



SOCIETIES PROCEDURE

POLICY TYPE	CLUBS & SOCIETIES
APPROVING AUTHORITY	ONTARIO TECH STUDENT UNION BOARD OF DIRECTORS
POLICY OWNER	ONTARIO TECH STUDENT UNION BOARD OF DIRECTORS
APPROVAL DATE	JULY 2024
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Tech Student Union (“Student Union”) facilitates the creation and support of Student Union Societies (Society/Societies). Societies act as a forum where students can gather for educational and social purposes with the intent of enriching the student experience of its membership.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Student Union Societies

Refers to faculty-based groups operated and managed by elected student representatives and ratified by the OTSU in accordance with the OTSU Societies Procedure. Each year, these students are elected into their executive positions by their peers. In situations where not all positions are elected, students are hired and/or appointed into their executive positions. Societies exist to provide their membership with rewarding social, professional, and educational opportunities. Each Society represents one Faculty and can consist of Sub-Societies. Societies represent all students in their membership equally.

2.2 Faculty

Refers to a group of academic programs under a specific discipline at Ontario Tech.

2.3 Society Executives

Refers to individuals who voluntarily help manage a Society. There can be several executive officer positions within a Society, each dealing with a specific facet of society management (e.g., Financial Executive Officer, Marketing Executive Officer, President, etc.). To be eligible to hold a Society Executive position, individuals must be enrolled full-time in the Faculty their society represents and must be elected into their position via OTSU Society Elections.

2.4 Society General Member

Refers to individuals who voluntarily join and participate in Society affairs. Individuals must have participated in at least 20 hours of Society activities over the academic year to receive official recognition as a general member from Ontario Tech. To be eligible to participate as a general member, individuals must be enrolled full-time in the Faculty their society represents.

3. PURPOSE

This procedure outlines the guidelines for the functioning of OTSU recognized Societies in a clear and comprehensive manner. It also defines the obligations Societies have to OTSU and their members. Should any part of this procedure or an individual Society constitution be in contravention or contradiction of the OTSU General Bylaws, those governance documents shall prevail.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Society Ratification:

Students wishing to re-ratify a Society must submit a copy of a Society Ratification Package online to the Clubs & Societies Department by September 30th of each academic year. Ratification packages will be available April 1st and must include:

Ratification Packages must include:

- 4.1.1 society name that highlights the society's purpose;
 - 4.1.2 general society email;
 - 4.1.3 purpose for starting the society;
 - 4.1.4 a Mission Statement;
 - 4.1.5 goals, objectives, and unique characteristics of the society;
 - 4.1.6 event plans and ideas;
 - 4.1.7 budget for forecasted events;
 - 4.1.8 a minimum of 4 executives; and
 - 4.1.9 a minimum of 10 general members (excluding established executives).
- 4.2 The Clubs & Societies Department will respond to a submitted Society Ratification Package within ten (10) business days.
- 4.3 Ratification requirements:
- 4.3.1 executives must be registered Ontario Tech University students and have paid all Clubs & Societies fees in full;
 - 4.3.2 an Event Form must be filled out for all events;
 - 4.3.3 the society's purpose must not contain any endorsement or support for activities or events that break Student Union policies, campus policies, or any applicable laws;
 - 4.3.4 societies must not share a name or purpose with any existing society, institutional service, or Student Union service/programs;
 - 4.3.5 all society activities and conduct must adhere to the policies and procedures set by the Student Union and Ontario Tech University;
 - 4.3.6 executives must attend mandatory meetings and training scheduled by the Clubs & Societies Department;
 - 4.3.7 societies that do not fulfill training and attendance requirements will be sanctioned;
 - 4.3.8 society names must be respectful and represent the society's purpose;
 - 4.3.9 general membership in a society must be open to all part-time and full-time students at Ontario Tech University who have paid Clubs & Societies fees in full;
 - 4.3.10 executive member status is restricted to Ontario Tech University students who have opted in to paying all applicable fees associated with Clubs & Societies;
 - 4.3.11 a Student Union Board of Director may be an executive on a society but cannot be a signing authority;
 - 4.3.12 fees may not be charged for membership in a society;

- 4.3.13 a Constitution defining the roles and responsibilities of a society must be included with the Society Ratification Package. An up-to-date copy must be available to the Clubs & Societies Department and on the OTSU website;
- 4.3.14 the Clubs & Societies Department has the authority to make exceptions and approve events for qualification;
- 4.3.15 failing to organize and execute at least two (2) events in a semester may automatically disqualify a society from re-ratification the following academic year;
- 4.3.16 events that do not qualify towards your two (2) events per semester include, but are not limited to, registration and/or recruitment tables/meetings or executive meetings;
- 4.3.17 society executives must adhere to all administrative duties and deadlines set by the Clubs & Societies Department to remain in "Good Standing," including:
 - (i) submitting a completed Ratification Package to the Clubs & Societies Department;
 - (ii) submitting a final active Executive and general membership list by January 31st for Involvement Record Recognition;
 - (iii) submitting an Event Form for each event or activity hosted by the society within the specified time frame set out by the three-level event form request;
 - (iv) replying to all correspondence from the Student Union within a timely manner;
 - (v) providing all necessary information to the Student Union for review when requested and completing required forms;
 - (vi) completing the Student Union Clubs training; and
 - (vii) sending two (2) executive members to attend the Student Union AGM.

4.4 Re-Ratification requirements:

Re-Ratification Packages must be submitted no later than September 30th of a new year to claim any account balances that are not Base or Grant Funding from the previous year. Any society that does not submit a Re-Ratification Package before September 30th relinquishes their rights to any account balances left over.

4.5 Good Standing:

To be recognized in "Good Standing" with the Student Union, a society must:

- 4.5.1 complete a minimum of two (2) events each semester;
- 4.5.2 complete the Student Union Clubs & Societies training;
- 4.5.3 send two (2) executive members to attend the Student Union AGM;
- 4.5.4 submit your General Member list to the Member Engagement Coordinator by January 31st; and
- 4.5.5 comply with Clubs & Societies Policy, Financial Procedure, and OTSU Bylaws.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Executive responsibilities:

- 5.1.1 Society Executive members, including Student Union society Presidents, are responsible for adherence to all policies and procedures relevant to Student Union societies at the OTSU.
 - (i) poster approvals (Print Media Approval Form);
 - (ii) adherence to the mandate on which a society was ratified;
 - (iii) attending or sending a delegate to all mandatory meetings set by the Club & Societies Department;
 - (iv) adherence to Student Union policies and procedures when organizing events involving a third party, non-commercial or commercial entities, or transportation services;
 - (v) Society executives do not have the authority to hold other Executives accountable; executives should complete a formal email with the account of the issue to the Clubs & Societies Department who will inform the Clubs & Societies Committee on an as-needed basis. If the issue cannot be resolved through the Clubs & Societies Department, students may submit an entry to the Clubs & Societies Sanctions Form.

- 5.1.2 Under the terms of this policy, OTSU will not attempt to censor, control, or interfere with any existing Society on the basis of its philosophy, beliefs, interests, or opinions expressed unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal, violate OTSU Societies Policy, OTSU Bylaws or core values, Ontario Tech University policies and procedures, or infringe upon the rights and freedoms of others.
- 5.1.3 Recognition as a Society by OTSU does not imply endorsement or a Society's beliefs or philosophy. It only assumes that OTSU has a responsibility to approve a Society status and to deny or withdraw recognition if the requirements of the policy or procedure are not observed.
- 5.1.4 Status of a Society, Society Executive, or Society General Member is a privilege, not a right.
- 5.1.5 Recognized Societies shall not engage in activities which are essentially commercial in nature.
- 5.1.6 A recognized Society cannot:
 - (i) have as a major activity a function that makes it a commercial organization seeking profits;
 - (ii) provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the organization or as a donation to a registered charity;
 - (iii) pay monetary compensation to some or all of its Society Executives or Society General Members, except as a reimbursement for Society expenses.
- 5.1.7 All constitutions adopted by a Society must be reviewed by the Clubs & Societies Department and approved by the Clubs & Societies Committee to be considered valid.
- 5.1.8 Societies are required to disclose, in detail, any Society relationship with on and off-campus organizations other than OTSU. OTSU reserves the right to approve or restrict your ability to leave the organization.
- 5.1.9 Removal of any Society Executive must be reviewed by the Clubs & Societies Department and approved by the Clubs & Societies Committee to be considered valid.
- 5.1.10 Societies must be ratified and in good standing to be eligible for resources and funding. OTSU resources and funding are a privilege, not a right. Society and OTSU resources must be utilized in a manner that ensures all funded activities are sensible, ethical, and legal.
- 5.1.11 Societies are required to host elections through the Clubs & Societies Department to determine Society Executives. Procedures for elections and filling vacant seats are outlined in the OTSU Society Operating Procedure.
- 5.1.12 OTSU recognizes that any student who has paid their Society ancillary fees in full can be a member of their respective Society.

6. PROMOTION OF SOCIETY AND EVENTS

- 6.1 Print media must be approved by the Clubs & Societies Department before posting on campus;
- 6.2 Student Union society posters cannot be displayed in Durham College space;
- 6.3 Content that may be considered vulgar, graphic, or potentially triggering to students can be denied; and
- 6.4 Students must follow the universities Postering Policy.

7. SOCIETY SPONSORSHIP

- 7.1 Approval and instruction from the Clubs & Societies Department are required for accepting sponsorship donations.
- 7.2 Sponsorship agreements must be signed by a signing authority of the OTSU, not society executives.

8. SOCIETY EVENTS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 Societies must submit a detailed Event Form for each planned event on or off campus, including all relevant information, to the Clubs & Societies Department.
- 8.2 Approval and confirmation will be provided via email, and holding events without approval may result in sanctions.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 Events will be approved based on provided details, and the Student Union retains the discretion to cancel or deny events based on unforeseen risks or insurance liability.
- 9.2 Events are classified into three levels:
- 9.2.1 Level one:
On campus, no external guests. Small events and meetings. Require a minimum 3 business days.
 - 9.2.2 Level two:
On campus, external guests, anticipating large numbers of participants. Require minimum of 5 business days.
 - 9.2.3 Level three:
Off-campus, typically end-of-year galas. Require minimum of 20 business days.
- 9.3 Insurance Requirements
- 9.3.1 Third-party insurance of at least \$5,000,000 is required for off-campus events, including coverage for alcohol service if applicable. The university requires any vendors coming to campus to provide a COI with a minimum of 5 million in liability.
- 9.4 External Guests
- 9.4.1 The OTSU may permit external guests on a case-by-case basis, subject to review of risk management documents and adherence to guest pricing and entry requirements.

10. NON-COMPLIANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Violation of the Society's policies and procedures may result in reputational, financial, and/or situational consequences to the Society, Sub-Society, Club & Society department, and/or OTSU. A Society that fails to comply with these policy statements or related operating procedures, risks sanction and possible loss of status as a recognized OTSU group.

11. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND DIRECTIVES

- Not-For-Profit Corporations Act
- The Ontario Human Rights Code
- Ontario Tech University Student Code of Conduct
- Ontario Tech University Booking & Use of University Space Policy
- Policy on the Recognition of Student Organizations
- OTSU General Bylaws
- Clubs & Societies Policy
- Clubs & Societies Sanction Procedure