article VIII, Section 2 of the Constitution;
   g. Filing annual corporate reports on behalf of the Association;
   h. Filing timely annual IRS tax-exempt organization forms;
   i. Establishing mailings of the Treasurer's Report to all National and Regional Board members and chapter chairpersons in June, September, December, and March. This accounting shall be the sole responsibility of the National Board and shall consist of a full disclosure of the National Organization;
      i. The term "full disclosure" means a delineation of amounts received and dispersed indicating all dates and parties involved;
   j. Disseminating an annual accounting to all Regional Directors and Chapter Chairpersons;
   k. Submitting an Association Budget for the year at the first regularly scheduled Board meeting, to include;
      i. Statement of accounts;
      ii. Statement of unpaid bills with explanation;
      iii. Statement of transfers between accounts with explanation;
      iv. Statement of income;
      v. Detailed account of how all funds were used;
      vi. Detailed account of all anticipated expenses based on future program needs, history, and accounting for emergencies;
   l. Performing such other functions and exercising such further duties as the National Chairperson, the Board, or the Assembly may assign.

5. **Director of Community Services:** The Director of Community Services shall be responsible for:
   a. Coordinating and executing all community affairs projects undertaken on a National or Multi-Regional level;
   b. Providing for the recognition of six chapters, one from each region, who have developed model community service programs;
   c. The publication of an annual Community Service Handbook or supplement to be distributed to all chapters;
      i. An outline of the model programs recognized during the National Convention shall be published in the Handbook, and
the handbook shall be posted on the Association’s website;

d. Organizing the Community Service Project to be conducted during the National Convention; and

e. Performing such other functions and exercising such further duties as the National Chairperson, the Board or the Assembly may assign.

6. Attorney General: The Attorney General shall be responsible for:

a. Researching current legal and political issues facing the Latina/Latino Community;

b. Preparing memoranda to increase the Association’s awareness of these legal issues;

   i. The Attorney General shall coordinate with the Recording Secretary to make this information available on the Association’s website;

   c. Preparing Amicus Curiae briefs to support cases affecting the Latino Community in the United States and abroad;

   d. Working with all chapters to lobby the United States Congress to pass legislation that is in accordance with the goals of NLLSA’s mission;

   e. Performing such other functions and exercising such further duties as the National Chairperson, the Board or the Assembly may assign.

C. Classification of Regional Directors: One (1) director will be elected out of each respective region, as described within Article III, Section 1(B). No one region will have more than one director representing its respective region. These Regional Directors shall perform duties prescribed within the Constitution and subsequent Bylaws created under the parliamentary authority of this Association. Regional Directors shall also abide by the Bylaws enacted within their respective regions pursuant to Article III, Section 2 of this Constitution.

D. Classification of Advisory Council: The Advisory Council (hereinafter referred to as the “Council”) shall consist of five (5) dues paying members of the Alumni Association in good standing. The Council shall perform duties prescribed within the Constitution, and the subsequent Bylaws created under the parliamentary authority of this Association.

1. The Alumni Association shall be an independent organization that shall strive to undertake and further the mission and the spirit under which NLLSA was founded.

Section 3

Election of National Executive Board: shall consist of all National Officers, Regional Directors, and Advisory Council Members as described in this section herein.
A. **National Officer:** The Chair, Vice-Chair, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Director of Community Services, and Attorney General shall be elected by a majority of the voting delegates at the annual National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference. A National Elections Committee, pursuant to all relevant provisions of this Constitution and subsequent Bylaws, shall coordinate such elections in accordance with Article III, Section 5 of the Constitution.

B. **Regional Directors:** Each of the six (6) regions of the Association shall elect by a vote of their respective memberships one (1) Regional Director. Such elections shall be coordinated by a Regional Elections Committee, pursuant to all relevant provisions of this Constitution and/or Bylaws of his or her region.

C. **Advisory Council Members:** Each member of the Council shall be elected from the Alumni Association by a majority of the voting delegates of the Alumni Association at the annual National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference. The Alumni Association shall elect members to the Advisory Council at the National Conference to coincide with the election of the National Officers and the Regional Directors;

1. The appointment of any Alumnus to the Advisory Council can be overturned by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the delegates present at the National Conference with proper cause.

**Section 4**

Terms of Office: All terms for officers shall be those described within this section.

A. **Terms of Office for a National Officer or Regional Director:** A National Officer or Regional Director shall hold office for a term of no more than one (1) year. A term of office shall commence October 1st and shall terminate September 30th of the following year, conditioned on the date of the elections held during the National Convention.

B. **Term of Office for Advisory Council:** The Council shall hold office for a term of no more than three (3) consecutive years. A term of office shall commence on October 1st of the first year elected and shall terminate on September 30th of the third year, conditioned on the date of the elections held during the National Convention. The Council shall be on a staggered term system with two (2) positions open for elections one year, two (2) positions open the following year, and one (1) the year after that. This pattern shall repeat itself cyclically.

1. For purposes of initiating the staggered term system one (1) of the first Advisory Council positions shall only serve a one (1) year term, two (2) a two (2) year term, and the remaining two (2) a full term.

2. Alumni Members can seek to serve on the Council again after being off the Council for two (2) years.
Section 5

**Succession of Officers:** In the event that the National Chairperson is unable to complete a term of office, the National Vice-Chairperson shall automatically rise to the position of National Chairperson for the remainder of the term. If the Vice-Chairperson is unable to fulfill this duty, an acting Chairperson will be elected by simple majority vote of the Board. In the event that any other National Officer is unable to complete a term of office, the Board shall elect a replacement to serve the remainder of the term.

If a Regional Director is unable to complete a term of office, a replacement will be chosen pursuant to the relevant provisions of the Constitution of his or her region. In the event that no such provision exists, the manner of succession shall be determined by the region.

The Board shall be responsible for making known to the Member Chapters the reasons why any officer could not finish out his or her tenure and the qualifications of the replacement the Board chooses. In seeking replacements, the Board should seek as many candidates as it possibly can, with the understanding that vacancies in any office must be filled as quickly as possible.

Section 6

**Election Procedures:** Those members seeking election to National Offices shall be required to sign a statement before being officially recognized as a candidate. That statement will include: 1) a statement of the fiduciary duty of Board Members of the Association; 2) a description of the duties of the particular office; 3) a pledge to abide and fulfill the requirements as set forth by this Constitution; and 4) a statement of purpose as to what plans and/or vision the candidate shall follow and/or seek to implement if elected.

**ARTICLE V**

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Section 1

**Composition:** The Officers of the Association shall be designated the National Executive Board and shall be composed of the following members: the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Director of Community Services, Attorney General, the Regional Directors from each of the six (6) member regions, and the five (5) members of the Advisory Council.
Section 2

Powers of the Executive Board: The Board shall have a general power to administer any and all programs, business projects, and matters pertaining to or concerning the Association.

A. The Board shall have the power to create such staff positions and committees, as deemed necessary to carry out the business of the Association. Such staff persons and committee chairpersons shall be appointed by the National Chairperson from the active membership subject to approval by the Board.

1. Appointed members are considered Board members to the extent that they may have the power to make motions at National Board meetings, when recognized, but are not considered Board members for the purpose of establishing quorum or voting on any programs, business projects, or matters of the Association.

B. Any decision of the Board shall be made at a duly called meeting at which there is a quorum.

1. Online Quorum: Quorum can be achieved through online meetings. These online quorums can be attained if, and only if:

   a. The National Chairperson, or the Recording Secretary acting at the National Chairperson’s direction, sends out an e-mail to the entire National Board and has received responses from at least seven (7) members in eight (8) days’ time. If no responses are received, it shall not be interpreted as a denial. For online quorum to exist, members must respond either affirmatively, negatively or state that they abstain. Lack of response shall NEVER be interpreted as anything other than a lack of response. This electronic correspondence shall be maintained by the Recording Secretary as part of the Association’s files. Any replies and/or discussions done online must include ALL of the members of the Board.

   b. Other Board Members can have issues decided by electronic correspondence, but the issues must be sent out by the National Chairperson or the Recording Secretary acting on his or her behalf. Decisions made online that were not originally sent by the National Chairperson shall not be considered binding, and will have to be sent again to the National Board for reconsideration.

C. Pursuant to Article X of this Constitution, the Board is empowered to discipline any officer who is negligent in the discharge of his or her duties to the Association.
Section 3

**Board Approval:** is defined as an affirmative simple majority vote by the National Executive Board.

**ARTICLE VI**

**COMMITTEES**

Section 1

**Standing Committees:** The Standing Committees of the Association shall be the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, National Conference Committee, Elections and Membership Committee, Grievances and Resolutions Committee, Community Services Committee, and Alumni Relations Committee.

A. Such other committees, Standing or Special shall be appointed by the National Chairperson as the Board or the Association shall from time to time deem necessary to carry on the work and goals of the Association.

B. The Chairperson(s) of all Standing and Special Committees shall be appointed by the National Chairperson, subject to the approval of the Board as defined in Article V, Section 3.

C. The Board may delegate such appointive powers as are necessary to facilitate the organization and operation of a committee.

D. Standing committees of this Association, with the exception of the National Conference Committee, shall consist of regional representatives from each of the regions. (Amended at the eighth annual NLLSA conference, on Sunday October 10, 2004, in Denver, CO.)

1. The National Conference Committee shall be comprised of members from the previous year’s National Convention Committee host site and shall be presided over by the Vice-Chairperson. The National Conference Committee shall make the final recommendation, from all submitted proposals to the Board as to the most qualified host site for the subsequent annual conference. Recommendations shall be written pursuant to Article XII(A) and presented to the National Board.

E. Regional directors may appoint another officer to attend a committee meeting in which the titled person is unable to attend.
ARTICLE VII

MEETINGS

Section 1

National Executive Board Meetings: There shall be no less than two (2) NLLSA Executive Board meetings annually to which all officers of the National Executive Board, including Regional Directors and members of the Advisory Council, are required to attend. or to conversely send a representative, possessing a duly signed document by the officer who fails to attend, who will have the same rights and privileges as the non-attending officer in those occasions. [Amended at the eighth annual NLLSA conference, on Sunday October 10, 2004, in Denver, CO.]

Section 2

National Conference: One of the board meetings shall convene each fall in what shall be known as the “National Latina/Latino Law Student Association Conference” (hereinafter referred to as the “National Conference”).

ARTICLE VIII

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Section 1

Financing: This Association shall be financed primarily by dues, fund-raising activities, donations, and grants. The National Executive Board of NLLSA shall be required to initiate and pursue all of the abovementioned financing efforts for the duration of their term, as stated in Article IV, Section 4.

Section 2

Dues: All local chapters shall pay dues as the means to activate membership pursuant to Article III, Section 1(A)(1)(a) of this Constitution.

A. Setting Dues: The National Board shall determine dues amounts for all chapters on a yearly basis.

1. The National Treasurer will be charged with collecting and accounting for all dues or monies owed or given to the Association.
B. **Exception to Payment of Dues:** In the event that a Member Chapter is unable to meet the dues requirement, due to extenuating circumstances, that Member Chapter may petition the Board for waiver or modification of dues payment. The chapter shall submit a written explanation and an alternative proposal for waiver or modification of said dues to the Chairperson of the Elections and Membership Committee, the Recording Secretary, the National Treasurer, and its respective Regional Director, who shall then evaluate the merits of the proposal and present a report at the following board meeting. At that meeting, the board shall determine by a two-thirds (2/3) vote whether to accept, reject or modify the chapter's petition.

1. **Interim to Filing:** During the interim between filing of the petition and evaluation by the Board, the member chapter is to have active status.
2. **Waiver or modification of the dues payment requirement by the Board, and compliance therewith,** will satisfy the dues payment for that fiscal year.

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**Section 3**

**Charter Fee:** There shall be a charter fee to be paid to the Association at the time of charter application. The Board will set the fee as well as procedures to waive this requirement in cases of extreme extenuating circumstances.

A. **The procedure for chartering chapters shall be as follows:**

1. Upon request, the NLLSA Executive Board shall send a copy of the NLLSA Constitution and a charter application.
2. Upon receipt of a completed and signed charter application, the application shall be reviewed pursuant to Article III, Section 1(A)(1) of the NLLSA Constitution.
3. Upon approval, the NLLSA Executive Board shall issue a certificate of charter.

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**Section 4**

**Final Report:** A final full disclosure of all funds received and disbursed within any given fiscal year, including those received and disbursed at the National Convention, shall be disseminated by the Board to all chapters and non-chapter members prior to the first regularly scheduled National Executive Board meeting.

A. **Audit:** The financial records of the Association shall be submitted annually to a certified public accountant for audit immediately after the first regularly scheduled Board meeting. This audit report shall be completed within the first sixty (60) days of the new fiscal year.

B. **Fiscal Year:** The fiscal year of the Association shall commence October 1st and terminate September 30th of the following year.
ARTICLE IX

VOTING

Section 1

Appointment: Each chapter shall be represented at the National Conference in accordance with the number of members in the chapter. Chapters with an active membership ranging from one (1) to twenty-nine (29) members shall have one (1) vote; chapters with an active membership of thirty (30) or more members shall have two (2) votes. Under no circumstances will the number of votes per chapter be less than one (1) or greater than two (2). Documentation must be presented of membership rolls along with proof that the members are enrolled students at the law school.

Section 2

Proxy: Each chapter has a right to vote by proxy. However, to do so it must comply with the following provisions.

A. The Chapter must be an Active Chapter for the year in which it wishes to exercise this Proxy provision.

B. The Chapter must be pre-registered for the National Conference no less than two weeks before the Conference.

C. The Chapter must, in a timely manner and at the very least a week before the National Conference, present a written proxy to be certified by the National Recording Secretary.

ARTICLE X

DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

Procedure: The Association is empowered to make and enforce its own rules and require that its members and officers refrain from conduct injurious to the Association or its purposes. The Board shall have the power to censure its members, staff persons, and committee members. Enforcement of any disciplinary action is pursuant to Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution.

A. There shall be stricter standards for members of the National Board. The Board shall act affirmatively to remove any officer, including the Chairperson, for continually failing to meet the duties of his or her office, OR for persistently failing to work toward the stated goals and purpose of the Association.
B. **Impeachment:**

1. Impeachment procedures shall be commenced by agreement of at least four (4) members of the National Board who shall present signed written statements for why the officer in question should be removed from office.

2. The officer in question shall be placed on probation and his or her replacement shall be chosen according to Article IV, Section 5 of this Constitution. During probation, the officer in question will have the right to request an independent committee created from members of the six (6) regions and one (1) member from the Alumni Association, none of which can be members of the National Board. The members of this Special Investigative Committee shall be chosen by a majority of at least nine (9) members of the National Board. This Special Investigative Committee shall be independent from any members of the National Board and shall receive written statements from the officer in question and those signed by the four (4) or more Board Members who brought forth the allegations. The Special Investigative Committee is empowered to perform any reasonably prudent investigation it sees fit to find the veracity of the allegations and the defenses. The Special Investigative Committee can proceed with impeachment if five (5) of the seven (7) committee members agree to proceed.

3. If the Special Investigative Committee finds that there is not sufficient evidence to impeach, yet some incorrect act or acts has taken place, it may recommend that a lesser punishment to impeachment can be dealt out. If it finds the officer in question free from misconduct, it shall reinstate the officer in question. If it finds that the accusers acted in bad faith and with false evidentiary support, it may recommend their impeachment.

4. If the Committee proceeds with the impeachment, then all chapters shall be contacted with a summary of the Committee’s findings and the officer shall be permanently removed with a simple majority of the votes from the Member Chapters, with each chapter receiving one (1) vote.

5. Full records of these proceedings shall be maintained in the NLLSA files; if the officer in question wishes to resign then the report will merely state that the officer chose to resign and the reasons behind the resignation shall remain confidential.

C. **Review:** All disciplinary measures shall be reported by the Board to the General Assembly at the National Convention and are thereupon subject to review by the General Assembly.

D. **Repeal:** The repeal of any disciplinary action taken by the Board will be upon the conclusion of the review process by the General Assembly as stated within this Article. A repeal of a Board action will be granted upon a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote by the General Assembly.
ARTICLE XI

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Procedure: The Association is empowered to establish its rules of order through the adoption of some form of parliamentary authority. It shall be the role of the National Officers during the first year of NLLSA’s existence to establish the exact procedure the Board shall employ. These procedures can be amended by subsequent Bylaw Amendments pursuant to Article XIII, Section 2(B).

ARTICLE XII

MANDATORY PROJECTS

Mandatory Projects: The following project(s) are mandatory: the National Latina/o Law Student Association Conference, to be held in the fall yearly; Election of National Officers, Regional Directors, and the Advisory Council; Organizing and maintaining the Community Service Project; and any other project the Board adopts hereinafter.

A. National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference: Pursuant to Article VI, Section 1(D)(1), the National Conference Committee shall organize all proposals received from potential host schools. It shall write recommendations taking into account factors including but not limited to the following:

1. The quality of the proposed theme—how is the proposed theme unique and relevant to the present time while still following the mission and purpose of NLLSA as set forth in the Constitution;
2. The quality of the proposal and the presentation—the Committee should consider the visionary aspects of the proposal while at the same time considering whether the proposal lacks ambition or appears too unrealistic in its proposed scope;
3. The experience of the people who are going to work on hosting the Conference;
4. Possible preference may be given to locations where multiple schools in the area are working collaboratively to increase the number of people that can work on the Conference and the number of resources available;
5. The location of the school. Although it shall never be used as a reason to exclude a potential host, the committee and the Board should do its best to diversify the location of the National Conference.
ARTICLE XIII

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Section 1

Adoption: The Constitution of the Association shall be adopted by a simple majority vote of the Assembly.

Section 2

Amendments: Amendments to the National Constitution or Bylaws shall be passed according to the rules below:

A. **Constitutional Amendments:** Constitutional Amendments are defined as changes in the mission and purpose of this Constitution and this Association. These Amendments shall be passed at the Annual National Convention Plenary Session(s) upon receiving a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the General Assembly.

B. **Bylaws Amendments:** Bylaws are defined as rules adopted by the Association for the governing of its affairs, not to change the mission or the purpose of this Constitution or the Association. Bylaws Amendments shall be passed at the Annual National Convention Plenary Session(s) upon receiving a simple majority vote of the General Assembly.

C. Once properly adopted, these amendments become part of the NLLSA Constitution.

[Amended at the eighth annual NLLSA conference, on Sunday October 10, 2004, in Denver, CO.]

Section 3

Ratification: Where properly passed according to § 2 of this Article, supra, constitutional amendments and bylaws shall be automatically ratified and be effective as of the date the amendment was properly passed. Constitutional and Bylaw Amendments to the NLLSA Constitution shall be ratified and take effect immediately upon adoption by a simple majority of the General Assembly on the final day of plenary business.

[Amended at the eighth annual NLLSA conference, on Sunday October 10, 2004, in Denver, CO.]
ARTICLE XIV

BUSINESS DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF THE ORGANIZATION

The provisions contained in this Article shall apply only to the first year of NLLSA’s existence. The Association shall commence only with the election of the National Officers at the seventh (7th) annual National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference. These six (6) officers shall be empowered with discretion in keeping with the spirit of this Constitution, and shall have the responsibility of solidifying its continued existence. The Officers shall also ensure that the National Board is completed at the eighth (8th) annual National Latina/Latino Law Student Conference as the Regional Directors and the Advisory Council shall also be elected along with a new set of National Officers.

The first year will be devoted to building the infrastructure of the Association, including but not limited to:

A. Establishing procedural by-laws;
B. Establishing non-profit status;
C. Seeking General Counsel;
D. Continue extensive outreach to all Latina/Latino law student organizations and individual law students in the nation; and
E. Any and all activities and procedures in keeping with this Constitution.