

**BY-LAWS**  
**ASA SECTION ON SOCIOLOGY OF LAW**  
**Amended 2022**

The purpose of the section of Sociology of Law is to encourage and enhance research, teaching and other professional concerns in the study of law and society. The section seeks to promote communication, collaboration, and consultation among scholars in the field of the sociology of law.

**I. *Officers of the Section***

The officers of the Section shall consist of a Council that includes: a Chair; a Chair-elect; a Past-Chair; a Secretary-Treasurer; a Newsletter Editor serving *ex officio*, six Council Members and one Graduate Student Council Members. All Officers shall serve a two-year term except the Chair who will be on Council for three years. The Graduate Student Council Member shall serve a one year term. The Chair-elect will serve in the first year as the Chair of the Program Committee for the ASA meeting the following year. The Chair will serve as Chair for one year, and will act as Chair of the Council and shall preside at the annual business meeting. In the third year, the Chair serves as Past-Chair. The Secretary-Treasurer shall take and circulate minutes of meetings, and keep and present the documents and financial records of the Section.

The elected Council member receiving the greatest number of votes shall serve as Chair-elect of the Nominating Committee in his or her first year on Council and the Chair of the Nominating Committee in his or her second year.

The Newsletter Editor shall be appointed by the chair with the concurrence of Council for a term of two years, at which time the Editor may be reappointed or a new Editor appointed to a two year term. The Newsletter Editor shall Chair the Communications and Publications Committee.

Other than the Newsletter Editor, officers cannot succeed themselves. No member can hold two elective offices simultaneously. No member may be a member of Council for more than a continuous five-year period, nor may any member hold Council positions for more than seven years of any ten-year period. All voting members of the Section are eligible to serve as elected Officers but only a graduate student shall serve as the Graduate Student Council Member. If an elected office is vacated before the end of its term, it will be filled for the unexpired term by appointment of the Chair with the concurrence of the Council. If the Chair's office is vacated, the Chair-elect shall fill the functions of Chair. If a Past-Chair cannot serve on Council, no replacement shall be appointed.

**II. *Powers of the Officers***

The Council is vested with the power to carry out all necessary operations of the Section, acting as the representative of the membership of the Section. The Council shall make decisions at its scheduled meetings by a majority vote of its attending members and between meetings by mail, e-mail, conference phone call or any similar method designed to allow all Council members a chance to register their votes. Any action to be made on behalf of the Section will be brought to

the next Section Business Meeting for a vote if requested by three or more Council members. In addition, an action to be made on behalf of the Section may be brought to the next Section Business Meeting for a vote by a petition signed by 10 percent of the members of the Section or by 25 members, whichever is less.

Unless otherwise provided in these bylaws, all appointments to Committees shall be made by the Chair with the concurrence of Council.

### **III. *Elections and Voting***

The elections of the Section shall be carried out in cooperation with the American Sociological Association and coordinated with its schedule. Newly elected officers and Council members shall assume office on the day following the annual Business Meeting of the Section at the American Sociological Association's Annual Meeting.

### **IV. *Committees***

There shall be a Nomination Committee of at least four members: two members shall be appointed for one-year terms and the Chair and Chair-Elect who shall be members of Council selected as described above. At least two candidates will be presented for each office by the Nominating Committee.

There shall be a Program Committee consisting of the Chair-Elect of the Section (sitting as Chair of the Program Committee). As he or she deems appropriate, he or she may constitute a committee with up to four members. If a Program Committee is appointed, appointments shall be made by the Program Committee Chair. The Program Committee shall develop sessions of interest to the Section at each annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in cooperation with the Program Committee of the association. The Program Committee may also develop programs outside of this framework with the consent of the Council.

There shall be a Communications and Publications Committee consisting of the Newsletter Editor who shall be appointed for two years and serve as Chair and at least two other members appointed for one-year terms. The Newsletter Editor shall edit the Section newsletter and serve *ex officio* as a member of Council. Other members of the Communications and Publications Committee shall serve as Contributing Editors of the newsletter. The purpose of the Communications and Publications Committee shall be to prepare a Section newsletter to be distributed to all Section members through the American Sociological Association and to maintain the online presence of the Section. This committee shall also compile periodic reports as requested by the Council of the Section or the Committee on Publications of the American Sociological Association and deal with any other publications-related business of the section.

There shall be a Mentoring Committee consisting of at least 3 members: a Chair (who is a member of Council) and two additional members appointed by the Chair of the Section. The Mentoring Committee shall plan mentoring functions and facilitate mentoring relationships as needed between graduate students, junior faculty, mid-career and senior scholars as needed.

There shall be prize committees each consisting of a Chair and at least two additional members. Prize Committees shall advertise and select prizes for the: (1) distinguished undergraduate student paper in the sociology of law; (2) distinguished graduate student paper in the sociology of law; (3) distinguished article in the sociology of law; and (4) distinguished book in the sociology of law. Undergraduate and Graduate Student paper prize winners shall be provided up to \$100 to defray travel expenses to attend the meeting and accept the award.

Other committees may be established by the Chair of the Section on an ad hoc basis, subject to approval by the Council.

## ***V. Membership***

The membership of the Section is open to any member of the American Sociological Association without regard to the classification of the membership. Members who do not pay their Section dues shall be suspended, and dropped from the rolls after two years.

## ***VI. Dues***

Dues shall be set by the Council to cover the operation of the Section in accordance with the requirements of the American Sociological Association.

## ***VII. By-law Changes***

Proposed changes in these by-laws must first be discussed at an annual meeting of the Section. Next, the changes must be approved by a majority of the entire Council. Finally, the changes must be submitted to vote of the Section members through a mailed or emailed ballot and approved by a majority of those submitting valid ballots. If the vote is conducted by email, the voting shall remain open for no fewer than 30 days with no fewer than 3 emailed announcements about the vote (one on the day the balloting opens, one at the mid-point, and one approximately 72 hours before the ballot closes).

If the Council members fail to approve a proposed by-law change but there are three or more dissents, the change shall be submitted to those members attending the next subsequent annual Business Meeting. If the change is approved by a majority of those voting at this meeting, it shall be submitted to the general membership via mailed or emailed ballot and shall take effect upon approval of a majority of those submitting valid ballots.