



2020 Constance Baker Motley National Student Writing Competition

The American Constitution Society proudly announces its eleventh annual Constance Baker Motley National Student Writing Competition. This annual competition for law students is an opportunity to recognize legal scholarship that enhances the understanding and reputation of progressive legal theories.

Overview/Theme: The American Constitution Society welcomes all papers furthering and promoting a progressive vision of the Constitution, law, and public policy. Entrants are encouraged to view this topic broadly, and we welcome submissions on a variety of substantive areas. Examples of possible topics include: access to the courts, Census report, civil liberties, consumer rights, disability rights, freedom of speech, LGBTQ+ rights, human rights, immigration, labor law, money in judicial elections, voting and the political process, privacy, protection of health, safety, the environment, racial equality, religion, second amendment and guns, separation of powers and federalism, state attorneys general, and women's reproductive rights and reproductive freedom. Papers will be judged on their effective use, analysis, and/or expansion of progressive legal scholarship. The judging committee will include federal judges and leading academics. The student authors of the top three papers will receive special recognition at the 2020 ACS National Convention and a cash prize for their work. The top paper will receive an offer of publication in the *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law*. The deadline is **Sunday, February 9, 2020**.

Submission Requirements:

- **Deadline:** Submissions must be emailed by **Sunday, February 9, 2020 at 11:59 pm EST**. Papers submitted after this date will not be considered.
- **Eligibility:** Any full-time or part-time law student currently enrolled in a J.D., LL.M. or S.J.D. program at a United States law school is eligible to participate. Only one entry per student is permitted. Multiple submissions will result in disqualification. All entrants must be a student member of the national American Constitution Society for Law and Policy. You may join online at <http://getinvolved.acslaw.org/join>.
- **Content:** Papers will be judged on their effective use, analysis, and/or expansion of progressive legal scholarship. Submissions may focus on one specific area of the law, legal theory, or jurisprudence, or may broadly cover multiple areas or major themes, so long as the submission as a whole relates to the topic. Possible topics include – **but are not limited to** – access to the courts, Census report, civil liberties, consumer rights, disability rights, freedom of speech, LGBTQ+ rights, human rights, immigration, labor law, money in judicial elections, voting and the political process, privacy,

protection of health, safety, and the environment, racial equality, religion, second amendment and guns, separation of powers and federalism, state attorneys general, and women's reproductive rights and freedom. **Please do not put your name or other identifying information anywhere in your paper; only the submission form should have your name.**

- ***Format:*** Submissions must be original unpublished academic ***works by one author. The length must be between 25 and 50*** pages, including footnotes. The text of the paper must be in double-spaced 12-point Courier font with 1-inch margins. Footnotes may be in single-spaced 10-point font.
- ***Note:*** Please be aware that Penn Law School and its Journals operate under stricter plagiarism rules than many law schools. Entrants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these rules, which are available at <https://www.law.upenn.edu/students/policies/conduct-responsibility-the-law-school-policy-on-plagiarism.php>.
- ***Judging Process:*** All submissions will go through an initial screening process. All eligible submissions will be reviewed by three readers. The finalists from that process will then be reviewed by a panel of judges made up of federal judges, law professors, and other ACS members. This panel will select the top three papers among the finalists. Submissions will be judged on their depth of legal analysis, quality of writing, readiness for publication, originality (in topic selection and treatment), thoroughness of research, relevance to the development of progressive constitutional jurisprudence, and discussion of conclusions and future impact. The winners will be announced in May 2020.
- ***Award:*** The author of the top submission will receive \$3,000 and be eligible for publication in the *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law*. The authors of the two runner-up submissions will each receive \$1,000. ACS will post winning submissions on its website. In addition, the three winning authors will be recognized at the 2020 ACS National Convention in mid-June.
- ***Entry Fee:*** There is no entry fee. However, all participants must be a student member of the national American Constitution Society for Law and Policy. You may join online at <http://getinvolved.acslaw.org/join>.
- ***Previous Publication/Use:*** No paper previously published will be considered. However, papers currently being considered for publication, papers related to research done by the author and/or submitted to fulfill a course requirement or law journal credit requirements may be submitted. Submissions should not yet have undergone significant editing by journal editors, professors, or others. If a paper is currently being considered for publication, the author should consult the editors of the alternative journal to make sure that entry in this competition will not interfere with his/her opportunity for publication in that journal.
- ***Additional Questions:*** Check <https://www.acslaw.org/get-involved/awards-and-competitions/constance-baker-motley-national-student-writing-competition/> for updates or email writing_competition@acslaw.org with questions.