



Supplemental Funding Manual

for Certified Student Organizations

2017

Student Organization Resource Center
Office of Student Life
Division of Student Affairs
University of Pittsburgh

Purpose and Use of the Student Activities Fee

Student Activity Fees

Student activity fees are collected from all University students and are administered by the Office of Student Life (Student Life).

Student Life provides programs and services for graduate/professional students with activity fee revenue. Every school receives half of the fee per student in the school and GPSG operating expenses are funded by activity fees.

Assembly board recognized graduate/professional student groups receive annual activity fee funded budgets approved by GPSG. These graduate/professional student assembly groups (GAGs) follow: ANKUR, Iranian Student Association, PANAF, CSSA, TASA and GOSECA.

The Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) is recognized by the Vice Provost/ Dean of Students as the governing body for all graduate and professional students. Student Life provides GPSG with an annual budget to support its programs and services and to provide financial support to eligible certified student organizations according to procedures and policies approved by Student Life.

Eligibility for Funding

All organizations must be certified by the Student Organization Resource Center (SORC) to officially operate on campus. Certification is a precondition to apply for activity fee funding and must be maintained to remain eligible to expend allocated funds. See www.sorc.pitt.edu for the certification guidelines.

Certified student organizations comprised of 75% graduate/professional students have the right to apply for GPSG funding, but do not have a right to funding.

Limits of Certification

Certified student organizations are student associations and are not official components of the University. Certification does not permit a student organization to use or act in the name of the University, to represent the University, engage in any contractual obligation in the name of the University nor represent the organization as being an official part of the University. Certification expressly permits certified student organizations to only operate on campus. Off campus activities of certified student organizations are the sole responsibility of the organization, officers and members, unless expressly approved in advance by the University. Membership in a certified student organization and participation in its activities are voluntary and all risks of personal injury, property damage or other losses that are incidental to membership or participation in activities are assumed solely by the student organization and/or individual member(s) or participant(s).

Funding of Certified Student Organizations

The goal of the GPSG activity fee allocation system is to provide the graduate/professional student body with a comprehensive array of relevant and desirable activities and programs by providing financial support for certified student organizations created and administered by elected student leaders.

GPSG Funding Philosophy

Funding of eligible graduate/professional student organizations is a shared responsibility of the organizations, their members who primarily benefit from participation and the GPSG. GPSG does not have the financial resources to fully fund the activities of all eligible organizations that request funding.

To help put the shared funding responsibility concept into perspective, organizations should realize that all graduate/professional students pay the same activity fee and that each contributes to the total amount of funding available to GPSG to fund recognized student governance organizations and all eligible certified organizations that apply for funding. Their members are likely members of other organizations and attend events sponsored by other certified organizations.

As a result, it is the expectation of GPSG that eligible certified organizations it funds *must contribute to the funding of their operation and programs*. Funding requests are scrutinized to determine if the members and organization are contributing to the financial support of their funding requests.

The Student Organization Resource Center

The Role of the SORC Business Office

1. Establishes University accounts for certified student organizations to utilize allocated funds.
2. Receives, deposits and executes expenditures of private organization funds held in accounts.
3. Provides bookkeeping and reporting services for organizations.
4. Assists officers of student organizations with the execution of expenditures.
5. Approves and executes all business transactions according to University, procedures and policy for all organizations.
6. Maintains working relationships with all University business offices to facilitate efficient and effective execution of all business and accounting functions and to resolve problems.
7. Reconciles all expenditures against University accounting level reports.
8. Provides training programs for student organization leaders.

Supplies, Copies, Fax and Mail Services

Funding for supplies for general operational needs and programs, copies, faxing and mailing are not part of the GPSG allocations program. To access these services offered by the Student Organization Resource Center (SORC), 823 WPU, please contact GPSG first.

Funding Guidelines for GPSG

To meet its fiduciary responsibility for the administration of student activity fees, GPSG has approved policies to guide the decision making in approving allocations to eligible certified student organizations.

GPSG **may not fund** the following for Certified Student Organizations:

1. Programs that duplicate or compete with the GPSG Event Planning Committee.
2. Donations for any kind.
3. Honoraria or any expenses related to the appearance of *any candidate for public office*.
4. Salaries, stipends, honoraria or any form of remuneration to advisors, coaches, officers or members.
5. Personal gifts.
6. The purchase of alcohol or tobacco products and any other scheduled substances.
7. Travel expenses for advisors or non-student members.
8. Recruiting events.
9. Funding of any request that requires travel outside of the continental United States.
10. First class air fare.
11. The sponsorship of conferences comprised mainly of external participants.
12. Off -campus leadership retreats.
13. Alternative Spring Break Programming.
14. Expenses judged to be the responsibility of a school, college, department, or administrative unit sponsoring a recognized student organization.
15. Individual or organization's membership dues.
16. Expenses judged to be the responsibility of individual members of student organizations such as cost of parking, food and etc. for the staff.
17. Expenses for supplies, copies, fax, mail services, etc. provided by the SORC office (contact GPSG first if use is desired) or any supplies needed for the office of the organization and not related to an event.
18. Any request previously denied within the same fiscal year.
19. Any previous expenditure that has been completed prior to the submission of the request (Deficit Spending)
20. Spring Break travel unless it is required. Organizations must provide explanatory documentation for its necessity.

Deficit Expenditures

Any expenditure or any commitment to expend funds without approved funding by the finance committee or GPSG are **prohibited** and are the sole responsibility of the organization. No supplemental request or budget modification request will be considered.

Food Funding Guidelines

GPSG will under no circumstances provide funding for food for organizational meetings or recruitment purposes for non-GAGs.

GPSG may elect to fund for food for cultural or ethnic organizations, *only when* the food contributes to the programming by adding significant value to the cultural experience of the event. GPSG may not fund cultural organizations for food in excess \$6 per PITT Student attending the event.

GPSG may elect to fund for food for graduate/professional student organizations on the basis of the programming and involvement with significant portions of the Student Body.

Recreation Club Funding

The certified recreational clubs enhance the recreational opportunities offered by PITT and are an important part of campus life. PITT does not have the appropriate facilities to accommodate all of varied recreational activities offered by our certified clubs. Likewise, availability of athletic and recreational facilities on campus is not sufficient to meet demand. As a result recreational activities of many of our clubs are held off campus.

Since the members of these organizations are the sole benefactors of participation. GPSG expects the members to contribute to the funding of the cost of their operation and programs. Likewise, the clubs are encouraged to help fund their programs by fundraising. GPSG will consider funding of off campus recreational activities

Funding For All Other Categories of Certified Organizations

The philosophy of shared responsibility for funding applies to all eligible organizations. In order to make consistent decisions regarding funding for eligible organizations, GPSG employs standard decision criteria to all program requests: *purpose, need, value and impact, importance to the organization, timeliness, redundancy, viability, cost/benefit analysis, history and composition of attendance*. While most of these criteria relate to the quality of the program, its importance to the organization and its cost effectiveness, the attendance criteria relates directly to the concept of shared responsibility for funding. The more the funding relates solely to the benefit of the organization, is limited to members or involves select members; the expectation of shared funding responsibility on the part of the benefiting members and the organization becomes apparent and will affect GPSG's funding decision.

Student Life Policies for Certified Organizations

SORC Officer Certification

Business managers or officers administering the organization budget must attend a certification workshop offered by the Student Organization Resource Center (SORC). Certification is required to conduct organization business with the SORC.

Organization Private Funds

All certified student organizations that receiving activity fee funding may not have a private outside bank account for the organization. All organization funds must be held in the organization's University account administered by the Student Organization Resource Center. The private funds are kept separate from allocated funds in the account. Expenditures are made through standard University procedures and policies. They remain in the organization's account until expended.

Solicitation of Donations at GPSG Funded Events

Organizations may add a philanthropic dimension to a program funded by GPSG by soliciting donations at the event. All donations by attendees must be voluntary. Attendees **MUST** be informed in advance of the program that a donation will be solicited, the benefactor of the donation and its intended use. No admission fee will be approved to generate funds for a donation, and the collection of the donation may not be taken at the door when entering so as to avoid any inference that giving a donation is a pre-condition for admittance. The collection of voluntary donations can be taken during or after the event. No funding provided by GPSG needs to be reimbursed. Though this philanthropic dimension may be added, funding for the program itself must be judged on the merit of its primary purpose first and foremost.

Admission Fees for GPSG Funded Programs

No admission fees may be charged to generate funds for the **organization sponsor or for donations for any purpose.**

An admission fee may be approved for a program by GPSG only if the organization is contributing its own funds to support the program. The revenue from admission fees will be used to reimburse the organization for the amount of funds expended directly by the organization. Any amount over the organization's contribution and up to the amount awarded as supplemental funding will be returned to the GPSG distribution account. Funds provided by University sponsors, external organizations or individuals will not be reimbursed by admission revenue. **The collection of admission fees at the door must be approved by the Wm. Pitt Union Reservations Office and must comply with policy.**

Recouping Unspent Allocated Funds – The Clearing of Budgets

All unspent or uncommitted funds approved for use 30 days after the event are returned to the GPSG distribution account.

Arbitration of Disputes Regarding GPSG Funding Decisions

Funding decisions made by GPSG must conform to procedures and policies approved by Student Life. Student organizations may file a request for arbitration with the GPSG advisor regarding decisions made by GPSG that are alleged to be inconsistent with policy and/or procedures. The advisor will determine whether or not the request has merit and will be heard or not. If an arbitration meeting is held with representatives of the organization and GPSG, the decision of the Advisor is final and no appeal will be accepted.

Important University Policies Affecting the Use of Allocated Funds

Vehicle Rental Policy for Student

Student organizations are eligible to use University-owned vehicles for business purposes.

The following criteria must be met to obtain approval for student use of University vehicles:

1. Must have a valid Pitt ID Card.
2. Must be enrolled at the University and/or be an active student.
3. Must have a valid Driver's License.
4. Must be 21 years of age and have had a valid driver's license for 2 years to drive a vehicle that seats 7 passengers or less.
5. Must be 25 years of age and have had a valid driver's license for 4 years to drive a vehicle that seats 8 or more passengers.
6. All drivers must complete a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Request for Driver Information and be subsequently approved to drive at least once a year. Information obtained from the DMV, including actions and violations, will be reviewed and may be used to disqualify individuals from a University vehicle.
7. Must complete the Authorization for Student Organization Use of a University Vehicle form available at the bottom of the page.

Vehicle Rental Policy for Students (cont.)

8. Must provide a detailed itinerary that includes destination, estimated number of miles, and planned travel route with Authorization form. A Mapquest or GoogleMaps print out will suffice.
9. For trips over 250 miles one way:
 1. Two approved drivers are required.
 2. Drivers must rotate every 3 hours.
 3. No more than 10 hours of driving can be completed during any one day.

4. Driving between 11:00pm and 6:00am is prohibited.
5. The organization advisor or substitute advisor (faculty or staff member, graduate student assistant, or contracted coach) must accompany the organization on the trip. See the Advisor's Role Statement for additional information. All authorized advisors must complete an Advisor's Role Acceptance form prior to the trip. The individual authorizing the vehicle usage will be considered the responsible party. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted on a limited basis.

Students granted permission to use University vehicles must agree to the following rules and regulations:

1. Use vehicles for official stated purpose only.
2. Operate University vehicle in accordance with University rules and regulations.
3. Observe all applicable traffic laws, ordinances and regulations.
4. Use safe driving practices at all times.
5. Use seat belts at all times.
6. Driver assumes all responsibility for fines or traffic violations.
7. No smoking in University vehicles.
8. Do not permit unauthorized individuals to drive or ride in the vehicle.
9. Ensure that all doors and windows are locked when vehicle is not in use.
10. Inspect vehicle before leaving and after returning to the point of pick-up.
11. Report any malfunctions to the University.
12. Report any accidents to the University and the proper authorities.

Non-compliance with the above guidelines may result in disciplinary actions up to and including Judicial Board review and may also jeopardize future rental usage of University vehicles by the student organization.

Contracts

Important Notice Regarding Contracting Requirements for Student Organizations

Student Organizations may download contract templates and other related documents to assist them with event and program planning. Please review the downloadable Student Life Policy Statement for Contracts. Please note that the contract policy for ON CAMPUS and OFF CAMPUS activities varies.

The following documents are available for download:

1. Event Checklist
2. Student Life Policy Statement for Contracts – Effective August 2006
3. Generic Release/Waiver Form
4. IRS W-9 Form - Required for any Payee who has never been paid by the University

The following contract templates are available for download:

1. Contract Cover Sheet – **Required for all contracts**
2. Guest Speaker Contract: for lecturers being brought to campus.
3. Live Performance Contract: for bands, deejays, and other live performances.
4. Event Production: should be used for companies providing services other than entertainers (e.g., sound companies, lighting companies, equipment rentals, etc.)

Reminder: All contracts must be submitted to the SORC at least 10 business prior to the event. Failure to submit contracts by this date may result in the cancellation of your program/event.

Programming Resources

The following websites may be helpful to your organization as you plan your program/event:

1. Office of Risk Management
2. Parking, Transportation, and Services
3. William Pitt Union – Reservations and Technical Services

If you need assistance, contact SORC at the SORC Business Office in 833 William Pitt Union, by phone at 412-648-7836, or by e-mail at sorc2@pitt.edu.

Account Balances

Account Balances are now available through the new Student Organization Community. Only organization administrators have access to account information. To access the Student Organization Community, complete the following steps:

1. Login to My Pitt (www.my.pitt.edu).
2. Click on the My Resources tab.
3. Click on the Student Life page.
4. In the upper-right corner, select the SORC Community. You will automatically be redirected into the Community.
5. Click on Student Organizations.
6. Click on My Organizations.
7. Select the group that you wish to view.
8. Select the Budget tab in the dashboard.
9. Select the View icon on the account you wish to view.
10. Click on the Transaction tab in the dashboard to view individual transactions within the account.
11. You may switch between accounts (if available) by selecting Back to List on the Budget Detail page.

Note: Any allocations that are listed as Pending in your account have been approved by your governance organization. All allocations and transactions become approved once the monthly account statements received from Payment Processing at the beginning of the following month verify them.

The Role of the Finance Committee

In addition to the role prescribed for the committee in the following allocations process described above, the committee holds the responsibility to supervise the expenditure of funds for approved purposes according to established policies and procedures. Accordingly, all activities related to the administration of any approved budget fall under the jurisdiction of the Finance Committee. Furthermore, Finance Committee holds the right to request additional documents or information regarding expenditure and attendance of an event.

The committee *may recall or freeze the funds of an organization for violations of policy or procedure.*