

Principles for Recognition

Student Organisations

4 May 2015

Foreword

Dear Fellow Students,

One of the primary responsibilities of the Student Government is to recognise Student Organisations. A recognised student organisation of Yale-NUS is responsible for upholding the values and embodying the spirit of the College, because it represents the College in every activity. This is an important responsibility, and we have sought to give it due consideration.

Over the course of eleven meetings and thirty hours, the Committee has crafted five principles by which it will recognise all future Yale-NUS student organisations. These principles were crafted with input from leaders of existing student organisations and advice from the Dean of Students' office on fundamental College values and institutional rules and restrictions.

We have attempted to rationalise existing constitutions by these principles, to promote consistency and in view of representing and defending student concerns. **This project was undertaken with the consciousness that all prospective and future students will take our current student organisations as role-models.** However, this project has also been tempered with the understanding that much of what makes Yale-NUS college a vibrant community is its diversity, variance in views, flexibility and allowance for student initiatives. The Committee has sought to make the principles fair, consistent, broadly applicable, and non-restrictive.

We appreciate feedback on the principles and/or mechanisms employed to date. We also warmly welcome volunteers to serve on the second iteration of this committee, whose work will commence in August 2015.

With regards,
The Student Organisations Committee

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1 Constitutional Responsibility

The Student Government is constitutionally mandated to recognise student organisations. This is found under Article III (‘Responsibilities, Powers and Duties of the Student Government’), Section Two (‘Powers’), Clause B. The Student Government is tasked to: “Formally recognise student organisations, but have no control over the budgeting or funding of student organisations.” The Student Government has appointed a Student Organisations Committee to recommend student organisations to be recognised by the Government.

2 Student Organisations Committee

The Student Government has tasked a Committee to craft principles for recognition of student organisations. The first iteration of this committee, serving for Spring 2015, is composed of seven Student Government members: Ami Firdaus ‘17, Feroz Khan ‘18, Jared Theodore Yeo ‘17, Jay Brinton Lusk ‘18, Nur Qistina ‘17, Seow Yongzhi ‘18, and Zach Mahon ‘17. To date, the Committee met for over 30 hours (non-inclusive of meetings with organisation leaders), reviewed 35 Constitutions, and approved 30 organisations.

For Fall 2015, the Student Government intends to nominate students to serve alongside partners from the Dean of Students’ Office (DOS). The recognition process will be a collaboration between the Student Government, nominated representatives of the student body, and DOS.

3 Recognition Mechanism

The Committee has crafted principles for recognition, as well as a tiered system of feedback. Where principles are violated, the student organisation is red-flagged, and must amend their Constitution or provide justification for retaining the red-flagged clauses. Decisions by the Committee can be overturned by a vote in the Student Government.

The tiered system of feedback is as follows :

- Red-flag : for the organisation to amend the Clause, or provide justification
- Recommendation : for the organisation to strongly consider amendment
- Suggestion : for the organisation to consider amendment

4 Reviewing Organisations

The Student Government understands that there are student organisations which existed prior to the Government, and have been in existence since the *Start Fresh!* drive by the Dean of Students’ Office to create student organisations. It does **not** seek to dissolve or de-recognise any existing organisation. However, the Student Government aims to promote consistency across organisations’ constitutions on fundamental principles, without consequently stultifying the laudable diversity and initiative within each organisation.

5 Principles for Recognition

The following principles have been adhered to and made consistent across all student organisations' constitutions.

- + **Leadership Renewal.** All organisations must have a clause specifying their leadership renewal mechanism. This can range from arbitrary appointment to democratic election.
- + **Mission Statement.** All organisations must have a clear mission statement delineating the organisation's role and purpose within the Yale-NUS and/or broader community.
- + **Non-discrimination.** Access to membership and leadership cannot be limited on categorical grounds other than merit. These will include: race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability.
- + **Openness.** All organisations recognised by Yale-NUS should be accessible to Yale-NUS students on 'first cut'. There can be no barrier to membership, such a selection process or membership fee. Membership may be suspended or terminated following non-compliance with organisational rules (eg attendance requirements).
 - + **Athletic Teams**¹. Tryouts must be fully accessible. Teams may select based on merit following tryouts (if any).
 - + **Performing Groups.** Auditions must be fully accessible. Groups may select based on merit following tryouts (if any).
 - + **Interest and Cultural Societies.** Membership must be fully open.
- + **Treasurer.** All organisations must have a designated treasurer to handle fiduciary tasks, including collecting record of payments, creating invoices, submitting budget proposals and statements, and liaising with the Dean of Students' office.

¹ At present time, recognition of Athletics teams and groups do **not** fall under the mandate of the Committee.

6 Communication and Feedback

Two Points-of-Contact (POCs) were assigned to each student organisation. The POCs met with organisation leaders, shared the principles of recognition, and obtained feedback items which were highlighted at Committee and Government meetings.

Since the first iteration of the Student Organisations Committee was comprised entirely of Student Government members, feedback on the Committee was also submitted directly as feedback to the Government.

Conclusion

The Student Organisations Committee is happy to clarify any concerns and address feedback that you may have. Please feel free to contact us through any of the communication channels described above. We hope to serve you well.

Yours Sincerely,

The Student Organisations Committee of Yale-NUS College

ANNEX A – RECOGNISED ORGANISATIONS

The following student organisations have been recognised by the Student Government (correct as of 30 April 2015.)

1. Ashen Light
2. CAMPOS
3. Debate Society
4. European Society
5. Fashion Society
6. Film Appreciation Society
7. Global China Connection
8. Gourmet Club
9. GOYAC
10. Health Society
11. Hispanic Students' Association
12. i'dECO
13. Improv Comedy Conglomerate
14. Japan Society
15. Kids Accomplish!
16. Lit Collective
17. Photography Society
18. RC³
19. Singers' Guild
20. Strategic Games Club
21. sYNCd
22. The Fifth Wall
23. The G-Spot
24. The Octant
25. Toastmasters
26. Visual Art Society
27. Y.A.L.E. Association
28. Yale-NUS Filmmakers
29. YAPAC
30. YNC_Hacks

ANNEX B – SAMPLE CONSTITUTION

ANNEX C – REPRESENTATIVES

Ami Firdaus (Cendana '17) is Cendana College Representative. Besides serving in the Student Government, Ami is the current Tchoukball co-captain in Yale-NUS and is also part of the college's Floorball, Frisbee and external Field Hockey teams. He is also periodically involved with other college groups such as sYNCD (Society of Yale-NUS College Dancers). Ami currently hopes to major in Anthropology and minor in Urban Studies or Global Affairs, and his academic interests lie in many areas but are mainly found in areas such as Linguistic Anthropology and Geopolitical History. In his spare time, Ami writes about his experiences, goes on adventures with GOYAC (Good Ol' Yale-NUS Adventure Club), and sleeps.

email: ami.firdaus@yale-nus.edu.sg

committees/roles: Community Living | Student Organisations | Identity

Feroz Khan (Saga '18) is currently serving as Student Representative-at-Large in the inaugural Yale-NUS Student Government. He is also the Captain of the Floorball Team and an active member of RC³, where he is the unofficial bartender. Academically, he is passionate about policymaking in Singapore and the intersections between law enforcement and race. When he is not being a busy college student, he likes to kick back by playing an (allegedly) unhealthy amount of video games. He also enjoys exploring Singapore's dodgy IT malls and retail stores, so hit him up if your phone screen is cracked and you want to walk on the sketchy side.

email: feroz.khan@yale-nus.edu.sg

committees/roles: Internal Affairs | Student Organisations | Identity | Communications | DDP | Budget Oversight

Jared Theodore Yeo (Elm '17) is Student Representative-at-Large, and serves on the Academics, Student Organisations, and Identity committees of the Government. Outside of government, Jared serves as the inaugural Vice-President of Political Affairs in the Yale-NUS International Relations & Political Association (YIRPA) and was the Secretary-General of YIRPA's Yale-NUS Model ASEAN in August 2014. He also serves as the Vice-Chairperson of the Yale-NUS Gourmet Club, organised the first two Yale-NUS Freshmen Orientations and was previously elected to serve on the Elected Student Committee. He is majoring in Global Affairs and minoring in Environmental Studies. In his free time, he loves catching up on the latest sitcoms and finding the best foods.

email: jared.yeo@u.yale-nus.edu.sg

committees/roles: Academics | Student Organisations | Identity | DDP | Administrative Liaison

Jay Lusk (Elm '18) is Student Representative-at-Large. He serves as an Administrative Liaison and on the Academics, Student Organisations, and Internal Affairs committees. Jay plans to major in Life Sciences and hopes to attend medical school after graduation. Jay does developmental biology research in *Drosophila* fruit flies, is the Senior Training director in the Yale-NUS Debate Society, an Executive in Training in Yale-NUS International Relations & Political Association, and the lead singer for *The Overtime Project*, Yale-NUS's Barbershop Quartet. Outside of these activities Jay loves to eat delicious food and engage in banter with the employees of the Shiok Shack, Yale-NUS's buttery.

email: jay.lusk@u.yale-nus.edu.sg

committees/roles: Academics | Student Organisations | Internal Affairs | Administrative Liaison

Nur Qistina Binte Abdul Wahid (Cendana '17) serves as the Student Government Secretary and in the Events and Student Organisations committees. Outside of student government, Qistina dances with the Society of Yale-NUS College Dancers (sYNCD) and is a founding member of oneheART- a community arts outreach student organisation. She is interested in majoring in Mathematical, Computational, and Statistical Sciences with a minor in the Arts and Humanities. Previously, Qistina was elected as the President of her secondary school's English Language and Literary Society (Drama). She aspires to someday professionally perform in a musical or open a successful cafe. More practically, she hopes to apply her degree in mathematics to develop more engaging mathematical pedagogies in Singaporean schools.

email: nurqistina.abdulwahid@u.yale-nus.edu.sg

committees/roles: Student Organisations | Events | Secretary

Seow Yongzhi (Saga '18) is Representative for the Class of 2018. Outside of student government, Yongzhi is Captain of the Contract Bridge team and Director (Training) for the Yale-NUS International Relations and Political Association. He is interested in majoring in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics (PPE), but also deeply appreciates East Asian literatures (read: Japanese manga and Korean drama). In his spare time, Yongzhi plays the cello, floorball, and YouTube videos of Margaret Thatcher.

email: yongzhi@u.yale-nus.edu.sg

committees/roles: Community Living | Student Organisations | Budget Oversight

Zach Mahon (Elm '17) is Student Representative-at-Large. In addition to Student Government activities he is extremely involved with college life. He works for the Office of the President, is a student advisor to CIPE, serves on the dining hall committee, and is a member of the athletics council as a co-captain of the Men's Basketball team. He is majoring in Environmental Studies and plans on minoring in Global Affairs. He is also working on becoming fluent in Mandarin. When he's not busy with all of this his favourite thing to do is spend time with good friends, usually over delicious food!

email: zachary.mahon@yale-nus.edu.sg

committees/roles: Community Living | Student Organisations | Identity | Administrative Liaison