

**Carnegie Mellon University**  
**Committee on Student Organizations Bylaws**

**Article I. Purpose and Scope.**

- A. The purpose of these bylaws is to establish structures and operating procedures for the Committee on Student Organizations, which is a Standing Committee of Student Government established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*.
  - 1. The purpose of the Committee on Student Organizations is to oversee the process of granting and revoking the status of Student Government Recognition to student organizations.
- B. When there is a contradiction between these bylaws and the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, or *Student Body Fiscal Policy*, those documents shall supersede this one.
- C. When there is a contradiction between these bylaws and the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Senate Bylaws* or *Graduate Student Assembly Bylaws*, these bylaws shall supersede those documents.

**Article II. Terms and Definitions.**

- A. CoSO refers to the Committee on Student Organizations.
- B. The *student body* refers to the collection of students enrolled in undergraduate or graduate academic programs at Carnegie Mellon University's Pittsburgh campus.
- C. A *student organization* is any grouping of members of the student body.
  - 1. Neither Student Senate nor the Graduate Student Assembly are student organizations.

**Article III. Committee Structure and Duties.**

- A. CoSO shall be established as specified in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* and shall consist of a minimum of seven (7) and a maximum of fifteen (15) members.
  - 1. The Student Body Vice President for Organizations shall be a member of the committee and shall serve as Chair of CoSO.
  - 2. CoSO shall elect a Director of New Recognition and a Director of Re-Recognition, from among their voting membership and by way of a majority vote, within three (3) weeks of their first meeting of the academic year.
    - a. In the event of a vacancy in either of these offices, CoSO shall elect a new officer, from among their voting membership and by way of a majority vote, by the end of the second regular meeting following the creation of the vacancy.
    - b. Either of these officers may be removed from office by way of a three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote at a regular meeting of CoSO.
- B. General Duties for Members of CoSO:
  - 1. Attend at least two-thirds (2/3) of the weekly CoSO meetings.
    - a. Failure to maintain this attendance rate is grounds for removal from the committee.

2. Assist the Director of New Recognition by meeting with student organizations seeking Student Government Recognition in order to review the submitted documents and discuss the aims and methods of the organization.
3. Assist the Director of Re-Recognition in processing applications for re-recognition.
4. Abstain from voting on issues of New Recognition and Re-recognition for student organizations with which they have a conflict of interest.

**C. Duties of the Chair of CoSO:**

1. Schedule and chair weekly meetings of CoSO.
2. Oversee the activities of the Director of New Recognition and the Director of Re-Recognition.
3. In the event of a vacancy in one of the Director offices, act as Interim Director until a new Director is elected.
4. Act as liaison between CoSO and Carnegie Mellon University Student Government, student organizations and the university's administration.
5. Ensure that the contents of the CoSO website are up-to-date and accurate.
6. Maintain, in consultation with the Office of Student Activities and the Student Government Application Engineer, the Student Government database of information regarding all Student Government Recognized organizations.
7. Remove individuals from CoSO when they repeatedly fail to satisfy their meeting attendance requirements.
  - a. The Chair of CoSO shall notify the Student Senate Chair and the Graduate Student Assembly President within one (1) week of the removal or resignation of any member of CoSO.
8. Provide monthly updates to Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly regarding the activities and progress of CoSO.
  - a. These updates may either be sent by e-mail or provided in person at a regular meeting of Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly.
  - b. These reports must also include information regarding any failure to adhere to these bylaws.

**D. Duties of the Director of New Recognition**

1. Oversee the process of granting Student Government Recognition to student organizations that were not recognized during the previous academic year. This responsibility includes:
  - a. educating members of CoSO, and student organizations seeking Student Government Recognition, regarding the application process for Student Government Recognition;
  - b. scheduling meetings between CoSO and student organizations seeking Student Government Recognition;
  - c. notifying the Office of Student Activities with information regarding organizations that are granted Student Government Recognition.
2. Coordinate with the Director of Re-Recognition to fulfill the duties of the Chair of CoSO, in the event of a vacancy in that position, until an Interim Student Body Vice President for Organizations is appointed, or a new Student Body Vice President for Organizations is elected.

**E. Duties of the Director of Re-Recognition**

1. Oversee the processing of applications for re-recognition submitted by student organizations that are Student Government Recognized. This responsibility includes:
  - a. communicating with Student Government Recognized organizations in order to facilitate their applications for re-recognition;
  - b. coordinating the review of re-recognition applications by members of CoSO;
  - c. notifying the Office of Student Activities with information regarding any organization whose application for Re-Recognition is rejected.
2. Coordinate with the Director of New Recognition to fulfill the duties of the Chair of CoSO, in the event of a vacancy in that position, until an Interim Student Body Vice President for Organizations is appointed or a new Student Body Vice President for Organizations is elected.

#### **Article IV. Meetings.**

- A. CoSO shall meet weekly, beginning within the first three (3) weeks of the Fall semester.
- B. Quorum for CoSO meetings shall be a majority of the seated members of CoSO.
- C. CoSO meetings with student organizations seeking Student Government Recognition shall be open to all members of the student body.
- D. CoSO may elect to close any portion of their meeting by way of a two-thirds (2/3) supermajority vote.
  1. Members of CoSO are prohibited from sharing information from closed meetings with any individual who is not a member of CoSO, regarding confidential discussions held during any closed CoSO meeting.
    - a. The Vice President for Organizations is permitted to share information from a closed CoSO meeting with the Student Body President and/or the Student Body Vice President for Finance.
    - b. CoSO may, with a two-thirds (2/3) supermajority vote, elect to share information from closed discussions with particular individuals who are not members of CoSO.

#### **Article V. Student Government Recognition.**

- A. Any group of Carnegie Mellon University students is permitted to apply, at any time, to CoSO in order to receive the status of Student Government Recognition.
- B. An application for Student Government Recognition must include the following information:
  1. A constitution or set of bylaws for the organization which includes the following information:
    - a. Duties of the organization's officers;
    - b. A procedure for the selection and removal of officers;
    - c. Rules by which the organization will conduct its business;
    - d. A statement of commitment to the Carnegie Mellon University *Statement of Assurance*.
  2. The names of at least three (3) officers – or two (2) officers and an advisor – along with each individual's e-mail address or AndrewID.
    - a. All listed officers must be current members of the Carnegie Mellon University student body.

3. The names of at least eight (8) members of the Carnegie Mellon University student body who are members of the organization, along with each student's AndrewID.
  4. A mission statement indicating the organization's primary purpose.
  5. A statement of goals, related to the primary purpose of the group.
  6. A list of events the organization intends to host during the coming year.
- C. It is the responsibility of the Director of New Recognition to process all applications for Student Government Recognition, to provide assistance to organizations seeking Student Government Recognition, and to coordinate with these student organizations to present their case for Student Government Recognition to CoSO.
- D. CoSO is expected to make a decision regarding Student Government Recognition within one (1) month of the receipt of an application for Student Government Recognition.
1. Decisions regarding applications received in the time period from two (2) weeks before the end of a semester through to the beginning of the following semester must be rendered by CoSO within one (1) month of the start of that following semester.
  2. A three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote of approval at a meeting of CoSO is required to grant the status of Student Government Recognition to a student organization.
    - a. CoSO is expected to grant Student Government Recognition to groups whose complete and accurate application demonstrates a purpose and/or special interest not adequately addressed by a student organization that already has the status of Student Government Recognition.
- E. The Director of New Recognition is required to notify a student organization, via e-mail, of CoSO's decision regarding their application for Student Government Recognition within one (1) week of CoSO's vote on the matter.
1. If the application is rejected then this notification must include information regarding CoSO's reasons for rejecting the application, and information regarding the appeals process for rejected applicants.
  2. If the application is approved then this notification must include information regarding both the benefits afforded to Student Government Recognized organizations and the expectations placed on them, as described in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*

## **Article VI. Student Government Re-Recognition.**

- A. CoSO shall provide Student Government Recognized organizations with an opportunity to apply for re-recognition at least once each academic year. Organizations whose re-recognition application is not rejected by CoSO will retain their Student Government Recognition status until the end of the first re-recognition process during the following academic year.
1. It is the responsibility of the Director of Re-Recognition to communicate with Student Government Recognized organizations regarding all deadlines and requirements for re-recognition.
  2. It is the responsibility of Student Government Recognized organizations to provide up-to-date contact information to CoSO and to meet deadlines set by CoSO for the re-recognition process.

- B. A re-recognition application must include, in addition to the same information required for an application for Student Government Recognition, a summary of events held by the organization during the previous twelve (12) months.
- C. It is the responsibility of the Director of Re-Recognition to process all re-recognition applications from Student Government Recognized organizations, to provide assistance to organizations seeking to maintain their status of Student Government Recognition, and to coordinate with these student organizations to present their case for Student Government Recognition to CoSO, as needed.
- D. A three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote at a CoSO meeting is required to reject an application for re-recognition.
  - 1. CoSO is expected to accept applications for re-recognition from groups whose complete and accurate application demonstrates a continuing pursuit of their stated primary purpose.
    - a. If a group's mission statement and/or general goals have changed since the time of their last application for Student Government Recognition or re-recognition, then CoSO is expected to accept applications for re-recognition from groups whose complete and accurate application demonstrates a purpose and/or special interest not adequately addressed by a student organization that already has the status of Student Government Recognition.
- E. The Director of Re-Recognition is required to notify, via e-mail, any organization whose application for re-recognition has been rejected, within one (1) week of that decision by CoSO. This notification must include information regarding CoSO's reasons for rejecting the application, and information regarding the appeals process for rejected applicants.
- F. The status of Student Government Recognition shall be renewed for any organization that submits a completed application for re-recognition by the established deadline and whose application is not rejected by CoSO within one (1) month of that deadline.

## **Article VII. Recognition Probation.**

- A. A Student Government Recognized organization may be placed on Recognition Probation by the Student Body Vice President for Organizations if directed to do so by way of a three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote at a meeting of CoSO.
- B. Criteria for Recognition Probation include:
  - 1. Repeated and/or egregious failure to meet the expectations placed on Student Government Recognized organizations, as described in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*;
  - 2. Decrease in membership to less than eight (8) members of the student body.
- C. The Chair of CoSO is required to notify, via e-mail, any organization that is placed on Recognition Probation within one (1) week of the decision by CoSO. The Chair of CoSO must also notify the Student Senate Chair, the Graduate Student Assembly President, and the Office of Student Activities of the decision by CoSO, within one (1) week of the decision. These notifications must include the following information:
  - 1. Reasons for placing the organization on Recognition Probation;
  - 2. The specific Student Government Recognition benefits that will be suspended during the probation period.

- a. CoSO is not permitted to suspend a student organization's eligibility to apply for funding from the Joint Funding Committee without approval from the Joint Funding Committee by way of a three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote at a meeting of the Joint Funding Committee.
- 3. The length of the probationary period.
  - a. The probationary period must be at least one (1) month and at most four (4) months.
- 4. The requirements for the organization during the probationary period.
- 5. The consequences for the organization if they do not meet these requirements during their probationary period.
  - a. These consequences cannot include loss of funding from Student Government sources without a three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote at a meeting of the body from whom the funds are being received.
  - b. These consequences can include loss of Student Government Recognition status for the organization on probation.
- 6. Information regarding the appeals process for student organizations that have been placed on Recognition Probation.

### **Article VIII. Appeals Process.**

- A. A student organization whose application for Student Government Recognition or re-recognition has been rejected by CoSO, or who has been placed on Recognition Probation by the Student Body Vice President for Organizations, may appeal to CoSO for a change in any of the details of that decision by submitting a written notice of their appeal to CoSO within one (1) week of receipt of notification of the decision made by CoSO.
- B. CoSO shall schedule an appeal hearing to meet with up to two (2) representatives from any group that has submitted written notice of their appeal, giving the representative(s) an opportunity to state their case in person.
  - 1. Other concerned parties may submit information in the form of written statements, to be passed on to CoSO by the representative(s) attending the appeal hearing.
  - 2. Scheduling of appeal hearings shall be coordinated by the CoSO Chair, who shall give priority to groups in the order that their notice of appeal is received.
  - 3. An appeal hearing must take place within two (2) weeks of receipt of notice of an appeal.
    - a. In cases where notice of an appeal is received within two (2) weeks of the end of a semester, the appeal hearing must take place within two (2) weeks of the beginning of the next semester.
- C. At the conclusion of the appeals hearing CoSO must vote on whether to reverse their original decision.
  - 1. That original decision will be reversed if three-fourths (3/4) of the members of CoSO at the appeals hearing vote in favor of reversing the decision.
  - 2. The Chair of CoSO is required to notify the organization that has lodged the appeal, via e-mail, of the results of this vote within twenty-four (24) hours of this vote. The Chair of CoSO must also notify the Student Senate Chair, the Graduate Student Assembly President, and the Office of Student Activities of these results – within twenty-four (24) hours of this vote.

- a. This notification must include information regarding the process for lodging further appeals through Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly, as described in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*.

## **Article IX. Override and Amendment.**

### **A. Override**

1. A request to override this policy must be presented to both Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly.
2. Approval of a requested override requires a three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote of approval at a meeting of Student Senate, and a three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote of approval at a meeting of the Graduate Student Assembly.
  - a. The override request must be received, via e-mail, by the members of Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly at least one (1) week prior to their vote on the request.

### **B. Amendment**

1. Amendments to these bylaws must be proposed and passed in accord with the procedure set out for amendment to the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution*, with the addendum that any proposed amendment must be provided, via e-mail, to the CoSO Chair at least one (1) week prior to its initial presentation to Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly.
2. A record of all amendments to these bylaws must be kept, by the Constitutional Advisor, as an appendix to these bylaws.

Adopted by Student Senate: February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010.

Adopted by the Graduate Student Assembly: February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010.

Revised by Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly: April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

## **Appendix: Amendments to the Committee on Student Organizations Bylaws**

*Note: In September 2009 the Amendment procedure for the Committee on Student Organizations Bylaws was changed to require that amendments be kept as an appendix to these bylaws. In February 2010 major revisions to the Student Government documents were approved by both Student Senate and the Graduate Student Assembly, effectively replacing the old documents. What is contained in this appendix are the changes that have been made to the Committee on Student Organizations Bylaws since February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010.*

### April 6, 2011:

All references to notification “in writing” changed to notification “via e-mail” – for the sake of clarity.