

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN LAW SCHOOLS

Bylaws of the Section on
Federal Courts

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section 1. Name. This section shall be known as the Section on Federal Courts.

Section 2. Purpose. The purpose of this section is to present a program of interest to federal courts teachers at the AALS Annual Meeting.

Article II. Membership

Section 1. Membership.

(a) Membership in the section is open to faculty members of law schools that are members of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS).

(b) Associate membership is open to any other person who is concerned with the teaching, administration and improvement of legal education of the law of federal jurisdiction.

(c) This section is opposed to section dues and will impose them only when absolutely necessary to implement its program or distribute its newsletter.

Section 2. Privileges of Members.

(a) Regular members may be officers of the section and may vote in section elections.

(b) Associate members may participate in the programs, meetings and activities of the section, but may not vote or hold a position in the section.

Article III. Officers-Committees

Section 1. Officers. The officers of this section are the Chairperson, the Chairperson-Elect and the Secretary. Each shall hold office for two years. At the termination of the Chairperson's term, the Chairperson-Elect shall assume that office, and a new Chairperson-Elect shall be chosen by those present at the business meeting.

Section 2. The Executive Committee.

(a) The Executive Committee of the section shall consist of the chairperson, chairperson-elect, the secretary, and three or more other members elected annually.

(b) The Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the section in the interval between annual meetings and may create standing and special committees.

Section 3. Filling Vacancies. If an officer or other member of the Executive Committee resigns, becomes ineligible to serve or dies, the position shall be promptly filled. If the position of chairperson becomes vacant, the chairperson-elect becomes the chairperson. If the position of chairperson-elect becomes vacant, the chairperson, with the advice and consent of the other members of the Executive Committee, shall appoint a person to serve as chairperson-elect until the next annual meeting of AALS at which time both a chairperson and a chair-person elect shall be elected. If the position of secretary or a member of the Executive Committee becomes vacant, the chairperson, with the advice and consent of the other members of the Executive Committee, shall appoint a person to the position to serve until the next annual meeting of the AALS.

Article IV. Nomination and Elections

Section 1. Nominations. At or immediately following the annual meeting the chairperson shall appoint the Nomination Committee for the subsequent year. The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least three members of the section and shall include at least one past chairperson of the section. The Nominating Committee shall receive and consider suggestions of persons to serve as officers and members of the Executive Committee of the section and shall report a slate of nominees to the section for election at the business meeting of the section at the next annual meeting of the AALS.

Section 2. Elections. The officers and other members of the Executive Committee of the section shall be elected at the annual meeting. Nominations shall be received from the Nominating Committee and from the floor. Elections may be by voice vote or Secret ballot, as the chairperson determines.

Article V. Duties of Officers

Section 1. Chairperson. The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the section and of its Executive Committee. At each annual meeting of the AALS, the chairperson shall report on the section activities during the prior year and is responsible for the program of the section. The chairperson shall appoint the members of standing and special committees.

Section 2. Chairperson-Elect. The chairperson-elect of the section shall assist the chairperson, as the chairperson may request, and shall perform the duties of the chairperson during absence or disability of the chairperson.

Section 3. Secretary. The secretary shall produce and maintain any required records of the section and shall assist the chairperson, as the chairperson may request.

Article VI. Policy Statements

Section 1. Policy Statements. Because sections are part of the AALS, statements of policy adopted by a section or similar positions may be made public only after they are approved by the Executive Committee of the AALS.

Article VII. Amendments

Section 1. Amendments. These bylaws can be amended by a majority of those present at the annual business meeting.

Article VIII. Section Award

Section 1. The AALS Section on Federal Courts Best Article Competition

Section 2. Introduction. The Section on Federal Courts of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) wishes to recognize excellence in legal scholarship by full-time untenured faculty members at AALS member and affiliate schools. To that end, the members of the Section on Federal Courts hereby adopt the following amendment to the Section Bylaws.

Section 3. Selection Process

(a) Each year, at the annual meeting, the chair of the Section on Federal Courts will announce the winner of the “best article” competition. The purpose of the award program is to recognize outstanding scholarship in the field of federal courts by untenured faculty members.

(b) The best article will be chosen by an award selection committee consisting of between three and five members. Prior to the annual meeting, the chair of the Section will seek out nominations for the award committee members. The members will then be elected as part of the slate of Section officers at the annual meeting. In the event of a vacancy in the award selection committee, the chair of the Section may fill the vacancy after the annual meeting.

(c) Nominations for the best article award should be directed to the chair of the Section or to a member of the award selection committee and received no later than September 15 of the year preceding the annual award. Self-nominations are to be welcomed. Section officers will take appropriate steps to notify the Section members of the deadline, through the Section’s communication platform, listservs, blog posts, Section newsletter announcements, and announcements at the annual meeting.

(d) Eligible articles are those in the field of Federal Courts law that were published by a recognized journal during the twelve month period ending on September 1 before the close of nominations (date of actual publication determines eligibility). Eligible authors are those who, at the close of nominations, were untenured full-time faculty members at AALS member or affiliate schools and have not previously won the award.

(e) From the articles nominated, the award selection committee will select the single best article by November 15. If the committee cannot reach a consensus, the decision will be by majority vote.

(f) The Section chair will submit supporting documentation to AALS to confirm that the award selection committee followed the criteria and procedures agreed upon by the Section in making the award. This documentation must include detailed information about how the Section followed its award criteria and procedures to select the award winner. It must identify where the announcements requesting nominations were made (name specific listservs, newsletters, etc.), must state how many nominations were received, must identify the members of the award selection committee, when nominations were reviewed, how many nominations were received and why was award winner selected.

Section 4. Announcement and Ceremony. Following receipt of AALS approval, the chair will announce the award.

