



UNTANGLING

Problem Solving for Student Businesses

STUDENT BUSINESS COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

Cooperative principles were developed in Rochdale, (Rotch-dale) England, near Manchester, in 1844 in response to unfair working conditions. A **group of 28 factory workers**, came together to develop principles to guide their self-managed businesses. **They called themselves the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society.** BENJAMIN Franklin also formed a cooperative in 1752. Over the years farmers have come together to form businesses that mutually benefit all of the members. Many food grocers have organized as a worker-owned business. Several iterations of principles exist, all modified to suit the particular organization that is working cooperatively. These have been modified for UMASS student businesses.

Open, Voluntary, Committed Membership.

- Membership in student businesses is voluntary for anyone with skills fitting the needs of the business and who are willing to accept the responsibilities of membership as defined by the handbook.
- Membership is open without discrimination based on gender, race, sexual orientation, social, cultural, political or religious thought.
- Committed membership means that the business has a high priority in the member's life and that the member is committed to both participatory decision making and financial accountability.

Democratic Control

Student Businesses are democratic organizations whose members actively participate in setting policy, making decisions and managing their operation. Their affairs should be administered by persons elected or appointed in a manner agreed to by the members and accountable to them. Full members enjoy equal rights of voting (one member, one vote).

Honest Business Practices

Student businesses deal openly, honestly, and honorably with their members, their customers, suppliers and the general university community. Each member's contribution to the business may result in surpluses which should be used for reserves, benefiting members in proportion to their contribution and supporting activities approved by the membership

Economic independence

Student businesses are self-run and managed; however certain responsibilities must be met, recognizing their interdependence with the university system. They must follow university rules and regulations and remain economically viable. Members recognize that economic independence



means that revenues must cover expenses and financial accountability is critical for survival of the business.

Education, Training and Information

Student businesses provide education and training for their members so that they can contribute effectively to the development of the business. The Center for Student Business acts as a resource to achieve this principle.

Cooperation

Student businesses strengthen themselves by working with each other. Student businesses avoid competition with each other and work together.

Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, student businesses work for sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.