



# BOWDOIN STUDENT GOVERNMENT

## STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

### Student Organizations Oversight Committee Guidelines

The Student Organizations Oversight Committee (SOOC) serves as the Bowdoin Student Government (BSG) governing body on club recognition and manages the chartering process. The SOOC will use this document as guidance on what we see as essential for an organization or proposed organization to be considered for recognition as a chartered student organization, and what should disqualify a club or proposal from being recognized. Please remember that these are just guidelines, not fixed rules. The SOOC withholds the right to make chartering decisions at their discretion. Please contact the Chair of Student Organizations, Sonia Shah ([sshah@bowdoin.edu](mailto:sshah@bowdoin.edu)), if you have any questions.

#### **1) College and BSG Policy**

All clubs and organizations on the Bowdoin College campus, chartered by the SOOC or nonexistent otherwise, will submit to the SOOC their amended club contracts. These contracts will adhere to the following requirements:

- Be fully inclusive and open to all students. They must admit all students regardless of race, religion, age, ethnic or national origin, gender, physical ability, or sexual orientation. They *may not* be exclusive in nature in any way, shape, or form. *This policy is all encompassing and will be enforced by the BSG and the SOOC Chair without apology. Any reason for concern will result in a meeting with the Chair of the SOOC to resolve the issue in conjunction with the Assembly and action the College administration deems necessary and appropriate.*
- Abide by the Bowdoin Social and Academic Honor Code.
- The entirety of the Student Handbook as put down by Bowdoin College. This handbook will remain as the parameters and framework of each and every club contract. The Student Handbook may be found at the following link: <http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/student-handbook/>
- The By-Laws of the BSG (<http://students.bowdoin.edu/bsg/about/>) will remain as further parameters of each and every club contract.
- The formatting of each club's contract will remain in alignment with the Rules and Regulations of the SOOC.
- No group, if part of a greater local, regional, national, or international organization, will allow said group's guidelines to supersede College and BSG policy.

## **2) General Policies**

- Meetings may not take place by a club that has not been chartered, that has a suspended charter, or that has been stripped of its charter.
- Informal meetings may be held by non-chartered clubs to gauge interest. They may not program.
- Clubs and organizations cannot sign any contracts on behalf of the College

Active clubs and organizations must:

- Offer an opportunity to hear diverse viewpoints and enhance the cocurricular life of the college
- Benefit the Bowdoin student body and enhance student life on campus. Events and activities should not primarily occur away from campus or exclusively benefit off campus groups.
- Adhere to the following advertising rules:
  - a. Official Bowdoin logos and wordmarks (i.e. the Bowdoin seal) may not be placed on any advertisements without the express permission of the Communications Office.
  - b. Club posters and advertisements must have the full name of your organization easily visible.
  - c. Online conduct by all organizations through social media must still abide by the College's Social and Academic Honor Code.

## **3) Managing Your Club**

Active student organizations must:

- Be run by currently enrolled Bowdoin Students
- Hold events that benefit and are inclusive to all club members
- Not hold events that cause students to skip classes or other academic-related events. Clubs must always support an "academics first" mentality.
- Not be dependent on a national organization for campus activities, guidance, or support. Clubs may be chartered as a chapter of a national organization if it allows for access to resources not otherwise found at Bowdoin.
- Not place the bulk of the work and leadership responsibilities to an advisor. Advisors support student leadership and can provide a historical perspective.
- Submit re-charter forms every year. By this time, new leadership should have been elected. Because the re-charter form includes vital details necessary for the re-chartering process, including the names of the new leadership, negligence of this deadline will result in the suspension of a club's charter for one semester. If a club is on its probation period, it will not be given a full charter.
- Meetings should be held at least once during the following months: September, October, November, February, March, and April. Inability to accomplish this will result in a serious consideration of not re-chartering a club.
- No events, meetings, or programming of any kind by SOOC-chartered clubs may take place after the first two days of Reading Period.

## **4) Club Contracts**

All Club Contracts will contain the following articles, excepting Article (A), followed by articles that may be amended by the club.

## **A) Club Charters**

- To be chartered, each club will go through the SOOC Charter Process. This includes filling out the online forms and meeting with the SOOC. If chartered, a club will spend a semester on a probation period. This will serve to gauge interest in a club and its community impact. At the semester end re-chartering Process, successful clubs will receive a full Charter.

## **B) Leadership**

- All clubs will vote exactly two members to top leadership positions. These position names may be supplemented by the club, and may be Co-Presidential, Presidential-Vice Presidential, or any other combination or terminology that the club thinks appropriate. These positions MAY NOT be liaison positions to the BSG. This will serve to establish quick, effective, and direct communication between club leaders, the BSG, and the College.
- If applicable: ALL leadership, current and newly voted for the next year, will be present at SAFC operating budget meetings at the end of the academic year.
- All clubs must have at least two leaders attend the mandatory club leadership training prior to holding any club events or activities as well as any other mandatory Student Activities-BSG-run Leadership Development Series. If the SOOC strongly believes a certain club should be in attendance, the SOOC reserves the right to include a mandatory attendance article for the leadership in a club's contract.
- All club leaders will be required to attend an annual hazing workshop at the start of the year, hosted by Athletics or Student Activities.
- Leadership must be updated as appropriate on Blink. This includes any electoral changes or changes in leadership due to a student's abroad status.
- The SOOC reserves the right to remove individuals from leadership positions, call for elections within a club, and establish a new leadership in the case of violations of the SOOC Rules and Regulations. Club members may petition the SOOC to commence an inquiry to evaluate the effectiveness of the current leadership.

## **C) Membership**

- If a club has not attained sufficient membership, is experiencing funding difficulties, etc., the SOOC reserves the right to examine the benefits of re-chartering a club. This may be due, among a variety of reasons, to the following:
  - i. A club with low student interest and high cost-per-student, may not be chartered or re-chartered if the SOOC believes they will be unable to provide a club the support it needs without sacrificing support of other clubs.
  - ii. The existence of another club that has greater membership and fulfills the same or a similar mission statement as the club in question.
  - iii. Lack of interest in a club from the student body.
- Because "sufficient membership" and "funding difficulties" are subjective, clubs are assured that the BSG and SOOC understand that each club is different. Majority vote from the SOOC and the opinion of the SAFC Chair will be taken into account when making final decisions.

#### **D) Mission Statement**

- Each club is required to have a mission statements that includes what the club is and some goals that it hopes to achieve. It must highlight how each club on campus is unique and diverse from others.
- The mission statement reflects the purpose of the club and therefore will be used to help the SAFC make funding decisions in that items that do not help the club's mission will only be funded at the SAFC's discretion.
- Mission statements may be revised through a meeting with the SOOC.
- Mission Statements must:
  - i. Be distinct and unique from all other clubs on campus.
  - ii. Ensure that the club will have continuity from year to year. Clubs should not have a potential end in their mission statement.
  - iii. Not include any events that the club will hold that could possibly lead to a liability for the college. Any mission statement that includes events that could potentially be dangerous to students will not be approved.

#### **5) Rules for Maintaining Club Charter**

Active student organizations must have:

- At least ten active members
- A staff or faculty advisor that is actively involved in the affairs of their organization. The advisor should not control or make decisions for the club but rather help organizations make informed decisions. Groups are free to change advisors as needed.
- Two club leaders who are on campus in order to ensure proper leadership and continuity for the club
- Logistical requests that are within the ability of the campus to support your needs. This includes the ability to reserve practice space, storage space, etc.

#### **6) Club Sports**

Club Sports must:

- Establish the season or seasons that they will be active in with the SOOC. Club sports that are chartered for only one season may only have club events, practices, and competitions within that season.
- Not consist of individual events or competitions and must be team based. Club sports must be competing for Bowdoin College.

#### **7) Other Chartering Sources**

- Proposed organizations must look at what other departments they could be chartered through before approaching the SOOC. Generally, if the mission statement falls within an obvious college department or creates a duplicate event that is already sponsored by a department, the club should work within that department to sponsor these events.
- If your proposed organization falls under one of these categories, please look into academic departments that you could be chartered though or sponsor events through instead:

- i. Is only open to students within an academic department.
  - ii. Consists of members whose make up falls solely within the same major.
  - iii. Pre-professional and academic groups
- If your proposed organization falls under one of these categories, please look into working with the McKeen center to pursue your mission instead:
  - i. Has a mission that has a primary focus on fundraising.
  - ii. Has volunteer or community service as the focal mission of the club.

### **8) Role of the SOOC**

- The six voting members of the SOOC are the four Class Council Vice Presidents and the two At-Large representatives. The Chair of Student Organizations only votes as a tiebreak.
- If an SOOC member is attempting to charter an organization, they must abstain from votes pertaining to said club. They may participate in deliberation but must make their role known to the SOOC.
- The SOOC, in collaboration with the Office of Student Activities and Chair of the Treasury, works to grant and deny proposed charters as well as review existing charters.
- The SOOC will assist clubs throughout the year in event planning and advertisement as well as advocating on behalf of club leaders in dealing with the administration and larger policy changes.

### **9) Revoking a charter**

The SOOC holds the right to revoke the charter of any organization on campus. A charter can be revoked through a vote of the SOOC. Chartering of a club may be revoked for the following reasons:

- Failure to comply with the guidelines and policies mentioned above
- Failure to comply with the SAFC guidelines and policies and misuse of funds received from the SAFC
- Failure to comply with Bowdoin College's policies and procedures
- Acting outside of a club's mission statement
- Holding events or fundraisers that have not been approved by the Student Activities Office

The organization's club leaders will receive a notification from the SOOC of the revocation of the organization and shall be given the chance to defend their case.