



**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.
4. At any time organizations can request money from the "Need Based Meals at Travel Fund" for individual members who have financial difficulties affording food for club excursions. This process will be overseen by the Budgetary Committee. Student government will allocate 0.75% of the general budget to this fund.

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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.

**Attending Budget Committee Meetings:** Student Government reserves the right to call in any student organization to discuss their Budget Request.

**Reimbursements:** May be provided up to \$100 if agreement is made ahead with the Office of Student Involvement. Receipts for reimbursement must be submitted within 1 week of the original purchase.

**New Organization Funding:** New organizations must complete an Itemized Budget Request in order to receive Student Government funding.

**Promotional Items:** All recognized student organizations will receive \$75 for promotional items (stickers, printing, etc.) for the year. Additional requests for promotional items will be analyzed with increased scrutiny.

**Alternative Options:** Student Government will not fund any items when there is a free alternative available.

**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**

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.
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.

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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 only be subsidized up to \$15 per member. Only one apparel item per active member will be funded annually. This does not include uniforms.

**B. Food for Events**

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 only be funded for events (ie. retreats, formals, etc.).
3. Food will NOT be funded for general body meetings, board meetings, etc.
4. Food will be only be funded for events with 6 or more people.
5. Gratuity for a sit-down meal may not exceed 18% of the meal.
6. Student Government funds must not be used for the purchasing of alcohol.
7. 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**

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.

**D. Contract**

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.

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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**

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. Student Government will not reimburse gasoline for personal vehicles.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Transportation for speakers, guests, or outside parties working with the College will be funded within reason.

**F. Lafayette Affiliated Contractors**

1. Student Government will not fund Lafayette Affiliated Contractors (students & current Lafayette employees) to perform a function (dj's, photographers, videographers, etc) for student organizations.

**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 Itemized Program Budget Requests.

**H. Greek Organizations**

1. Student Government will not fund Greek organization dues or events.
2. Greek organizations are encouraged to co-sponsor with other organizations.

**I. Tickets**

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

**J. 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 and Intercollegiate Competition Groups (groups where intercollegiate competition is essential to their

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mission) 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.
    - iii. Student Government will not fund hotels for events that are within a 50 mile radius.
  - e. Food:
    - i. Any food expenses will not be paid by Student Government and should be covered by the individuals attending the conference, with the exception of the Need Based Meals at Travel Fund.

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#### **K. Gift Cards, Prizes, Giveaways, and Gifts**

1. Gift cards, prizes, giveaways, and gifts 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
4. Student Government will not fund Senior gifts, Advisor gifts, gifts of any kinds.

#### **L. Fundraising**

1. Student Government will only fund fundraising events (ie. dance marathon, walkathon).
2. Student Government will only fund logistical items for the event (ie. decorations, wristbands, signs).
3. The fundraiser event must be mission critical for the organization (ex. The Student Movement Against Cancer may organize an event because it is in their organization's mission to raise money for charity).

#### **M. Charitable Causes and Co-Sponsorships**

1. Under no circumstances may Student Government funds be donated directly or indirectly to religious or political 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

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- 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. Single use plastic water bottles.
- L. Any activities or items banned by Lafayette College.

### **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 the Itemized 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.
  - 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. In order to request funds, organizations must attend a Student Government Budget Meeting at the start of the each semester. Failure to attend will result in lack of funding. At least two meetings shall be held during the first week of the semester, run by the Student Government Treasurer. A member of the organization's executive board must attend one of these meetings.
- C. There are two established measures for acquiring funds from Student Government: Itemized Program Budget Requests and Unanticipated Program Requests.
- D. **Itemized Program Budget Requests (IPBR)**
  - 1. Recognized student organizations must utilize an IPBR to request all funding for the designated time period (summer, fall, and spring). This request must include a detailed breakdown of expenses to be incurred, for the entirety of the budgetary period for which they are requesting funds. Requests should include all funding needed (programming, travel, equipment, apparel, etc.).
  - 2. If organizations do not request funds or wish to revise their budgets there are two optional periods in which they may do so for the listed time periods.
  - 3. **Period 1: For the Summer & First Two Weeks of the Fall Semester**
    - a. Requests must be submitted by June 1st.
    - b. Groups will have access to funds from July 1st through the end of the 2nd week of the fall semester.



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4. **Period 2: For the Fall Semester (Week 3 to Spring Semester)**
  - a. Requests must be submitted by the annual Involvement Fair (2nd Thursday of the fall semester).
  - b. Groups will have access to funds from the middle of the 3rd week of the fall semester through the end of the 2nd week of the spring semester.
  
5. **Period 3: Spring Semester (Week 3 to July 1st)**
  - a. Requests must be submitted by the 2nd Thursday of the spring semester.
  - b. Groups will have access to funds from the middle of the 3rd week of the spring semester through July 1st.
  - c. **PLEASE NOTE: All unspent funds will be confiscated when the Period 3 funds are allocated. Organizations will not be able to utilize any remaining funds from the fall semester. Plan as if you have \$0 for the spring semester.**
  
6. **Optional: Winter Session (Mid November - Start of Spring Semester)**
  - a. Should only be used if organizations wish to revise their budget request or missed submitting a request.
  - b. Requests must be submitted by Election Day (second Tuesday of November).
  - c. Groups will have access to funds from the Thursday of the 3rd week of November through the end of the 2nd week of the spring semester.
  
7. **Optional: End of Year (April through July 1)**
  - a. Should only be used if organizations wish to revise their budget request or missed submitting a request.
  - b. Requests must be submitted by the Thursday following Spring Break.
  - c. Groups will have access to funds from the subsequent Thursday through June 30th.

**E. Unanticipated Budget Requests**

1. At any point a club may submit an Unanticipated Budget Request which will be reviewed by the Budget Committee.
  
2. A justification must be provided as to why this expense could not be anticipated. Examples of this sort include expenses for a tournament which could not be planned for earlier in the semester, a reaction to a current event, a broken piece of equipment, etc. Examples which do not qualify include wanting more decorations, forgetting to request funds for a fixed event, booking a caterer, etc.
  
3. Reallocations over \$300 must be requested through the Unanticipated Budget Request Form on OurCampus. The legitimacy of any reallocation will be reviewed by the Budget Committee.

F. 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.

G. 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.

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- H. Student use of personal funds is discouraged.
- I. 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: Unspent Funds**

- A. All unspent funds at the end of the fall semester will be confiscated and returned to the general Student Government Budget for distribution during the spring semester.
- B. All unspent funds at the end of the spring semester and any remaining funds not allocated will be transferred to the Student Government Reserve account.

#### **Section 8: 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.

#### **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 28, 2022

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 semesterly budget 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?