

[MODEL]
CONSTITUTION FOR
CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY STUDENT CHAPTER AT

[insert school name here]

PREAMBLE The Mission and Vision of the Christian Legal Society

Mission. The Christian Legal Society (“CLS”) is an Illinois non-profit corporation with its principal offices in Springfield, Virginia, that exists to inspire, encourage, and equip lawyers and law students, both individually and in community, to proclaim, love and serve Jesus Christ through the study and practice of law, the defense of religious freedom, and the provision of legal assistance to the poor.

Vision. CLS is dedicated to seeking justice with the love of God by following His principles: Helping members faithfully serve Jesus in their professions, relationships, communities, and churches; influencing the legal profession and the law in accordance with His teachings; and serving others as He would serve them.

ARTICLE I. CHAPTER FORMATION

1.1 *Name.* As chartered by the Executive Director of the Christian Legal Society, the name of this organization is the Christian Legal Society Student Chapter at *[insert name of law school or university here]* (the “Chapter”).

1.2 *Location.* This Chapter is chartered and established at *[insert name of university or law school]* and shall remain chartered at this [law] school unless lawful action to the contrary is taken by the Executive Director of the Christian Legal Society.

1.3. *Definitions.* When used herein, the terms “CLS” or the “Christian Legal Society” refers to the national membership organization based in Springfield, Virginia, and the term “Chapter” refers to the specific Student Chapter of the Christian Legal Society identified in article 1.1 by name.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Chapter is to develop and maintain a vibrant Christian law student presence on campus, enabling its members, individually and as a group, to love the Lord with their whole beings--hearts, souls, and minds--and to love their neighbors as themselves (Matthew 22:37-40). To that end, the Chapter will:

- Cultivate spiritual growth among its members through communal prayer, fellowship, and worship; learning to share one’s faith; and devotional study of the Bible and classic Christian works.
- Show the love of Christ to the campus community and the community at large by proclaiming the gospel in word and in deed, such as through a life of integrity and charitable good works; as Martin Luther put it, “to be as Christ to our neighbor.”
- Address the question, “What does it mean to be a Christian in law?” that is, learning to submit every aspect of one’s calling in the legal profession to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

3.1. *Statement of Faith.* All officers of this Chapter must subscribe to the Christian Legal Society Statement of Faith:

Trusting in Jesus Christ as my Savior, I believe in:

- *One God, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*
- *God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.*
- *The Deity of our Lord, Jesus Christ, God's only Son conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary; His vicarious death for our sins through which we receive eternal life; His bodily resurrection and personal return.*
- *The presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration.*
- *The Bible as the inspired Word of God.*

All officers must also affirm the CLS Community Life Statement and agree to operate the Chapter under its principles.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 *Chapter Activities.* All meetings and activities are open to anyone who is part of the law school or university community, including faculty, staff, and students.

4.2. *Chapter Membership.* Any full- or part-time student at [insert name of law school or university] may be a member of the Chapter if he or she attends at least 50% of the Chapter's regular meetings or activities. *[Upon request, CLS will consider whether to permit a chapter to have further appropriate membership requirements.]* Membership in the Chapter does not confer or imply membership in CLS.

4.3 *Eligibility to Vote.* Chapter members are the only persons eligible to vote for Chapter business that is put to a membership vote.

4.4 *Termination.* Any Chapter member who, for any reason, ceases to be a student at the School shall immediately cease to be a member of the Chapter.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

5.1 *General.* A Chapter must consist of at least three officers who are members of CLS and enrolled as students at the School. *[Upon request, CLS will decide whether to allow a chapter with fewer than three officers.]* All Chapter officers shall be members of CLS in good standing. Any Chapter officer who, for any reason, ceases to be a student at the School or whose CLS membership expires shall immediately cease to be an officer of the Chapter.

5.2 *Officer Duties.* The following offices and duties are stated for the use of those holding office. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same person.

President. The President shall preside over Chapter business meetings and meetings of the Officers. The President shall operate as the Chapter's representative and primary spokesperson to the law school community, university community, and public-at-large in all matters for which a formal representative is required or appropriate. The President shall also serve as the Chapter's primary contact person with CLS and shall immediately advise the CLS national office of any significant operational or policy conflicts or other problems within the Chapter or between the Chapter and another entity.

The President shall be responsible to select and notify the officer(s) who are to lead the Bible study, prayer, and worship. The President shall also be responsible for inviting any guest speakers. With the consent of the other officers, the President may delegate either or both of these two responsibilities to another officer.

Vice President. The Vice President shall assist the President in the discharge of his or her duties, as the President may direct, and shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the President. In the absence of the President, or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President, and when so acting, shall have all of the powers of, and be subject to all of the restrictions upon, the President.

Secretary. The Secretary shall maintain all non-financial records of the Chapter. The Secretary shall be responsible for (a) preparing minutes of all meetings and (b) assisting the President in filing the annual reporting form with CLS.

Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining all financial records of the Chapter, including, but not limited to, all records of the payment of funds, deposits and disbursements from the Chapter's bank accounts pursuant to the procedures described in Article VIII.

Other Officers. Any other Chapter Officers appointed pursuant to this Article shall have such duties as are assigned to them by the President.

Each officer is expected to lead Bible studies, prayer, and worship at Chapter meetings as tasked by the President. Although the President is the primary spokesperson for the Chapter, each officer also serves as a spokesperson for the Chapter.

5.3 Bearing Witness of Christ. The Chapter is expected to bear witness of Christ.

5.4 Transition of Authority. To insure the continual wellbeing of the Chapter, outgoing officers shall facilitate the orderly transition of authority by taking adequate time in the winter and spring to train new Chapter leaders. The Chapter shall implement a procedure for the naming of at least three new officers by April 30 of each year. No later than May 1, the outgoing President or Secretary shall inform the CLS office of the names and contact information of the incoming officers.

5.5 Election of Officers. Officers shall be elected by vote of the officers at the meeting of the board of officers called for that purpose each year. Officers may vote in consultation with members, faculty advisors, or other campus ministry staff, should the officers so choose. Any vacancies in the board of officers shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining officers.

[Alternative 5.5. To be used if your university administration requires democratic elections (please delete this alternative section otherwise). Election of Officers. Officers shall be elected by a

majority vote of the Members at the Chapter meeting called for that purpose in the spring semester each year. Any vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining officers.]

5.6. *CLS Membership of Newly-Elected Officers.* In order for a Chapter to retain its affiliation with CLS, each officer, upon election, must join CLS if he or she is not already a member.

5.7 *Forcible Removal of an Officer.* The removal of a current officer prior to the end of term requires a majority vote of officers or action by the CLS. Such action may be initiated by Chapter members or officers or CLS.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Chapter meetings shall be held with enough frequency to accomplish the mission and purposes of the Chapter. At least four general meetings shall be held during each school year. The officers, in consultation with the chapter members and any advisor, shall determine the frequency, time and place, and agenda of each meeting and shall insure that adequate notice is given of each meeting.

The President shall be responsible to select and notify before each meeting the officers who are to lead the Bible study, prayer, and worship as well as for inviting any guest speakers.

All students, staff, and faculty are welcome to attend CLS meetings and events, regardless of race, age, disability, color, national origin, religion, race, sex, veteran status or sexual attraction/sexual practices.

ARTICLE VII. FINANCES

The Chapter may raise revenues through contributions, fundraising activities, or by applying for funds otherwise available to student groups. A Chapter shall never charge local dues. If the Chapter chooses to raise revenues, it shall insure that the highest standards of Christian morality and financial integrity are met. At a minimum, the Chapter shall: maintain its funds in a segregated checking or savings account managed according to School standards; require the signatures of two officers to write a check or withdraw funds; incur financial obligations only when there is sufficient funding to honor the obligations; pay all debts in a prompt manner; and maintain accurate financial records showing all receipts and expenditures and all assets and liabilities of the Chapter. Upon request, the Chapter's financial records shall be made available to CLS.

ARTICLE VIII. RESTRICTIONS ON ACTIVITIES

The Chapter shall not carry on any activities prohibited by CLS under its bylaws or by Sections 501(c)(3) and 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code. Without the prior written consent of the CLS Executive Director, the Chapter shall not: be a voluntary party in any litigation; seek legal counsel from an attorney not on CLS staff; lobby (including the publishing or distribution of statements) or otherwise attempt to influence legislation; or participate or intervene in any political or judicial campaign on behalf of any candidate for office. No part of the net income of the Chapter shall inure to the benefit of its officers or other private persons, except that the Chapter shall be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services actually rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its purposes.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS AND INTERPRETATION

9.1 *Amendments.* The Chapter may amend this Constitution by a 75% member vote, or unanimous vote of the officers; provided, however, that no amendment shall have any force or effect unless it has been approved in writing by the CLS Executive Director. Request for approval of any amendment must be submitted in writing to **CLS Law Student Ministries, 8001 Braddock Rd, Suite 300, Springfield, VA 22151, lsm@clsnet.org.**

9.2 *Interpretation.* Any conflict or disagreement among Chapter officers or members as to the meaning or interpretation of this Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Christian Legal Society, through the Executive Director or Director of Law Student Ministries. The decision of the CLS Executive Director resolving the conflict or disagreement shall be final. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between this Constitution and the CLS bylaws, the terms and provisions of the CLS Bylaws shall control. The Chapter, on behalf of its officers and members, agrees to submit any conflict with CLS to mediation or arbitration using the services of Peacemaker Ministries.

ARTICLE X. FORCE AND EFFECT OF CONSTITUTION

This Constitution shall take effect when the CLS Executive Director executes an affiliation agreement, accepting this Constitution, and shall remain in effect until terminated in writing by either party or until the Executor Director of CLS determines that the Chapter ceases to meet the qualifications of a CLS student chapter as enumerated in this Constitution and Art. XIII of the CLS Bylaws. If the Chapter Constitution is terminated, the Chapter ceases to exist.

CONSTITUTION ADOPTED ON: _____, 20____.

SIGNED:

Chapter Officer and CLS Student Member

Print Name:_____

Chapter Officer and CLS Student Member

Print Name:_____

Chapter Officer and CLS Student Member

Print Name:_____

AFFILIATION PROCESS

To form a student chapter of CLS, at least three officers who are members in good standing of the Christian Legal Society must sign this Constitution, complete the Application for Recognition as a Student Chapter of the Christian Legal Society ("Affiliation Agreement"), and submit the originals of the Constitution and Affiliation Agreement to

CLS Law Student Ministries
8001 Braddock Rd., Ste 302
Springfield, VA 22151 (mail)

The Law Student Ministries Director shall forward copies of the Constitution and Affiliation Agreement to the CLS Executive Director. If the Executive Director accepts the application, he or she shall send a signed acceptance document ("Acceptance") to the Law Student Ministries Director, who shall place the original Acceptance in the Chapter file and promptly forward a copy to the Chapter.

**APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION AS
A STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY**

AFFILIATION AGREEMENT

In consideration of the right to be recognized as an affiliated student chapter of the Christian Legal Society ("CLS") and to enjoy all the benefits and privileges arising from that status, applicant, the CLS Student Chapter of _____
[insert name of educational institution] agrees:

1. To abide by the chapter Constitution and to maintain it without alteration, unless written approval for amendment is obtained from the CLS Executive Director.
2. To accept as binding the decision of the CLS Executive Director in response to any inquiry concerning the meaning or interpretation of the local Constitution.
3. To permit and facilitate the inspection of applicant's records and operations at any time by the Christian Legal Society.
4. To recognize ownership by CLS of the trademarks and service marks CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY, CLS and a symbol consisting of a cross and scales of justice, and the exclusive right of CLS to control the quality of services offered and materials produced by applicant under these marks. Upon request, to provide CLS with copies of any or all materials carrying the CLS marks.
5. To cease immediately to hold itself out as a CLS student chapter upon demand by CLS or upon termination of this agreement and thereupon to discontinue promptly the use of the CLS marks.
6. To advise CLS of any significant operational or policy conflicts or other problems within the Chapter or between the Chapter and the School.
7. To ensure, early in the school year, that the chapter advisor and student chapter officers read the Student Chapter Manual and familiarize themselves with the contents of the Resource Packet.
8. To make every effort to insure that one or more student chapter officers or members attend the CLS National Conference each year and to assist CLS by raising funds at the local level for this purpose.
9. To respond promptly to all CLS inquiries and, by May 1 of each year, to inform the LSM office of who the incoming officers will be.
10. This agreement shall continue in effect until terminated by either party or until applicant ceases to exist, whichever occurs first. Either party may terminate this agreement at any time by written notice to the other party.

DATE: _____, 20____.

CLS STUDENT CHAPTER of _____

BY: _____

Chapter Officer and CLS Student Member
Print Name:

Chapter Officer and CLS Student Member
Print Name:

Chapter Officer and CLS Student Member
Print Name:

**ACCEPTANCE OF
CLS STUDENT CHAPTER CONSTITUTION AND AFFILIATION AGREEMENT**

The CLS Student Chapter Constitution and the Application for Recognition as a Student Chapter of CLS (Affiliation Agreement), submitted by the Christian Law Fellowship of _____ [insert name of educational institution], are hereby accepted. Henceforth, the fellowship is recognized as an official student chapter of the Christian Legal Society, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the above Constitution and Affiliation Agreement.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY:

David Nammo, Esq.
Executive Director, CLS

DATE: _____, 20____