


Policy:	<b>Society Policy</b>
Last Amended:	<b>April 2024</b>
Responsibility:	<b>Board of Directors; Society Committee, Society Coordinator</b>
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Board Chair Signature:	 Ashish Ganapathy

## 1. GENERAL

- A. The goals of allowing students to set up societies are:
  - i. to develop personally and professionally
  - ii. to expand the mindset and knowledge of participants; and
  - iii. to help students develop a broader understanding of the world and their place in it.
- B. This policy clearly outlines all student Society regulations in order to allow societies to achieve their goals, maintain their resources and remain in good standing with the Association, as well as the larger Saint Mary's University ("the University") community. All student societies, clubs, and organizations must follow these policies as they:
  - i. operate on campus
  - ii. use the name of the University or the Association
  - iii. ask Association members for money or to become members or clients of societies
  - iv. use University or Association facilities.
- C. Approved societies may apply to the Association for funding.
- D. The Association approves three types of societies on campus:
  - i. Academic societies, whose members share an interest in a faculty, major, or certificate the university offers
  - ii. Social societies, whose members are any member of the Association
  - iii. Levied societies, that collect fees from students
- E. Levied societies:
  - i. collect funds from students through a levy

- ii. allow all members and only members of the Association to be Society members
- iii. must submit a report for every use of funds, and submit receipts or other proof of spending over \$150
- iv. are reviewed by the Society Coordinator or the Society Committee
- v. must create a Board of Directors:
  - 1) with at least 25 % of voting members being appointed by the President
  - 2) made up only of current Saint Mary's students, and
  - 3) meets at least once each semester.

## 2. SOCIETY SUMMITS

- A. The Society Summit outlines the bylaws, rules, and regulations for conducting Society business on campus. Primary Event Organizer training takes place at the Summit. The Society Coordinator deals with any issues that are not covered in the Society Summit.
- B. There will be a Fall Society Summit and a Winter Society Summit.
  - i) At least two executive members from each Society must be present at the Fall and Winter Society Summit for the Society to maintain or obtain their ratified status.
  - ii) Societies may be exempted from the Winter Society Summit if the following criteria are met:
    - 1. At least two executives who attend the Fall Society Summit are continuing their term in Winter.
    - 2. The Society submitted their semester report at least two weeks before the Winter Society Summit.
    - 3. There have been no content changes to the Society Summit Presentation through the Fall and Winter Semesters. However, if changes are made to the presentation's content, the VP of Societies will contact the societies to make that known.
- C. Society Summits are held on the third Friday of each semester unless scheduling conflicts or other interruptions prevent that.

## 3. EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLES

- A. Every month, a Society Roundtable will be held where all societies will meet with the Society Coordinator.
- B. Two executives from each society must attend at least one Society Roundtable each semester.
- C. The Society Coordinator will gather feedback and ideas to improve the student Society system.

## 4. SOCIETY COMMITTEE

- A. The Society Committee oversees the actions of societies and holds them accountable to policy.
- B. Membership of this committee is made up of three (3) members of the Association's Board of Directors and the Society Coordinator (typically a Vice-President of the Association).
- C. Committee members remain on the committee from their appointment until:
  - i. they resign from the committee, or
  - ii. they are no longer a member of the Board of Directors, or
  - iii. they are no longer the Society Coordinator.
- D. The committee elects a Chair from among its members. The Chair must be a member of SMUSA's Board of Directors and is a voting member of the committee.
- E. A meeting has quorum only if all four members are present. Votes and motions are passed by a majority vote (two (2) of the three (3) voting members, including the Society Coordinator).
- F. The committee meets at least twice in each of the Fall and Winter semesters, and at least once in the Spring/Summer semester. One of these meetings takes place after the Society Summit; one takes place two weeks after the Fall and Winter Society Expo; and another takes place by April 30 (the last day of the fiscal year) to review and approve the list of societies for the coming semester and to introduce the new Society Coordinator.
- G. The Committee aims to appoint new members and fill any vacancies before the end of August each year.
- H. If the Committee Chair is in a conflict of interest with any Committee business, the Chair will, through the Board Chair, appoint a temporary member of the Committee from the Association's Board of Directors to

sit in. This member is not an official member of the Committee.

- I. The Committee Chair gives the Board a verbal report when necessary, and a written report at least once each year.
- J. The Committee has the authority to hear appeals about approvals or suspensions of approvals, or refusals to approve any Society.
- K. The Committee's decision on any appeal is final.

## 5. SOCIETY CRITERIA

- A. The Society Committee may approve any student Society that:
  - i. is in good standing with the Association from prior years' operations and has not violated any of the Association's policies or bylaws
  - ii. has already been approved by the Board of Directors. Once the Board approves a new Society to operate on campus, the Society Coordinator can re-approve it each year.
- B. Every Society should have an executive body consisting of registered Saint Mary's University students, including a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer if required.
- C. Approved Societies accept as members people who are registered Saint Mary's students.
- D. Each Society presents a constitution that follows the Association's Constitution and policies.
- E. Approved Societies have at least 20 members unless the Society Coordinator approves something else in writing.
- F. Each Society has the right to collect membership fees if desired.
- G. Each Society has its own bank account receives approval by completing the appropriate approval forms (which can be found at [www.smusa.ca](http://www.smusa.ca)).
  - i. Approved Societies are in good standing with the Association from prior years' operations and have not broken any of the Association's policies or bylaws.
- H. Every Society must give the Association the following:
  - i. by January 15, a report of events in the first semester
  - ii. events expected in the second semester
  - iii. proof that the Society has a bank account, its current balance, and all cash flow statements
  - iv. recommendations for the next year's executive of that Society
  - v. by April 30th an annual report with:
    - 1) the Society's incoming and outgoing executives
    - 2) the Society's outgoing executives
    - 3) all events held in the past year, including the revenues, expenses, venues, dates, and nature of each event
    - 4) a current cash flow statement
    - 5) proof of the Society's bank account and its current balance
    - 6) recommendations for the next year's executive of that Society
    - 7) member involvement record with time contributed kept by the President of the Society that may be delegated for use in co-curricular record approval.
    - 8) Student Event Risk Management (SERM) forms for any events that are to take place.
- I. If a Society break rules, the Society Committee may:
  - i. approve the Society upon a two-thirds vote, as long as:
    - 1) the Society's recognition was not withdrawn in the previous administrative year
    - 2) the Society does not have the same mandate as a Society that had its recognition withdrawn within the previous administrative year
  - ii. withdraw the Society's recognition if two-thirds of the Association's Board votes in favour of this
  - iii. suspend the Society's recognition if two-thirds of the Association's Board votes in favour of this
  - iv. ask for information about the Society and access to the affairs of the Society as it, or those acting upon its behalf according to the Constitution and policies of the Association, deemed to be necessary.
- J. The Association's student staff may take any executive or signing position in any Society.
- K. The Society Coordinator may permit societies to book space on campus before being approved so they can plan events and rally support for their purpose.
  - i. A Society may be granted this permission only if they apply for approval and the permission is temporarily granted.

## 6. FUNDING

- A. All societies may open a business bank account under the Association's umbrella at the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) branch located at the corner of Spring Garden Road and Summer Street in Halifax.
- B. A Society should have \$200 in its bank account at the end of each semester. Each Society executive must make sure there are sufficient funds for the incoming executive for the following year and that there are no outstanding debts.
- C. Funding is available to societies in the order in which societies apply until Society budget funds are exhausted. Not all approved societies will be funded.
- D. All funds that a Society receives belong to the Association and must be returned immediately if the Society Coordinator demands it.
- E. All societies may apply for a branding grant of \$250 in their first year of operation, or if they have never received this grant before. No other start-up funds are to be provided. This funding is available only until Society funds for the year are exhausted.
- F. All societies that need funding may apply to the Society Coordinator for a special event grant at least two weeks before the event is to take place. This application must include a detailed event budget.
- G. The Society Coordinator approves grant applications that are reasonable, following these rules:
  - i. The Society Coordinator will not give a Society more than \$2000 in special event grant funding in any fiscal year. Any additional funding must be approved by the President to an absolute ceiling of \$3000.
  - ii. The Society Coordinator will not grant more than half of the costs of any single event.
  - iii. Preference is given to funding applications for events that will improve the image of the University while contributing to student events, achievements, and interests.
  - iv. The Society Coordinator will not support costs that will only benefit a person that is not a student of the University.
  - v. The Society Coordinator will not consider requests for special event grants after the event has taken place.
  - vi. The Society Coordinator will consider only applications for funding from student societies recognized by the Association under this policy document.
  - vii. The Society Coordinator will consider only funding requests that benefit the membership of the Association and make the Society more active in the University community.
- H. The Gorsebrook Lounge ("the Gorsebrook") is a service of the Association; it is available to host Society events. The Association and the Gorsebrook need some things from event planners:
  - i. a completed SERM form, at least two weeks before the event
  - ii. confirmed Gorsebrook booking to the Association's Operations Manager at least one week before the event
  - iii. a complete description of the event (to the Society Coordinator)
  - iv. a \$200 deposit to cover possible lack of food and beverage sales (If sales are greater than \$200, the Gorsebrook will repay the deposit to the Society).
- I. If a Society is late to pay a bill from the Association or an outside organization or company, the Society may face charges or penalties, which the Society Committee and President review and decide upon:
  - i. rejection of future grants , if the amount owed is \$500 or more
  - ii. loss of status as a recognized Society of the Association if the amount owed is \$2500 or more
- J. For any event that receives a grant from the Association, the Society must submit a Post Event Summary. This summary describes the event as it took place and all financial details or records or both. This summary must be submitted to the Society Coordinator at least two weeks after the event.
  - i. If a Society fails to submit post-event summaries with receipts, the Association will not approve future grants.
- K. The Society Coordinator will not consider a special event grant for any of the following:
  - i. capital expenditures or maintenance
  - ii. illegal uses
  - iii. salaries, honorariums, or gifts for Society members
  - iv. alcohol or alcoholic beverages

- v. events or expenditures between May and August
- vi. unnecessary food purchases

## 7. MEETING SPACES AND LOCKERS

- A. When assigning locker space, the Association considers the Society's past success and its willingness to follow Association policies. "Success" means the Society's financial and programming success in the previous year.
  - i. The Society can show it followed Association policy by:
    - 1) submitting Society reports on time
    - 2) sending up-to-date versions of the constitution to the Association
    - 3) following all other policies, rules, and regulations.
  - ii. If a Society receives locker space, they must make sure that:
    - 1) the locker is not damaged
    - 2) they keep an active schedule of events that students who are not members of the Society can attend.
  - iii. The Association may randomly inspect lockers during the year.
  - iv. Societies that don't follow these rules may face financial penalties or lose their locker space.
  - v. At the end of its locker lease a Society has one week to remove their belongings.
    - 1) Objects worth less than \$50 will be thrown away or donated.
    - 2) Objects worth \$50 or less will be stored for four months, and then donated to the Association.
- B. The Society Common Space (located on the 5th floor of the Student Centre, room 522) is as an open space for all student societies to use. The following rules apply for all users of this space:
  - i. Society meeting space can be reserved by contacting the Association's front desk (in person—at the main office on the 5th floor of the Student Centre; by phone at 902-496-8700) and signing out the space;
  - ii. There will be designated times throughout the week where the common space may not be booked to allow the space to be freely occupied by all those who wish to use it.
  - iii. The Society Common Space must be respected (i.e., students are expected to clean up after themselves). The space should always be left in better condition than it was found.
  - iv. Societies can be held responsible for damage that happened when the space was booked or occupied by the Society; damaging Association property could cause fines for the Society; a Society can also lose its status as an approved Society.
  - v. The Society Committee decides how to deal with damage.
- C. Other spaces are available to be booked, and the following rules apply:
  - i. Any executive member of a Society may book space on campus, as approved by the Society Coordinator.
  - ii. The person who books the room is responsible for making sure it is used properly.
  - iii. Anyone who uses a computer must take care of it and log out when they leave the space.
  - iv. Societies are responsible for setting-up and cleaning any space they reserved.
- D. Societies may not provide their own food or liquor; this includes items supplied by external sources, including donations.
- E. Food services may be provided by Aramark Campus Services (902-420-5599), or an external business with a food establishment permit and a licensed kitchen.
- F. All liquor/alcohol services must be provided by the Association's bar service through the Gorsebrook (902-496-8703).
- G. If a Society plans to serve alcohol at an event, they must fill out a Liquor Functions form.
  - i. The Manager of University Security and President must sign this form. The President may delegate signing to the Operations Manager.
  - ii. The Society must return the completed form to Conference Services by Thursday of the week before the event.
  - iii. They must pay for services three full days before the event or the event may be cancelled.

- H. Campus security services must be at all functions with alcohol, as well as large public gatherings. Conference Services assigns security at the Society's expense where it is needed.
- I. If a Society does not pay charges for damages, security, cleaning, liquor or food service, it may not use university facilities until it has paid the charges.
- J. If a Society fails to follow these regulations, its event could be cancelled and it could lose the ability to use University facilities.
- K. All societies must fill out a Student Event Risk Management form for off-campus events and meetings.
- L. If a Society rents a bus or car, it must give the Society Coordinator proof of insurance.

#### 8. SOCIETY PROBATION

- A. If a Society breaks any of the rules in this policy, or neglects to submit forms, the Society Coordinator can place it on Society probation.
- B. While a Society is on probation, it:
  - i. may not receive funding from the Association
  - ii. must have the Society Coordinator approve any room booking a week before booking with Conference Services
  - iii. loses its locker space.
- C. If a Society on probation continues to break rules, ignore Association policies, or neglect forms and paperwork, the Society's executive committee may be individually barred from taking part in any student Society, as well as the Society being suspended.

#### 9. GALAS AND EVENTS

- A. The Societies' Coordinator or any such authority should be notified of the society's intention to host a gala or event no later than;
  - i. Six (6) weeks prior to on-campus events.
  - ii. Ten (10) weeks prior to off-campus events.
  - iii. In the event of a society failing to meet these deadlines, the Society Coordinator maintains the discretion to approve or reject the event/gala. Societies may choose to appeal the decision of the Society Coordinator if they wish to do so.
  - iv. That notification should include
    - 1) A Budget
    - 2) Current financials
    - 3) Location of the event
    - 4) Event capacity
    - 5) External funding
- B. No event will happen without the express approval of the Societies' Coordinator or any such authority.
- C. Approval for the intended event (date), will be expressly given or denied within ten (10) business days of the presentation.
- D. Should an event be denied, a report on the reasons for the denial will be produced by the Societies' Coordinator.
- E. Upon rejection the societies coordinator will inform said society of the appeals process.

#### 10. THE APPEALS COMMITTEE AND PROCESS

- A. An appeal can be brought to the appeals committee where the society may present their case to

be heard by the committee on the standing of their event. This may be due to reasons including but not limited to; poor communication by the Association, perceived unfair treatment or unclear reasoning for the event's rejection.

- B. The appeals committee will be comprised of 4 members.
  - 1) Three board members of the societies committee with the Societies Committee Chairperson chairing the Appeals Committee
  - 2) The Human Resources and Governance Committee Chair or a representative from this committee.
- C. Appeals should be communicated formally via either letter or email to the chair of the societies committee within three days of the events rejection. This letter will be disseminated to the members of the appeals committee, as well as, the report mentioned in section 9 subsection D.
- D. Whether or not an appeal will be heard is subject to a vote by the members of the Appeals Committee which will take no more than one day to conduct.
- E. Should the appeals committee vote in favour of a hearing a meeting will be held within three days. At this meeting the society can make their case for the approval of their event and the societies coordinator can explain the reasons for the rejection in depth, for said event.
- F. The Appeals Committee has final authority over any and all decisions made on an appeal. There may be no further appeals of Committee decisions.
- G. Should the appeals committee reject the hearing of an appeal, The societies committee chair will offer a meeting with one member of said societies executive. Following which, said matter will be dissolved.

## 11. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- A. Societies facing internal conflict are encouraged to first try to resolve the conflict themselves by using conflict resolution strategies. Information on conflict resolution can be found online or in the Patrick Power Library.
- B. If a situation escalates, students can contact the Society Coordinator to help settle the conflict.
- C. If a problem continues or becomes serious, students can contact the University's Conflict Resolution Advisor.

## 12. FURTHER GOVERNANCE

- A. Societies operating on campus must follow all contracts or agreements of the Association and the University.
- B. The Society Coordinator will provide up to date policies to all Presidents of Societies in September of every year and/or upon ratification
- C. All societies must talk with the Association's General Manager before endorsing any company, product or services, on or off campus.
- D. No Society may authorize a company to advertise or distribute products or services on campus.
- E. Not enter into any contracts or agreements without the expressed written consent of the Association's General Manager.
- F. An Association staff member must approve Society event posters before they are posted. The following staff members may give this approval:
  - i. Society Coordinator
  - ii. Marketing and Events Manager
  - iii. General Manager
  - iv. Administrative Assistant

- G. All further and temporary Society information can be found on the Association's website ([www.smusa.ca](http://www.smusa.ca)) under the "Societies" drop-down menu. This site will list all available resources and upcoming events for societies, including contact information for the Society Coordinator.
- H. The President may make further rules and regulations that they believe are needed, as long as they follow the Constitution and these policies.