



Lafayette College Student Government
Financial Guidelines

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Lafayette College Student Government Financial Guidelines

Section 1: Purpose, Nondiscrimination, Responsibility, & Exemptions

A. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines shall be to govern the distribution of funds by the Student Government of Lafayette College. This document shall be binding to all of Student Government and its recognized student organizations.

B. Nondiscrimination

All financial decisions made by Student Government and its members shall be viewpoint neutral, and this position shall reflect, but not be limited to, the policies included in the Nondiscrimination Policy as stated in the Lafayette College Student Handbook.

C. Student Responsibility

Lafayette College is fortunate to have close to 150 recognized student organizations where students can engage with each other and learn about cultures and interests, explore a passion, or develop a new hobby. To that end, Student Government has a limited amount of funds to support all organizations to the best of their ability. Students are encouraged to pay a portion of their membership in club sports, attendance at conferences, or find creative ways to reduce the overall cost of events. Student organizations are encouraged to conduct fundraising activities.

D. Exemptions

Student Government reserves the right to provide exemptions to the Student Government Financial Guidelines on a case by case basis. Student Government reserves the right to allocate more or less amount of funding to an organization than specified by the Financial Guidelines, subject to budgetary constraints, the nature of the organization, or the benefit to the student body.

Section 2: Special Considerations

1. Each year Student Government has a limited amount of student fees to allocate based on the enrollment of the College and other special projects. For each eligible student organization to have a chance to request funds, Student Government may not be able to fund the entire request of a student organization.
2. The following guidelines set a maximum amount that will be allocated for certain requests, and student organizations may receive less than this amount due to budgetary constraints. The Student Government Allocation Notification will explain in detail how much money the student organization was allocated and the reasoning behind the allocation.
3. It is an expectation that funds allocated to a student organization are used in the period for which they are allocated.

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Section 3: General Provisions

Direct Purpose: Student Government will only fund items and activities directly related to the purpose of the student organization requesting funds.

Accessibility: All Lafayette College students must be allowed to participate in the activity/event in which Student Government funds are being used.

Awareness: A reasonable effort to advertise events and/or student organizations must be made. It is therefore required, in addition to any planned method of advertisement, that any campus wide program be posted to OurCampus.

Admittance Charge: Admission fees to campus wide events that are primarily funded by Student Government cannot be charged.

Lafayette College Service Providers: Student organizations should prioritize using Lafayette College's internal service providers (e.g. Printing/Reprographics and Bulk Mail Department, Design Services, Plant Operations, Information Technology Services) over external vendors.

Program Budget Requests: *Itemized* Program Budget Requests (meaning very specific and detailed breakdown of expenses to be incurred) must be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the weekly Student Government Budget Committee Meeting. Budget requests greater than \$1,500 must be submitted one week prior to the Student Government Budget Committee Meeting. Program Budget Requests greater than \$5,000 must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the Student Government Budget Committee Meeting.

Attending Budget Committee Meetings: Any student organization requesting more than \$400 must attend a Student Government Budget Committee Meeting with a detailed Program Budget Request submitted before the meeting. Student Government reserves the right to call in any student organization to discuss their Program Budget Request.

Ex Post Facto Funding: Reimbursement is available up to \$100. All reimbursements must be preapproved. Receipts are required for all reimbursements.

New Organization Funding: Each new student organization will receive \$75 for branding and \$75 for their first introductory meeting. This money may be used to provide food for the first meeting. These funds do not need to be requested, but must be utilized by the end of the semester in which the student group was initially recognized.

Sports Clubs: Due to their unique nature, Sports Clubs should also coordinate with Recreation Services staff when making purchases and utilizing funds.

Section 4: Specific Funding Type Policies

A. Equipment, Uniform, & Apparel Policy

1. New or used equipment or furnishings (such as sports paraphernalia, sound equipment, etc.) must be recorded as inventory in the student organization's records and is the student organization's responsibility to maintain.

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2. Sports Clubs must get signature approval from Recreation Services for all capital equipment purchases and any non-perishable equipment over \$500 due to delivery, storage, and liability considerations.
3. Uniforms purchased on behalf of a student organization are to be held in inventory and remain with the student organization at the conclusion of the year. Uniforms purchased with Student Government funds are not for individual members to keep beyond the use of student organization activity.
4. The purchase date for equipment and uniforms should be documented.
5. Uniform and apparel designs must be tasteful, appropriate, and abide by Lafayette College's Style Guide, Logo Policy, and Nondiscrimination Policy. Uniform and apparel can only be purchased for Lafayette students.
6. Financial support for clothing items will not exceed **\$10 per t-shirt** and **\$30 per article of outerwear** (long sleeve shirt, jackets, sweatpants, sweatshirts, etc.).

B. Food for Events Policy

1. Food for student organization events will be funded on the basis of their merit under the following condition:
 - a. If it is not the sole draw of the event
 - b. If it relates to, enhances, or respects the specific format and/or theme of the event.
2. Food will be funded up to \$15 per person, except for travel (see Off Campus Requests).
3. The maximum funding of food per event is limited to \$1500.
4. If a group chooses to invite a speaker or guest of the College to a meal, funding will be considered for the speaker/guest only.
5. Student Government funds may not, under any circumstances, be used for the following:
 - a. The purchase or promotion of alcoholic beverages.
 - b. Dinners or parties solely for the entertainment of members of the student organization.
6. If a student organization would like to obtain food for an event, they must consult and follow the procedures outlined in the "Lafayette College Policy on Food and (Non Alcoholic) Beverages".

C. Speaker/Guest Hotel and Travel Accommodations Policy

1. Hotel accommodations for speakers and guests for on-campus events will be funded up to \$200 per night.
2. Travel and other accommodations will be funded within reason.

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D. Contract Policy

1. All student organizations that choose to contract with an agent, presenter, lecturer, musician, performance, or vendor must have all costs and credentials approved by the Office of Student Involvement.
2. Sports Clubs should consult the Sports Club Manual for the proper onboarding process and requirements for hiring and/or rehiring an instructor or coach for their organization.
3. Students may not sign contracts. All approvals should go through the Office of Student Involvement. All instructors and coaches must have the paperwork (i.e. Forms I-9, W 4, etc.) filed with Lafayette College in order to be paid.

E. Transportation Policy

1. Students should not use personal vehicles for official College business (departmental or club/organization programs). The College cannot assume liability for students who use their own vehicles.
2. Reimbursement for rental vehicles, gas, tolls, and parking will be provided only if Enterprise rental vehicle(s) are used. Requests for Enterprise rental vehicles can be made through the Office of Student Involvement.
3. School buses should be used when possible within a 50 mile radius of the College; after 50 miles a coach bus or Enterprise vehicle(s) should be used for the safety of the participants.
4. Transportation for speakers, guests, or outside parties working with the College will be funded within reason.

F. Student Performances

1. Student Government does not fund student performers such as dj's, photographers, videographers, etc. or any student to perform a function for the organization.

G. Membership Fees

1. Student Government will fund membership fees/dues for national/recognized organizations.
2. Membership type/category should be listed as Lafayette College, not per individual names.

3. Membership fees should be included in Annual Budget Requests.

H. Tickets

1. Student Government will only fund ticket costs that are related to the student organization's mission/purpose.

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I. Off Campus Requests (Trips, Conferences, Tournaments, etc.)

1. Student Government will fund a maximum of \$4,000 per student organization each year for off campus requests. Student organizations are encouraged to take different people for each trip funded by Student Government. Sports Clubs, because of their unique mission and purpose, may be funded up to \$12,000 each year for off campus tournaments and trips.
2. While traveling on College business, travelers should expect to receive service and accommodations that are both safe and comfortable, but not lavish or extravagant. Travelers should always seek and select the most economical mode of transportation that meets the requirements of both the traveler and the event schedule.
3. The following guidelines must be followed:
 - a. Registration/Tickets:
 - i. Will only fund registrations/tickets that directly relate to the student organization's mission/purpose.
 - b. Airfare:
 - i. Will only fund coach/economy seating.
 - ii. Will not fund baggage, upgrade, club fees, etc.
 - iii. Will only fund airfare to/from the Lafayette College area (Newark Liberty International Airport, Lehigh Valley International Airport, Philadelphia International Airport). Will not fund flights to/from an individual's home.
 - iv. Will not fund international travel.
 - v. Travelers should schedule departure and return flights to minimize the overall travel cost incurred by the College. As such, travelers are also permitted to travel a day earlier or stay a day longer when overall travel savings can be realized.
 - vi. Travelers may only use commercial flights and may not serve as a pilot in command or crew member of any aircraft.
 - c. Transportation:
 - i. Will fund costs associated with Enterprise vehicle rentals (gas, tolls, parking, etc.) and other methods such as rideshare, taxis, mass transit, etc.
 - ii. Will not fund transportation unrelated to the event (transportation to explore) and extravagant options (limos). We expect travelers to minimize cost.

d. Hotel:

- i. Travelers should use reasonably priced, standard accommodations. When traveling to a conference, it is appropriate to stay at the hotel hosting the conference, assuming that the daily rate is not unreasonably expensive relative to other nearby alternatives.
- ii. Hotel accommodations will be funded for coaches and advisors participating in the trip.

e. Food:

- i. Any food expenses will not be paid by Student Government and should be covered by the individuals attending the conference.

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J. Gift Cards, Prizes, Giveaways, and Gifts

1. Gift cards, prizes, giveaways, and gifts (such as senior gifts, plaques, or certificates) will be funded within reason. Organizations are encouraged to use fundraising or restricted accounts to fund all or at least a portion of these items.
2. All designs/logos for giveaway items must abide by Lafayette College's Style Guide, Logo Policy, and Nondiscrimination Policy.
3. Gift cards may be purchased, but cannot exceed \$25 per individual card. The following must be recorded and submitted to the Office of Student Involvement:
 - a. The first and last name of the recipient
 - b. The "L-Number" or Lafayette ID of the recipient
 - c. The dollar amount of the gift card

K. Fundraising

1. Student Government will not fund fundraising activities.

L. Charitable Causes and Co-Sponsorships

1. Under no circumstances may Student Government funds be donated directly or indirectly to religious, political, or other charitable organizations.
2. Organizations may not transfer any funds from Student Government to another organization's or department's event. Only generated revenue or funds from a restricted account may be transferred to co-sponsor another organization's/department's event.

Section 5: Prohibited Expenditures/Reimbursements

While not intended to be an exhaustive list, the following items are prohibited expenditures/reimbursements:

- A. Activities that are required by an academic department or that directly support classroom instruction. These activities should be funded by the academic departments
- B. Alcoholic beverages

- C. Enrollment in academic courses, academic requirements, graduate assistantships, lab fees, academic related travel, required in-class activities, internships, or any other expense related to a student's academic experience at Lafayette College
- D. Events/activities that take place in private residences
- E. Guns and weapons of any kind
- F. Laundry, dry cleaning, and cleaning products/services
- G. Meals for routine meetings that are generally attended by student organization members only or meals during travel
- H. Personal electronic, computer, and mobile devices
- I. Sales Tax - The College is exempt from sales taxes on the majority of its purchases. Therefore, faculty, staff, students, and others cannot be reimbursed for any Pennsylvania state sales tax paid when the College would ordinarily be exempt from the tax.
- J. Traffic violations, parking tickets, fines, personal vehicle repairs and maintenance
- K. Any activities or items banned by Lafayette College.

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Section 6: Accessing Funds

- A. There are two types of accounts that student organizations may have to manage their money: Student Government Accounts and Restricted Accounts.
 - 1. **Student Government Account:** All Student Government allocations are held in the Student Government account. Every student organization receives a SG account upon receiving recognition. SG funds are allocated on a rolling basis throughout the year through Program Budget Requests and may only be used for items approved through the budget process. A student organization's budget is effective **July 1 to June 30**. Any remaining money in a student organization's SG account will be returned to the SG General Account at the end of the academic year or the end of a sports team season.
 - 2. **Restricted Account:** Recognized student organizations who engage in fundraising, collect dues, receive donations, or otherwise raise money outside of the SG budget allocation process may maintain those funds in a Restricted Account to separately manage such student organization finances.
- B. There are two established measures for acquiring funds from Student Government: Program Budget Requests and Annual Budget Requests.
 - a. **Program Budget Requests:** Recognized student organizations may submit Program Budget Requests to receive funding for programs, activities, and conferences. Student organizations may make as many Program Budget Requests as they wish. Each Program Budget Request should be submitted through OurCampus.
 - b. **Annual Budgets Requests:** Recognized student organizations may request an Annual Budget each spring for the upcoming academic year to cover the costs of regular club activity. Annual Budgets will be allocated by July 1st each year.
- C. Purchase Orders may be obtained through the Office of Student Involvement for the purpose

of making transactions through approved vendors. All Purchase Orders must be submitted along with the appropriate receipts. To avoid any inconvenience, the Office of Student Involvement should be notified at least two weeks before all purchase orders are submitted.

D. A cash advance may be requested through the Office of Student Involvement for the purpose of purchasing approved items prior to an event or for gas/tolls for an upcoming trip.

E. Student use of personal funds is discouraged.

F. Please note, organizations are not permitted to hold accounts with outside firms or banks without the expressed permission of the Director of Student Involvement.

Section 7: Amendments

This document may be amended via a two-thirds majority vote of the Representatives of the Student Government during a regularly scheduled Student Government meeting.

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Disclaimer:

Lafayette College Student Government reserves the right to freeze a student organization's funds in instances of violation of Student Government policies, abuses of funding, and/or a student organization's violations of Student Handbook policies. Lafayette College's Student Government further reserves the right to subject any student organization suspected of violating Student Government policies, abusing funds, and/or violating the Student Handbook policies to a budget hearing, which could result in sanctions as severe as the loss of recognition of a student organization. Violations to the policies included in the Student Handbook will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

Updated:

April 23, 2020

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Appendix 1: Budget Evaluation Criteria

Factors Budget Committee may consider when calculating budgets:

1. Student Government takes into account the amount of money the student group has in their account prior to each new allocation of funds.
2. The success and effectiveness of the organization in planning and executing past programs. Newly established organizations will not be judged by this criteria.
3. The amount of outside funding the activity has previously received and the potential for additional funding from other sources.
4. The number of expected event participants.

5. The location of the event (i.e. whether the event is held on campus or off campus).
6. Did the club attend the Budget Preparation Info session?
7. How large is club membership? Or how many people are involved in the club's events?
8. What is the expected longevity of this club, or the current longevity of the club?
9. How often does the club meet? What is usual attendance at these meetings?
10. If there is the potential, were any of the club's events co-sponsored?
11. Where applicable, has the club effectively marketed its events?
12. Does the club require its members to pay dues?
13. Do the club members provide any of their own equipment, materials or devices for participation?
14. Does the club fundraise for any of its events or purchases?
15. How well researched and detailed is the club's request?