

PROGRAM SOCIETY POLICY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To define a Program Society under the McMaster Science Society (MSS);
- 1.2. To identify the Program Societies currently ratified under the MSS;
- 1.3. To outline the process and criteria for ratifying and maintaining status as a Program Society under the MSS;
- 1.4. To outline the rights and privileges afforded by Program Societies;
- 1.5. To describe the relationship between Program Societies and the MSS.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. Program Society: A student group which represents a department, school, program within a school, or a program within a department (if the Program Society meets the requirements in 4.1.1) within the Faculty of Science, and which the MSS distributes funding based on program enrollment. Its purpose is to support, advocate and increase student interests through professional development, social events, services and representation within their respective programs;
- 2.2. Faculty Society: A society or organization operated by students which represents a Faculty within McMaster University. Faculty Societies are recognized by their respective Dean's Offices as being the highest student governing body for the faculty-at-large;
- 2.3. EOHSS: The Environmental and Occupational Health Support Services, part of the University's Human Resources department that provides risk management expertise;
- 2.4. Executive: A group of students recognized by the Program Society who hold leadership positions within the Program Society. These students must have been elected or hired according to their respective group's elections policy, as outlined in their constitution.

3. WHO WE RATIFY

- 3.1. McMaster Actuarial Society;
- 3.2. McMaster Biology Society;

- 3.3. McMaster Biochemistry & Biomedical Sciences Society;
- 3.4. McMaster Biopsych Society;
- 3.5. McMaster Undergraduate Society for the Chemical Sciences;
- 3.6. Geography and Earth Sciences Society;
- 3.7. Integrated Science Society;
- 3.8. McMaster Kinesiology Society;
- 3.9. McMaster Life Sciences Society;
- 3.10. Math and Stats Society;
- 3.11. Medical Radiation Sciences Student Society;
- 3.12. McMaster Undergraduate Physics Society;
- 3.13. McMaster Psychology, Neuroscience, and Behaviour Society.

4. ELIGIBILITY FOR RATIFICATION

4.1. To be newly ratified, a student group must:

4.1.1. Meet the definition of a Program Society as described in Section 2.1, however, a Program Society may represent a program within a department if:

4.1.1.1. The program itself maintains an enrollment of over 200 students and represents at least 25% of the students within the department itself,

4.1.1.2. The Program Society can demonstrate itself in their cover letter submitted during the ratification process to be significantly different from the Program Society that represents their department or school,

4.1.1.3. There is written approval from the Program and Department Heads relevant to the program and Department,

4.1.2. Email an online application package to the Vice-President Internal of the MSS. This package shall include:

4.1.2.1. A constitution for the proposed Program Society. This must follow the guidelines in Section 7,

4.1.2.2. A cover letter proposing the society's desire to be recognized as a Program Society under the MSS, as well as outlining how their group fills a need not currently satisfied by an existing Program Society or other non-Program Society student organization,

4.1.2.3. A Program Society Funding Application as defined in Article 11;

4.2. A proposed Program Society must receive a majority vote of the MSS Core Executive in order to be approved as a Program Society.

5. CRITERIA FOR MAINTAINING STATUS AND RE-RATIFICATION

- 5.1. All Program Society Presidents are required to attend monthly President's Council meetings hosted by the MSS President and Vice-President Internal. If the President(s) are unable to attend a given meeting, a representative must be sent in their place;
- 5.2. All Program Societies must have a minimum of thirty (30) percent of their executive team attend the MSS General Assembly each semester assuming:
 - 5.2.1. Notice of the date and time is provided to Program Societies by email no less than one week before the event,
 - 5.2.2. A sign-in process is provided prior to the start of the General Assembly,
 - 5.2.3. There are no extenuating circumstances that affect a majority of the executive team of a given Program Society that have been discussed with and approved by the MSS VP Internal prior to the event, in which case the VP Internal may:
 - 5.2.3.1. Provide a Program Society a reduced requirement for the number of attendees,
 - 5.2.3.2. Waive a Program Society's attendance requirement;
- 5.3. Prior to March 31st of the current academic year, a Program Society must submit to the MSS:
 - 5.3.1. A constitution that has been updated within 8 months of being submitted, following the guidelines in Section 7,
 - 5.3.2. A funding application for the upcoming year,
 - 5.3.3. A financial report outlining income and expenses from the previous year,
 - 5.3.4. An up-to-date bank account statement,
 - 5.3.5. A transition report from the Program Society, which must include:
 - 5.3.5.1. All relevant account information for accessing important Society information (email accounts, EOHSS, etc.),
 - 5.3.5.2. An account of all previous events and activities during their term,
 - 5.3.5.3. A list of incoming executives,
 - 5.3.5.4. Guidance for the incoming President(s) based on previous experience;
- 5.4. All Program Societies must provide the MSS webmaster with up-to-date information for their webpage;
- 5.5. All Program Societies must retain positive outward support of the MSS and its

constituents, likewise, the MSS will retain positive outward support of its Program Societies;

- 5.6. All Program Societies must follow all applicable laws of the land, including but not limited to the MSS, McMaster University, local, provincial, and national by-laws, laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures;
- 5.7. All Program Societies must be open to all students in compliance with the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) and [McMaster's Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment: Prevention and Response](#). While discriminatory membership practices are not allowed it is recognized that certain Program Societies could be homogeneous in nature without being discriminatory;
- 5.8. All Program Societies must follow the policies and procedures outlined in the Policy and take direction from the VP Internal as necessary or otherwise face repercussions as described in Section 7.

6. MSS PROGRAM SOCIETY PRIVILEGES

- 6.1. A recognized Program Society shall be eligible to:
 - 6.1.1. Book the Science Lounge to host events, provided the event complies with Sections 12,
 - 6.1.2. Request promotion on MSS social media streams in accordance with the MSS Promotions Policy,
 - 6.1.3. A minimum of \$1000 in funding from the MSS,
 - 6.1.4. A page on the MSS website, tailored to the Program Society's needs,
 - 6.1.5. Consult with the MSS Vice-President Internal or President on matters concerning Program Society function, event planning, and other related issues,
 - 6.1.6. Attend President's Council meetings as well as any MSS-run Program Society events,
 - 6.1.7. Send their Executives to the MacSci Appreciation Gala,
 - 6.1.8. Host a booth at I Love Science Day,
 - 6.1.9. Apply for the Program Society Collaboration Fund and Science Initiative Fund;
- 6.2. A Program Society that violates the Program Society Policy is entitled to a meeting with the MSS VP Internal to discuss parameters surrounding their violation and the associated impacts;

7. PENALTIES AND REMOVAL OF PROGRAM SOCIETY STATUS

- 7.1. Immediate removal of Program Society status can be initiated by the combined approval of the MSS VP Internal and President if a Program Society:
 - 7.1.1. Violates local, provincial, or national laws,
 - 7.1.2. Engages in homophobic, racist, sexist, or otherwise discriminatory activity,
 - 7.1.3. Publicly slanders the MSS or any of its constituents,
 - 7.1.4. Engages in financially irresponsible behaviour including, but not limited to, providing compensation to its executives or acting as an on-campus affiliation of a commercial organization;
- 7.2. Penalties can be issued to a given Program Society at the discretion of the VP Internal if a Program Society violates clauses within the Program Society Policy;
- 7.3. A Program Society can be put under review at the end of the year by the combined approval of the MSS VP Internal and President if a Program Society:
 - 7.3.1. Engages in unethical elections or hiring practices,
 - 7.3.2. Maintains a negative bank account balance,
 - 7.3.3. Accumulates a total of three penalties in one year as described in Section 6.2,
 - 7.3.4. Accumulates a penalty for the same violation for two years within a three year period,
 - 7.3.5. Does not follow appropriate EOHSS procedures as defined in Section 12;
- 7.4. If a Program Society is put under review in accordance with Article 7.3., then the MSS President, VP Internal, President(s) of the Program Society under review, and other relevant parties must meet to discuss the parameters surrounding the review;
- 7.5. Reviews may include, but are not limited to, an investigation of elections and hiring practices, finances, and program society operation;
- 7.6. Following reasonable investigation, consultation, and presentation of a written letter describing the review and decision making process to the Program Society, the MSS has the ability to invoke actions including, but not limited to, the removal of persons in positions on Program Societies, decreased funding in current and/or future years, loss of Program Society status, and removal of privileges as described in Section 6;
- 7.7. Following the loss of Program Society status, a Society is eligible to re-apply for the following academic year following the guidelines in Section 4.

8. MEMBERSHIP

- 8.1. General membership in a Program Society shall be restricted to students who are part of the affiliated program(s) and who are general members under any Faculty Society;
- 8.2. Executives on a Program Society with signing authority shall be restricted to students who are part of the affiliated program(s) and who are general members under any Faculty Society that funds the Program Society;
- 8.3. Executive roles without signing authority may be filled by students who are part of the affiliated program(s).

9. ELECTIONS AND HIRING

- 9.1. The President(s) of a Program Society must be elected through an internal or program-wide election. This position may be made available to all general members of a given Program Society or be restricted to previous executives, depending on their constitution;
- 9.2. A vote of non-confidence must be held for any presidential election that occurs where the candidates are unopposed. The candidate(s) must receive a majority vote to be officially elected to their position.
- 9.3. If a constitution dictates an internal election for the President position(s) and no internal executives run or if they receive a majority vote of non-confidence as per 9.2, nominations must be opened up to all general members of a Program Society. Polling will occur through a program-wide election.
- 9.4. Other positions on a Program Society executive may be elected or hired at the discretion of their constitution, however, these positions must be made available to any general member of a given Program Society with the exception of year-specific positions which must be made available to any general member of a given Program Society in the year relevant to the position;
- 9.5. For any positions requiring an election:
 - 9.5.1. Five (5) percent of eligible voters constitutes quorum for the election,
 - 9.5.2. Failure to meet quorum will result in a by-election as per a Program Society's constitution,
 - 9.5.3. Polling must be made available to all general members of a Program Society with the exception of year-specific positions which must have polling available to all general members in the year relevant to the position,

- 9.5.4. Positions with candidates that are running unopposed must face a vote of non-confidence and a majority vote of non-confidence must result in a by-election,
- 9.5.5. No candidate can run for more than one position in any given election period on a given Program Society,
- 9.5.6. Results of the election must be sent to the VP Internal of the MSS no later than two (2) business days following the election;
- 9.6. For any positions being hired:
 - 9.6.1. Applications must be open and accessible to any general member of a given Program Society,
 - 9.6.2. Applications must be made publicly available through the Program Society's primary social media stream(s),
 - 9.6.3. The application must be open and advertised for a minimum of one (1) week,
 - 9.6.4. Persons serving in elected positions may not take on the role of any hired position for the duration of their term,
 - 9.6.5. All hiring must be conducted in a fair and equitable manner;
- 9.7. The new executive team must be announced through the Program Society's primary social media stream(s) once all hiring has completed;
- 9.8. All elections for the new President(s) must conclude by April 1st, and all hiring for the new executive must conclude by September 30th;
- 9.9. If a position is to become vacant prior to January 14th of the current academic year, then a by-election or re-hiring must occur within 30 days of the vacancy. After January 14th of the current academic year, the position may remain vacant until the new executive is hired/elected. Responsibilities of the position may be distributed among the remaining executives until the vacancy is filled.

10. CONSTITUTION

- 10.1. The constitution is a binding document with the purpose of maintaining accountability for a Program Society. Each Program Society must draft and uphold their own constitution;
- 10.2. The constitution must consist of the following sections:
 - 10.2.1. A proposed name,
 - 10.2.2. A statement of purpose,

- 10.2.3. Membership definitions, privileges, duties, and restrictions,
- 10.2.4. A description of the function and parameters surrounding General Meetings,
- 10.2.5. A list of Executive members and accompanying duties and responsibilities including, but not limited to, those of the President(s), VP Internal, VP Finance, VP Communications, and VP Academic;
- 10.2.6. Election procedures including the start and termination dates for elected and hired positions and processes for nomination, campaigning, voting, vacancies, and impeachment,
- 10.2.7. The process of constitutional amendments,
- 10.2.8. Financial procedures;
- 10.3. The constitution must be submitted as part of the ratification and re-ratification every year, and it will be approved with an MSS watermark;
- 10.4. The proposed constitution must receive a majority vote of the outgoing Program Society executive prior to submission for ratification or re-ratification;
- 10.5. The constitution will be made available on a given Program Society's page on the MSS website.

11. FUNDING

- 11.1. Only officially recognized MSS Program Societies shall be eligible for MSS Program Society funding;
- 11.2. Program Societies must complete the MSS Program Society Funding Application by including information regarding:
 - 11.2.1. A Program Society's current bank balance,
 - 11.2.2. A Program Society's planned and potential events,
 - 11.2.3. Other sources of income that the Program Society will receive that term, including department funding;
- 11.3. The MSS Program Society Funding Application must be provided to the Program Society one month prior to the deadline and contains instructions as to proper submission of the form;
- 11.4. Funding will be provided in the form of a cheque no later than October 1st of the current academic year. This cheque must be deposited within 6 months of receipt and it will not be reissued after this time has elapsed;

- 11.5. Program Societies are required to have a bank account either with CIBC or their Department and the signing rights must be transferred to members of the new executive prior to receiving funding;
- 11.6. Any Program Society that has its funding collected by the University is ineligible for funding by the MSS with the exception of funds pertaining to Welcome Week.
- 11.7. A Program Society may not engage in activities that are essentially commercial in nature. This is not intended to preclude the collection of charges for specific activities, programs or Events, or to prohibit Program Societies from engaging in legitimate fundraising. However, a Program Society cannot:
 - 11.7.1. Have as a major activity or function that makes it an on-campus part of a commercial organization;
 - 11.7.2. Provide services and goods at a profit when that profit is used for purposes other than those of the organization;
 - 11.7.3. Be financially compensated, including but not limited to gifts, honorariums, salaries to any or all of its officers.

12. EVENT PLANNING AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- 12.1. Program Societies can be held responsible for incidents, damages or harm done during or after the event. Organizers of events or activities have a duty to care for others where the potential risk is foreseeable;
- 12.2. Failure to meet the responsibilities as set out in the Program Society Policy or follow any applicable laws, statues, regulations, or policies may result in the cancellation of the event or activity and removal of Program Society status;
- 12.3. Organizers must ensure their events and activities are planned and executed in a manner that is safe, inclusive, and accessible manner including:
 - 12.3.1. Dealing appropriately and safely with any problems that might arise leading up to, during, and following the event,
 - 12.3.2. Attending the event,
 - 12.3.3. Ensuring there is at least one (1) non-drinking monitor for every ten (10) participants to a licensed facility,
 - 12.3.4. Ensuring the facilities that the event is held in are returned to their original condition;
- 12.4. Organizers must ensure their events receive an approved Environmental and

Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS) application prior to the event;

12.5. The MSS is not liable for unsanctioned or illegal events held by Program Societies.

13. DISCLAIMERS

13.1. Under the terms of this Policy, the MSS will not attempt to censor, control or interfere with any Program Society on the basis of its philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions expressed unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal or which infringe the rights and freedoms of others. By the same token, recognition as a student group by the MSS implies neither endorsement of a particular group's beliefs or philosophy, nor the assumption of legal liability for the student group's activities;

13.2. The successful implementation and use of the Program Society Policy requires consultation and communication between the McMaster Science Society and all Program Societies. All Program Societies shall be consulted and communicated with regarding the implementation, use, and future amendments to the Program Society Policy in good faith in order to ensure the policy's success.