

PLATO POLICIES

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GENERAL POLICIES

Management by the Board

The Board shall be responsible for control and management of the affairs and interests of the organization. Any changes in committee policies and procedures that affect the PLATO mission or have significant financial implications must be approved by the Board.

Each fiscal year, standing committees shall review their procedures and revise them if necessary. Committee chairs may seek assistance from the Board, Executive Committee, and other standing committees to conduct these reviews.

Copying

Committees: To the extent possible, committee materials should be distributed by email.

Courses: Coordinators should communicate with and distribute handouts to class members as much as possible by email. Class members should be asked and expected to contribute to the costs of class materials. Copyright law must be respected.

Policy on Alcohol at PLATO Events

PLATO does not provide alcoholic beverages at PLATO-sponsored events, nor does it encourage members to bring their own alcoholic beverages to PLATO-sponsored events (e.g. No “bring your own bottle” statements on event announcements). This policy is not meant to prohibit individual members from purchasing alcoholic beverages at PLATO meal events where the site venue has a bar at which members can purchase alcohol with their own funds.

Exceptions to this policy must be explicitly approved in advance by the Board of Directors.

(Approved June 8, 2018)

FINANCIAL

Nonprofit Status

PLATO is a nonprofit corporation organized under Wisconsin law and is recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code.

Memorandum of Agreement

PLATO is associated with the University of Wisconsin-Madison and its Department of Continuing Studies (DCS). UW-Madison and PLATO are parties to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

PLATO and Oakwood Village are parties to a Memorandum of Agreement relating to PLATO's use of office space, utilities, and housekeeping on the Oakwood Village University Woods campus.

Expenditures

For transactions involving outside vendors, PLATO members should ensure that the purchase or obligation they are undertaking is within the budget of the relevant committee. In general, financial transactions other than bus trips, catering or facility use (which involve potential liability) should be handled within PLATO's traditional mechanism for reimbursement, including obtaining committee chair approval for purchases over \$50 and forwarding invoices or receipts promptly to the PLATO Treasurer for payment or reimbursement.

Committees may spend budgeted funds without further approval. Committees wishing to make non-budgeted expenditures or spend on a budgeted item substantially in excess of the amount budgeted must obtain prior approval from the PLATO Board.

Budgets

Each spring, the Treasurer, with input from committee chairs, shall submit a proposed budget for the following fiscal year for Board approval.

Vehicle Rental

PLATO does not carry insurance for rental vehicles, thus it does not allow its officers, committee members or members to rent vehicles without a driver. For most PLATO events members drive their own vehicles. If it is desired to have members travel in one vehicle, various size vans and buses can be rented from commercial carriers such as Badger Bus, Van Galder/Coach USA and others that provide a driver and carry insurance. Because of the lack of insurance for PLATO there are no exceptions to this policy.

PLATO does not authorize nor encourage members to use their personal vehicles to give rides to other members. If a PLATO member chooses to give a ride to another member, they are doing so on their own, under their own insurance.

(Approved February 9, 2018)

Honoraria and Expenses

Honoraria policy generally falls into one of four categories as follows:

- **Courses** – PLATO does not pay honoraria or expenses to speakers at courses.
- **Special Events** – the Special Events Committee has a budget overseen by the chairperson. Honoraria are sometimes built into the event cost and paid, often to a person's charity.
- **PLATO Annual Meeting and Board authorized special activities** – these are overseen and approved by the Board.
- **Volunteers** – honoraria or expenses are not paid to PLATO volunteers, with the exception of waiver of registration fees for trip organizers and assistants.

(Approved December 13, 2019)

CURRICULUM

Course Approval

New courses may be proposed by any member, following procedures established by the Curriculum Committee.

The Curriculum Committee anticipates approving proposals for new and ongoing courses submitted by potential and current course coordinators. The committee reserves the right to reject any course. The decision will be based on a review of the course's content, the interests or experience of the individual coordinating the course, and his/her willingness to abide by PLATO policies in leading the course.

Course coordinators and presenters are volunteers and do not receive remuneration for teaching.

Course Host Locations

Venues for PLATO courses include, but are not restricted to: senior centers, residential communities, libraries, churches, community centers and banks. Sites meeting the needs of members typically provide the following:

1. Ample parking.
2. A location close to city bus lines.
3. Accessibility for the physically handicapped.
4. Connections for audio-visual equipment and/or internet access. The equipment may be owned by the facility, PLATO or the course coordinator.

Fees paid to venues are determined by the PLATO Board.

Nonmember Participation

Nonmembers may attend the first two sessions of a course at no cost, but if they intend to continue with the course, they should join PLATO by paying the appropriate fee. Residents of host facilities are exempt from fees when participating in PLATO activities at their residence.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events are non-course, typically one-time events including lectures, local tours, theater trips, field trips, and social events. Organizing and running events is the responsibility of the Special Events Committee (SEC). Events are for the benefit of the PLATO membership. Proposed events should be of general interest and appeal to the membership. Only events reviewed and approved by the SEC are sponsored PLATO events.

Administration

The Board of Directors is the governing entity of PLATO to provide policy for special events. In case of all events, the BOD powers include approving, changing, and establishing policies for operations and finances. The BOD may approve or change organization structure, operations, and management of finances.

PLATO may authorize external recordings of any PLATO function.

Managing inappropriate or unsafe behavior.

PLATO is committed to providing welcoming, safe, and respectful environment for participants during all events. Event Coordinators have the responsibility for promoting and maintaining this welcoming and safe environment.

In case of a disruptive and or unruly behavior by a participant during a particular event, the coordinator of the event present at site has the authority to ask the individual to leave the event. The coordinator may politely quote PLATO policy, if needed. If the situation occurs during a bus ride, policies by the bus company regarding such behavior would be followed.

In case of recurring persistent unruly and disruptive behavior by an individual, the SEC chair may recommend to the board for removal of the individual from future events of any kind. The board will designate a member to notify the individual.

Disability Issues

In accordance with State and Federal disability laws, PLATO welcomes people with disabilities at its events.

PLATO event coordinators do not aid with navigating the events or with activities such as eating, taking medication, or using the rest rooms. Participants needing such assistance must bring a companion at their own expense.

PLATO event coordinators and bus drivers do not aid with boarding and or exiting the bus unless it is in the policy of the transport company for the driver to lower the passenger seat and or assist in any way.

SEC members will assess all venues and trips regarding mobility and disability issues.

Information about disability assistance provided by the venue should be included with the promotional and registration materials.

Nonmember Surcharge

Nonmember guests may participate in PLATO special events trips by paying a nonmember guest surcharge. The Treasurer, with the recommendation of the SEC Chair, is authorized to waive payment of the nonmember surcharge on a special event if warranted.

Cancellations and Refunds

The Special Events Committee is authorized to cancel SEC events and provide refunds in accordance with detailed policies of that Committee.

Implementing Procedures

The SEC in coordination with other committee chairs as required will prepare a procedures manual for PLATO special events. The manual for example would include procedures for fee structure, payment methods, cancellation, refunds, and other details that are required to implement the events. Each year, the SEC would review the procedures manual and request Board input and feedback if needed and revise accordingly.

In case of trips, historically there have been two kinds of trips, field, and theater. Both venues provide round trip bus transportation to locations outside of Dane County with field trips going to various sites and theater groups going to theater performances.

PLATO treasurer reviews and approves all expenditure requests associated with each trip. The treasurer reviews, authorizes and audits trips financial records to ensure financial viability of each trip. The treasurer may use his or her discretion within limits to continue a trip if the trip does not break even for the good of the organization. If the loss is higher, the treasurer will consult with the Executive committee.

The SEC approves all trip plans, changes, proposals, and reports. The SEC monitors trip activities, trip results, findings and issues and report such to the board during the board meetings. After review by the SEC Chair, the Treasurer is authorized to sign event contracts and transportation company contracts. SEC is responsible to ensure that all trip worksheets are prepared and submitted to the treasurer for approval.

MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNICATION

Member Information and Privacy Policy

PLATO maintains the following information about its members: name, address, telephone number, email address, year of birth, how they learned about PLATO, their areas of interest, whether they would be willing to share their knowledge and whether they would be willing to serve on a PLATO committee. Member information is stored in a secure database. PLATO only uses this information to benefit PLATO members.

PLATO member information is never sold or provided to outside organizations for commercial purposes. This information may only be used for PLATO purposes.

(Approved September 19, 2014)

Member Directory Listing

PLATO provides a member directory to facilitate communications among PLATO members. The directory lists the member's name, address, telephone number and email address. Members may designate which items should be displayed or opt out of being listed in the directory by contacting the PLATO office. The directory will be in electronic format. Members wishing a paper copy may contact the PLATO office to request that a copy be mailed to them not more than once a year.

(Approved September 19, 2014; Updated November 20, 2015)

FUND DEVELOPMENT

PLATO has created and funded the PLATO Fund at the UW Foundation, with the UW-Madison Division of Continuing Studies (DCS) as the spending authority. The purpose of the PLATO Fund is to support costs of education for economically disadvantaged adult students enrolled in credit courses at UW-Madison, educational opportunities for learners of all ages in greater Madison, and PLATO's lifelong learning programs for its members. The PLATO Fund is funded exclusively from donations by PLATO members and not from member dues.

The Fund Development Committee administers fundraising, recommends recipients and amounts of grants for review and approval by the PLATO Board, and provides periodic financial reports about the PLATO Fund to the PLATO Board.

The PLATO Board reviews the Fund Development Committee's recommendations, and selects grant recipients and the amount of these grants annually. The Board may request prior review of the Fund Development Committee's recommendations by the Executive Committee.

After selecting the grant recipients and the amounts of grants, the PLATO Board submits a written request to the UW-Madison Division of Continuing Studies (UW-DCS) to authorize the disbursement of these grants from the PLATO Fund by the UW Foundation. Upon receipt of the funds released by the UW Foundation, DCS transfers the entire amount to the PLATO Treasurer. The PLATO Treasurer then disburses the grants to the recipients.

PLATO and DCS have a memorandum of agreement delineating their respective duties and responsibilities relating to the PLATO Fund.

A separate document, PLATO Standing Committees: Responsibilities and Procedures, provides additional detailed information about the PLATO Fund Development Committee.

WEBSITE, MISSION, OBJECTIVES, AND GUIDELINES

Mission Statement

The primary mission of the PLATO website is to provide members with accurate and timely information about PLATO's offerings and services. It and the PLATO Weekly Update email constitute the authoritative sources of PLATO communications. The secondary mission of the PLATO website is to provide information about PLATO to prospective members and the public.

Objectives

1. To provide members and the public with relevant and timely information regarding PLATO and its programs
2. To provide online access to join and renew memberships and to register for PLATO courses and events
3. To provide a secure, online method of paying for PLATO services
4. To provide potential members with information about PLATO and an online method for joining
5. To provide a source for the latest version of PLATO organizational documents

Guidelines

To ensure the website mission is accomplished, the website should:

1. Reflect the breadth of PLATO offerings — Members and site visitors should see that PLATO offers classes and special events as well as provides ways to connect and share.
2. Take a balanced approach to content — The Home page is the gateway to the website, providing direction and access to other content. As such there is a high demand for space on the Home page. Consequently, the placement of content on the Home page should be dynamic and flexible with the goal of providing a balance between information fundamental to PLATO's mission and responding to time-sensitive activities and events.
3. Offer an easy and secure means to join or renew membership and to register for courses and events.
4. Provide an appealing and professional appearance, including the consistent use of PLATO brand identity, typography, colors, images, and graphics.
5. Posted content should be informational in nature and related to PLATO sponsored activities or services.

(Approved Dec. 14, 2018)

REVISION OF POLICIES

This document is to be reviewed annually and updated if needed.