

**Association of Student Activities  
Operating Guidelines**

## Article I: Student Groups

**Section 1. Definitions** An extracurricular activity is any organized, continuing activity which takes place primarily on the MIT campus and is not part of the academic curriculum.

A student activity is an extracurricular activity administered and run substantially and primarily by MIT students.

The active membership of an extracurricular activity is that portion of the activity's membership that regularly participates in the functioning of the activity.

The core membership of an extracurricular activity is that portion of the active membership most directly responsible for the continuing success of the activity. Usually this comprises the "leadership" or executive committee of the activity and includes the titled positions or the activity's management.

### Section 2. Activity Classifications

**Full recognition** groups are student activities with an active membership of at least 5 MIT students and at all times at least 50% MIT students, including standing committees of the MIT student governments. The activity's president and treasurer, or corresponding officers, must be registered MIT students.

**Sponsored recognition** groups are student activities with an active membership of at least 5 MIT students and at all times at least 50% MIT students, including ad hoc committees of the MIT student governments. These activities are directly linked to an MIT program, existing student activities, or an academic department. The sponsoring party of such a group is able to provide the basic support necessary to ensure success of the group.

**Club Sports** groups are student activities with an active membership of at least 5 MIT students and at all times at least 50% MIT students which have been granted recognition by the Club Sports Council and accepted by the ASA Executive Board.

**FSILGs and Dorms** are student activities with an active membership of at least 5 MIT students which are members of the Inter-fraternity Council, Panhel, Dormcom, Living Group Council, or the Graduate Student Council General Council.

## Article II: Student Group Recognition and Derecognition

**Section 1. Recognition** Any eligible activity may be granted ASA recognition upon fulfillment of the ASA Recognition Procedures published by the ASA Executive Board. These procedures must require, but are not limited to:

1. A statement of purpose for the activity.
2. A constitution of the activity.
3. A signed acknowledgment of the Massachusetts Hazing Law.
4. A list of at least five MIT students who will be members of the group.

The ASA Recognition Procedures must be published in a prominent place. The procedures may be changed by a 2/3 vote of the Executive Board, but not more than once during each spring/summer term and each fall/IAP term. The procedures may always be reviewed by the ASA membership at a General Body meeting.

Funding eligibility shall be determined by the ASA Executive Board, the Undergraduate Association Finance Board, or the Graduate Student Council Funding Board.

**Section 2. Grounds for Derecognition** Any ASA recognized activity not meeting its responsibilities as set forth in this constitution and the policies of the ASA may be subject to derecognition.

The ASA Executive Board, acting in its judicial capacity as mediator between member activities, may restrict, in whole or in part, an activity from any privileges granted by the ASA to its members or derived through ASA membership.

**Section 3. Procedures for Derecognition** The ASA General Body may derecognize any member activity by a two-thirds vote at a General Body Meeting.

The ASA Executive Board may derecognize any activity not meeting its responsibilities as defined in Article Article III: by first providing one month notice via e-mail to the activity's officers mailing list as last provided to the ASA followed by a vote of the executive board.

## Article III: Rights and Responsibilities of Student Groups

**Section 1. Group Responsibilities** All members of the ASA have the following responsibilities:

1. Each activity shall notify the ASA Executive Board of changes of officers or contacts, constitutional changes, and other information as requested by the ASA Executive Board at least semi-annually.
2. Each activity shall comply with all rulings of the ASA and its Executive Board.
3. Each voting ASA member activity shall have a representative present at all ASA General Body meetings. Failure to attend at least one such meeting per semester may be considered sufficient grounds for derecognition.
4. Each ASA member activity shall comply with its constitution as submitted to and approved by the ASA.
5. Full or sponsored ASA-recognized activities must follow MIT's Non-Discrimination policy.
6. The majority of the voting membership of full or sponsored ASA-recognized activities must be MIT students.
7. The activity's president and treasurer, or corresponding officers, must be distinct registered MIT students.

**Section 2. Group Rights** ASA recognized activities derive the following benefits from ASA recognition:

1. Use of MIT name
2. Scheduling of MIT rooms and facilities including Endicott House
3. An MIT account
4. Except in unusual circumstances, only full ASA-recognized activities are eligible for ASA shared and private office space. All other recognized groups should receive office space from their sponsoring party.
5. The ASA's membership consists of all recognized student activities in good standing. However, the ASA's voting membership consists only of full groups, sponsored groups, and club sports.

**Section 3. Student Group Property** The ASA recognizes the importance of student group property. As such, the board will not reallocate property from any active group. However, since all property purchased with student group funds or owned by a group is owned by MIT, the ASA executive board is responsible for distribution of property when a group is derecognized. Strong preference should be given to allowing either the UA or GSC finboard to allocate the property to other groups that would benefit from the property. Groups with specific plans for their property should include those plans in their constitution.

## Article IV: ASA Executive Board

The members of the ASA Executive Board are defined in the GSC and UA Bylaws. The Executive Board shall be the administrative and judicial body of the ASA.

**Section 1. Meetings** Executive Board meetings shall be conducted at least biweekly during the regular school year, except when conflicting with MIT holidays. The Executive Board must meet at least once between General Body meetings.

**Section 2. Responsibilities of the Executive Board** The Executive Board, working with an official representative from the Student Activities Office, shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Maintain and supervise the distribution of a list of all activities recognized by the ASA.
2. Review and, in conjunction with the Dean's office, assign space allocation to recognized activities.
3. Have the authority to arbitrate all inter-activity disputes at the request of a member activity.
4. Be responsible for the interpretation of these Operating Guidelines and the enactment of policies of the ASA, subject to review by the General Body.

**Section 3. Duties of Specific Executive Board Members**

**The president** shall preside at all meetings of the ASA and of its Executive Board. The president shall also be the outside representative of the ASA in all matters. The president will call Executive Board and General Body meetings as necessary. In the event of a tie, may cast a vote at Executive Board meetings and General Body meetings.

**The treasurer** shall be responsible for the finances of the ASA and of its Executive Board. This officer shall become a voting member of the UA Finance Board and of the GSC Funding Board unless they do not meet qualifications set forth by the respective board. The treasurer shall also be the chair of the Large Event Funds (LEF) funding board and the Assisting Recurring Cultural And Diversity Events (ARCADE) funding board.

**The secretary** shall keep minutes of all meetings and handle all correspondence of the ASA and its Executive Board.

**The two undergraduate members-at-large** must be registered undergraduates at MIT. If the ASA treasurer is not able to serve on the UA Finance Board, one of these members shall be appointed by the ASA president to serve in the treasurer's place.

**The two graduate members-at-large** must be registered graduate students at MIT. One of these members shall be appointed by the ASA president to serve as a voting member of the GSC Funding Board.

**The one student member-at-large** must be a registered student at MIT.

**Section 4. Vacancies in Offices** In the event of a vacancy in the office of the president, the vacancy will be filled by the first available officer in the order of Treasurer, Secretary, and student member-at-large.

In the event of a vacancy in any other office, the president shall appoint a temporary replacement, subject to ratification by a majority vote of the Executive Board. The vacancy will be filled at the next General Body meeting.

**Section 5. Removal of Officers** Voting members of the ASA Executive Board who accumulate three or more unexcused absences for Executive Board meetings will be automatically removed and the vacancy filled as specified in section Section 4.. Further mechanisms of the removal of the ASA Executive Board are defined in the UAGSC Bylaws.

**Section 6. Election of Officers** To be eligible for office, the candidate must be an MIT student and a member of an ASA recognized activity. Nominations may be accepted by electronic or paper submission beginning two weeks before the announced date for the General Body meeting. Nominations may also be accepted from the floor at the meeting itself.

To be elected to an office, the candidate must carry the majority vote of voting ASA members present. In the event that no candidate has a majority, the candidate with the least votes shall be stricken from the ballot and a new vote taken.

## **Article V: ASA Judicial Process**

The ASA Executive Board, as the judicial body of the ASA, shall mediate inter-activity disputes and shall rule on violations of ASA, UA, GSC or MIT policies, procedures, or rules.

### **Section 1. Guidelines for ASA Judicial Process**

1. Rulings of the ASA or its Executive Board shall not restrict purely internal functions of an activity beyond requiring a group implement its constitution.
2. Rulings may be made when the ASA Executive Board convenes itself with a majority of the Board voting in favor, or in exceptional circumstances, via email with a 2/3 vote of the Board.
3. All rulings must be communicated via email or letter within twenty-four hours.
4. All procedures/policies created by the ASA Executive Board must clearly indicate the maximum set of possible sanctions.
5. All decisions concerning policy or rule violations must cite the specific procedures or policies violated. The board may
6. ASA Executive Board members must recuse themselves from any judicial proceedings in which they appear to have a conflict of interest.

### **Section 2. Appeals**

1. Rulings of the ASA Executive Board may be appealed to the Board within two weeks of the initial ruling.
2. A hearing between the officers of the affected activity or activities and the ASA Executive Board shall be scheduled no later than one month after the appeal request.
3. Following the hearing, the ASA Executive Board shall meet in executive session to decide an appeal. The original ruling shall stand unless decided otherwise by a 2/3 vote of the Board.
4. Sanctions for the violations in question may not be increased due to an appeal.
5. Further Appeals
  - (a) Rulings by the ASA Executive Board may be appealed at a meeting of the General Body of the ASA. Decisions shall be by a majority vote of the General Body.
  - (b) The UA-GSC Bylaws state the procedure for further appeals.

**Section 3. Student Group Agreements** As part of its judicial role, the ASA may enforce agreements between student groups, including financial agreements, when requested by one or more of the involved groups. The group making the request should provide a hardcopy of agreement between the groups as signed by the presidents of both groups. All such agreements must be limited to a term of two years or less. To ensure fair and unambiguous language, the ASA encourages groups to work with the ASA or SLP to draft such agreements.

## Article VI: General Body Meetings

### Section 1. Regular Meetings

1. There shall be no more than three regular General Body meetings per term.
2. Electronic or paper mail shall be sent to the last given contact address of all ASA member activities at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.
3. The quorum for regular business at a General Body meeting shall be thirty voting ASA member activities, or twenty percent of the ASA voting membership, whichever is less.
4. All such meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (Revised), except as specified herein.
5. All voting ASA recognized activities shall have one vote each in meetings of the ASA.
6. Each voting ASA member activity shall be represented by its president or designated representative. No voting individual at a General Body meeting may exercise more than one vote.
7. The ASA General Body may, by a majority vote of the voting members present, adopt standing policies consistent with these Operating Guidelines and the UA-GSC Bylaws regarding the ASA that shall be binding on its Executive Board and shall continue in effect until amended or repealed by the General Body. The text of proposed policies or changes to policies must be distributed to member groups prior to the General Body meeting at which they will be discussed.

### Section 2. Special Meetings

1. In extraordinary circumstances, the ASA president may call a special meeting of the ASA General Body. A petition signed by 1/3 of the voting ASA member activities may also call a special meeting. A special meeting shall differ from a regular meeting only in that: a. Notice for special meetings must be given only two days in advance. b. The agenda for the meeting shall be posted the day of the meeting. c. Under no circumstances shall elections or amendments to this constitution be in order at a special meeting.
2. The quorum for special business shall be one-third of the ASA voting membership.

## Article VII: Office Space Allocation Policy

**Section 1. Frequency** The Board will perform a full room allocation process, as defined below in Section 2, under two circumstances:

1. The Board decides before the Fall General Body meeting to perform one.
2. The ASA General Body passes a motion at the Fall General Body meeting instructing the Board to perform one. Such a motion will always be in order at a Fall General Body meeting.

### Section 2. Allocation Process

1. The decision to perform an allocation will be announced at the Fall General Body meeting as outlined in Section 1.
2. Applications for rooms are due the first Friday of November. Applications are described in Section 3.
3. The Board will announce its initial decisions on or before the end of Thanksgiving break a. Each group requesting new office space will be placed in one of three categories: A, B, or C. All groups in category A will receive space before any group in category B and all groups in category B will receive space before any group in category C. These categorizations will be kept after the allocation

is over. If any spaces become available before the next allocation, these lists will be used to allocate it. b. Each group which already has space will be placed on one of three lists. The first list is of groups which will retain their current space. The second is of groups which may be assigned to different space than they currently occupy. The third list is of groups which may lose their space. Each group in the third list will also be assigned to one of the categories in paragraph a above. c. Any group requesting a larger space than it currently possesses or additional space will be classified without regards to that request. If the group is then placed in the first list, the Board may consider their request during phase 6 below. Any group in the first list may not have its space altered by the Board except as part of a room reorganization agreement between the group and the Board.

4. Any group which wishes to protest their categorization must file a formal complaint with the Board before the last ASA Executive Board meeting of the Fall term. The format of such a complaint is described in Section 4.
5. Protest hearings for all groups which file a complaint on time will be scheduled with the group, the Board, and a representative of the Dean's office. All protests must be heard before the last ASA Executive Board meeting of the Fall term. Protest hearings are described in Section 4.
6. The board will present its final decisions via an ASA Official e-mail before the end of the Fall Term Finals Week. The e-mail shall include a listing of activities receiving space and the location of that space. Also, the Board will present the Interim Allocation List, which is the categorization of groups which requested space but did not receive it, as well as those groups which lost space; this list will be used for interim allocations as per Section 5. 7. The presented room assignments will take effect on the following IAP period, no earlier than the 3rd day of January, but no later than the 15th.

**Section 3. Applications** An application for space allocation must include the following information, as a minimum:

1. Whether the group is requesting space for the first time or has space currently allocated to it.
2. A contact for the group, including current phone number.
3. The number of members of the group, broken down into the typical "Undergraduate students, Graduate students, MIT Community, Other".
4. The terms during which the group sponsors activities.
5. The number, size, and intended audience of activities sponsored each year.
6. The frequency at which the governing body of the group meets
7. The anticipated frequency of usage of the space.
8. What kind of space the group is willing to use. Private Space is an office used by one group only. Shared Space is an office used by 2 or 3 heterogeneous, or a larger number of homogeneous groups. Small Activities Space is an area shared by a large number of groups, each of which has at least locker space for storage of some of the group's possessions. i. Which other groups, if any, with which the activity would be willing to share space, or groups which the group would rather not/refuse to share space with.
9. Whether the group has any need for any Facilities Space. Facilities Space is space used exclusively by an activity for some purpose other than office use.
10. In addition, the group should submit a description of what the space will be used for and why it is needed. Activities seeking renewal should include what they have done in the office recently and whether they are interested in voluntarily changing the size of their office space. All groups should include the amount of space they feel they need, and should attempt to give examples of appropriate rooms. Said description must be typewritten in not smaller than 10pt font on not more than one sheet of 8.5inX11in paper.

All applications shall be open to the public, except that the information given to satisfy item 3.1(i) will remain confidential.

#### **Section 4. Protests**

1. Protests shall consist of a one-page prose description of why the categorization of the group in the initial decisions is incorrect. In this description, arguments should be limited to the merits of the protesting group; it is inappropriate to attempt to discredit or demerit another group. This description must be submitted over the signature of the group's ASA contact. Said protest must be typewritten in not smaller than 10pt font on not more than one sheet of 8.5inX11in paper.
2. Protest hearings shall be scheduled by the ASA Secretary or an employee of the Dean's office.
3. Participants in the hearing shall include:
  - (a) At least one, but no more than three members representation the protesting group.
  - (b) At least five members of the Board
  - (c) A representative of the Dean's office.
  - (d) The group's faculty advisor may participate, but his/her presence is not required.

At the hearing, each representative of the group will receive at least 2 minutes to explain to the hearing why the categorization of the group is incorrect. After the group has spoken, the Board and the representative of the Dean's office will be allowed to ask questions of the group. When the Board and the representative of the Dean's office have finished with their questioning, the group's representatives may ask questions of the Board or the representative of the Dean's office. After this session, the Board shall discuss the protesting group's status with the representative of the Dean's office. This discussion session will be closed and no minutes will be taken. They will then re-categorize the group by vote. At least two-thirds of the members of the Board present must vote in favor of a particular categorization for it to become official (Abstentions in the vote shall be considered as in opposition). If after three votes a decision cannot be made, the representative of the Dean's office will decide on the categorization of the group. Each vote will be recorded for the record. Any specific room allocation can be brought to a vote of the General Body at the Spring meeting by filing a petition to do so at least two days prior to that meeting. Such a petition shall require 25 Class I groups written endorsements to be valid.

#### **Section 5. Interim Allocation**

1. Groups wishing to request space during times when an allocation is not underway may do so by submitting an application as described in Section 3. The Board active at that time will categorize the group as described in Section 2.3, paragraph a, and place it on the Interim Allocation List.
2. If space becomes available when an allocation is not currently underway, the Board active at that time will allocate that space to a group in the "A" category of the Interim Allocation List. If there are no groups in the "A" category, the space must go to a group in the "B" category. If there are no groups in the "B" category, the space must go to a group in the "C" category. If there are no groups in the "C" category, the space will go to the next group which submits an application for space.

**Section 6. Revocation** The Board may revoke a group's room allocation prior to the next declared allocation process if the activity violates any of the provisions outlined in Section 7, or as a disciplinary measure. Any such revocation is subject to appeal through the protest process in Section 4.

## **Section 7. Terms**

1. No activity which has space allocated to is authorized to grant permission for another activity to use that space.
2. Improvements or renovations made to a room at the expense of the activity occupying the room do not guarantee that the group will continue to have that room allocated to them. Such improvements may be presented in the group's application under Section 3 for consideration of the Board.
3. The Association of Student Activities is not responsible for providing, maintaining, or financing any equipment contained in any room allocation under this policy.

**Section 8. Philosophy** It is the highest responsibility of the Executive Board of the Association of Student Activities to act in the best interest of the MIT Community and of the Student Activities which it represents. No other interest or responsibility could possibly supersede it. Thus, the Board must make a good faith effort to allocate rooms fairly. The Board should attempt to ensure that the most active groups who need space and other groups with the highest demonstrated need for space actually receive it. Secondary to that is attempting to allocate space to as many groups as possible.

## **Article VIII: Bulletin Board Allocation Process**

**Section 1. Bulletin Boards** The ASA Executive Board administers the bulletin board space in the infinite corridor and adjoining areas that are designed for dedicated student group use. Since bulletin board space is a valuable resource, the ASA Executive Board will periodically reallocate all boards based on need and on a group's history of effective usage of their bulletin board.

The Board may deallocate a board between full reallocations if the group fails to use the space after notification by the Board. The Board may also reallocate individual boards between full reallocations when boards become available.

**Section 2. Student Group Responsibilities** Each group must maintain its bulletin board by filling the space with a display that advertises the group's mission, message, events, and activities. Each group must remove other materials posted in its space. Groups must ask permission before permanent modifications are made to their board space (such as putting up display cases or adding plexiglass to their space). The fact that a group has put the effort and money into renovating their board space does not ensure that the space will be allocated to the group in the future.

**Section 3. Timeline** The ASA will reallocate bulletin boards every other year. The application for space should be available in October such that allocations can be announced and appeals completed before the end of the fall term. The allocations will take effect during IAP with the exact date determined by the Board. The schedule for posting a display in a new space (or moving a display) should allow groups to effectively advertise IAP and Spring events.

**Section 4. Waiting List** Between standard full re-allocations, the ASA will maintain a list of groups that requested space in the previous standard allocation and those that requested space between full reallocations. If boards become available, the Board will preferentially allocate boards to those groups that applied in the previous full allocation cycle.

## **Article IX: Standing Policies**

The ASA Executive Board and General Body may pass standing policies. Policies passed by the General Body take precedence over those passed by the Executive Committee. Any proposed change to standing policy must be presented one week before the meeting at which it is voted on.

## **Article X: Amendments**

These Operating Guidelines may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at a General Body meeting or by the process specified by the UA-GSC Bylaws. The text of any guideline amendment must be distributed with the agenda for each meeting at which the amendment is to be considered.