Constitution as of October 4, 2014

Article I. Organization Name.

This organization shall be named the Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter. The Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter may also be referred to as the “Student Veterans of America (SVA), UM Law Chapter,” or the “Law School VSA.”

Article II. Statement of Purpose.

Section 1. Guiding Principles.

The purpose of the Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter is to bring veterans, student-veterans, and students together to foster mentorship, fellowship, and support veteran’s rights.

Section 2. Objectives.

The objectives of Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter shall be to:

1. Support military veterans at the University of Miami School of Law and the greater University of Miami campus.

2. Educate the University of Miami School of Law community on veteran's issues to include disability, healthcare, housing, employment, readjustment, and family law issues.

3. Establish a network to provide information and a support system for veteran-law students, as well as much as reasonably possible, participate and support the main campus VSO’s activities and other veteran-related events in the area.

4. Serve as a feeder for students interested in the University of Miami School of Law Veterans Legal Corps, the Equal Justice Works/AmeriCorpsJD Veteran’s Rights Fellows program, the HOPE Pro-Bono Program, etc.
5. Provide community service to disabled and homeless veterans in the greater Miami community.

Article III. Affiliation Statement.

This Organization shall be affiliated with the Student Veterans of America (SVA).

Article IV. Responsibility.

The Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter shall comply with all Student Bar Association (SBA), University of Miami School of Law, and University of Miami policies and procedures, including but not limited to those policies set forth in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, The Student Organization Handbook, as well as local, state, and federal laws.

Article V. Membership.

Section 1. General Membership.

Membership in the Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter shall be open to all University of Miami School of Law students in good Academic Standing who have paid their Student Activity Fee. The SVA, UM Law Chapter shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, handicap, age, sexual orientation, or political and religious affiliation in any of its policies, procedures, or practices. Non-voting memberships may be extended to interested faculty, administrators, staff members, and alumni of the University.

Section 2. Active Membership.

A. Active Membership in SVA, UM Law Chapter is defined as those students who attend at least 50% of meetings and/ or club activities.

B. Benefits of Active membership include the right to vote and to run for executive board positions (if eligibility requirements are met).

Article VI. Executive Board.

Section 1. Positions. At a minimum, the chapter must have an active President and Treasurer at all times. During the advent of the organization in Fall 2014, the President will be the founder of the organization, and the Treasurer will be
appointed by the President for the remainder of the academic year. Elections for the Vice President and Secretary will take place at the first organizational meeting. In subsequent academic years, the new President will be selected by the outgoing Executive Board (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary) by majority vote. The remaining positions will be selected through election by active-members majority vote.

A. President.
   a. The President MUST be a U.S. or Ally country (UK, CAN, AUS, NZ, Israel, NATO, etc.) military veteran-law student.
   b. Serves as Primary Contact for the Organization, works with the Student Bar Association and Dean of Students, and serves as official liaison to the Student Veterans of America in Washington, DC.
   c. Organizes and presides over meetings and/or events.
   d. Relays important information to the organization members (ex. meeting times and places).
   e. Oversees and is responsible for the organization's fundraising and sponsorship.
   f. Responsible for organizing and presiding over participation in community service activities.

B. Vice President.
   a. The Vice-President MUST be a U.S. or Ally country (UK, CAN, AUS, NZ, Israel, NATO, etc.) military veteran-law student.
   b. Assists President with leadership and operational duties as assigned/required.
   c. Assumes President’s duties when the President is unable to attend an event or meetings.
   d. Ensures attendance of members is taken at meetings and events.

C. Treasurer.
   a. Works with the law school as the LAFAC liaison.
   b. Prepares the budget of the organization.
   c. Work with the law school advisor to oversee and conduct any of the club's expenditures or budget allocations.
D. Secretary.
   a. Record Executive Board and General meeting minutes. Provide updates to the Hearsay.
   b. Maintain a roster of active membership and up-to-date contact information through OrgSync.
   c. Creates or is responsible for working with the student events/activity office at the law school on any flyers, posters, banners, web communication, and other publicity aspects.

E. 3L or LLM Member at Large.
   a. Acts as a liaison between the General Membership and Executive Board. Attends all Executive Board meetings as a voting member.
   b. Attends all SVA, Miami Law Chapter events in support of the organization.
   c. Supports the organization in terms of networking, membership, and morale and assists the President as needed.

F. 2L Member at Large.
   a. Acts as a liaison between the General Membership and Executive Board. Attends all Executive Board meetings as a voting member.
   b. Attends all SVA, Miami Law Chapter events in support of the organization.
   c. Supports the organization in terms of networking, membership, and morale and assists the President as needed.

G. Section 2. Eligibility Requirements.

All Active members who have been active in the club for at least one (1) semester and are in academic good standing are eligible to run for office.

Section 3. Length of Term.

The length of the term of office for Executive Board members shall be for one academic year, with elections being held in accordance with the law school calendar in the springtime.
Section 4. Installation.

Installation of new Executive Board members will occur in the spring semester and is to be facilitated by the advisor and/ or exiting Executive Board. The Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter will participate in the “Passing the Gavel” ceremony.

Section 5. Vacancies/Succession.

If a vacancy occurs:

A. If a vacancy occurs in the President position, it will be filled by the Vice President for the remainder of the academic year, and the Vice President will be replaced by special election at a time and place determined by the Law School SVA Executive Board.

B. If a vacancy occurs in any other position (student withdraws from school, leaves club, resigns from office, etc.), the President will appoint an active member to fill that position for the remainder of the academic year.

Section 6. Impeachment/Removal of Executive Board.

A. Petition.

Two-thirds (2/3) of the Executive Board must agree or two-thirds (2/3) of active members must sign a petition to ask for impeachment of an Executive Board Member.

B. Process.

Active members, the Executive Board, Advisor, and the Executive Board member being impeached must be notified at least two weeks in advance of the impeachment hearing. The impeachment hearing must occur while classes are in session during the semester.

C. Hearings.

The moderator of the impeachment hearing will be the Faculty Advisor. Three-fourths (3/4) of active members must be present in order for the impeachment hearing to begin. Each side will be given the opportunity to present their case and
the active members may ask questions. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of active members present is needed for conviction and removal.

Section 7. Resignation of Office.

In the event that an Executive Board member is unable to comply with the duties as assigned, a formal letter of resignation must be submitted, two weeks prior to the last day of service. The committee member must address the letter to the President carbon copying the Law School Advisor. In the event the Executive Board member is the President who is resigning, the letter is addressed to the Vice President of the organization. An exit interview moderated by the Law School SVA Executive Board and the Faculty Advisor must be held the week the committee member is departing. During the committee member's last meeting he/she will officially announce their resignation.

Article VII. Elections.

Section 1. Timeline.

Annual election of SVA, UM Law Chapter Executive Board shall occur during the spring semester at a time and place that falls within the law school’s designated window, with the exact date determined by the Executive Board.

Section 2. Procedures.

A. Facilitation.

Elections will be facilitated by a non-returning Executive Board Member or a non-returning active member appointed by the Executive Board. This appointed member is to remain neutral and relinquishes his or her right to vote.

B. Eligibility.

i. All Active members who have been active for at least one (1) semester are eligible to run for office.

C. Nominations.

i. Nominations for the Executive Board will take place by email during a time published by the Executive Board Secretary.
ii. Candidates may nominate themselves.

iii. Nominations do not have to be seconded to be placed in the elections ballot.

iv. Candidates may only be nominated for one position. If they are not selected for a position during voting, they can however compete for the next position available.

v. The nominee must accept their nomination in person when elections are held.

D. Voting.

i. Only active members have the right to vote.

ii. The sequence of voting for Executive Board will be the following:
   a) President---elected by outgoing members of the current Executive Board.
   b) Vice President---elected by general members.
   c) Treasurer---elected by general members.
   d) Secretary---elected by general members.
   e) 3L or LLM Member at Large---elected by general members.
   f) 2L Member at Large---elected by the general members.

iii. A candidate for office need must be present for the Election. If a candidate cannot be present at the election, he/ she may have a facilitator present on their behalf.

iv. The position to be voted on will be announced and all the candidates for said position will be presented to the Active Members.

v. One candidate at a time for each position will be given the opportunity for a brief speech (5 minutes) followed by questions (3 minutes) from the active members present.

vi. After all Candidates for said position have presented before the active members present, voting for that position will occur.
viii. Candidate with the majority vote wins. In case a candidate does not receive a majority, successive votes shall be taken until one candidate receives a majority vote.

ix. The Candidate(s) that did not win may choose to roll down his or her nomination to the next elected position up for election.

Article VIII. Committees.

Section 1. Standing Committees.

There will be no standing committees at this time.

Section 2.

Special Committees may be appointed at the discretion of the Executive Board.

Article IX. Faculty Advisor.

The Advisor for the Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter shall be a full-time faculty, administrator, or staff member at the University of Miami School of Law. This individual is responsible for the management of all accounts, events, as well as being present at annual elections.

Article X. Meetings.

Section 1. General.

It is the organization’s goal to hold general member meetings or official events at least twice an academic semester or more.

Section 2. Executive Board.

Executive Board meetings will be held usually once a month during the academic year, and usually at the discretion of the President.

Section 3. Special.

Special meetings will be held at the discretion of the Executive Board.

Article XI. Discipline.
Section 1. Reason.

1. Misrepresentation of the organization or behavior that is detrimental to its guiding principles and/or objectives.

2. Lack of civility to fellow law students, fellow student organizations, or members of the community in general.

Section 2. Process.

A mandatory meeting between the member being disciplined, the advisor, and the President shall be held at a time and place agreed upon by all parties involved.

Section 3. Consequences

Based on the severity of the action, the member will be disciplined accordingly. Sanctions will be determined during the mandatory meeting by the President, with the approval of the Faculty Advisor, with the most severe form of discipline being the revocation of active membership status.

Article XII. Amendments to the Constitution.

Section 1. Submission.

Amendments to this constitution shall be submitted to the Executive Board in writing.

Section 2. Process.

A. 100% of the Executive Board must be in agreement for adoption of the amendment.

B. If 100% of the Executive Board is not in agreement, a vote of active membership must occur.

i. Notification of changes to the Constitution must be made at least 2 weeks before voting occurs.

ii. 3/4 of the active membership is needed before voting can occur. A 2/3 vote of active members present is needed for the adoption of the amendment.
Section 3. Final Approval.

Amendments must be presented to the Student Bar Association for approval prior to implementation. The amendment is not final until an updated Constitution is submitted and approved.

Article XIII. Dissolution of the Organization.

Section 1. Process.

The Student Veterans of America, Miami Law Chapter may be dissolved after dissolution is approved by the Executive Board and by a vote of 3/4 active members, provided that a notice of the vote on dissolution is furnished to all active members at least sixty (60) days prior to the vote.

Section 2. Obligations.

Upon dissolution, the Executive Board will utilize assets of the organization to pay all obligations and expenses of the organization.

Section 3. Approval.

Notice of dissolution must be presented in writing to the President of the Student Bar Association and must include reason of dissolution.

President Name: Noel C. Pace, 3L

Signature:

Treasurer Name: Jessica Neer, 2L

Signature:

Article IX. Points of Contact.

svamiamilawchapter@gmail.com

SVA, Miami Law Chapter OrgSync Page
Official Affiliation:

Student Veterans of America

Unofficial Affiliation:

The Veteran Student Organization at the University of Miami