

<b>Policy Name:</b>	Recognition of Student Organizations
<b>Originating/Responsible Department:</b>	Vice-President (Students and Enrolment)
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	Senior Management Committee
<b>Date of Original Policy:</b>	March 2008
<b>Last Updated:</b>	November 2020
<b>Mandatory Revision Date:</b>	November 2025
<b>Contact:</b>	Director, Student Affairs and Student Life

**PURPOSE:**

Carleton University recognizes that voluntary organizations formed by students are a traditional part of University life and contribute to the intellectual, cultural and social development of our students. However, only accredited student organizations have the privilege of being able to organize and hold activities on campus for the benefit of their members.

**SCOPE:**

This policy is intended to delineate the principles associated with the recognition of all student groups, to define university accredited student organizations and to provide a process, apart from Carleton Undergraduate Student Association (CUSA) Club and Society Certification program, whereby such organizations can be formally accredited by Carleton University. By attaining accreditation, all student organizations accept certain responsibilities, must comply with all applicable University policies, rules and regulations to obtain privileges, as outlined in this policy.

**DEFINITIONS and GENERAL PROVISIONS:**

This policy does not supersede or alter any legal or contractual relationship that exists between the university and its student associations: the Carleton University Students Association, the Graduate Student Association, and the Rideau River Residence Association.

**Carleton Undergraduate Students' Association (CUSA)** is the organization which includes all undergraduate students registered at Carleton University.

**Graduate Students' Association (GSA)** is the organization which includes all graduate students at Carleton University.

**The Rideau River Residence Association (RRRA)** is the student organization which includes all students living in the campus student residences.

**Carleton Academic Student Government (CASG)** is composed of student representatives from every academic department on campus. The members of CASG serve on Departmental Councils, Faculty Boards, and the University Senate. The CASG's mandate and formal status as a university entity is granted by the University Senate.

**Clubs and Societies** are student organizations that have been certified by the CUSA Clubs and Societies Board through its policies and procedures. All student organizations, groups or collectives are entitled to apply for certification as a Club or Society unless otherwise indicated by CUSA. Student organizations cannot be accredited both under the process outlined in this policy and certified under the CUSA process. Only one process can be utilized. CUSA is responsible for all clubs or societies that they certify. Clubs and Societies are subject to all applicable university policies.

**Faculty/Departmental Academic Societies** are open student organizations centered in and supported by academic departments and faculties with activities related to the relevant academic disciplines. Such organizations are approved by individual faculties and are subject to this policy and the regulations of their affiliated faculty and all applicable University policies. Academic Societies certified by CUSA are also subject to this policy and the regulations of the faculty and all applicable University policies. Academic Societies cannot be accredited under both this policy and certified under the CUSA process. Only one recognition process can be utilized. Academic Societies are subject to all applicable University policies.

**A Campus Group** is a voluntary association of Carleton students that is not certified as a Club or Society by CUSA and is also not an Academic Society approved by an academic unit. Such an association is eligible for accreditation under this policy. There is no implied commitment to funding included in such recognition. Campus Groups are subject to all applicable University policies.

**A Student Organization** refers to all campus groups including accredited campus groups, certified CUSA clubs and approved academic societies.

**Accrediting Bodies** for the purposes of this policy are:

- a) Faculty Deans for Academic Societies;
- b) The Campus Group Accreditation Committee for other groups.

The **Risk Management Committee** is made up of university officials and is responsible for managing the university's online risk assessment process and for approving student events on and off campus.

Other:

Fees for accredited clubs and societies can only be assessed on students, if they follow procedures and policies set out by the University and comply with all relevant provincial legislation, directives, policies, and guidelines.

**STATEMENT OF POLICY:**

**ACCREDITATION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS:**

1. Carleton University is committed to recognizing the rights of its members to communicate, discuss and explore all ideas, to organize groups to distribute materials on campus in a responsible way, to hold meetings, to engage in debate and peaceful demonstrations, and to be free from discrimination on the basis of race, sex, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, creed, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, or citizenship, provided these activities are within the law.
2. Memberships in accredited Student Organizations shall be open to all members of the University community, in compliance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, and without restriction based on grounds of race, sex, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, creed, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, or

citizenship.

3. The accreditation period will be for the duration of one (1) year starting October 1<sup>st</sup> until September 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. Student organizations must renew their accreditation status annually, during the month of September.
4. The university will not accredit any group that:
  - a) Operates in secrecy or is insufficiently transparent (including but not limited to the following areas: finances, budgets, constitutions, operations), or
  - b) Fails to comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code, Federal and Provincial laws, and any University Policies, Rules and Regulations;
  - c) Is presently certified as a CUSA Club or Society, or
  - d) Interferes with the operations, learning, living and work environment of the University and/or the health, wellbeing, security, and safety of the community in the University's sole discretion.
5. Each accrediting body has the authority to remove accreditation of groups that fall under their purview when this action is warranted by a breach of this policy, any applicable university policy and/or law.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **Rights, Responsibilities and Prohibitions:**

1. By the University or CUSA granting accreditation or certification to a student organization, the group is accorded the following benefits:
  - a) Use of the University's name subject to University regulations and policies;
  - b) Ability to book space subject to the University's Space Booking Request process and policies;
  - c) Right to hold events in accordance to University policies; and
  - d) Use of campus facilities for the solicitation of memberships subject to University policies.
2. Student Organizations are required to comply with the University's Free Speech Policy.
3. Accreditation under this policy as a Campus Group, or Academic Society or CUSA club by the University implies neither endorsement of a particular group's beliefs or philosophy, nor the assumption of legal liability for the student group's activities. Student groups and their individual members shall remain fully responsible for their actions including any violation of policies and/or legal liability.
4. If an unaccredited group or individual represent themselves as an official Carleton University student organization, they may be subject to sanctions under the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy. In addition this may impact their application to be accredited under this Policy.
5. Accredited Campus Groups, Academic Societies, or CUSA clubs may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature. This is not intended to preclude the collection of reasonable membership fees to cover the expenses of the organization, or of charges for specific activities, programs or events, or to prohibit these groups to engage in legitimate forms of fund raising. However, these groups cannot:

- a) Engage in on-campus commercial operations which comprises a majority of their activities and/or revenue without the prior written approval of the Vice-President Students and Enrolment or their designate.
  - b) Provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for the purposes other than those of the organization; or
  - c) Pay salaries to some, any or all of its officers or members of any sort.
6. Similarly, if a Campus Group, Academic Society, or a CUSA club has been recognized under a defined mandate, and misrepresents their role, operates beyond the terms of the approved mandate, organizes events that contravene policies of the University, or organizes special events that are not approved by the Risk Management Committee, the group may have their accreditation suspended or revoked. Moreover, individual members, depending on their actions, could face sanctions under the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy or other applicable University policies. The University reserves the right not to extend and/or revoke accreditation or the privileges offered to accredited student organizations and certified CUSA clubs where groups engage in inappropriate conduct including but not limited to:
- a) are operating on the basis of membership exclusivity;
  - b) have or will violate university policies or regulations; or
  - c) are interfering with the operations, learning, living and work environment of the University and/or the health, wellbeing, security and safety of the community.
7. Any and all posting practiced by an Accredited Campus Group, Academic Society or CUSA club shall be conducted in accordance with the University's Posting Policy. Failure to abide by the policy may impact accreditation under this Policy.
8. University accredited Campus Groups, Academic Societies, or CUSA clubs must abide by the University's Risk Management Policy. Risk Management forms must be completed and submitted fourteen (14) days in advance of an event, whether on or off campus or virtual, if the event has one or more of the following elements:
- a) More than fifty (50) people in attendance;
  - b) Features a speaker from an external organization;
  - c) A sports-like physical activity is planned; and/or
  - d) Any activity that has the potential to result in injury to individual persons, or physical property.

Failure to submit a Risk Management Form may result in any space booking requests being delayed or cancelled and may impact accreditation under this Policy. Where Campus Safety or the University's Risk Management Committee mandates the presence of security for an event, such additional services (provided by Campus Safety Services or otherwise) will be at full expense of the organization sponsoring the event.

#### **PROCEDURES:**

1. Student organizations who wish to be accredited through the university in order to become a **Campus Group** must **complete and submit the following items to the Office of Student Affairs:**
  - a) A completed and signed Accreditation of Student Organizations Application Form;
  - b) A copy of their most current constitution, bylaws, policies and rules; and

- c) Submit a minimum of ten (10) student signatures along with their printed names and student numbers of students who are supportive of the organization being accredited (there is a signature section within the Accreditation of Student Organization Application Form).

Further information can be found on the Student Affairs website ([www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs](http://www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs)).

2. Student organizations that wish to become accredited Academic Societies under this policy are to follow the procedures outlined in the Accreditation of Student Organizations Application Form.
3. Student groups meeting the requirements of this policy may be granted recognition by the Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs and Student Life, on behalf of the University the year in which application is made. (For the purposes of this policy the year will be considered from October 1 to September 30<sup>th</sup> of the next academic year). Normally, recognition will be renewed automatically year-to-year at the request of the executive by submitting the online Accreditation Renewal Form no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>. If constitutional or bylaw changes have been proposed, the amended constitution or bylaw must be submitted and will be considered during the renewal process. Similarly, any other substantial changes to the nature of the group should be submitted with the Renewal Form no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>.
4. One of the elements of being an accredited campus group or approved academic society is providing a copy of the group's constitution or bylaw. The University's interest in the constitution or bylaw is based on its concern that organizations and individuals using its name and its facilities are genuine campus organizations, that they pursue activities in accordance with the law, and that such things as organizational structure, membership, procedures, rules of conduct, etc., are defined so that all members who join a group and take part in its activities may do so with full knowledge of their rights and responsibilities within the group.

**Campus Group Accreditation Committee:**

1. The Campus Group Accreditation Committee is responsible for the accreditation of those student organizations that are not otherwise certified by CUSA.
2. The Committee is appointed by and is responsible to the Vice-President (Students and Enrolment). The membership is:
  - a. Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs and Student Life (Chair);
  - b. One faculty member;
  - c. One staff member; and
  - d. Two students-at-large members;
3. The Committee will meet on an ad-hoc basis in order to consider the approval of Campus Groups and consider sanctions that may be applied to any Campus Group that transgresses a university policy.
4. Where an Accredited Campus Group or Academic Society is handling significant funds (more than \$1,000), it may be required to submit an audited statement to the Office of Student Affairs or the applicable Faculty Dean. Requests for financial information will be at the discretion of the Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs and Student Life or the applicable Faculty Dean.

5. Where an Accredited Campus Group or Academic Society is providing goods or services for which a charge is being levied the Group or Society will be required to indicate in all of its advertising, contractual and other material that the university neither endorses the Group or Society's activities nor assumes responsibility or legal liability in connection with the goods and services provided. No Campus Group or Academic Society may use the University's official marks without approval.

**Complaints:**

1. The University reserves the right to investigate accredited Campus Groups or Academic Societies that have acted in a manner that is inconsistent with its constitution, bylaws, or with the requirements of this or any other University policies and law.
2. In the event a University investigation finds misconduct or other breach, sanctions may be levied by the Campus Group Accreditation Committee against the Group or Society in question including but not limited to:
  - a) Some or all privileges outlined in this policy being suspended or withdrawn; and/or
  - b) The group's status as a university accredited Campus Group or Society may be suspended or terminated.
3. If an Accredited Campus Group's or Academic Society's status is suspended or terminated, an application for renewal of accreditation may be made at any time after September 30<sup>th</sup> in the following academic year.
4. In addition to group sanctions, individual sanctions may be applied under other University policies (e.g., the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy) where individual group members have transgressed aspects of these policies.
5. Accredited Campus Groups or Academic Societies seeking to appeal the decision to deny, suspend or withdraw their privileges or status as an accredited group may appeal in writing within 14 calendar days following their notification of a sanction to the Carleton University Resolution Board (CURB). Appeals to CURB must be sent to the Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs.

**RELATED POLICIES:**

- a) Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy
- b) University Alcohol Policy
- c) University Space Booking Policy
- d) Residence Agreement
- e) Residence Standards
- f) University Poster Policy
- g) Human Rights Policy
- h) Free Speech Policy
- i) Risk Management Policy

**CONTACTS:**

Vice-President (Students and Enrolment)  
Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs