**SAN JOAQUIN COLLEGE OF LAW**

**STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION**

**BYLAWS**

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

THE PURPOSE OF THESE BYLAWS, AS ADOPTED BY THE STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION OF THE SAN JOAQUIN COLLEGE OF LAW ON February 24, 1993, AND AMENDED ON November 16, 2023, IS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE, CONCISE AND ACCURATE AUTHORITY AND GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING THE BUSINESS OF THE STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION, THESE BYLAWS, SET FORTH BELOW, BY THEIR ADOPTION BY THE SJCL STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION, REVOKE ALL PRIOR BYLAWS AND AMENDMENTS.

**DEFINITIONS**

1. Association: the entire student body at San Joaquin College of Law.
2. Student Bar: the elected and appointed officers of the Association, as outlined in Articles V and VI.
3. Officers: includes President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Class Representatives, as outlined in Articles V and VI.
4. Academic Days: Days in which classes are being held.

**ARTICLE I**

**Name**

The name of this Association shall be the “San Joaquin College of Law Student Bar Association,” hereinafter referred to as “Association.”

**ARTICLE II**

**Objects and Purposes**

1. The objects and purposes of the Association are:

1. To stimulate a high order of academic attainment;
2. To disseminate information and knowledge of interest to members;
3. To establish a high standard of ethics for and among the members;
4. To uphold the honor and dignity of the law as befits students thereof and to project a professional image to the community;
5. To establish good fellowship among the members of the Association; and
6. To be a voice for student concerns.

2. This Association shall be non-sectarian, non-partisan and non-profit.

**ARTICLE III**

**Classes of Membership**

1. There shall be three (3) classes of members in the Association, which shall be defined as follows:

(a) **First Year Students**. Those students enrolling in San Joaquin College of Law for the first and second semester for the study of law;

(b) **Continuing Students**. Those enrolled students who have successfully completed the first year of study of law and have passed to their second, third, fourth, and fifth years of study, including transfer students; and

2. First Year Students and Continuing Students shall be entitled to the following privileges and rights:

1. To vote in all elections;
2. To attend all open Association meetings and functions;
3. To receive any Association newsletter publications and other notices as published; and
4. To be a candidate and hold office in the Student Bar as set forth hereinafter.

**ARTICLE IV**

**Dues**

The dues shall be a reasonable amount to be determined by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Bar. The dues shall be mandatory and non-refundable and shall be paid at the time of registration in August and January of each year, or at the time of registration for transfer students.

**ARTICLE V**

**Student Bar**

The governing body of this Association shall be known as the Student Bar and shall consist of elected and appointed officers and representatives. Each elected member of the Student Bar shall have one (1) vote. The President may only vote in the case of a tie.

**ARTICLE VI**

**Officers and Representatives**

1. **Elected Officers**. Elected Officers of the Association who form the “Student Bar” are:

1. President;
2. Vice-President;
3. Secretary;
4. Treasurer; and
5. Two (2) Class Representatives from each First Year and Continuing class. Students in their fifth year of study shall be represented by and may hold the office of the Fourth Year Representative.

2. **Appointed Officers**. The Appointed Officers of the Association shall be such officers deemed necessary and proper by the Student Bar. Such appointments shall be ratified by a majority vote of the Student Bar.

3. **Eligibility for Office**. To be eligible for office, a candidate shall be:

1. An active member in good academic standing, except for those candidates elected as First Year Class Representatives.
2. Any candidate for the offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary, or Treasurer, shall be a Continuing Student in good standing.
3. Representatives of the First Year Class shall be selected pursuant to provisions set out in Article XI. Elected First Year Representatives may continue in office unless academically disqualified pursuant to SJCL continued enrollment requirements or otherwise removed as an enrolled student.

4. **Term of Office**. Officers shall hold office for the term of one (1) fiscal year or until their successors have been elected and have assumed the duties of their office. The fiscal year shall begin on the Spring semester’s last day of instruction.

5. **Vacancies**. Vacancies in any elected office, except for the office of President, shall be filled for the unexpired term by a majority vote of current members of the Student Bar present and voting as soon as reasonably possible following the effective date of the vacancy. In the event of the vacancy of the office of President, the order of succession shall be as follows:

* 1. Vice-President;
  2. Secretary; then
  3. Treasurer.

If none of the above are capable or willing to serve, a special meeting for the purpose of a general election shall be called pursuant to Article XI, § 3 of these Bylaws.

6. **Selection of Parliamentarian**. The position of Parliamentarian may be filled as needed by solicitation from the Association. Interested students’ qualifications may be reviewed and considered by the Student Bar prior to selection by majority vote of present Student Bar Officers.

7. **Executive Board**. An Executive Board shall be comprised of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

8. **Removal from Office**. Upon a finding of good cause as defined in subsection (a), any elected officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Bar. Following receipt of reliable information, evidence, or complaint of misconduct by a member of this Student Bar, a special closed hearing shall be held by the Executive Board of the Student Bar Association to determine whether good cause exists for a removal vote. Prior to the hearing, the accused shall be notified as to the reason(s) for possible removal and shall have an opportunity to refute all allegations.  The accused shall have an opportunity to submit any documentation or call any witness at the good cause hearing.

1. Good cause shall include but is not limited to the following: Criminal conduct, moral turpitude, malfeasance, dereliction of duty, or other serious misconduct unbecoming an officer of the Association.

(b) Removal of appointed officers and committee chairpersons shall be at the discretion of the President.

The Student Bar shall subsequently notify the accused and the Association within three (3) calendar days of the Student Bar’s decision to proceed or not to proceed to a removal vote. At this time, the Student Bar must turn over all evidence against the accused so that they may have time to prepare. The accused shall have a minimum of seven (7) calendar days to prepare for the open removal vote, which shall be held at the next qualifying regularly scheduled meeting or a special meeting, if deemed necessary. The removal hearing shall begin with the President reading the accusation to the Accused. The Accused may admit or deny the accusation. If the Accused denies the allegation, the Vice President shall present all evidence in support of the accusation. The Accused, or their Class Representative, shall present any evidence they possess, and explain any evidence brought against them. After both sides have presented their evidence, all present members of the Student Bar shall vote to convict or acquit. If the majority vote is to convict, the Accused shall be removed from their office immediately. Written notification of the Student Bar’s vote shall be given to the accused within three (3) calendar days of the vote.

An officer of the Student Bar may also be removed by the Association through a recall. A recall is initiated by gathering signatures from a quarter (1/4) of the total population of the Association. Verifiable Adobe signatures from online-only students are acceptable. The signatures must be accompanied by a petition that outlines the reason(s) for the recall. Once the petition and signatures are received by the Student Bar, the Elections Committee, as defined in Article IX, shall initiate a vote to the Association to recall the Student Bar member. This recall vote shall be solicited no later than thirty (30) calendar days, and no sooner than one (1) week after receipt of the recall petition and signatures. The recall vote solicitation shall include the petition as originally submitted, as well as a response from the Student Bar member being recalled. The recall vote shall be open for three (3) academic days. Academic days are defined as days in which classes are being held. The Student Bar member will be removed upon a majority vote of all Association members voting, and the results of the recall vote and vote count shall be published to the Association.

**ARTICLE VII**

**Duties of Officers**

The duties of the officers shall be as implied by their respective titles and as are specified in these Bylaws:

1. **President**. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association and the Student Bar, and perform such duties as usually pertain to the office of President. The President shall be an associate member of the SJCL Board of Directors. Within a reasonable amount of time after taking office, the President shall appoint chairpersons and appointive officers of all standing committees. As the presiding officer at regular Student Bar meetings, the President shall cast no vote except in the event of a tie vote on any matter before the Student Bar or the Association, the President shall cast the deciding vote. The President shall be an *ex-officio* member of all committees except the Elections Committee. The president may, upon the election of a new president, bestow the remainder of their term to the incoming president-elect. This remainder shall not constitute the beginning of the incoming president's term for purposes of appointments.
2. **Vice President**. The Vice President shall preside at all meetings of the Association and the Student Bar in the absence of the President, perform such duties as usually pertain to this office and as may be prescribed by the President or the Student Bar, and shall chair the Grievance Committee and the Barrister’s Ball Committee.
3. **Secretary**. The Secretary shall keep a correct record of the proceedings of all meetings of the Association and the Student Bar, shall send out all notices and conduct all correspondence; shall keep a correct register of the officers and chairmen of committees and all other data required by the President or the Student Bar and shall preserve all records in a permanent file. All records shall be turned over to the successor of the office at the close of the term. The Secretary shall email all approved meeting minutes to the Class Representatives and make available all Student Bar records available to the members of the Association. If an Association member requests records from the Student Bar, then the Secretary shall produce them within a reasonable amount of time. Records that are sealed or closed shall not be subject to this requirement.
4. **Treasurer**. The Treasurer shall have charge of all monies of the Association in such place as the Student Bar may direct, collect all dues and fees from the Association, pay all bills upon authorization by the Student Bar, and keep a correct account of all receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer must, upon request by any member of the Association, disclose accounting records to the requestor within a reasonable amount of time. The Treasurer will also submit a detailed report on the Association’s financial accountings, including receipts and disbursements, at every Association Meeting and Student Bar Meeting. This report will be made part of that meeting’s minutes.
5. **Representative**. It shall be the duty of the class representatives to attend all meetings of the Student Bar and report back to the members of their respective classes the business transacted by that body, and generally to act as a liaison between the Student Bar Association and the class members.
6. **Parliamentarian**. The Parliamentarian shall advise the presiding officer on all questions of order and see that parliamentary procedure is followed in all things, shall interpret the bylaws of the Association and the policies adopted by it and shall attend all regular and special meetings of the Association and the Student Bar. The Parliamentarian shall not vote in any proceeding before the Student Bar.
7. **Executive Board**. During periods when the Student Bar is not in session, this Board shall be authorized to act for the Student Bar on any matter affecting the Association, which in the opinion of the Board is important and requires immediate attention. All such actions shall be reported to the Student Bar at its next regular meeting.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**Faculty Liaison**

If it is deemed necessary by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Bar, the Student Bar shall select one of its members to act as Faculty Liaison. The Faculty Liaison shall be a member of any committee or group established by the Administration of San Joaquin College of Law to consider or decide questions of mutual interest to the members of the Association and the School.

**ARTICLE IX**

**Committees**

1. **Standing Committee(s)**. Within a reasonable amount of time after taking office, the President shall, at the President’s discretion, appoint the Chairperson(s) of any of the following, committee(s[[1]](#footnote-1)\*)\*:
2. Elections
3. Orientation
4. Back to School Night
5. Grievance
6. Barrister’s Ball

The names of the Chairpersons of the Standing Committee(s) shall be published in a conspicuous place on campus, or on the Association’s school website.

The President shall have the right to combine, at the President’s discretion, any one or more committees under the head of one chairperson and additional standing committees may be added by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Student Bar. Their duties shall be investigating and reporting their findings to the Student Bar. Any further action necessary shall be authorized by a majority vote of the Student Bar. Vacancies on committees may be filled by appointment by the President as necessary. Such committees shall cease once the anticipated purpose for which they are appointed is accomplished.

The chair of a committee must take minutes or appoint a committee member to take minutes. These minutes will be made part of a committee report at the next regularly scheduled Student Bar meeting.

2. **Duties of Committees**. All standing committees shall have the power to consider, investigate, and act as outlined in their committee descriptions. All expenditures shall be subject to Student Bar approval by a majority vote. The duties of each Standing Committee include:

(a) **Elections**. The duties of the Elections Committee are set forth in Article XI of these Bylaws and as authorized in the Elections Guidelines adopted by the Student Bar on February 24, 1993, as subsequently amended.

(b) **Orientation**. This committee shall coordinate such activities as are necessary for the orientation of the First-Year class. Further orientation activities and programs may be designated by this Committee at its and the Student Bar’s discretion.

(c) **Back to School Night**. This Committee shall be responsible for the planning and carrying out the “Class Action Party” (or “Back to School Night”) within thirty (30) calendar days of the commencement of Fall Term classes.

(d) **Grievance Committee**. This Committee’s duties shall be outlined in the Grievance Packet.

(e) **Barrister’s Ball Committee**. The committee shall coordinate such activities as are necessary for the Barrister’s Ball (Ball). The committee shall be chaired by the Vice President and the Ball shall be held during the Spring Semester.

**ARTICLE X**

**Meetings**

1. **Association Meetings**. Meetings of the general membership of the Association shall be held on an as-needed basis. These meetings may be called by SJCL staff, the Student Bar or at the direction of any member of the Association. No meeting of the Association shall have any weight or effect unless the Student Bar is given notification, twenty-four (24) hours in advance, of the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting. All Association meetings shall be open to any member of the Association in good standing.

2. **Student Bar Meetings**. A regular meeting schedule of the Student Bar shall be set by a majority vote of the Student Bar not later than thirty (30) calendar days after the installation of officers and shall meet no less than once a month during the regular school term. Special meetings of the Student Bar may be called by the President or by a majority vote of the members of the Student Bar upon twenty-four (24) hours’ notice to each member. All Student Bar meetings shall be open to all Association members unless the Student Bar moves into private session by a two-thirds (2/3) vote. The result of any private session will be made immediately public and part of the meeting’s minutes. Any decision or vote arising from a Student Bar meeting held in violation of the twenty-four (24) notice requirement shall be void.

The agenda for each Student Bar meeting will be made available to the Student Bar and the general Association, no less than twenty-four (24) hours before the start of the meeting. Minutes for the meeting will include how each member voted on non-unanimous action items. No action item shall be added to the agenda unless it complies with the twenty-four (24) hour requirement.

**ARTICLE XI**

**Elections**

1. **Elections Committee**. The Committee shall follow the Election Guidelines attached hereto, previously adopted by the Student Bar in 1992, and as subsequently amended.

1. The General Election guidelines are as follows:
2. The Association general election shall be held in the last week of March, on a date determined by the Elections Committee.
3. Nominations will be solicited from First Year Students and Continuing Students at least one week, but no longer than three weeks, prior to voting.
4. Upon the closure of the nomination period, the Elections Committee Chair shall confirm the nominations with each nominee and each confirmed nominee will then become a candidate.
5. The Elections Committee Chair shall check all nominee’s academic standing status. If a candidate is on academic probation, that shall bar the nominee from seeking candidacy.
6. The Elections Committee will convene a meeting with the candidates to discuss the election procedures and the duties of each position.
7. The candidates may submit campaign flyers and election materials to the Elections Committee Chair, and the Chair will physically post the flyers in the hallways and email the flyers to the Association.
8. All election materials will be posted and distributed at least one (1) academic day before voting begins.
9. Candidates shall be allowed to campaign at least one (1) academic day before voting begins.
10. The Association will be given the opportunity to vote for President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.
11. The Association will be allowed to vote for the Class Representative candidates running in the same year in which they are classified (e.g., 2L students can only vote for 2L Class Rep Candidates). If there are more than two Class Representative candidates running in a particular year (2L, 3L, 4L), then the Association member shall vote for up to two candidates.
12. Any candidate receiving the most votes for their intended position shall win that election. However, Class Representative elections shall be won based on the top two candidates receiving the most votes.
13. In the event of a tie, a runoff election shall be held. Each candidate in a runoff election will have at least one (1) academic day, but no more than three (3) academic days, to campaign.
14. When the polls close, the Elections Committee Chair shall tally the votes and publicly publish the results and the number of votes each candidate received.

b) There shall be no changes made in elections procedure unless such change or changes shall be implemented, and proper notification given thirty (30) calendar days prior to the date set for elections.

2. **First Year Class Representatives**. A Special Election shall be held for the First Year Class Representatives within sixty (60) calendar days of the commencement of Fall Term Classes. It shall be duty of the Student Bar to advise the First Year Students of this requirement and the Elections committee shall provide whatever assistance and instruction necessary to assure the orderly and proper election of the First Year Class Representatives. In the event of vacancies in the office of the First Year Class Representative, a subsequent Solicitation of Interest and an election (following the election procedures above) shall be made to the First Year Class.

3. **Special Elections and Solicitations**. It shall be the responsibility of the Student Bar to conduct any Special Election or Solicitation of Interest necessary to fill a vacant position. Vacancies in any position shall be filled as soon as reasonably possible following the effective date of the vacancy.

4. **Notification**. It shall be the responsibility of the Student Bar to publicize the results of all elections and selections.

5. **Results**. It shall be the responsibility of the election committee to store the ballots and all subsequent material pertaining to the election for thirty (30) calendar days following the close of the election. If a candidate wishes to challenge the results of the election, they must notify the Election Chair within the said thirty (30) calendar days after the close of the election.

**ARTICLE XII**

**Expenditures**

Each expenditure over $100.00 must be approved in advance by a majority vote of the Student Bar unless such expenditure was included in a previously approved budget.

Under extenuated circumstances, when an expenditure must be made that falls outside of a previously approved budget, there must be a two-thirds (2/3) approval of the expenditure by the Student Bar.

A budget will be proposed by the President, with advice from the Executive Board, and confirmed by the Student Bar by a majority vote.

The budget may authorize discretionary funds for the Executive Board and/or the standing committees. An accounting of such discretionary funds will be reported at each Student Bar meeting by the chairperson of the committee that received the funds, or the Treasurer if a discretionary fund was created for the Executive Board. Such reports will be attached to the minutes of that meeting in its entirety.

The budget will include amounts and the purposes for which the funds can be used. Once approved, the budget can be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote by the Student Bar. The budget will be available to any Association member who requests it.

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**ARTICLE XIII**

**Quorum**

1. **Association Meetings**. One-fifth (1/5) of the members in good standing shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the entire Association.

2. **Student Bar**. A majority of the elected members of the Student Bar described in Article V shall constitute a quorum of that body.

**ARTICLE XIV**

**Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended or revised by a three-quarter (3/4) vote of the Student Bar, provided:

1. A copy of the proposed Amendment shall have been furnished to each elected Student Bar member at least fourteen (14) calendar days before it is voted upon; and

1. A copy of the proposed Amendment shall be posted in a conspicuous place on campus that the Student Bar and Association use as a bulletin board. This is intended to provide the Association with a chance to comment on the proposed change or Amendment. Any comment by an Association member in good standing will be allowed at the meeting designated for approval of the Amendment.

**ARTICLE XV**

**Term of Membership**

Membership in this Association shall terminate upon graduation, withdrawal, dismissal, suspension or otherwise terminating enrollment at San Joaquin College of Law.

**ARTICLE XVI**

**Parliamentary Authority**

*Robert’s Rules of Order*, Revised, shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and insofar as they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

1. \*The following committees are specifically excepted from this Section:

   * 1. Grievance Committee – which is automatically chaired by the Vice President; and
     2. Barrister’s Ball Committee, which is automatically chaired by the Vice-President.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)