



THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Finance Policy Book

PREAMBLE

This Finance Policy Book is written in accordance with the Bylaws of the Student Government to provide regulations for the administration of the Student Government budget and other financial activities of the organization. Entrusted with a large amount of student money, it is imperative for Student Government to handle these funds responsibly. This policy book provides rules to that end. As per the Bylaws, these rules are binding on Student Government members.

ARTICLE I. JURISDICTION

Section 1. Matters Within the Jurisdiction of this Policy Book

This policy book provides guidelines for the administration of the Student Government budget, including how funding can be requested and disbursed and how records of financial activity are to be kept.

Section 2. Matters Outside the Jurisdiction of this Policy Book

This policy book does not concern the annual creation of the Student Government Budget and Stipends legislation, which are covered by the Budget Policy Book. Additional qualifications to the jurisdiction of this policy book are set out in Article IV, section 4 of this policy book.

ARTICLE II. ACCOUNTS

Section 1. List of Accounts

Subsection i. Overview

This section lists the various financial accounts of the Student Government budget, including their purposes and the specific Student Government members who are authorized to make funding requests for each account. These accounts are hosted by the American University Center for Student Involvement.

Subsection ii. Student Government General Account

The Student Government General Account (SG General) provides funding for the projects and needs of the Student Government as a whole, as well as any necessary funding that is not accounted for by another account. Requests for SG General funding may be authorized by the Executive Board by a majority vote. Should a tie occur during a vote authorizing an SG General expenditure, the tie shall be broken by the Comptroller.

Subsection iii. The Club Co-Sponsorship Fund

The Co-Sponsorship Fund provides funding for co-sponsorships to student organizations for their events, travel to events, and other purposes. Requests for funding from the Club Co-Sponsorship Fund shall be made to the Comptroller who shall set uniform standards for requesting.

Subsection iv. The President's Advocacy Fund

The President's Advocacy Fund shall provide funding for the projects and activities that are necessary or beneficial to the advocacy efforts of the President. Requests for the President's Advocacy Fund may be made by the President or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection v. The Vice President's Programming Fund

The Vice President's Programming Fund shall provide funding for the projects and activities of the Vice President. Requests for the Programming Fund funding may be made by the Vice President or their designees as communicated to the Comptroller by the Vice President.

Subsection vi. The Department of Outreach, Publicity, and Recruitment

The Department of Outreach, Publicity, and Recruitment (DOPAR) shall provide funding for items that are the responsibility of the Secretary, such as website maintenance, communications, and promotional materials. Additionally, the Speaker of the Undergraduate Senate, any programming board, Undergraduate Councils, or any other department may request funding from DOPAR through communication with the Secretary if they require funds relating to their individual communication and promotional efforts. Requests for DOPAR funding may be made by the Secretary or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection vii. The Center for Advocacy and Student Equity Account

The Center for Advocacy and Student Equity (CASE) Account provides funding for the activities of the Center for Advocacy and Student Equity. Requests for CASE funding may be made by the CASE Director or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection viii. The Community Service Coalition Account

The Community Service Coalition (CSC) Account provides funding for CSC activities. Requests for Community Service Coalition funding may be made by the CSC Director or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection ix. The Capital Maintenance Fund

The Capital Maintenance Fund provides funding for physical supplies and other logistical necessities of the Student Government. Requests for Capital Maintenance funding may be made by the Comptroller.

Subsection x. The SIS Undergraduate Council Account

The SIS Undergraduate Council Account provides funding for the activities of the SIS Undergraduate School Council. Requests for SIS Undergraduate Council funding may be made by the SIS Undergraduate Council Treasurer or President, or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection xi. The SPA Undergraduate Council Account

The SPA Undergraduate Council Account provides funding for the activities of the SPA Undergraduate School Council. Requests for SPA Undergraduate Council funding may be made by the SPA Undergraduate Council Treasurer or President, or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection xii. The CAS Undergraduate Council Account

The CAS Undergraduate Council Account provides funding for the activities of the CAS Undergraduate School Council. Requests for CAS Undergraduate Council funding may be made by the CAS Undergraduate Council Treasurer or President, or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection xiii. The SOC Undergraduate Council Account

The SOC Undergraduate Council Account provides funding for the activities of the SOC Undergraduate School Council. Requests for SOC Undergraduate Council funding may be

made by the SOC Undergraduate Council Treasurer or President, or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection xiv. The SOE Undergraduate Council Account

The SOE Undergraduate Council Account provides funding for the activities of the SOE Undergraduate School Council. Requests for SOE Undergraduate Council funding may be made by the SOE Undergraduate Council Treasurer or President, or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection xv. The KSB Undergraduate Council Account

The KSB Undergraduate Council Account provides funding for the activities of the KSB Undergraduate School Council. Requests for KSB Undergraduate Council funding may be made by the KSB Undergraduate Council Treasurer or President, or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection xvi. The Undergraduate Class Council Fund

The Undergraduate Class Council Fund provides funding for all Undergraduate Class Councils. Requests for funding from the Undergraduate Class Council Fund may be made by any Undergraduate Class Council Treasurer or President, or their designee as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection xvii. Undergraduate School Council Leadership Fund

The Undergraduate School Council Leadership Fund shall provide additional monetary support to Undergraduate Council leaders other than the President of the Council. Functioning similarly to stipends, this fund shall serve to provide additional student support payments beyond those outlined in the annual Stipend Bill and shall be determined by the Undergraduate Senate in their annual budget bill. Support payments shall be distributed at the discretion of each Undergraduate Council President to leaders within their council while always upholding principles of equity and fairness. This shall be done with the consent of the Vice President, the Comptroller, and the Chair of the Senate Special Committee on Finance who shall come to a unanimous agreement on each School Council President's proposed leadership fund distribution. Half of each council's Leadership Fund shall be determined each semester following the same process each time. Recipients may include both Undergraduate School Council Executives and any appointed officials.

Subsection xviii. Senate Operational Fund

The Senate Operational Fund shall be used to fulfill any operational need of the Undergraduate Senate. This shall include for the purpose of creating and maintaining the Student Government historical record. Additionally, this fund may be used for the purchase of supplies and tools for the Undergraduate Senate as well as for snacks and food to be available at Undergraduate Senate meetings. Requests for funding from the Senate Operational Fund may be made by the Undergraduate Speaker or presiding officer as communicated to the Comptroller.

Subsection xix. SG Reserved

The Student Government Reserved account, also called Restricted, shall be used for the purpose of additional budgetary allocations and payment of previous fiscal year expenses. Funds from SG Reserved shall be available for disbursement through the legislative act of the Undergraduate Senate. Such legislation shall require a majority vote to pass.

Section 2. Transfer of Funds Between Accounts

Funding from Student Government accounts may not be used for the purposes assigned to other accounts. Funds may be transferred between accounts by the Undergraduate Senate. This shall not be construed to prevent Student Government programming boards, departments, or

Undergraduate Councils from co-sponsoring the events of each other which shall not require Senate approval.

ARTICLE III. RECORD KEEPING

Section 1. Responsibility of the Comptroller

It shall be the responsibility of the Comptroller to maintain records of Student Government financial activity, including all expenditures and revenues across all financial accounts.

Section 2. Means of Record Keeping

The Comptroller shall maintain records of SG financial activity on one or more spreadsheets, as suits their preferences. These records shall include the amount of money in the expenditure or revenue, the purpose of the activity, and the date of the activity. These records shall be itemized as much as possible to record each financial activity separately.

Section 3. Confidential Records

The Comptroller's internal records shall include all financial transactions, including those affected by contractual confidentiality restrictions. These records may only be shared with Student Government members who have signed the Student Government confidentiality agreement as provided in the Bylaws. The Chair of the Senate Finance Committee shall always have access to the Comptroller's internal records.

Section 4 Public Records

The Comptroller shall also maintain public records of Student Government financial activity for the general student body to view. These records shall include as much information as possible without violating contractual confidentiality restrictions. These records should be updated whenever financial activity occurs, but they must be updated at least once per month. The Comptroller shall coordinate with the Secretary to ensure that these records are accessible from the Student Government website.

ARTICLE IV. ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDING

Section 1. Funding Requests

Subsection i. Overview

A funding request shall occur when a member of Student Government directs the Comptroller to administer spending from a fund/account controlled by that member, as detailed in Article II of this policy book. The Comptroller shall establish a uniform method for the submission of funding requests. All members that control fund(s)/account(s) shall be trained on the method for submitting funding requests and kept apprised of any changes.

Subsection ii. Elements of a Funding Request

A funding request shall include an amount of money requested, the purpose for which it is to be spent, the recipient of the spending, and any other information deemed necessary by the Comptroller.

Section 2. Funding Principles

Subsection i. Overview

All funding requests for accounts administered by the Comptroller must adhere to the Student Government funding principles as established in this Article. Upon the receipt of funding requests, the Comptroller shall determine whether they satisfy the funding principles. If the principles are satisfied, the funding request shall be processed and the funding shall be administered. If the principles are not satisfied, the Comptroller shall not administer the spending, but they shall correspond with the requesting individual in an attempt to rectify the shortcomings of the funding request.

Subsection ii. Purpose of Accounts

All Student Government spending must fit within the purpose of the account from which its funding comes. All of Student Government's financial accounts have a specific purpose, as listed in Article II of this policy book. The Constitution and Bylaws give the authority to designate specific funds for specific purposes to the Undergraduate Senate. The Undergraduate Senate exercises this responsibility by dividing the Student Government budget into different accounts. It would violate this arrangement for funds from one account to be used for the purposes of another. Funds may be transferred between accounts by the Undergraduate Senate. Whether this principle is fulfilled shall be determined by the account purposes in Article II.

Subsection iii. Beneficial use of student money

All Student Government spending must be a beneficial use of student money. This principle may be fulfilled in one of two ways, as outlined in the two paragraphs of this subsection.

- a. Spending may fulfill this principle by providing a benefit to the general student body. Whether spending benefits the student body will be determined by evaluating its outcome against such considerations as whether a hypothetical, representative member of the student body would support their money being spent for that purpose and whether a benefit arises from that spending that would exist without the spending. Although this criterion specifies that spending should benefit the student body generally, this should not be taken to mean that every use of AUSG money must be used for the whole student population. In other words, it would still be in line with this criterion to spend AUSG funds to benefit specific communities or groups of students. The ability of students to enjoy vibrant communities within the broader student body is a benefit to all students. However, it would violate this criterion if Student Government spending were not equitably shared amongst the whole student body, being unjustifiably concentrated among specific groups.
- b. Spending may fulfill this principle if it is necessary for Student Government operations. Student Government is responsible for advocating student interests and hosting programming events for student enjoyment. It must spend a responsible amount of money to ensure that it remains capable of meeting those two responsibilities. Whether spending is necessary for Student Government to operate will be determined by identifying an actual or potential impediment that would prevent Student Government members from effectively performing a specific aspect of their position, and whether the spending would resolve that impediment. If the duty in question can be adequately performed without the spending, or if the spending would not solve the impediment, this criterion would not be satisfied.

Subsection iv. Price

Student Government spending may not be excessively expensive. If spending is excessively expensive, it reduces the ability of Student Government to spend student money for student benefit by unnecessarily reducing the amount of money remaining for other purposes. Whether spending is excessively expensive will be determined according to whether a less expensive option can sufficiently meet the same purpose as the requested spending.

Subsection v. Ethics

Student Government spending may not unethically benefit anyone. The budget of Student Government belongs to the student body as a whole, and AUSG members who control the budget only do so as trustees. It would be wildly inappropriate for Student Government members to use the budget to unethically benefit themselves. However, AUSG members are students as well; slightly more than two percent of the student body is in AUSG. Therefore, the question of this principle is not whether any member of Student Government is

incidentally benefitted by spending, but whether the benefit is unethical. Whether spending is unethical will be determined using the following questions:

- a. Would members of Student Government, or their friends or otherwise close associates, benefit from the spending?
- b. Would certain individuals have special access to benefits arising from the spending?
- c. Would this funding request be made by a different individual holding the same position?
- d. Would this spending violate any of the guidelines in the Ethical and Judicial Standards?

It is not the case that if any single one of these questions are affirmed, that spending is automatically unethical. For instance, if a Student Government member enjoys a programming event put on by AUSG, that benefits them but is not unethical. Furthermore, spending that exclusively benefits Student Government members may be ethically permissible if it is necessary for Student Government to properly function.

Section 3. Processing through the Center for Student Involvement

Subsection i. CSI

Upon the receipt of funding a request and the determination by the Comptroller that the request satisfies the funding principles as established by section 2 of this Article, the Comptroller shall submit the request to the Center for Student Involvement to arrange for them to facilitate it.

Subsection ii. Final authorization and disbursement

Once the Center for Student Involvement is prepared to facilitate an expenditure as described in this section, the Comptroller shall sign a final authorization certifying that the expenditure satisfies all requirements from Student Government and the Center for Student Involvement. The Comptroller shall maintain a uniform authorization form for such use. Once this final authorization is given, the expenditure may be made by the means set out by CSI, such as “purchase cards” in online orders. The actual act of payment may be performed by the Comptroller or individuals designated by the Comptroller. When making purchases, members of Student Government may not use funds for any reason other than that for which they were duly approved.

Subsection iii. Exclusive authority of the Comptroller

Members of Student Government shall not attempt to have funds disbursed from Student Government accounts — or sign any external form, enter any agreement, or otherwise indicate assumption of financial obligation on behalf of Student Government — including by unilaterally submitted unauthorized requests to CSI, without receiving the final authorization signed by the Comptroller, except as provided in exceptions under section 4 of this Article.

Subsection iv. Receipts

Whenever possible after completing expenditures, receipts of that transaction, whether physical or digital, shall be obtained for record-keeping purposes. If an individual other than the Comptroller completes a transaction, they are to give such receipts to the Comptroller.

Subsection v. Processing time

Members requesting funds should anticipate at least five business days to elapse for CSI to process funding requests.