

Student Activity Fee Overview

Approved by the Student Activity Fee Committee September 18, 2015

The following are basic guidelines for the expenditure of Student Activity Fee Funds, as approved by the Student Activity Fee Committee (SAFC). These points will assist you in preparing your budget. The first fundamental concept is that fee funds are state funds and generally follow the same restrictions as those placed on revenue from tax dollars, with a few exceptions. Expenditures for items such as food and non-employee student travel are permitted. Purchasing Department guidelines and travel regulations are the same as with state funds.

All fee councils, as well as the college councils, are required to allocate funds with consideration given to the following criteria:

1. Past performance and budget management of the various organizations.
2. Programs or services with broad appeal to various constituents.
3. Programs and services that serve the greatest number of students
4. Programs and services that cross organizations and encourage co-sponsorship and shared responsibilities.
5. Programs and services that support the development of community on campus and maximizes Georgia State University's rich legacy of cultural diversity.
6. Programs and services that complement the academic mission of the institution.

The following section of the Board of Regents Policy Manual defines the nature of fee funds and their expenditure:

1. Mandatory student fees shall be used exclusively to support the institution's mission to enrich the educational, institutional, and cultural experience of students (BoR Minutes, January 2010). All payments from funds supported by student mandatory fees shall be made according to approved business procedures and the appropriate business practices of the institution (BoR Minutes, 199-2000, p364). (Section 7.3.2.1. Mandatory Student Fees)

State of Georgia laws prohibits the following:

1. No activity fee funds may be expended for "personal use". This includes obvious items, such as a student's rent or power bill, but also includes personal telephone calls made from GSU, clothing, jewelry, books used for classes, magazine subscriptions, and travel expenses, to name only a few examples.
2. No honorarium may be paid to a political candidate seeking public office.
3. No donations to charities, churches, or any non-profit organizations are allowed.
4. All equipment and certain goods and services must be bid by the GSU Purchasing Department.
5. All equipment and materials purchased with fee funds become the property of Georgia State University and must be kept on campus unless authorized in the approved manner for that item.

The University requires the following in regard to the expenditure of fee funds:

1. Anyone who is not a classified GSU employee cannot obligate the university financially. This means that students are not authorized to purchase equipment or services. Students may purchase petty cash items if authorized by the organization's advisor, who must be a classified staff employee of GSU. (Student assistants are not classified staff). Likewise, students are not authorized to negotiate contracts, bid for services, hire student employees or conduct any financial transactions involving fee funds or other University funds beyond petty cash transactions.
2. All financial transactions must be approved and signed by a classified employee.
3. All transactions, including the purchase of goods, student travel, consultants, and contracts, must follow regular university procedures and policies applicable to fee funds.
4. Administrative regulations concerning the chartering of student organizations are contained in *Student Code of Conduct and Policies*. Please refer to the following webpage for complete information concerning the chartering process and requirements: codeofconduct.gsu.edu

Chartering requirements include the following:

- No student organization may collectively, or through the actions of its individual members, engage in discriminatory, harassing, obscene or indecent conduct.
 - Each organization is required to have and maintain an advisor who is a *full-time* faculty or staff member at Georgia State University.
 - Student organizations must follow all rules and regulations related to Student Fee Usage Guidelines. Any organization collecting monies through dues, sale of goods, donations, etc., other than through the Student Activity Fee Allocation Process, must open and maintain a bank account in the name of the student organization and run all of the non-fee money through the account. Only current officers of the organization are allowed to perform transactions on the account.
 - Student organizations must cooperate with all reasonable requests for information by the University including, but not limited to, requests to review financial information and records.
5. No university funds or student activity fees may be used for the purchase of alcoholic beverages.
 6. Whenever activity fee funds are expended and revenue is generated, all revenue must be deposited into the designated activity fee account that is associated with the chartered student organization sponsoring the event. The expenditure of revenue generated is subject to university rules and regulations.

In addition to the above, the Student Activity Fee Committee (SAFC) has established additional restrictions:

1. Any student organization wishing to receive funds from the Student Activity Fee Committee must be a chartered student organization.
2. Fee funds are not to be used for academic departmental costs, such as office supplies, equipment, staff, or faculty.
3. Each student organization must have a staff or faculty advisor. This is, in effect, required for expenditures, as a student is not authorized to obligate the University financially or approve purchases without the approval of a University employee. This advisor must approve all expenditures and is responsible for adhering to these policies and other applicable policies of Georgia State University.
4. Pay of personnel (student assistants, temporary employees, extra compensation, fee based, etc) must be approved by the Student Activity Fee Committee in advance.
5. Unless approved by the SAFC, receiving pay for more than one position in one budget is not allowed. No stipend in a particular budget may exceed the stipend paid to the leader of that organization.
6. Any expenditures incurred by a fee budget which is not allowed by SAFC restrictions will be charged to the department to which the budget reports.
7. The purchase of food is approved only for on-campus events (the campus includes property owned or controlled by the University, e.g., Indian Creek Lodge, Buckhead Center, Peachtree-Dunwoody Center and Panthersville) such as speakers, concerts, and presentations. The purchase of food for meetings is limited to no more than 10 % of the organization's approved budget or \$2,000 whichever is less. The purchase of food for off-campus events is limited to approved travel authorizations and retreats or conferences which are coordinated and presented by Georgia State University staff. Reimbursement for meal expenses for travel under an approved travel requisition is not allowed if the destination is less than 50 miles from the downtown campus of Georgia State University.
8. No fee funding is allowed for permanently assigned rooms or space.
9. Sport Club student organizations cannot use fee funding appropriated by this committee for regular operations for which the organization was formed (e.g., uniforms, equipment, travel).

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