



ANNUAL BUDGETING GUIDE 2011-2012

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1. Annual Budgeting Calendar

Tuesday, August 30, 2011	Mandatory orientation for all treasurers at 8:00 pm (Currently scheduled in L201, but subject to change)
Thursday, September 1, 2011	Budgets due by 5:00 pm to sbamoney@law.gwu.edu (NO EXCEPTIONS)
Friday, September 2, 2011	Budget hearings
Saturday, September 3, 2011	Budget hearings
Sunday, September 4, 2011	Budget hearings
Wednesday, September 7, 2011	Proposed budget allocations released to individual groups
Saturday, September 10, 2011	Appeals due before midnight to sbamoney@law.gwu.edu
Week of September 12, 2011	Appeals heard before the full Senate Final appropriations bill goes before the Senate C Funds available following Senate approval

2. Annual Budgeting Requests and Appeals

The annual budgeting process begins with a mandatory orientation for all student group treasurers. If a student group does not have a treasurer, or if the treasurer is unavailable, the president of the group must attend. You will only be able to sign up for your required Senate Finance Committee hearing time on schedules available at the orientation.

Electronic request forms (Microsoft Excel spreadsheets with data entry fields) will be distributed for use in preparing your budget requests. You are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible in these forms; the Finance Committee is more likely to view your request as realistic and provide funding if there is evidence of your planning. The requests must be filled out and returned in electronic form to sbamoney@law.gwu.edu by the deadline provided. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.** Failure to meet this deadline will result in the forfeiture of SBA funding.

Following budget hearings, the Finance Committee will release the proposed budget allocations via email. Any organization wishing to appeal their allocation must submit a written explanation of why the proposed allocation is in error. This explanation must be emailed to sbamoney@law.gwu.edu before the deadline provided.

Appeals will then be heard before the full Senate. If you appeal, you will be notified of the time and place of this meeting. Immediately after oral appeals, the Senate will close to debate and discuss the proposed budget. The Senate will vote on final budgets that same evening and release final budgets thereafter.

All student organization leaders are strongly encouraged to review SBA Bylaw 909, which describes the requirements for the annual budgeting process and the criteria that the Finance Committee uses to consider those requests. A copy of the SBA Constitution and Bylaws are available on the SBA website; relevant excerpts of the Bylaws are included in the Document Supplement. Please note that student groups currently in their probationary period at the time of the fall annual budget process are ineligible for an annual budget per Bylaw 907. These groups may only request money from the Ad Hoc Fund and/or the OOPS Fund.

3. Budget Appropriation Factors

The SBA Senate Finance Committee has created a list of factors (below), any or all of which may be considered in reaching a particular funding decision.

Factors that generally **do not** reflect favorably on budget proposals:

1. Failure to spend a significant amount of the monies allotted to your C fund, either in terms of net amount (e.g. \$1,000 left over) or in terms of percentage of allocation (e.g. \$100 left over from \$200 allocation). Especially egregious if the R fund was used to make purchases that should have been made from the C fund.
2. Inflated event-cost or event-attendance figures.
3. Use of the C fund to pay for activities that are not open and advertised to all law students.
4. Use of the C fund as seed money for fundraisers.
5. Lack of a fundraiser or fundraising revenue in the previous year.
6. Failure to plan for fundraising to cover a significant amount of group expenses this year (groups should aim to cover at least 25% of their expenses by fundraising).
7. Overlarge R fund, indicating less need for SBA assistance.
8. Lack of institutional memory – “Everybody graduated last year; I don’t know where those numbers came from.”
9. Small group membership – Committee considers cost per member.

Factors that generally **do** reflect favorably on budget proposals:

1. Prudent past-year spending from both C and R funds – spending the entire C fund, only using C fund for appropriate expenditures, and spending from R fund.
2. Use of, and planned use of, fundraising to cover a significant amount of group expenses.
3. Expecting group members to cover the costs of ‘fun stuff’ – paying dues to cover a banquet, paying a nominal fee for t-shirts, paying a part of the cost for weekend trips, etc.
4. Events that have a cultural, educational, or job-related purpose, and that have dates, venues, and/or attendees already locked in.

5. Events that raise the profile of GW Law locally or nationally.
6. Event-cost and event-attendance figures that, in the absence of compelling proof of increased anticipated attendance or costs, reflect the previous year's expenditures.
7. Institutional memory – several 1Ls and 2Ls in executive board positions.
8. Large group membership.

4. Special Considerations

a. *Sexual Orientation Disclosure Act*

The SBA Senate's Sexual Orientation Discrimination Disclosure Act (the "Act") requires any student organization that wishes to invite an entity to campus for recruitment purposes to provide a discrimination report (the "Discrimination Disclosure") with your budget request if the entity practices any discriminatory policy with regards to personnel decisions on the basis of sexual orientation. The Discrimination Disclosure is required to outline (1) which invited entities practice a reasonably known discriminatory policy, and (2) what proportion of its invite list practices a reasonably known discriminatory policy. There is no set format for this report. The Discrimination Disclosure will be required for any student organization that intends to invite any branch of the military for recruitment purposes.

Failure to provide a full and complete Discrimination Disclosure will result in sanctions lasting one calendar year starting at the end of the academic semester during which the infraction took place. Further, sanctions will be imposed for this time period if an organization inflates the cost of an event to compensate for the report, intentionally fails to disclose a particular organization that practices a discriminatory policy, or intentionally provides an inaccurate proportion of the invited organizations that practice a discriminatory policy. The sanction will result in a loss of funding for the time period covered by the sanction.

b. *Events Involving Alcohol*

Thirsty Thursday: Student organizations should **not** include expenses related to hosting a Thirsty Thursday in their annual budget requests. The Finance Committee will set aside a certain amount of money sufficient to fund all Thirsty Thursdays. The Committee will then determine budget allocations based on the remaining pool of money. Before the Senate finalizes the budget, the Gavel Club will allow groups to make requests to host a Thirsty Thursday. Once the list of hosts is finalized, the Finance Committee will add a preset amount of Thirsty Thursday funding to all hosts' proposed budgets.

Security for Events Involving Alcohol: Security for Thirsty Thursday is arranged through the Law School. However, any other on-campus event involving alcohol requires the student organization to arrange and pay for security services. These costs must be factored into budget requests. Please recall that all organizations must also comply with CADE requirements for any event involving alcohol.

5. Annual Budget Allocation and Management

Annual Budget Allocation: Student organizations create a line-item budget request detailing expected expenditures for the year; the Finance Committee makes allocations based on those items. However, when the final C Fund allocations are released, each group is simply given a lump sum. It is impossible to inform all student groups of the exact cuts made in a given budget, so it is within that group's discretion to determine which requested expenditures to reduce or eliminate. The Finance Committee does not tell groups how to spend their money, and the Vice President of Finance will not deny a payment request merely because the expense or event was not on the original itemized budget. However, be mindful that Bylaw 910(f) provides that no organization may expend funds in a manner grossly inconsistent with its budget as submitted to the Finance Committee.

Please note that a student organization is unlikely to receive the full amount of its requested budget, whether or not the Finance Committee believes events are worthwhile. There is a limited pool of money to be distributed among the student groups, and the total amount requested each year is significantly greater than this pool.

Reallocation of Funds Between Events: Because the Finance Committee, the Senate, and the Vice President of Finance are strongly opposed to micromanagement of student organization budgets, groups do not need to seek approval when they want to reallocate monies among their events. The SBA is aware that programs are cancelled, speakers back out, and events end up costing more than expected. Here's how to handle these unexpected changes, using the sample budget below:

Event A	\$200
Event B	\$300
Event C	\$400

If Event A is cancelled, you may use the \$200 allocated for that event to pay for Events B and C.

If Event A costs more than expected, you must use funds reserved for Events B and C to cover event A. You may decide to (1) reduce the scale of Event B and/or C, using a portion of the funds for one or both events; or (2) cancel Event B and/or C altogether, using all of the funds from one or both events. Ad hoc funding is not appropriate in this situation because there are still funds available in the budget. You do not need prior approval from the Vice President of Finance or the Finance Committee to reallocate funds in this manner because Events A, B & C were implicitly pre-approved during the fall budget process.

If your group suddenly decides to host Event D (a new, unbudgeted event), the reallocation of funds described above still applies. If you have limited funds remaining because you have already hosted Events A, B, and C, you may properly request ad hoc funding.