



# UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto  
Governing Council

## **Policy on the Recognition of Campus Groups**

Revised May 25, 1993

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## Policy on the Recognition of Campus Groups

Voluntary organizations formed by members of the University community are a traditional part of campus life, and contribute in a significant way to its intellectual, political, social and cultural diversity and richness.

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 on the basis of sex, race or religion.

Recognition as a "campus 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 It follows that this privilege can be withdrawn if these procedures are neglected or responsibilities abrogated by the organization or group.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 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 "campus group" by the University implies neither endorsement of a particular group's beliefs or philosophy, nor the assumption of legal liability for the 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.
  - (a) The University should maintain a policy and mechanism for the recognition of campus organizations. All such organizations wishing to use "University of Toronto" in their names and all groups wishing to claim internal status under the "Policy for the Allocation of Rooms - Extracurricular Bookings" must be recognized.
  - (b) Responsibility for the maintenance of the policy and mechanism, where campus-wide organizations or organizations drawing members from more than one division or constituency of the University are concerned, should be vested in the University Affairs Board of the Governing Council.
  - (c) The responsibility for recognition of organizations drawing members from only one division should rest with the council of that division.
2. Eligibility for recognition should be assessed annually against the following "technical" constitutional areas rather than ideological ones:
  - (a) 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 essential "value" of the University must remain that of preservation of freedom of enquiry and association.
  - (b) Recognized campus 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 campus group cannot
    - (i) Have as a major activity a function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial organization;
    - (ii) provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the organization;

- (iii) pay salaries to some or all of its officers.
- (c) Membership in groups should be open to all members of the University community without restriction on the grounds of national origin, race, religion, colour, or sex. While discriminatory membership practices are not allowed, it is recognized that certain groups could well be homogeneous in nature without being discriminatory. Status as non-voting members may be extended to interested persons from outside the University.
  - (d) The University's interest in the constitution is based on its concern that organizations and individuals using its name and its facilities are genuine campus organizations, and that they pursue activities in accordance with the law, and in addition that such things as organizational structure, membership, procedures, rules of conduct, etc. are spelled out so that all members who join a club and take part in its activities may do so with full knowledge of their rights and responsibilities within the group.
  - (e) Where a group applying for recognition has direct connections with another body outside the University of Toronto, the nature of this connection and the name of the body must be disclosed fully and substantially in the application for recognition.
- 3.
- (a) The University will not attempt to monitor or review the activities of a group in the normal course of events. It will however investigate complaints or charges that an organization has acted in a manner that is inconsistent with its constitution or with the requirements of this policy. If these complaints or charges prove to be valid, recognition may be withdrawn. Application for a renewal of recognition may be made at any time after the following September 30.
  - (b) Responsibility for the implementation of this policy is delegated to the administration. In the case of denial or withdrawal of recognition, a statement of the reasons will be provided. All administrative decisions to grant, deny, or withdraw recognition will be reported regularly to the University Affairs Board for information.
  - (c) Groups wishing to appeal a decision may do so through the Office of the Assistant Vice-President, Student Affairs. In the event of an appeal, a hearing shall be held by an administrative officer designated by the Assistant Vice-President, Student Affairs not involved in the original decision.
4. Groups seeking recognition should supply the following:
- (a) An application in the form prescribed.
  - (b) The names of two officers and a "contact person" (who could be one of the officers) responsible for all room bookings and rentals of University equipment and services, a mailing address and a telephone number. This information will be considered to be public information.
  - (c) The total number of members, the size of the governing body (i.e., number of executive officers), and the proportion of members on and off campus at the time of registration.
  - (d) A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the group.

Groups meeting the requirements of this policy will be granted recognition for the academic year in which application is made. (For this purpose the academic year is considered to run from October 1 to September 30.) Normally recognition will be renewed automatically in successive academic years upon request by the new executive. If constitutional changes have been proposed the amended constitution should be submitted and will be considered in the course of the renewal process.

5. Applicants for recognition or recognized groups handling extensive funds may be required to submit audited statements annually to the Office of the Assistant Vice-President, Student Affairs.

At the discretion of the Assistant Vice-President, Student Affairs 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 group's activities nor assumes legal liability in connection with the goods and services provided.

6. Recognized Campus Groups must report to the Assistant Vice-President, Student Affairs the name of the bank, trust company or credit union, the branch, account numbers and signing officers for all bank accounts opened in their name.

January 26, 1987

Section 11 amended by Governing Council on February 13, 1990.

Section 11(b, c) revised and sections 11(d-f) added by Governing Council, May 23, 1993.