1.0 Preamble

Student organizations on campus are important members of the University of Guelph (the “University”) community. While these student-administered
organizations have significant autonomy their actions reflect upon the University as a whole. Therefore, it is agreed that under this Policy, they are required to abide by all University policies and procedures. This policy does not apply to University administered student groups, such as varsity athletic teams, nor does it apply to Student Service Groups that have separate accountability agreements with the University.

2.0 Purpose and Jurisdiction

2.1 The Student Organization Policy (SOP) establishes the relationship and responsibilities between the University and Recognized Student Organizations (as defined in section 4). The purpose of the SOP is to clearly define reporting and accountability requirements for Recognized Student Organizations.

2.2 Student organizations that adhere to this SOP will be considered by the University as a Recognized Student Organization in good standing. The University has ultimate authority in administering the privileges associated with being a Recognized Student Organization.

2.3 This Policy does not apply to student organizations at the University of Guelph-Humber or Ridgetown College.

2.4 This Policy is administered by the Department of Student Life (“Student Life”) on behalf of the Division of Student Affairs and the University.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Fiscal Year: means May 1st to April 30th.

3.2 Non-Compliance: refers to the failure to abide by the terms of this SOP. Levels of non-compliance are defined below in Section 6.

3.3 Policy on non-academic misconduct: University policy that sets out the University’s expectations regarding student conduct as members of the University of Guelph community.

3.4 Student Risk Management (SRM): refers to a student run process which applies to all Recognized Student Organizations and is used to assess risk and grant approval for Recognized Student Organizations to run events and activities. Insurance coverage of events and activities requires SRM approval.
3.5 **Recognized Student Organizations or RSO:** Student Organizations that have been recognized by the University in accordance with this SOP or have entered into a recognition agreement with the University.

3.6 **Student Organizations:** organizations whose members are currently enrolled students sharing a common goal or interest. Student Organizations include are not limited to PSOs, ASOs, Special Status Groups and Affiliated Groups defined as follows:

3.6.1 **Primary Student Organizations (PSOs):** Student organizations (including those that are independently incorporated) that have clearly defined and countable fee paying constituencies and have the authority, once recognized by the University, to recognize other groups and in accordance with relevant policies and guidelines. Groups recognized as a PSO include College Governments, Residence Hall Council and Undergraduate and Graduate Student Unions as follows:

- Central Veterinary Student Association (CVSA)
- Central Student Association (CSA)
- College of Arts Student Union (CASU)
- College of Biological Sciences Student Council (CBSSC)
- College of Business and Economics Student Association (CBESA)
- College of Physical and Engineering Sciences (CPESSC)
- College of Social and Applied Human Sciences Student Alliance (CSAHSA)
- Graduate Students’ Association (GSA)
- Interhall Council (IHC)
- Student Federation of the Ontario Agricultural College (SFOAC)

3.6.2 **Accredited Student Organization (ASO):** Clubs and Groups representing an area of interest, culture or a hobby, an academic program or academic area of interest, and/or single Residence Community including organizations that have membership in more than one college such as the Bachelor of Arts and Science Student Association (BASSA) and the Environmental Sciences Student Executive (ESSE).¹

3.6.3 **Affiliated Groups:** Groups housed within an Accredited Student Organization and subject to all applicable policies and guidelines.

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¹ BASSA and ESSE have a fee structure that guarantees them 75% of the fees paid by their members to each of their member colleges.
3.6.4 **Special Status Groups (SSG):** These groups do not officially represent students through a student government, but rather provide the entire University community with a special service. More than 50% of the membership in a SSG must be held by currently registered students. Current Special Status Groups:

- C.J. Munford Centre
- Guelph Queer Equality
- Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity
- International Student Organization
- Ontario Public Interest Research – Guelph

3.7 **Student Service Groups:** Groups which perform a specific service for students. Current Student Service Groups are The Ontarion and CFRU.

### 4.0 Recognition and Accountability of Recognized Student Organizations

Status as a Recognized Student Organization brings with it certain requirements and accountability that are indicated under this section.

#### Documentation

4.1 **Attaining Status:** To attain status under this SOP, any group of currently enrolled students must submit documents as required by the University, supporting recognition as a PSO, ASO or Affiliated Group to Student Life for approval. Applicants for ASO or Affiliated Groups must also meet the guidelines established by the PSO to which they will be accountable. Once the documentation is submitted to Student Life and approved, a letter of approval will be sent to the PSO. This letter will indicate the status the group has been granted. The University has the final determination on the creation of new Recognized Student Organizations and under which PSO they will reside, if applicable.

4.2 **Maintaining Status:** In order to maintain status as a Recognized Student Organization in good standing, the following documentation must be submitted annually upon request and in an agreed upon format by the deadlines as noted. The University reserves the right to request additional information to demonstrate compliance with organizational constitutions and policies as well as University policies.
i. **Primary Student Organizations and Special Status Groups:**
   a. By May 15\(^{th}\) of each Fiscal Year, the following documentation must be submitted:
      - Name of the Organization;
      - Names, titles, email addresses of its officers;
      - Names, titles, student ID numbers, email addresses and sample signatures of its officers with signing authority;
      - Name(s) and contact information to be used prior to September.
   b. By September 30\(^{th}\) of each Fiscal Year, the following documentation must be submitted:
      - The most up to date constitution, written statement of purpose and/or policy, bylaws or other guiding document;
      - The process for accrediting ASOs and Affiliates (where applicable);
      - A copy of a financial statement from a financial institution for the preceding fiscal year (May 1 to April 30);
      - An audited financial statement if required as per (4.3.e);
      - A projected budget for the forthcoming year that has been reviewed and approved.
   c. By November 30\(^{th}\) of each Fiscal Year, the following documentation must be submitted:
      - Evidence of payment of insurance in the form of a paid invoice from the Central Student Association for the Student Risk Management Insurance or receipt of payment that liability insurance premiums have been paid for the current academic year;
      - The name and sample signature of the Student Risk Management Representative who is expected to attend Student Risk Management meetings regularly, if applicable.
d. Any changes to the information must be communicated to Student Life within 10 University business days.

ii. Accredited Student Organizations and Affiliated Groups:
   a. By May 15th of each Fiscal Year, the following documentation must be submitted:
      • Name of the Organization;
      • Names, titles, email addresses of its officers;
      • Name(s) and contact information to be used prior to September.
   b. By October 31st of each Fiscal Year, any updates to the information submitted under subsection a. above must be submitted.
   c. Other recognition requirements are managed by the respective PSOs.

iii. Limited status may be imposed on a Recognized Student Organization if one or more of the documents in subsection 4.1.2 (i) are missing or incomplete. Limited status can result in restrictions on a group’s activity, or additional requirements that must be met in order to achieve full status.

Financial Responsibility

4.3 RSOs must follow standard financial practices designed to promote good financial management. RSOs may have their own bank accounts.
   i. Specifically, RSOs must:
      a. Have an open review and approval process for budgets and financial statements;
      b. Have procedures in place to protect them from fraudulent behaviour including dual signing authority and limitations on authority for spending without Board approval;
      c. Maintain appropriate action with those students’ fees applicable to the RSO. Examples of inappropriate use of student fees may include but are not limited to the following:
         • An annual deficit with no explanation of unanticipated financial challenges, and with no plan to remove the deficit in subsequent years;
- An annual surplus with no explanation of unanticipated financial challenges, and with no plan to remove the surplus in subsequent years;
- Failure to use the fees consistent with the original purpose as approved.

d. Maintain a carry-over of monies to support activities in the Fall semester up to when the student fees would be remitted;

e. Conduct an annual financial audit if more than $160,000 in fees are received during the fiscal year. If less than $160,000 in fees is received, then a financial audit must be conducted on the following schedule:
  - In 2017-2018 for the fiscal year 2016-2017
  - The Student Organization is responsible for the cost of the audit unless the Office of Student Affairs requests one when not normally required, at which time it will be performed free of charge by the University.

**Adherence to By-Laws, Policies, Procedures and Protocols**

4.4 All RSOs are required to adhere to all University by-laws, policies, procedures and protocols including, but not limited to the following:

- [Alcohol Beverages Policy](#)
- [Anti-Hazing Policy](#)
- [Branion Plaza Policy](#)
- [Code of Ethical Conduct for Suppliers and Subcontractors in Relation to Working Conditions and Employment Standards](#)
- [Policy on Human Rights at the University of Guelph](#)
- [On Campus Advertising Promotion, Sales and Solicitations](#)
- [Policy on Non-Academic Misconduct](#)
- [Policy for Release of Student Information for Elections](#)
- [Student E-mail Communications Policy](#)
- [Student Risk Management Policy](#)

**Risk Management Process**

4.5 The University requires RSOs to manage the risk associated with their events and activities regardless of their location. RSOs must have
insurance coverage for their events and activities either through the student run Student Risk Management (SRM) process or as holders of their own insurance policy. All RSOs are subject to the Orientation Risk Management Standards if hosting events within the annual Orientation Week. Failure to provide proof of insurance may result in penalties as outlined in section 6.

5.0 Benefits of Recognized Student Organization Status
RSOs which are in good standing as determined by the University have access to a number of benefits and privileges, including:

- Access to University organizational email accounts for executive/staff members;
- Use of University space and facilities free of charge\(^2\) and subject to availability;
- Office space where possible;
- Access to official University publications where appropriate for the purpose of publicizing the nature of the group, its purposes and activities (subject to space availability);
- Access to email listserv lists, the High Volume Mail Service and/or the student portal as per the Mass E-mail Policy;
- Access to student discounts Hospitality Services provides for student organized events open to students;
- Access to audio/visual equipment through Teaching Support Services;
- Access to advising and support services offered through the Department of Student Life; and
- Collection of student fees applicable to the RSO.

6.0 Non Compliance
6.1 RSOs that do not comply with the terms of this SOP may be deemed by the University as not in good standing or non-compliant.
6.2 There are three levels of non-compliance:

\(^2\) There are charges for War Memorial Hall, Rozanski Hall, Athletics facilities and other non-classroom spaces on campus.
6.2.1 Level 1: Violation of University policies, organizational constitutions and/or approved policies; does not pose a risk to student health or safety and/or is easily remedied;
6.2.2 Unresolved or persistent Level 1 violation and/or risk to student health or safety is present and/or increasing; or
6.2.3 Level 3: Unresolved or persistent Level 2 violation; violation of multiple University policies, organizational constitutions and/or approved policies; significant risk to student health or safety; likely harm to University reputation; failure to cooperate with the University.

6.3 Level 1 and 2 non-compliance issues are normally dealt with through Student Life. Non-compliance at Level 3 is referred to the Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs who will determine a method for resolution.

7.0 Penalties
Penalties to a RSO found not to be in compliance with the terms of this SOP may include but are not limited to the following:

- Loss of one or more benefits as defined in section 5.
- Loss of status Recognized Student Organizations.
- Downgrading to limited status.
- Re-direction of student fees to a purpose consistent with the original purpose as approved.

8.0 Appeals
Any decision made by the University under this Policy is appealable to the next level of administrative responsibility. For example, if a decision is made by the Leadership Education & Development (LEAD) Advisor, then that decision can be appealed to the Director, Student Life. The Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs) is the final authority on any appeals.