

University of Ottawa Aesculapian Society Policy on the Approval and Functioning of Student run interest groups

1.

Interpretation

For the purposes of this policy:

1.1

“Group” refers to any Aesculapian Society certified association of members of the medical school – be that a student interest group, advocacy committee, etc.

1.2

“Executive” refers to group leaders, - be they referred to as President, coordinators, or any other leadership title.

1.3

“Term” refers to an academic year, or however long an executive position within a group is expected to be held.

2.

Purpose and categories of interest groups

2.1

Interest groups are student run groups that function as an integral part of campus life by providing students with extra education and opportunities, which include but are not limited to career talks, skill building activities, and volunteering opportunities. Interest groups play an important role in contributing to the intellectual, political, social, and cultural diversity of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa.

2.2

A ‘Special Interest Group’ is defined as a group whose focus is to cater to the interests of medical students by providing extra information in the form of activities, speakers, and events.

A ‘Community Interest Group’ is defined as a group whose main function is to provide students with opportunities to take part in community service opportunities. The majority of this group’s MSPR hours must be given for community service.

3.

Interest group and group budget approval process

3.1

All interest groups must apply for approval prior to each academic year. The Aesculapian Society encourages all students with the desire to create a new group to do so. All interest groups must apply by going through a formal approval process by filling out an *Interest Group Proposal* form. The *Interest Group Proposal* form will be sent out to all medical students by the VP Community Health prior to the beginning of each academic year so that everyone who so desires has the opportunity to create a group. This form will contain the following required sections as well as any extra section the VP Community Health deems necessary.

A. Description of the group,

B. Specific goals and planned Activities,

C. Record of number of hours given last year

D. Executive(s), and Faculty advisor, and their contact information (phone, email)

E. Budget Request*

*Funding from The Aesculapian Society **cannot** be put towards food for planned events, and the budget request must outline specifically what the requested money is expected to be spent on. Within this

section a group must also indicate whether they will be receiving any external funding outside of the expected Aesculapian society funding and where those funds will be coming from.

3.2.

There will be a maximum of thirty Special Interest Groups approved in a given year and an unlimited number of Community Interest Groups approved provided the group application is approved. All interest group proposals will be reviewed by the Interest Group Selection Committee comprised of the VP Community Health, VP Academic, VP Finance Jr., VP Finance Sr., VP Executive, the clerkship assistant at the Medical Education Office and the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Medicine. This process will evaluate the applications on the following criteria:

A. Quality and extent of planned events for the upcoming year- the offering of at least 10 MSPR hours must be shown in the plan.

B. Performance of the group in the previous year as well as attendance at events in the previous year (if pre-existing group)

C. Ability to stand alone as a unique interest group- there must not be significant overlap among one interest group's objectives with another interest group's objectives that deem the creation of both interest group's unnecessary. If an overlap does exist and one group is a proposed new group and the other group is a proposed pre-existing group, selection will be to the pre-existing group.

D. Contribution to the intellectual, political, social, and cultural diversity of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa.

E. The proposed group's objectives/planned activities are not discriminatory in any way, **as laid out by the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, and has no clauses that are illegal in any way under Canadian Law.**

3.3

In order to encourage inclusiveness and diversity amongst our students there will be a slightly different process for religious and cultural interest groups. Included in the thirty special interest groups will be a **Multi-faith Interest Group** and a **Multicultural Interest Group**. These two groups are meant to provide students of all religions and/or cultures the opportunity to share their religion and/or culture with other students without the requirements of providing 10 MSPR hours worth of activities. These groups are also meant to encourage all medical students to attend talks from a variety of different religions and/or cultures to reach 10 MSPR hours.

Any religion/culture that would like to be represented under either of these two groups may have a maximum of two executives per religion/culture.

Students who attend any events by any religion/culture will be given hours towards the Multi-faith Interest group or Multi-Cultural Interest Group respectively.

Each religion/culture will be required to submit an application as part of the process but will not be judged based on ability to provide 10 MSPR hours and will not need to fill out the budget section.

Any religion/culture that receives external funding will be able to use that money solely on it's own events. The Aesculapian Society will provide a set amount to be shared between religions/cultures that do not have access to external funding.

3.4

If a pre-existing interest group is not approved the following year, any student who has less than 10 MSPR hours will not be eligible for a credit unless the interest group is re-instated in following years.

4.

Budget Approval

4.1

The group budget for all interest groups will be allocated as fairly as possible to ensure all reasonable requests for funds are taken into account. The draft of the budget (additive budget from all groups) will

be brought forth to the Aesculapian Society and voted on by all voting members. As soon as the budget is passed the VP Community Health will notify group executives of their finalized budget. The VP Community Health along with the VP Finance Junior will review the budget request for each group, and funds will be allocated to groups taking into consideration:

- A. The number of planned events and the number of events traditionally held by the group
- B. The funds estimated to be necessary for planned events based on size of event
- C. The practicality and feasibility of the budget request
- D. The usage of the previous year's budget by said interest group
- D. The total Aesculapian Society Budget available for that term

5.

The rules and regulations of maintaining official group status

5.1

Every group must have a faculty advisor, and this advisor must have official faculty status with the University of Ottawa. This advisor must be made aware of and approve all events put on by their group.

5.2

Every group must have a minimum of one group executive for the term, and a maximum of four executives, of which at least two executives must be in second year. The executive(s) will take the responsibility of booking rooms for events put on by the group, as well as communicating with the Faculty Advisor. When the term for the executive(s) is near end, the executive(s) for the following term should be chosen in as democratic a way as possible. A student can be an executive on no more than two interest groups.

5.3

Every group must put on a minimum of 10 hours worth of events per academic year. If a group fails to meet the requirements to maintain group status in one academic year, their application for the following year will face intense scrutiny. This will help ensure that members of said group are given the opportunity to fulfill the 10 MSPR hour requirement. If a group applying did not provide 10 MSPR hours in the previous year they may include an explanation of how this will be remedied in their application and their approval will be at the discretion of the Interest Group Selection Committee outlined above.

6. Housekeeping of Groups

6.1

Once per month, at a time that is convenient for the VP Finance Jr., group executive can submit receipts to him/her for reimbursement from The Aesculapian Society. Executives of each committee/group will be made aware of the date and time for reimbursement by the VP Community Health at least 1 week in advance.

6.2

Reimbursement forms are available on the Aesculapian Society Website-
Click About Us > Documents > Expense Form

6.3

While it is inevitable that there will be overlap in events held (example. Two speakers for two different groups coming in on the same day at the same time), we expect that executives be as collegial as possible in booking events, and make every effort possible not to book speakers/hold events that overlap with other groups. This is simply for the sake of mutual respect, as we are well aware of how difficult it can be to book guest speakers, and to maintain attendance at events, especially when there is more than one event running at the same time