

1 **MERCYHURST STUDENT GOVERNMENT FINANCE CODE**

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3 Drafted: October 2005; Approved: 9 January 2006; Amended as of: 1 October 2007; Redrafted: September 2010;  
4 Approved: 11 October 2010; Amended as of 28 June 2016; Approved as of 17 August 2016.  
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7 **Article I. Purpose**

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9 The Finance Code of Mercyhurst Student Government, herein referred to as MSG, shall govern the financial  
10 policies of MSG.  
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12 **Article II. Authority**

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14 No part of this Finance Code may supersede any part of the MSG Constitution. If any part of this Finance Code is  
15 found to be in conflict with the MSG Constitution, the contradictory clause of the Finance Code shall be  
16 suspended until such time as that part is amended in such a fashion that it is no longer in conflict with the MSG  
17 Constitution.  
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19 It is the MSG Treasurer's responsibility, along with assistance from the President and Advisor, to ensure the  
20 Finance Code's accuracy and practicality in relation to the evolution of funding and fiscal practices.  
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22 **Article III. Mercyhurst Student Government Funding**

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24 The purpose of funding is to provide the opportunity for MSG, its committees, Senators, Student Activities  
25 Council, herein referred to as SAC, Multicultural Activities Council, herein referred to as MAC, and Recognized  
26 Student Clubs/Organizations, herein referred to as RSCOs, to enhance the overall experience of the traditional,  
27 undergraduate, full-time students at Mercyhurst University Erie campus.  
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29 For RSCO Funding, please refer to Article IV Section 4.  
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31 **Section 1. Income**

32 The primary source of income for the MSG shall be in the form of the Student Activities Fee, commonly referred to  
33 as the FTE Allotment. This amount shall be set by the MSG.

- 34 **A.** The current fee shall be slated at \$100 per Academic Semester and is paid by all traditional, regular, full-  
35 time, undergraduate students.
- 36 **B.** Any change of the Student Activities Fee must be proposed by the MSG Executive Board or Senate and  
37 approved by both a majority of the Operations and Facilities Use Committee and two-thirds (2/3) of the  
38 Senate. The change must be made during the Fall Semester and submitted to the University Controller  
39 no later than Dec. 1.  
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41 **Section 2. Funding Procedures**

- 42 **A.** Any purchase made using MSG funds must be made through one of two methods:
  - 43 **1.** Internal purchase: Bookstore, Dining facilities, One Card Office, and DocuCenter.
  - 44 **2.** External purchase: Purchases made through a vendor, contractual agreement, credit card, or  
45 other negotiated purchase requiring a check to be issued. For all external purchases, payment  
46 must be requisitioned through the MSG Treasurer in a timely manner.
    - 47 **i.** If an item is to be paid in advance, a check requisition should be submitted Monday prior  
48 to that check date needed. Requests submitted after that time shall be handled by the  
49 Treasurer at their discretion.
    - 50 **ii.** If an item is to be paid *ex post facto*, a check requisition should be submitted immediately  
51 upon receipt of an invoice.
- 52 **B.** The MSG Treasurer shall establish a deadline for check requisitions and shall make that date known to all  
53 parties involved with MSG funding.
- 54 **C.** All check requisitions must be accompanied by the proper documentation which includes a receipt,  
55 contract, invoice, or some other proof of purchase clearly indicating the amount, service performed, and  
56 the party the check should be made out to.

- D. All receipts submitted to the MSG Treasurer should be original and itemized, clearly indicating items purchased, the costs, and the vendor purchased from.
- E. MSG is tax-exempt in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. All purchases shall be made with a tax-exempt form available from the MSG Treasurer or with other appropriate documentation from the University's Business Office.
- F. In the case of a reimbursement, MSG will not be responsible for paying the tax on the purchase; all purchasers are advised that tax exempt forms must always be used.
- G. The MSG Treasurer shall be responsible for informing the MSG Senate and Executive Board of the state of the budget and at the first meeting of each month the Senate and Executive Board shall be given a copy of the budget, as well as an oral report of the state of the finances (Treasurer Report).
- H. Any movement of funds from or within the budget exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500) must be submitted to the Executive board and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of members present.

### Section 3. College Accounts

#### A. Investment Account

1. Throughout the academic year, the MSG Treasurer will be responsible for making deposits into the Investment Account.
  - i. At the discretion of the MSG Treasurer and Advisor, unspent funds during the previous fiscal year shall be deposited into the Investment Account once funds for the following fiscal year have been secured and deposited into the MSG checking account.
  - ii. The purpose of the Investment Account is three-fold. First, the account gives the MSG Treasurer and Operations and Facilities Use Committee a better idea of budgeting figures. Second, it allows for the purchase of large special projects and/or increased funding for large events. Lastly, it provides MSG with financial support when student enrollment numbers do not meet the expectations.
2. In order to withdraw from the Investment Account, a motion must be made from the MSG Senate and passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority.
3. At any given time, there must be a five thousand dollar (\$5,000) minimum in the Investment Account.
4. The MSG Treasurer is responsible for reporting the total invested amount and the total yield from said investment at the beginning of each Fiscal Year, Academic Year, and per request of the Senate.
5. According to the Memorandum of Understanding between Mercyhurst University and Mercyhurst Student Government, authorizes MSG the ability to maintain their current Investment Account and hold a maximum of \$100,000 including interest accrued.

#### B. FTE Account

1. The MSG President and Treasurer must meet once per academic Semester, preferably in the last week of the Semester, with a representative of the Business Office to reconcile the FTE account and address any issues that may have occurred during the previous Semester.

## Article IV. Mercyhurst Student Government Budget

### Section 1. Budget Description

MSG shall follow a budget established in the spring of the previous fiscal year.

The budget shall be prepared by the MSG Treasurer and facilitated through the Operations and Facilities Use Committee following the process outlined in Article IV.

### Section 2. Budgeting Process

- A. In order to obtain a proper perspective of budgetary needs, the MSG Treasurer shall prepare Budget Application packets and distribute them to the proper constituencies per the process listed below:
  1. Budget Application Workshops facilitated by MSG Treasurer;
  2. Budget Applications distributed to RSCOs;
  3. All Budget Applications due to MSG Treasurer electronically;
  4. Treasurer confirms receipt of budget within forty-eight (48) hours;

- 112 5. Treasurer meets with one or more advisors of Campus Involvement Center to preliminarily review
- 113 budget applications;
- 114 6. Initial Operations and Facilities Use Committee meetings;
- 115 7. Budget presented by MSG Treasurer to MSG Senate. The budget will be either voted upon that
- 116 meeting or tabled for further discussion.
- 117 8. If the Senate failed to approve the initial proposal, the Operations and Facilities Use Committee
- 118 shall reconvene to make the necessary adjustments and present the revised budget at the next
- 119 Senate meeting. A vote shall take place at the next meeting.
- 120 B. All other line items will be reviewed by the Executive board and voted on. A majority vote of two thirds
- 121 (2/3) will be needed. The Operations committee will then review and approve all changes, prior to the
- 122 Senate vote.
- 123 C. There shall be a minimum established for the MAC/SAC budget, which shall be no less than twenty
- 124 percent (20%) of the total MSG Operating Budget.

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126 **Section 3. Policies and Regulations on Specific Line Items**

- 127 A. The "Presidents Fund" is a line item for use at the discretion of the MSG President which may not be
- 128 used for personal gain and it may not exceed the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500.00).
- 129 B. The "Officer Travel" line item is intended to off-set travel expenses incurred by MSG Executive Board
- 130 members after graduation and before the start of fall classes.
  - 131 1. There will be a maximum reimbursement of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) available to each of
  - 132 the seven (7) executive board members when traveling to the University for MSG related
  - 133 business.
  - 134 2. Valid travel expenses will only include the cost of gas which will be decided by the number of
  - 135 miles driven. A Travel Log Form must be filled out and attached with original receipts in order to
  - 136 receive reimbursement. Reimbursement per mile will be set at the University rate and shall not
  - 137 exceed total spent.
  - 138 3. Reimbursement will not be given for travel when the intent of the trip is for personal purposes or
  - 139 moving back to campus.
- 140 C. The "Philanthropy" line item is designed to match monetary requests put forth by RSCOs and sent to non-
- 141 profit organizations.
  - 142 1. RSCOs may request up to two hundred dollars (\$200.00) to be matched throughout the course of
  - 143 one (1) academic year.
  - 144 2. Any left over Philanthropy funds not used in a given Semester will roll over to the next Semester.
  - 145 3. Upon the approval of the request, the RSCO will need to deliver the raised funds to the
  - 146 Treasurer, who will verify the amount raised and write a check for any additional funds authorized
  - 147 by senate for philanthropy. A check requisition must also be filled out for the deposited amount,
  - 148 made out to the charity, and turned into the MSG Treasurer. The check will then be sent out by
  - 149 the MSG Treasurer with a letter of explanation.
  - 150 4. College employees, offices, and departments not falling in the category of RSCOs will not be
  - 151 permitted to request philanthropy.
  - 152 5. A RSCO must actively participate in the event/fundraiser to request philanthropy. Money must be
  - 153 deposited in their University Account and not another RSCO's Account.
  - 154 6. A RSCO may not solicit any other RSCO for money to give to or to use as philanthropy.

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156 **Section 4. RSCO Funding**

157 Beginning Fall Term Two Thousand and Sixteen (2016), all RSCOs must have obtained a copy of the

158 revised Finance Code. Further each RSCO must also have at least one representative attend training

159 sessions offered by the MSG Treasurer. Sessions shall be offered in the Fall and Spring Semesters

160 explaining the Budget Application process and the spending procedures for RSCOs.

- 161 A. Each RSCO in good standing with MSG and the Campus Involvement Center is eligible to apply for
- 162 RSCO Funding. Good standing shall be defined as:
  - 163 i. Having resubmitted their Year-end Re-application Form.
  - 164 ii. Having resubmitted their member roster.
  - 165 iii. Having two (2) official meetings registered with the Campus Involvement Center within
  - 166 the semester funding is applied for.

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- B.** The Operations and Facilities Use Committee will evaluate each RSCO Budget Application on a semester basis based on the individual merits of that request. The Committee will determine the appropriation of the RSCO's budget by including all but not limited to the:
    1. Degree of positive promotion and reflection of the mission of both Mercyhurst University and MSG.
    2. Appeal of the appropriation to the student body through activities and programs.
    3. Expected student participation in planned programs, with particular attention to the dollars-per-student ratio.
    4. Appropriate historical budget expenditures and uses.
    5. Overall benefits offered to the students.
  - C.** Following the purchase of any supplies, services, and/or other merchandise, original receipts must be turned into the MSG Treasurer no later than a week following the purchase. The only exception to this rule is circumstances where the RSCO representative has gained approval prior to the purchase that allows that representative to present the receipts at a later, agreed upon time.
  - D.** The following items are prohibited from being purchased with MSG funds:
    - i. Alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, their paraphernalia, and any items promoting these products.
    - ii. Philanthropic gifts.
    - iii. Political contributions.
    - iv. Anything violating the Mercyhurst University Student Conduct Code.
    - v. Personal items.
    - vi. Expenses for meetings not open to the college community.
    - vii. Membership, conference, or competitions fees.
  - E. Travel**  
Any RSCO planning to include travel expenses in their RSCO Budget Application The form must be completed in its entirety, with the best estimate for fields in which definite answers are unavailable (i.e. dates, exact amounts, et cetera).
    1. MSG will provide limited funding for RSCO travel, with travel expenses in an RSCO's Budget Application not to exceed thirty percent (30%) of total amount requested. Exceptions may be granted by the Operations and Facilities Use Committee for clubs whose ability to function would be hindered by a lack of travel funding. These events shall be handled on a case-by-case basis
    2. Priority consideration will be given to on-campus events. RSCOs are encouraged to keep this in mind when planning their overall budgets.
  - F.** The Operations Committee shall also determine an amount in the RSCO Funding line item each spring during the budgeting process to leave unbudgeted for funds available as "Start-up Funds and Spot Funding" for RSCOs.
  - G.** RSCOs have one academic Semester from their date of recognition to request the funds of up to one hundred dollars (\$100), but may not be requested if the RSCO receives a general budget allotment. These funds will remain available to a club or organization until they submit a budget to the Treasurer during one of the subsequent allocation periods. After this time, any unused start-up funding will be absorbed into the general RSCO line item.
  - H.** Each RSCO will have the option of applying for and maintaining an account within the University Business Office.
    1. The RSCO advisor must email the Business Office to begin the process of establishing the RSCO account. University procedures for that account will be in effect.
  - I.** Any RSCO not adhering to the rules outlined in the Finance Code shall be held responsible for the following penalties should they occur in an academic year:
    1. First Offense – a freeze will be placed on the RSCO for 60 days, a period in which the RSCO will not be able to utilize monies allocated by MSG.
    2. Second Offense – a freeze will be placed on the RSCO budget for the remainder of the academic year. In addition, this will be a consideration when the RSCO submits a Budget Application the following spring.
    3. Third Offense – the RSCO will lose their recognition from both MSG and the Campus Involvement Center for the period of two full Academic Semesters. This RSCO shall also receive no start-up funds upon renewed recognition.

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**Article V. The Operations and Facilities Use Committee**

**Section 1. Consistency**

- A. The Operations and Facilities Use Committee shall consist of the following:
  - 1. MSG Treasurer
  - 2. MSG President (non-voting)
  - 3. SAC/MAC Financial Secretary
  - 4. Two MSG Senators appointed and approved by the Executive Board.
  - 5. MSG Advisor (non-voting)
  - 6. SAC Advisor (non-voting)
  - 7. MAC Advisor (non-voting)
  - 8. RSCO Liaison (non-voting)
- B. The Treasurer may invite guests not included in the list above to contribute to the Operations and Facilities Use Committee, in a non-voting capacity, with the approval of the rest of the Operations and Facilities Use Committee;

**Section 2. Quorum**

The Committee shall have a quorum of four (4) voting members and one (1) non-voting Chair (Executive board member) present for business to be official.

**Section 3. Responsibilities**

- The Operations and Facilities Use Committee shall be responsible for the following:
- A. Approving the budget as prepared by the Treasurer.
  - B. Approving all RSCO budget applications during Fall and Spring Semester.
  - C. Conducting any research needed to make proper determinations when budgeting RSCO allocations.
  - D. Approve any further request from RSCOs for funding.
  - E. Approving line breakdowns, i.e. SAC/MAC Budget, Major Events, et cetera.

**Section 4. Meetings**

- A. The Operations and Facilities Use Committee shall meet as necessary during the Academic Year, and will meet regularly at specified times during the Budget Application Processes as outlined in Article II, Section 2, Subset A.
- B. The Operations and Facilities Use Committee will be available as needed by the MSG Senate, Executive Board, and RSCOs for appeals, hearings, et cetera.
- C. The MSG Treasurer and SAC/MAC Financial Secretary shall meet weekly to reconcile their respective budgets in regards to SAC and MAC, with appropriate documentation kept on file for auditing purposes.
- D. The MSG Treasurer, MSG Event Coordinator, SAC/MAC Financial Secretary, SAC Chair and MAC chair shall also meet as needed to reconcile their respective budgets in regards to major events, with appropriate documentation kept on file for auditing purposes.

**Article VI. Compliance**

All funding procedures facilitated with funds belonging to the MSG shall abide by this code.

All members of MSG serving in any capacity (including those RSCOs who have requested and have been allocated funds) must comply with the Finance Code, unless such compliance is in direct conflict with the MSG Constitution, the Finance Code of Mercyhurst College, or any State or Federal laws and regulations. Willful and/or deliberate disregard of the Finance Code shall be sent to the Judicial Board for review and recommendation.

**Article VII. Amendments**

It is the MSG Treasurer's responsibility to update the Finance Code throughout the summer. At all other times, the Operations and Facilities Use Committee shall be responsible for amendments to the Finance Code as needed. The Operations and Facilities Use Committee, in their first meeting of an academic year, shall review

278 the Finance Code and discuss any changes that were proposed by the MSG Treasurer during the summer and  
279 determine if any changes should be made.

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281 The MSG Treasurer shall then present the updated Finance Code to the Operations and Facilities Use  
282 Committee and the MSG Senate. For any wording or language changes, a simple majority vote shall be needed  
283 to pass. For any monetary or number changes, a two-thirds (2/3) vote shall be needed to pass.