

The Constitution of OutLaw – Penn State Law

Article I – Mission Statement

OutLaw is a student organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, et al (LGBTQ+) individuals and allies at The Pennsylvania State University (University) School of Law (Law School). OutLaw is dedicated to create a safe space for all LGBTQ+ persons, and providing social, educational, professional, and philanthropic opportunities for Penn State Law's LGBTQ+ community. OutLaw strives to foster a dialogue with the larger campus community about the legal status of LGBTQ+ persons in society, the ways in which the law interacts with the lives of LGBTQ+ persons, and being LGBTQ+ in the legal profession.

Article II. Members

a. Membership in OutLaw may include past and present law students, and any other person in the Law School community. These members may include faculty, staff, community members, undergraduates, or any other individual who is supportive of the organization and its mission.

b. Members have one principal duty: Involvement. Involvement includes attending OutLaw sponsored events, voting, and working to foster a community within the law school that promotes sexual minorities and their interests.

c. All members are entitled to vote for Officers on the Executive Board and on substantive matters affecting the organization.

d. The email list for OutLaw shall be considered the official roster of members for voting purposes and for reporting membership numbers.

e. Membership dues shall not be imposed as a precondition of membership in OutLaw. The E-Board may, at its discretion, ask for voluntary contributions from members to fund club activities.

f. In order to be a member of the Executive Board, a member must be currently enrolled as a full-time Law School student for the entirety of their term in office.

Article III. Executive Board –

a. Generally - The Executive Board of OutLaw shall serve as the leadership of the organization, and is responsible for planning events, coordinating with other student organizations, and guiding the organization towards the fulfillment of its mission statement. The composition of the E-Board should strive to reflect the diversity of the LGBTQ+ community. The Executive Board shall be vested, in addition to the powers and duties enumerated within this Constitution, with all power and authority necessary to govern and lead the organization. However, the Executive Board is subject to control and restraint by the general membership, and

should take efforts to incorporate the general membership's wishes into decisions where appropriate.

b. Officers - The Executive Board shall consist of the following Officers:

i. *President*: The President serves as the Chief Executive Officer and official spokesperson of OutLaw. The President is responsible for preparing and calling meetings with both the Executive Board and general membership; communicating with administrators, faculty, and staff; and serving as a spokesperson to the Law School and University communities. The President is responsible for communicating with on-campus LGBT groups and committees, as well as appointing members of OutLaw to sit on these groups and committees when warranted. The President is also responsible for inviting and hosting speakers to the law school on topics related to sexuality or gender in the law. The President shall ensure that the organization maintains a faculty advisor. The President is required to be a member in good standing of the National LGBT Bar Association, and shall serve as a liaison between the Law School and the LGBT Bar.

ii. *Vice President*: The Vice President shall assist the President, and in the absence of the latter, perform the duties of that office. The Vice President is chiefly responsible for assisting the President with the operation of OutLaw and its events. The Vice President will coordinate communication with other student groups who are co-sponsoring events with OutLaw as well as the faculty, staff and administration of the Law School and University community.

iii. *Treasurer*: The Treasurer serves as the Chief Financial Officer of OutLaw and is responsible for matters of finance relating to the business of the organization. The Treasurer is responsible for preparation and submission of OutLaw's annual budget and communicates with the Student Bar Association and administrators to request, administer, and account for all financial expenses related to OutLaw's activities.

iv. *Secretary*: The Secretary is responsible for communication between OutLaw and the greater community. To this end, the Secretary maintains the psu.outlaw@gmail.com account, OutLaw's web page, and any other social networking pages with OutLaw's imprimatur. Access to these accounts will be transferred from the outgoing Secretary to their successor upon the latter's election. The Secretary is also responsible for maintaining contact information for OutLaw alumni. The Secretary shall also keep minutes of general membership meetings, and shall make such minutes available to all members within two days of general membership meetings.

v. *Director of Ally Affairs*: The Director of Ally Affairs works with the President and members of OutLaw to foster relationships with allies in order to increase awareness of LGBTQQI concerns and to promote positive engagement with the community.

vi. **Parliamentarian:** The Parliamentarian, in addition to their responsibilities related to elections, resignations, and impeachments, *infra*, shall be the authority on rules disputes within OutLaw. The OutLaw shall be appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Board, and the Parliamentarian may not hold another executive position while serving as Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian serves at the pleasure of the Executive Board, but the Parliamentarian may not be dismissed during the process of an election or impeachment.

Article IV. Meetings, Events, and Committees

a. *Meetings:* The President will convene at least one general membership meeting per semester. Between meetings, the President will communicate with the membership, maintaining a non-public list of recipients. The President will convene meetings of the Executive Board at least once per semester. Both general body and Executive Board meetings should occur as frequently as necessary in order to ensure organizational success.

b. *Events:* Each governing administration shall determine which, if any, events OutLaw shall hold during any given semester. Members may propose suggested events to be held throughout the year. Events should include, *inter alia*, speakers, panels, workshops, informational tabling, and social events, preferably planned around significant LGBTQ+ days of commemoration (e.g., National Coming Out Day/Week). Events should promote the organizational goals of providing social, educational, professional, and philanthropic opportunities for OutLaw's members and the law school community.

c. *Committees:* Committees shall be created on an ad hoc basis. Any member of the organization may suggest the need for committee establishment. The President shall determine the need and present the option to the general membership. Establishment of the committee shall occur upon approval by a majority vote of members present. The President shall appoint a chair to the committee with the advice and consent of the general membership.

V. Elections, Impeachment, Resignation, and Replacement Elections

a. *Elections:*

i. The Executive Board shall announce no later than April 1st of every year, the date of elections for the upcoming academic year.

ii. Any full-time Law School student wishing to be considered for election to the next year's Executive Board must indicate the office sought and submit their name and contact information to the Parliamentarian one week (7 days) before the scheduled date of elections.

iii. The Parliamentarian will submit the list of candidates to the President, who will make this information available to the general membership.

iv. The Parliamentarian shall determine the voting method the organization shall utilize, providing that method is a) anonymous, and b) ratified by the members at a general membership meeting.

v. Following the election, each current Officer shall meet with his or her successor to discuss transition. This shall be accomplished by the last day of classes, though an earlier meeting is preferred.

vi. An Officer's term of service expires on May 31.

b. Impeachment

i. Any member may submit a grievance calling for the impeachment of an Officer. A grievance may be submitted in writing to the Parliamentarian and must include the name of the complainant, the name of the Officer, the nature of the complaint, and why the complainant believes the Officer's conduct warrants impeachment. If the complainant wishes to file the charge anonymously, the Parliamentarian shall maintain anonymity unless there is a clear conflict of interest in the complainant pursuing an impeachment. If the Parliamentarian denies anonymity, they shall inform the complainant and provide the complainant the opportunity to withdraw the complaint. A grievance may be withdrawn by the complainant at any time.

ii. The timeline shall be as follows: Once the member files a complaint, the Parliamentarian has three days to inform the accused Officer and solicit a response. The accused Officer then has three days to prepare and return a response to the Parliamentarian. Once the response has been returned, the Parliamentarian has two days to email the membership, with both the complaint and response.

iii. The members have exactly three days to cast their votes after the complaint and response have been sent. Two-thirds of the voting members who vote must vote to impeach the accused Office in order to sustain an impeachment. Votes to "abstain" are counted as votes against impeachment. After the period of voting closes, the Parliamentarian then has one day to inform the membership of the results of the impeachment voting. If an Officer is impeached, the President or Vice President (if the Presidency is vacant) may appoint a member to act as interim Officer until elections for a replacement are held.

c. Resignation

i. Any Officer wishing to resign must submit their letter of resignation to the Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian is responsible for informing the members of the resignation. If the Parliamentarian wishes to resign, their resignation shall be submitted to the President.

ii. A resignation is effective once the Parliamentarian notifies the membership. Once that Officer has resigned, the President may appoint a member to act as an interim Officer until a replacement election can be held.

iii. If the President resigns, the Vice President will assume the duties of the President until a replacement election is held.

d. *Replacement Elections*

i. When the need to replace an Officer arises, the Executive Board shall, within one month of the vacancy arising, shall announce a date for a replacement election.

ii. The Parliamentarian shall solicit interest in the vacant position from the membership. After three days of this notice being sent, the nomination period shall close.

iii. Once the nomination period closes, the Parliamentarian will make the list of candidates public via email and members will be asked to vote for one of the candidates. If only one member is a candidate, he or she will win by default.

iv. The Parliamentarian shall set the amount of time for voting, with a minimum of 24 hours. The candidate with the most votes will be declared the winner and immediately take office.

VI. Nondiscrimination

a. This organization and its membership aims to be as inclusive as possible. As a result, discrimination in any form against an individual or group for any reason shall not be tolerated. The Nondiscrimination policy shall include the protections outlined by the Penn State University Nondiscrimination Policy, as well as protection of gender expression.

VII. Amendments

a. *Amendments:* This constitution may be amended by putting an amendment to the membership for a vote. Two-thirds of the voting members must vote to amend the constitution in order for the amendment to pass.