

Policy on the Recognition of Student Groups

Office of Administration:	Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students
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1. Preamble

Voluntary organizations formed by the University community are a traditional part of campus life, and contribute in significant ways to its intellectual, political, social, and cultural diversity. In its relations with these organizations, the University is guided by a commitment to the right of University members to communicate and to discuss and explore all ideas, to organize groups for any lawful purpose, to move about the University and to use its facilities in any reasonable way, to distribute on campus, in a responsible way, published material provided that it is not unlawful, to hold meetings, to debate and to engage in peaceful demonstrations, and to freedom from discrimination.

At Laurentian University, the University recognises certain “Student Associations” as being the official representatives of the student body in its relations with the University. Such Associations are incorporated entities with an existence independent of the University and are granted status through the *Policy on the Recognition of Student Associations*.

Recognition as a “Student Group” is a privilege based upon observance of certain procedures and acceptance of certain responsibilities. It follows that this privilege can be withdrawn if these procedures are neglected or responsibilities abrogated by the organization or group.

Under the terms of this Policy, the University will not attempt to censor, control or interfere with any Student Group on the basis of its philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions expressed unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal or which infringe the rights and freedoms already mentioned.

By the same token, recognition as a “Student Group” 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. It assumes only that the University has a responsibility to

inform itself of organizations which use its facilities and name and to deny or withdraw recognition if the requirements of this Policy are not observed.

- 1.1. The University should maintain a policy and mechanism (or mechanisms) for the recognition of Student Groups. All such groups wishing to use “Laurentian University of Sudbury”, “Laurentian University”, “Laurentian”, “LU”, or similar in their names, all groups that wish to receive funding from any office or representative of Laurentian University (whether through the collection of student fees or otherwise), and all groups wishing to claim internal status at Laurentian University must apply for recognition under this Policy and may not begin to operate unless and until such recognition is granted. Per section 2.9 below, the Student Equity Centre and Resource Centres as defined herein are exempt from this requirement.
- 1.2. Responsibility for the maintenance of this Policy and mechanism(s) is vested in the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. For the purpose of interpreting this document, words in the singular may include the plural and words in the plural may include the singular.
- 2.2. “Academic Unit” shall mean a Faculty, Program, or Academic Department of Laurentian University.
- 2.3. “Club Teams/Sports” and “Student Groups with an athletic or physical activity mandate” shall mean Student Groups that have as their primary focus athletic or physical activity and must be recognised and operated under the supervision of Athletics and Campus Recreation.
- 2.4. “Contact person” shall mean the registered Laurentian University student member who is the primary point of contact between a Student Group and the University.
- 2.5. “Executive member” shall mean a member of a Student Group who is serving on its executive, as outlined by the constitution and/or by-laws of the Student Group.
- 2.6. “Member” shall mean a person who has signed up to participate in a Student Group, whether it be on an on-going or provisional basis, such as to participate in a class or workshop.
- 2.7. “Officer” shall mean a member of a Student Group who has been assigned duties by the constitution and/or by-laws of the Student Group, or by this Policy.
- 2.8. “Recognising Authority” shall mean the on-campus organisation that has the authority under this policy to receive, review and assess applications for recognition from proposed Student Groups and to grant Student Group status in accordance with this Policy.

- 2.9. “Resource Centre” shall refer to a service overseen by the Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office and the Student Equity Centre which provide support and services to equity deserving students. Resource Centres are NOT considered Student Groups and therefore are exempt from this Policy.
- 2.10. “Student Associations” shall mean those Associations recognised by the University as representing communities of students, to which student ancillary fees are collected and remitted, not including Student Councils/Societies under s. 2.12 below. These currently include the AEF, the GSA and the SGA.
- 2.11. “Student Clubs/Alliances” shall mean voluntary organizations formed by registered students at Laurentian University of a general nature and must be recognised and operated under the processes of one of the Student Associations.
- 2.12. “Student Councils/Societies” shall mean voluntary organizations formed by registered students at Laurentian University with an academic or professional focus which have a direct relationship with an Academic Unit of the University (see Appendix A below) and must be recognised under the processes of the Faculty which is home to the particular academic unit.
- 2.13. “Student Groups” shall be an umbrella term to refer collectively to “Club Teams/Sports”, “Student Clubs with an athletic or physical activity mandate”, “Student Clubs/Alliances”, and “Student Councils/Societies” as such terms are used herein.
- 2.14. This Policy applies to the recognition, operation and supervision of Student Groups, which differ from Student Associations that are granted status through the *Policy on Student Organizations*.

3. Eligibility for Recognition

- 3.1. The following organisations or offices shall be considered "Recognising Authorities" under this Policy:
 - 3.1.1. L'Association des étudiantes et étudiants francophones (AEF);
 - 3.1.2. The Graduate Students Association (GSA);
 - 3.1.3. The Student's General Association (SGA);
 - 3.1.4. The academic Faculties;
 - 3.1.5. Athletics and Recreation;

- 3.1.6. Any other organisations or offices recognised in the future as “Recognising Authorities” under this Policy;
- 3.2. Recognising Authorities have the ability to establish their own processes by which they recognise Student Groups under this Policy;
- 3.3. Recognising Authorities shall have in place a process by which events proposed by Student Groups under their authority can be reviewed and approved which, at a minimum, shall include considerations of Insurance for the Event and Risk Management for the Event.
- 3.4. The University, as represented by the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students, may consider applications from other organisations or offices within the University Community to be accepted as a Recognising Authority under this Policy.
- 3.5. In considering any application under section 3.4, the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students, shall consult with the existing Recognising Authorities for their input on the application.
- 3.6. Eligibility for recognition as a Student Group shall be assessed annually by the appropriate Recognising Authority:
 - 3.6.1. Athletics and Recreation, for “Club Teams/Sports” and “Student Clubs with an athletic or physical activity mandate”;
 - 3.6.2. Student Associations, for “Student Clubs/Alliances”; and
 - 3.6.3. Faculties for “Student Councils/Societies”.
- 3.7. Students interested in forming a Student Group must seek formal recognition (ratification) by the appropriate Recognising Authority in accordance with such Authority’s processes and this Policy.
- 3.8. The recognition processes and standards of any Recognising Authority shall comply with the minimum standards set out in this Policy.
- 3.9. The recognition processes and standards of any Recognising Authority must require a Student Group to adhere to the following:
 - 3.9.1. Student Association policies, rules, and regulations;
 - 3.9.2. University policies, rules and regulations; and, where appropriate,
 - 3.9.3. The rules of the appropriate Academic Unit and Faculty or the rules of Athletics and Recreation.

- 3.10. It is recommended that, as part of being recognised under this Policy and/or the policies of a Recognising Authority as a Student Group, the executive members of each Student Group, at the start of each academic year, receive an Onboarding Guidebook as prepared by the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students, in consultation with the Recognising Authorities, which will include information about the following subjects:
- 3.10.1. Applicable university and Student Association policies,
 - 3.10.2. Marketing rules and processes,
 - 3.10.3. Conference Services rules and processes,
 - 3.10.4. Risk Management's rules and processes, and
 - 3.10.5. The university's commitment to a bilingual and tricultural community.
- 3.11. The objectives and activities of groups seeking recognition should be seen as attempting to contribute to the educational, recreational, social or cultural values of the University. These values are intended to be interpreted in the broadest sense. However, the University must preserve as essential the freedoms of enquiry and association.
- 3.12. Recognized Student Groups may not engage in activities which are essentially commercial in nature. This is not intended to preclude the collection of membership fees to cover the expenses of the organization, or of charges for specific activities, programs or events, or to prohibit groups from engaging in legitimate fundraising. However, a recognized Student Group cannot:
- 3.12.1. as a major activity, have a function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial organization;
 - 3.12.2. provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the organization; nor
 - 3.12.3. pay salaries and/or stipends to some or all of its executive members or officers.
- 3.13. Membership in Student Groups should be open to all registered student members of the University without restriction on the grounds outlined in Part I of the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#), being the prohibited grounds of discrimination. While discriminatory membership practices are not allowed, it is recognized that certain Student Groups could well be homogeneous in nature without being discriminatory. Where a Student Group is specifically created or operated for the support of

members of an equity deserving group, membership in such Student Group may be limited as a result of that purpose.

3.14. The University's interest in a Student Group's constitution is based on its concern that:

- 3.14.1. groups and individuals using its name and its facilities are genuine Student Groups;
- 3.14.2. Student Groups pursue activities in accordance with the law;
- 3.14.3. organizational structure, membership, procedures, rules of conduct, etc. are articulated so that members who join a Student Group and take part in its activities may do so with full knowledge of their rights and responsibilities within the Student Group; and
- 3.14.4. Student Groups are operating in an open, accessible and democratic fashion, as per the *Policy on Student Organizations*, and following the terms of their constitutions and/or bylaws.

3.15. Where a group applying for recognition has a direct connection with another body outside of Laurentian University, the nature of this connection and the name of the body must be disclosed fully and substantially in the application for recognition.

- 3.15.1. Student Groups must be separate and distinct from the body outside of Laurentian University. The executive members, officers, and contact person of the Student Group shall not be executive members of the external organization.
- 3.15.2. Student Groups shall not confer financial benefit to external organizations without fully and completely disclosing to the Recognising Authority the nature and amount of the benefit. Where appropriate, the Recognising Authority may then consult with the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students.
- 3.15.3. Where concerns exist about the relationship between a Student Group (or proposed Student Group) and an external organisation, the Associate Vice-President, Students, may at their own initiative or at the request of any student, suspend the recognition of that Student Group until the relationship is clarified and, if necessary, brought into compliance with this Policy.

4. Composition of Student Groups

4.1. Executive members with voting privileges shall be currently registered students of Laurentian University.

- 4.2. Subject to the rules of the applicable Recognising Authority, staff, faculty, or alumni members may hold non-voting executive positions. These non-voting executive positions shall be limited to a maximum of one (1) person or ten per cent (10%) of the full executive body, whichever is greatest. Persons holding these non-voting executive positions cannot serve as an officer (including financial signing officer) or contact person of the Student Group. Their role will be advisory in nature.
- 4.3. Registered students may be executive members on one or more Student Groups but may only serve as a financial signing officer on one Student Group at a time.
- 4.4. Student Groups must have a minimum of five (5) members who are registered students of Laurentian University.
- 4.5. Non-voting membership may be extended to interested staff, faculty, or alumni without restriction on the grounds outlined in Part I of the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) being the prohibited grounds of discrimination.

5. Recognition of Student Groups

- 5.1. Under the supervision of the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students, Student Groups shall apply for recognition to the applicable office (“Recognising Authority”):
 - 5.1.1 A recognised Student Association,
 - 5.1.2 A Faculty of the University, or
 - 5.1.3 Athletics and Recreation,and their application shall be processed according to the processes of the Recognising Authority to which they apply.
- 5.2. Each Recognising Authority shall submit information about each Student Group such Recognising Authority has recognised under its processes to the Associate Vice-President, Students, in accordance with a schedule to be agreed upon from time to time.
- 5.3. Although each Recognising Authority may create and operate its own process for recognising Student Groups, at a minimum each such process must require groups seeking recognition to supply the following:
 - 5.3.1. The names and email addresses of two officers and a Contact person (who could be one of the officers) responsible for all bookings of University space, rentals of University equipment, and use of other University services.

5.3.2. The total number of members, the size of the governing body (i.e., number of Executive members), and the proportion of registered Laurentian University student members and other members at the time of registration. Non-student members of the Student Group shall be identified.

5.3.3. An up-to-date copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the Student Group.

Student Groups wishing to maintain their recognition in successive academic years must submit an application for renewal annually by the new executive to the appropriate Recognising Authority. If constitutional and/or bylaw changes have been proposed, the amended constitution and/or by-laws shall be submitted and will be considered in the course of the renewal process.

5.4. The Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students, shall create and maintain a Student Group Register, which will be available publicly on the Laurentian University website, and which contains information related to all Student Groups currently recognised by a Recognising Authority, including at a minimum the following information:

5.4.1. The official name of each Student Group;

5.4.2. The names and contact information of two members of the Executive of each Student Group.

5.5. For the purposes of s. 5.4 above, an individual who participates in seeking recognition of a Student Group under this policy shall be deemed to consent to have their name and contact information shared on the Student Group Register.

5.6. Where a group applying for recognition wishes to use “Laurentian University”, “Laurentian”, “LU”, or similar, in their name, it shall be clear in their name and all related representations that it is a Student Group.

5.6.1. Student Groups shall not use the University’s signatures, crests, word marks, or letter marks without expressed written consent from the Director of the Marketing Office.

5.7. Applicants for recognition or recognized Student Clubs handling extensive funds (in excess of \$1000.00 in an academic year) may be required to submit audited financial statements annually to the applicable Recognising Authority.

5.8. If concerns are raised with the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students, about the manner in which a Student Group handles funds, the Associate

Vice-President, Students, may contact the applicable Recognising Authority to review and address those concerns.

- 5.9. At the discretion of the Associate Vice-President, Students, Student Groups supplying goods or services for which a charge is made may be required to indicate in all advertising, contractual, and other material that the University neither endorses the Student Group's activities nor assumes legal liability in connection with the goods and services provided.
- 5.10. The Associate Vice-President, Students, may request that a Recognising Authority provide to the Associate Vice-President, Students, and the Associate Vice-President, Financial Services the name of the bank, trust company, or credit union, the branch, account numbers, and financial signing officers for all financial accounts opened in their name. When it receives such a request, the Recognising Authority shall comply with the request or provide grounds for failing to do so.
- 5.11. All personal information shall be handled in accordance with Ontario's [*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#).

6. Privileges associated with Recognition

- 6.1. Subject to compliance with this Policy, availability and appropriate agreements with the University, the University may at its discretion grant to recognized Student Groups any or all of the following Privileges:
 - 6.1.1. Financial and in-kind University grants or donations;
 - 6.1.2. Use of University space and facilities including tabling space;
 - 6.1.3. Use of University classroom technology;
 - 6.1.4. Consent to use University marks, brands, names, logos and related assets.
- 6.2. The granting of any privilege under s. 6.1 may be revoked by the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students, at any time for any reason.
- 6.3. Subject to compliance with this Policy and the policies of the Sponsor, as well as to availability, the Recognising Authority may at its discretion grant to Student Groups recognised by that Recognising Authority and or all of the following Privileges:
 - 6.3.1. Financial and in-kind grants or donations;
 - 6.3.2. Use of space and facilities including tabling space controlled by the Recognising Authority;
 - 6.3.3. Use of Recognising Authority technology;

6.3.4. Consent to use University marks, brands, names, logos and related assets;

6.3.5. Coverage by the Recognising Authority's insurance policies, including Liability Policies.

6.4. Recognising Authorities shall be responsible to provide insurance to the Student Groups they recognise. The University insurance does not cover Student Groups recognised by the Student Associations.

7. Complaints, Appeals and Reporting of Administrative Decisions

7.1. The University will not attempt to monitor or review the activities of a Student Group in the normal course of events. It may however work with the appropriate Recognising Authority to investigate complaints or charges that a Student Group has acted in a manner that is inconsistent with its constitution and/or bylaws, or with the requirements of University policy. If these complaints or charges prove to be valid, recognition may be suspended or withdrawn or privileges may be suspended or withdrawn, in whole or in part.

7.2. Responsibility for the implementation of this Policy is delegated to the Office of the Associate Vice-President, Students.

7.3. If a decision is made by a Recognising Authority to deny or withdraw recognition of a Student Group, the Recognising Authority shall provide a written statement of the reasons. All administrative decisions to grant, deny, or withdraw recognition will be reported regularly to the University Executive Team for information.

7.4. If a decision is made by the Associate Vice-President, Students, to withdraw Privileges as outlined in Section 6 above from a Student Group for any reason, the Associate Vice-President, Students, shall provide reasons in writing to the Student Group and the applicable Recognising Authority.

7.5. Student Groups wishing to appeal a decision made under s. 7.4 above may do so through the Office of the Vice-President, Academic and Provost. In the event of an appeal, a review shall be held by the Provost and Vice-President, Academic or their designate who was not involved in the original decision.

8. Transitional Clauses

8.1. Recognising Authorities shall be in full compliance with the requirements of this Policy on or before September 1, 2026.

8.2. Student Groups shall be in full compliance with the requirements of this Policy on or before September 1, 2026, with the exception of any changes that are required to the name

of a Student Group – changes to the name of a Student Group made necessary by this Policy must be completely implemented by September 1, 2028.

Related Policies:

Policy on Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees

Policy on Student Organizations

Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities,

Policy/Program on a Respectful Workplace and Learning Environment

Policy on Response and Prevention of Sexual Violence

Schedule A
Information on Student Groups

Name	Recognising Authority	Characteristics
Student Equity Centre and affiliated Resource Centres	Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Office (EDHRO)	• Supported by Student Fees/University funds • Mandate includes supporting student groups, clubs, and student-led resource centres that actively promote human rights, equity, diversity, inclusion, and a culture of consent • Direct Staff Guidance • Specific Constituency Represented • Equity deserving groups • Insurance would be under University policies*
Association	Laurentian University	• Independent Corporation • Supported by Student Fees • Act as “Union” representing students in relations with University • Provide services to students • Have space allocated on campus • Can recognize other student groups • Insurance would be under their own policies*
Club or Alliance	Student Associations	• General student club • Open membership • Formed as a result of a specific interest • Funding through application to Student Association or through fund raising • May have a connection with an academic unit • Insurance would be under Association policies*
Council or Society	Academic Unit	• Act as “union” to represent students in their relations with the academic unit • May be supported by student fees collected by their Program • May provide services • Offers social, professional development and related activities for member • Insurance would be under University policies*
Club Team or Sport	Athletics and Recreation	• Group with a physical or athletic mandate • Primary focus is athletic or physical activity • Supported by Athletics and Recreation • Funded by Athletics and Recreation

		Insurance would be under University policies*
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*Additional insurance may be required for events that are not considered to fall within the usual activities of a university or that involve significant additional risk.