

Governance Policy:

POL #GP-0004



Policy: Code of Conduct

Date of Creation: 01/03/23

Last Reviewed: 13/03/23

Next Review: March 2024

1.0 Authority

1.1 In accordance with the Students' Association of Olds College (SAOC) Bylaws, the powers and duties of the Board of Directors includes making policies and decisions regulating the conduct of the organization provided such policies and decisions are consistent with applicable legislation and these bylaws.

2.0 Purpose and Scope

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. Establish principles and expectations to guide individuals' behaviour and decisions;
- b. Ensure SAOC affairs are carried out in a manner that protects, upholds and enhances the organization's reputation;
- c. Support a safe and healthy workplace, free from harassment and violence, in accordance with Alberta *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, Regulation, and Code* requirements; and
- d. Support effective and responsible decision-making.

2.2 This policy applies to the SAOC Board of Directors and any person who may be acting on the Board's behalf, including the Executive Director, staff, and volunteers, in all situations and contexts that are SAOC-related including:

- a. SAOC and Olds College premises;
- b. Locations visited for meetings, events, and conferences;
- c. Locations of SAOC-related social gatherings; and
- d. Interactions that take place by means such as the telephone, email, social media, instant message, text message or other online or technology-enabled tools.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 **Conflict of Interest** refers to a real, apparent, potential or perceived situation where an individual's private interests and SAOC interests may be in conflict. This can include

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situations where an individual could use their position with SAOC to obtain or seek to obtain a Private Benefit for themselves or a related person or entity, or a situation where an individual's private interests could negatively impact SAOC interests.

- 3.2 **Disrespectful Behaviour** refers to conduct that contributes to a negative and harmful work environment, including comments, actions or gestures that are humiliating, offensive, hurtful, or belittling and effect the dignity and wellbeing of others. Examples of Disrespectful Behaviour include, but are not limited to, verbal or written comments, bullying or intimidation, harassment, violence, abuse of authority, yelling or shouting, deliberately excluding others, hazing, and attempting to discredit others by spreading misinformation.
- 3.3 **Harassment** refers to repeated or single, serious occurrences of inappropriate, bullying, hostile, or unwelcome verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct where it is known or reasonably ought to be known that the behaviour is unwelcome and:
- Is based on a Protected Ground;
 - Has the effect or purpose of abusing, disparaging, harming, threatening, demeaning, or intimidating an individual or group of individuals;
 - Negatively affects a person's psychological or physical wellbeing; or
 - Has the effect or purpose of significantly interfering with performance.
- 3.4 **Political Activities** may include holding membership in a political party, promoting for a political party or cause, fundraising for an election campaign, campaigning for a candidate for elected office, or being a candidate for elected office.
- 3.5 **Private Benefit** means a financial or personal benefit (which includes the avoidance of a negative consequence) other than a financial or personal benefit that is applicable to a group of individuals (such as all students or all employees) or is inconsequential.
- 3.6 **Protected Grounds** means the grounds of discrimination defined in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, including race, colour, age, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender (including pregnancy and gender identity), physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income, and sexual orientation.
- 3.7 **Sexual Harassment** means Harassment that is based on gender or sexuality such as unwanted remarks, behaviours, or communications of a sexual nature that creates an unwelcome, hostile, coercive or offensive environment. Sexual Harassment may affect or

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threaten to affect, directly or indirectly, a person's job security, working conditions, or prospects for promotion or earnings.

- 3.8 **Violence** means the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical injury or damage to property.

4.0 General

4.1 All individuals are responsible to:

- a. Be familiar with and act in accordance with this policy; and
- b. Use good judgement guided by the spirit and intent of this policy in situations that may not be explicitly addressed.

5.0 Principles for Good Conduct

5.1 Individuals must at all times:

- a. Follow and uphold all applicable legislation, bylaws, policies, procedures, standards, and directives;
- b. Support the mission, vision, values, and objectives of the students' association;
- c. Act in good faith and place the interests of SAOC above their own private interests;
- d. Ensure integrity and impartiality in decision-making;
- e. Demonstrate respect and support for decisions legitimately taken in transaction of the students' association's business;
- f. Exercise care, skill, and diligence in their work;
- g. Be responsible stewards of SAOC resources;
- h. Treat others with respect, compassion, dignity, and fairness;
- i. Act and encourage others to act fairly and ethically;
- j. Practice proactive, open, honest, and respectful communication; and
- k. Respect and give fair consideration to diverse and opposing viewpoints.

5.2 All people have the right to be treated in a fair, reasonable, and respectful manner. Disrespectful Behaviour will not be tolerated. To create a respectful environment for employees, volunteers, and visitors, individuals must:

- a. Ensure their behaviour is respectful and appropriate at all times;
- b. Treat others equitably and fairly;

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- c. Listen to what others have to say and be open-minded to others' ideas, comments, and suggestions;
- d. Accept responsibility for their own actions, reactions, behaviour, and impact on others;
- e. Act in a solution-focused manner;
- f. Be polite, courteous, and respectful of others; and
- g. Recognize and value the diversity among peers, colleagues, stakeholders, and visitors.

5.3 Any conflicts, disagreements, or issues that may arise must be resolved in a manner that contributes to a healthy and productive workplace.

6.0 Board Meeting Participation and Conduct

6.1 Board members are expected to attend and participate in all SAOC Board of Directors meetings, as well as all SAOC committee meetings of which they are a member.

6.2 Further, Board members shall:

- a. Be prepared to discuss the issues and business on the agenda, having read all background material relevant to the topics at hand;
- b. Cooperate with and respect the opinions of fellow Board members;
- d. Support the decisions of the Board even when the Board member personally did not support the action taken;
- e. Demonstrate respect and courteous conduct in all Board and committee meetings; and
- f. Refrain from intruding on administrative issues that are the responsibility of management, except to provide oversight and monitor for results and compliance.

6.3 In the conduct of SAOC business, Board members shall observe established lines of communication and direct requests for information or assistance to the Executive Director.

7.0 Confidentiality

7.1 Individuals must only access the confidential personal information of others when authorized to do so for the effective conduct of duly authorized SAOC business and only as often as necessary to fulfill their job duties.

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7.2 Individuals must protect and shall not disclose any confidential financial, personnel, or other matters concerning the students' association, members, employees, volunteers, contractors, visitors or other third-parties, including Olds College.

8.0 Conflicts of Interest

8.1 Individuals must not use their position with SAOC to obtain or seek or obtain a Private Benefit for themselves or any related person or entity, including but not limited to relatives, business associates, and friends.

8.2 Individuals must disclose any situation or interest that could lead to potential or perceived Conflicts of Interest. When an issue or question for decision or action arises that may result in a Conflict of Interest, the individual has a duty to immediately disclose the Conflict of Interest and shall abstain from attempting to use personal influence in addressing the matter or from participating in any discussion, debate, decision, or vote on the matter.

8.3 All conflicts disclosed to the Board shall be recorded in the meeting minutes of the meeting in which the disclosure was made, which shall also note that the Board member with a Conflict of Interest abstained from participating in discussion, debate or vote on the matter.

9.0 Gifts, Favours, Services, and Other Benefits

9.1 Individuals shall be prohibited from:

- a. Accepting gifts, favours, services, or other benefits that are connected directly or indirectly with the performance of their job duties and could create a Conflict of Interest;
- b. Giving gifts, favours, services or other benefits to individuals or organizations order to facilitate, obtain, or retain a business advantage for SAOC; and
- c. Giving gifts, favours, services or other benefits to individuals or organizations in the course of their job duties in order to facilitate, obtain, or retain a Private Benefit for themselves or a related person or entity.

9.2 Notwithstanding section 9.1, individuals may give or accept gifts, favours, services, or other benefits from individuals or organizations in the performance of their duties in circumstances where the gift or benefit constitutes:

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- a. The normal exchange of gifts between friends;
- b. The normal exchange of hospitality between persons doing business together;
- c. Tokens exchanged as part of protocol; or
- d. The normal presentation of gifts to persons participating in public functions.

9.3 In accordance with sections 9.1 and 9.2, individuals are prohibited from:

- a. Purchasing goods or services through any SAOC purchasing agency for personal use; and
- b. Accepting discounts on goods or services unless it is the general business practice of an establishment to provide discounts to employer organizations or groups, including SAOC.

10.0 Political Activities

10.1 Individuals must be non-partisan and impartial in the performance of their duties but may participate in Political Activities outside of their service to SAOC subject to the following expectations:

- a. Individuals must not use their position with SAOC to seek contributions to a political party or candidate for election; and
- b. Political Activity must be clearly separated from SAOC and must not make use of SAOC facilities, equipment or resources.

10.2 Employees who are elected to political office must resign their position with SAOC.

11.0 Use of SAOC Resources

11.1 Individuals may only use SAOC resources for SAOC business and purposes within their scope of responsibility. Limited personal use of SAOC resources may be permitted in situations where incidental personal use is reasonable and does not negatively impact SAOC operations or interfere with the conduct of the individual's duties and responsibilities.

12.0 Zero Tolerance for Harassment and Violence

12.1 Consistent with the SAOC Harassment and Violence Policy, SAOC is committed to providing a safe, healthy, respectful and supportive environment. Harassment or

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Violence, including Sexual Harassment, will not be tolerated. Individuals have a role in creating an environment that is free from Harassment or Violence and must:

- a. Not subject any other person to Harassment or Violence;
 - b. Participate in training as required and access resources provided to learn to identify warning signs of Harassment and Violence;
 - c. Report incidents of Harassment or Violence; and
 - d. Participate in the investigation of Harassment or Violence as required.
- 12.2 Objects, materials, or content that could cause harm, threaten the safety or wellbeing of others, or be perceived as constituting or threatening Violence, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, or Disrespectful Behaviour are not permitted in SAOC-related situations or contexts.
- 12.3 Individuals must immediately report incidents of Violence that cause or are likely to cause physical injury. If a situation poses an imminent threat to a person's safety, an individual must also contact 9-1-1 and request assistance from the police and emergency services as appropriate. When on Olds College property, incidents must also be reported to Campus Security.

13.0 Compliance & Enforcement

- 13.1 Individuals must comply with all elements of this policy and shall support others in doing so.
- 13.2 All concerns about potential violations of this policy will be investigated in accordance with SAOC policy and SAOC will take corrective action to address incidents.
- 13.2 Individuals who violate this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including removal or dismissal in accordance with applicable SAOC Bylaws and policies.

14.0 References

- [Students' Association of Olds College \(SAOC\) Bylaws](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety \(OHS\) Act, Regulation and Code](#)
- Olds College Student Code of Conduct Policy
- Olds College Anti-Hazing Policy

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