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April 28, 2010

Dear President:

Welcome to organization leadership! It has been said that everything rises and falls on leadership, and in the case of student organizations this is particularly true. Your new role is one that benefits the students in your organization as well as the law school and surrounding community. We appreciate your dedication and trust that you will enjoy your leadership responsibilities. This publication is part of our ongoing effort to assist as you transition into the upcoming year. Please use the information to make the changeover as smooth as possible.

As the president of your organization, you or a designated member of your organization will be required to participate in the Presidents' Roundtable. As such, you will meet with other members of the Roundtable once per month or as needed to coordinate efforts of all student organizations and to serve as a liaison between student organizations, the Student Bar Association (SBA) and the law school administration. The Cumberland School of Law Presidents' Roundtable Constitution is located in Appendix A and it may be of assistance to you as you fulfill this role.

One of your first duties as an officer is to **register** your organization with Law Student Services. To be officially recognized, receive funds, reserve rooms and post announcements, you will need to submit a completed Student Organization Registration Form, a copy of which is found in Appendix B. This is a very important document. Organizations cannot be listed as active and will not be displayed on the law school website until this completed form is filed with Law Student Services.

In addition to the registration form, your organization must have a **constitution and bylaws** on file with Law Student Services. A constitution is a concise document that clarifies the purpose and framework of a group and provides historical perspective. Bylaws provide a more detailed description of the manner in which a group conducts business. Your organization may choose to write its constitution and bylaws separately or include both in one document.

Appendix C lists all active and inactive student organizations. Several organizations are still in need of finalized versions of their constitution and/or bylaws. If you are the president of an organization, you will want to make sure that your constitution and/or bylaws is complete and that a copy has been submitted to the Student Services Office. Incoming students request organization information, and your group will be moved to the inactive list if this information is not complete. In the event that your organization is new or in need of new documentation and you would like some direction, you may refer to the Sample Constitution/By-Laws in Appendix D. This should be used as a guideline, not as a fill-in-the-blank document.

Oftentimes organizations establish accounts with area banks. It is very important that you work with previous officers to **transfer bank accounts** as efficiently as possible. You should check with the former officers and make necessary changes to signature cards and bank permissions before the end of the semester. Many graduates are planning to practice in other cities or states and accessing organization funds could prove to be difficult if the appropriate arrangements are not made at this time.

The SBA has the responsibility of overseeing student organization funds. Procedures and Guidelines for the Management of the Student Organization Fund is attached in Appendix E. Of particular interest to you is Section IV, Student Organization Requirements. You will want to familiarize yourself with the guidelines and check with the SBA President if you need more information regarding their procedures.

As you look over the attached documents and begin your new duties, questions will inevitably arise. Please feel free to stop by the Student Services Office so that we may assist you. Thank you in advance for your efficient handling of the necessary paperwork, and best wishes for a great year!

Sincerely,



Pamela J. Nelson  
Director, Student Services and ADA Compliance

# **Appendix A:**

**Cumberland School of Law  
President's Council  
Constitution**

Cumberland School of Law  
President's Council  
Constitution

Adopted September 2003

Preamble

The corner stone of American-style democracy is the deliberative assembly, an autonomous group of people meeting to determine in full and free discussion courses of action to be taken in the name of the entire group. Members of deliberative assemblies are free to act within the assembly according to their own judgment. The opinion of each member present has equal weight as expressed by their vote in the decisions made. Failure to concur in a decision of the body does not constitute withdrawal from the body; those who enjoy the privileges or benefits provided to the group must also abide by the decisions made by the group.

Article I

*Name*

The name of the organization shall be the President's Council of the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University.

Article II

*Purpose*

The purpose of the President's Council is to coordinate and support the efforts of each individual student organization, discuss common challenges and work towards mutually beneficial solutions. The President's Council is charged with making any decision, by majority and representative vote, which affects Cumberland Student Organizations as a whole. The President's Council also serves as the liaison between organizations and the elected officers of the Student Bar Association and organizations and the Administration.

Article III

*Membership*

The President's Council is comprised of one (1) representative from each Registered Student Organization at the Cumberland School of Law. Each representative shall have one (1) vote. An organization that is not registered may send a representative to the President's Council but may not vote.

Article IV

*Officers*

Officers of this organization shall be the Chair and the Secretary.

The President of the Student Bar Association will call the first meeting of each academic year. Upon the first meeting of each academic year, nominations will be made for those willing to serve as Chair of the Council. The Chair shall be elected from within the President's Council by majority vote.

The Secretary will be elected at the first meeting by a majority vote of the members.

Article V  
*Meetings*

Regular meetings will be held at a time agreed upon by the majority of the members, at least once a month. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or a majority vote of the members.

Article VI  
*Quorum*

A quorum will be a majority of the members in any given year; majority being defined as one more than half.

Proposed amendments to this constitution shall be presented at a regular meeting at least one meeting prior to being discussed and voted upon.

Article VII  
*Duties of Officers*

The Chair prepares and presents the agenda for each meeting. Members with agenda items should contact the Chair at least one week prior to the next for items to be included on the agenda.

The Secretary takes notes at each meeting, prepares and distributes the minutes. This is not a rotating position. The Secretary shall register the President's Council as a student organization each year. The position is for one academic year.

Article VIII  
*Organizations*

All student organizations shall register with the President's Council by the first day of October every academic year. The Council shall set forth the requirements for the registration and establishment for the student organizations. The Council Secretary shall maintain copies of all organizational forms.

Article IX  
*Parliamentary Authority*

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority of this organization.

# **Appendix B:**

## **Student Organization Registration Form**



**CUMBERLAND**  
SCHOOL OF LAW  
SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

**Student Organization Registration Form**  
**2010-2011**

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

President: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Vice-President: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Meetings are held:  Weekly  Bi-Weekly  Monthly  As Needed

Type of Membership:  Coed  Female  Male

Current Membership Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership selected by:  Application  Invitation  Nomination  
 Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Officers are selected: \_\_\_\_\_ (Give date)

New officers are installed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Give month)

**Membership Requirements:**

I have read our organization's constitution and realize that I am accountable to my organization, Samford University and Cumberland School of Law for upholding this constitution.

My organization must register with the Student Services Office annually. Whenever officers, the constitution and/or the by-laws change, the organization must update their registration file. Changes to the constitution and/or the by-laws which drastically alter the original constitution may result in an organization re-applying for recognition. Failure to report any changes may result in recognition being revoked.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adviser's Name (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adviser's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# **Appendix C:**

**Active and Inactive  
Student Organizations  
2010-2011**

**2010 - 2011  
STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

**Student Bar Association  
Honor Court**

**JOURNALS/BOARDS**

**American Journal of Trial Advocacy  
Cumberland Law Review  
Henry Upson Sims Moot Court Board  
Trial Advocacy Board**

**STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

**Alabama Defense Lawyer's Association (ADLA)  
Black Law Students Association  
Christian Legal Society  
Community Service Organization  
Cordell Hull Speakers Forum  
Cumberland Active Barristers Association  
Cumberland Democrats  
Cumberland Republicans  
Cumberland Softball Club  
Defense Research Institute (DRI) - The Voice of the Defense Bar  
Environmental Law Society (Need updated constitution and by-laws)  
Hispanic Interest Law Students Association  
Law, Science & Technology Society  
Student Health Lawyers Association  
Women in Law**

**STATE STUDENT BARS**

**Georgia Student Bar Association  
Tennessee Student Bar Association  
Virginia Student Bar Association**

**LEGAL FRATERNITIES**

**Phi Alpha Delta**

**INACTIVE ORGANIZATIONS**

**Alabama Student Bar  
American Constitution Society  
Asian Law Student Association  
Association of Trial Lawyers  
Catholic Law Student Association  
Cumberland Libertarian Society  
Cumberland Second Amendment Appreciation Society  
Cumberland Swim Club  
Cumberland Wildlife Society**

**Federalist Society**  
**Florida Student Bar Association**  
**Jewish Law Students Association**  
**Media & Law Practice Group**  
**Military Justice Society**  
**Mississippi Student Bar**  
**Nathaniel Green Debate Society**  
**North Carolina Student Bar**  
**Phi Delta Phi**  
**Pro Confesso**  
**South Carolina Student Bar**  
**Sports and Entertainment Law Society**  
**Texas Student Bar Association**

Updated 4/28/10

# **Appendix D:**

## **Sample Constitution/By-Laws**

# SAMPLE CONSTITUTION/BY-LAWS

This sample constitution is not designed for you to fill in the blanks, but rather to provide you with guidelines in designing a constitution which will meet the specific requirements of your organization.

## Article I. Name

The name of the organization shall be \_\_\_\_\_ of Cumberland School of Law at Samford University.

## Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the organization shall be \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Article III. Membership

Section 1 Membership shall be open to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section 2 No member may be removed from membership without first having an open hearing and then by no less than a \_\_\_\_\_ vote at a regular meeting.

Section 3 The \_\_\_\_\_ (*organization name*) allows participation in the organization by all people regardless of sex, race, creed, or ethnic origin.

## Article IV. Officers

Section 1 The officers of this organization shall be \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (*include a list of the positions, not the persons who will fill those positions. Example: President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer*)

Section 2 All officers shall be elected at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting (*first meeting, second meeting, April meeting, September meeting, etc...*) of \_\_\_\_\_ (*fall, spring*) semester of each year. Officers will be elected by \_\_\_\_\_ (*majority, 2/3 present...*) of those members present at said meeting.

## SAMPLE CONSTITUTION/BY-LAWS

Section 3 No officer may be removed from office without first having an open hearing then by no less than a \_\_\_\_\_ (*majority, 2/3 present...*) vote at a regular meeting.

Section 4 Office vacancies will be filled by special election at the meeting after the vacancy occurs.

### Article V. Duties of Officers

Section 1 Office of President (or related position)

Section 2 Office of Vice President (or related position)

Section 3 Office of Secretary

Section 4 An officer must be assigned the responsibility to register with the Office of Law Student Services each year. This responsibility may be assigned to any officer in your organization

Section 5 Subsequent sections for other officer explanations as needed.

### Article VI. Meetings

Section 1 Regular meetings will be held \_\_\_\_\_ (*use specific time if such time will not change from year to year or semester to semester; otherwise, use less specific time such as "the first Monday of each month" or "at a time agreed upon by the majority of the members".*)

Section 2 Special meetings may be called by the chief executive officer or upon request of any \_\_\_\_\_ (*number*) active members.

Section 3 All members shall be notified of a special meeting at least \_\_\_\_\_ (*number of days*) before the time of the special meeting.

### Article VII. Quorum

Section 1 Proposed amendments to this constitution or the by-laws of this constitution shall be presented at a regular meeting at least one meeting prior to being discussed and voted upon.

Section 2 Having been properly presented, amendments may be adopted by a \_\_\_\_\_ majority vote of the membership at a regular meeting.

# SAMPLE CONSTITUTION/BY-LAWS

Section 3 Amendments shall go into effect \_\_\_\_\_ (*immediately upon adoption, 30 days following adoption, etc.*).

## Article VIII. Dues (optional)

The dues shall be \_\_\_\_\_ (*amount*) payable by \_\_\_\_\_ (*time*).

## Article IX. Committees

Section 1 There shall be \_\_\_\_\_ standing committees.

Section 2 The \_\_\_\_\_ Committee shall \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section 3 (*These sections – and subsequent sections as needed – should describe the creation, purpose, and duties of the standing committees.*)

Section 4 Special committees may be \_\_\_\_\_  
(*Describe the creation, purpose, and duties of special committees.*)

## Article X. Parliamentary Authority

*Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the parliamentary authority of this organization.

**NOTE:** You may wish to add additional articles, sections, by-laws, or amendments to this sample. This is a model intended to guide you in the development of a constitution which will suit your particular organization.

# **Appendix E:**

**Procedures and Guidelines  
for the Management of the  
Student Organization Fund**

## **Funding Request Form**

## Procedures and Guidelines for the Management of the Student Organization Fund

### Section I – General Purpose

- A. The Student Bar Association acting through the Executive Board and pursuant to its stated mission of providing a form of government for the supervision of student activities and concerns; of providing a forum for the expression of student views and interests, as well as encouraging broad participation; of creating, promoting, and preserving student honor, academic responsibility and student rights establish these Procedures and Guidelines for the Management of the Student Organization Fund.
- B. The following procedures and guidelines are meant to provide uniform and standard criteria for the allocation and disbursement of the Student Organization Fund. The Student Bar Association is fully committed to strengthening of the student organizations at Cumberland School of Law. The procedures are intended to build trust by clearly defining the expectations and goals behind all funding decisions to ensure fairness for all student organizations.
- C. The overall funding process is divided into two categories:
  - 1. Allocation of Funds: including application, recommendation, and approval of requests.
  - 2. Reimbursement for Approved Expenditures

### Section II – Definition of the Student Organization Fund

- A. At the beginning of each academic year, the SBA Treasurer shall create a preliminary budget for all SBA activities for the year based on the prior year's actual income and expenses. The creation of this budget allows the SBA Treasurer to accurately estimate available funds. Based on this estimation, the SBA Treasurer then shall set aside a percentage of the General Operating Fund to be allocated as the Student Organization Fund ("the Fund").
- B. The amount proposed by the SBA Treasurer must be approved by a majority vote of the SBA Executive Board.
- C. The SBA Treasurer shall make available to all student organizations the proposed amount of the Fund for the academic year.

### Section III – Finance Committee

- A. In order to facilitate an open and fair process, the SBA Treasurer shall create a Finance Committee each academic year that shall review all Funding Request Forms and make recommendations to the SBA Executive Board. The SBA Treasurer shall act as chairperson. The committee shall consist of:
  - 1. An SBA representative from each class selected by the Treasurer – (3)
  - 2. A volunteer from each class selected by the Treasurer – (3)
  - 3. The SBA President may attend as an ex-officio member, but shall not vote.
- B. The Finance Committee shall meet at least one week prior to the SBA Budget Meeting for the purposes of reviewing funding proposals and making

recommendations to the SBA Executive Board. The Treasurer shall post the date and time of the meeting on the SBA bulletin board and through e-mail.

- C. Each student organization wishing to receive funds shall complete one Funding Request Form detailing the organization's proposed events or activities for the academic year. While an organization may list more than one activity or event on the Funding Request Form, this does not guarantee that all activities or events listed shall be funded. These forms shall be available in the SBA office.
- D. All funding requests shall be submitted no later than five days prior to the Finance Committee meeting.
- E. A representative of each student organization requesting funds shall be permitted and encouraged to attend the Finance Committee meeting for the purpose of explaining the student organization's funding request.
- F. The Committee shall recommend for approval proposed events or activities and not organizations per se. See Section V for the guidelines the Committee shall take into consideration when making funding recommendations.
- G. The SBA Treasurer shall report the Finance Committee recommendations to the student organizations at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the President's Council.
- H. The SBA Treasurer shall maintain accurate records of student organization funding requests to serve as a basis for future allocation decisions.
- I. The SBA Executive Board, exercising its budgetary authority, may consider special and emergency funding requests and requests for re-allocation of funds during the academic year, without review by the Finance Committee, at the option of the SBA Executive Board.

#### Section IV – Student Organization Requirements

- A. To be eligible to receive allocations from the Student Organization Fund each student organization shall:
  - 1. Have a Treasurer (or someone acting as Treasurer) to be the contact person for requests and later allocation of funds.
  - 2. Have on file with the SBA Secretary an up-to-date copy of the organization's constitution, by-laws, or mission statement and a copy of the current Samford University Organization Registration Form on file with the University.
  - 3. Be a member, in good standing, of the President's Council.
  - 4. Submit a proposed calendar of events to the SBA Secretary.
- B. A newly constituted student organization must comply with the requirements listed in Section IV(A)(1)-(3) and the following additional requirements:
  - a) Exist for one full semester;
  - b) Submit, prior to the last regularly scheduled SBA meeting of the first semester of existence, a roster of members, a preliminary Treasurer's report, and provide an indication of any fund raising activities.
  - c) Based on the level of fundraising, the Treasurer's report, the proposed activities or events, and the number of persons participating in or attending organization sponsored activities, the SBA Executive Board shall have the authority to allocate funds from

the Student Organization Fund to new student organizations pursuant to Section III(I).

- C. All allocations from the Fund shall be used for law school activities open to all students.
- D. No allocations from the Fund shall be used for National Organization Registration or Membership Fees.
- E. All events or activities funded by the Fund must be prominently posted and advertised no less than 48 hours before the event, excluding weekends. Preferably, events or activities shall be advertised several weeks in advance in print, email, the SBA calendar of events, and on the organization's bulletin board.

#### Section V – Decision Criteria

- A. The Finance Committee shall take into consideration, but not be bound by any given one of, the following factors when making allocation recommendations:
  - 1. The number of students affected by the activity.
    - a. While a large number of members or students served by a given event is not the exclusive aim of the Finance Committee or the SBA Executive Board, it is a significant consideration. The SBA Executive Board does not see a need to subsidize small, exclusive organizations that could, and would meet and organize without our collective support.
  - 2. The impact of the event or activity on the reputation of Cumberland School of Law and the SBA.
  - 3. The overall organization and capacity of the organization:
    - a. Number of students regularly participating in the student organization.
    - b. History of the organization regarding compliance with these procedures.
    - c. History of the organization regarding compliance with its own constitution or by-laws.
  - 4. The apparent completeness and detail of the request and supporting documents submitted by each organization:
    - a. The Finance Committee and the SBA Executive Board consider 'padding' a budget as deceptive and shall have no sympathy for organizations that ask for more than they need with the expectation that they will get what they want.
  - 5. The relationship of the request to the stated mission of the organization:
    - a. Each organization should focus on its stated mission and design events around that mission. The clearer the relationship between the event and the mission, the more likely the event will be funded.
  - 6. The activity is co-sponsored by two or more organizations:
    - a. While the SBA wants organizations to maintain their individual identities, we hope to foster an efficient system that maximizes each organization's potential. If organizations work together, they will gain audience, perspective, and economics.

- b. The Committee also recognizes that the Student Organization Fund only has a limited amount of money each year and shall actively favor cooperation between organizations.
7. The merits of the request, based on past expenditures, the attendance at past events, and present needs.
8. The total funds available to the SBA Executive Board.

#### Section VI – SBA Budget Meeting

- A. The SBA Executive Board shall have a Budget Meeting (“the Meeting”) at the beginning of each academic year to review Finance Committee recommendations, take up challenges to those recommendations, and approve student organization funding requests.
- B. The SBA Treasurer shall publish the date of the Meeting on the SBA bulletin board and through email.
- C. The Meeting shall be held no later than the first week in October of each academic year.
- D. A majority vote by the SBA Executive Board shall be required for approval of the organization’s funding request.
- E. The SBA Treasurer shall publish the results of the Meeting including Approved Funding Requests within two (2) days of the Meeting. The results shall be published in email and on the SBA bulletin board.

#### Section VII – Challenges to Funding Recommendations

- A. Student organizations wishing to challenge the recommendations of the Finance Committee must submit to the SBA Treasurer in writing all challenges stating specific objections no less than three days prior to the scheduled SBA Budget Meeting.
- B. Failure to challenge Finance Committee recommendations shall be construed as an acceptance of the Committee’s recommendation.
- C. The SBA Executive Board shall consider the written objections submitted by the organization when reviewing and approving Finance Committee recommendations.

#### Section VIII – Payment Procedures

The Finance Committee shall submit a list of approved organizational allocations to the Director of Student Services and to the Vice Dean as soon as they are approved. No payment requests can be honored that have not been reported by the Finance Committee at least one week before payment is due. Funds made available through the Student Organization Fund are on deposit with the University and require adequate planning and time for payment.

An organization that has received approval for its funding request may receive the funds by one of two methods: Purchase Requisition paid to the vendor or individual reimbursement. ***No cash advances are provided and no reimbursements are paid without receipts.*** A minimum of five (5) business days are required for check requests and purchase requisitions to be processed.

Please allow enough time in your planning for these procedures to work. Additional time may be required if the vendor is not currently in the University accounts payable database.

**A. Purchase Order/Requisition.** A vendor providing products or services to a Student Organization approved project may be paid directly through purchase orders and purchase requisitions (The student organization should check with the vendor to see if they accept Purchase Orders). Vendors not accepting Purchase Orders may be paid from an approved Invoice, usually after the product or service is provided. The Administrative Assistant in the Office of the Vice Dean in room 134 can tell your organization if the vendor is in the University database and request the addition of new vendors, prior to processing requests for payment.

1. In order to request a Purchase Order Number (PO#), the vendor needs to provide the student organization with a written quote for the service or product being provided. The treasurer of the requesting organization must approve and sign the quote and forward the request with documentation to the SBA Treasurer for approval and submission to the Administrative Assistant to the Vice Dean.
2. The SBA Treasurer has the authority to deny payment of activities and expenses that are not approved organization expenses.
3. The vendor will be provided the PO# by the Office of the Vice Dean.
4. If the vendor requires advance payment, an invoice may be submitted after a PO# has been assigned, and payment request will be processed through the Administrative Assistant to the Vice Dean.
5. If advance payment has not been required, at the conclusion of the event, the vendor shall present an Invoice for payment.
6. Unless otherwise specified, payments will be mailed directly to the vendor.
7. **NOTE:** If payment is for a meal or reception, a list of participants must be submitted with the Invoice.
8. Failure to comply with these procedures may be taken into account by the Finance Committee when considering future funding requests.

**B. Individual Reimbursement.** An individual may be reimbursed for organizational expenses by submitting a General Expense Report with supporting documentation and receipts.

1. The treasurer of the requesting organization must approve and sign the reimbursement form and forward the request with documentation to the SBA Treasurer for approval.
2. The SBA Treasurer has the authority to deny payment of activities and expenses that are not approved organization expenses.
3. The SBA Treasurer will process the reimbursement request through the Administrative Assistant in the Office of the Vice Dean in room 134. The check will be returned to the SBA Treasurer for disbursement to the payee.

4. Each organization shall have an obligation to accurately track expenditures and to limit spending to the approved request.
5. **NOTE:** If payment is for a meal or reception, a list of participants must be submitted with the Invoice.
6. Failure to comply with these procedures may be taken into account by the Finance Committee when considering future funding requests.

# FUNDING REQUEST FORM

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Events & Brief Description, including requested amount for each event:

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If any of the above listed events took place last year, approximately how many people attended each event?

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Does this organization have a Samford Account?

Yes  No

Does the organization request funding through transfer to the existing Samford Account or through reimbursement?

Samford Account  Reimbursement

\*Please attach any documents supporting this request (including past or current invoice or receipts).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Authorization:

\_\_\_\_\_  
SBA Treasurer                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
SBA President                      Date

Amount Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

