# STUDENT ORGANIZATION HANDBOOK

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BAYLOR LAW STUDENT ORGANIZATION POLICIES

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE AT BAYLOR LAW

- The Student Bar Association (“SBA”) is the only registered student organization at Baylor Law. Every other student organization is a “sub-group” of the SBA, the umbrella organization for the law school. For ease of reference, each “sub-group” is referred to as an organization for the purposes of this handbook and the Baylor Law Student Organizations website.

- Each organization at Baylor Law is subject to the Baylor Student Activities Student Organizations Policies and Procedures. Please click here to access the Baylor Student Activities Student Organization Policies and Procedures webpage.

FORMING A NEW STUDENT ORGANIZATION

- If you do not see an organization in which you would like to get involved, consider starting one. See Stephen Rispoli, Asst. Dean of Student Affairs and Strategic Initiatives (Stephen_Rispoli@Baylor.edu), for information about starting a new student organization at Baylor Law. Dean Rispoli will walk you through the process of forming a new organization, which includes steps such as creating a constitution for the organization, forming the inaugural board, being approved by the Student Bar Association, and obtaining 25 Baylor Law student signatures on a petition to create the organization.

- When creating a name for an organization, it should follow this handle formula: “[Organization Name] at Baylor Law”. It should not be the “Baylor Law [Organization Name]”. So, for example, “Student Wellness Organization at Baylor Law” is appropriate, but “Baylor Law Student Wellness Organization” is not.

RE-STARTING AN EXISTING, BUT INACTIVE, STUDENT ORGANIZATION

- If you see a student organization on the website that is already approved but listed as inactive, please contact Dean Rispoli about re-starting the organization.

FORMING AN INTEREST GROUP

- If you have an interest in creating a student organization and want to test the waters, you can visit with Dean Rispoli about the process to form an interest group that works with a faculty member with related expertise to discuss issues and host events for interested students. Interest groups can host events and speakers by partnering with existing student organizations and their faculty sponsors.
REGISTER YOUR ORGANIZATION’S OFFICERS

- Be sure to e-mail Dean Rispoli each time your organization elects new officers.

- New officers are encouraged to visit with their faculty advisor and Dean Rispoli as soon as possible after election so that they may assist you with these policies and procedures, as well as planning events and activities.

New officers should also consult the organization’s constitution and the prior officers (if possible) to determine what their new responsibilities are and ensure that they can meet all of the stated goals of the position and for their organization. If you do not have a constitution for your organization, please contact Dean Rispoli. He may have an older copy or can guide you through the process of drafting a constitution for your organization.

  - For example, an organization’s new Treasurer should consult with the constitution to ensure that he or she understands the role and can fulfill. Then, the Treasurer should meet with the immediate-past Treasurer to get a good understanding of the current finances of the organization, how the organization has traditionally handled funding requests, and access to any budgetary items (balance sheets, fund request forms, etc.) that the immediate-past Treasurer may have. The Treasurer should then meet with the President and faculty advisor of the organization to understand the goals of your term, any upcoming events or items that need to be funded, and discuss any ideas for raising funds for these needs.

- Note: Please see the “Managing the Finances of the Organization” section below for more about funds and bank accounts.

SELECTING OFFICERS FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

- Note: This section applies to existing organizations, not organizations seeking to be formed. For organizations that are seeking approval, please refer to the “Forming a New Student Organization” section above.

- Check your organization’s constitution for the procedure to elect officers or select candidates for appointed positions. If you do not have a constitution for your organization, please contact Dean Rispoli. He may have an older copy or can guide you through the process of drafting a constitution for your organization.

- New officers are encouraged to visit with their faculty advisor and Dean Rispoli as soon as possible after election so that they may assist you with these policies and procedures, as well as planning events and activities.
WORKING WITH YOUR FACULTY ADVISOR

- Your faculty advisors are eager to help you! Officers of an organization should be meeting regularly (at least three times per quarter) to discuss the goals and operations of the organization.
  
  - Some organizations may need to meet with their faculty advisor more than three times per quarter. Meeting more than three times per quarter is highly encouraged. The more you visit with your faculty advisor, the more helpful he or she can be.

- Contact your faculty advisor as soon as you become an officer to set up an initial meeting. At the meeting, it is recommended that you discuss:
  
  - Goals for your term.
  - Activities and events that the organization typically sponsors.
  - Covering any Baylor University and Baylor Law policies of which you should be aware. Note: Be sure to also consult the policies and procedures on the Baylor University and Baylor Law websites.
  - Finances of the organization.
  - Succession planning for future leaders.
  - Advice that the faculty advisor may have for you.

RUNNING THE ORGANIZATION

- Leadership in an organization can be difficult. As an officer, you must ensure that the organization is hosting events, encouraging fellowship among members, growing in membership, managing any problematic officers, and preparing members or other officers to be the future leaders of the organization. Dean Rispoli and Professor Teague host a “Student Organization Leadership Summit” every Fall and Spring quarter. In addition to broadly covering the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, they will cover at least one of the following topics at each Summit:
  
  - Planning successful events;
  - Running efficient meetings;
  - Recognizing and avoiding conflicts of interest;
  - Recruiting members;
  - Working with difficult members or officers;
  - Growing the next generation of leaders (succession planning); and
  - The importance of leadership and followership.

- Dean Rispoli and Professor Teague are also available to you at any time to discuss any of these topics in detail and with specifics for your organization. Please send either one of them an email to set up a meeting.
MANAGING THE FINANCES OF THE ORGANIZATION

- Each student organization has the ability to store funds for the organization in a Baylor account. The SBA has a dedicated account with Baylor University. As sub-groups of SBA, other student organizations can store money in the SBA account and keep track of funds.

- Organizations can request updates from Terri Kroll about available funds.

- Officers should communicate with Dean Rispoli or Terri Kroll in advance of funding expenditures or requests to ensure that the expense is appropriate and can be funded.

- If you want to keep an outside bank account for your organization, you must visit with Dean Rispoli.

PURCHASING

- If you need to purchase items or food for an event or your organization, do not purchase anything directly. Please visit with Terri Kroll to order items or food for your event at least two weeks prior to the event. We need to allow time to place the order and receive the items.

- Baylor University does not reimburse students.

T-Shirts

- Contact Terri Kroll about creating t-shirts for your organization. She will guide you through the approval and ordering process.

REPORTING PRO BONO HOURS FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

- If your sponsored or participated in a pro bono or public service activity that qualifies under the Baylor Law Pro Bono and Public Service Program, please submit a roster of participants and the hours they worked to Yvette Marascia, Legal Assistant to the Legal Clinics (Yvette_Marascia@baylor.edu). She will record those hours with the Baylor Law Pro Bono and Public Service Program for participants.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- If your organization would like to create a social media account to advise members and other students of the activities and events of your organization, you are encouraged to do so.

- If you create a social media account, you must invite Dean Rispoli and your faculty advisor to be administrators on the account.
Social Media Post Guidelines

- Although posts to the social media accounts do not have to be pre-approved, each post must further the mission of Baylor University and Baylor Law School. Moreover, each post must be in compliance with Baylor University’s Student Conduct Code and Baylor Law School’s Honor Code.

- Should any post be found to be objectionable by Dean Brad Toben, Associate Dean Patricia Wilson, Senior Assistant Dean Angela Cruseturner, Dean Rispoli, Ed Nelson, or an organization’s faculty advisor, the student organization may be required to delete the post.

Name of Organization on Social Media

- If your organization does create a social media account, it should follow this handle formula: “[Organization Name] at Baylor Law”. It should not be the “Baylor Law [Organization Name]”. So, for example, “Student Wellness Organization at Baylor Law” is appropriate, but “Baylor Law Student Wellness Organization” is not.

- The formula should be followed for social media handles, so “@swobls” would be acceptable, but “@blsswo” would not.

- Organizations that created social media handles prior to the adoption of this rule must attempt to change the name and handle on all social media channels to comply. However, if it is impossible to do so without shutting down the account and starting a new one, please contact Dean Rispoli.

- Before creating a social media account, please visit with Dean Rispoli.

TABLING

- If you would like to set up a table for your organization on the first floor of the law center, please see Terri Kroll (office location noted below) to sign the table out and get the keys.

EVENT AND SPEAKER POLICIES

STEPS TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR AND HOST A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

Complete the following steps.

1. View ASTRA for Conflicting School Events
• Visit Astra to see the events calendar at the law school. The calendar contains organization meetings, special events, speaker events, and non-classroom reservations. If you would like to add a student organization meeting (no invited speaker) to the calendar, please contact Terri Kroll.

2. Check the Student Announcements for Conflicting PDP Events

• Review the Weekly Student Announcements and CDO communications to select the best date and time for your event. You are also encouraged to visit with your faculty advisor or Dean Rispoli.

3. Check the Baylor Law Course Schedule

• Review the Baylor Law Course Schedule to select the best date and time for your event and maximize attendance by avoiding timeframes that conflict with students’ classes or makeup classes as much as possible.

4. When choosing a day for your organization’s event, keep in mind the following criteria:

• PDP programs are often held on Mondays at noon, or Tuesdays and Thursdays in the afternoon. Check the PDP schedule for upcoming programs.
• Scheduling a major event at the same time as makeup classes or mandatory meetings, when students may not be available to attend your event, does not maximize the best use of your speakers, their time, and your funds.
• The administration of Baylor Law tries very hard to avoid scheduling more than one event per day. Our goal for doing so is to avoid competition for events to ensure maximum attendance at each event.

5. Complete the Event and Speaker Approval Form. Pay special attention to the policies and procedures regarding guest speakers below.

GUEST SPEAKERS

• Guest speakers are welcomed and encouraged. Baylor Law is committed to bringing engaging speakers who have positive, constructive, responsible, ethical, and professional viewpoints to share in a venue marked by civility, factual accuracy, open-mindedness, and mutual respect. (There are some restrictions regarding those who are political office holders or those seeking to attain a political office. Talk to Dean Rispoli if you have questions.) Baylor Law has a robust schedule of programming each quarter for students. In addition to Professional Development Program ("PDP") events, faculty and student organizations frequently schedule events to provide additional learning and academic opportunities to Baylor Law students. To keep our calendar and events coordinated, all student organizations requesting to host certain types of events must submit the Event and Speaker Approval Form.
• **If you are planning a major event and wish to invite a high-profile guest, please contact the Dean’s office to ensure Dean Toben’s availability PRIOR to making the ask. It is imperative that proper protocol always be followed.**

• Prior to contacting a guest speaker for ANY reason, you MUST get pre-approval through the [Event and Speaker Approval Form](#). This includes checking with a speaker for his or her availability prior to filling out the form – do *not* reach out until you have filled out the approval form and received pre-approval for the speaker. It is perfectly acceptable to fill out the [Event and Speaker Approval Form](#) with only a rough idea of the topic and speaker that you have in mind. We will work with you to work out details after approving the speaker and the general topic.

• You must also check all calendars and be sure the classroom and event space are available. (Please see the “Select a Date for Your Event” Section below for more details on this point.) Should you need to provide your guest with optional or tentative dates, be sure to check with Terri Kroll, Assistant Faculty and Law Review Office Manager, to make arrangements to tentatively reserve your space until final dates are chosen. This can be facilitated through the [Event and Speaker Approval Form](#).

• DO NOT book flights or a hotel for a speaker until you have received approval from Dean Rispoli and confirmed the room reservation. Prior to submitting your room request for final approval, you must represent that you have checked and verified all schedules and received any required permissions, i.e., budget approvals, faculty advisors, etc.

• If you are inviting panelists for a multiple-speaker panel for a large event or conference, etc., you must contact Dean Rispoli ([Stephen_Rispoli@Baylor.edu](mailto:Stephen_Rispoli@Baylor.edu)) for assistance in addition to filling out the [Event and Speaker Approval Form](#).

• If there is a speaker’s fee associated with an invite, you must make sure that you have the funds available to pay the speaker’s fee. In addition, you must clear with Dean Rispoli ([Stephen_Rispoli@Baylor.edu](mailto:Stephen_Rispoli@Baylor.edu)) how the speaker will be paid to ensure that Baylor policies and procedures are followed. We encourage you to pool funds, and partner with other student organizations to pay for your event.

• SBA funds may be available to assist in funding your activities.

• When selecting a guest speaker, the time and date of your event are critical. Keep in mind that to maximize the best use of your funds and their time, major events should be scheduled at a time and date that will not conflict with Baylor University holidays or any mandatory student events or meetings.

• To maximize student attendance during lunch hour events, we try to minimize overlap between events planned by student organizations and those planned by Law School departments. For example, if you are hosting a panel with former law clerks who will be discussing their experience, then we would not want you to host your event on the same date that the CDO holds an information session on how to apply for clerkships.
• If you want to invite a speaker to campus to discuss career-development related topics or judicial clerkships, please visit with Kristine Bridges, Assistant Dean for Career Development, to organize and plan the event. The CDO periodically invites speakers (including judges) to discuss judicial clerkships and we do not want to have too many events too close together.

• Communicate clearly to the potential speaker the event’s purpose and intended audience and the desired duration for their speech. Let them know the time, date, and location of the event and the expense and travel arrangements that will be covered or not covered. Confirm all arrangements including the date and time and expenses in writing.

• Visit with your faculty advisor or Dean Rispoli about a gift for your speaker. Typically, you want to provide something that is thoughtful and will be appreciated by the speaker. The gift does not need to be particularly expensive. You do not want to give them something that they are likely to discard after leaving the building.
  
  o Note: Do not purchase gift cards for speakers, as they cannot be reimbursed.

Professional Development Credit and Leadership Development Credit

• If you would like your organization events to count for Professional Development Program Credit (“PDP”) and/or Leadership Development Program Credit (“LDP”), please see the criteria on those pages. If you believe the event would qualify for credit, please contact Dean Rispoli and Dean Bridges.

• For full consideration and best chance of your program being approved by the PDP Committee, you must seek approval prior to the sixth week of classes in the quarter preceding the quarter in which you seek to hold an event. For example, if applying for PDP or LDP credit for a Winter Quarter program, you must seek that approval before the sixth week of classes in the Fall Quarter. If you do not submit your program by this deadline, the committee will consider your program as space and topic allows.

CAREER-RELATED PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

• If there are conflicts with an event that the Career Development Office (CDO) is planning, contact Dean Bridges to get permission to hold your event during that time. This includes organization business meetings where no outside speaker or non-members are invited to attend.

• The CDO encourages student organizations to organize career-related programs based on your organization’s practice area or other focus. Professional Development Programs (“PDP”) educate students about different practice areas, skill sets, professionalism and more. They also help your members connect with practicing attorneys and provide networking opportunities for students.
• To encourage your organization to present programs, the CDO will fund up to $300 to your organization for one career-related program this academic year. If your organization wants to host a career-related program, please contact Dean Bridges if you have questions. **Pre-approval is required for funding. Funds are limited each quarter and are disbursed on a first-come first-served basis.**

• Please note that your organization is responsible for organizing the event, inviting speakers, reserving a room, promoting the event and ordering any food.

• Students prefer that programs not be held the last few weeks prior to the end of classes. **All career-related program dates and times must be cleared in advance through Dean Bridges.**

**HOW TO RESERVE A ROOM**

• Contact [Terri Kroll](mailto:terri.kroll@law.berkeley.edu).

• Requests for the current semester room reservations will ONLY be considered after all class schedules have been finalized. Also, at the beginning of each quarter, Law School Department events will be given priority. When most department events have been scheduled, then student organization events will be considered for approval. There are exceptions, i.e., when the law school will host national competitions, events approved by the Dean’s office, etc. Contact [Terri Kroll](mailto:terri.kroll@law.berkeley.edu) to discuss specific details.

• Allow 48-72 hours for confirmation of your room request.

• Please note it is the responsibility of each person requesting the room to make arrangements for AV/media and food service needs. (These fields are included on the [Event and Speaker Approval Form](#).) Any damage to the room is also the responsibility of the user.

**PROMOTION OF YOUR EVENT**

*Proper promotion of your event is essential to ensure optimal attendance and event success. Keep in mind the purpose of your event, as well as the intended audience and determine the best way to reach that audience. For minimal publicity, emails to organization membership may be sufficient. For increased publicity for larger events with prominent speakers or multi-panel discussions, flyers for the digital display, the weekly announcements, and invitations to affinity groups are encouraged.*

Weekly Announcements Email

• If you would like to include an announcement in the weekly student announcements email, you must submit it (with the exact heading and wording you want to appear in the email) to [Terri Kroll](mailto:terri.kroll@law.berkeley.edu) by 12:00 p.m. noon on the Friday preceding the Monday when you would like the announcement to be sent. You must also copy [Dean Rispoli](mailto:dean.rispoli@law.berkeley.edu) and the SBA
Executive Secretary on the email to Mrs. Kroll. Failure to comply with this procedure may preclude your announcement from being included in Monday’s email. You may petition for a late/non-conforming submission to be included or sent in a separate email by sending Dean Rispoli an email showing good cause for the late or non-conforming submission.

Campus Monitors

- If you would like an announcement posted on the monitors through the law school, please email Dean Rispoli and Nick Teixeira, with the exact heading and wording of the announcement by 12:00 p.m. noon on the Friday preceding the Monday when you would like the monitor image to appear.

Career Development Online Announcements

- To publicize career-related programs, email the flyer for your event to Lauren Porter, Career Development Coordinator (Lauren_Porter@baylor.edu). The CDO will be happy to include your flyer in its weekly announcements.

Tabling

- If you would like to set up a table for your organization on the first floor of the law center, please see Terri Kroll (office location noted below) to sign the table out and get the keys.

Flyers

- Student Organizations may post flyers for their event. You may only place flyers on the bulletin boards located within the law school.
  - **DO NOT** put up flyers on any painted surface (i.e., the walls and hallways) in the law center.
  - **DO NOT** put up flyers that have not been approved by the SBA.
  - When placing flyers on the bulletin boards, **DO NOT** cover flyers already in place. You may move flyers around if it is necessary to make room for your flyer.
  - **DO NOT** remove flyers that belong to another organization.
  - Please remove flyers after your event is over.

- **Organizations who violate the process will lose their privileges for future events.**

- If you need 15 flyers or less, please contact Terri Kroll to print them. If you need more than 15 flyers, the cost of producing flyers comes out of your organization’s budget. Please observe proper funding procedures before printing flyers.

- If you have any questions regarding making or posting flyers, do not hesitate to contact the SBA for further assistance.
Social Media

- Using social media is an incredibly valuable tool to promote your events. Be sure to discuss your social media advertising strategy.

- Be sure that your posts comply with all Baylor University and Baylor Law policies. As noted above, each post must further the mission of Baylor University and Baylor Law School. Moreover, each post must be in compliance with Baylor University’s Student Conduct Code and Baylor Law School’s Honor Code.

SPECIAL EVENT NEEDS AND POLICIES

Alcohol

- Read Baylor’s policy on alcohol here.
- Contact Dean Rispoli with any questions.

Audio-Visual

- If you need audio visual assistance and have not already notified Baylor Law’s Information Technology (IT) Team through the Event and Speaker Approval Form, you must give two weeks prior notice. You can give notice and request assistance by emailing BaylorLawIT@Baylor.edu. A member of the Baylor Law IT Team will then contact you about the event and any support you need.

Building Accessibility

- If you are planning an event on weekends or holidays and inviting people to campus that do not have Baylor ID cards that allow access to the building, contact Terri Kroll to ensure that the buildings will be unlocked.
- Requesting this access may require that the Baylor Police Department has security for the event. Please contact Dean Rispoli for guidance.

Catering

- Contact Terri Kroll.

Contracts

- For all contracts, the contracting party should be the organization. The organization is responsible for any contract signed. Organizations can contact Dean Rispoli for advice.

Maintenance and Facilities Custodial Support

- At the conclusion of your event, the space should be cleaned up and returned to its original condition. It is your responsibility to clean up after your group. When utilizing a classroom, keep in mind there will be classes after your meeting and failure to cleanup will affect the students using the classroom after you. Appoint a clean-up
person/committee depending on the event size prior to the day of your event. Failure to clean up properly will affect your ability to reserve a room in the future!

**Off-Campus Events**

- Visit with Dean Rispoli. Even if the event will take place off campus, you must visit with your faculty advisor and Dean Rispoli for approval.

**Parking**

- Depending on the size and type of your event, you may need special parking for speakers or other outside attendees. Should you require additional parking, please contact Terri Kroll no later than two weeks prior to your event for arrangements. She will determine the most suitable options for your event based on the number of guests planning to attend. If you need parking for more than five guests, she will need to make special preparations with Baylor Parking Services.

**Non-Law School Room Requests**

- Should you need to reserve rooms in other buildings on campus, not located in the Law Center, please contact Dean Rispoli for the process.

**Safety and Risk Management**

- All special events involve some level of risk. Proper safety and risk management planning by the event coordinator will ensure events held by student organizations run smoothly and safely. If you are inviting outside vendors (not just speakers) to the law center, they MUST have special event insurance. All outside vendors coming Baylor Campus are required to show proof of Liability Insurance coverage at a minimum of $2,000,000. Ask them for a Certificate of Insurance (COI). This can usually be emailed to you.

- Events that require notification to Baylor University’s Risk Management team include, but are not limited to: dog socials on campus, physical activities (such as intramural sports) on campus, or any other activity on campus where risk of bodily harm or injury is possible during the normal course of the activity.

- Please refer to this Risk Management for Student Organizations training powerpoint to learn more.

**EVENT BUDGETS AND FUNDING**

**Purchasing**

- If you need to purchase items or food for an event or your organization, do not purchase anything directly. Please visit with Terri Kroll to order items or food for your event. Baylor University no longer reimburses students.
• Payment for gift cards cannot be reimbursed under Baylor University policy.

SBA Funding

• If you are requesting funds from SBA for your organization, please email the request to the Executive President and the Executive Treasurer. Please include the amount, a detailed list of what the funds will be used for, and how it will positively influence/impact the student body.

Outside Funding / Fundraising

• **DO NOT seek outside funding from a law firm, corporation, etc. without first consulting with** Dean Rispoli. He will help you determine if approval by Baylor University’s Advancement Office is required before moving forward.

• Baylor University does not allow raffles.

Organization Accounting

• If you have money to deposit into your organization account from a fundraising event or would like to check the balance of your account, please email Terri Kroll.

EVENT CANCELLATIONS

• If you have already received a room reservation confirmation, and you need to reschedule or cancel an event, please contact Terri Kroll as soon as possible. Be sure to notify other vendors or departments of your cancellation, i.e., the help desk for technology services, SBA, etc.

• When an event must be cancelled or rescheduled, it is essential to notify and inform all attendees and potential attendees and speakers as timely as possible!

CONTACT INFORMATION

• Stephen Rispoli  
  Asst. Dean of Student Affairs and Strategic Initiatives  
  Office Location: Room 313 (take the elevator to the third floor of the classroom wing, take a right, and his office is the first on the left)  
  Office Phone Number: 254-710-3927  
  Email: Stephen_Rispoli@Baylor.edu

• Terri Kroll  
  Asst. Faculty and Law Review Office Manager  
  Office Location: Faculty Secretaries Suite (take the elevator to the third floor of the classroom wing, take a left, and her office is the second on the right)  
  Office Phone Number: 254-710-3692
Email: Terri_Kroll@Baylor.edu

- You can find contact information for all Baylor Law faculty and staff here.