



# ADVOCACY POLICY

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PROCEDURE TYPE	OPERATIONS
APPROVING AUTHORITY	ONTARIO TECH STUDENT UNION BOARD OF DIRECTORS
APPROVAL DATE	JULY 2022
REVIEW DATE	JULY 2025

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy provides a framework for implementing, reviewing, and establishing advocacy papers that represent the Ontario Tech Student Union's (OTSU) recommendations on various post-secondary student facing issues. Advocacy papers will be developed through the procedures that are listed in this policy and will convey the OTSU's principles, concerns, and recommendations (PCR's) to various stakeholders such as university administration, government officials and the student body.
- 1.2 All advocacy papers will be developed in a manner that is with the best interest of all Ontario Tech student needs.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- 2.1 **Annual advocacy priorities**  
Refers to the annual advocacy goals that are set by the OTSU executive team upon commencement of their term.
- 2.2 **Board of directors**  
Refers to elected representatives from each faculty at Ontario Tech University that guide the decisions of the organization as defined by the OTSU by-laws.
- 2.3 **Executive team**  
Refers to elected representatives that advocate and represent all students at Ontario Tech University as defined by the OTSU by-laws.
- 2.4 **Government official**  
Refers to a position held by an individual in any level of government (provincial, municipal and federal).
- 2.5 **PCRs**  
Refers to principles, concerns, and recommendations.
- 2.6 **Principles**  
Refers to statements that summarize the organizations ideology on that particular topic.

- 2.7 **Concerns**  
Refers to issues that have been identified within the particular topic that need to be addressed.
- 2.8 **Recommendations**  
Refers to the necessary steps that should be taken to resolve the issues identified.
- 2.9 **Student Advocacy Advisory Committee (SAAC)**  
Refers to a committee under the OTSU that is responsible for overseeing advocacy initiatives.
- 2.10 **Student body**  
Refers to all part-time and full-time students at Ontario Tech University.
- 2.11 **Student union advocacy library**  
Refers to a virtually stored database that houses all approved advocacy papers.
- 2.12 **University administration**  
Refers to Ontario Tech University senior leadership.

### 3. PURPOSE

- 3.1 This policy provides the necessary framework and procedures for introducing an advocacy paper to the student union advocacy library. This policy acts as a guide for the OTSU to formally adopt stances on issues faced by the student body and provide appropriate PCRs to necessary stakeholders.
- 3.2 This policy can be used to provide direction for the creation of advocacy papers and guide in the development of other policies.

### 4. SCOPE/APPLICATION

- 4.1 This policy applies to the executive team, board of directors, SAAC and members of the student body when adopting a paper in the advocacy library.

### 5. PROCEDURE

#### 5.1 Proposing papers

- 5.1.1 Before authorship of advocacy papers begins, they must be approved by two thirds of majority vote first by the SAAC. If approved, the SAAC will recommend the proposal to the board of directors.
- 5.1.2 Approval from the board of directors is necessary before the commissioning of a paper.
- 5.1.3 The executive team may propose papers to be commissioned as they relate to the annual advocacy priorities and approved by the board of directors.
  - a. A minimum of two (2) papers should be proposed by the executive team relating to the annual advocacy priorities set.
- 5.1.4 The executive team may propose additional papers to be commissioned on the following conditions:
  - a. Existing papers that are up for renewal, and
  - b. Topics that have demonstrated significant Ontario Tech student interest.

- 5.1.5 Members of the student body can propose topics to the SAAC for recommendation to the board of directors via written proposal addressed to the VP Student Affairs as described in section 5.1.6. Oral presentations can be used to assist in delivery.
- 5.1.6 All proposals submitted to the SAAC must include:
- a. Policy topic,
  - b. Justification or demonstration of significance to Ontario Tech students,
  - c. Recommendation on the topic, and
  - d. Data supporting the topic.
- 5.1.7 Proposal topics are limited to post-secondary education issues at university, college, and governmental levels.
- 5.1.8 For advocacy papers to be published in the current academic year, all proposals should be submitted before the start of winter break.

## 5.2 Commissioning papers

- 5.2.1 Once a proposal has been received, the SAAC will review and analyze the information presented.
- a. The SAAC will ensure that the proposal meets the necessary requirements and are topics of interest for Ontario Tech students.
- 5.2.2 The SAAC will approve, reject, or table the proposal.
- a. A two thirds majority vote must be obtained for a decision to be carried out.
  - b. If a proposal is rejected, the SAAC must provide reasoning and justification to the proposer(s).
  - c. If a proposal is approved by the SAAC, a recommendation will be made to present the proposal to the board of directors at the next board meeting.
    - i. If approved by the board of directors, please refer to section 5.3.
    - ii. If rejected, the board of directors should provide feedback and recommendations to the proposer(s).
  - d. An urgent SAAC meeting may be called under the discretion of the President or Executive Director to commission advocacy papers in an expedited process.

## 5.3 Writing papers

- 5.3.1 If the proposal is submitted by a member of the student body, the paper shall be authored by the individual who submitted the proposal or by a group, at least one (1) of whom should be an individual that submitted the proposal.
- a. In addition, one (1) of the President, VP Student Affairs, VP Student Life, or VP Downtown (or other designate) must be included in the writing of the paper.
- 5.3.2 The author(s) responsibilities include but are not limited to:
- a. In depth research on the topic,
  - b. Creating principles, concerns and recommendations relating to the topic selected,
  - c. Write an advocacy policy paper around the topic proposed,
  - d. Consult various stakeholders and hold focus groups to ensure an equitable representation,
  - e. Provide monthly meeting updates or updates upon request,
  - f. Present a draft copy of the paper to the SAAC,

- g. Present a final copy of the advocacy paper to the SAAC, and
- h. Amend the paper with any edits or changes that the SAAC or board of directors may deem necessary.

#### 5.4 **Approving papers**

- 5.4.1 Completed papers should be submitted first to the SAAC for review. The SAAC will then recommend it to the board of directors after receiving a two thirds majority vote.
- 5.4.2 Once under review by the board of directors, the paper can be approved, rejected or tabled. Two thirds of majority vote must be obtained for a motion to pass.
  - a. If the paper is rejected, the board of directors are required to provide sufficient reasoning as to why and provide recommendations for next steps.
- 5.4.3 If the paper is approved, a motion will be carried to put the paper in the advocacy library.
  - a. Papers must be published/uploaded into the library within a month of approval from the board of directors .

#### 5.5 **Renewing, retiring, or amending advocacy policies**

- 5.5.1 Approved and published advocacy papers expire three (3) years after its initial approval date.
- 5.5.2 The VP Student Affairs or designate is responsible for:
  - a. Ensuring that policies in the advocacy library are up to date.
  - b. Renewing policies that are expiring.
  - c. Amending existing policy if needed.
    - i. Amendments must be recommended by the SAAC and receive two thirds majority vote from the board of directors to be amended.
  - d. Retiring the paper if it is deemed insignificant to the student body.

## **6. EXECUTIVE ACTION**

- 6.1 The executive team should update the board of directors on advocacy initiatives that pertain to the papers adopted in the student union advocacy library.
- 6.2 Continuing efforts by the executive team should be made to ensure that advocacy initiatives are addressing current student facing issues.