

## Legal basis for the constitution and operation of student scientific societies in the Bolivian university system

### Bases legales para la constitución y funcionamiento de las sociedades científicas de estudiantes en el sistema universitario Boliviano

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#### Abstract

The emergence of the National System of Science and Technology in the Bolivian University has allowed that the interested students in complement their studies of professional formation with the scientific research task, social interaction and university extension has proceeded, in subsidiary form to its formative activity in the classroom, with the conformation of research groups at the undergraduate level, which were denominated Scientific Societies of Students; however, the juridical regulation and form in these entities should proceed in the moment to implement all and each one of their activities, according to the normative of the university, is difficult to predict because the incomparable articles, resolutions and regulations which have a link with named Societies have not been object of a thorough analysis by any university authority or by the coordination organisms at central level in the Public Universities, even worse if is considerate that nor students neither consultant teachers count with the enough experience and knowledge to proceed with the legal constitution of a Scientific Society, that's way we pretend to make a relation of the mentioned regalements, resolutions and other documents of university cut that allow the operation of the Scientific Societies of Students and their organs of representation and decision in the entire System of the Bolivian University, resulting also essential make an historical sketch about the emergence and consolidation in order to fully understand each one of the sections to detail.

**Undergraduate research, Scientific Societies of Students, accreditation and institutional recognition, normative and regulative frame, university juridical personality**

#### Resumen

El surgimiento del Sistema Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología en la Universidad Boliviana ha permitido que los estudiantes interesados en complementar sus estudios de formación profesional con la tarea de investigación científica, interacción social y extensión universitaria hayan procedido, en forma subsidiaria a su actividad formativa en el aula, con la conformación de grupos de investigación a nivel de pregrado, los cuales fueron denominados Sociedades Científicas de Estudiantes; sin embargo, la regulación jurídica y forma en que estas entidades deben proceder en el momento de implementar todas y cada una de sus actividades, de acuerdo a la normativa de la universidad, es difícil de predecir debido a que los incomparables artículos, resoluciones y reglamentos que tienen vinculación con las denominadas Sociedades no han sido objeto de un análisis minucioso por parte de ninguna autoridad universitaria o por los organismos de coordinación a nivel central en las Universidades Públicas, peor aún si se considera que ni estudiantes ni docentes asesores cuentan con la suficiente experiencia y conocimiento para proceder a la constitución legal de una Sociedad Científica, es así que pretendemos hacer una relación de los mencionados reglamentos, resoluciones y otros documentos de corte universitario que permiten el funcionamiento de las Sociedades Científicas de Estudiantes y sus órganos de representación y decisión en todo el Sistema de la Universidad Boliviana, resultando también imprescindible hacer un bosquejo histórico sobre el surgimiento y consolidación a fin de comprender cabalmente cada uno de los apartados a detalle.

**Investigación de pregrado, Sociedades Científicas de Estudiantes, acreditación y reconocimiento institucional, marco normativo y regulatorio, personalidad jurídica universitaria**

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## Introduction

By way of introduction, it should be noted that the limited, not to say scarce, information regarding the emergence, recognition and functioning of the Scientific Societies of Students in the Bolivian University System has been one of the main factors driving the drafting, analysis and explanation of a legal nature of the university regulations on a subject that is unknown by a large majority of administrative authorities, teachers and students, i.e., the correct constitution and regulatory guidelines that allow the full validity of a Scientific Society, The correct constitution and normative guidelines that allow the full validity of a Scientific Society, moreover, being scientific entities that bring together undergraduate students from different careers that are strictly recognised and accredited, as provided by the Organic Statute and various regulations of the Bolivian University, it is difficult to achieve consensus on the main points that should govern the legal life of the Scientific Societies of Students.

In accordance with the above, it is essential to start from an affirmation that, despite not having any reference, is based on the personal experience of having participated in different and consequent meetings and other curricular events with authorities of the Executive Committee of the Bolivian University (CEUB) and administrative personnel whose work is centred on scientific activity, research and social interaction at university level, In this sense, the latter consider that the nature of the Scientific Societies of Students is completely atypical, from which it can be deduced that according to the wisdom of those who have managed to exercise administrative functions or university leadership, they have concluded that the lack of regulations, mechanisms of promotion and recognition or accreditation of the Scientific Societies, In the vast majority of Bolivian university careers and faculties, these are the main factors that have prevented the consolidation and consequently the budgetary management to give continuity and impetus to all the students who are members of these groups, attributing this failure to the students themselves.

Unfortunately, as they come from different areas of knowledge, they did not achieve the necessary cohesion to request economic and logistical support in order to ensure their continued existence. Nevertheless, this factor has led to some scientific societies disappearing or simply becoming dependent on political student groups, whose supremacy allowed them to justify the economic resources of the student body destined for pre-graduate research.

Thanks to the insistence and institutional life of the Scientific Societies of Students of the Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontifica de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca, in particular the Scientific Society of Law Students (S.C.E.D.), it has been possible to investigate, collect and compile information on the student body's activities. ) it has been possible to investigate, compile and systematise different university provisions that are directly related to the Scientific Societies, and it has also been a fundamental task to rescue the valuable contributions provided by the Association of Scientific Societies of Students of the University San Francisco Xavier (ASCE - USFX), as the only legally recognised institutional entity in Bolivia, which as a result of its own permanent efforts was able to establish a series of reforms in the Bolivian University System that are now the subject of study, Therefore, the present article should be analysed and disseminated, as this work has been the product of various meetings, encounters and other congresses that unfortunately pass into the simple memory of those present, as the incorporation of only students in the legal regulation made it unsustainable that the agreements reached are not reflected in reports, which paradoxically resulted in the majority of the time in the majority of new participating actors.

Therefore, this article will not only deal with university regulations, be they resolutions or precedents, but will also unravel the meaning and functioning of the Student Scientific Societies in all Bolivian universities.

### **Theoretical framework**

Few reliable data exist in relation to the students who stimulated the creation of Scientific Societies in the Public Universities of Bolivia, it is enough to simply observe that in most cases they are simple comments that make reference to previous generations that would have promoted the establishment of Scientific Societies in the field of Medicine.

The traditional discourse that is reiterated in any academic event has revolved around the fact that the first glimpses emerged as a consequence of the interest of students from the Medical School of the Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontificia de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca in projecting research work, the exact date on which the first Scientific Society was founded is unknown, not only at the Universidad San Francisco Xavier but also in the rest of the universities of the system, therefore, since there is no founding act, organic statute, much less an internal regulation that governs the actions of this Scientific Society, Despite the fact that it is still stable, this statement should not be considered as a valid or fully historical criterion, but it is relevant data that allows us to infer that the source of the establishment of Scientific Societies of Medicine in Bolivia had repercussions on the creation of Societies in the other careers.

According to the characteristics of each facultative unit, several Scientific Societies began to be founded in our University, such is the case of the Scientific Society of Odontology, however, like Medicine, it could not establish a system of archived documentation, where it is possible to verify the procedures established or the reception and sending of notes or requests.

To tell the truth, if it is a question of integrating legal situations, the first Scientific Society of Students in the Bolivian University, according to the founding act dated September 8, 1995, is the Scientific Society of Law Students (S.C.E.D.) of the Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontificia de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca, logically, by grouping students who studied a profession related to the Legal Sciences, it was foreseen that everything concerning its establishment, the way of executing activities, organic statutes, internal regulations and a host of correspondence would be registered, making it the proven historical milestone of the constitution of Scientific Societies in the whole Bolivian University System by initiative of the student sector of the Faculty of Law, Political and Social Sciences of the Universidad San Francisco Xavier itself.

At the same time as these three student scientific societies, namely Law, Medicine and Dentistry, in 2003 new student research groups began to form in Architecture, Social Communication, Economics, Nursing, Pharmacy and Biochemistry, but personal meetings with the members of the latter scientific societies were summarised in simple arguments about the legal informality of the loss of the documentation inherent to their exercise and functioning for reasons that were completely unknown. An extremely important fact, as recorded in the archives of the S.C.E.D., This, like its foundations, was also unable to accredit its legal existence. Under this analysis, it is no less certain that this data is only a significant antecedent, which, due to the lack of rigorousness and the initiation of procedures before university recognition bodies, means that it is only a precedent, but not a fact that marks history within the Bolivian University System. With the passing of time and the development of events, activities, research projects, congresses and other tasks that were organised and executed by the Student Scientific Societies, San Francisco Xavier University convened at the end of August 2009 the I National Congress of Research, Science and Technology, where naturally student researchers were invited to attend permanently as organisers and participants.

As a result of permanent talks and approaches between the organising Scientific Societies, namely Law, Mechanical, Electrical and Electromechanical Engineering, Public Accounting, Medicine and Dentistry, the Association of Scientific Societies of Students of the University San Francisco Xavier (ASCE - USFX) is constituted, according to the minutes of September 7, 2009, as the only and main institutional entity that brings together all the Scientific Societies of Students of the University. Certainly the first activity developed by the ASCE - USFX resulted in the development of the organic statute, internal regulations, in addition to the emblem that determine the characteristics and functions of an Association, allowing its member Societies the correct formulation and adequacy of its internal regulations, which until that time was seen as non-uniform, dispersed and contradictory, due to little experience and guidance on issues relating to the development of statutes and regulations that do not become congruent or contradictory to higher standards emanating from the CEUB.

Once the drafting of the documents was completed, common difficulties were perceived, which were experienced by the Scientific Societies, in each of the activities and events organised at both local and national level, with this problem being rooted in the lack of express recognition and accreditation by the University itself. Until then, none of the previous directors, with the exception of those representing the S.C.E.D., had no knowledge of the impact caused by the lack of university recognition, under the almost ill-advised argument that the Scientific Societies of the rest of the universities in the system were supposedly functioning, to which is added that they did not present conflicts a priori, simply the intervention of people linked to the student leadership affected the credibility of the Scientific Societies, but it was revealed that when they did not obtain any benefit, they abandoned the idea of agreeing and appropriating what was generated by them in their research work.

This was analysed and in accordance with the best criteria of institutionalising for the first time and without the intervention of university political actors, the ASCE-USFX and each of its member societies proceeded with the process of express recognition and accreditation before the highest university authority of San Francisco Xavier.

After several months of waiting and presenting the relevant documents to the Vice Rectorate, who in turn took on the task of supporting pre-graduate research through the Student Scientific Societies, the Vicerectoral Resolution 176/2010 was issued on August 13, 2010, which in the literal part of each of the articles formally indicated the "recognition of the student scientific societies" with express mention of the nomenclature and name assumed in the preceding form, Likewise, this Resolution includes "the acts of constitution, statutes and internal regulations of the Association of Student Scientific Societies of the Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontifica de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca, as well as of each of the recognised societies", and finally it is instructed to "submit the present provision to the Honourable University Council for its consideration and approval".

The University Council, observing that the research of undergraduate students is promoted and encouraged, without further difficulty or delay in the process, on September 15 of the 2010 academic year and in accordance with the background exposed above, approves the Vicerectoral Resolution No. 176/2010, through the HCU Resolution No. 094/2010 milestone of historical character, since it formally recognizes and initiates the legal life under university regulations of the Scientific Societies of Students of San Francisco Xavier and why not say it also in Bolivia. Thanks to this well-deserved process, the first and only Scientific Societies of Public Universities have as their legal source of origin the city of Sucre, capital of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and home to the Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontifica de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca.

*Regulations of the Bolivian University System referring to Student Scientific Societies*

According to Resolution N° 35/99 of the IX National Congress of Universities, held from 17 to 21 May 1999 at the Autonomous University of Beni, the "need to encourage the creation of scientific societies of university students throughout the system" was established. From a historical perspective, it is not possible to identify the causes or motives that potentially led this congress to take a position on student scientific societies. One of the prevailing difficulties in the Bolivian University System is the lack of institutional commitment to cultivate a culture related to the elaboration of complete reports that transcribe in detail the will of the congress participants of the commissions that are constituted for each congress at the time of issuing criteria, contributions and suggestions, therefore the CEUB documents are limited to transcribing all the emerging resolutions, moreover, precedents are not established that allow the proper legal interpretation of each of the articles and the nature or spirit of drafting.

The notable thing that can be highlighted is the interest that could have been generated within the degree programmes that already had student scientific societies, the existence of some support to provide support to strengthen them in their facultative units, although the lack of knowledge and dissemination of these normative documents meant that it remained a simple precedent and did not have the necessary impact to promote greater statutory reforms for the benefit of research students, despite having legal background to support the requests or budgetary processing in general.

It should be remembered that in February 2009, the new Bolivian Constitution came into force, which meant that all local, regional, departmental and national bodies, entities and organisations had to adapt their internal rules and regulations to the provisions of the Constitution. Within this constitutional framework, the Bolivian University, through Resolution N° 01/2009 of the I National Conference of Universities held at the Autonomous University Juan Misael Saracho (UAJMS) in the city of Tarija, decided to convene the XI National Congress of Universities to be held at the Technical University of Oruro in mid-June 2009. To clarify and understand the institutional relevance of a Congress, it is correct to mention that the Organic Statute of the Bolivian University, as the supreme norm that determines the characteristics, principles, aims and functions of Bolivian higher education through the Bolivian University System, literally indicates in Article 12 in relation to the Congress of Universities that it is constituted as "the highest governing body and the highest authority of the Bolivian Public University and will meet ordinarily every four years and extraordinarily at the request of five or more Universities". In strict compliance with this mandate, the XI Congress of Universities was convened and, in accordance with the Rules of Debate, the necessary commissions were set up to deal with each of the specific regulations and norms to be approved for the Bolivian University.

As is traditional, the Research Commission was set up, and its report states that the commission "used the dialectic and participative method, where the distinguished members of the Congress took the floor to analyse the problems of scientific and technological research in the University System, reaching the conclusion that the fundamental pillar of the public university is the development of science, technology and research". Little is said about the premises that justified the projection of the relevant resolutions and regulations, so for a better understanding of this article we will only refer to the interpretation of the resolutions and in a later one to issue legal criteria of the articles related to the regulations that are binding to the research work of the Scientific Societies.

The Research Commission approved four resolutions, three of which refer to the Student Scientific Societies, more specifically Resolution N° 49/09 in its first article modifies article 54 of the Organic Statute of the Bolivian University, adding paragraph g), on the quality of the participants of the National Meeting of Research, Science and Technology (RENACIT) incorporating the intervention of "three student members of the Scientific Societies of each university". This allows the active collaboration of the Student Scientific Societies in national meetings organised by the CEUB itself and which link the scientific and technological activity of the Bolivian University, clarifying that the results of the RENACIT about the Scientific Societies will be studied and analysed in depth in the following sections.

In addition, the resolution under study, in its second article, defined the incorporation of a new provision to the Organic Statute of the Bolivian University, by which through article 102 "the National System of Universities of Science and Technology (SINUCYT) with its respective regulations is given effect". As stated in Article 1, SINUCYT, "is the set of bodies and bodies of the Bolivian University System responsible for achieving the aims and objectives on research, science, technology, innovation and social interaction of the Bolivian University", from which it can be seen that research is an essential pillar, This was to be delegated the scientific research activity, which due to its prevailing nature fell to research institutes or centres, whose main researchers were university professors.

The SINUCYT Statute in its third article stated that such a system "includes the Student Research Societies, postgraduate students, research assistants and undergraduate research students". This is a remarkable contribution since, as well as allowing teachers to look after the scientific future of public universities, it was considered inexcusable that students of the scientific societies could build and design research projects at undergraduate level. From this it can be inferred that the Societies are legally recognised, but with a not entirely perfect nomenclature, because they were called Student Research Societies, but this mistake has been corrected, as will be seen later on.

It should be noted that article four of Resolution N° 50/09 of the XI Congress stipulates that "Universities should encourage the creation of Scientific Societies, based on a Regulation". This valuable precedent for the present study is an element of interpretation and has a connotation in safeguarding the existence of the Societies, implicitly the will of the participating congressman was to summon the Bolivian Houses of Higher Studies to elaborate and regulate the activity of these research groups, until then dysfunctional due to the scarce legal support that the university authorities had given them.

The formal recognition by the System was partial due to two notable motions, the main one not mentioning textually to which institutional part of the Universities in particular the projection of the regulation is delegated, obviously it will be noted that this is no longer an attribution of the Congress but of each University, but all instructions derived by competent authority are executed according to the general attributions, nevertheless in most cases it is compensated with specific faculties where nobody wants to usurp functions that do not belong to them for reasons of responsibility in the fulfilment of duties. Finally, the mechanisms for verifying that these companies can participate in the projection of regulations related to their actions were not included. Evidently, this article marked a big step forward for the Student Scientific Societies and even more so to allow their respective recognition, proof of which in all normative instruments is used as a precedent to grant the accreditations that are requested by the Societies.

Resolution N° 56/09, which in its first article, paragraph g) recommends RENACIT to organise and organise various points, one of them being "to promote student scientific societies and include them in the national prize for scientific research". The promotion was understood as fully stagnant, the economic resources were not disbursed to channel projects, workshops, courses, scientific dissemination material in the Universities, although the Secretariat of Research, Science and Technology of the CEUB (SICYT-CEUB) began with the logistical support to the Student Scientific Societies using as main instrument the guarantee of their participation in the RENACIT.

To conclude, the XI Congress approved a transcendental document for Bolivian university students, entitled "Reglamento del Régimen Académico Estudiantil de la Universidad Boliviana" (Regulations of the Student Academic Regime of the Bolivian University), which in article 14, paragraph h), legally allows students of public universities to initiate the "formation of scientific student societies oriented towards research and knowledge of nature, society and thought subject to control and supervision in accordance with the regulations". No one can ignore the power granted by Congress to establish that interest in research topics is sufficient for students to form scientific societies within their careers and faculties, subject to a regulation, which as foreseen will be considered in the following sections related to specific regulations of research, science and technology of the CEUB.

Each of the resolutions analysed can be summarised as legal precedents that institutionalise, recognise and allow the birth to legal life of the Scientific Societies of Students in the Bolivian University System, without ignoring that previous resolutions originated the founding of the Societies and promoted their constitution, also refuting that the XI Congress opens spaces for a new stage in pre-graduate student research. This is favourably used by the student members of the Scientific Societies, in particular the ASCE-USFX, for their permanent insistence on achieving contributions and a greater number of certifications or accreditations in events, meetings and congresses that are organised for academic, research or social interaction purposes by the CEUB or the Bolivian University.

*Participation, accreditation and recognition of Student Scientific Societies in National Research, Science and Technology Meetings (RENACIT)*

Article 33 e) of the Organic Statute of the Bolivian University incorporates RENACIT as a national advisory body, and in the chapter on special regulations it expresses its pre-eminence as the highest authority for defining science and technology policies in the Bolivian University System and must therefore guarantee that it is held every academic year at the call of SICYT-CEUB. Deplorably, up to its tenth version, there are no reports that reveal what the guiding criteria for RENACIT's work have been, and even for the XI National Congress of Universities, the draft resolutions that should have been approved in the respective congressional resolutions are unknown.

Despite not having the conclusions and issues addressed in the first ten versions, with the legal basis indicated above, SICYT-CEUB in coordination with the Universidad Mayor de San Simón (UMSS), called the XI RENACIT, held on 4 and 5 November 2010. At the time of issuing the call and in strict compliance with the modifications introduced by Resolution No. 49/09 of the XI Congress of Universities, three students from the Scientific Societies were required to present themselves as participants, a situation that demanded that each delegation of the Universities of the System summon research students from the different careers or faculties to participate in the RENACIT.tades.

Notoriously, the Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontificia de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca, with due anticipation communicated to the ASCE - USFX the call and respective agenda to be discussed at the RENACIT, requesting the designation of the students who would integrate the delegation, as well as urging them to prepare a student proposal to enrich the first regulatory document of the Scientific Societies.

On their own initiative and with the experience acquired in the transcription of the organic statutes and internal regulations of the Association and its respective Scientific Societies, the meticulous task of drafting a regulation that could regulate the functioning of the Societies began, but with the addition of generating consensus among all the Universities. The draft regulations offered by the ASCE - USFX were too complete, to such an extent that an organic statute and internal regulations were drawn up as a general model, so that all Scientific Societies would be fully aware of the correct procedures, so that students interested in developing research projects through student groups would not encounter any ambiguities when forming a Society.

The relationship and certain links that arose between the Scientific Societies of the other departments prior to RENACIT cannot be disputed, the strange thing is that no matrix contact was generated with other delegations to establish the main chapters to be contained in the regulations. Thus, as established in the background of Resolution N° 05/10 of the XI RENACIT, the commission corresponding to the regulations of the Student Scientific Societies (SCE), managed to integrate the relevant proposals for regulations from the Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontificia de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca, Universidad Autónoma Juan Misael Saracho and the CEUB. Erroneous assertion because the only student delegation and representatives of the fully accredited and recognised Scientific Societies of the Bolivian University System was the ASCE - USFX, the other Universities of El Alto, San Simón, Tomás Frías did not bring their own proposals, they simply attended contributing and enriching the projection of the future regulations. With regard to the proposal of the University of Tarija, it should be pointed out that there were no students from the Scientific Societies present at the RENACIT, it was simply an administrative officer who handed over the current regulations of the Scientific Societies of the UAJMS, and no articles were included, as they were more of an organic and representative nature, not functional, and much less was it a model to follow or a contribution to the regulatory norms.

Under the nomenclature of General Regulations of Scientific and Student Societies (SCE), it is the first normative document of the Bolivian University that prescribes the nature, categorisation of members, rights, duties, reports, recognition and accreditation, incompatibilities and other points for the benefit of the Scientific Societies. This valuable project, which certainly attempted to partially regulate the activity of undergraduate research groups, lacked many formalities and in particular little legal wording, and did not even assess whether or not it transgressed what was regulated by the Bolivian University, nor did it refer to significant aspects such as their organisation and representation at local or national level, eligible positions and other observations that were understood by the short time that RENACIT itself had given them, practically 24 hours were not enough, justifying the many legal loopholes in this inconvenience. Furthermore, it is inconceivable that a regulation should lack articles, because the proposal included normative sections in the form of paragraphs, with overly long and pompous paragraphs, whose importance lies in the fact that there is a complementarity of some articles with others, as well as adequately establishing the basic chapters of any general regulation, all in accordance with the science and technology indicators of the University System and in accordance with the needs of those students who generate research as a complementary activity to their professional training.

To give legal and juridical support, the sole article of Resolution N° 05/10 decrees "to recommend the application of the General Regulations of the Student Scientific Societies that have been dealt with by Commission III formed in the XI RENACIT 2010, considering the organisational conditions and administrative rules of each of the Universities". By introducing the term recommend, from a legal point of view, it can be understood that the RENACIT induces a simple suggestion, but not as a synonym for binding or inexcusable.



To this end, it must be considered that the resolutions of the technical meetings organised by the CEUB only issue suggestions; only the Congress of Universities has the specific power to approve the resolutions, with an imperative and obligatory character, without any public university or its governing bodies being able to delay their compliance.

It should be noted that Commission III was made up of students from the Board of Directors of the ASCE - USFX, representatives of the Scientific Societies of the Public Universities of El Alto, Tomas Frias and San Simon, being then the first and only Association present at such an emotional event, which led to the founding of the Organization of Scientific Societies of Students of the University System of Bolivia (OSCESUB) with minutes dated November 5, 2010. As a proposal of San Francisco Xavier and in the absence of interrelation organisms, the constitution of a national body is promoted, catalogued as an instance of representation of each and every one of the Scientific Societies of Students of the Universities of the System, whose own character would be of scientific, academic and non-profit order, as the nature of any Society states. The OSCESUB went through different stages from its constitution to its recognition by the CEUB, which will be studied in depth in subsequent articles. The ASCE-USFX, being the founder of this organisation, constantly promotes the consolidation of this organisation and, subsidiarily, its member Associations. The problem is the discontinuity of the other Universities, that is, unlike San Francisco Xavier, the other Universities have never guaranteed the continuity of the activities of the Scientific Societies, to which is added the lack of formalism, lack of institutional commitment, lack of care with documents and archived correspondence, lack of attendance at events related to science and technology promoted by the CEUB and the OSCESUB, which over the years could be overcome by the achievements obtained at each meeting.

The SICYT-CEUB together with the Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno (UAGRM), held the XII RENACIT on 18 and 19 October 2011, where ASCE-USFX naturally guaranteed the presence of its new board with representatives who continued the work entrusted by their societies in previous meetings and assemblies, which influenced in indispensable contributions to the central theme to be discussed, i.e., with Article 1 of Resolution No. 02/2011 it was possible to "approve the National University Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2012-2015 as a management instrument of the universities of the system for the development and strengthening of science, technology and innovation in the projected period". The part of Human Resources for Research, which only took into account the teaching sector and not students, was potentially strengthened by adding to this strategy the need to mention the contribution of students, who are grouped in the different Student Scientific Societies, which goes hand in hand with the challenges for research 2012-2015, This goes hand in hand with the challenges for research 2012-2015, since within the indicators it is determined to strengthen and encourage new talents for the production of scientific and technological knowledge through the Scientific Societies, and at the same time the Directorates of Research, Science and Technology (DICYT) are urged to promote and strengthen the creation of Scientific Societies of teachers and students. None of them have complied with this express mandate to consolidate the Science and Technology System. Furthermore, one of the points of the strategic action established as a special responsibility the promotion of the participation and presence of university researchers, specifically Scientific Societies, in national and international scientific events.

It is sufficient to observe that, with the exception of the DICYT of San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca, the other universities were not able to send their student representatives to RENACIT, which means that the creation of scientific societies has not spread within the universities, i.e. the administrative authorities in their corporate and functional chronogram should have qualified the functionality and fulfilment of the matrices on which the Bolivian University would fall in student research, science and technology issues. For the elaboration of the University Strategy an essential element is the performance of each one of the matrices, the neglect of the DICYTs did not justify the non-observance of the Association, since as a short and long term task the promotion and incentive of scientific research in the students with pre-graduate training stage was outlined, allowing the constitution according to the norm of several Scientific Societies, such as Agricultural Sciences, Economic and Business Sciences, History and Technology, Chemistry Area, which by means of Vice-rector's Resolution N° 158/2013 dated eighteen September 2013, ratified by Rector's Resolution N° 1017/2013 dated sixteen October 2013 are recognised and incorporated into the San Francisco Xavier University, becoming four more Scientific Societies within the ASCE - USFX.

The processes, procedures, reports and participation of the Association of Scientific Societies of Students of Sucre have been quite consistent, at the request of the CEUB and through the SICYT, the Societies were strengthened, as those students of the ASCE - USFX who began the legalisation and propagation, from a legal approach in all instances of the System, obtained the legal backing of the national coordination body of the Houses of Higher Education in Bolivia, being the only reference of student research organisation in the entire University System.

Chronologically, in 2012, the Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontificia de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca organised the XIII RENACIT on 11 and 12 October, which was attended by around eighty delegates representing all the public universities in accordance with the composition established by the Organic Statute of the Bolivian University, which by Resolution N° 03/2012 decided to "approve the Regulations of the National System of Research, Science and Technology SINUCYT, which the Commission formed in the XIII RENACIT 2012 has dealt with, with its VI Chapters and its 19 articles for its application in each of the Universities of the Bolivian System". This project, in accordance with the university document related to SINUCYT, allowed the recognition and participation of students from the Scientific Societies in the technical and sectorial meetings related to lines of research, documents that were ratified and enriched in the XII University Congress.

The XIV RENACIT was held at the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (UMSA) in the city of La Paz on 20 and 21 February 2014. In this event the delegates of the Board of Directors of the ASCE - USFX, participated actively in each of the Commissions as well as in Plenary giving them the power to review and approve each of the emerging resolutions, so that in the XIV RENACIT three resolutions were approved inherent to the Scientific Societies of Students being developed, drafted and projected by the three delegates of the ASCE - USFX, These resolutions were approved by the majority of both bodies in the Plenary, and their importance lies in the designation of San Francisco Xavier University as the venue for the II National Congress of Student Scientific Societies of the Bolivian University System, which through the OSCESUB, in coordination with the ASCE - USFX, would be in charge of organising the Congress.

In the same way, it is worth remembering that the relevant modifications to the General Regulations of Student Scientific Societies (SCE) were made, as well as the incorporation in each of the chapters of articles referring to the recognition of the Student Scientific Societies in the Regulations for Researchers and Scientific Research of the Bolivian University System, as main subsidiary and specific regulations to the Organic Statute of the Bolivian University, on which the SICYT-CEUB, the DICYTs and consequently the Bolivian Universities will focus their activity.

*Framework Regulation RM - SEIF-D - SUB for Public Universities*

Among the objectives of SINUCYT is the creation of a University Fund for Scientific and Technological Research, known as FONUCYT, as well as the management of resources and credits to improve equipment and other materials and inputs for research, the creation of a national university register of researchers due to the lack of accurate and current data on human resources for research. Finally, there is a need to create a university unit for patents and copyrights, due to the lack of a national university intellectual property regime and the permanent plagiarism of Bolivian research by national or foreign peers. These premises and other budgetary resources, as in the case of D.S. 1322, which expressly stated that "the Autonomous Public Universities are authorised to allocate up to five percent (5%) of the resources received in each administration for IDH, to finance activities and representations developed by university students related to university extension, culture and sports, at local, national and international level", as well as other Supreme Decrees and University Resolutions, gradually allow for the financing of student scientific activity in the Bolivian University System.

On this legal basis, the ASCE - USFX in the respective commission of the XIV RENACIT, proceeded to a thorough review in extenso of the regulations to be approved in order to obtain resources from the IDH, which immediately allow public universities the management and therefore the use of public economic resources for scientific research, but despite the persistent observations that were made to the articles, The authorities of the teaching sector made it clear that, as students, it is unfeasible for them to request these resources or for them to be used by the Student Scientific Societies, arguing that this budget is only intended for concurrent purchases, i.e. equipment and infrastructure, and that although the training of research professors and other research-oriented activities is foreseen, under no circumstances can the training of research students be approved.

In short, the use of resources coming from the IDH and which would be regulated by this regulation will not benefit the student researchers who are members of the Scientific Societies. However, it was requested as a suggestion that such resources could be used for the scientific activities and training of the Societies, a motion that was ultimately dismissed, pointing out that there are resources from the student body itself destined for science. It was even mentioned that the government itself approved Supreme Decrees authorising that students can be beneficiaries of such resources, but these are administered by political entities, which in most cases, under subjective excuses of lack of budget, refused to give course or viability to a certain amount to the promotion of science.

*Regulations of the National University System of Science and Technology (SINUCYT)*

Before dealing with the Regulations and as an effect of the participation of the ASCE - USFX in the XIII RENACIT, it should be noted that Resolution N° 50/09 of the XI National Congress of Universities in its sixth article resolved, "to entrust the RENACIT with the revision, modification and adaptation of the Regulations of the National System of Research, Science and Technology SINUCYT".

Therefore, in Resolution N° 03/2012, after an intense day of work with the participation of students and teachers, it was decided to approve the Regulations, which were subsequently discussed and supplemented by the ASCE - USFX at the XII National Congress of Universities.

#### *General Regulations for Research and Researchers in the University System*

This is perhaps one of the regulations with the greatest impact on SINUCYT, as it will logically regulate the teacher and consequently the student, who on their own initiative decide to venture into scientific and technological research. For several years, both have not had any regulation that could protect them as indispensable subjects in the field of science, technology and innovation, so all the participants of the XIV RENACIT were officially presented with a project prepared by the teaching sector of the UMSA. In this sense, as a student sector, the ASCE - USFX present in the Commission noticed a legal omission of a position taken in a previous national meeting. Within the agenda of the XIII RENACIT, the analysis of both regulations was determined, but by Resolution No. 04/2012, more specifically in the second article it was decided "to entrust the Scientific and Technological Research Directorates of each University, the preparation of a proposal for the General Regulation of Scientific and Technological Research based on the observations and recommendations attached to the present. To this end, they should convene teachers and students, preferably those who participated in commission III of the XIII RENACIT and who analysed the general regulations for Scientific and Technological Research".

In the XIV RENACIT, the ASCE - USFX had the obligation to inform all the delegations of what had been resolved in the previous RENACIT. Furthermore, in spite of the UMSA's own initiative, a regulation could not be projected without the participation of students, and so after a long debate it was decided to set up teachers and students per university to draw up proposals to be incorporated into the future regulation.

It should be recalled that on 10 March 2014 the ASCE - USFX, made the delivery within the legal deadline granted by the XVI RENACIT to the DICYT of San Francisco Xavier and the SICYT-CEUB of a chapter on the inclusion of Scientific Societies of Students, because the ASCE - USFX, at the conclusion of the XVI RENACIT and grouping different delegations of Scientific Societies, assumed the responsibility of projecting and drafting articles, which will ultimately be added to these Regulations, after review and approval by the other members of the Scientific Societies, a guiding criterion that as a result of the student effort of the ASCE - USFX has been incorporated into the agenda of the RENACIT, In other words, one of the pillars of the student researcher is university recognition as part of their professional training, from which it can be deduced that now all members will be registered in a timely manner, so that in the future their time and dedication will be positively valued even for the purposes of university certification, since until now only the teacher was taken into account, but not the students as a human resource for research. It is therefore necessary to mention the contribution of students in RENACIT, based on the different Student Scientific Societies, conceptualised as entities made up of undergraduate students from the Bolivian University's degree courses and faculties, whose purpose is to coordinate, promote, foster and encourage the production and development of academic activity, scientific and technological research, social interaction and artistic sciences, strengthening the interest and active participation of students in research.

#### *Inclusion and institutional recognition of Student Scientific Societies*

Due to the internal organisation and institutional characteristics of the ASCE-USFX, it has been foreseen that the venue of the next Congress of Scientific Societies will be the city of Sucre, whose working matrix is the elaboration of the Organic Statute and Internal Regulations that will define the OSCESUB.

Regarding the National Congress of Scientific Societies of Students of the Bolivian University System, it should be noted that through the ASCE-USFX's own efforts, having observed a lack of motivation and commitment from the other Scientific Societies of the University System, and thanks to the constant and persistent meetings held with CEUB authorities, the institutional consolidation of OSCESUB is being encouraged, requiring an urgent meeting.

The ASCE - USFX proceeded with the development of a proposal for the so-called "First Meeting of Representatives of the Scientific Societies of the Bolivian University System", held in the city of La Paz at the end of August 2013 in environments provided by the Scientific Societies of the UMSA. On this occasion and after a long debate, San Francisco Xavier was named as the venue for the II Congress, whose resolution, as noted, was projected by the ASCE - USFX and fully approved in the RENACIT, with the democratic support of the other delegations. With regard to the regulations governing the validity of the Societies, in the XIV RENACIT the representatives of ASCE-USFX managed to design and modify the General Regulations of the Scientific Societies of Students in accordance with the minimum requirements that had been ignored in the previous RENACIT, which is why the regulations had to be adapted and modified in the XII National Congress of Universities, as a stage prior to their promulgation and validity in university classrooms, in order to reach their legal perfection.

### *XII National Congress of Universities*

The approval of the emerging resolutions of the RENACIT carried out from 2010 to 2014, in the Second Phase of the XII National Congress of Universities held in the city of Santa Cruz, was a historic event, as it was a fundamental point.

The organizers of the II National Congress of Student Scientific Societies of the Bolivian University System, as well as the delegates who drafted the resolutions and made the modifications to the General Regulations of Student Scientific Societies, were required to participate in the Second Phase of the XII National Congress of Universities held in the city of Santa Cruz, headquarters of the Universidad Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno from 5 to 9 May 2014, ASCE - USFX requested the Honorable University Council of San Francisco Xavier to authorize and instruct the delegates of the Board of Directors of the Association, as part of the student sector, to participate in the XII National Congress of Universities, as their presence was essential to explain all aspects of the resolutions and particularly the regulations related to these undergraduate scientific research bodies, such as the Regulations for Scientific Research and Researchers of the Bolivian University System and the Regulations of the University System of Science and Technology.

The HCU Resolution No. 039/2014 dated May 2, 2014, authorizes the participation of three delegates of the Board of Directors of the ASCE - USFX, who had the long-term vision to participate with a myriad of observations and contributions that were embodied in various articles, which were constitutive part of the three regulations that were discussed in the Research Commission of the XII Congress of Universities, This was the result of the efforts made by the participating delegation of the Association of Scientific Societies of Students of San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca and the notable support of the nascent Association of Scientific Societies of Students of the Autonomous University Gabriel René Moreno (ASCE - UAGRM), which as a result of the XII Congress proceeded to its founding act on 9 May 2014, date on which the four resolutions were fully approved in Plenary of the Congress, ratifying each of the regulations governing the scientific activity of the Bolivian University System, which by its membership and relevance grant the university legal personality, i.e., it proceeds for the first time to the legal and institutional recognition of student research groups by the Bolivian University System.

To conclude personally, it is worth mentioning that the effort, dedication, commitment to work of the Scientific Societies of Students of San Francisco Xavier and especially of the young university scientists, are the impetus that led the writer of this article to continue this arduous task as a representative, who also at the time of assuming the presidency of the S.C.E.D., due to his little experience in the field of research and development of the S.C.E.D., was the first to be recognized by the Bolivian University System, because of his little experience in the field of research, he only dared to point out a phrase that has been perpetrated in the S.C.E.D. until today, that which denotes, Science, Research and Friendship Forward Society!!!. Now it has repercussions in the ASCE - USFX, Academia, Research and Interaction, forward Association!

## Results

After a previous legal analysis of the university regulations, we proceeded with a historical review necessary to understand and link the formative activity of the student members of the Scientific Societies of the San Francisco Xavier University, highlighting their valuable contribution in the formation of the first Scientific Societies and the respective Association in the Bolivian University System. The lack of memories or documents has not hindered the concretization of each of the sections, a fundamental contribution is the documentary legacy transmitted by some representatives of the Scientific Societies of Sucre, but the informality of the other Universities makes it impossible to count on extremely important reviews that should be analyzed or studied for the conformation of Societies.

Clearly, as a legal precedent, the Resolutions of the Honorable University Council as well as Conferences, Congresses and Meetings organized by the CEUB were defined, which allowed the contextualization of facts and events that took place in the University San Francisco Xavier and the University System as a unique and primary source to establish a circumstantial relationship of the legal background that consolidated the entry of the Scientific Societies to the Bolivian University.

In order to do this, we could not leave aside the traits of the congressman's own will, that is to say, since there is no data on the way of thinking and acting of those delegates who participated in each of the CEUB events, we were able to rescue the guidelines on which their actions were based, agreeing with each and every one of the university regulatory provisions that are obligatory for the Scientific Societies.

A complete legal interpretation of each of the resolutions emerging from previous University Congresses, which due to their characteristics have been related to the Scientific Societies of Students, is achieved, with the addition that there are no other documents, with the exception of this article, that manage to understand and systematise the university legislation coming from the CEUB, The discontinuity of national and administrative authorities has had an impact on the lack of commitment to promote undergraduate research. It is difficult to foresee that students will write and leave an analysis of their contributions in each meeting or congress they attend, so the notability of what has been written, in each of the preceding points, allows it to become an institutional contribution for the purpose of implementing actions in the next Bolivian university strategy.

With an appropriate exegesis, it was possible to unravel the bases, origins and form of issuing each resolution in the RENACIT, since the student presence in these meetings guaranteed that what was obtained would not remain in a simple document, but on the contrary would be a premise to achieve in future events the respect of what was previously planned and agreed in these sectors, Therefore, the background and legal precedents for the creation and functioning of the Scientific Societies are strengthened, while at the same time it was very beneficial to know the guiding criteria of the opinion of the ASCE - USFX with respect to university actions in science and technology.

A clear example is that it was possible to legally modulate each regulation related to research in the University System, not simply based on resolutions, but by achieving a tight monitoring of student researchers in compliance with such resolutions, for which it was possible to visualize and agree on all the regulatory provisions relating to scientific societies, excluding those that have not been publicly accessible.

Finally, after analysis, a compilation of general and specific regulations was obtained, a document of unfailing dissemination among the Scientific Student Societies of both the Bolivian University System and other Bolivian Universities.

### **Conclusions**

The Universidad Mayor, Real y Pontifica de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca is the cradle of the birth, origin, emergence and consolidation of the Scientific Societies of Students, rescuing that each of the Societies that were initially founded continue with their academic activities, research and social interaction, at the same time the ASCE - USFX is a pioneer in the formation of groups of Scientific Societies, At the same time, the ASCE-USFX is a pioneer in the formation of groups of Scientific Societies, cultivating an attitude of formal recognition prior to initiating any research work, in order to consequently have an impact on the organic statutory framework and internal regulations of the OSCEUSB, a new challenge taken on by each of the student researchers of San Francisco Xavier in sponsorship of the nascent OSCEUSB.

The interest and work demonstrated by the ASCE - USFX is the national reference of the Scientific Societies in the Bolivian University System, due to the formality and legality that has always characterised its actions within the university. Proof of this, this entity constantly participates in each of the events that concern science and technology at local, national and international level, achieving for its universities deserved recognition, as can be seen in each of the tasks that are frequently developed by its members.

The RENACIT, being a technical meeting prior to any major congress, allowed students of the Scientific Societies to begin the longed-for search for university recognition, therefore it is appreciated that the SICYT-CEUB and the DICYT of each University of the System have convened those directly interested, demonstrating at all times the benefit of generating not only a space for debate but also for strengthening student researchers, Although their main requirements, such as equipment, infrastructure and budgetary resources, will not be fully addressed, their contribution is essential as they consolidate and guarantee the permanence and continuity of the Student Scientific Societies in the different careers and faculties of the Public Universities of Bolivia.

The XII National Congress of Universities of Bolivia, marks the historical milestone of formal recognition and accreditation of the Scientific Societies of Students, their respective Associations and OSCEUSB, therefore future generations already have a historical background, legal precedents, general and specific regulations, representative bodies visibly approved and authorised by the university authorities, to continue with their specific role, i.e. to encourage their members to combine their experiences with scientific capacities and aptitudes, developing competences to face scientific activity in different research contexts, as established in their General Regulations, which is the official document for the creation and regulation of the Student Scientific Societies in the Bolivian University System.

The regulations of the System are extensive, the non-existence of a database, the lack of legal support limits the information provided on the legal bases for the constitution and operation of a Scientific Society. For all these reasons and as part of a constructivist suggestion, it is urgent to adopt incentive strategies for science, it is not enough to elaborate and approve normative documents, their applicability must be guaranteed in the framework of managing the training of the Scientific Societies, reason enough to continue with further contributions, which develop extensively each of the above regulations, this being a personal responsibility, having enjoyed the great honor of participating in all the events and promoted, planned and even drafted most of the articles and resolutions approved over the last few years.

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