

**The Constitution of the Gay/Straight Law Alliance
The University of Akron School of Law**

Article I (Name) :

The official name of this organization shall be The Gay/Straight Law Alliance of The University of Akron School of Law, hereinafter referred to as GSLA.

Article II (Purposes and Goals) :

The GSLA shall endeavor in all equitable and practical ways to achieve the following goals and actualize the following purposes:

- A. Foster the ideals of tolerance, respect, understanding, and equality in the community regarding the legal rights and privileges of all people, notably those individuals who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans-gendered, or gay-friendly;
- B. Develop law student interest and learning regarding gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans-gendered legal issues through educational programs;
- C. Provide a forum in which students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni may come together to express themselves and discuss legal issues relevant to gay, bisexual, and trans-gendered people;
- D. Work as an advocate in developing and implementing University policies that guarantee the right against discrimination based on sexual orientation;
- E. Encourage and support agencies that work at meeting the needs of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and trans-gendered communities;
- F. Function as a supportive and educational resource for the entire community, especially the law school community.

Article III (Organizational Structure) :

- A. The Executive Board
 - a. The membership of the Executive Board shall consist of the President, Vice-President/President-elect, Finance Officer, and Administrative Officer.
 - b. The Executive Board shall meet as needed, a minimum of once a month during the school year.
 - c. The duties of the Executive Board shall be:
 - i. To determine the agendas, functions, and activities of the GSLA, both internal and external.
 - ii. Oversee disciplinary actions, including membership, revocation, and impeachment.
 - iii. To develop leadership from within the GSLA.
 - iv. Interpret ambiguous constitutional matters.
 - v. Create and approve an annual GSLA budget.
 - vi. Maintain records and archives for future use.
- B. Ad-hoc Committees
 - a. Should it be deemed necessary by the Executive Board, ad-hoc committees may be created to carry out duties of limited scope and duration.

- b. Ad-hoc committees shall be chaired by the Vice-President/President-Elect, or a GSLA member approved by the Executive Board.
 - c. Membership in the committee shall be selected by the Vice-President/President-Elect or appointed chairperson, subject to the approval of the President, with at least one officer serving on the committee
 - d. The ad-hoc committees will disband upon completion of the specified duties, or upon unanimous agreement of the Executive Board.
- C. The Faculty Advisor
- a. The advisor shall be a member of The University of Akron School of Law faculty who is supportive of the GSLA's goals and purpose and is selected by unanimous vote of the Executive Board and consultation with the faculty member who has been nominated.
 - b. The advisor should offer suggestions and guidance to the officers and the membership. He or she shall follow all University rules and regulations regarding the role of advisors in the student organizations.
 - c. The tenure of the advisor's term shall continue from August until the following August where he or she can be nominated again to fill a second term.
- D. General meetings shall be held as needed, with no less than one (1) meeting per month during the academic year.
- a. Should a question arise regarding the manner for conducting a meeting, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall serve as the recognized authority and will be used to determine correct procedure. In such circumstance, a quorum shall be:
 - i. In the Executive Board: three officers, one of whom must be the President.
 - ii. In all other meetings: A minimum of three voting members.
 - b. Exceptions to the Rules of Order will be made in cases where the procedure for GSLA are outlined as differing in this Constitution.
 - c. In order to conduct business a quorum must exist consisting of fifty (50) percent of voting members plus one (1).

Article IV (Membership) :

- A. Eligibility: Those eligible for membership in the GSLA shall be any undergraduate, graduate, or law student, alumnus or alumna, faculty, staff member, or attorneys and individuals from the community who believe in the goals and purposes of the GSLA.
- B. Membership in the GSLA shall not be construed as labeling an individual as gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, or trans-gendered. Any member found to be revealing the sexual orientation of another member shall be subject to the membership revocation process outlined in Article IV, Section F. The GSLA shall not require any of its officers or members to be of a particular sexual orientation.
- C. Nondiscrimination: The GSLA shall not discriminate on the basis of race, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender, gender identity, age, physical challenge, physical or mental health, religious belief or affiliation, and/or organizational memberships in the selection of its members or in its programs unless federal or state laws allow such exceptions.

- D. Voting Membership: Voting member status shall be extended to any University of Akron law student with a valid identification in good standing who has paid membership dues not less than two (2) weeks prior to the date of the vote the individual would like to participate.
- E. Non-voting Membership: A non-voting membership shall be extended to any individual mentioned in Article IV, Section A, but who are not eligible for a voting membership in Article IV, Section C. Non-voting members may attend any GSLA-sponsored event.
- F. Revocation of Membership: If it has been shown by the policies and procedures outlined in this Constitution that any member, voting or non-voting, has been intentionally undermining any of the purposes and goals of the GSLA(as outlined in Article II), be it publicly or privately, his/her membership may be revoked for the remainder of the academic year and reapplication may be denied until the following academic year. Revocation shall follow the procedure set forth in Article IV, Section G.
- G. Hearing of Revocation or Impeachment: When addressing a matter of membership revocation or officer impeachment, the following procedures will be followed:
 - a. The Executive Board shall be required to review and discuss any allegations of misconduct against a GSLA member. After this review, the Executive Board shall determine by majority vote if action may be warranted. The Executive Board shall then notify the accused in writing of the allegations and the outcome of its review and vote.
 - i. The Executive Board shall be required to give the name of the individual making the accusations as a part of this written notice unless reasons for keeping the name confidential are upheld by a unanimous vote of the Executive Board.
 - ii. If so authorized by the Executive Board, the President may place the accused on probationary member status pending the outcome of the disciplinary hearing. Members on probationary status are prohibited from attending GSLA-sponsored events, meetings, or entering the GSLA office unless willingly chaperoned by a member of the Executive Board. Members on probationary status shall not have voting privileges for the length of the probation. If an officer is placed on probation, he or she shall be divested of all authority for the duration of the probation.
 - 1. The accused must be notified in writing of the date of the disciplinary hearing. The accused shall be given the choice of being heard only by the Executive Board or the general membership body.
 - 2. At this hearing, the accused shall be informed of the allegations, relevant evidence, and the action that will occur if the charges are upheld. The accused will have the opportunity to answer the allegations and present any relevant evidence to

the Executive Board as a means of a defense. Upon the conclusion of this defense, the Executive Board shall convene in private to discuss the evidence and then vote on a course of action. The vote for revocation or impeachment must be unanimous.

3. Should the accused fail to respond to the first notification of a hearing within two (2) weeks from his or her receipt of the written notice, a second and final notice will be issued. Should the accused fail to respond within two (2) weeks of this final notice, his or her revocation / impeachment will automatically take effect.

Article V (Offices):

- A. The offices of the GSLA shall consist of three elected positions and one appointed position.
 - a. Elected offices shall consist of the Vice-President who will also have the title of President-Elect, Administrative Officer, and Finance Officer.
 - b. The President shall be appointed via his or her automatic succession to this position from the Vice-President / President-Elect position from the previous academic year.
- B. Qualifications for holding an office:
 - a. To be an elected officer, the candidate must be a student in good standing at The University of Akron School of Law.
 - b. Enrollment must continue for the duration of the office. The candidate must be a voting member of GSLA.
 - c. No one may hold more than one elected GSLA office at a time
 - d. The candidate for president must be in the second year of either the day or evening program.
 - i. The Vice-President/President-Elect must have at least one semester of law school remaining.
 - ii. No candidate shall be an early out student during the academic year he or she will be serving.
- C. Election to Office and Office Tenure
 - a. The terms of all officers will begin with the first meeting in April and terminate at the first meeting of April in the following academic year.
 - b. Nominations for elected offices will be held in the second meeting in February and will be taken in the following order: Vice-President/President-Elect, Financial Officer, Administrative Officer. A qualified member may be nominated for more than one office.
 - c. Elections will be held during the first meeting in March. There will be separate elections for each office in the same order that nominations were

taken. A simple majority among voting members present, or by signed proxy, will be observed. Any person elected to a superior office is ineligible to run for a lesser office.

D. Duties and Descriptions of Officers

a. President

- i. Coordinates the functions and activities of the GSLA as determined by the Executive Board.
- ii. Maintains communication with an between members.
- iii. Serves as liaison between members, other student organizations, faculty, staff, the community, student government, the University, et al.
- iv. Is responsible for ensuring all administrative requirements of student organizations at the University of Akron are met.
- v. Oversees and ensures completion of all duties of the officers as delegated or described in this section.
- vi. Oversees and authorizes disbursement of GSLA funds as outlined by the Executive Board's annual budget.

b. Vice-President/President-Elect

- i. Assist the President as delegated / requested.
- ii. Oversee the operation of all ad-hoc committees.
- iii. Assume the duties and authority of President in the event of the President's absence, resignation, impeachment, or probation.
- iv. Oversee and coordinate all educational programs and functions of GLSA as directed by the Executive Committee, unless delegating a specific event or task.
- v. If the presidency is vacant, the Vice-President/President-Elect shall replace the President for the current year and the next year.
- vi. President-Elect status provides automatic succession into the President's position for the next school year.

c. Administrative Officer

- i. Maintain accurate minutes of all meetings.
- ii. Prepare and distribute an agenda for all meetings.
- iii. Assist the President and the Vice-President in preparing internal organizational communications
- iv. Facilitate correspondence as directed by the policies of the Executive Board.

d. Finance Officer

- i. Collect payment of dues and maintain records on such payments and memberships
 - ii. Maintain accurate records on the collection and disbursement of all GSLA funds
 - 1. The Finance Officer should be able to report reasonable accurate balances of all GSLA accounts at each regular meeting when requested.
 - 2. While the Finance Officer oversees the funds of GSLA, he or she may not disburse those funds without the express written authorization of the President.
 - iii. Prepare the annual budget request to the University and ensure it meets all guidelines.
 - iv. Prepare an archival deposit of the year at the end of his or her term of office
- E. The Officers must uphold this Constitution and the rules and regulations of The University of Akron as pertaining to the operation of student organizations.
 - a. A list of all current officers, their addresses, and telephone numbers, as well as the name and University extension of the required faculty advisor will be maintained in the GSLA office.
 - b. A copy of the most recently amended constitution will be kept on file in the GSLA office.
- F. The chain of command of the officers shall be:
 - a. The President, or in his or her absence...
 - b. The Vice-President/President-Elect, or in his or her absence...
 - c. The Finance Officer, or in his or her absence...
 - d. The Administrative Officer, or in his or her absence...
 - e. The Faculty Advisor, or in his or her absence...
 - f. The member with the longest tenure of membership in the organization.
- G. Succession to Office:
 - a. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President for any reason other than election of a new President, the Vice-President / President-Elect will become the President, the Finance Officer will become the Vice-President / President-Elect, and the Administrative Officer will become the Finance Officer. The Executive Board will then appoint a new Administrative Officer.
 - b. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Vice-President / President-Elect for any reason other than election of a new Vice-President / President-Elect, the Finance Officer will become the Vice-President / President-Elect, and the Administrative Officer will become the Finance

Officer. The Executive Board will then appoint a new Administrative Officer.

- c. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Finance Officer for any reason other than election of a new Finance Officer, the Administrative Officer will become the Finance Officer. The Executive Board will then appoint a new Administrative Officer.
- d. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Administrative Officer for any reason other than the election of a new Administrative Officer, the Executive Board will appoint a new Administrative Officer.
- e. Any person filling a vacant office must be eligible to hold that office by the qualifications established in Article IV, Section B.

H. Resignation from Office

- a. Officers, who serve voluntarily, may resign at any time.
- b. To resign from office, the officer must submit in writing a letter of intent to the President. The President must then promptly present the letter to the rest of the Executive Board.
- c. Vacancies created by resignation will be filled under the guidelines in Article V, Section G.

I. Impeachment of Officers

- a. Impeachment of officers can be initiated by any member in good standing. Impeachment proceedings will follow the guidelines of Article IV, Section G.
- b. Grounds for impeachment:
 - i. Elected Officers
 - 1. Intentionally undermining the goals and purposes of the GSLA as set forth in this Constitution, be it publicly or privately.
 - 2. Non-performance of duties as outlined in this Constitution.
 - 3. Public Misrepresentation of the GSLA.
 - ii. Appointed Officers
 - 1. Intentionally undermining the goals and purposes of the GSLA as set forth in this Constitution, be it publicly or privately.
 - 2. Non-performance of duties as outlined in this Constitution.
 - 3. Public Misrepresentation of the GSLA.
 - 4. Interference with the duties of an elected officer.
- c. A separate proceeding must be used if the charges also warrant revocation of membership.

- d. Following an impeachment, any vacancies will be filled under the guidelines of Article V, Section G

Article VI (Finance) :

- A. GSLA shall manage its finances and funds in accordance with the rules and regulations of The University of Akron.
 - a. Annual dues for membership shall be set forth by the Executive Board and shall be collected at any time during the academic year. After the fourth meeting of the fall semester, payment of dues will be required for a member to be given voting status as described in Article IV, Section D.
 - b. GSLA may accept funds given from outside The University of Akron in the form of donations, in-kind contributions, benefits, and/or fund raising activities.

Article VII (Dissolution) :

- A. GSLA shall be dissolved upon three quarters majority vote of the Executive Board, followed by three quarters majority vote of the membership of GSLA. All members of GSLA regardless of official voting status shall be allowed to vote on this matter.
- B. GSLA can be dissolved at any time that the officials of The University of Akron can offer proof that GSLA violated the rules and regulations of The University of Akron and dissolution is the only recourse. Appeals of this dissolution may be pursued by the membership in accordance with the University's policies and procedures.
- C. In the event of dissolution:
 - a. All non-University materials shall be liquidated, except in the cases of personal property on loan to the GSLA.
 - b. All outstanding debts of GSLA shall be settled utilizing appropriate funds as designated by The University of Akron.
 - c. Remaining proceeds from the liquidation and all other remaining funds shall be forwarded to an organization that supports similar goals and purposes as GSLA, and is approved by a majority vote of the Executive Board.

Article VIII (Affiliation with Non-Campus Organizations)

- A. Affiliation with a non-campus organization shall be limited to basic membership in organizations that have similar goals and purposes as the GSLA. Affiliation may only be for the purpose of gaining information and periodicals or publications.
- B. Affiliations with a non-campus organizations in a manner other than as described in Article VIII, Section A, shall require three-fourths majority vote of the Executive Board, followed by discussion and two-thirds majority vote among the general membership.

- C. Should an affiliation be granted as described in Article VIII, Section B, an amendment to the constitution must be made which fully defines the nature of the affiliation, in a manner similar to that recommended by The University of Akron.
- D. Dissolving an affiliation with any non-campus organization can be made by majority vote of the Executive Board, followed by discussion and majority vote by the general membership.

Article IX (By-Laws and Amendments)

- A. Adoption of this Constitution will require three-fourths majority vote of the Executive Board, followed by two-thirds vote of the voting membership in attendance. The Constitution shall become effective immediately upon acceptance.
- B. Amending the Constitution
 - a. Amendments may be proposed by any member of the GSLA during any general meeting of the membership.
 - b. The Amendment will be discussed by the general membership and refined into a written statement.
 - c. The written amendment will be submitted to the Executive Board for review. The President must ensure the amendment will comply with the rules and regulations of The University of Akron. Any changes deemed necessary by the Executive Board can be instituted by unanimous vote of the Executive Board or by approval of the amendment's author(s). The Executive Board must report the amendment back to the general membership within three weeks of receiving it.
 - d. Upon receiving the amendment, the general membership shall discuss its merits prior to voting. A three-fourths majority of voting members is required for adoption.
 - e. Amendments become effective immediately upon being accepted.