Student Group Recognition Guidelines

What is a student group?

A student group is defined as a group of students reapplying for or having received official recognition from the Students' Union. These groups are united by a core mission or purpose, and recognized by Student Group Services via the registration process. Groups may be defined in a variety of ways, according to, for example, a shared program of study, a commitment to service, a common activity, philosophy or background or particular perspective.

What can be a student group?

The University of Alberta Student's Union has set standards for student groups. Not every new student group proposal will be approved solely on the basis of its unique niche. Student Group Services will determine the feasibility of new groups within this criteria:

- Proposed groups must follow UASU Bylaw 220 and the Student Groups Operating Policy, and relevant policies and bylaws for Associate Student Groups
- No proposed groups can duplicate already existing university services or student groups
- Proposed groups should contribute to the student life at the University of Alberta

What kinds of groups exist?

Student Group Services handles registration administration for UASU Student Groups and Graduate Student Groups, and additionally provides benefits to other groups on campus that are administered by other offices. Because of this, there are a few different types of groups, and different requirements depending on who is administrating them.

Group Type	Who's it for?	Membership Composition	Executive Composition
UASU Student Group	Any group of students reapplying for or having received official recognition from the Students' Union, recognized as such by Student Group Services.	At least 10 current University of Alberta students must be general members. If non student members can join, at least ⅔ of members must be current students.	All executives must be current University of Alberta students, and the majority must be undergraduate students, including the President and Treasurer.
Student Representative Association	Student groups that represent a definable and enumerable constituency, recognized as such by Students' Council.	All undergraduate students enrolled in a particular faculty or department or at a particular campus, living in a particular residence, etc.	All executives must be current University of Alberta students, and fall within the constituency of the SRA.

Club Sport	Student groups that focus on recreational, performance, or competitive level sports, recognized as such by Campus & Community Recreation.	At least 15 current University of Alberta students must be members. Additional members are required for higher tiers of classification. Non student members are not permitted.	All executives must be current University of Alberta students.
Graduate Student Group	Student groups that organize academically-related or professional development activities for graduate students, recognized as such by the Graduate Students' Association.	At least 10 current University of Alberta students must be general members. At least ⅔ of members must be graduate students. If non student members can join, at least ⅔ of members must be current students.	All executives must be current University of Alberta students, and at least 75% of executives must be graduate students.

What can I do with student group recognition?

Registered student groups gain access to many perks on campus, as a reward for meeting the responsibilities and requirements outlined in bylaw and operating policy.

The following benefits are granted by the University of Alberta:

- Ability to book space with the University, including classrooms, tables, and outdoor sites
- Use of the University's institutional liquor licenses and the ability to receive permission for gaming events
- Use of the University's name and insignia, with proper approval
- Exclusive use of the group's name on campus
- Access to and ability to rent designated University property and equipment
- Use of campus facilities for solicitation of membership
- Ability to apply for and receive grants through the University of Alberta and other Campus Units who provide student group funding, through applications to the relevant unit.

The following benefits are granted by the University of Alberta Students' Union:

- Access and ability to obtain student group storage space in SUB
- Access to the Student Group Discount Card program
- Discounted booking at select Students’ Union venues, including Dinwoodie Lounge & Dewey's
- Access to book tables during Clubs Fair
- Access and ability to rent designated Students Union equipment
- Ability to apply for and receive grants through the Student Group Granting Program
- Ability to apply for and receive awards through the UASU Awards Program

UASU Student Groups, Student Representative Associations, and Club Sports gain all the benefits granted by the U of A and the UASU, plus additional perks if they're administered by another office. GSA groups gain all the benefits granted by the U of A, and are eligible to book tables during Clubs Fair and rent designated Students' Union equipment.

What can’t be a student group through SGS?

Student Group Services is not the only office who handles group recognition on campus! Groups may be pointed towards other offices if we cannot administer them under our structures. They may still receive the benefits of being a UASU Student Group though!

- **Sports related clubs:** Students wishing to start a club that teaches or instructs members in physical activities, such as dance, taekwondo, or other sports and activities will not be reviewed by Student Group Services due to the high-risk nature. If you are interested in starting a physical activity club, please contact Campus and Community Recreation, through the Club Sports & Outdoor Programs Coordinator. You can find more information here.
- **Engineering project groups:** Students wishing to start a club that works on an engineering-related project will not be reviewed by Student Group Services due to administrative changes. If you are interested in starting an engineering project group, please contact the Faculty of Engineering, through the Engineering Student Projects Manager. You can email foeproj@ualberta.ca for more information.
- **Ambassador groups:** Student Group Services will no longer be accepting proposals for groups that function as ambassadors for an external affiliate and exist solely to recruit members for or promote the message of the external affiliate. Groups that want to work with an external organization will need to ensure their proposal outlines how they will maintain a level of self-reliance and independence from their affiliate, and contribute to the campus community more than to the external affiliate.
- **Businesses and for-profit organizations:** All student groups are, for all intents and purposes, not-for-profit organizations. Student Group Services will not approve student group recognition for any group that aims to bring in income for its members.
- **Groups without an election process:** All student groups are required to conduct democratic elections. If your group plans to interview candidates for executive positions, you will not be eligible for student group recognition.
- **Groups without members:** All student groups are required to have at least 10 current students as general members. If your group is only composed of executive members and no general members, you will not be eligible for student group recognition.

What can I do without student group recognition?

Not every idea needs to be a registered student group! It can take a lot of time and work to put together a student group, and sometimes an idea simply won't be sustainable or permitted in the long run. So what other options do you have?

- **Start an online community:** Many students opt to create online communities such as Discord servers to bring folks with similar interests together. This is a great way to informally bring people together without worrying about holding elections, writing a constitution, etc.
- **Join another group:** Sometimes your idea will be very similar to an existing group. In these situations, we recommend you join the existing group and build a rapport with their team. You may be able to execute some of your ideas by forming a committee in that group or running for an executive position!
- **Meet informally on campus:** While room booking permissions are restricted to registered student groups, you can bring folks together in common areas or library collaboration rooms to meet and do activities. You can also encourage your group to attend events together, such as drop in activities with Campus Community Recreation or UASU events such as Antifreeze.
- **Apply for funding:** Non-registered groups and projects still have some options for funding on campus! You can consider applying for a grant via APIRG, Campus & Community Recreation, and many other units on campus, depending on the nature of your idea. The Career Centre has a full list of opportunities for funding here.
- **Volunteer off campus:** As a student, you aren't restricted to getting involved on campus! We encourage folks to check out opportunities in the general community as well.

By now, you've hopefully figured out if your idea qualifies to be a new student group with Student Group Services. Read on to find out how the process works and what you need to do to get ready!

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