Formal recommendations by the recognition committee:

- **The committee recommended** that the Senate approve four groups for recognition:
  1. Columbia Health Law Association
  2. New England Students Association
  3. Midwest Students Association
  4. Bike Club

- **The committee recommended** that the Senate withhold recognition from five groups:
  1. Motorcycle club
  2. Refugee Connect
  3. Workers' Rights Project
  4. Texas Society

- **The committee recommended** that the Senate re-approve the six existing groups that had changed their constitutions, as these changes occurred in non-controversial ways.
  - Black Law Students Association
    - ("We added a statement emphasizing BLSA’s commitment to welcoming all people, regardless of creed, color, etc.")
  - Outlaws
    - ("We amended our Constitution to allow Co-Presidents. Previously, only one person could be elected to President.")
  - Law Students for Life
    - ("Currently, our officers include president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, pro bono coordinator, and university liaison. We have decided to amend our Constitution to allow for co-presidents if the Board - by a vote - determines that having co-presidents is necessary. Having a co-president will not be mandatory, and each semester it will be up to our Board to decide whether it is necessary to have co-presidents.")
  - Columbia International Arbitration Association
    - ("Amended bylaws to provide for a co-Presidency in place of a single president; amended the responsibilities of a couple of officers")
  - Columbia Business and Law Association
    - ("The organization name changed! It was the Columbia Securities and Private Equity Law Association and now it is the Columbia Business and Law Association.")

- **The committee approved** the following recommendation regarding the budget process:
  
  Please reconsider whether core funding should be automatic for groups that are not expected to incur expenses for which core is intended, namely administrative expenses.

- **The committee approved** an exception to its policy of not disclosing vote counts:
  
  the vote to withhold recognition from the Columbia Law Opera and Classical Society was 4-5-0.

- **The committee approved** the following text:
the committee, in addition to not recommending the Texas Society for recognition, also formally requested that,
prior to appealing this recommendation, the proponents of the Texas Society demonstrate that they have
explored options that include working within the existing "Southern Law Students Association (Y'allsa)".

Summary of deliberations:

Introductory material
This year, while nine groups are seeking recognition, there are seven existing groups that are not
seeking re-recognition:
- Brewmasters
- CareerPaths
- Intra Vivos Social Club
- Universities Allied for Essential Medicines
- Multicultural Exchange Student Organization
- St. Thomas More
- Columbia Racquetball Society

Recommendation regarding the budget process
Please reconsider whether core funding should be automatic for groups that are not expected to incur expenses for which
core is intended, namely administrative expenses.

This recommendation arose from some members’ comments that they would have supported
recognition but for the budget implications of doing so (guaranteed core, plus access to the budget
committee). Committee members had a sense that if recognition conferred only some perks, such
as an email account, the recognition process would have lower stakes, and then committee could be
more generous with its recommendations.

An alternative proposal was made, namely that the recognition committee could simply recognize
individual groups on the condition that their constitution include a provision that the group would
not (for example) accept core funding during its first year of existence. However, no group was
recognized under this method.

There were dissenters who expressed their view that core is a very important way for groups to get
off the ground, and therefore that the Senate should not be stingy with core. Others abstained from
voting out of concern that it might not be appropriate for the recognition committee to take a
position on a budgetary issue.

Columbia Health Law Association:
Recommended.
- According to its proposed Constitution, "The goal of the Columbia Health Law Association is to
  promote discussion of both public and private health law issues among Columbia Law School
  students, faculty, and health law practitioners. Speaker panels and volunteer opportunities will allow
  students to become acquainted with the field of health law and its related issues."
- The group's proponents submitted thorough and articulate materials for the committee's consideration.
- Recognition of this club was viewed as non-controversial by the committee. The only analogous group
  (Society of Law, Health and Bioethics) has been defunct for several years.
Refugee Connect:
Not recommended
- According to its proposed Constitution, "Refugee Connect was established to promote an opportunity for Law School students to engage with the refugee populations in developing countries on a long-term basis. The organization will initially provide English tutoring services over the Internet by linking with a computer center that currently services the refugees. More services may be initiated as the organization develops."
- The committee identified no procedural problems with the proposed constitution.
- Committee members observed that the organization's proponents have a concrete and articulate plan for their work.
- However, committee members also observed that it was hard to distinguish the organization's stated mission from that of a currently existing group, the Society of Immigrant and Refugee rights. Despite a statement by the group's founder to the contrary ("while I know that other groups serve refugee/immigrant populations and educate, this group's goal is broader"), the committee felt that the main distinction was the groups' list of proposed activities, and felt that persons sharing an interest in refugee issues should be able to work under a common banner.
- The group's founder also stated that "In addition to the differences in mission this group is fairly capital expensive and probably would have a stronger ability to receive outside funding as a separate organization." However, committee members felt that this would be an inappropriate use of the budget process, expressing concern that they did not want to "double fund" groups.

Workers Rights Project:
Not recommended
- According to its proposed Constitution, "The Workers' Rights Project is a student group dedicated to the support and defense of the rights of workers. We seek to educate ourselves and the community about issues affecting workers, provide law students with pro bono opportunities in support of the rights of immigrants and refugees, and increase awareness of the CLS community on issues of workers' rights."
- The proposed founder of WRP informed the committee via email that "[the Unemployment Action UAC's mission is limited to representing people in unemployment insurance benefit hearings. WRP seeks to diversify pro bono opportunities for students interested in workers' rights. Topics that WRP, but not UAC, covers will include, but not limited to union-related issues, workers' compensation issues, and employment discrimination issues. In addition, WRP seeks to engage in public education through holding various speak events."
- The committee acknowledged that the group's mission is a valid one. However, the group's liaison was not impressed with the level of organization or interest demonstrated by the group's leaders. The concern was that, until a pro bono club has a vision for what it is trying to do, CPIL provides a more helpful set of training wheels for organizing these activities.
- Therefore, the committee withheld recommendation "without prejudice" -- i.e. it welcomed the Workers Rights Project to resubmit its application once it could provide more information about what it was trying to do.

Columbia Law Opera and Classical Society:
Not recommended [4-5 vote]
- According to its constitution, "CLOCS will serve as a forum through which Columbia Law students, faculty, and staff can meet and discuss opera and classical music. Since opera and classical music are meant for live performance, and since New York City boasts so many great opportunities to witness such performances, the group will provide an invaluable opportunity for members to find other people with whom to attend opera or classical music concerts."
Beyond enabling students to meet companions for these events, CLOCS will also facilitate students' attendance of operas and classical music concerts by planning and coordinating various outings throughout the academic year to institutions such as the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic. CLOCS will apprise students of the goings-on of the opera and classical music worlds, as well as of good deals on tickets. CLOCS will also try throughout the year to invite speakers who are members of the opera and classical music fields to address its members."

- In response to the committee's inquiry as to whether CLOCS would overlap with any existing group, CLOCS responded that: EASLS’s focus is more on Entertainment Law, CLOCS is not a pre-professional society, it’s more focused on the love and pleasure of classical and opera music.
- Some committee members with interest in classical music or opera expressed the enthusiasm (their own and also that of their acquaintances) that this group was coming into existence -- reporting that this community has felt this to be a void.
- However, other committee members expressed a concern that CU Arts Initiative already serves many of the functions of this proposed group -- especially the ones that would require money (i.e. subsidizing tickets) -- and that the non-monetary needs could be met by means of a listserv.
- In light of the close vote, the Committee voted that it would disclose the vote -- i.e. 4-5 against recognition.

**Devil's Advocates (Motorcycle Club)**

Not recommended

- The Committee took note of the new "beneficial purpose" clause of the Senate Constitution: 
  
  *The purpose of the organization shall be sufficiently related to the law school community and sufficiently unrelated to the purpose of any other recognized organization so as to offer a distinct benefit to a substantial number of law school students. Activities of the organization shall benefit the law school community.*

- The committee concluded that the new club would not benefit a significant portion of the student body, and that many of the interests expressed in founding the club (including the ability to recruit new members and manage a listserv) could be met without full-blown Senate recognition (and access to the budget process).
- In this context, many committee members expressed interest that the Senate should look into ways to unbundle the package of benefits that come with group recognition, so that the needs of groups like the Devil's Advocates can be met in his fashion. One proposal was circulated that some Senate committee might be empowered to authorize new listserves for non-groups.

**Bike club**

Recommended

- The principal distinction between this club and Devil's Advocates, was that this group organically appealed to a much broader student base.

**Texas:**

Not recommended

- The Committee recognized that Texas Society's application was well drafted and that the students involved were energetic and motivated to benefit the student body as a whole.
- However, the Committee found that the purpose of the Texas Society overlapped substantially with an existing student group, Y'allsa. To ensure the best possible use of Student Activity Fee funds, the Senate rules require that recognized groups be "sufficiently unrelated to the purpose of any other recognized organization." Because Y'allsa is a recognized regional group covering the Southern region, and because Y'allsa's leadership stated that they are planning Texas themed events, the Committee found that Texas Society's purpose was not sufficiently unrelated to the purpose of Y'allsa.
- Given that the two groups have overlapping purposes, and that Y'allsa is the recognized group, the Committee recommended that prior to appealing this recommendation, the proponents of the Texas
Society demonstrate that they have explored options that include working within the existing "Southern Law Students Association (Y'allsa)."

- Texans and Y'allsans met at 12:30pm on Monday 10/5/09. The Parliamentarian's summary of the meeting is [here](#).

- At 10pm, Art Cavazos, Jr. wrote explain that the proposed Texas Society would not seek to appeal. The text of this email is [here](#).

**Midwest:**
**Recommended.**
- The Committee was impressed with the level of organization, and with a demonstration (in the organization's mission statement as well as in a huge number of conversations with the founders) that they would make a commitment, not just to serving Midwestern students, but to serving the entire student body.
- The committee attempted to confront the difficult question of whether every region would be entitled to a geographic club. In this instance, many people were comfortable distinguishing this club, and the New England club, from Texas on the grounds that Y’Allsa already existed.

**New England:**
**Recommended.**
- Similar arguments were made in favor of this club, analogizing it to the Midwest Society and distinguishing it from the Texas Society.