

# UNG Funding for Student Organizations

## Student Activity Fees (SAF)

### Definition

Student Activities Fees (SAF) are collected for the express purpose of providing students with a variety of educational, cultural, recreational, and social activities. Any activity that does not directly address one of these four areas cannot be funded by SAF money. Any activity that is organized in such a way that it discriminates against ANY STUDENT will not qualify for SAF Funding.

### Use of Student Activities Fees

Student Activities Fees *may* be used for the following expenses:

- Supplies for the operation of a student club or organization
- Supplies for a student sponsored event or contest (includes contract fees and per diems for speakers/performers and other non-personnel services)
- Prizes for a student competition
- Travel of students to conferences and meetings to cover registration, hotel, and actual to and from travel. No other expenses will be approved without authorization from the Office of Student Involvement.
- Travel of an advisor with a student organization
- Student workers as deemed necessary

Student Activities Fees *cannot* be used for the following:

- Illegal and/or unethical practices and programs
- Programs or organizations that in any way discriminate
- Events not offered for students and not student oriented
- Expenses of academic classes, labs, or College departments
- Expenses for the next fiscal year

**NOTE:** For any Student Organization to utilize their SAF funds, they must have completed all requirements for yearly re-registration and complete mandatory Student Organization training. Requests to spend funds (i.e., check requests, purchase order requisitions, and requests for reimbursements) allotted for the current fiscal year may begin on July 1 of that year. The last day that requests may be submitted to the Office of Student Involvement will depend on the deadlines set every year by the Business Affairs Office, usually around April 30<sup>th</sup>. Requests made after that day must be approved by the Office of Student Involvement on a case-by-case basis.

### How Student Activities Fee Budgets are Awarded

Student Activities Fee (SAF) budgets are awarded by the Student Government Association on each respective campus. SGA then sends the proposed budgets to the Student Life Committee which is comprised faculty, staff, and students from that campus, with 50% of its members being students. The committee will meet throughout the year, as necessary, to address any questions which arise regarding activity fees. ***Detailed information on the allocation process will be provided in the spring semester prior to the request deadline.***

## SGA Funding Guidelines & Allocation Process

### **Allocation of Student Activity Fees**

ARTICLE IV, Section C, Number 1b. Of the University of North Georgia Student Government Association Constitution outlines the authority and responsibilities of the SGA in the allocation Student Activity Fees. Designated authority includes the following:

“The Student Government Association on each campus shall be the body through which Student Activity Funds shall be allocated and distributed, with the approval of the Student Life Committee and the University President.”

### **Graduate Student Funding**

At the request of the Graduate Student Senate, the Student Government Association has delegated responsibility for allocation of 40% of Student Activity Fees, paid by graduate students, to the Graduate Student Senate. These funds are not subject to the SGA Funding Guidelines; however, they must follow State Purchasing Guidelines and University System of Georgia Policies.

The remaining 60% of Student Activity Fees paid by graduate students will be included with undergraduate fees and allocated by the Student Government Association. Fee distribution will be made in accordance with projections made by the UNG Budget Office. Actual fee collection will be reviewed following the end of drop-add each Spring Semester and any needed corrections will be made.

### **Allocation Process**

#### **SGA Finance Committee:**

The Student Government Association Director of Finance shall appoint a Finance Committee and serve as its chair. Committee members must be approved by the Senate through a majority vote, with a minimum of one (1) per campus and a maximum of two (2) per campus. The Committee will oversee the process to disburse Student Activity Fee funding in a process outlined by the Student Activity Fee Funding Guidelines.

#### **Budget Requests:**

Each spring, the Student Government Association will solicit funding requests from Registered Student Organizations and departments. Applicants will complete a Funding Request via UNG Connect and provide an itemized spreadsheet of their budget request.

#### **Budget Presentation:**

The SGA Finance Committee will review all requests and invite any groups with outstanding questions to make a Budget Presentation when necessary. Every group may not be specifically asked to present their request to the committee, which has no negative impact upon the funding decisions.

#### **Allocation Proposal:**

Following the Budget Presentations, the Finance Committee meets to develop a proposal for the allocation of funds per campus for the following year and will submit allocation proposals to the Senate. The proposals are voted on by the SGA Senate.

#### **Approval of Funding Proposal:**

The SGA's proposed allocation is forwarded to the Student Life Committee for review. The recommendations of the Student Life Committee are forwarded to the University President, along with SGA's proposal for final approval.

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, 1999-2000, p. 364).

### **SGA Funding Philosophy and Guidelines**

1. SGA will allocate Student Activity Fees to those organizations that best represent the most students' interests, while providing a wide variety of social, recreational, cultural, and educational programs.
2. Student Activity Fees should be used for programs and activities that benefit the maximum number of students rather than academic departments and programs.
3. Student Activity Fees should support groups and events that are open to all students.
4. Student Activity Fees should benefit current students rather than being used to recruit future students or to provide publicity for departments or the university.
5. Student Activity Fees should be used to support events held on campus and for students rather than for events held away from the campus or for non-students.
6. Student Activity Fees should only support travel that directly benefits the entire student body. Travel that only benefits the individual, or an academic program, should be funded by the student or program. See below for Travel guidelines.
7. Any student employees funded by Student Activity Fees must be specifically approved by SGA.
8. SGA will only fund the purchase of t-shirts in the case of:
  - a. Promoting a student activity that benefits the entire student body.
  - b. Student representing bodies where the representatives are elected through SGA sanctioned campus-wide elections.
9. SGA may contribute to the cost of performance/competition uniforms for groups that are asked to perform for the student body on campus, unless those uniforms are otherwise required for purchase by the student in other populations. SGA will fund up to 20% of the total cost of each uniform with a maximum of \$25.00 per person per year.
10. SGA will not fund expenses for fundraisers.
11. Student Activity Fees may not be used to support political parties, candidates, or other partisan political activities.
12. Student Activity Fees shall finance a maximum of 25% of the cost of music for public performances. Music purchased for classroom use only is not allowed.
13. Student Activity Fees shall not finance performance venue rentals.
14. Student Activity Fees shall finance student publications a maximum of \$1,500 dollars per campus for printing costs per academic year.
15. Student Activity Fees shall finance a maximum of \$250 in promotional items for student organizations. Exceptions can be considered for University wide programs.
16. Student Activity Fees can be used to fund gift cards for events and programs with the following stipulations:
  - a. Can only be awarded for skill or talent-based performances
  - b. Must be requested and approved by SGA through the annual Budget Request process each spring
  - c. Cannot be requested as a reallocation during the fiscal year
  - d. Cannot exceed \$50 per prize
  - e. Cannot exceed \$150 per semester and \$300 per year

### **Guidelines for Student Travel Grants**

1. SGA will not fund undergraduate academic travel.
2. Travel can be requested through SGA on a trip-by-trip basis. Student Organizations will request this no later than six (6) weeks in advance of the trip.
3. In order for the SGA to approve the travel grant, students must submit a detailed plan for the trip (costs, transportation means, lodging, agenda, etc.) with the request. In addition, organizations have the option to present a summary of the experience during an SGA meeting. Organizations that choose not to present may be requested to email their summary to campus finance chair.
4. SGA may fund up to 50% of the cost per individual, per trip, with a maximum of \$200 per individual and \$1600 per trip. The following factors will be used in determining funding:
  - a. Reason for trip
  - b. How many students will benefit?
  - c. Cost and length of the trip
  - d. Type of transportation
  - e. Availability of funding from other sources

*\*Please note that retreats for student groups will not be subject to the above and will be granted funds based upon educational outcomes of the retreat.*

### **Basic Guidelines for Groups Receiving Funding**

1. Groups must track student attendance at all events funded through Student Activity Fees using UNG Connect.
2. Groups receiving funding are expected to adequately advertise their funded events to the entire student body.
3. You may not overspend your budget.
4. Unspent money goes back to the Student Activities Reserve at the end of the fiscal year.
5. You must spend the money as you outlined in your proposal form.
6. You must follow all relevant university policies and procedures.
7. Events funded by Student Activity Fees must be open to all UNG students.
8. Any funds generated by charging admission to non-students for attendance at an event funded through Student Activity Fees must be reported and deposited into the appropriate University account through the Office of Student Involvement.
9. Prohibited Expenditures:
  - a. Alcohol
  - b. Tobacco
  - c. Illegal items
  - d. Items for personal use
  - e. Scholarships
  - f. Faculty/Staff Salaries or other compensation unless specifically approved by SGA.

### **Mini-Grant Request Process**

#### **Mini-Grant Request:**

Throughout the academic year, a Registered Student Organization may apply for a mini-grant. This is a one-time grant allocated from the Student Activity Fees to an organization. The request form can be found on UNG Connect. Mini-grant requests must be requested five weeks in advance of needing money to comply with the Office of Student Involvement purchasing procedures.

**Presentation of Request:**

If the request is above \$500, the organization must attend an SGA meeting and come prepared with a brief presentation explaining their need for the money and answer questions from the student body. The SGA will notify the requester of the meeting date, time, and location to present this information. The presentation can include topics such as:

- Purpose of the money
- How it will benefit the entire student body
- Why the money was not included in the original budget request (if applicable)
- If there are other means of obtaining money

**Voting Process:**

The SGA members will then discuss and vote on the requested mini-grant amount. The process takes two meetings, as the motion must be tabled for a week before voting.

**Approval of mini-grant request:**

Following the SGA's vote regarding the mini-grant request, an approved request will then be sent to the Office of Student Involvement to be dealt with between the organization and that office. The organization must contact the office to initiate expenditure.

**Feedback/recap of allocation:**

If a mini-grant request is allocated for an event, the organization has *two* weeks to return to a regular SGA meeting and present the outcome of the event (i.e., how many students attended, how the event enhanced UNG life, or how students benefited from event). Optional for grants up to \$500, then mandatory.

**Budget Reallocation Request Process****Request to Reallocate Funds:**

Groups that decide that they want to change the way that allocated funds are used must submit a proposed new budget for the desired change and provide an explanation for the changes. The request should be via the form on UNG Connect. SGA will review then vote to accept, reject, or modify the proposed reallocation. This process takes a minimum of two weeks.

If you need this document in an alternate format for accessibility purposes (e.g. Braille, large print, audio, etc.), please contact Stacie Rowley (stacie.rowley@ung.edu) at 678-717-3622