



GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

University at Buffalo *The State University of New York*

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Revised July, 2014

SPECIAL INTEREST AND INTERNATIONAL CLUBS RECOGNITION POLICY GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

The Graduate Student Association encourages, supports and sponsors the formation, growth and activities of clubs that benefit the graduate student community with services **not already being provided by any other GSA club**. This allows groups of students who share common interests to carry out activities as organized bodies for educational or recreational purposes. The Graduate Student Association has the authority and responsibility to recognize special interest and international clubs, and to insure that recognized clubs conform to the policies, which it endorses, and to University rules and regulations.

Recognized campus clubs are urged to address the overall spirit of the principles of non-discrimination (e.g. age, race, sex, religion, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, etc.) by encouraging broad participation in their activities and programs. Furthermore, student clubs are encouraged to plan their activities in functional and accessible facilities providing reasonable services and accommodations when meeting on or off campus. All club events MUST be held in public places. Under no circumstances can events be held in a private residence.

The GSA reserves the right to deny recognition to new clubs, and to review, sanction or revoke existing ones when it deems it appropriate.

RECOGNITION OF CLUBS

Recognition implies that the club has been incorporated into the Graduate Student Association. It allows the clubs to use University facilities, services, rental equipment, advisory services, publicity outlets, and to seek funding from the GSA for its activities.

Special interest and international clubs must be recognized by the GSA Senate every year either during the Early Recognition process (the deadline of which is **March** of the previous academic year), or **by the December Senate Meeting**.

All newly recognized clubs will receive \$300 for their first year and can then apply for a full budget the following year, upon successful review by the GSA Vice President.

REQUIREMENTS FOR RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

For the purposes of this document, a **graduate student** is a student who pays or would pay the Graduate Mandatory Student Activity Fee (i.e. not Medical, Dental, Law, Graduate Management Association, School of Pharmacy Student Association, etc.).

In order for a student club to qualify for recognition:

1. Its membership must be open to any member of the graduate student body of the University at Buffalo who chooses to belong (see Membership section).
2. It must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the GSA Senate that its purposes are of cultural, social, or educational nature and that its overall purpose will be of general benefit to the university's graduate student community.
3. It must show that its purposes materially differ from any other GSA club already established on this University.
4. It must submit a constitution or have one on file at the GSA.
5. It shall hold regularly scheduled meetings at least once a month, and it shall furnish minutes of all its proceedings, copies of which will be sent to the GSA office to be kept on file.
6. All special interest and international clubs must send a representative to GSA Senate meetings; no person can represent more than one club.
7. If the Senate representative is missed at two consecutive Senate meetings, the club shall have its budget frozen, to be reinstated only when a representative appears at a subsequent Senate meeting.
8. All club meetings and events must be **advertised**, and the official name of the club, as stated in its constitution, shall be used. All club activities may be publicized and announced via the GSA website's calendar and the GSA Facebook page.

PROCEDURES FOR ANNUAL/NEW CLUB RECOGNITION

Clubs seeking recognition MUST provide the following documentation to the Vice President for review and consideration:

- Club Recognition Form (including complete Member List)
- Club Data Form
- Officer Election Verification Form
- Senate Sheet
- Statement of Purpose
- Mission Statement for posting on GSA Website (one paragraph description of the club, which should include a statement of purpose, and examples of previous and planned activities.)
- Senate Election Verification Form (International Clubs Only)
- Proposed Budget Sheet
- Constitution
- Photocopies of valid student I.D. cards of the officers and six members of the club (total of ten ID copies needed)

*The above forms are available at the GSA office, 310 Student Union or at gsa.buffalo.edu/leadership/forms/

The deadline for documentation submission is at least one week before the Senate meeting where the recognition is to be considered. Failure to meet the deadline will result in the delay of the club recognition until the next Senate meeting. Recognition pending required documents will not occur.

Clubs will be invited to a hearing before the Executive Committee for the purpose of clarification (if necessary). The Vice President presents the club's request for recognition to the Senate for consideration and final action.

PROCEDURES FOR EARLY RECOGNITION (FOR EXISTING CLUBS ONLY)

1. Eligibility- Special Interest and International Clubs who have been previously recognized by the Senate are eligible to submit for renewal of recognition and funding for the next budgetary year. Clubs who have missed three or more Senate meetings in the current year are not eligible for renewal by this process.
2. Clubs seeking recognition MUST provide the following documentation to the Vice President for review and consideration:
 - Renewal of Recognition Form (including complete Member List)
 - Statement of Purpose
 - Proposed Budget Sheet

CONSTITUTION

Each student club must develop a constitution, which includes a statement of purpose, membership eligibility, elections of officers, the frequency of meetings, and policies of the club (examples are available upon request). For club renewal of recognition it is not necessary to resubmit the constitution as long as no changes were established.

MEMBERSHIP

1. Club membership must be open to all **graduate students** and include a minimum of TEN currently enrolled graduate students to qualify for recognition.
2. Each club should be made up of a minimum of **FOUR** departments
3. 30% of club membership cannot belong to any one department.
4. Voting membership is limited to currently enrolled graduate students. Thus, some clubs may choose to include other individuals in their programs and activities, but those individuals shall not be officers or voting members.

OFFICERS

1. All officers of the club's Executive Board (E-Board) must be currently registered UB graduate students. When new officers are elected, new documentation must be submitted to the GSA.
2. Only 50% of the E-Board officers can be from the same department.
3. The person in the role of President cannot hold the role of Treasurer in a club.
4. Special interest and international club officers cannot hold office in any other international or special interest club. They can be part of the active membership of any number of them.
5. Departmental club officers can hold office in a maximum of one special interest or international club.

WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION

Recognition of clubs may be revoked for any of the following causes:

1. Disregard of any of the requirements for student clubs.
2. Knowingly sponsoring, urging, or engaging in actions on or off campus by individuals, clubs or groups which violate the GSA constitution, its bylaws, University rules and regulations, local, state or federal laws.
3. Fiscal irresponsibility.
4. If the Senate representative is missed at three meetings, GSA recognition will be withdrawn from the club.

The sanctions may include but are not limited to one or more of the following: budget freeze, probation for a specified time, suspension of recognition for a specified time, and revocation of recognition.

FUNDING OF ACTIVITIES

Examples of allowable expenditures for special interest and international clubs include:

- Speakers
- Films, Slide Shows, Videos and Other Media Presentations
- Stationary, Postage, Office Supplies
- Printing and Publication
- Socials, such as parties, orientations, and coffee hours. All club events MUST be held in public places. Under no circumstances can events be held in a private residence.

REVIEW PROCESS

The Vice President shall review all requests for recognition based on the following criteria:

- Service to the GSA constituency
- Service to the club's membership
- Fiscal responsibility

The Vice President will also take into consideration whether or not clubs have:

- Hosted at least one event in each semester, based on the club's recognition date
- Co-hosted any events with other special interest and/or international clubs
- Followed their proposed budget plan