OPERATING POLICY – MSU CLUBS

1. PURPOSE

1.1 Clubs recognized by the MSU shall act as a centerpiece around which members of the McMaster community with similar interests, backgrounds, or ambitions can gather for educational, informational, and social purposes to benefit the McMaster community.

2. CLUB RECOGNITION

2.1 Recognition as an MSU Club is a privilege based upon observance of certain procedures and acceptance of certain responsibilities. It follows that this privilege can be withdrawn, in whole or in part, if these procedures are neglected or responsibilities abrogated by the organization or group;

2.2 Under the terms of this policy, the MSU will not attempt to censor, control or interfere with any existing MSU Club on the basis of its philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions expressed unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal or which infringe upon the rights and freedoms of others.

2.3 By the same token, recognition as a club by the MSU implies neither endorsement of a particular club’s beliefs or philosophy. It assumes only that the MSU has a responsibility to inform itself of organizations, which use University facilities and the MSU name, and to deny or withdraw recognition if the requirements of this policy are not observed;

2.4 All clubs wishing to use “MSU” or “McMaster Students Union” in their name must be recognized by the MSU;

2.5 Responsibility for the maintenance of the club recognition policy and mechanism of recognition shall be vested in the MSU Clubs Administrator; the Clubs Administrator shall solicit recommendations from the Clubs Executive Council (CEC), a minimum of twice per semester in order to maintain the most effective policies possible. Changes to policy must be approved by majority vote of the SRA;

2.6 Recognized clubs shall 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 clubs from engaging in legitimate fundraising. Moreover, funding from the MSU shall be secondary to funds raised through legitimate fundraising activities, including sponsorships and membership fees. However, a recognized club group cannot:

2.6.1 Have as a major activity, a function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial organization;
2.6.2 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;

2.6.3 Pay monies to some or all of its officers or members, except as a reimbursement for club expenses;

3. **MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 Membership in clubs shall be open to all MSU members, except where it jeopardizes the integrity of the club’s purpose, as determined by the Clubs Administrator in consultation with said club’s Executive (performance art clubs, etc);

3.2 The Clubs Administrator shall ensure to the best of their ability that all clubs, where practical, are inclusive in their membership practices and missions;

3.3 Non-MSU members may hold club membership upon invitation of the club, but may not hold Executive office, or any position, which gives them authority to expend MSU Club funds;

3.4 A minimum of 2/3 of the clubs membership must be constituted of MSU members (full-time undergraduate students);

3.5 Membership requirements and privileges must be clearly stated in the club constitution;

3.6 President must be elected by the general membership, in a process determined annually by the Clubs Administrator;

3.7 All members in good standing may be candidates in an election if they fulfill the requirements of that position as described in the club constitution, excluding MSU members.

4. **RECOGNITION PROCEDURE**

4.1 Any group requesting MSU club recognition shall submit a complete online application (posted at www.msumcmaster.ca/clubs) to the Clubs Administrator in order to receive MSU club status; such an application shall include:

4.1.1 A membership list of the Executive (minimum 4) including titles, valid email addresses, student numbers, and phone numbers for each student;

4.1.2 A membership list of at least ten (10) MSU members who wish to be a part of the club (excluding executives listed as part of 4.1.1), including valid email addresses and student numbers for each student;

4.1.3 A propose constitution which includes:

4.1.3.1 A proposed name;

4.1.3.2 A statement of purpose;

4.1.3.3 Membership privileges, duties, and restriction;

4.1.3.4 Definition and responsibility of executive officers;

4.1.3.5 Election procedures (nominations, campaign, voting, impeachment);

4.1.3.6 Financial procedures;

4.1.3.7 Meeting requirements and procedures;

4.1.3.8 Method of constitutional amendments;

4.1.3.9 Disclaimer.

4.1.4 A cover letter stating the club’s desire to be active this term;
4.1.5 A proposed year plan for the upcoming year;
4.1.6 A proposed budget.
4.1.7 In order to gain recognition as an MSU club, all applicants must show, to the satisfaction of the Clubs Administrator, that they will provide significant positive impact on the McMaster community and that they fill a need not currently satisfied by an existing club or other non-club student organization.
4.1.8 Applications for the following academic year will be advertised and accepted during second semester, as determined by the Clubs Administrator;
4.1.9 A second round of applications will be advertised and accepted during second semester, as determined by the Clubs Administrator.

4.2 Where a group applying for recognition has direct connections with another body outside the MSU, either inside or outside the University, the nature of this connection and the name of the body must be disclosed fully and substantially in the application for recognition. Connections requiring disclosure include but are not limited to any kind of funding or sponsorship, or being an on-campus part of another body;

4.3 The MSU’s interest in the constitution is based on its concern that organizations and individuals using its name and its facilities are genuine clubs, 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 club;

4.4 In the event that existing clubs are found, in the opinion of the Clubs Administrator, to be in direct competition with one another and are duplicating services, the Clubs Administrator shall make every practical effort to find different niches for the clubs. If this is found to be impractical, the Clubs Administrator, as their discretion, either merge the clubs or disband one or more of the clubs;

4.5 Recognized clubs shall report to the Clubs Administrator 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. All clubs must maintain their accounts at the PACE Credit Union, or other branches as deemed acceptable by the Clubs Administrator on a case-by-case basis;

4.6 Clubs, whose applications are received after the deadline stated in 4.1.8 and 4.19 above, will be considered at the Clubs Administrator’s discretion.

4.7 All new clubs will be on probation for one year; the following will occur during the probation year:
4.7.1 The Clubs Administrator will work closely with the club, and make recommendations at the end of the year as to whether or not the club should receive full recognition;
4.7.2 Any club not recommended for full recognition at the conclusion of their probation will be placed on a second year of probation;
4.7.3 If full recognition is not recommended after the second year, the club will be disbanded;
4.7.4 The club shall notify the Clubs Administrator in advance of all club and Executive meetings and events;
4.7.5 New clubs must submit a midterm (December) and a year-end (March) evaluation.

4.8 The Clubs Administrator shall distribute to the SRA, a list of those clubs that applied for recognition and recommend those applications found satisfactory;

4.9 Clubs will receive e-mail confirmation of their recognition status within two (2) weeks following SRA approval;
4.10 All clubs shall automatically lose recognition on September 1 unless ratified by the SRA; no club shall receive funding from the MSU until it is duly recognized;

4.11 A record of all changes and results of Constitution reviews will be kept on file by the MSU via the Clubs Administrator for perusal by all MSU members;

4.12 For all MSU Clubs whose primary purpose is to produce a publication, the Clubs Executive Council shall act as a Board of Publication.

4.13 The decision of the Clubs Administrator in this matter shall be made after reviewing the application package, consulting with the group’s Executive and consulting with any other interested parties. The decision of the Clubs Administrator may be appealed first to the Clubs Administrator for a second consideration. If this appeal fails, a second appeal may be made to the CEC, which shall decide that matter based on advice from the club and from the Clubs Administrator. In the event of a tie, the appeal fails. The decision of the CEC shall be made in closed session, is final, and cannot be appealed;

5. JUDICIAL POLICY

5.1 The Clubs Judicial Policy is maintained in addition to, not instead of, the McMaster University Student Code of Conduct, the University Alcohol Policy, the Residence Discipline Code, and other codes of conduct or regulations and disciplinary procedures. The Clubs Judicial Policy is intended to address issues of conduct particular to Clubs that may or may not be addressed in other codes as well. The following offences shall constitute a material breach of the conditions under which clubs are recognized by the MSU and are subject to discipline as outlined in section 5.3:

5.1.1 Class A Offences: are actions that interfere with the right of an individual or group to enjoy life in the McMaster community. They include:
   5.1.1.1 Intentionally running a club in a manner which negatively affects the ability of another club, non-club group, or individual to conduct their lawful affairs;
   5.1.1.2 Interfering with another club’s activity that has been approved by the Clubs Administrator;
   5.1.1.3 Any other actions, which unnecessarily cause a significant nuisance for an individual or group.

5.1.2 Class B Offences: are actions, which negatively affect the ability of the MSU to properly provide support to its clubs. They include:
   5.1.2.1 Running any event substantially differently than portrayed to the Clubs Administrator in a detrimental manner;
   5.1.2.2 Failure to fulfill a mission statement as provided to the Clubs Administrator;
   5.1.2.3 Failure to abide by the rules of the clubs’ space as posted;
   5.1.2.4 Failure to uphold the terms of a mailbox, locker, or office contract;
   5.1.2.5 Failing to abide by any part of this or any other MSU or University policies, the McMaster University Risk Management Policy notwithstanding;
   5.1.2.6 Failure to comply with instructions or sanctions received from the Clubs Administrator;
   5.1.2.7 Conduct unbecoming of an MSU club;
   5.1.2.8 Any other actions, which unnecessarily hinder the ability of the MSU to properly, support its clubs.
5.1.3  Class C Offences: are actions, which endanger the safety or security of any person or property. Class C Offences will always result in a punitive sanction. They include:
5.1.3.1  Any illegal behaviour;
5.1.3.2  Failure to comply with the McMaster University Risk Management policy;
5.1.3.3  Any other actions, which unnecessarily jeopardize the safety or security of any person or property.

5.2  The Clubs Administrator shall be the primary investigative and judicial officer in the event that a club is suspended of any of the above offences. The Clubs Administrator shall exercise their best judgment in interpreting and applying these policies and shall conduct an investigation into any allegations of misconduct, and sanction any clubs found to be in violation at their discretion, subject to appeal at the CEC;

5.3  Clubs found to be guilty of any offences described in 11.1 shall be subject to the following sanctions:

5.3.1  The Clubs Administrator may hand out the following sanctions at their discretion, in consultation with the Operations Coordinator. The Clubs Administrator shall notify the CEC within 2 business days of reaching a decision. Only those punitive sanctions falling under 5.3.2 may be appealed to the CEC and any clubs intending to appeal shall notify the Clubs Administrator of their intent to appeal within one (1) week of being sanctioned. Appeals will be held at the soonest possible CEC meeting:
5.3.1.1  Punitive letter of Caution:  The Clubs Administrator may issue a letter to the club, advising them of the infraction and placing them on probation for a period of not more than one (1) calendar year. During the period of probation, clubs shall report all events and Executive meetings to the Clubs Administrator in advance and if found to be in violation of the clubs judicial policy again, will be subject to mandatory disciplinary action;
5.3.1.2  Proxy Appointment: If, in the opinion of the Clubs Administrator, the issue in question has been a result of poor or inadequate leadership on the part of the club's President or other Executive members, the Clubs Administrator may appoint a proxy to be present at all Executive and general meetings and any other events they deem necessary. This proxy shall report on a bi-weekly basis to the Clubs Administrator and act as a monitor of the club, with the authority to defer any decisions at Executive meetings pending approval or rejection by the Clubs Administrator and available to supervise any general meetings or events. The proxy shall report to the Clubs Administrator at least every 30 days and the Clubs Administrator shall decide whether or not to lift the sanction;

5.3.2  In the event of a more serious infraction, the Clubs Administrator may call a meeting of the CEC to hear the case and decide on a more severe penalty. The CEC may reach one of the following decisions. Sanctions that can only be handed down by the CEC include:
5.3.2.1  Disbandment: If in the opinion of the CEC, a club is either incapable of or unwilling to correct its behavior and the interests of the MSU and student body would be best served by the disbandment of a club, the Clubs Administrator has the right to recommend that the SRA rescind the MSU's recognition of the club. This sanction is subject to ratification by the SRA and shall only be used in situations where all other reasonable courses of action have been pursued. This sanction shall remain in effect for a minimum of one (1) full calendar year and carries with it the stipulation that a club must present evidence to the satisfaction
of the Clubs Administrator that they have reformed in order for it to be lifted. All clubs that are removed from the disbanded list will be placed on probationary status for their first subsequent year of operations;

5.3.2.2 Membership restrictions: Where the CEC finds cause to sustain a charge of individual misconduct on the part of a club Executive, instead of sanctioning the club as a whole, that member shall be barred from holding Executive office in any MSU club for one (1) calendar year. That Executive position shall then be filled in accordance with the club’s Constitution.

5.4 Where the Clubs Administrator is a member of an MSU recognized club, the Operations Coordinator or delegate thereof shall investigate all offences allegedly committed by that club;

5.5 Any actions taken by the MSU shall be independent of those taken by any other judicial body;

6. MSU CLUB PRIVILEGES

6.1 A recognized club shall:

   6.1.1 Be eligible to use MSU notice boards and meeting rooms
   6.1.2 Be eligible to book rooms on campus;
   6.1.3 Be able to use the Compass Information Centre to sell tickets and/or advertise their events at a reduced charge;
   6.1.4 Have a mailbox in the Clubs Space in MUSC Room 215;
   6.1.5 Be able to advertise events on the MSU Page in The Silhouette and Public Service Announcements on CFMU-FM 93.3 free of charge;
   6.1.6 Be eligible to make use of the MSU name;
   6.1.7 Be eligible for funding from the MSU;
   6.1.8 Be eligible to do billing and credit at Underground Media & Design, provided there is no outstanding balance from a previous year;
       6.1.8.1 Management of follow up of outstanding balances to the Underground will be completed by the Clubs Administrator and Underground Service Manager.
   6.1.9 Be eligible for risk management liability coverage for their events through the McMaster University Risk Management policy;
   6.1.10 Be eligible to gain free access to all permanently-installed audio/visual equipment at McMaster University;
   6.1.11 Be eligible to participate in ClubsFest;
   6.1.12 Be eligible to consult with the Clubs Administrator on matters of club function, event planning, and problem solving;
   6.1.13 Be eligible to request available locker space;
   6.1.14 Be eligible to request available office space in ClubSpace;
   6.1.15 Be eligible to use space on the MSU website;
   6.1.16 Be eligible to book meeting rooms in ClubSpace.

7. ALLOCATION OF SPACE FOR CLUBS PROCEDURES

7.1 ClubSpace bookings will prioritize bookings for ratified MSU Clubs. Other groups wishing to book the space for events will be allowed under the discretion of the Clubs Administrator. The following allocation procedures shall apply:
7.1.1 Bookings will be made available to MSU clubs 30 days in advance and will be filled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

7.1.1.1 Only one group may book out ClubSpace at a time, with the exception of hosting of a bake sale table at the entrance to ClubSpace. This space may be booked by a second club.

7.1.1.2 An individual club may book the space a maximum of 4 times a month, and for a maximum of 4 hours per booking. Additional hours may be allocated at the discretion of the Clubs Administrator.

7.1.1.3 All bookings shall be made online via the Clubs portal.

7.1.1.4 Based on the discretion of the Clubs Administrator MSU services and other groups will be able to book spaces 14 days in advance of the date.

7.2 Only MSU recognized clubs can apply for office space. The offices shall be allocated via an application and lottery process overseen by the Clubs Administrator. The following restrictions shall apply to these spaces:

7.2.1 Spaces shall be allocated for a period of one (1) year, with occupancy extending from date of allocation to no later than April 30. At the end of that time period, they will again be available for allocation;

7.2.2 Three (3) clubs shall share one (1) office. In the event that one club wishes to move to another office space, such changes shall be made only with the full agreement of all clubs affected, as well as the Clubs Administrator;

7.2.3 The clubs occupying this space will have low-priority access to the clubs lockers;

7.2.4 Applications for these spaces shall be submitted to the Clubs Administrator. These applications shall be made available by the Clubs Administrator on the clubs website, shall contain both qualitative and quantitative questions, and which be periodically reviewed by the Clubs Administrator;

7.2.5 The spaces themselves shall be allocated using the following process:

7.2.5.1 Clubs shall submit their responses to an application package;

7.2.5.3 Nine clubs shall receive office space directly based on merit of application

7.2.5.4 Nine clubs shall receive office space via award allocation

7.2.5.5 The remaining applicants will be placed into a lottery which will randomly select clubs for remaining office spaces.

7.2.6 All clubs shall complete a club office contract and present it to the Clubs Administrator for signing prior to being granted office space access. Club Presidents shall present the signed contract to the MSU Administrative Services Coordinator in MUSC 201 and leave a deposit as outlined in OPERATING POLICY – KEY ACCESS before receiving one (1) key for the allocated office;

7.2.7 Clubs shall occupy no more than one (1) office space at a time.

7.2.8 One (1) office shall be allocated as shared clubs office space. This office shall be booked through the Clubs Administrator and shall be used for such purposes as office hours or Executive meetings for clubs that have not been allocated an office in 7.2;

7.3 Only MSU recognized clubs may apply for locker space. The lockers shall be allocated via an application process overseen by the Clubs Administrator. The following restrictions shall apply to these spaces:

7.3.1 Clubs without office space shall have priority over those who have office space;

7.3.2 The decision of the Clubs Administrator regarding locker assignment is final and cannot be appealed;
7.3.3 All clubs shall sign a club locker contract prior to being granted locker access and present it to the Clubs Administrator for their signature;
7.3.4 Clubs assigned a locker will submit a $10 refundable cash deposit to the MSU Accounting Department;
7.3.5 The Clubs Administrator will provide the combination lock for the lockers. Other locks will not be accepted.

7.4 For the mailboxes available to MSU recognized clubs in ClubSpace, the following procedures shall apply:
7.4.1 All MSU clubs shall be allocated a mailbox in ClubSpace, to which both on and off campus mail may be sent;
7.4.2 Where practical, club mailbox assignments will be constant from year to year;

7.5 Decisions made under SECTION 7: ALLOCATION OF SPACE FOR CLUBS’ PROCEDURES of this Operating Policy are final and cannot be appealed.

8. DUTIES OF CLUBS

8.1 An MSU Club shall:
8.1.1 Include the words: “A recognized and funded club (society/organization/association) of the MSU” under its name and the MSU logo on all letterhead, advertising, and publicity;
8.1.2 Ensure that the clubs’ Constitution and statement of purpose are up to date and that the club is operating in accordance with both;
8.1.3 Determine its own program membership and membership fee, consistent with the policies of the MSU;
8.1.4 Keep a current copy of the MSU Clubs Handbook in their files and ensure that it is being followed;
8.1.5 Prior to the deadline for reapplication, hold election(s);
8.1.6 Ensure that the club’s Executive are MSU members;
8.1.7 Ensure that the club’s Executive consists of at least a President, Vice-President, and Treasurer, and one additional Executive member, at least two of whom shall be signing authorities for the club;
8.1.8 File, with the Clubs Administrator by e-mail prior to May 1st, the name, summer e-mail address and telephone number of a club member, preferably the President, who will act as a summer contact;
8.1.9 File, with the Clubs Administrator by the second Friday in September, any updates to the information required in the club’s application. As well as any updates to the club’s executive and constitution as they occur;
8.1.10 Follow the policies and procedures outlined in the Clubs handbook and take direction from the Clubs Administrator as necessary;
8.1.11 Follow all applicable laws of the land, including but not limited to MSU, McMaster University, local, provincial, and national by-laws, laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures;
8.1.12 Attend clubs training and CEC meetings as directed by the Clubs Administrator;
8.1.13 Be financially responsible for their activities;
8.1.14 Empty the contents of their mailbox every week;
8.1.15 Hold at least one general meeting per year. Clubs’ meeting minutes should be available to the Clubs Administrator upon request.
9. **FUNDING**

9.1 Only MSU recognized clubs shall be eligible for MSU clubs funding;

9.2 Funding shall follow a set criteria recommended by the Clubs Administrator;

9.3 Funding shall be given in the form of grants only;

9.4 Funding shall be given in the form of reimbursement only; no advances shall be issued to clubs;

9.5 Any club that has its fee collected by the University is ineligible for funding from the MSU;

9.6 Sports, clubs for which there is a comparable University or intramural team on campus, will be ineligible for funding from the MSU;

9.7 Club grants shall be given out on an expense basis as follows:

9.7.1 All clubs shall file a proposed budget for the upcoming year with the Clubs Administrator by e-mail, using the budget request form posted on the clubs website. Clubs shall refer to the clubs website to download the budget worksheet, complete it, and e-mail the file to the Clubs Administrator by October 1;

9.7.2 The Clubs Administrator will inform the club of the amount of their grant for the year by October 15 for those clubs who meet the prescribed deadlines;

9.7.3 Clubs will only receive its money as it is spent, not in a lump sum at the beginning of the semester;

9.7.4 A club will only receive money upon presentation of receipts, invoices, or valid written estimates to the Clubs Administrator. This documentation must accompany a completed club claims form, which shall be posted on the clubs website for download;

9.7.5 Upon presentation of the documentation outlined above, the Clubs Administrator will authorize the issuing of a cheque to the club, for the amount noted on the form, to a maximum of the amount allocated to the club for the year;

9.7.5.1 All receipts for events held from the time a club’s budget is approved to December 1, must be submitted by December 15

9.7.5.2 All receipts for reimbursement for events held after December 1st must be submitted by April 15 each year.

9.7.6 All clubs may be required to submit their books for a random audit within five (5) business days, on request of the Clubs Administrator, failure to submit books may result in funding being suspended and automatic probationary status will be applied;

9.7.7 Any monies remaining in the club’s individual bank account at the end of the fiscal year shall be considered the sole property of that club;

9.7.8 If a club fails to renew its status, any monies remaining in club bank accounts shall be held in trust for two (2) calendar years, at which time the Clubs Administrator shall close the account and the proceeds shall be added to the clubs grant budget line;

9.7.9 Clubs shall be responsible for any/all debts remaining from previous years;

9.8 Where the Clubs Administrator is a member of an MSU recognized club, the Operations Coordinator or delegate thereof shall designate all funding for that club.

10. **PERSONNEL**

10.1 **Clubs Administrator**

10.1.1 The Clubs Administrator shall:
10.1.1.1 Act as a liaison between MSU clubs, the McMaster Students Union, and McMaster University;
10.1.1.2 Perform duties outlined in the Clubs Administrator job description;
10.1.1.3 Ensure that OPERATING POLICY – SERVICES and OPERATING POLICY – MSU CLUBS is upheld;
10.1.1.4 Prepare a year plan, mid-year, and year-end report in conjunction with the Assistant Clubs Administrator and present it to the Operations;
10.1.1.5 Participate in transition with the outgoing Clubs Administrator and prepare transition for the incoming Clubs Administrator;
10.1.1.6 Maintain records of club constitutions and executive officers;
10.1.1.7 Be hired by a hiring committee struck by the Board of Directors that shall consist of: the outgoing Clubs Administrator, the Operations Coordinator, and one Board of Directors member.

10.2 Assistant Clubs Administrators
10.2.1 The Assistant Clubs Administrators shall:
10.2.1.1 Act as a liaison between MSU clubs, the McMaster Students Union, and McMaster University, in conjunction with the Clubs Administrator;
10.2.1.2 Perform duties outlined in the Assistant Clubs Administrator job description;
10.2.1.3 Ensure that OPERATING POLICY – SERVICES and OPERATING POLICY – MSU CLUBS is upheld;
10.2.1.4 In conjunction with the Clubs Administrator, prepare a year plan, mid-year, and year-end report and present it to the Operations Coordinator;
10.2.1.5 Participate in transition with the outgoing Assistant Clubs Administrator and prepare transition for the incoming Assistant Clubs Administrator.
10.2.1.6 Chair Clubs’ Executive Council meetings
10.2.1.7 Be selected by the Clubs Administrator and hiring board through an application and interview process.

11. EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

11.1 All allegations of misconduct made on the basis of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with according to relevant MSU and McMaster University policies.

11.2 OPERATING POLICY – MSU CLUBS shall not preclude the Clubs Administrator from devising creative solutions to novel situations. Such solutions shall be made in consultation with the Operations Coordinator.