



RYERSON LIBERAL ARTS SOCIETY

STUDENT GROUP

POLICY

Amended November 19th, 2020.

RYERSON LIBERAL ARTS SOCIETY – POLICY re: Student Groups
[Amended November 19, 2020]

Preamble: The Ryerson Liberal Arts Society (“RLAS”) serves as the voice of Faculty of Arts students by promoting their abilities and interests, both within and beyond Ryerson and to unite all undergraduate students within the Faculty. One of the ways in which RLAS does this is by supporting Student Groups. “*Student Groups*”, in this context, refers to Course Unions which represent students in a specific academic program, as well as Student Interest Groups which represent a certain interest or hobby. It is important to ensure that all Student Groups reflect the mandate of the RLAS and serve their membership accordingly. Student Groups must promote the academic programs encompassed within the RLAS, and/or enhance the general experience of RLAS students. Student Group Status is a privilege that will not be extended to all organizations seeking legitimacy. Student Group Status is granted only if the group can satisfy the requirements set out in this policy, and most importantly, can act in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the RLAS and Ryerson University (“University”) criteria, policies, and procedures.

The RLAS Board of Directors (the “Board”) has the right to recognize new groups upon application, as outlined below. The Board also retains the right to withdraw recognition from any group that does not adhere to RLAS Policy. If a group loses official recognition, all RLAS resources and other Student Group privileges will be terminated and can only be reinstated with approval from the Board.

1.1 General Policies

This section of the policy refers to any and all undergraduate Student Groups recognized by the RLAS.

1.1.1 All Student Groups must follow the Ontario Human Rights Code, the RLAS, Ryerson Students’ Union (if applicable), and University criteria, policies, and procedures.

1.1.2 Student Groups are funded by the RLAS for the benefit of the membership; therefore all Student Groups and their activities must promote or enhance the academic, professional, and social experiences of the RLAS member programs. Activities may extend beyond the RLAS but the greater benefit should be reserved for the membership.

1.1.2.1 Course Unions must enhance the experiences of their particular group of students

1.1.3 Student Groups must not place restrictions on their membership based on Ancestry, Age, Creed, Colour, Citizenship, a Conviction for which a pardon has been granted or a record suspended, Disability, Ethnic Origin, Family Status, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, Genetic Characteristics, Marital Status, Place of Origin, Race, Religion, Sex,

Sexual Orientation, and/or Political Beliefs. These groups must pursue activities in accordance with the law and seek to promote values of Equity, Diversity, Tolerance, and Inclusion.

1.1.4 Student Groups cannot interfere with the operations, learning, living, and work environment of the University, and/or the security and safety of the community.

1.1.5 Student Groups must fully and substantially disclose the nature of a direct or implied connection with any other organization outside the university.

1.1.5.1 Any establishment of a connection should be disclosed to the Board upon their Application.

1.1.5.2 Should a connection be made after Student Group Status has been awarded, the connection must be communicated to the Vice President, Operations as soon as possible.

1.1.6 Under specific instances, a Student Group may be exempted from adhering to articles listed in this document if determined by the RLAS President, Manager, Student Relations and Development, Vice President, Operations, and where applicable, the Vice President, Finance.

2.1 Student Group Status Application Requirements

This section applies to all groups seeking to become recognized as a Student Group by the RLAS. All documentation must be submitted through official communication.

2.1.1 In order to become recognized as a Student Group under the RLAS, the President and/or an Executive of the proposed Student Group must first meet with the Vice President, Community Relations to discuss their group and its mandate.

2.1.2 The proposed Student Group must be unique, in that its mandate and activities must not substantially overlap with those of existing Ryerson groups, societies, or campus services.

2.1.3 The Executive Committees of the proposed Student Group must submit the following to the RLAS Vice President, Operations as part of their application:

2.1.3.1 A list of the Executive Committee members with Ryerson email addresses, signatures, programs of study, and student numbers.

2.1.3.1.1 Only RLAS members may hold the position of President within any Student Group under the RLAS, unless Board approval is obtained.

2.1.3.1.2 Student Interest Group Executive Committees must consist of at least fifty-one percent (51%) (i.e. majority) Faculty of Arts students, unless Board approval is obtained.

2.1.3.2 A valid constitution.

2.1.3.3 A founding members list consisting of a minimum of five (5) RLAS member signatures.

2.1.3.4 A proposed budget that has been reviewed by the RLAS Vice President, Finance.

2.1.3.5 A proposed list of activities, goals, and objectives for one (1) year, including a clear succession plan.

2.1.4 Upon fulfillment of the requirements set out in this policy, an appointment will be scheduled by the Vice-President, Operations for the proposed Student Group to present to the Board for ratification.

2.1.4.1 The Student Group shall be approved for Student Group Status under the RLAS if they receive a majority vote at a Board meeting.

3.1 Maintaining Student Group Status

3.1.1 Annual summer training workshop(s) will be offered through the RLAS and the Manager, Student Relations and Development.

3.1.1.1 A minimum of one (1) training session addressing topics of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion must be included in the summer training workshops.

3.1.1.2 A minimum of two (2) Executive Committee members and/or Course Union Governance Council Members must attend each training workshop. Non-attendance will automatically result in a status of probation.

3.1.2 The maintenance of Student Group Status requires that Student Groups submit updated documents, as itemized below to the Vice President, Operations, by the end of September annually in order for the status to remain in good standing.

3.1.2.1 Resubmit materials listed in Article 2.1.3.1 for maintenance of Student Group Status

3.1.2.2 All Governing document changes must be brought to the attention of the RLAS Vice President, Operations.

3.1.3 Student Group Executive Committee and/or Course Union Governance Council Members are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all policies pertaining to their operations and must comply with policies, manuals, by-laws, and the Constitution of the RLAS.

3.1.4 Failure to provide the listed documents above will result in probation.

3.1.4.1 Terms of probation shall be determined by the Board. For details see Article 6.1: Disciplinary Procedures.

4.1 Funding

This section of the policy entails information regarding Student Group Funding Requests, Student Group Accounts, Cheque Requisitions, Student Group Chits, and Limits to Funding.

4.1.1 Student Group Funding Requests

Funding requests are written applications to obtain funding from the RLAS for an initiative that a group may propose.

4.1.1.1 Student Groups under the RLAS are eligible to apply for project funding, which may include funding for projects and initiatives as deemed eligible by RLAS funding procedures.

4.1.1.1.1 Priority will be given to projects that promote academic learning outcomes.

4.1.1.2 Student Groups will submit a request to present their application for funding at a meeting.

4.1.1.2.1 For requests under \$5,000 groups will be required to attend a Funding Committee Meeting or a Board Meeting for approval of application.

4.1.1.2.2 For requests over \$4,999.99 groups will be required to attend a Board Meeting for approval of application.

4.1.1.3 Approval of applications for funding must be sent in writing by the RLAS Vice President, Finance prior to the proposed project.

4.1.1.4 Funding from the RLAS is to be received on a reimbursement basis only. In order to receive reimbursements the following must be submitted:

4.1.1.4.1 A completed Cheque Requisition Form along with original

itemized receipts.

4.1.1.4.2 A projected budget breakdown and/or a statement of expenditure.

4.1.2 Student Group Accounts

Student Group Accounts are trust accounts that hold funds that belong to the Student Group. Funds in this account can be used at the discretion of the Student Group in Question and in accordance with procedures outlined below. These funds are not provided by the RLAS, rather are earned and deposited by the Groups themselves.

4.1.2.1 Funds can be withdrawn from Accounts on a reimbursement basis only.

4.1.2.2 In order to access these funds, a Cheque Requisition Form must be submitted to the RLAS Finance Committee by way of their official email address, with original itemized receipts.

4.1.2.3 The RLAS reserves the right to withhold funds in the case of suspected misuse pending further investigation, see section 6.1: Disciplinary Procedures.

4.1.3 Cheque Requisitions

4.1.3.1 Cheque Requisition Forms are the only acceptable method of reporting expenditure.

4.1.3.2 The original copy of the receipt/invoice must be submitted along with the Cheque Requisition Form unless otherwise instructed by the Vice President, Finance and/or Manager, Student Relations and Development.

4.1.3.3 All Cheque Requisition Forms should be signed by at least two (2) Student Group signing officers, whenever possible.

4.1.3.3.1 In the event that the Student Group does not have 2 signing officers, an RLAS Board member can act as the signing officer on behalf of that group.

4.1.3.4 Cheques are payable solely to the person who requests reimbursement and made the original purchase.

4.1.3.5 Receipts must be submitted within thirty (30) days of purchase.

4.1.3.6 All expenditures must be submitted prior to the RLAS Fiscal Year End.

4.1.4 Student Group Chits

A Student Group Chit is an amount of money deposited by the RLAS into Student Group Accounts, for the purpose of fostering student engagement. This money does not require an application.

4.1.4.1 Annual sum of \$500 (Five Hundred Dollars) will be deposited into the accounts of each Course Union.

4.1.4.2 Annual sum of \$250 (Two hundred and Fifty Dollars) will be deposited into the accounts of each Student Interest Group.

4.1.4.3 End-of-Term balance will be carried into subsequent terms, in the case of Inactivity.

4.1.5 Limits to Funding

4.1.5.1 Expenditure requests must be in accordance with the RLAS Mandate and Values listed in the Preamble.

4.1.5.2 Funding cannot be provided for prohibited items as listed in the Student Group Accounts Agreement, such as;

4.1.5.2.1 Expenses of a personal nature or for personal benefit; Lottery, gaming, alcohol, tobacco, or drugs of any kind;

4.1.5.2.2 General honoraria, per-diems, personal cell phone/internet, and cable bills;

4.1.5.2.3 Fines and penalties, including, but not limited to, late payments on credit cards, parking fines, traffic fines, or penalties;

4.1.5.2.4 Charitable donations;

4.1.5.2.5 Gift Card purchases must be won, and not provided as payment for participation in an event;

4.1.5.2.6 Money must be used for events that directly affect the Faculty of Arts students;

4.1.5.3 It is prohibited to use funding for items that have not been approved by the RLAS Vice President, Finance, RLAS Funding Committee, and/or the Board.

- 4.1.5.4 Partial funding may be provided for particular receipt items but denied for others.
- 4.1.5.5 Notification of all funding approvals or denials, along with an explanation will be provided to the groups in question.
- 4.1.5.6 In the case that funding is denied, Student Groups may resubmit their request for funding, to the RLAS Vice President, Finance, following consultation.

5.1 Consequences for Misspent Funds

5.1.1 Misspending of funds by the Student Group may lead to a temporary suspension of their Student Group Account as deemed necessary by the President, Manager, Student Relations and Development, and Vice President, Finance.

5.1.1.1 Funds cannot be requested until the Student Group suspension is lifted.

5.1.1.2 Severe repeated incidents of misspending may result in disciplinary measures being taken as decided by the RLAS Board until the end of RLAS Fiscal year.

5.1.1.2.1 Disciplinary Measures are outlined in section 6.1.

5.1.1.3 Notice of misspent funds shall be communicated to the Student Group in question through email upon discovery by the President and/or Vice President, Finance.

5.1.2 Any suspected misconduct will be brought before the Board in the subsequent Board Meeting, at which point, by majority vote, an adequate suspension time and further consequences will be determined.

6.1 Disciplinary Procedures

6.1.1 All disciplinary decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

6.1.2 Should the Board have reasonable evidence that the Student Group has violated one or more articles listed in this document, the Student Group in question may be placed on probation through a Board majority vote.

6.1.2.1 A notice of misconduct and the motion for probation will be delivered by

the President and/or Vice President, Operations not less than five (5) business days prior to the Board meeting where the alleged violations will be discussed.

6.1.2.2 Upon the receipt of the notice mentioned in article 6.1.2.1, the Student Group in question may be requested, by the President and the Vice President, Operations, to attend the Board Meeting at which their circumstances will be discussed.

6.1.2.2.1 In the event that there is a time sensitive issue, an Emergency Board Meeting may be called.

6.1.2.3 The Student Group will have the opportunity to defend their group status at the meeting.

6.1.2.4 Failure of the Student Group to send one or more of their Officers to this meeting will automatically result in probation that will include all of the above penalties or termination of Student Group status.

6.1.2.4.1 Should allegations against the Student Group be proven true, a set of actions will be recommended to lift probation and/or restore Student Group status.

6.1.2.4.2 Should allegations against the Student Group be proven false, probation will be lifted by way of a Board majority vote.

6.1.2.5 The Board reserves the right to specify actions that a group must take in order to lift probationary status.

6.1.2.5.1 Probation includes the freezing of RLAS funding until the end of the probationary period.

6.1.2.5.2 Failure to complete the actions specified by the Board within the allocated time frame will result in termination of Student Group Status.

6.1.3 Should a Student Group attend the meeting but fail to meet the requirements for Student Group status, they will be notified by the RLAS President, and/or Vice President, Operations of their probationary status via email.

6.1.3.1 Upon notification of probationary status, details of how to lift the probationary status will be outlined through official communication.

6.1.4 In the case that a Student Group feels that they have been wronged, they may begin the process for an Appeal. For details on this process see Article 7.1: Appeals.

7.1 Appeals

7.1.1 The intent to appeal must be brought to the attention of the RLAS President, and Vice President, Operations through official communication. They will then provide information regarding how the group must proceed.

7.1.1.1 In order for the Appeal to proceed the Student Group Appeal Form must be completed, fully detailing the required information.

7.1.1.1.1 The RLAS Vice President, Operations shall provide this form following communication of intent to appeal.

7.1.1.2 Upon submission of the appeal, the group will present their case to the RLAS Appeal Committee for further investigation in a meeting.

7.1.1.2.1 The RLAS Vice President, Operations shall partake in this process as the Chairperson of the Committee.

7.1.1.2.2 The Manager, Student Relations and Development shall partake in this process as a mediating member.

7.1.1.3 It is mandatory for at least one member from the Student Group who initially presented to the Board to attend subsequent meetings.

7.1.1.4 The decisions made by the Appeal Committee will only serve as a recommendation to the Board.

7.1.2 The Appeal Committee will communicate its recommendations to the Student Group in question, and the Board.

7.1.2.1 The Appeal Committee Chair shall notify the Student Group of the Committee's recommendation within Seven (7) days of the meeting.

7.1.2.2 The Appeal Committee Chair shall notify the Board of the recommendations through email and presentation, prior to the Student Group's presentation at the next Board Meeting.

7.1.2.3 Taking into consideration the decision made by the Committee and the presentation by the Student Group seeking appeal, The Board will then make a decision.

7.1.3 The Appeal Committee shall be comprised of the following individuals:

7.1.3.1 The Vice President, Operations shall be a non-voting participant.

7.1.3.2 The Manager, Student Relations and Development shall be a non-voting participant.

7.1.3.3 Two (2) Directors on the Board shall be voting members.

7.1.3.4 Three (3) Student Group Representatives who are not members of the Board, or the Student Group making the appeal shall be voting members.

7.1.3.4.1 These Representatives shall be selected through an application process by the Manager, Student Relations and Development.

7.1.3.4.2 In the case that there are no applicants, the Manager, Student Relations and Development shall appoint students who are able to participate.

7.1.3.5 The Manager, Student Relations and Development shall determine One (1) non-voting Board representative to present.

7.1.3.6 The Vice President, Finance may act as a consultant for financial matters, as a non-voting member.

7.1.4 In the event of multiple appeals by a single Student Group, the second appeal decision made by the Board shall be final.

7.1.4.1 Exceptions to this rule shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.

7.1.4.2 Should a second appeal go forward, a new Appeal Committee must be Formed with different voting members.

7.1.5 All decisions made by the Board, and the Appeal Committee are valid until the end of the RLAS Fiscal year, unless otherwise directed by a Board Majority vote.

8.1 Limits of Liability

8.1.1 Recognition under this policy as a Student Group implies no endorsement by the University or The RLAS of a particular Group's beliefs or philosophy, nor the assumption of legal liability for the Student Group's activities. Student Groups and their individual members will remain fully responsible for their actions, including any and all violations of policies or law.