STUDENT GROUP PROTOCOL

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I: Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that funding considerations for recognized SMSS student groups, both new and returning, are met efficiently and effectively. It aims to award funding in accordance with the principles of justice, equity, and equality. The protocol will outline the requirements for applicants/groups applying for recognized SMSS Student Group status, the review process, the roles and responsibilities of the Committee, and the transparency of the process along with the confidentiality rights of applicants/groups. The protocol will identify the process for making appeals regarding the Committee's decisions.

II: Definitions

2.1. Ratified SMSS Student Group (status): Refers to a student body that meets with a goal pertaining to medicine, that has met the requirement of this protocol and has been ratified as an SMSS group for the year by the Funding and Oversight Committee.

2.2. Student group in good standing: Refers to a returning, previously/currently recognized student group that has committed to and upholds the requirements of recognized student groups and has no outstanding budgetary conflicts.

2.3. New SMSS Ratified Student Group: refers to a novel group of students who work together to accomplish their group's goals and have not been recognized as a student group in the previous application cycle.

2.4. Returning SMSS Ratified Student Group:

- Refers to a group of students who work together to accomplish their group's goals and have been recognized as a student group in the previous application cycle.

2.5. Audit: VP Finance may conduct an inspection of the group's finances at any time during the academic year to ensure budgetary compliance.

III: New Student Group Ratification and Funding

3.1. All student groups recognized by the SMSS will be first ratified by the Funding and Oversight Committee.

3.1.1. Discussion of ratification will occur only at the October meeting.

3.1.2. Any group ratified will become a recognized student group one (1) week after the October meeting is held.

3.1.3. Ratification lasts one year, starting from recognition until the week of the October meeting the following year

3.2. All ratified SMSS Student Groups will adhere to all SMSS Policies and relevant governing documents. In return, they will receive the following rights and responsibilities:

3.2.1. Right to have group events posted to the SMSS website calendar.

3.2.2. Right to request funding from the SMSS.

3.2.3. Right and responsibility to participate in the SMSS Student Group Fair and SMSS Student Group Roundtable Discussions.

3.2.4. Responsibility to uphold their own mandate, the mandate of the SMSS, and the College's mandate.

3.2.5. Responsibility to conduct group business professionally and equitably.

3.3. 3. All applying student groups must complete and submit the New Student Group Application form to the Chair of Committee (via email) by October 1st. The following are reasons for immediate application denial without the opportunity for appeal:

3.3.1. The application is late.

3.3.2. The application is incomplete.

3.3.3. The application is inaccurate or presents falsified information.

3.3.4. The application is identical to a previously reviewed application.

3.4. Executive members of Student Groups may not sit as an executive member of more than **three** student groups or hold more than two president positions. Any group found to have executives that sit on more than three groups will be asked to re-submit their application after a different executive is elected/appointed.

3.5. The Funding and Oversight Committee will consist of four members, the VP Finance, VP Internal Regina Jr., VP Internal Saskatoon Jr., and VP External Jr. Applications will be scored by individuals appointed by the Chair based on specific criteria (described in the Scoring Criteria Table below). If an application does not receive a perfect score, the scorer will provide feedback on the deductions. The Student Group Coordinator will then compile the scores and feedback to make a recommendation for ratification to the committee members (See 3.5.3)

3.5.1. New groups will be ratified by a simple majority resolution of the Committee if they receive a perfect score of 10/10 on the New Group Ratification form (based on the scoring criteria).

3.5.2. Committee members on a Student Group's executive must abstain from voting on the group's ratification and excuse themselves from related discussions and votes.

3.5.3. Scoring Criteria:

Student Group Application		
Criteria	**Points**	
Contact info *(1= name, email, president, contact all filled in)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Mission statement *(1 = sounds reasonable)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Objectives for the year *(1 = Objective is specific, measurable, achievable, and realistic)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Reason for creating the group *(1 = sounds reasonable)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Uniqueness *(1 = is unique)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Relevance to Medicine (1 = provides opportunities that supplement or advance medical education)	Yes = 1	No = 0
Equity *(1 = is equitable to both Saskatoon & Regina site)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Exec members *(1 = have 3 execs, minimum one in Saskatoon and one in Regina)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Planned Activities *(1 = unique from other groups, 1/semester, site equity)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Outside funds *(1= no conflicts/red flags: i.e. funding from donors/sources that the SMSS fiscally relies on.)*	Yes= 1	No= 0
Total	**/10**	

Total: *If not 10/10, describe reasoning below*

3.6. Budget requests will be granted according to the Budgetary Request Process section of this protocol. This process equally divides the allotted funds set aside for student groups by the number of eligible (ratified) Student Groups while also maintaining a reserve fund.

3.7. The Chair of the Committee will be responsible for informing all applicant groups of the ratification decision no more than one (1) week following the October meeting.

3.7.1. Successful applications will receive the following information:

3.7.1.1. An outline of how to get SMSS funds/the funding they have received.

3.7.1.2. An outline of further steps the group may take/upcoming important dates.

3.7.1.3. An attachment outlining the rights and responsibilities recognized SMSS student groups are bound by and to.

3.7.2. Unsuccessful applications will receive the following information:

3.7.3. A specific request for more documentation should it be required.

3.7.4. The failing ratification criteria that must be amended or resolved prior to re-submission of the application.

3.8. To attract new members to their group, two executive members from an unrecognized student group may attend the first year Student Group Fair.

3.8.1. The Student Group Fair is regularly held in September.

3.8.2. Interested groups should contact the Student Group Coordinator by September 1st at smss.sgcoord@gmail.com.

3.9. The ratification of Student Groups may be impacted by available funding. In the event of limited funding, consolidation of student groups may be required to receive ratification.

IV: Returning Student Group Ratification and Funding

4.1. Recognition as an SMSS Student Group lasts one calendar year. All Student Groups must recertify annually by submitting the Returning Student Group Application form to the Chair of the Committee by October 1st at 11:59 pm.

4.1.1. Ratification lasts from one week after the Committee's October meeting is held until the week of the same meeting the following year.

4.1.2. NOTE: The Returning Student Groups Application form includes information for the coming year and activities from the previous year. Both parts are considered mandatory.

4.1.3. Returning Student Groups must elect their President and at least one (1) other executive member (strongly recommended to be treasurer) at the end of April, prior to turnover. Groups must elect at least one (1) member at both the Saskatoon and Regina sites.

4.2. All ratified SMSS Student Groups will adhere to all SMSS policies and relevant governing documents. In return, they will receive the following rights and responsibilities:

4.2.1. Right to have group events posted to the SMSS website calendar.

4.2.2. Right to promote the Student Group and their events on SMSS related social media

4.2.3. Right to request funding from the SMSS.

4.2.4. Right and responsibility to participate in the SMSS Student Group Fair and SMSS Student

Group Roundtable Discussions

4.2.5. Responsibility to uphold their own mandate, the mandate of the SMSS, and the College's mandate.

4.2.6. Responsibility to conduct group business professionally and equitably.

4.3. The following are reasons for immediate application denial, without the opportunity for appeal:

4.3.1. The application is late.

4.3.2. The application is incomplete.

4.3.3. The application is inaccurate or presents falsified information.

4.3.4. The application is identical to a previously reviewed application.

4.3.5. The group fails to provide required documentation.

4.3.6. NOTE: If less than one Executive member from the group fails to participate at the SMSS Student Group Roundtable Discussions, or the group fails to participate at the Student Group Fair, they will automatically receive **only half or less** of the budget they request. This breach of professional responsibility may also result in denial of the application and/or denial of all funding for the year.

4.4. Executive members of student groups may not sit as an executive member of more than **three** student groups or hold more than two president positions. Any group found to have executives that sit on more than three groups will be asked to re-submit their application after a different executive is elected/appointed.

4.5. Four members of the Committee (the VP Finance, VP Internal Regina Jr., VP Internal Saskatoon Jr., and VP External Jr,), appointed by the Chair, shall review the minimum ratification requirements as outlined by the Returning Student Group Form (i.e. Mission statement, goals, group uniqueness, equity, etc.). Each member will submit and make a recommendation to the other committee members regarding re-ratification.

4.5.1. Returning groups will be ratified by a simple majority resolution of the Committee.

4.5.2. Committee members on a Student Group's executive must abstain from voting on the group's ratification and excuse themselves from related discussions and votes.

4.6. Budget requests will be granted according to this protocol's Budgetary Request Process section. This process equally divides the allotted funds set aside for student groups by the number of eligible (ratified) Student Groups while also maintaining a reserve fund.

4.6.1. Fiscal irresponsibility, as defined by the VP Finance, found as part of an audit may impact the funding of the new budgetary request.

4.6.2. Ongoing issues with a group's finances or professionalism issues may result in

suspended ratification.

4.7. The Chair of the Committee will be responsible for informing all applicant groups of their ratification decision no more than one (1) week following the October meeting.

4.7.1. Successful applications will receive the following information:

4.7.2. An outline of the funding they have received.

4.7.3. An outline of upcoming important dates.

4.7.4. Unsuccessful applications will receive the following information:

4.7.4.1. A specific request for more documentation should it be required.

4.7.4.2. The failing ratification criteria that must be amended or resolved prior to the re-submission of the application.

V: Budgetary Request Process

5.1. Budgetary requests will consider the following sections of the documents for New and/or Returning Student Groups: Ratification Form and Budget Form.

5.2. The Committee will strive to provide maximal and equitable funding where appropriate while remaining fiscally responsible to other divisions and initiatives of the SMSS.

5.2.1. A minimum of 7% of the SMSS budget will be allocated to fund Student Groups.

5.2.2. Student Groups must remain professional and respectful during the budgetary request process.

5.2.3. The Committee reserves the right to adjust funding requests that exceed need and/or are not in accordance with the SMSS guidelines. These adjustments may not be appealed.

5.3. The Committee has the right to reallocate any surplus Student Group funds that align with SMSS values. The SMSS funding guidelines will be presented as part of the application form.

5.3.1. Funding allocation for Student Groups will be as follows:

5.3.1.1. A total budget of "x" for student groups will be set for the upcoming academic year as a portion of the overall SMSS budget.

5.3.1.2. A portion of this total budget "x" will be set aside as an Opportunity Fund.

5.3.1.3. The remaining funds "y" will be divided equally among the total number of successfully ratified student groups to set the allotted funds of "z."

5.3.1.4. All ratified student groups are eligible for Basic Funding up to the determined amount "z" in the form of retroactive reimbursement. Student groups may spend up to that amount on various events and are required to maintain their receipts for reimbursement. Requests for reimbursement must be made

no later than 14 days post-event/invoice.

5.3.1.5. If student groups require funding beyond the Basic Funding "z," they will contact the SGC and VP Finance to provide a rationale for the extra requested funds, along with a specific event budget and outline. These extra funds will be awarded from the Opportunity Fund.

5.3.1.6. It is encouraged that groups apply for extra funding as soon as possible, but groups must submit their request for extra funding no later than 2 weeks prior to their event. The SMSS Executive Committee will review the request through an online or in-person meeting/discussion and provide an answer within two weeks of the request submission.

5.3.1.7. Opportunity Fund decisions should be made impartially, with fairness, and always with the best interests of the students in mind.

5.3.2. Meal funding for group executive and/or group general meetings cannot be included in the group's budget request or reimbursed by the SMSS.

5.3.3. All Student Group funding should be used in accordance with the SMSS Financial Policy.

5.4. The committee shall vote on the budget recommendations of the appointed members after all anomalies have been discussed.

5.4.1. The voting shall be by simple majority.

5.4.2. Any Committee member who sits on the executive of a Group must abstain from voting on that Group's budget request and must excuse themselves for all anomaly discussions and votes pertaining to the Group.

5.4.3. Budget fulfillment will be the responsibility of the VP Finance, as dictated by the Chair.

5.5. If collaboration occurs between the SMSS and a SMSS Ratified Student Group on an event, funding must come solely from the SMSS Ratified Student Group.

5.5.1. There shall be no preferential treatment of Student Groups by the SMSS, and collaboration should be limited to maintain professionalism and unbiased governance.

VI: Audits and Outcomes with Regards to Funding

6.1. Student groups are required to comply with any audit request from the SMSS VP Finance.

6.2. Student groups should seek to have consistently updated financial records that they should be able to produce in the case of an audit within a week (7 days).

6.3. Student groups that fail to comply with audit requests or are found to have been fiscally irresponsible as part of an audit investigation shall be required to repay their budget for the current academic year to the SMSS by Nov 1 of that year and will

furthermore be disallowed from requesting financial compensation from the SMSS for a period of one (1) year.

VII: Revocation of Recognized SMSS Student Group Status

7.1. The Committee reserves the right to revoke SMSS Student Group status following any of the following:

7.1.1. A breach of professionalism by the offending student group.

7.1.2. Continuous fiscal irresponsibility or inappropriate budgeting.

7.1.3. Failure of a student group to stand out as unique/novel.

7.1.3.1. This shall be decided only by a 3/4th vote of the Committee

7.1.3.2. This is subject to appeal. The appeal shall be respectful, fair, and completed in a timely fashion. The Chair shall control how the appeal process occurs and may request that the final decision be made by a vote of all SMSS Officers.

7.1.3.3. NOTE: Student Groups that fail to be ratified or have ratification status revoked lose the rights entitled to recognized student groups but are not required to cease functioning within the College of Medicine. These groups can seek ratification the following October as a New Student Group.

7.1.4. Failure to demonstrate site equity as per 7.1.4.1

7.1.4.1. For any event/activity organized by a student group in one site, an equitable event/activity must be held in the opposite site within a 30-day period.

7.1.4.2. Failure to comply with 7.1.4.1. will result in the revocation of SMSS student group status, as per a 3/4th vote of the committee.

7.1.4.3. This is subject to appeal. The appeal shall be respectful, fair, and completed in a timely fashion. The Chair shall control how the appeal process occurs and may request that the final decision be made by a vote of all SMSS Officers.

7.1.4.4. NOTE: Student Groups that fail to be ratified or have ratification status revoked lose the rights entitled to recognized student groups but are not required to cease functioning within the College of Medicine. These groups can seek ratification the following October as a New Student Group.

7.2. The Committee shall treat all incidents regarding revocation of status seriously and with utmost confidentiality.

7.2.1. The same will be expected of all persons involved in the revocation process. Committee members and SMSS members in violation (e.g. rumour spreading, etc.) shall be held accountable (See SMSS Accountability Policy) and may be referred to the UGME office

for a breach of professionalism.

VIII: Confidentiality and Transparency

The SMSS is committed to upholding confidentiality and ensuring fairness and transparency within our organization.

8.1. Confidentiality shall be addressed in the following ways:

8.1.1. The members of the Committee agree to keep information discussed as part of the scoring process confidential.

8.1.2. The Committee meeting minutes and discussions shall be considered closed with communications to general members being the responsibility of the Chair and, in a limited manner, the VP Finance (as part of the SMSS budget declarations).

8.1.3. Appeals shall be handled in a confidential manner. Confidentiality will be expected from both the Committee membership and the appealing applicant during the appeal process.

8.2. Transparency shall be addressed in the following ways:

8.2.1. Following the Committee's decisions, a list of total funding amounts shall be made accessible to general members. This will occur no later than one (1) month after the decisions are finalized.

8.2.2. This protocol, as well as all relevant information regarding applications, shall be made permanently available to general members on the SMSS website.

IX: Appeals

Appeals for funding decisions, Student Group ratifications, and/or revocation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Appeals should be rare and the process the Committee follows will be carried out by the Chair. Any concerns about the processes or decisions of the Committee should be addressed to the Chair (smss.sgcoord@gmail.com) NO LATER than one month (30 days) after a decision is made.

X: Roles and Responsibilities

10.1. SMSS Student Groups Coordinator (SGC)

10.1.1. Chair the Committee

10.1.2. Receive and distribute student group applications to Committee members in accordance with this protocol.

10.1.3. Counsel potential applicants regarding their applications and interpretation of this protocol as requested

10.1.4. Communicate decisions of the Committee to applicants/groups, regardless of application success.

10.1.5. Maintain records in accordance with this protocol.

10.1.6. Mediate disputes between student groups and other student groups, the Committee, or the SMSS. This responsibility may, at times, overlap with that of the SMSS VP Internals, in which case the positions are to coordinate to find an outcome mutually agreeable to all parties.

10.2. Student Group Executive

10.2.1. Understand and adhere to the Student Group Protocol

10.2.2. Facilitate professional and timely communication with SMSS SGC and Executive

10.2.3. Maintain responsible and judicious budgetary constraint

10.2.4. Submit event requests to SGC and VP Communications in a timely manner to prevent overlapping events.

10.2.4.1. NOTE: Per the SMSS Constitution, Student Groups cannot book events during SMSS meetings. It is the responsibility of the Student Group Executive to monitor event dates on the SMSS Event Calendar and accommodate SMSS meetings.

XI: Maintenance of Records

The Chair of the Committee shall hold all received applications and communication on the SMSS SGC account from the time they are received, throughout the student group funding process, and for a period of two (2) years after a decision regarding student group status/funding is made. Once the Committee has decided upon applications, only the SGC (Chair), VP Finance, and individuals outlined on the group's application (or their positions' successors) are able to request access to the records.

This may be subject to change in the case of a decision appeal or unidentified extenuating circumstances. The applications and all documents on file for an approved student group will be curated by the SGC throughout the year for use the following year when the group applies for status as a returning group.

XII: Resources and Contact Information

Resources:

1. SMSS Policy: The SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee
2. SMSS Constitution
3. Robert's Rules of Order

Contacts:

1. SMSS Student Group Coordinator -> smss.sgcoord@gmail.com (General Information, Primary Contact, Committee Chair)
2. SMSS Vice-President, Communications ->
    a. smss.vpcommunications@gmail.com (Transparency inquiries)

XIII: Review

This protocol is subject to review and approval by the SMSS Council. Restructuring the protocol shall fall to the SMSS Funding and Oversight Committee unless otherwise outlined by the SMSS Council. This protocol is to be reviewed every three years or as needed.