

# USG Finance Committee Bylaws

Last Updated: 11/05/2020

## Article I. USG Finance Committee

- 1) Pursuant to the authority of the Undergraduate Student Government Constitution, Article VIII, the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) Finance Committee shall be a standing committee of the USG Senate.
- 2) Throughout the course of these bylaws let it be known that 'Student Activity Fee money' refers to the student-mandated Student Activity Fee that is allocated for distribution by the Undergraduate Student Government Finance Committee.
- 3) The purpose of the USG Finance Committee is to assure that the funds of the Undergraduate Student Activity Fee and Provisions at the 30<sup>th</sup> Parallel are properly handled for the benefit of all students. To this end, the Finance Committee will hear presentations on, investigate, and deliberate over all requests for funding in a timely and judicious manner.
- 4) The USG Finance Committee expressly reserves to itself all powers and duties designated to the Committee by the USG Constitution.
- 5) All allocations of the Undergraduate Student Activity Fee must be referred to the USG Finance Committee before consideration by the USG Senate. The USG Senate reserves the right to remove and change funding and budget resolutions from the Finance Committee upon a two-thirds vote by the Senate.

## Article II. Funding

- 1) The Student Body Administrative Council (SBAC), subject to the approval of the USG Senate, is responsible for determining the eligibility of groups and organizations for USG funding.
  - a) Notwithstanding Section 1 above, the USG Finance Committee may recommend to withhold funds as a sanction against an organization for violations of USG, Finance or SBAC regulations.
- 2) Following USG Senate Provisional recognition of an organization, a new organization must then be fully recognized as Active before it is eligible for the funding of annual budgets or auxiliary funds, which include requests to the programming, travel, and reserve funds.
- 3) In order to receive funds, an organization must be registered on WaveSync. Organizations must include a copy of the constitution, officer contacts, current membership list, and advisor information.

## Article III. Budget Request Procedures

- 1) All groups shall receive notification of the deadline for submitting annual budget requests at least four (4) weeks prior to the deadline.
- 2) The Vice President for Finance shall be required to conduct two (2) workshops for all student organizations; one (1) prior to the annual budgeting process of the spring semester and the other in the fall semester, clarifying spending procedures.
  - a) At least one (1) officer of each organization must be available for all budget workshops. The USG Finance Committee will specify time and date.
  - b) If no officer is available, the organization will send another member of the organization to the budget workshops.
  - c) At each workshop, the Vice President for Finance shall make a point to inform the clubs of the Judicial Appeals process and direct them to the proper channel should they desire to appeal any future decision of the Finance Committee.
- 3) At the time that the annual budget is presented, the USG Finance Committee must have specific time limitations set for the presentation of budgets as well as a Question & Answer and Discussion periods. Exceptions to these time limits can be made by the Vice President for Finance for organizations that will require greater amounts of time.
  - a) At least one (1) officer of each organization must be available for the presentation of the request. The Vice President for Finance will specify time and date.

- b) If no officer is available, the organization will send another member of the organization to the budget request presentation.
  - c) An organization can request that its council chair sit in on the hearing so that the council chair can better address the organization's needs during the Presentation and Question & Answer periods. This clause can also be applied to an organization's hearing for the auxiliary funds based on the organization's discretion.
  - d) During the Question and Answer and Discussion periods, the Finance Committee is recommended to ask about and consider the impacts of the organization and its request on the greater Tulane community.
- 4) Organizations will be scheduled to present to the Finance Committee for all requests, and presentations will be formatted as either a Full Hearing, Small Hearing, No Hearing, or Consolidated Hearing.
- a) A Full Hearing will include the Finance Committee and the presenting organization. A Full Hearing will consist of a discussion of the request followed by a question and answer period.
  - b) A Small Hearing will include the Vice President for Finance, one member of the Finance Committee, and at least one representative for the presenting organization. A Small Hearing will consist of a discussion of the request followed by a question and answer period.
  - c) A No Hearing will not include a formal presentation; the Finance Committee will read and discuss the submitted budget and deliberate based solely on the written budget request and any supplemental materials submitted.
  - d) A Consolidated Hearing must be approved by the Finance Committee ahead of budget presentations. A Consolidated Hearing will include the Vice President for Finance, one member of the Finance Committee, and representatives from the applicable Council or governing organization. A Consolidated Hearing will consist of a discussion of any requests that the Committee deems appropriate to be consolidated, and a question and answer period.
  - e) The Vice President for Finance will inform the presenter at the end of the Question & Answer period on when the next Senate meeting is so the organization knows the timeline for funding.
- 5) Budgets for all organizations shall be reviewed by the organization's executive board before presentation to the USG Finance Committee. The USG Finance Committee may approve certain councils or umbrella organizations to present their constituent budgets as appropriate in a Consolidated Hearing.
- 6) In any single fiscal year, no organization shall be allowed to submit the same budget request more than twice without substantial material change as determined by the Vice President for Finance.
- 7) All budgets must be submitted by the Vice President for Finance's stipulated due date, and the budget review process must be started no later than March 1. The USG Finance Committee Budget Recommendation must be presented to the USG Senate for approval by the second to last regularly scheduled Senate meeting. Budgets received after the stipulated due date will be considered late and review may be delayed until the fall. The deadline for late budgets to be submitted is October 1. Late budgets will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. Following that date, all excess late budget funds will transfer into a fund for initial budgets for newly recognized organizations. The deadline for newly recognized organizations to submit a budget request is February 1 of the following year. After that date, all remaining funds will be transferred into the travel request fund or co-programming fund, later defined in Articles XIX through XXII.

#### **Article IV. Budget Requests**

- 1) Budget requests must be submitted on WaveSync through the organization portal. All budgets must be approved by the student organization advisor.
  - a) Council Chairs will be recommended by the Vice President for Finance to consult with all represented organizations before submitting individual budgets.
- 2) All budgets must factor in expected revenues or clearly explain them in the Budget Presentation, if applicable.
- 3) Following the deadline for budget requests, an organization may not change any part of the initial budget request.
- 4) The USG Finance Committee shall require all student organizations to have an up-to-date membership list on WaveSync, which includes name, classification as (a) an undergraduate, (b) a graduate or professional student, (c)

staff, faculty, or graduates of Tulane University, or (d) other Tulane University affiliates, and Tulane email addresses at the time of submitting its initial budget request in order to be eligible for funding.

- a) Student Governments membership lists should only include elected representatives and committee chairs, and other branches of the government outlined in individual constitutions, excluding constituents.

**Article V. Allocation of Funds**

- 1) Prior to the USG Finance Committee reviewing initial budgets, the USG Finance Committee will decide specific aggregate allocations for on-time annual budgets, late annual budgets, first-time annual budgets, travel requests, and co-programming requests.
- 2) All organizations are subject to the year-to-year budgetary increase and decrease guidelines outlined below;

Budget Range (\$)	1-99	100-999	1000-9999	10000-24999	25000-49999	50000-74999	75000-99999	100000+
Potential Increase %	400%	200%	100%	50%	25%	12.5%	6.25%	3.125%

- a) If an organization utilizes less than 90% of the approved budget for the year, they are subject to the decrease guidelines below;
  - i) Funding Amount = Previous Year’s Budget - (0.5 x Amount of Budget Unspent)
- b) Subject to Finance Committee’s Approval, organizations may be funded at amounts greater than or less than the guideline limits.
- 2) Requests for funding for events will be considered for events held on Tulane’s campus only, are open to the general student body, and registered on WaveSync at least 3 weeks in advance. Exceptions to this will be granted by the Vice President for Finance and the Associate Director of the LBC for University Life.
- 3) Executive officer annual retreats for the USG, Association of Club Sports (ACS), CACTUS, Media Board, Multicultural Council (MCC), Gender and Sexuality Advisory Committee (GSAC), and TUCP will be limited in funding to sixty (\$60) dollars per officer attending).
  - a) The entire USG Senate is included because the Senate acts as officers for the entire undergraduate student body.
- 4) Fifty pages per day of free black and white printing for any organization is located within the Student Organization Center in the LBC. The Finance Committee can approve printing requests when better printing is deemed necessary for the organization.
- 5) The USG Finance Committee must post its initial budget recommendations on the USG Finance website at [www.usg.tulane.edu/finance](http://www.usg.tulane.edu/finance) at least 48 hours before the USG Senate meeting at which the budget will be recommended by the committee.

**Article VI. Reallocation of Funds**

- 1) Organizations must adhere to the programming plans based on which they were allocated money unless changes are approved in advance following the reallocation procedures set forth below.
- 2) A reallocation is defined as a transfer of funds between natural accounts within a given budget. Reallocations up to and including one thousand dollars (\$1,000) within one natural account shall be made upon prior notification and approval of the USG Vice President for Finance in consultation with the student organization advisor of said organization and the Associate Director of the Lavin-Bernick Center for University Life. Reallocations greater than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) in one natural account shall be made upon the approval of the USG Finance Committee.

**Article VII. Refreshments**

- 1) Requests by student organizations for refreshment expenses at organized and structured programming events open to the Tulane community, on Tulane’s campus, and registered on WaveSync will be considered. Recruitment, general meetings, or other parties must be funded out of an organization’s 9 account.
  - a) Study Breaks, stress-relief events, bonding events, or events of similar capacity are not eligible for funding for refreshments.

- 2) Student Activity Fee funds and Motivation Money should not be used to purchase alcohol by any organization.

### **Article VIII. Expenditures**

- 1) All expenditures must conform to existing purchasing and accounting procedures. Current procedures will be available from the Lavin-Bernick Center for University Life.
- 2) All extraordinary and emergency allocations must be approved by the Executive Finance Board as defined by the USG Constitution (Article VIII, Section 4, Part B).

### **Article IX. Revenue and Donations**

- 1) All revenues and donations received by all USG sponsored organizations shall be deposited according to university procedure.
  - a) Use of GoFundMe, Venmo, or other crowdfunding or donation websites or apps is prohibited with the sole exception of Tulane's official Wave Starter platform.
  - b) Failure to comply with Article IX can result in an organization or individual being reported to student conduct along with further disciplinary action from Finance Committee under Article XII.
- 2) All donations received by organizations shall follow proper university procedure.
- 3) Income generated from services rendered shall be deposited into 1 Accounts in accordance with an organization's stated purpose.
- 4) No USG-recognized organization shall charge another USG-recognized organization for more than the cost of materials on services rendered to that organization.

### **Article X. Inventory Control**

- 1) All organizations shall annually submit an inventory report with their budget requests, showing state of repair and location of any equipment initially valued over five hundred (\$500) dollars.
- 2) All equipment over five hundred (\$500) dollars is to be inventoried, tagged, and processed by the University Property Management Office.
- 3) No equipment is to be kept for personal use.
  - a) No personal uniforms, shirts, hats, attire, etc., will be funded by the Student Activity Fee.
  - b) Uniforms or material inherent to the organization shall be returned to the organization at the end of each year to be reused by the next students in the organization.
- 4) All equipment inventory is subject to USG Finance Committee inspection and verification checks upon 24-hour notification to organization leadership.
- 5) All equipment purchased using Student Activity Fee funds must be kept in university-approved storage.

### **Article XI. Checks and Balances**

- 1) All organizations and clubs are subject to an audit by the USG Vice President for Finance with 24 hours' notice.
- 2) All books and records are to be kept up to date by the individual organization treasurers.
- 3) Deficits will not be condoned. Any organization anticipating a deficit must report to the USG Vice President for Finance. Such a deficit will constitute grounds for freezing said organization's budget.

### **Article XII. Wrongful Appropriations and Misuse of Funds**

- 1) Individuals responsible for misuse of funds may, upon recommendation of the USG Finance Committee, be referred for disciplinary action as specified in the Student Code of Conduct.
- 2) The USG Finance Committee, at its discretion, may refuse to allocate funds, for a maximum period of two (2) fiscal years, to any organization found guilty of violating existing procedures, subject to appeal before the USG Senate by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.
- 3) The USG Vice President for Finance may, at their discretion, immediately freeze the budget of any organization which has violated existing procedures, subject to review at the following USG Finance Committee meeting. The USG Vice President for Finance must notify the president of said organization or their respective student organization

advisor within one (1) school days of freezing said organization's budget. The budget may be unfrozen by a majority vote of the USG Finance Committee.

- 4) No USG sponsored organization may have an outside bank account.
- 5) No member of a USG sponsored organization shall hold a paid position with their organization.
- 6) Student Activity Fee money and money generated from the use of this money will not be appropriated for individual memberships but can fund the group for membership in a regional, national, or international organization. Individuals violating this rule may, upon recommendation by the USG Finance Committee, be referred for disciplinary action as specified in the Student Code of Conduct.
- 7) Student Activity Fee money and money generated from the use of this money will not be appropriated for the purchase of gifts to or for individual members. This includes clothing, novelty items, or individual awards.
- 8) Student Activity Fee money and money generated from its use will not be used to make donations on behalf of the organization or its members.

#### **Article XIII. Alleged Violations**

- 1) Alleged violations of financial procedures should be reported immediately via email to the Associate Director of the LBC for University Life and the USG Vice President for Finance.
  - a) The USG Finance Committee has an obligation to act only on written reports.

#### **Article XIV. Conflicts of Interest**

- 1) At no time shall a USG Finance Committee member use their affiliation with the USG Finance Committee in an effort to achieve personal benefits (i.e. extortion, receiving bribes, etc.). Subject to the due process provisions of the USG Constitution, violation of this rule shall result in the immediate expulsion of said member from the USG Finance Committee, if the evidence is sufficient to warrant this action. Individuals violating this rule may, upon recommendation by the USG Finance Committee, be referred for disciplinary action as specified in the Student Code of Conduct.
- 2) USG Finance Committee members must abstain from discussion and voting on any matter when they are members of the organization at hand.

#### **Article XV. Agendas and Minutes of Meetings**

- 1) Agendas of each USG Finance Committee meeting and the minutes taken at the previous meeting must be available for each USG Finance Committee member at least 24 hours prior to meeting time. Approved minutes must be made available for each USG Finance Committee member 24 hours after the meeting at which they are approved.
- 2) A USG Finance Committee meeting agenda shall include the following: date, time, and location of said meeting, and a list of each request to be reviewed at said meeting.
- 3) The USG Finance Committee members will not be obligated to review any request which has not been made available at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at which that request is presented.
- 4) USG Finance Committee members shall be notified of a special meeting of the USG Finance Committee at least 48 hours in advance of the special meeting. Special meetings may be called by the USG Vice President for Finance or a two-thirds majority of the voting members of the USG Finance Committee. No business shall be transacted except that mentioned in the call.

#### **Article XVI. Meeting Attendance, Use of Proxies, and Quorum**

- 1) Absence of a USG Finance Committee member from two (2) regular meetings without notice and proper excuse as per the discretion of the Vice President for Finance shall result in automatic removal of said member from the USG Finance Committee.
  - a) Emergencies or unforeseen circumstances are excused.
  - b) Committee members are required to send a proxy to vote when a committee member cannot attend a meeting.
    - i) A proxy is defined as a person authorized to act for another.
- 2) In order for the USG Finance Committee to conduct business it must have quorum.

- a) Quorum is defined as five (5) voting members being present.
- 3) Committee members may vote on all business barring conflicts of interest
  - a) The USG Vice President for Finance may only vote in issues of quorum or ties.

**Article XVII. Motivation Money**

- 1) Motivation Money is a percentage of Provision on the 30<sup>th</sup> Parallel’s profits, which USG receives for the purpose of funding requests normally excluded from 2 account allocations of the Student Activity Fee. Such requests may fund purchases including but not limited to awards, recognition parties, banquets, and T-shirts.
- 2) In recognition that this fund was created and designed to motivate organizations to adhere to the stated values of the USG and/or Tulane University, an organization, in order to qualify for Motivation Money, must have:
  - a) At least 60% of its members having attended at least one training as individuals OR the organization has requested and completed at least one of the various trainings for its organization members on campus.
  - b) These trainings must have verifiable attendance and have taken place within one calendar year of the Motivation Money form closure.
  - c) Organizations who wish to request trainings for their members are allowed to partner together with other organizations to complete the training requirement
  - d) Accepted trainings will be updated on the USG Finance website. Other trainings will be accepted by appeal to the Vice President for Finance if they are verifiable, have taken place within one calendar year, and support the stated values of the USG and/or Tulane University.
- 3) Individual council chairs and their respective councils will assist the Vice President for Finance in review of membership lists.
- 4) The USG Finance Committee will allocate the monies according to the approved criteria.
- 5) The final amounts and actual allocations must be recommended by the USG Finance Committee and subsequently approved by Senate.
- 6) Motivation money is allocated according to a multi-part formula; organizations will receive:
  - a) A base allocation derived from membership brackets, as listed on Wavesync:

Members	Base Allocation
10-15	\$25
16-25	\$45
26-40	\$60
41-65	\$75
66-100	\$90
101+	\$100

- b) \$3 per member, in addition to the base allocation. This amount may be adjusted by the Vice President for Finance to ensure full allocation of the money generated by Provisions on the Thirtieth Parallel and the Mushroom Trust;
- c) The formula is as follows:
  - i) Motivation Money Allocation = Base Allocation + [(Factor Adjusted by the Vice President for Finance to Ensure Full Use of the Fund) x (\$3 x Each Member)]
- 7) The model assumes that we will be allocating a lump sum amount to each organization based on the organization’s membership as reflected by the membership list submitted. The guidelines are the maximum allocation per group. In

the event that requests exceed the available revenues, the USG Finance Committee will make across-the-board percentage cuts.

- 8) Motivation Money may not be used to purchase alcohol or to fundraise for the organization.

#### **Article XVIII. Reserve Fund Requests and Allocations**

- 1) The USG Reserve Fund should be used for capital improvements, for projects that will enhance the overall Tulane community, to purchase major equipment that does not come out of the USG General Fund, at the discretion of the USG Finance Committee, and to ensure that the USG General Fund will not be overdrawn as of June 30th.
- 2) All Reserve Fund Requests must be submitted via WaveSync to the Vice President for Finance. Requests must include all documents that states information about what is being requested.
- 3) All Reserve Fund Requests must include a signed Memorandum of Understanding, which will outline any timeline or terms of use requirements as determined by the Finance Committee and/or USG Senate. All Memorandums of Understanding must be signed by an appropriate representative of the funded project and the USG President.
- 4) The USG Finance Committee can only recommend to the USG Senate the allocation of money from the Reserve Fund by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.
- 5) For specific possible uses (investments) of the USG Reserve Fund, see Article VIII, Section 5 of the USG Constitution.

#### **Article XIX. New Organizations/First-Time Budget Requests**

- 1) A portion of the Undergraduate Student Activity Fee shall be placed in a special fund (hereon in this section called pool) for use by new organizations.
- 2) The pool will be used for the funding of new organizations on a case-by-case basis.
- 3) New organizations are those groups that have been deemed newly active and eligible to receive funding by the SBAC, and those that have not received Student Activity Fee funds before.
- 4) Money from the pool shall not be used for travel or late initial budgets.
  - a) Pursuant to Article III, Section 7, all remaining funds in the pool after February 1st will be transferred into the pool for Travel Requests or Co-Programming Requests under the discretion of the Vice President for Finance.
- 5) The Vice President for Finance reserves the right to change the amount of money in this pool with committee approval at any time in order to best accommodate the needs of student organizations.
- 6) First-time budget requests must be submitted prior to February 1<sup>st</sup> in order to be considered by the Finance Committee.

#### **Article XX. Travel Requests**

- 1) A portion of the Undergraduate Student Activity Fee shall be placed in a special fund (hereon in this section called pool) for use for traveling for USG sponsored student organizations.
- 2) Pamphlets, brochures, or other written material must be included through WaveSync in any budget requesting travel funds.
- 3) No meals, local transportation, or personal expenses will be funded.
  - a) Exceptions are when registration costs cover meals and local transportation.
  - b) Student Activity Fee funds for travel requests will not go towards costs associated with taking advisors on trips.
- 4) Organizations must utilize the least expensive mode of transportation within reason for their requests.
- 5) The USG Vice President for Finance must discuss guidelines for travel requests during the Fall Workshop.
  - a) Organizations traveling frequently may be asked by the Vice President for Finance for an estimate for future travel plans and costs during their first travel request meeting.
- 6) Organizations must follow the directions specifically in the Travel Request form on WaveSync and include all supporting documents.

- 7) The Association of Club Sports will be responsible for the allocation of travel money for Club Sports in accordance with the Association of Club Sports bylaws.
  - a) Additional travel requests for individual Club Sports organizations will not be considered.
- 8) Organizations taking trips prior to October 1st must include a travel request with their initial budget request. The organizations referred to in Section 5 are excepted.
- 9) The Vice President for Finance reserves the right to change the amount of money in this pool with committee approval at any time in order to best accommodate the needs of student organizations.
- 10) Upon completion of the presentation, the Finance Committee shall make a recommendation to the USG Assembly regarding the Travel Request. Travel Request recommendations will be sent to the USG Senate Body after their approval at Finance Committee, and automatically pass into effect in the absence of disputes from Senators after a period of 24 hours. Senators may dispute a recommendation by sending an email with the reason for the dispute to the Vice President for Finance at [usgvpf@tulane.edu](mailto:usgvpf@tulane.edu). When 1 or more disputes are submitted in a 24-hour period, the recommendation will instead be brought to the Senate floor at the next regular Senate session. Clubs whose Travel Requests have been disputed will be emailed with a description of any submitted disputes. Senators will be informed of the posting of the recommendation and the 24-hour approval period via email. The recommendations posted will include notes from the Committee meeting and reasoning behind the recommendation.

#### **Article XXI. Late Budget Requests**

- 1) A portion of the Undergraduate Student Activity Fee shall be placed in a special fund (hereon in this section called pool) for use for Late Budget Requests for USG sponsored student organizations.
- 2) Late Budget Requests are capped at the organization's prior year budget unless approved by the Finance Committee to exceed that amount.
- 3) All bylaws from Article III apply.
- 4) The Vice President for Finance reserves the right to change the amount of money in this pool with committee approval at any time in order to best accommodate the needs of student organizations.

#### **Article XXII. The Programming Fund**

- 1) A portion of the Undergraduate Student Activity Fee shall be placed in a special fund (hereon in this section called pool) for use for Programming.
- 2) The amount of money in the pool shall be allocated during Budget Season by the Finance Committee and passed through the USG Senate.
- 3) The allocation power of the fund rests in the Finance Committee and follows all Student Body Administrative Council (SBAC) and Finance bylaws.
- 4) The Finance Committee will be the stewards of the Programming fund.
- 5) Organizations can request Programming funds directly on WaveSync.
- 6) The Vice President for Finance reserves the right to change the amount of money in this pool with committee approval at any time in order to best accommodate the needs of student organizations with prior consultation of the Director of the LBC or their designee and the USG Advisor.

#### **Article XXIII. Effective Date**

These bylaws shall be in full course and effective immediately upon approval by the USG Finance Committee and USG Senate by a two-thirds (2/3) vote and are valid for an indefinite period until changes are made by a future Finance Committee, as of November 2020.