

Article III - Appropriations Committee

Section 1 - Purpose. The purpose of the Appropriations Committee is to disburse funds in a fair and consistent manner in order to enhance the quality of the law school experience at Georgetown University Law Center.

Section 2 - Composition. The Appropriations committee shall consist of between 8 to 14 members of the House of Delegates, not including the Treasurer. When possible, at least one member of the Committee should have previously served on the Committee. During the period between Spring elections and Fall Committee assignments, the Committee shall, if necessary, be permitted to function with no less than 5 members, not including the Treasurer.

Section 3 - Contact Information. The Treasurer should create an Appropriations Committee roster with names, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, and other relevant contact information to be sent to committee members via e-mail as soon as possible when the committee is established following Spring elections and in the event of any changes or updates to the roster.

Section 4 - Record Keeping. The Treasurer is responsible for taking minutes on the Appropriations Committee deliberations, i.e. recording the rationale for the funding of each club and checking OrgSync form submissions.

Section 5 - The Presentation Process.

- A.* The Treasurer shall train all new members of the committee regarding their responsibilities as soon as is possible after each election cycle.
- B.* Before the first set of panel presentations of each Appropriations cycle, the Treasurer shall update the standardized form for the Panel Members, which they shall use during the presentation process.
- C.* Student Organizations will sign up for presentation times when they submit their budget requests. Each presentation slot will be 30 minutes in length divided starting with a 10-15 minute presentation by the student organization summarizing their budget and providing background information on their organization. The remainder of the time will allow for questioning by the Panel Members.
- D.* Upon submission of their budget, the organizations applying for funding shall inform the Treasurer of outstanding or pending charges to the organization's account number.
- E.* At the first appropriations meeting of each Appropriations cycle, the Treasurer should assign Panel Members to sit at each student organization presentation.

- (i) Each Panel shall include 3 to 4 members of the Appropriations Committee. Whenever possible, the panel should include the Treasurer and at least one Committee member who has participated in a previous Appropriations cycle.
 - (ii) The role of the Panel Members is to serve as a conduit between the student organizations they hear present and the Appropriations Committee. It is the responsibility of the Panel Members to advocate the budgeting interests of their groups during the Appropriations cycle and present a recommended budget to the rest of the Committee.
- F. After hearing each student organization's presentation, the Panel Members will evaluate their budget request and produce a recommended allocation to present to the Appropriations Committee.
 - G. At the conclusion of Budget Presentations, the Appropriations Committee will meet to review the recommendations from the various Panels and draft a comprehensive budget.
 - H. At the conclusion of each semester's budgeting process, the Treasurer shall inform the leader(s) of organizations of all funding decisions regarding the organizations. The information provided should include a detailed breakdown of the funding allocated to the organization for each event listed in the organization's proposed budget..
 - I. Committee members must not be Panel Members for the student organizations of which they are on the executive board or have a severe conflict of interest.

Section 6 - Meetings. The Treasurer shall schedule an Appropriations Committee meeting for early in the second week following Spring elections and early in the second week of the Fall semester. The Treasurer shall schedule an additional meeting the week after Fall Committee appointments.

Section 7 - Provisional Student Organizations.

- A. All new and inactive student organizations shall be considered provisional student organizations for one semester and will be notified as such by the Treasurer.
- B. *"New" student organizations.*
A "new" student organization is one that the Student Life Student Faculty Committee has recognized and that has not previously existed.

- C. *“Inactive” student organizations.*
- (i) Any student organization that has previously been recognized by the Student Life Student Faculty Committee but has failed to host at least one “significant event” during the current semester, shall be considered “inactive” for Appropriations Committee purposes.
 - (ii) What constitutes a “significant” event will be determined at the discretion of the Appropriations Committee. A significant event must be adequately advertised to the student body as a whole. Participation in the Student Organization Fair shall not constitute a significant event.
 - (iii) The Committee shall take into consideration demonstrated planning of a “significant event” for the following semester in determining whether a student organization shall be classified as “inactive.”
 - (iv) Student groups deemed inactive will be notified of their status as an inactive group, by the Treasurer, prior to the beginning of the next academic semester.
 - (v) If a student organization is classified as “inactive” but has received a year-long allocation, all remaining Association funds shall revert to the Association.
- D. At the last Association meeting prior to the budget hearings, the provisional status of all such organizations shall be reevaluated. If a provisional organization fails to complete a significant event then it will remain provisional and ineligible to submit a budget for funding for the following semester.

Section 8 - The Appropriations Cycle. The Appropriations Committee provides the following schedule to ensure that the appropriations process is fair, thorough, and expeditious.

- A. The Spring Appropriations cycle for Fall and year-long budgets shall begin one week after Spring Break. The Fall Appropriations cycle for Spring budgets shall begin two weeks before Thanksgiving Break. .
- B. *Notification.*
 - (i) At the beginning of the spring semester, the Treasurer will notify student organizations of the expected application date for the Spring Appropriations cycle with the intention that student organizations will plan their elections accordingly.

- (ii) At the beginning and end of the first week after Spring Break, the outgoing Treasurer will notify by e-mail, OrgSync, and other appropriate methods all student organization leaders of their requirement to submit a budget via OrgSync.
- (iii) In all initial communications, the Treasurer should notify all organizations of the consequences of a late submission. Organizations submitting late budgets waive the right to appeal decisions of the committee absent extenuating circumstances.
- (iv) The outgoing Treasurer should stipulate a budget submission deadline of at least two weeks after the original submission announcement.

C. Budget Deadlines.

- (i) At the beginning of the second week after Spring Break, the incoming Treasurer shall send another notification about the appropriations deadline to student organization leaders and shall post it on the Appropriations courseware site.
- (ii) The Treasurer, after the submission deadline, shall distribute a preliminary budget reflecting the full funding requests of each student organization budget submission.
- (iii) The Treasurer shall provide a list of all the organizations that have submitted, and those that have failed to submit, a budget on time.
- (iv) As soon as is possible after the deadline for budget submissions, the Treasurer shall notify the student organization leaders of those organizations that have not yet submitted a budget that the deadline for budget submissions has past and they must get their budget requests in immediately.

D. Treasurer Meetings.

- (i) Prior to the submission deadline, the Treasurer should encourage organizations that have failed to submit a budget to submit one immediately.
- (ii) The Treasurer shall hold optional meetings for organization leaders prior to the submission of the budgets. The goal of these meetings is to negotiate a reasonable budget request that allows the organization to fulfill its goals for the year or the semester, but

does not request more money from the SBA than is absolutely necessary.

E. Organization Submissions.

- (i) Organizations whose bylaws provide for elections of new Executive Boards in the Spring Semester should have elected, at a minimum, a new treasurer prior to the submission of their fall budget requests. The Committee should consider placing groups failing to meet this requirement on provisional status for the following Fall Semester.
- (ii) Organizations will submit their budget requests to the Appropriations Committee based on the forms provided by the Treasurer.
- (iii) The Treasurer shall update the budget request forms each year.
- (iv) Included in the budget request form will be specific information, to the extent practicable, for each event that an organization is planning, including the following information: actual date, location, nature, number of people involved, and cost of the event.
- (v) Student organizations shall also report the following information in their budget request:
 - (a) The number of active students in the student organization during the previous year. This number should be based upon the reasonable belief of the organizations officers.
 - (b) The number of general body meetings and special events available to both day and evening students in the previous year (particularly events scheduled after 8pm, or on weekends).

F. Drafting the Budget.

- (i) The Appropriations Committee should meet one month after Spring Break to draft the budget.
- (ii) Drafting the budget entails balancing the needs of all organizations to create an overall Association budget that allocates limited Association funds fairly and effectively.

- (iii) During this process, Panel Members shall be prepared to defend the budget they recommended for the student organization before the rest of the Appropriations Committee.
- (iv) After completion of the draft budget, the Treasurer will contact the organization leaders to inform them of their initial allocation in the draft budget. The Treasurer shall also inform leaders that allocations are only preliminary and may change as the budget is finalized.

G. Conflict of Interest.

- (i) Committee members must abstain from voting on funding requests proposed on behalf of an organization of which a committee member is an executive board member.
- (ii) Committee members who are executive board members of organizations seeking funds from the Association may answer any questions during debate on that organization's budget request.

H. Factors in Allotting Funds.

The Appropriations Committee will consider the following factors in allocating funds to student organizations:

- (i) Timeliness of the student organization's budget submission.
- (ii) The specificity of the student organization's funding request.
- (iii) The student organization's management of past funding in allocating funds to student organizations.
- (iv) Availability of events to both day and evening students.

I. Wednesday Wind Down

Requests for funding for Wednesday Wind Down shall not be included in the general budget requests.

J. Speaker Honoraria.

- (i) The Appropriations Committee shall have the discretionary authority to provide funding for speaker honoraria.
- (ii) The value of the total honorarium given for a single event will generally not exceed \$250.00.

- (iii) Student organizations should make every reasonable effort to obtain speakers at no cost to the Association. Student organizations should keep the Appropriations Committee informed on their efforts to find a free speaker. If the speaker is not available for free, student organizations should inform the Appropriations Committee why that speaker is indispensable to the event.
- (iv) Barring exceptional circumstances, the Committee should not approve more than one honorarium per student organization per semester.

K. Appeals Meeting.

An Appeals Meeting should be scheduled for the week following the budgeting process. The purpose of the Appeals Meeting is to allow organization leaders to appeal their initial allocation in the draft budget by presenting compelling reasons for additional funding from the Association. The Appeals Meeting is optional for organizations.

L. The Final Budget.

The Appropriations Committee should dedicate subsequent weeks to finalizing and cementing the final Association Appropriations Budget and presenting it to the House of Delegates for approval in compliance with the Constitution.

Section 9 - Transportation.

- A. Members of student organizations generally should plan to provide their own transportation for their events.
- B. The Appropriations Committee shall consider funding and/or reimbursement of transportation costs based on the nature of the event, beneficiaries, impact on the law center community, and budget of the organization sponsoring the event.
- C. For speakers outside the GULC community, student organizations may not pay for airfare or include airfare in a speaker's fee, but student organizations may fund for reasonable ground transportation from a metropolitan Washington, D.C. airport to an area hotel or GULC, from an area hotel to GULC, and back.

Section 10 - Membership Dues & National Dues.

- A. Student organizations shall disclose to the Appropriations Committee any membership dues their members pay to that organization, as well as the membership dues the organization pays to national organizations, if the

student organization is a Georgetown University Law Center chapter of a national organization.

- B.* Organizations that collect membership dues can use those dues as a non-Association source of funding.
- C.* The Appropriations Committee may consider membership dues, as well as dues paid to national organizations, when deciding a group's budget, giving due consideration to the group's spending history and its impact on the law center community.
- D.* If an organization collects dues from its members, the Appropriations Committee shall consider it to have spent the dues funds before the Committee will consider it to have spent Association allocations.
- E.* The Association generally will pay national dues for student organizations in order for that student organization to remain in good standing with the national organization.

Section 11 - Conferences & Conference Attendance Off-Campus.

- A.* The Association will not fund conference transportation or accommodations. An exception may be available for transportation to conferences within 60 miles of the Law Center.
- B.* The Association may pay for conference dues and fees up to 50% of the cost per person but not exceeding \$250.00. The Committee will consider exceptions to this policy, taking into consideration such factors as the proximity of the conference to the Law Center, the involvement of the students in the conference, and the relationship of the student organization to the group putting on the conference.
- C.* In general, the Association will not fund national or regional conferences hosted by student organizations.

Section 12 - Sports Jerseys and Personal Fees. The Committee may pay for up to 50% of costs on sports jerseys and personal fees within reason.

Section 13 - Executive Board Events. The Committee will not fund events solely for organization executive boards unless the event provides additional benefit to the larger student body.

Section 14 - Supplemental Funding.

- A.* The purposes of supplemental funding are: (1) to provide funds to student organizations for unforeseen circumstances or unique opportunities; and

(2) to provide funds to new and inactive student groups classified by the committee as provisional groups.

- G.* A majority of votes cast in the Committee shall be required to approve any funding decision over \$75.00.
- H.* A majority of the membership of the House of Delegates shall be required to approve any funding decision over \$500.00.

Section 15 - Special Appropriations for LL.M. Organizations.

- A.* During the Spring appropriations cycle, the Association shall allocate a quantity of money to a general LL.M. activities fund, which the Committee shall use to fund activities sponsored by or offered for LL.M. students during the fall semester.
- B.* All LL.M. student groups shall submit requests for funds to the Appropriations Committee for their activities during the fall, and the Committee shall first allocate monies toward these requests out of this fund. If the LL.M. requests exhaust this fund, these groups remain eligible to apply for supplemental funding.

Section 16 - Organization Spending.

- A.* The Association expects student organizations to spend their Association budget funds in good faith, in accordance with the budget submitted to the Appropriations Committee, and in compliance with the GULC Bulletin rules.
- B.* Any spending abuse or misappropriation of funds by an organization may be taken into consideration by the Appropriations Committee when reviewing budget requests.

Section 17 - Suggested Student Pricing Index.

- A.* For certain products, foodstuffs, and beverages, the Appropriations Committee shall produce and maintain a Suggested Student Pricing Index. The Index should include the pricing for common products, foodstuffs, and beverages that student organizations commonly order.
- B.* The Association generally will not fund more than the price indicated in the Suggested Student Pricing Index for any funding requests, except if the student organization is able to demonstrate extraordinary need to go outside the general guidelines of the Index.

- C. It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to maintain and update the Suggested Student Pricing Index and distribute a copy to all student organizations.
- D. It shall be the responsibility of the Appropriations Committee to seek out the lowest prices possible for commonly purchased goods and to make every effort to negotiate deals with frequent vendors on behalf of GULC Student Organizations.
 - (i) The Treasurer shall have the final authority on all negotiated deals.
- E. It shall be the responsibility of the student organization president and/or treasurer to ensure that all funding requests comply with the Suggested Student Pricing Index.

Section 18 – Wednesday Wind-Down

- A. *Wednesday Wind-Down budgeting process for future Appropriations cycles.*

The Appropriations Committee shall not allocate funds for Wednesday Wind-Down individually to student organizations. Rather, the Committee shall fund Wednesday Wind-Down according to the following provisions:

 - (i) *Standing budget for Wednesday Wind-Down.* During each budgeting cycle, the Committee shall determine a reasonable allocation for a Wednesday Wind-Down every Wednesday afternoon (as practicable) during the regular school year weeks within that budgeting cycle. Thus, an SBA-funded Wednesday Wind-Down shall take place on every such Wednesday afternoon. The Committee shall make this allocation out of the Student Organization Fund, and shall set aside this allocation exclusively for use on Wednesday Wind-Downs.
 - (ii) *Student organization sponsorship of weekly Wednesday Wind-Down.* In the event a student organization would like to hold a Wednesday Wind-Down, that organization shall contact the Social Chairs of the Association. Any student organization approved for sponsorship of the Wednesday Wind-Down shall be responsible for (1) publicizing that student organization's sponsorship of the Wednesday Wind-Down; and (2) cleanup immediately following the Wednesday Wind-Down.
 - (a) *Scheduling of Wednesday Wind-Downs.* Should the requesting student organization wish to hold the weekly Wednesday Wind-Down at a time other than Wednesday afternoon, that organization shall present grounds for the

schedule change. When all the Wednesdays in a semester have been reserved by student organizations, the Association will attempt to facilitate co-sponsorship opportunities for all student organizations that wish to sponsor a Wednesday Wind-Down.

- (b) *Supplemental funding of Wednesday Wind-Downs.* The Appropriations Committee will determine a standard allocation for alcohol, non-alcoholic beverages, food, ice, etc. needed for the weekly Wednesday Wind-Down. Should the requesting student organization feel that the existing allocation for the Wednesday Wind-Down is insufficient to meet either its (a) projected attendance or (b) desired beer and/or food quality, that organization may submit a request for supplemental funding to the Appropriations Committee. A student organization may submit such a supplemental funding request to the Committee either (a) as part of that organization's Wednesday Wind-Down Sponsorship Request, or (b) at any time through a Supplemental Funding Request Form, provided that the Committee receives such request with adequate time to make changes to the then-existing beer and/or food provisions.
- (c) *Cleanup of Wednesday Wind-Down.* Student organizations sponsoring any Wednesday Wind-Down shall retain sole responsibility for cleanup immediately following the sponsored Wednesday Wind-Down. Should the Committee receive justified complaints from the GULC maintenance staff, the Committee shall reserve the right to charge the organization for any cleaning costs incurred as a result of the failure to oversee cleanup. No supplemental funding shall be available to compensate the organization for funding shortfalls caused by such charges.

B. Effect of these provisions.

Nothing in the above provisions shall in any way limit a student organization's ability to submit Supplemental Funding requests to the Committee for events other than Wednesday Wind Down.

Section 19 - Amendments to the Bylaws.

- A. Changes to the appropriations bylaws require approval by a majority of the House of Delegates, provided that a majority of the Appropriations Committee has previously approved the changes.

- B.* Absent approval from a majority of Appropriations Committee quorum, changes to the appropriations bylaws require approval by two-thirds of the membership of the House of Delegates.