Course Union Policy
Amended December 14, 2015
COURSE UNION POLICY
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PART A:  PREAMBLE

Course Unions are designed to enhance the academic experience of Student Society members within their faculty of study. Course Unions are intended to foster a positive educational environment beyond the classroom and to integrate those activities into the diverse university community.

PART B:  STRUCTURE

1.  RECOGNITION

To be ratified as a Course Union of the UVSS the following must be met:
   a.  Have a constitution, duly approved by Course Unions Council and ratified by the Board of Directors that must be in compliance with this Course Unions policy.
   b.  Must complete a "Course Union Status Verification Form" for each semester of activity.
   c.  A course union shall not be granted status until a course union representative has attended a meeting of the Course Union Council for the semester that they are seeking status.

2.  EXCLUSIONS

   a.  Professional Development Unions (PDUs) are excluded from this policy and are governed as under the Constitution and Bylaws of the UVSS and the respective PDU.
   b.  Faculties that have PDUs as recognized within the UVSS Bylaws are prohibited from forming Course Unions.

3.  STATUS

   a.  A Course Union that has submitted a "Course Union Status Verification Form" in the current semester will be considered active.
   b.  A Course Union that has not submitted a "Course Union Status Verification Form" in the current semester will be considered inactive.
   c.  A Course Union which is considered 'inactive' for two consecutive years is subject to abandonment under Part D, section 5.

4.  MEMBERSHIP

Any student registered in a course of any department shall constitute eligibility for membership in the appropriate Course Union.

5.  GOVERNANCE

Each Course Union must meet the following governance requirements:
   a.  Each Course Union shall have an executive of not less than three members.
   b.  The executive of each Course Union shall be elected by the membership of the Course Union as per the constitution of said Course Union. No members of a Course Union shall be denied the right to vote in the election of the executive of the Course Union.
   c.  Holds regular meetings at least once a month.
d. Holds at least one General Meeting that is advertised and open to all its members.

6. CONSTITUENCY GROUP CAUCUSES

Where not less than five percent and at least two of the active members of an individual course union belong to, or identify as a group which faces systemic discrimination (women, queer people, people of colour, First Nations people, and people with disabilities) and has the purpose of ameliorating that condition of discrimination, and where they wish to form constituency group caucuses, they shall be entitled to do so. This list is not limited to the above groups. Any groups not specifically mentioned above must have the approval of course union council. Constituency group caucuses shall be entitled to:
   a. Use the name of their course union along with their constituency name (eg. The Creative Writing Students' Guild Women's Caucus or Queer People of the Creative Writing Students' Guild).
   b. Meet as a caucus, exclusive of the other members of the organisation.
   c. Produce reports on issues important to their constituency act in any manner which does not contravene the Society’s Constitution, Bylaws and Policy.
   d. Fair access to funding and resources of the course union
   e. Appeal to the appropriate level should they feel that they are not being treated fairly.

PART C: FUNDING

1. ELIGIBILITY

   a. To be eligible to receive funding grants from the UVSS a Course Union must fill out a budget request form obtained from the Director of Student Affairs.
   b. No Course Union shall receive funding if:
      i. It has not met the requirements of Recognition under Part B, section 2.
      ii. It has not met the requirements of Governance under Part B, section 5.
   c. A representative of the Course Union seeking funding must be present at the Course Union Council meeting at which their budget is discussed.
   d. There will be no funding allocated from the Travel Pool, Academic, or Publication funds in the first scheduled meeting of every semester (September, January, and May).
   e. Clubs and Course Unions can retroactively apply for funding for Travel Pool, Academic, or Publication funds for expenses incurred within the same semester.

2. FORMULA

   a. The annual committed allocation for Course Unions shall be divided as follows:
      i. 20% for the summer term
      ii. 40% for the winter term
      iii. 40% for the spring term
   b. The Society shall withhold at least 5% of each terms committed allocation in a contingency fund for new or reactivated Course Unions funding mid-term.
c. 25% of funding from each semester will be held in trust for travel pool as per Part C Section 5.

d. The Society shall withhold 2% of each terms committed allocation for the purposes of Janitorial, Utilities and Maintenance (JUM) in exchange for Course Unions being granted free room bookings in the Student Union Building.

e. All remaining funds will be evenly distributed among all requesting Course Unions.

f. Each Semester the Director of Student Affairs will produce and present a spreadsheet of the funding dispersal to Course Union Council and the UVSS Board of Directors.

3. DEBT

a. No Course Union shall incur debt, negative balances or loans against budget and or trust accounts without the express written approval of Course Unions Council and the UVSS Board of Directors.

b. In the event that a Course Union incurs a debt, negative balance or loan against their budget account, the balance will be recovered from their trust account until it is paid in full.

c. In the event that a Course Union incurs a debt, negative balance or loan against their trust account, they will receive 50% of their total determined budget allocation while the remainder is withheld to pay the incurred debt until it is paid in full.

4. FUNDRAISING

a. Course Unions are encouraged to raise additional funds beyond their budget allocation. As stated in Part D, section 2 those funds will be deposited into the Course Unions trust account and are at the Course Unions disposal subject to Part D, section 2.

5. TRAVEL POOL

a. Application

i. Any UVSS member in good standing may apply to Course Union Council for travel pool funding for academic conferences or other events which are academic in nature and are relevant to their area of study by submitting a completed travel pool form to the Director of Student Affairs.

ii. The application shall include:

   ▪ Date and duration of conference or event
   ▪ Purpose of conference or event and statement of how the student(s) will benefit
   ▪ Detail of costs involved (travel, registration, accommodation)
   ▪ List of fundraising activities or money acquired from other sources (i.e. Department, Course Union, Community Group(s), etc.)
   ▪ Declaration of intention to report back to the respective course union and Director of Academics about the conference
   ▪ Amount requested from UVSS Travel Pool
b. Conference or Event Eligibility

i. The conference or event must be academic based and related to the member’s current area of academic study.

ii. Any conference or event hosted by a religious group or political party is not eligible for travel pool funding.

c. Use of Travel Pool Funds

i. Travel pool funding may only be used for the following activities:
   - Travel costs
   - Registration
   - Accommodation


d. Allocation of Travel Pool Funds

i. All decisions regarding allocations from the travel pool shall be made by Course Union Council and approved by the University of Victoria Students’ Society’s Board of Directors if the amount requested exceeds the limit outlined in policy.

ii. Course Unions are not permitted to vote on allocations for their own course union members.

iii. Travel pool will, unless otherwise decided at Course Union Council by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, allocate no more than $100 to individuals.

iv. Travel pool will, unless otherwise decided at Course Union Council by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, allocate no more than $300 to groups of three (3) or more.

v. Allocations exceeding those listed in iii. and iv. should take into consideration factors such as:
   - Exceptionally expensive travel, accommodation and delegate fees
   - Financial need of the delegation
   - Size of the delegation travelling
   - Presentations, if any, given by delegates
   - Demonstration of extraordinary efforts in fundraising, etc.

vi. Requests for allocations exceeding those listed in iii. and iv. must attend the course union council meeting where the application is discussed.

vii. Requesting delegations may be asked to leave the meeting while their funding allocation is discussed.

viii. Delegations of 8 or more applicants will not be granted more than $100 per person, unless otherwise decided at Course Union Council by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

e. Post-Conference Requirements

i. Upon return, travel pool recipients must submit the following:
   - All associated receipts
   - Any unused funds
6. **ACADEMIC FUND**

a. **Application**

i. Any Course Union or PDU in good standing may apply to Course Union Council for the Academic Fund by submitting a completed academic fund application form to the Director of Student Affairs.

ii. The application shall include:
   - Date and duration of on-campus event
   - Purpose of academic event and statement of how students will benefit
   - A budget detailing of costs involved (speaker, honourarium, etc)
   - List of fundraising activities or money acquired from other sources (i.e. Department, Course Union, Community Group(s), bake sales, etc.)
   - Declaration of intention to report back to Course Union Council and Director of Student Affairs about the event
   - Amount requested from UVSS Academic Fund

b. **Funding Eligibility**

i. The event must be academic based and related to the Course Unions’ area of academic study.

ii. Any event hosted by a religious group or political party is not eligible to access the Academic Fund.

iii. The event must be held on campus or within the Victoria area.

iv. The Course Union must show evidence of attempts to raise funds before an application is to be considered.

v. Approved funding will be allocated to the respective course union/PDU's budget account, where it can be accessed via cheque requisition.

c. **Allocations of Academic Fund**

i. All decisions regarding allocations from the Academic Fund over $2,000 requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of Course Union Council.

ii. No more than $2,000 shall be allocated to each individual Course Union or project/event/campaign per academic year, unless approved by the UVSS Board of Directors.

iii. Approval for any amount over $2,000 shall require a recommendation from Course Union Council that goes to a vote of the UVSS Board of Directors. If the allocation is approved, a record of the Board’s approval (approved or draft minutes) must be submitted to the UVSS Accounting Department.

iv. Course unions are not permitted to vote on allocations for their own course union.

d. **Post-Event Requirements**

i. Upon return, applicable recipients must submit the following:
   - All associated receipts
   - Any unused funds
A presentation to Course Union Council regarding the benefits the event had for students.

7. PUBLICATION FUND

a. Application

i. Any Course Union or Professional Development Union in good standing may apply to Course Union Council for the Publication Fund by submitting a completed Publication fund application form to the Director of Student Affairs.

ii. The application shall include:
   • Description of publication
   • Purpose and statement of how applicant and/or students will benefit
   • A budget detailing costs involved
   • List of fundraising activities or money acquired from other sources (i.e. Department, Course Union, Community Group(s), bake sales, etc.)
   • Amount requested from Course Union Control Account

b. Funding Eligibility

i. The publication must be related to an academic study

ii. Any publication exhibiting partisanship or religiosity is not eligible to access the Publication Fund.

iii. The Course Union must show evidence of attempts to raise funds before an application is to be considered.

iv. Approved funding will be allocated to the respective course union/PDU’s budget account, where it can be accessed via cheque requisition.

c. Allocations of Publication Fund

i. Allocations for funding will be granted from the Course Union Control Account.

ii. All decisions regarding allocations from the Publication Fund shall be made by Course Union Council and approved by the University of Victoria Students’ Society’s Board of Directors if the amount requested exceeds the limit outlined in policy.

iii. Course Unions are not permitted to vote on allocations for their own course union.

iv. Publication Fund will, unless otherwise decided at Course Union Council by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, allocate no more than $500.00 to Course Unions and Professional Development Unions (PDUs)

vi. Approved funding will be accessed via cheque requisition.
d. **Post-Publication Requirements**
   
i. Upon publication, recipients must submit the following:
   - All associated receipts
   - Any unused funds
   - A copy of the completed publication to the Director of Student Affairs.

8. **SPENDING**

   a. Each Course Union must submit a budget request form with all expenses for the upcoming semester, which must be approved by the Director of Student Affairs. If a Course Union is planning an event not listed on its budget request form, they need to seek prior approval from the Director of Student Affairs. Course Unions are financially liable for unauthorized expenditures, but may with approval from the Director of Student Affairs make unbudgeted expenditures.

   b. The UVSS does not pay for any activities that result in the personal benefit of individual members, but rather activities that benefit the majority of members of a Course Union.

   c. The UVSS does not pay for the purchase of alcohol.

**PART D: ACCOUNTING**

1. **BUDGET ACCOUNTS**

   a. A budget account contains funds that are granted to the Course Union by the Course Union Council and the UVSS.

   b. Course Unions are authorised to spend their budget allocations only as itemised and approved by Course Union Council and are financially liable for unauthorised expenditures but may with approval from the Director of Student Affairs make unbudgeted expenditures.

   c. No funds shall be expended from a Course Unions budget account without the written authorisation of the Director of Student Affairs.

   d. The UVSS does not pay for accommodation expenses incurred by individuals or groups belonging to a UVSS Course Union during the course of any of their activities.

   e. The UVSS does not pay for the purchase of alcohol.

   f. The UVSS does not pay for any activities that result in the personal benefit of individual members, but rather activities that benefit the majority of members of a Course Union.

   g. At the end of each fiscal year, all unspent funds in the Course Unions budget accounts shall be returned to the Course Unions control account.

2. **TRUST ACCOUNTS**

   a. A trust account contains self-generated revenue of a Course Union held in trust by the society and no other organisation or financial institution may hold these funds.

   b. No funds shall be expended from a Course Unions trust account without the written authorisation of the Director of Student Affairs.
c. The UVSS does not pay for the purchase of alcohol. Subsidisation may be available for hosting events for the benefit of all UVSS Course Union members.

d. Trust accounts may not be used to pay for any activities that result in the personal benefit of individual members, but rather activities that benefit the majority of members of a Course Union.

e. Course Unions may otherwise spend any monies in their trust accounts as they see fit, provided such expenditures are not for a purpose repugnant to the Course Unions constitution, this policy, or the objectives and constitution of the UVSS.

3. CONTROL ACCOUNT

a. The control account is where Course Unions budgets are funded from and where unspent or unbudgeted funds are deposited; and

b. Course Unions Council may authorise expenditures from the Course Unions control account for items of general interest and benefit to all Course Unions, but any such expenditure shall require the final approval of the UVSS Board of Directors.

c. Each year, if the Course Union control account has a surplus in excess of $4000, $2000 will be taken from the control account and be distributed in accordance with Part C: Funding, 2. Formula.

d. Each year, if the Course Union control account has a surplus in excess of $4000, $2000 will be taken from the control account and distributed to Travel Pool.

4. SIGNING AUTHORITY

a. Each Course Union must provide a list of no more than three, and no less than two, signing officers. All signing officers shall be executive members of the Course Union. No signing officer shall be recognised until her / his name and sample signature have been submitted to the Director of Student Affairs and the SUB General office

b. Only signing officers will be allowed to book rooms, audio / visual equipment and acquire E-mail and other electronic media Academics with the UVSS general office.

c. All Signing Authorities of a Course Union are accountable to both the Course Union membership and the UVSS for the activities of the Course Union including financial mismanagement and bad debts.

5. ABANDONMENT OF FUNDS

a. Where, in the opinion of the Director of Student Affairs, there is no evidence of any activity within the last two years by a particular Course Union, the Director of Student Affairs may declare the registration of a Course Union to be abandoned.

b. The Director of Student Affairs shall have a copy of a declaration of de-registration be posted on the Course Unions and Course Union notice board, the notice section of the official campus student newspaper and sent to the last known executive members of the Course Union.

c. After a period of 30 working days and with no response from any members of said Course Union the Course Union shall be considered no longer in existence and all assets / liabilities of the Course Union shall be transferred to the Course Unions Control account.
PART E: DISCIPLINE

1. ACTIONS

Course Unions having been found to violate Course Union policy may be disciplined in any of the following manners as determined by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at Course Union Council and approved by the UVSS Board of Directors:

a. An order in writing by the Director of Student Affairs to cease the violation and to refrain from committing the same or similar violation again.

b. Public censure.

c. Freezing of accounts, denial of funding or withdrawal of unspent funds for no more than one year.

d. Withdrawal of room or AV booking privileges for no more than one year.

e. Withdrawal of poster and bannering privileges for no more than one year.

f. Withdrawal of Course Unions Status for no more than one year.

2. REINSTATEMENT

Where status has been withdrawn, after the expiry of the period of withdrawal the disciplined Course Union may re-apply for status.