

Policy Number:	5500
Policy Title:	Recognition of Student Groups and Associations
Approved by:	Academic Council
Approval date:	December 3, 2021
Effective date:	December 3, 2021
Review date:	-
Next review date:	December 3, 2026

Policy Statement

Student Associations formed by the UCW community are a traditional part of student campus life and contribute in significant ways to its diversity for the community. In its relations with these Associations, the University is guided by a commitment to the right of University members to communicate. This commitment includes the rights to communicate, to discuss and explore all ideas, to organize Associations for any lawful purpose, to move about the University, to use its facilities in any reasonable way, to distribute on campus in a responsible way, to published material that it is lawful, to hold meetings, to debate, to engage in peaceful demonstrations, and to be free from discrimination.

Under the terms of this policy, University Canada West (UCW) will not attempt to censor, control or interfere with any Association, recognized or unrecognized, on the basis of its philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions expressed unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal, breaching university policies, or which infringe on individual’s rights and freedoms.

Recognition as a “Student Association” by the University implies neither endorsement of a particular Association’s beliefs or philosophy, nor the assumption of legal liability for the Association’s activities. It assumes only that the University has a responsibility to inform itself of Associations which use its facilities, its name, its affiliation, and to deny or withdraw recognition if the requirements of this policy are not observed.

Recognition as a “Student Association” is a privilege based upon observance of certain procedures and acceptance of certain responsibilities, especially the ones pertaining to this policy and the Student Association Charter. It follows that this privilege can be withdrawn if these procedures are neglected, or responsibilities repudiated by the Student Association, also known as Student Group.

Purpose

The University should maintain a policy and mechanism for the recognition of Student Associations. All such Associations wishing to use “University Canada West”, “UCW” or similar in their names must be recognized.

Scope

This Policy applies to the recognition of Student Associations and Student Groups within University Canada West.

Definitions

These definitions apply to terms as they are used in this policy:

Word/Expression	Definition
Contact person	The registered UCW student member who is the primary point of contact between a Student Association and the University
Executive member	A member of a Student Association who is serving on its executive, as outlined by the Charter and/or by-laws of the Student Association.
Member	A person who has signed up to participate in a Student Association, whether it be on an on-going or provisional basis, such as to participate in a class or workshop.
Officer	A member of a Student Association who has been assigned duties by the Charter and/or by-laws of the Student Association, or by this policy.
Student Associations	Voluntary Associations formed by registered students at the University Canada West.

Applicable legislation

- British Columbia Human Rights Code

Related policies

Policy Number	Policy Title
9014	Student Rights & Responsibilities

Associated procedure

Procedure Number	Procedure Title
5500p	Recognition of Student Groups and Associations

Responsibility

The Vice-President Administration is responsible for the oversight and administration of this policy at the institutional level. The responsibility for the implementation of this policy is delegated to University Student Affairs Department, Director of Student Affairs & Services. In the case of denial or withdrawal of recognition, a statement of the reasons will be provided by the University Student Affairs Department. All administrative decisions to grant, deny, or withdraw recognition will be reported regularly to the Office of Vice-President Administration.

Eligibility for Recognition:

Eligibility for recognition should be assessed every academic term against the following chartered areas rather:

- a. The objectives and activities of Associations seeking recognition should be seen as attempting to contribute to the values of the University. These values are intended to be interpreted in the broadest sense; however, the University's essential "value" of freedom of enquiry and gather must be preserved.
- b. Recognized Student Associations may not engage in activities which are essentially commercial in nature. This is not intended to prohibit the collection of membership fees to cover the expenses of the Association, or of charges for specific activities, programs, or events, or to preclude Associations from engaging in legitimate fundraising. However, a recognized Student Association cannot:
 - i. as a major activity, have a function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial or commercialized Association,
 - ii. provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the Association, nor
 - iii. pay salaries and/or stipends to some or all its executive members or officers.
- c. Membership in Student Associations should be open to all registered student members of the University without restriction on the grounds outlined by the British Columbia Human Rights Code's Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination. While discriminatory membership practices are prohibited, it is recognized that certain Student Associations could well be homogeneous in nature without being discriminatory.
- d. The University's interest in a Student Association's Charter is based on its concern that:
 - i. Associations and individuals using its name and its facilities are genuine,
 - ii. Student Associations pursue activities in accordance with the law and University policies,
 - iii. Associational structure, membership, procedures, rules of conduct, etc. are articulated so that members who join a Student Association and take part in its activities may do so with full knowledge of their rights and responsibilities within the Student Association,
 - iv. Student Associations are operating in an open, accessible, and democratic fashion, and following the terms of their Charters.
- e. Where an Association applying for recognition has a direct connection with another body outside of UCW, the nature of this connection and the name of the body must be disclosed fully and substantially in the application for recognition.
 - i. Student Associations must be a distinct entity from the body outside of UCW. The executive members, officers, and contact person of the Student Association shall not be executive members of the external Association.
 - ii. Student Associations shall not confer financial benefit to external Associations without fully and completely disclosing to the University the nature and amount of the benefit. The method of disclosure must be included in the UCW Recognized Student Association Inaugural Application or UCW Recognized Student Association Renewal Application

Composition of Student Associations:

- a. Executive members with voting privileges shall be currently registered students of UCW with good academic standing status.

- b. 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) 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 Association.
- c. Registered students may be executive members on one or more Student Associations but may only serve as a financial signing officer on one Student Association at a time.
- d. Student Associations must have a minimum of five (5) members who are registered students of University Canada West.
- e. Non-voting membership may be extended to interested staff, faculty, and alumni, or persons from outside the University, without restriction on those grounds outlined by the British Columbia Human Rights Code's Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination.
- f. Associations seeking recognition must supply the following:
 - i. An application in the form prescribed.
 - ii. The names of two executives and a contact person (who could be one of the executives) responsible for all bookings of University space, rentals of University equipment, and use of other University services. Associations must also supply an email address and a telephone number as prescribed in the executive contact list form. This information will be considered public information.
 - iii. The total number of members, the size of the governing body (i.e., number of executive members), and the proportion of registered UCW student members and other members at the time of registration as a recognized student Association.
 - iv. A copy of the Charter and by-laws of the Association.

Applications for Recognized Student Association status may be submitted at any time during the year. Associations meeting the requirements of this policy will be granted recognition in accordance with the due processes, guidelines, and timelines established on each campus. Recognition may be renewed in successive terms upon request by the new executive. If the Association Charter and by-law changes have been proposed, the amended Charter and/or by-laws should be submitted and will be considered in the renewal process.

1. Where an Association applying for recognition wishes to use "University Canada West", "UCW", or similar, in their name, it shall be clear in their name and all related representations that it is a Student Association.
 - a. Student Associations shall not use the University's signatures, crests, word marks, or letter marks without expressed written consent from the University's Marketing and Communications Department.
2. Applicants for recognition or recognized Student Associations handling extensive funds may be required to submit audited statements annually to the Office of the Vice-President, Administration. At the discretion of the Vice-President, Administration, Student Associations 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 Association's activities nor assumes legal liability in connection with the goods and services provided.
3. Recognized Student Associations must report to the University Student Affairs Department, 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.

Complaints, Appeals, and Reporting of Recognized Student Association Administrative Decisions:

- a. The University will not attempt to monitor or review the activities of a Recognized Student Association in the normal course of events. It will however investigate complaints or charges that an Association has acted in a manner that is inconsistent with its Charter and by- laws, or with the requirements of University policies. If these complaints or charges prove to be valid, recognition may be withdrawn.
- b. Recognized Student Associations must operate in accordance with its Charter
- c. Responsibility for the implementation of this policy is delegated to University Student Affairs Department. In the case of denial or withdrawal of recognition, a statement of the reasons will be provided by the University Student Affairs Department. All administrative decisions to grant, deny, or withdraw recognition will be reported regularly to the Office of Vice-President, Administration.
- d. Student Associations wishing to appeal a decision made by the Student Affairs Department on may do so through the Office of the Vice-President, Academic. In the event of an appeal, a review shall be held by an administrative officer designated by the Vice-President, Administration not involved in the original decision.