

# **Carnegie Mellon University** **Student Senate Fiscal Policy**

## **Article I. Purpose and Scope.**

- A.** This document provides guidelines for Student Senate spending and allocation of money from Student Senate accounts only.
  - 1.** All use of funds under the control of Student Senate is also bound by the restrictions found in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Government Fiscal Policy*.
- B.** This document does not place restrictions on spending by the Graduate Student Assembly or the Joint Funding Committee.
- C.** For any conflict between this policy and the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Senate Bylaws*, this policy shall supersede those bylaws.
- D.** For any conflict between this policy and the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* or the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Government Fiscal Policy*, those documents shall supersede these rules.

## **Article II. Terms and Definitions.**

- A.** The *Account Director* is the Carnegie Mellon University employee in charge of overseeing the execution of all financial transactions to and from Student Government accounts.
- B.** The *Activities Fee* refers to the funds that are collected and placed under the control of Student Government by the Carnegie Mellon University Board of Trustees.
- C.** *Financial Probation* is a form of probation for Student Government Recognized organizations, and is established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* and *Student Government Fiscal Policy*.
- D.** A *full session* of Student Senate shall extend from the first regular meeting of Student Senate following the ratification of the Student Senate Election results until the adjournment of the meeting at which the following year's Student Senate Election results are successfully ratified.
- E.** The *Joint Funding Committee* refers to the standing committee of Student Government, established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* to oversee the funding of student organizations.
- F.** *Notification* of a group of students shall be satisfied by either an e-mail sent to all individuals in that group, or a verbal announcement at a regular meeting of that group, provided minutes of that meeting are recorded and distributed.
- G.** *Recognition Probation* is a form of probation for Student Government Recognized organizations, and is established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Body Constitution* and *Student Government Fiscal Policy*.
- H.** The *Student Activities Fee* is the contribution of an individual student toward the Activities Fee.
- I.** The *student body* refers to the collection of students enrolled in undergraduate or graduate academic programs at Carnegie Mellon University's Pittsburgh campus.
- J.** *Student Government Recognition* refers to the recognition, along with its associated privileges, afforded to student organizations through the Committee on Student

Organizations, as governed by the *Student Body Constitution* and *Committee on Student Organization Bylaws*

1. A *Student Government Recognized Organization* is an organization that has been granted the status of Student Government Recognition by the Committee on Student Organizations, and whose status as a Student Government Recognized organization has not been revoked through the Committee on Student Organizations re-recognition Process.
- K. A *student organization* is any grouping of members of the student body.
1. Student Senate is not a student organization.
- L. The *Student Senate Finance Committee* refers to the standing committee of Student Senate, established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Senate Bylaws* to oversee the use of Student Senate funds.
- M. The *undergraduate student body* refers to all members of the student body who are enrolled in undergraduate academic programs at Carnegie Mellon University's Pittsburgh campus.

### **Article III. Allocation of Student Senate Funds.**

- A. Student Senate funds shall be used in a way that will benefit the undergraduate student body to the fullest extent possible, both through its internal operational budget, and its special allocation process which grants any initiative or student organization the opportunity to seek fiscal support.
- B. Student Senate shall maintain an Operating Account and a Reserve Account.
- C. The Reserve Account shall be populated by funds remaining in the Operating Account at the end of the Student Senate fiscal year.
- D. Money in the Reserve Account will not be spent, except to cover a fiscal deficit in the Operating Account.
- E. The Operating Account shall consist of all funds under the control of Student Senate that are not allocated to the Reserve Account.
- F. The Student Senate Executive Committee shall propose a budget for funds in the Operating Account no later than the third regular Student Senate meeting of the academic year.
1. At least twenty-five (25) percent of this budget shall be designated as Special Allocations funding.
  2. If this budget is not approved by the end of the previous full session, then each Student Senate standing committee shall be allocated twenty-five (25) percent of their allotment for the previous fiscal year, for use until a new budget is approved.
  3. To be approved, this budget proposal requires a simple majority vote of approval at a meeting of Student Senate.
    - a. If this budget includes an allocation to the Reserve Account, it requires a three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote of approval at a meeting of Student Senate.
- G. Proposals to amend the Operating Account budget may be presented by any Student Senator or Member-at-Large during any regular Student Senate meeting.
1. The budget may not be amended in such a way that an employment contract will be violated.
  2. The budget may not be amended in such a way that less than twenty-five (25) percent of the funds in the Operating Account budget are designated as Special Allocations funding.

3. To be approved, an amendment to the Operating Account budget requires a simple majority vote of a approval at a meeting of Student Senate.
  - a. If the amendment includes an allocation to the Reserve Account, it requires a three-fourths (3/4) supermajority vote of approval at a meeting of Student Senate.

#### **Article IV. Special Allocations Funding.**

- A. Special Allocations funding is intended to provide financial support in the following categories:
  1. Initiatives or student organizations that are new to the Carnegie Mellon University community;
  2. Student Government Recognized organizations that received funding from the Joint Funding Committee for the given fiscal year that incur unexpected costs that are not the result of fiscal irresponsibility;
  3. Initiatives or student organizations that are either ineligible for Student Government Recognition or did not receive funding from the Joint Funding Committee, given that the special allocation funds are used in a manner consistent with the Carnegie Mellon University *Activities Fee Policy* and the Carnegie Mellon University *Statement of Assurance*.
- B. Special Allocations funds may not be used in violation of the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Government Fiscal Policy*.
- C. Special Allocations funds may not be used to fund the following items:
  1. Alcohol;
  2. Student salaries.
  3. Direct charitable donations
    - a. Special allocation funds are permitted to fund operational costs of initiatives that donate any portions of their proceeds to charity.
  4. Personal equipment
    - a. This includes uniforms, costumes, or equipment that will not be available for use by future members of an organization or that is not sanitary for use by more than one (1) person.
  5. Initiatives which are academic in nature
    - a. Academic initiatives are defined as initiatives that discriminate based on one's academic status, including home college, department, major, or grade point average.
  6. Initiatives which are defined to be political and/or religious in nature, as found in the *Student Government Fiscal Policy Article VI.B*
- D. The Student Senate Finance Committee is responsible for processing applications for use of money from the Special Allocations fund, and making a recommendation regarding those applications. Three types of recommendations exist:
  1. Standard Recommendations;
    - a. A Standard Recommendation is an automatic motion by the Finance Committee for the presentation and approval of a special allocation during the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
      - (i) Any recommendation from the Finance Committee without a specific dollar amount is treated as a Standard Recommendation.

- b.** Making a Standard Recommendation requires a simple majority vote at a regular meeting of the Finance Committee
  - c.** Any Student Senator can motion to raise, specify or lower the recommended dollar amount of a Standard Recommendation during a regular meeting of Student Senate. The voting details required to pass this motion are the same as what is necessary to approve the special allocation.
  - d.** The Chair of the Finance Committee is responsible for communicating all Standard Recommendations to the organization which made the request at least thirty (30) hours before the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
  - e.** The Chair of the Finance Committee is responsible for communicating all Standard Recommendations to all Student Senators at least thirty (30) hours before the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
- 2.** Expedited Recommendations.
  - a.** An Expedited Recommendation is a recommendation by the Finance Committee for the approval of a special allocation without a presentation and vote at a regular meeting of Student Senate.
    - (i)** The maximum amount of an Expedited Recommendation may be up to 750 US Dollars.
  - b.** Making an Expedited Recommendation requires a unanimous vote at a regular meeting of the Finance Committee.
  - c.** The Chair of the Finance Committee is responsible for communicating all Expedited Recommendations to the organization which made the request at least thirty (30) hours before the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
    - (i)** An organization may appeal an Expedited Recommendation for their funding request by providing, via email, their objection to the Chair of the Finance Committee at least six (6) hours prior to the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
  - d.** The Chair of the Finance Committee is responsible for communicating all Expedited Recommendations to all Student Senators at least thirty (30) hours before the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
    - (i)** A Student Senator may appeal an Expedited Recommendation for any funding request by providing, via email, their objection to the Chair of the Finance Committee at least six (6) hours prior to the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
  - e.** An Expedited Recommendation for which a valid appeal has been received shall be presented and approved as if it was a Standard Recommendation at the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
  - f.** An Expedited Recommendation for Special Allocation funding shall be considered final if no valid appeal is filed with the Chair of the Finance Committee within the stated deadlines.
- 3.** Denied Recommendations.
  - a.** A Denied Recommendation is a recommendation by the Finance Committee of 0 US dollars for a special allocation.
  - b.** Making a Denied Recommendation requires a unanimous vote at a regular meeting of the Finance Committee.

- c. The Chair of the Finance Committee is responsible for communicating all Denied Recommendations to the Senate Executive Committee at least thirty (30) hours before the next regular meeting of Student Senate
    - (i) The Executive Committee may appeal a Denied Recommendation by way of a simple majority vote at a regular meeting of the Committee, at least six (6) hours prior to the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
  - d. A Denied Recommendation for which a valid appeal has been received shall be presented and approved as if it were a Standard Recommendation at the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
  - e. Denied Recommendations will be summarized in the monthly report from the Chair of the Finance Committee.
- E. Every Standard Recommendation of the Finance Committee must be presented and approved at a meeting of Student Senate.
  - 1. Standard Recommendations for use of Special Allocations funds in the following categories requires a two-thirds (2/3) supermajority vote at a regular meeting of Student Senate:
    - a. Coaching expenses;
    - b. Gifts and prizes;
    - c. Hotels and lodging;
    - d. Leasing of off-campus facilities;
    - e. Management and consulting fees;
    - f. Meals for members;
    - g. Outside-organization membership dues;
    - h. Reimbursements;
    - i. Travel expenses outside a 60 mile radius from the Carnegie Mellon Campus;
    - j. Uniforms and costumes.
  - 2. Standard Recommendations for all other uses of Special Allocations funds must be approved by a simple majority vote at a regular meeting of Student Senate.
- F. Campus events funded by the Special Allocations fund may not limit the use of recording equipment, as established in the Carnegie Mellon University *Campus Events Media Policy*, unless the Student Senate Finance Committee deems such limitations appropriate.
  - 1. The Student Senate Finance Committee is responsible to notify Student Senate regarding any known or potential limitations on the use of recording equipment within an event, when presenting a recommendation for funding such an event to Student Senate.
- G. Funding Disclosure Rule:
  - 1. If one hundred (100) percent of the budget for an organization or event is financed by Special Allocations funding, then all advertising and printed material associated with that organization or event must include the phrase "Funded by your Student Activities Fee".
  - 2. If Special Allocations funding finances a portion of the budget for an organization or event, but less than one hundred (100) percent of that budget, then all advertising and printed material associated with that organization or event must include either the phrase "Funded in part by your Student Activities Fee", or "Funded by your Student Activities Fee".
- H. Discipline:

1. Violations of this policy by an organization receiving support from the Special Allocations fund may result in at least one of the following:
  - a. The immediate impoundment, by the Chair of the Finance Committee, of the portion of the organization's funds and/or equipment that has been subsidized by Student Senate;
  - b. Recommendation to the Student Body Vice President for Finance and/or the Student Body Vice President for Organizations that the organization be placed on Financial Probation and/or Recognition Probation;
  - c. Restriction of access to Special Allocations funds for the full session of Student Senate in which the violation occurred.
2. Student Senate is required to take this disciplinary action if so directed by a simple majority vote at a meeting of Student Senate, the Student Senate Executive Committee, or the Student Senate Finance Committee.
  - a. If the direction comes from the Student Senate Executive Committee or the Student Senate Finance Committee, the relevant committee is required to notify Student Senate of their decision at the next regular meeting of Student Senate.
    - (i) Student Senate may override such a decision by way of a simple majority vote at a regular meeting of Student Senate.

## **Article V. Amendments.**

- A. Student Senate is permitted to override this policy, or any portion within, by way of a two-thirds (2/3) supermajority vote at a meeting of Student Senate, provided the members of Student Senate have been given at least one (1) week's notice of the proposed override.
- B. Amendments to this policy must be proposed and passed in accord with the procedure set out for amendment to the Carnegie Mellon University *Student Senate Bylaws*.

Adopted by Student Senate: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

Revised by Student Senate: April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Revised by Student Senate: December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

## **Appendix: Amendments to the Student Senate Fiscal Policy**

*Note: In April 2010 Student Senate adopted major revisions to the Student Senate Bylaws, which included creating this separate document detailing Student Senate's Fiscal Policy. What follows is an accounting of amendments to the Student Senate Fiscal Policy that have been passed since April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.*

### April 6, 2011:

Article II: Terms & Definitions arranged in alphabetical order.

Article III.F.3.a: Capitalization error fixed – Reserve Account.

### May 2012:

Article IV: Revised the process of Special Allocations. Two types of allocations are now available, Standard Recommendations and Expedited Recommendations.

### December 7, 2014

Article II.J: Defined Student Government Recognition  
Article II.J.1: Defined a Student Government Recognized Organization  
Article III.A: Redefined the purpose and scope of Student Senate Funds  
Article IV.A: Removed Scope (as is now defined in Article III)  
Article IV.A.1 & 2: Modified the definition of eligibility  
Article IV.A.3: Defined funding eligibility for organizations that are exclusive  
Article IV.C: Redefined the eligibility of charitable donations, academic events, religious/political events, and personal equipment  
Article IV.E.1.a: Redefined Standard Recommendations  
Article IV.E.1.a.i: Added a clause related to allocations without monetary recommendations  
Article IV.E.1.c: Added a clause which tied the voting details of an allocation amendment to the voting details of the allocation motion  
Article IV.E.1.d & e: Changed the hours required to submit allocations to general body (From 36 to 30)  
Article IV.E.2.a: Redefined Expedited Recommendations  
Article IV.E.2.b: Removed the \$1250 restriction on making an expedited recommendation  
Article IV.E.2.d & e: Changed the hours required to submit allocations to general body (From 36 to 30)  
Article IV.E.3: Added and defined Denied Recommendations  
Article IV.F.1: Changed the voting details for special expenses  
Article IV.F.1: Modified the qualifications of special expenses  
Article IV.J.1.c: Defined the amount of time for allocation restrictions.

April 29, 2021

Senate passed the "Fund School Supplies Act". The provisions of this act shall be in effect and considered standing fiscal policy in addition to this fiscal policy.