

Executive Committee Regulations of the Association of American Law Schools

Amended through January 2017

CHAPTER 1. SECTIONS

1.1 Sections: Purpose.

The purpose of Sections of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) is to enable the AALS to serve as the learned society for legal educators and law school professional staff. Sections are encouraged to advance AALS's core values by presenting programs at the AALS Annual Meeting and engaging their members through other activities including online discussion list and announcements, periodic newsletters, mentoring programs for junior faculty, and calls for papers.

1.2 Requirements for Sections.

a. A Section should sponsor a program session during at least every other Annual Meeting. The Section program should be held at the time and location assigned by the Executive Director.

b. A Section should elect its officers and the members of its executive committee annually. A Section may elect its officers and the members of its committee at the Annual Meeting or, provided that timely notice is given of the nominees, by electronic means. AALS may dissolve a Section if it fails to elect officers and members of its executive committee annually.

c. No person may serve as Chair of the same Section for more than two consecutive years. No person may serve as Chair of more than one Section concurrently.

d. A Section may hold a lecture, regional seminar, or other event outside the Annual Meeting with the prior approval of the Executive Director. The Executive Director may approve an event if, in consultation with the President, he or she determines that it is consistent with AALS's core values.

1.3 Review by the Committee on Sections.

a. The Committee on Sections should periodically review Sections to enhance the intellectual depth, quality, and diversity of their programs and speakers, as well as their activities outside of the Annual Meeting. If the Committee on Sections finds, after affording the officers a reasonable opportunity to respond to the inquiry,

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that a Section is inactive, materially duplicates the activities of other Sections, or has materially violated AALS's core values, Bylaws or these Regulations, the Committee should recommend that the Executive Committee dissolve the Section, merge it with another Section, replace the Section's officers with other individuals designated by the President, or take other appropriate action.

b. A Section's officers may voluntarily petition the Executive Committee to dissolve the Section. When a Section fails to retain at least 20 members from at least eight member schools, the Section officers should take steps to increase Section membership or recommend dissolution to the Executive Committee.

1.4 Section Membership.

a. Regular Membership. All faculty and professional staff of member law schools are eligible for regular membership in a Section. Sections that concern international issues may include as regular members faculty and professional staff at law schools that participate as AALS International Subscribers.

b. Associate Membership. Subject to restrictions set by a Section in its bylaws, any person may join a Section as an associate member. An associate member is not eligible to vote in Section meetings, to hold office in a Section, or to serve on a Section's executive committee. Associate members who are not affiliated with a member or a non-member fee-paid school may be required to pay an annual membership fee in an amount established by the Executive Committee. Faculty and professional staff affiliated with fee-paid schools may join a Section without paying the annual membership fee.

c. A Section may recommend additional limits on membership so long as those limits are consistent with the AALS's core values, Bylaws, these Regulations, and any other AALS policies. Additional limits on Section membership must be approved in advance by the Executive Committee.

d. Individuals who meet a Section's membership requirements may join a Section by communicating their interest to AALS's staff member designated for handling these requests.

e. For purposes of this chapter, "faculty and professional staff of member law schools" excludes adjunct faculty, visiting faculty or temporary professional staff who do not have a continuing professional relationship with a member law school as their principal employment.

1.5 Relationship of Sections to the AALS and Public.

a. The AALS recognizes three types of Sections: Academic Sections, Affinity Group Sections, and Administrative Sections. A current listing of Sections, by type, is located in the AALS Handbook and on the AALS website.

b. A Section may take a position on a matter related either to the subject matter of the Section or concerning legal education when the Section's executive committee, after giving Section members an adequate opportunity to review and submit comments on a proposed position, reasonably believes that the position reflects the views of a majority of the Section's membership

c. Academic and Affinity Group Sections may communicate a position taken in accordance with Chapter 1.5(b) to others within and outside AALS with a disclaimer that states that the position is that of the Section only and not necessarily of AALS. The disclaimer should use the following or similar language: "The following is a statement of the ____ Section of the Association of American Law Schools only. It does not necessarily represent the position of the Association." With the same disclaimer, Administrative Sections may communicate a position taken in accordance with Chapter 1.5(b) to members of the Section and deans and faculty of member and ABA-approved schools. An Administrative Section may not otherwise publish a statement. In no event may a Section communicate, publish, or otherwise disseminate a position that is inconsistent with the core values of AALS as stated in the Bylaws. Nor may a Section communicate the Section's views concerning a school's compliance with the rules of membership of AALS or concerning the quality of characteristics of the School's educational program or institutional policies. If a Section has reason to think a position it has adopted might violate the core values of the Association, it should submit the position to the Executive Director for evaluation before it is communicated outside the Section. A Section may submit to the Executive Committee a recommendation that AALS take a stated position.

c. Any applications for grants, sponsorships, or other funding from external sources should be made only in AALS's name. No Section may itself make any application for, or receive funding from, an external source. After receiving the Executive Directors' approval, a Section may make preliminary contact with an external funding source. After the Section makes approved preliminary contact, it may ask the Executive Committee to apply for a grant, sponsorship or funding from an external source in AALS's name.

d. Newsletters, websites, and similar Section communications must bear a legend in the following or similar language: "This newsletter/website is a forum for the exchange of points of view. Opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the Section and do not necessarily represent the position of the Association of American Law Schools."

e. A Section may not file amicus curiae briefs.

f. Any survey or questionnaire that a Section wants to distribute to groups or individuals other than Section members must be approved in advance by the Executive Director who shall act in consultation with the President.

1.6 Relationships of Sections with Other Organizations.

- a. With the approval of the Executive Committee, a Section may establish a liaison relationship with its counterpart Section of the American Bar Association and with similar national organizations. Before contacting any organization for this purpose, the Chair should inform the Executive Director of the Section's interest and purpose in establishing a liaison relationship.

- b. A Section may not become a member of another organization or join with an organization outside AALS in sponsoring a program or project unless it obtains prior approval from the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may approve the membership or joint action if it finds that AALS's interests are served and the program or project is limited in time and scope.

1.7 Finances.

- a. Upon request by a Section, the Executive Committee may appropriate general AALS funds to support Section activities and programs.

- b. A Section through its bylaws may impose dues upon its members.

- c. All funds of a Section, including dues received, must be banked through AALS's national office. The national office will disburse funds upon the authorization of the officer designated by the Section.

- d. General funds of AALS appropriated to a Section may be used, among other purposes, to: (i) compensate students for performing research and similar tasks for a Section project; (ii) reimburse a person who participates as a speaker or panelist in a Section program and who is not a faculty member of any U.S. law school for the person's travel and other expenses in accordance with AALS's travel reimbursement policies; and (iii) purchase, for a reasonable amount, a plaque or other memorial of an approved award or citation.

- e. General funds of AALS appropriated to a Section may not be used to:
 - (i) reimburse a faculty member of any U.S. law school, whether on leave or not, for travel;
 - (ii) pay honoraria; or
 - (iii) pay for food, drink, or entertainment for Section members.

- f. Revenue generated by a Section project will first be used by AALS to recapture any costs incurred by AALS in connection with the project. Two-thirds of any remaining revenue generated by the project should be distributed to the Section, and the remaining one-third to AALS.

1.8 Procedures for Section Awards and Citations. A Section may make a periodic or occasional award for distinguished scholarship or service provided that its award criteria and procedures are approved in advance by the Executive Director.

1.9 Establishing Sections.

a. Upon receiving a petition signed by at least 50 full-time faculty members or professional staff from at least 25 member schools, AALS's Executive Committee may provisionally establish a Section. The petition should include: (1) the Section's proposed name, (2) subject area(s) that will be the Section's concern, (3) proposed programs and activities of the Section, (4) the names of the initial officers and executive committee members of the Section (who will serve until the first Annual Meeting of AALS after the Section is granted provisional status), and (5) the Section's proposed bylaws (which will become the initial bylaws of the Section, if provisional status is granted).

b. The Executive Committee may grant provisional status to the proposed Section if it finds that:

(i) the petition and the proposed bylaws conform to the requirements of this chapter;

(ii) the proposed subject area(s) do not materially duplicate that of another Section; and

(iii) establishing the Section serves the interests of AALS.

c. Each Section's bylaws (whether having full or provisional status) should provide for an executive committee of at least five persons including a Chair, a Chair-Elect, and any other officers the Section determines. Section officers should file proposed amendments to a Section's bylaws with the Executive Director who should review them for conformity with the Bylaws and Regulations of AALS. If a proposed amendment to the Section's bylaws does not comply with AALS's Bylaws or these Regulations, the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee should notify the Section Chair and work with the Section to ensure that the proposed amendments are consistent with AALS Bylaws and these Regulations.

d. Two years after receiving provisional status, a Section may petition the Executive Committee for full status. A Section has up to three years from receiving provisional status to file the petition. The petition should (i) describe the Section's activities during the period of provisional status, including all programs presented, (ii) state the estimated attendance for each program, (iii) attach copies of newsletters and other publications and (iv) provide funding details. The petition must be signed by the Chair and the Chair-Elect of the Section. If the Executive Committee finds that the Section has served the interests of AALS during its provisional status and that it will continue to do so, it may grant full status to the Section.

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e. Failure to petition for full status on or before the third anniversary of the grant of provisional status will automatically dissolve the Section unless the period of provisional status is extended by the Executive Committee. A Section with provisional status will automatically dissolve upon failure to apply for full status at the end of any extension period granted by the Executive Committee.