

**SECOND DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF THE LAW STUDENTS' SOCIETY OF
ONTARIO**

***Unanimously approved at the LSSO Planning Conference on
March 2nd, 2013 at Toronto, Ontario***

With the exception of Article 10, which takes effect immediately, this Constitution takes effect as of October 1st, 2013.

ARTICLE 1 – DEFINITIONS

In this Constitution,

“AGM” shall mean the Annual General Meeting of the LSSO.

“Council” shall mean the entire membership of the LSSO, as defined in Article 5.5.1.

“Delegates” shall mean substituted individuals representing members of Council at either Council meetings or at the AGM.

“Executive” shall mean the President, Vice-President Internal, and Vice-President External of the LSSO.

“LSSO” shall mean the Law Students' Society of Ontario.

“Member Law Society” (or “Society”) shall mean the student government representing undergraduate law students at an Ontario Law School.

“Ontario Law School” shall mean Osgoode Hall Law School, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law, Queen's University Faculty of Law, University of Toronto Faculty of Law, Western University Faculty of Law, University of Windsor Faculty of Law, and any other faculty of law or law school operating in the Province of Ontario offering a law degree recognized by the Law Society of Upper Canada as satisfying its lawyer licensing requirements.

ARTICLE 2 – OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES OF THE LSSO

- 2.1** The LSSO is an advocacy body representing students currently completing undergraduate degrees at Ontario Law Schools for the purpose of articulating their needs to, and building relationships with, the member organizations that govern their professional interests, the universities administering their legal education, and government bodies.
- 2.2** The LSSO operates in a collegial and respectful manner, with Member Law Societies participating in good faith to represent the needs of their constituents.
- 2.3** The LSSO connects the Member Law Societies it represents. It shall not substitute or replace the Member Law Societies or student positions on other advocacy bodies.
- 2.4** The LSSO formulates evidence-based policy that is member-driven and research-based.
- 2.5** The LSSO researches the needs of law students, develops policy, and respectfully articulates these needs to professional partners, including the Ontario Bar Association and the Law Society of Upper Canada.
- 2.6** The LSSO pursues its objectives while fostering informed and collaborative relationships with professional organizations, thereby ensuring that the educational and professional vision of law students are meaningfully considered by relevant decision-makers.
- 2.7** The LSSO remains strictly non-partisan in its approach, although it reserves the right to comment on the decisions and actions of relevant professional bodies. The LSSO adopts a strict issues-based approach to advocacy in all of its communications.

ARTICLE 3 – EQUITY AND BILINGUALISM

- 3.1 The LSSO is an inclusive, equitable, welcoming and safe organization for all individuals.
- 3.2 The LSSO strives to be a bilingual organization, both in the composition of its Council and in its official communications.
- 3.3 All reasonable efforts shall be made to ensure that official documents are made available in both English and French.
- 3.4 Should the French and English versions of any document conflict, the English version shall take precedence.

ARTICLE 4 – COMPOSITION OF THE LSSO

- 4.1 The LSSO shall be composed of both a governing Council and Executive.

ARTICLE 5 – COUNCIL

Composition, Method of Appointment, and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Council shall consist of students from the Member Law Society student bodies, as selected by each Society.
- 5.2 Each Society shall appoint a number of members to Council equal to or less than their number of votes at Council meetings, but at least two, as indicated in Article 8.7.
- 5.3 Members of Council shall liaise between their Society and the LSSO and aid in the development and implementation of LSSO policies.

ARTICLE 6 – EXECUTIVE

Composition, Powers, and Duties

6.1 The Executive shall consist of a President, Vice-President Internal (“VPI”), and Vice-President External (“VPE”) and shall meet monthly either by teleconference or in person.

6.2 Members of the Executive shall, in addition to their other responsibilities, abide with the Constitution, oversee the general affairs of the LSSO, delegate tasks, and implement the agenda and policies set by Council.

A. President

6.3 The President shall exercise the following powers and duties:

- a. Chair all meetings of Council;
- b. Implement the strategic direction of the LSSO as set by the Council and supervise the Vice-Presidents in this capacity;
- c. Serve as the primary representative and spokesperson for the LSSO to member organizations, government bodies, media, and law students;
- d. At the end of their term, confirm the incoming members of Council with the Member Societies, and provide training and guidance to the incoming President; and
- e. Discharge any other duties, as listed in the By-Laws.

B. Vice-President Internal

6.4 The VPI shall oversee the internal administrative functions of the LSSO and exercise the following powers and duties:

- a. In the absence of the President, chair all meetings of Council;
- b. Oversee and coordinate all committees of the LSSO
- c. Oversee finances of the LSSO and ensure the keeping of a permanent and accurate record of all financial transactions of the LSSO;
- d. Present an annual financial report to the AGM of the LSSO;
- e. Oversee internal communications and maintain a current, authoritative copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the LSSO;
- f. Keep minutes of meetings of Council in a form approved by Council and post them on the website of the LSSO;
- g. Maintain internal documents and records, including all relevant information from the Societies; and
- h. Discharge any other duties, as listed in the By-Laws.

C. Vice-President External

6.5 The VPE shall oversee the external and communicative functions of the LSSO and exercise the following powers and duties:

- a. Working closely with the President, serve as the principle point of contact for students and organizations that want to contact the LSSO;
- b. Create and oversee all official communications of the LSSO, including press releases and the official LSSO website;
- c. Maintain contact with the media, universities, member organizations that govern law students' professional interests, government bodies, and other similar organizations.
- d. At the end of their term, provide training and guidance to the incoming VPE; and
- e. Discharge any other duties, as listed in the By-Laws.

6.6 The VPE shall ideally be able to communicate in both French and English. In the event that the VPE is not bilingual, the VPE will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the French language. Reasonable efforts may include, among other things, the translation of official documents or work product, or the creation of a standing committee on bilingualism.

Method of Election

6.7 The CRO shall administer and oversee the election of the new Executive. The CRO shall use his or her discretion to manage any situations that are not outlined in this Constitution.

6.8 The Executive shall be elected at the AGM from incoming members of Council. Any incoming member of Council may be nominated to run for an Executive position.

6.9 Prohibited Activities

- a. There shall be no campaigning activities outside the campaign period, as defined in Article 6.11.
- b. Any candidate for a LSSO executive position is not permitted to run on a slate with any other candidate.

6.10 Each Ontario Law School shall have two (2) votes in Executive elections.

6.11 There shall be a campaign period for two weeks to the day prior to the AGM.

6.12 Elections shall be conducted separately and in the following order: for President, for VPI, and for VPE. The procedure for elections is as follows:

- a.** The CRO shall ask for nominations;
- b.** The CRO shall confirm candidates;
- c.** Candidates shall be afforded an equal opportunity to speak to Council and to take questions;
- d.** The CRO shall distribute two ballots per school.
 - i.** Each school shall have the right to determine how it chooses to exercise its votes. In the event that a school is unable to agree on how to vote, the CRO shall draw names from the available Council members of that school, and those people shall cast the votes on behalf of that school.
- e.** Votes shall be submitted to the CRO in a blank envelope inside another envelope that is signed by the Members of Council from each specific school, indicating their approval of the contained ballots;
- f.** Ballots shall be secret as between the schools, and the CRO shall tally the votes, declaring the candidate with a plurality of votes the winner;
- g.** The results of any given vote tally shall be disclosed by the CRO after the election.

6.13 Tie

- a.** In the event of a tie between the candidates with the most votes, all other candidates running for that position are automatically eliminated.
- b.** The CRO shall then allocate additional speaking time to each tied candidate.
- c.** Voting will then recommence as per Article 6.12.

ARTICLE 7 – OFFICERS

A. Chief Returning Officer

7.1 “CRO” shall mean the Chief Returning Officer of the LSSO.

7.2 The CRO shall oversee and administer the elections of the Executive of the LSSO. The CRO shall be either;

- a.** The individual(s) responsible for administering Executive elections within the Member Law Society, or
- b.** Individual(s) otherwise appointed by the President in accordance with By-Law 2 – Chief Returning Officer.

7.3 The CRO shall be appointed as follows:

- a.** Each Member Law Society will take turns appointing a CRO.
- b.** The responsibility for appointing the CRO will rotate in an alphabetical order, in accordance with Appendix A – Membership.

B. Equity Officer

7.4 “EO” shall mean the Equity Officer of the LSSO.

7.5 The EO shall:

- a.** Be a member of Council;
- b.** Be responsible for ensuring that all activities, statements and endorsements of LSSO shall reflect the equitable and inclusive mandate of the LSSO;
- c.** Be responsible for equity considerations within the LSSO, including but not limited to conduct at meetings and communications between schools and the public;
- d.** Be responsible for monitoring all activities of the LSSO and those supported by the LSSO to ensure that they are not exclusionary or discriminatory in nature and address any problems as they arise within all best efforts;
- e.** Collaborate with the President and Vice President External to develop equity-based and other relevant projects;
- f.** Actively solicit the opinions of equity seeking groups in order to ensure that statements or projects developed or support by the LSSO are inclusive and free of discrimination; and
- g.** Train and advise the incoming Equity Officer.

ARTICLE 8 – COUNCIL MEETINGS

Notice

8.1 Notice of all Council meetings shall be given in a fair and reasonable manner to members of Council, at least 72 hours prior to each meeting.

Quorum

8.2 Quorum for Council meetings shall be:

- a. One (1) member of Council from each Ontario Law School;
- b. Two (2) members of the Executive; and
- c. Three (3) additional members of Council.

Conduct

8.3 The President shall conduct all meetings of the LSSO in accordance with the newest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

8.4 Matters relating to the agenda and direction of the LSSO shall be determined by a majority vote of Council.

8.5 Council meetings may be held via teleconference.

Appointment of Delegates

8.6 A member of Council may appoint, in writing to the Executive, a Delegate to attend a meeting of Council on their behalf. An appointed Delegate has all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of a member of Council at the meeting they are authorized to attend, as may be limited by the appointing member of Council.

Voting Rights

8.7 Member Law Societies shall possess a number of votes to be determined by the following formula:

- a. The number of J.D./L.L.B students in each Member Law Society divided by three hundred (300), rounded to the nearest whole number.
- b. In the event that the calculated number is less than two (2), it shall be deemed to be two (2).

8.8 The current allocation of votes shall be reflected in Appendix B to this Constitution.

Unanimity

8.9 Communications of the LSSO to the public, including but not limited to reports and public statements, must receive the unanimous approval of Council. For greater certainty, an approved public statement shall reflect a majority and minority position(s) if such division of opinion exists.

Academic and Administrative Asks

8.10 The LSSO strives to establish two advocacy projects each year:

- a. An academic ask to impact issues at the respective schools;
- b. An administrative ask to impact relationships with the respective member organizations that govern our professional interests.

ARTICLE 9 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

9.1 The outgoing President shall convene an AGM annually by the end of June.

Matters for Determination

9.2 The following matters shall be determined by Council at the AGM:

- a. Election of the Executive;
- b. Setting of a strategic direction for the year; and
- c. Approval of a budget.

Quorum

9.3 Quorum for the purposes of the AGM shall be:

- a. The outgoing President and VPI of the LSSO;
- b. One (1) member of Council from each Ontario Law School (not including Delegates) attending in person; and
- c. All other members of Council from each Ontario Law School, or their Delegates, either in person or by teleconference.

Appointment of Delegates

9.4 A member of Council may appoint, in writing to the Executive, a Delegate to attend a meeting of Council or AGM in their place. Only members of Council may vote at the AGM.

- a. An appointed Delegate has all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of a member of Council at the meeting they are authorized to attend, as may be limited by the appointing member of Council.

Conduct

9.5 The outgoing President shall chair the AGM until a new President is elected.

9.6 The AGM shall be conducted in accordance with the newest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

9.7 Except where otherwise indicated in the Constitution, By-Laws, or the newest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, matters at issue at the AGM shall be determined by majority vote with voting rights distributed proportionally per Article 8.7.

9.8 Members of the public are welcome to observe the AGM.

ARTICLE 10 – MEMBERSHIP

10.1 Member Law Societies shall join the LSSO with a majority vote of their respective student society, or by successful referendum.

10.2 In the event that a Member Society joins the LSSO, their membership shall be reflected as a list to be included in Appendix A, attached to this Constitution.

10.3 Member Law Societies shall leave the LSSO with a majority vote of their respective student society, or by successful referendum.

10.4 Should a Member Law Society withdraw from the LSSO mid-way through a Fiscal Year, any of the withdrawing Member's fees unused at that time shall be refunded on a pro-rata basis.

10.5 Where membership is undertaken mid-year, membership fees become payable one (1) month after joining the LSSO.

ARTICLE 11 – FINANCES

- 11.1** The annual budget is approved at the AGM.
- 11.2** Fees owed by Member Law Societies to the LSSO are approved at the AGM.
- 11.3** Fees are payable within three (3) months of the AGM in proportion to the prescribed number of votes allotted to each law school identified in Article 7.
- 11.4** Each Member Law Society must contribute to a total sum of \$500.00, to be paid in proportion to the prescribed number of votes allotted to each Member Law Society, as determined by Article 8.7.
- 11.5** Any fee increases above the all-item Ontario Consumer Price Index, as reported by Statistics Canada, must receive the unanimous approval of Council.
- 11.6** Should a Member Law Society wish to contribute additional funds, other Member Law Societies are not required to match this proportionally.
- 11.7** Monies collected from Member Law Societies unspent at the end of the fiscal year shall be carried over for use in the following fiscal year(s).
- 11.8** For any given year, the Fiscal Year of the LSSO commences on May 1st and ends on the last day of February in the following year.
- 11.9** Member Law Societies shall conduct an audit of the finances of the LSSO on a rotating basis, in accordance with Bylaw 1 – Financial Audits.

ARTICLE 12 – CESSATION OF DUTIES

Members of the Executive

- 12.1** Members of the Executive shall be relieved from their duties, in that capacity, upon a two-thirds vote at a Special Meeting of the Council provided they are given notice of five business days.
- 12.2** In the event of a vacancy on the Executive, such vacancy shall be filled within two (2) weeks, in accordance with the election procedures articulated in Article 6.

Members of Council

12.3 Any member of Council shall be relieved from their duties by a two-thirds vote of the other members of Council if they have failed to personally attend any two (2) consecutive meetings of Council, without a reasonable excuse.

12.4 In the event that a vacancy is created by the removal of a member of Council, such vacancy shall be filled within three (3) weeks, in accordance with the appointment procedures articulated in Article 5.

ARTICLE 13 – BY-LAWS

13.1 A motion to create a By-Law must be passed by a two-thirds majority of Council.

13.2 A motion to repeal or amend a By-Law must be passed by a two-thirds majority at Council.

13.3 If adopted, a motion designated as a By-Law shall be recorded by number and date.

13.4 The VPI shall keep a current list of By-Laws which shall be appended to the Constitution.

ARTICLE 14 – AMENDING FORMULA

14.1 With thirty (30) days notice, in writing, to the executives of each Member Law Society and every member of Council, the Constitution of the LSSO shall be amended by unanimous vote.

14.2 Quorum for any meeting at which a motion to amend the Constitution may be brought shall be the same as referenced in Article 9.

14.3 All amendments shall take effect immediately, unless provided for explicitly in the amending motion.

APPENDIX TO THE CONSTITUTION

Appendix A – Membership

1.1 The following schools have joined the Law Students' Society of Ontario through their respective Member Law Societies:

- ~~a. Osgoode Hall Law School~~
- ~~b. Queen's University Faculty of Law~~
- ~~c. University of Ottawa Faculty of Law~~
- ~~d. University of Toronto Faculty of Law~~
- ~~e. University of Windsor Faculty of Law~~
- ~~f. Western University Faculty of Law~~

Appendix B – Current Allocation of Voting Rights

Current as of March 3, 2013.

Ontario Law School	Number of JD/LLB students in Member Law Society	Votes on Council
Osgoode Hall Law School	867	3
Queen's University Faculty of Law	500	2
University of Ottawa Faculty of Law	1140	4
University of Toronto Faculty of Law	515	2
University of Windsor Faculty of Law	607	2
Western University Faculty of Law	490	2

BY-LAWS

By-Law 1 – Financial Audits

March 1, 2013

1.1 Financial audits of the LSSO shall occur on an annual basis, as follows:

- i.** Each Member Law Society will take turns providing audited financial statements of the LSSO to Council.
- ii.** The responsibility for appointing the auditor will rotate in alphabetical fashion, in accordance with Appendix A to the Constitution.
- iii.** Audited financial statements will be approved by a majority votes by Council.

By-Law 2 – Chief Returning Officer

March 1, 2013

- 1.1 The Chief Returning Officer of the LSSO shall be appointed by the President of the LSSO.
- 1.2 Each Member Law Society shall take turns nominating individuals for appointment, who may include but are not limited to the Chief Returning Officers (or equivalent) of the Member Law Societies.