

THE COLUMBIA PRE-LAW SOCIETY

Constitution

ARTICLE I Name

The name of the organization shall be known as the Columbia Pre-Law Society.

ARTICLE II Purpose

We, the members of the Columbia Pre-Law Society, are primarily concerned with providing Columbia University students with resources to explore opportunities and interests in the field of law. We plan to encourage those who are interested in pursuing a career in law by sponsoring discussion panels that outline the process of attaining a legal education and careers within the legal field, debating legal issues that are relevant to today's world, and encouraging professionalism through networking. We will maintain contact with Columbia Law School, as well as with our existing professional network. We want to give future lawyers and legal leaders valuable assets both through the services we provide and the community we facilitate.

ARTICLE III Membership

Membership is open to all undergraduate and graduate students of Columbia University interested in the field of law or in the pursuit of a legal career. To be considered an active member of the Society, students must be signed up for the Society's email list. Attendance of a minimum 2 programs or meetings per semester is required.

Membership must be open to all students interested in supporting the group's mission, regardless of race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, immigration status, age, disability, marital status, military status, or any other legally protected classes, or perceived membership in such a class, and regardless of personal characteristics or beliefs, such as political views. To the extent that student groups impose eligibility or membership requirements, those requirements must be closely connected to the group's mission and must be consistent with Columbia's Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policies.

ARTICLE IV Executive Board

The Executive Board shall consist of the President or Co-Presidents, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Committee Chairs, Senior Advising Fellows, and First-Year Fellows. Each officer of the Society's Executive Board shall be responsible for the following duties:

IV.1 President/Co-Presidents

- o Presides at meetings
- o Oversees the progress and development of committees and projects
- o Supervises and executes the appointment and/or elections of all Executive Board and Committee Chair positions

- o Serves as the primary spokesperson and representative of the Society
- o Develops plan and vision for academic year to build and grow the base of the Society
- o Co-Presidents can serve no more than one term, which lasts one calendar year

IV.2 Vice President (Limited to One)

- o Performs the duties of the President(s) in the event that the President(s) are absent or unable to perform their duties
- o Oversees committees and serves as a mentor for newly appointed members
- o Establishes relationships with on campus groups
- o Works with President/Co-President to develop and implement yearly programming
- o Check in with the committee chairs once a semester and report to Co-Presidents and the Board
- o Vice Presidents can serve no more than one term, which lasts one calendar year

IV.3 Treasurer

- o Oversees the allocation of funds for activities and keeps records of all transactions
- o Directs funds in the event of a co-sponsorship
- o decides on budget and expenditures and makes plans for fundraising initiatives and budget planning (with approval by the Board)

IV.4 Secretary

- o Sets location and time for meetings
- o Notifies all members of meetings
- o Keeps minutes of meetings and records of all transactions
- o Transfers all information to the incoming Executive Board at the end of each year
- o Sends out weekly/bi-weekly newsletters to general body members to inform them of upcoming events, deadlines, etc.

IV.5 Senior Advising Fellows (limit to two)

- o Serve as esteemed mentors within Columbia Prelaw
- o Offer institutional wisdom and strategic counsel to the Executive Board
- o Held by up to two former Co-Presidents from the previous year
- o Ensures continuity of leadership and fosters long-term organizational growth
- o Provide guidance on major initiatives specific to post-graduate opportunities
- o Assist in leadership transitions
- o Uphold the society's mission while empowering the next generation of prelaw leaders

ARTICLE V Committees & Fellows

All committees and fellows shall be appointed at the discretion of the Board who will, at the formation of a committee, also appoint a chair to oversee the entire operation; all committees must report to the board at all general meetings. Members of all committees, especially the chair, are under the discretion of the President/Co-Presidents and Vice President.

V.1 Pre-Professional Committee

The goal of the committee is to help general body members make informed decisions about pursuing a legal career by exposing them to the breadth of opportunities within the legal field, including lesser-known subfields and alternative career paths. The committee will foster meaningful connections with alumni and legal professionals and is responsible for organizing panels, networking events, mentorship programs, and site visits. Through these initiatives, students will engage with lawyers, clerks, judges, and other professionals, gaining direct insight into the legal profession and its diverse career pathways.

V.2 Academic Affairs Committee

The goal of the Academic Affairs Committee is to give students clear insight and assistance on how to get into law school. This committee will maintain close connections with the Columbia Law School, promote LSAT prep, as well as other events that introduce students to insightful information on the law school admissions process.

V.3 Conference Committee

The Conference Committee is responsible for organizing the inaugural Pre-Law Conference, the Pre-Law Society's annual conference for undergraduate students. Planning for the conference involves devising the content and format of the conference, accounting for logistics, coming up with a marketing strategy, among other responsibilities.

V.4 Networking and Engagement Committee

The Networking and Engagement Committee is responsible for guaranteeing that the Columbia Pre-Law Society continues to foster a welcoming and supportive pre-law community at Columbia. The committee is expected to organize social events periodically. The main objective of these events is to strengthen the connection between the general body and the Executive Board and to promote bonding within the Executive Board itself. In the past, social events have included movie nights, "meet the board" panels, trivia nights, study breaks, and mock trials.

V.5 Marketing Committee

The Marketing committee is responsible for Pre-Law Society's entire marketing strategy and implementation. Every event held by the Society shall be marketed via Instagram, flyers, and other appropriate channels by the Marketing Committee. Marketing plays an incredibly important role when it comes to Lawlapalooza promotion and designs.

V.6 Diversity Equity & Inclusion Committee

The DE&I committee is responsible for promoting a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for all members of the Pre-Law Society. The committee organizes initiatives such as affinity groups and events on diversity in the legal field, and works to enhance outreach and collaborations with a diversity of students and organizations. The DE&I committee is committed to creating a welcoming and supportive environment to ensure that all students have the opportunity to thrive.

V.7 First-Year Fellows (Max 3)

First-Year Fellows are responsible for facilitating connections between first-year students and the rest of the Society and Board. The fellows will represent the voices of first-year members and advocate for their

interests, along with tracking and reporting first-year engagement within the club. Fellows are responsible for attending Board meetings, collaborating with the Administrative Board and other committee heads, and leading 1-2 initiatives of their choice per semester.

ARTICLE VI Procedures of the Meetings

Board meetings shall be held once a week to conduct and oversee the business of the Society. While most weekly meetings will be used to discuss and manage tasks for the Society's various programming, in the event where the Board must make a major decision that will significantly impact the business of the Society, the Board will turn to a majority vote. The act of the majority of members at a meeting at which quorum is present shall be an act of the Society. Two-thirds (2/3) of the Executive Board and Committee members of the Society constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

VI.1 Additional requirements of board members:

1. All members of the Board must attend one sexual respect workshop and a follow-up discussion once per year. The workshop will be organized by the President/Vice President in coordination with Columbia Health's Sexual Violence Response (SVR).
 1. The date of the workshop will be finalized and sent out by the President/Vice President by the second week of the semester.
 2. All Board members will attend the SVR semesterly workshop together. General Body members are also invited to attend, and information regarding the workshop will be shared via the Institute newsletter.
 3. The President/Vice President (and any other interested Board members) will host a follow-up discussion with the Board during the Board's following meeting.
 4. Board members who are unable to attend either the workshop or discussion due to extenuating circumstances must notify the President/Vice President at least 48 hours prior to the respective meeting.
 5. If a Board member misses some or all of the workshop, they must complete the following assignments:
 1. Absent from the workshop (but not the discussion): Must go over slide deck/materials before attending the discussion.
 2. Absent from the discussion (but not the workshop): Must answer questions given by the discussion leaders.
 3. Absent from both parts: Must complete both assignments listed above.
 4. If a Board member misses some or all of the board's follow-up discussion, they must respond to the questions posed by the President/Vice President at the Board meeting.
 5. Failure to provide proper notice to the President/Vice President and failure to make up a missed meeting are grounds for removal from a Board position.
2. When a Board member (henceforth referred to as "Confidant") is approached in their official Board capacity by any member (henceforth referred to as "Confider") of the group with an

incident of sexual misconduct (sexual assault, stalking, violence, harassment, etc.), it is the Confidant's responsibility to provide the member with resources and potential next steps, including but not limited to reporting or seeking counseling.

1. The Confidant is not a mandated reporter, nor a confidential resource
2. The Confidant may take the following actions:
 1. Report the concern formally through University Reporting channels
 2. Report the concern to the student group's USL adviser, who is a mandated reporter and may be required to submit a formal report
 3. Provide information about resources, including the Sexual Violence Response office, Title IX office, club adviser, Office of Institutional Equity
 4. Connect the Confider with another member of Board who is not the accused, should the original Confidant feel as though they are not in a mental state to offer help
 5. Disclose to the Confider which resources are mandated reporters and which are confidential resources
3. The Confidant is strongly encouraged to report the concern formally or to the student group's adviser if there is a real safety concern on the part of the Confider
4. If a formal report is filed by the Confidant, the Confider, or the student group's adviser, the Confider may always decide how to proceed (or not proceed), and may decline any further communication or action
5. The student group leader role is crucial in helping club members get connected with resources, and the Confidant should be cognizant of the responsibilities that come along with that role
 1. As such, the Confidant should always prioritize the safety and wellbeing of fellow club members and recognize that their role is not to adjudicate the situation, but connect the Confider with administrators who can do so

VI.2 Conflict Resolution

1. If a conflict emerges between Board members regarding a working relationship, the members are encouraged to reach out to the President and Vice President to set up a conversation.
 1. If members do not feel as though the President/Vice President will be the proper resource, or they do not feel comfortable reaching out to them, the members should contact the club advisor.
 2. The President/Vice President will respond to messages with this topic within 48 hours.
2. If the conflict cannot be solved by the members themselves, or with the help of the President/Vice President, the members are encouraged to contact the club advisor (who is a Mandated Reporter), or a third-party mediator outside of the Institute. Such individual, interpersonal conflicts should not be addressed or mediated through the Institute Board.
 1. This measure is intended to ensure that personal relationships do not affect the way the situation is rectified.

2. If the conflict is a potential policy violation, it can only be resolved through the Columbia University Student Code of Conduct.

ARTICLE VII Elections and Evaluations

VII.1 Administrative Board - President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary

The Administrative Board elections may be conducted either through a formal vote of the Executive Board or through a nomination and confirmation process led by the sitting President/Co-Presidents, therefore bypassing a formal vote. All current Executive Board Members are eligible to run if in good standing as decided upon by the sitting President/Co-Presidents. "Good standing" shall refer to compliance with attendance requirements, fulfillment of assigned responsibilities, and adherence to the standards of professionalism outlined in this constitution. Applications may be opened to the general body if the position is not filled by current Board members.

If taken to a voting body, a majority of the board members (3/4 of current members) must be present at the election meeting for the official voting. Candidates will give a two-minute speech, followed by 2 mins of Q&A from sitting Presidents/VP, concluding with 2 mins of Q&A from remaining board members. After speeches, the board will vote via paper or electronic ballots.

The Executive Board elections are overseen and carried out by the sitting President/Co-Presidents. All current board members, if applicable, are eligible to vote in this process.

In the case of a possible tie (i.e. even number for 2 candidates), the sitting President and Vice President, or the two Co-Presidents, shall jointly cast one deciding vote.

VII.2 Executive Board - Committee Chairs, Committee Members, and Fellows

Committee chairs will be selected by appointment of the sitting President/Co-President or by the newly appointed Executive Board in a two-part process. Current General Body Members, sophomore standing and above are eligible to run.

VII.2.1 Interview Process (70% weight in decision)

Returning board members in good standing may run for a committee chair position of their preference. They may apply for two positions, with ranked preferences. Each member may submit a platform (one page in length, maximum) for each position they apply for. Upon submission of these platforms, the newly elected Executive Board will review these platforms and schedule a 20 minute interview with qualified candidates to discuss their platforms and ask questions.

From these interviews, the Executive Board may calculate a score based on predetermined standards that they will determine. This interview will weigh 70 percent in the final selection of committee chairs. It is suggested, but not required, that the Executive Board come up with a point system that sums to 70 points, to correspond to Point System Evaluation (below).

VII.2.2 Point System Evaluation (30% weight in decision)

In addition to the interview process, the previous Executive Board and Committee Chairs will have a chance to weigh in on the candidate's job performance in the previous academic year. They will have an opportunity to score each applicant based on the following criteria:

- Commitment (10 points)
 - Applicant attended meetings without fail, attended events, regularly in touch with committee and Exec Board
- Performance (10 points)
 - Applicant fulfilled the requirements of their position, going above and beyond to show initiative and innovation in their role on the board
- Professionalism (10 points)
 - Applicant was respectful and professional as a representative of the Society, both in internal and external communications and interactions

The applicant that has the highest total score (out of 100) will attain the committee chair position that the new Executive Board determines they are most fit for.

VIII.3 External Elections

Any positions, including Committee Chairs, Committee Members, or Fellows, that are not filled during the previous two election processes shall turn over to the external election process. The newly appointed Executive Board will create and distribute an application for positions (with adequate descriptions of each position and a link to this constitution) to the General Body. After reviewing the applications, the Executive Board will score each application to reduce the number of people interviewed. Upon determining whom they will interview, the Executive Board will conduct interviews and use a secondary scoring system to select people for each position that is necessary to fill.

Criteria for selection shall be decided at the discretion of the new Executive Board.

The Executive Board is also afforded the discretion of not offering current board members a position on the new board. If a sitting Executive Member, who is otherwise eligible for re-election, meets the criteria for impeachment at the end of their term, the sitting President/Co-Presidents may, at their discretion, dismiss that member and revoke their eligibility for internal elections. Dismissed Executive Members may still be considered for external elections, subject to the discretion of the newly elected President/Co-Presidents.

ARTICLE IX Resignation, Attendance, and Impeachment

Resignations must be submitted in writing and expressed verbally to the Executive Board. In the event of a resignation, the Executive Board shall appoint a replacement to serve until the general elections.

The Society also enforces a strict attendance policy for all board members. Members are required to attend all weekly board meetings and all programming, unless they have provided the President(s) with at least 24 hours advance notice. If a member has two unexcused absences, it is at the discretion of the President/Co-Presidents to dismiss the board member.

The Executive Board will consider impeachment of an officer if and only if five active members of the Society submit a proposal citing the grounds for impeachment. Any officer faced with possible impeachment will be allowed to address the Board. Upon hearing from said officer, the board will vote on the proposed impeachment. Impeachment will be executed after a 2/3 vote of the Board.

IX.1 In the case of operational concerns for Pre-Law Society pertaining to the actions of a particular member of the group (henceforth referred to as “the member of concern”) any member of the board may seek to document their concerns by sending written reports to the group’s adviser. All concerns about a member of concern must be discussed with the group’s adviser, and no action against the member of concern may be taken by group members, except in conjunction with the group’s adviser as outlined below.

1. Operational concerns may include
 1. Role abandonment - a board member is not fulfilling their role, as laid out in Section _ of this constitution.
 2. Financial mismanagement - a board or group member is mismanaging the group’s funds. This type of concern may involve the SGARB.
 3. Going against the group’s mission - a board or group member has taken actions that violate the mission of the group, as laid out in Article II of this constitution.
 4. Other concerns on a case-by-case basis, decided through discussion with the group’s adviser.
2. Documentation of the concern may look like:
 1. Sending an email with screenshots, documents, or a written narrative to the group’s adviser.
 2. Meeting with the group’s adviser to discuss the concern, to be followed up in writing.
3. The concerned group members must follow the guidelines set forth below when they are considering a member of concern.
 1. Group members may not:
 1. Request FERPA-protected information from the member of concern
 2. Seek to impeach or remove the member of concern from a board position or from the group
 3. Deny the member of concern access to social gatherings, events, or board meetings
 2. Group members may:
 1. Document their concerns via emails sent to the group’s adviser
 2. Meet with the group’s adviser to discuss the concern and discuss any next steps as determined by the group’s adviser
4. If the group’s adviser determines that the documentation warrants further action, they will communicate this in person with the member of concern as well as with the president of the group. The adviser reserves the right to take no action.

IX.2 In the case of policy concerns for Pre-Law Society that pertain to the actions of a particular member of the group (henceforth referred to as “the member of concern”), any member of the group may submit a formal report through proper University reporting channels. No action against the member of concern may be taken by group members.

1. These concerns include all violations of University Policy, and any violations that are already subject to a specific process.
 1. Examples may include:
 1. SGARB policy
 2. OIE policy
 3. Rules
 4. Individual conduct that violates any University policy
2. In the case that the group’s adviser receives notice or documentation of a concern that is of a policy nature, they will be mandated to report the concern via proper University channels.

ARTICLE X Amendments to the Constitution

This constitution shall be established by a vote of a 3/4 majority of the membership of the organization. The constitution shall not be done away with or amended except by a vote of 2/3 of the Executive Board and Committee Chairs at one official meeting with a quorum of at least 3/4 of total board members in attendance required.