

# **Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International By-Laws for 2011-2014**

Adopted: September 2011

## **ARTICLE I – Chartered Status**

The Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International is a validly chartered group, as approved by the SBA.

## **ARTICLE II – Statement of Purpose**

The purpose for the creation and existence of the Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International is to inspire continuation of the debate over the role of international humanitarian and human rights concerns in domestic and foreign law, as well as to raise awareness of international human rights issues within a local context.

Amnesty International (AI) is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for internationally recognized human rights. AI's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. In pursuit of this vision, AI's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

AI is independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest, or religion. It does not support or oppose any government or political system, nor does it support or oppose the views of the victims whose rights it seeks to protect. It is concerned solely with the impartial protection of human rights.

## **ARTICLE III – Objectives**

The objective of this group is to promote Amnesty International's Vision and Mission. In order to reach the goals set forth therein, members shall engage in as many of the following areas of work as the group decides, under the general supervision of AIUSA:

- **Demand Dignity**  
Amnesty International's Demand Dignity Campaign works to end the human rights abuses that imprison people in poverty. Those abuses affect the full spectrum of human rights -- like the rights to health, housing, and freedom from discrimination.
- **Individuals at Risk**  
In countries around the world, people's lives are threatened because of who they are or what they believe. Amnesty International puts protecting individuals at risk of human rights violations at the very heart of our work.

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- **Security with Human Rights**

Amnesty International's Security with Human Rights Campaign works to ensure security for all of us by breaking the cycle of terror and torture between armed groups and states.

- **Abolish the Death Penalty**

The death penalty is the ultimate, irreversible denial of human rights. By working towards the abolition of the death penalty worldwide, Amnesty International aims to end the cycle of violence created by a system riddled with economic and racial bias and tainted by human error.

**ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

1. A member of the Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International is considered an “active member” when he or she participates in at least two of the following: group or committee meetings and/or on or off campus events. “Active member” status attaches for only one semester of one year and is renewable each semester through the same procedure.
2. Any law student of Albany Law School is eligible to be an “active member” and any active member may hold office.
3. Non-students may act as associate members, but may not vote, hold office or act on behalf of the Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International.

**ARTICLE V – OFFICERS**

1. Election of Officers
  - a. The Executive Board shall consist of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary – each to be elected by a majority of members present at an advertised meeting for the purpose of election. An Activities Coordinator position may be added by a majority vote of the Executive Board, and that position will be elected in the same manner as the other Board positions. The members may, by a majority of members present at the time of the election, combine the offices of President and Vice President into an office of Co-President, which shall be shared by two board members who are elected in the same manner as the other Board positions. The office of Co-President shall exist for one school year and may be renewed. The office of Co-President may be renamed upon a majority vote of members present at an advertised meeting.
  - b. A member of the Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International becomes eligible to run for office by being an active member for at least one month prior to the election, and by submitting his or her intention to run for

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office in writing or electronically to any member of the current Executive Board at least one week prior to the election. Any or all clauses of this by-law may be disregarded if fewer active members intend to run for office than there are positions on the Executive Board.

- c. Officers will be elected by written ballot, with each active member casting a vote. A majority of votes will constitute a victory.
- d. Election of the Executive Board will take place at a scheduled meeting for that purpose during late April or early May, to ensure continuity of the organization the following academic year.
- e. Officers will assume office for the period of one year.

**2. Duties of Officers**

- a. The President of AI shall be the chair of the Executive Board and shall preside over the membership of AI. The President shall be responsible for presiding over and forming the agenda for all meetings of the Amnesty membership, and meetings of the Executive Board.
- b. The Vice-President of AI shall assume all duties reasonably placed upon that office by the President. This may include temporary Presidential duties, as needed in the absence of the President.
- c. The Secretary of AI shall be responsible for the taking of minutes at meetings of Amnesty members, and at meetings of the Executive Board. The Secretary shall also be responsible for corresponding with the general student body as needed. The Secretary shall be responsible for sending copies of the minutes to all Amnesty members by email.
- d. The Treasurer of AI shall be the financial officer for Amnesty. The Treasurer shall create a budget and defend the budget at the SBA budget meeting in the fall and spring semesters. The Treasurer shall assume all further duties reasonably placed upon that office by the President.

**3. Impeachment of Officers**

- a. Officers are subject to impeachment for wrongdoings in office or failing in their duties.
- b. Impeachment procedures will be initiated at the written request of five active members.
- c. Within two weeks following such a request, a hearing will be conducted for the presentation of evidence from all concerned parties (ie., the accused and

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the accusers). The President shall preside over such a hearing, except when the President is a concerned party, in which case the Vice President shall preside over such a hearing. Should both the President and Vice President be concerned parties, the hearing shall be presided over by an official elected by a majority of active members for this purpose.

- d. Immediately following such a hearing, a vote shall be held on the issue of impeachment.
- e. If two-thirds (2/3) of active members vote in favor of impeachment, the officer is thereby impeached, and a new election for the vacant position shall be held within two weeks.

**Article VI – Meetings**

The Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International shall hold scheduled meetings as needed but at least 3 times per semester. Scheduled meetings may coincide with events sponsored by the Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International. Meetings may be called by any member of the Executive Board as long as such meetings are agreed to by at least three-quarters (3/4) of the Executive Board.

**Article VII – Statement of Non-Discrimination**

The Albany Law School Chapter of Amnesty International does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, race, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, political or social affiliation, age, marital/familial status, sexual orientation or sexual preference. This policy will include, but not be limited to recruitment, membership, activities, or eligibility to hold office.