

**POLICY STATEMENT  
ON  
UNIVERSITY RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS  
AND INTEREST GROUPS  
as of May 10, 2012**

**A. INTRODUCTION:**

This policy on university recognition of student organizations is developed in accordance with the requirements of Title IX of The Education Amendments of 1972, as amended and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. The recognition procedures described represent the initial source of recognition before any other recognition or funding by any other groups of the University. Disapproval or denial of recognition as described in these procedures shall preclude recognition by any other group or source.

**B. GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. A student organization shall be defined as five (5) or more undergraduate students, at least half (1/2) of which will be enrolled full-time. An interest group shall be defined as one (1) or more undergraduate student(s) who must be enrolled full-time.
2. Student organizations and interest groups are one of the major segments of the Salem State University co-curricular program. The university permits and provides for the recognition of student organizations to promote the development of social, intellectual, recreational, and professional interests of students subject to its policies and regulations.
3. Membership in all student groups and organizations is open to all currently enrolled students. Member openings and election of officers shall be announced publicly. In addition, no group or organization may impose membership restrictions on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, gender identity, genetic information, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or veteran status. Some organizations require selective membership by their nature (e.g., honors program or fraternal organizations). When such interest groups or student organizations seek university recognition, this status shall be subject to approval by the Dean of Students. All members are considered active in any organization throughout the summer sessions or recesses of each academic year. A student need not be enrolled in a summer session program at Salem State University to retain active membership or to hold office in the group or organization.

4. Some University recognized student organizations may affiliate or hold membership in regional or national organizations. Individual campus chapters or organizations so affiliated may be recognized by the University. Such organizations may maintain affiliations with non-students and/or students from other chapters or organizations. However, student organizations are prohibited from recruiting or initiating members to join a University recognized student organization or interest group who are not currently enrolled students or University alumni.

5. Officers of a student group or organization must be currently enrolled, full-time students and in good academic standing as defined in the University catalog. Students may not serve as officers in a student organization while they are on Academic Warning or Academic Probation status. Such students may be eligible to serve as officers in student organizations once they are in good academic standing again. Students may serve as an executive board officer in as many as two student organizations concurrently, but may serve as the President or chief executive officer of only one organization at a time. Executive board officers are generally defined as President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, as defined by each organization's constitution. In addition, student organization executive board officers cannot be comprised of officers from another student organization where they represent greater than fifty percent of that organization's officers. (For example, the executive board of the Women's Center may contain members of CESA and vice versa, but both of these student organizations are restricted from allowing more than fifty percent of the officers of the Women's Center to simultaneously represent more than fifty percent of the officers of CESA).

6. Members of the community who are not members of the faculty or staff of the university are not able to serve as an advisor(s) to a student group or organization. This type of affiliate advisory role by members of the community may be appropriate, for example, when they have particular expertise, such as a career, which is related to the primary interest of the group or organization. All organizations must have at least one advisor from the full-time faculty, administration, or staff. Part-time employees may serve as resource people to the advisor.

7. Although a group or organization may have an academic interest or affiliation, it cannot establish academic program restrictions on members, nor can it require that members, officers, or advisors, be enrolled in, or affiliated with, a particular curriculum. Academic honorary societies are exempted from these restrictions.

8. The Director of Student Involvement (or designee) will maintain a basic file on each group or student organization, including the current leadership. The file must contain:

- a. Constitution developed in accordance with published constitutional guidelines available from the Student Involvement and Activities Office.
- b. Current list of officers and contact information.
- c. Name of advisor(s).
- d. Meeting date, time, and place information.

9. A list of new officers and advisors must be submitted by every university organization, including interest groups, to the Director of Student Involvement (or designee) by October 15 of each year. The information provided by the organization will be included in an organizations directory, which lists the name, type, officers, and advisor(s) of each of the recognized campus organizations and interest groups. The organizations directory is generally available in the Student Involvement and Activities Office by the end of the Fall Semester. Organizations failing to submit required information by this date will be recommended for inactive status to the Vice-President for Student Life (or designee).

10. Where a group or organization is affiliated with an outside organization such as a national society, that organization's Constitution and by-laws shall also be filed with the Director of Student Involvement(or designee).

11. All group or organization funds will be deposited through the University Financial Services Office and are subject to the applicable portions of those procedures and regulations pertaining to such funds as established by the University and the State. Student organizations are not permitted to maintain financial accounts independent of the University Financial Services Office. Organizations must annually provide two signatures of elected organization officials for all fiscal transactions.

12. Any group or organization which violates University policy, engages in or sponsors illegal or unauthorized activities, on or off campus, may have sanctions imposed against it by the Director of Student Involvement (or designee) which include: warning, reprimand, probation (which may include special educational or work assignments, community service, or suspension from specific activities or events), or withdrawal of university recognition.

13. University facilities may be assigned to student groups or organizations for regular business meetings, for social programs, and for programs open to the public, unless in the opinion of the Director of Student Involvement(or designee), the group or the planned program poses a serious threat to the continued well-being and safety of the University. Reasonable restrictions may be imposed to regulate the timeliness of requests, to determine the appropriateness of the space assigned, to regulate time and use, and to insure proper maintenance.

14. An individual, group, or organization may use the University name only with expressed authority of the Director of Student Involvement (or designee) as defined in these procedures.

15. Recognition of a group or organization implies neither University approval nor disapproval of the aims, objectives, and policies of the group or organization. However, the University reserves the right to deny recognition to any group or organization on the basis of it's a) advocacy of views directed toward inciting or producing imminent lawless action and likely to incite or produce such action; b) failure to show a willingness to comply with reasonable University regulations; c) engagement in any unlawful or disruptive activities.

16. Duplication of current groups or organizations is discouraged.

### **C. UNIVERSITY POLICY ON RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS:**

1. Student Organizations and Interest Groups may be established, as hereinafter described, for any purpose which does not violate local, state, or federal regulations and/or laws. The following policies and procedures regarding the development of student groups or organizations are established to provide an orderly and timely process of official recognition.

a. It is recognized that all interest groups of students may wish to meet, often on a short-term basis, to support a particular curricular or service interest. Because of informal or temporary nature of the group, development of a constitution and formal structure may not be necessary. Such an interest group may be formed as noted in Section 2 of the following procedures.

b. Those student interest groups anticipating a more continuing function must go through a process of recognition as a university organization including a period of interim recognition representing one month of development during

which time the constitution is written, membership is solicited, and leaders of the group become familiar with student activities and university policies.

## **2. Recognition of Interest Groups**

- a. Any student or group of students wishing to form an Interest Group should complete an “Application for Approval as an Interest Group” and obtain approval from the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
- b. Notice of approval or disapproval on interim recognition will be made by the Director of Student Involvement (or designee) within ten days of receipt of the application.
- c. A list of officers and copies of the interest group’s Constitution and By-Laws (if applicable) must be filed annually with the Director of Student Involvement (or designee). All amendments to the Constitution and/or By-Laws (if applicable) shall be submitted for approval before becoming effective.
- d. A minimum of one (1) Salem State University student is required to achieve interest group status (student status will be verified). An organization advisor designated from the full-time university faculty, administration, or staff is required.
- e. No revenue-producing activities will be permitted without the approval of the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
- f. Interest Groups anticipating field trips, outdoors events or hazardous activities are advised to seek formal recognition as described in this policy.
- g. Once approved by the Director of Student Involvement (or designee), the interest group will be allowed to use university facilities through the designated facilities procedures for meetings and activities on campus, which may be publicized by campus media.
- h. The interest group will not be allowed to use the university name or logo without the approval of the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
- i. The interest group shall be open to all currently enrolled students regardless of race, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, national origin, marital status, or veteran status. Some organizations require selective membership by their nature (e.g., honors program or fraternal organizations). When such interest groups seek university recognition, this status shall be subject to approval by the Dean of Students.

## **3. Recognition of University Organization**

- a. Interim Recognition

1. Any group of students wishing to form a recognized club or organization should complete the "Application of Intent" and obtain the necessary forms from the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
2. An application for full recognition and a constitution shall be completed by the students and then approved by the Director of Student Involvement and the Vice-President for Student Life (or respective designees). Notice of approval or disapproval on interim recognition will be made by the Director of Student Involvement (or designee) within ten days of receipt of the application.
3. Organizations must meet at least once during the interim recognition period other than for the purpose of electing officers.
4. A list of officers and copies of the organization's Constitution and By-Laws must be filed with the Director of Student Involvement (or designee). All amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws shall be submitted for approval before becoming effective.
5. A minimum of five (5) Salem State University students are needed in the organization to achieve interim recognition (student status will be verified). An organization advisor designated from the full-time university faculty, administration, or staff is required.
6. The group will be allowed to use university facilities only for the purpose of meetings during the interim recognition period through the designated facilities procedures for meetings and activities on campus, which may be publicized through campus media. Prior to sponsoring or co-sponsoring any events on or off campus, the President and Treasurer must complete a training program with the Student Involvement and Activities Office to learn about relevant policies and procedures.
7. The group will not be allowed to use the university name or logo without the approval of the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
8. The group shall be opened to all currently enrolled students regardless of race, color, creed, sex, gender identity, genetic information, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, or veteran status. Some student organizations require selective membership by their nature (e.g., honors program or fraternal organizations). When such interest

groups seek university recognition, this status shall be subject to approval by the Dean of Students.

9. Sponsoring, co-sponsoring or conducting revenue-producing activities are not permitted, without the specific approval of the Student Involvement and Activities Office. Only officially recognized organizations may currently seek funding through the Student Government Association.

b. Official Recognition

1. The group must satisfactorily complete an interim recognition period of one month or the equivalent thereof and complete the guidelines established by the Campus Center, including completion of the Intent to Establish a University Organization form, the Group and Club Recognition packet and the constitution, and a training program offered by the Campus Center.

2. At the completion of the one month interim recognition period, the Director of Student Involvement (or designee) will forward the application for recognition as a university organization to the Vice-President for Student Life (or designee) for approval. The constitution so filed will be considered as the formal basis for recognition. Notice of approval or disapproval by the Vice-President (or designee) will be submitted to the group in writing. Once approved, the organization shall be eligible for the following:

- a. To use the university name in its title.
- b. To receive any awards and honors for which organizations are eligible.
- c. To sponsor revenue-producing activities; funds collected or disbursed must be accounted for according to university and state financial policies.

3. In order to maintain continuing status as an officially recognized organization, the organization must:

- a. Submit all constitutional changes to the Director of Student Involvement (or designee) before they become effective.
- b. Verify to the Director of Student Involvement (or designee) that membership levels are the

same as they were during the period of interim recognition.

- c. Submit names of all officers, members and advisors to the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
- d. Groups and Organizations desiring funding from S.G.A. should follow the financial procedures outlined by S.G.A.
- e. Annually complete and submit the Group and Club Recognition packet as defined by the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
- f. Completion of the training program offered by Student Involvement and Activities to learn about relevant policies and procedures.

#### **4. Inactive Status and Loss of Recognition**

##### a. Inactive Status

1. Prior to being declared inactive, the organization's president or chairperson will be so advised and given the opportunity to present relevant information on behalf of the organization. Such a hearing will be with the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
2. An organization may be declared inactive by the Director of Student Involvement(or designee) if any one of the following conditions exist:
  - a. Failure to maintain the required number of members in the organization (5).
  - b. Failure to maintain an advisor.
  - c. Failure to provide lists of officers, members or constitution changes to the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
  - d. Failure to provide representation at a number of coordination meetings scheduled by the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
3. An organization may declare itself inactive for a given semester or semesters by submitting a written request to the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).
4. Until the organization corrects all deficiencies, which caused declaration of inactive status, the following actions will be observed.

a. The organization's name will not appear in campus publications such as newsletters, newspapers, and directories.

b. The organization will be ineligible for any awards, or honors, available to recognized organizations.

b. Loss of Recognition

1. Examples for loss of recognition include, but are not limited to the following:

a. Evidence of failure to comply with university/ campus, local, or state policies and regulations (e.g. financial policy, policy on scheduling events, etc.)

b. Evidence of failure to abide by its own constitution and by-laws (e.g. discrimination in membership).

c. Inactivity for a period of three academic semesters excluding summer sessions.

2. Procedure following loss of recognition:

a. Students interested in establishing a similar organization at some later time would follow the same guidelines for interim recognition.

b. Funds accrued in the student account of an organization, funded by other than the S.G.A., for which recognition is revoked, shall revert to the Campus Center. S.G.A. funded groups shall be required to revert funds to the S.G.A. General Reserve Account.

c. The name of the organization will not appear in the Salem State University Handbook, The Compass.

c. Implementation

1. An organization may be declared inactive by the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).

Appeal of the action may be submitted in writing to the Vice-President for Student Life (or designee).

2. An organization may lose official university recognition by the action of the Director of Student Involvement (or designee).

3. Individual student(s) are prohibited from continuing the activities of a student organization that has been denied recognition, declared inactive, or has lost university recognition status, other than following the guidelines for interim recognition to establish or re-establish the organization. Failure to abide by this restriction may result in disciplinary action against the individual student(s) and/or organization