



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH DAKOTA

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General Activity Fee

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I. REASON FOR THIS POLICY

Defines and explains the policy and procedures for the General Activity Fee.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The general activity fee (GAF) supports student functions related to the co-curricular and extracurricular activities and operations and payment of debt incurred for the construction, maintenance, repair and equipping of student unions, athletic facilities and wellness facilities as approved by the South Dakota Board of Regents.

Examples of activities funded by GAF are student organizations, cultural events, homecoming, student government, yearbooks, student newspapers, campus radio and television stations, childcare, student activities, athletics, intramurals, student health services, and the operational and debt expenses for student unions.

The general activity fee shall be assessed on a per credit basis on all state-support courses delivered on campus.

III. DEFINITIONS

GAF: The General Activity Fee is assessed to all students on a per credit hour basis for all state- support courses delivered on-campus. The student health fee is included as a component to the General Activity Fee but is held separate financially. The General Activity Fee may be waived by anyone enrolled in a workshop. The GAF rate is broken down into numerous components. The

pledged components are: The Dakota Dome Roof bond payment, the Wellness Center bond payment and operations, the Muenster University Center bond payment and utilities, housing scholarships, and the Athletics allocation. The remaining amount is the core rate, which goes to the GAF Committee for allocation.

GAF COMMITTEE: The student led committee that allocates GAF dollars to various departments and events. The committee is made up of four students, two faculty members and the Vice President of Student Services. The committee is chaired by the VP, Finance and Administration, who is a non-voting member.

IV. PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

- A. General Activity Fee Advisory Committee, Mission
 1. The General Activity Fee Advisory Committee is an advisory committee established by the President of the University of South Dakota.
 2. The General Activity Fee Advisory Committee is charged to:
 - a. Review departmental budget requests for funding from the General Activity Fee.
 - b. Make recommendations to the Student Government Association.
 - c. Make recommendations to the President as to the General Activity Fee amount per credit hour for the upcoming year.
 - d. Make recommendations to the President as to the budget allocation for the various departments funded by the General Activity Fee.

COMMITTEE AUTHORITY AND REPRESENTATION

- A. Board of Regents and Institutional Policies
 1. Section 5:5:4 of the Board of Regents Policy states that, "there shall be at least a simple majority of students on the committees that recommend to the president the establishment and allocation of the General Activity Fee. The president of the institution has the approving authority for the final recommendation to the Board."
 2. The President will appoint the General Activity Fee Advisory Committee in accordance with the Board of Regents and institutional policies.
 - a. The committee will consist of one non-voting Chairperson, four students, and three institutional employees.
 - b. The committee members will be appointed in September of each academic year.
 3. General Activity Fee Advisory Committee Protocol
 - a. The committee will not vote or take other action if there are less than three students present at a meeting. The committee can hold informational meetings with at least one student present. If a vote needs to be made outside of a meeting, this can be completed through a committee widening email. Most students must be present on the committee to make final recommendations.

COMMITTEE PROCESS

- A. General Activity Fee Advisory Committee Orientation
 - 1. In October, an orientation meeting will be held to review and clarify the committee by laws, goals, schedule, and policies
- B. Departmental Budget Submission
 - 1. Each budgetary unit will submit its budget request to the Chairperson of the General Activity Fee Advisory Committee for the upcoming fiscal year.
 - a. Budget requests will be completed in accordance with the prescribed University budget process and forms.
 - b. The proposed departmental budget requests must cover anticipated annual increases, such as inflationary increases for on-going operational expenditures. The salary policy for these units must be consistent with the University salary policy.
 - 2. Budget Deliberations
 - a. The Chairperson of the General Activity Fee Advisory Committee will calculate the projected revenue from the General Activity Fee assessment for the upcoming fiscal year.
 - b. The budgets are first reviewed by the General Activity Fee Advisory Committee members. The Committee members will consider the funding available and prioritize the requests. Those departments determined to have the top priority requests will be required to present their budget to the committee. The Committee may also require one or more other GAF funded departments to present their allocation as well, even if they are not seeking an increase.
 - c. The General Activity Fee Advisory Committee will review each individual budget and make recommendations on departmental budgets.
 - d. The Student Government Association recommends the portion of the General Activity Fee for Student Government Association. The Student Government Association recommendations will be submitted to the Chairperson on prescribed University budget documents (see III.B.1).
 - e. The General Activity Fee Advisory Committee will forward its recommendation to the Student Government Association. The Chairperson of the committee and each budgetary unit will be provided an opportunity to discuss its program/budget with the Student Government Association.
 - f. The Student Government Association will review each individual program/budget. Recommended program changes will be forwarded to the Chairperson of the General Activity Fee Advisory Committee.
 - g. The President will approve the final General Activity Fee budget and submit it to the Board of Regents for approval.
 - h. If the total recommended budget is greater than the projected General Activity Fee revenue for the upcoming fiscal year, the rationale, quantitative and qualitative reasons must be presented to the President.
 - i. The General Activity Fee lies outside of the Board of Regents

policy for the annual ceiling for tuition and other fee increases.

GENERAL ACTIVITY FEE ACCOUNTING

- A. Budget Accounts
 - 1. Separate accounts will be established for the departmental units funded by the General Activity Fee. General Activity Fee allocations will not be complying with other funding sources.
- B. Budget Distribution
 - 1. General Activity Fee collections will be allocated to the separate departmental accounts at the start of the fiscal year.
- C. Carryovers/Deficits
 - 1. Any remaining balance in the General Activity Fee departmental budget as of June 30 will be transferred to the General Activity Fee Reserve. (Remaining Student Government Association and pledged unit balances as of June 30 will not be transferred to the General Activity Fee reserve as the Student Government Association retains control over those funds and remaining student health balances shall remain in the student health fee reserve.) No funds will be carried over into the next fiscal year unless encumbered by a purchase order on USD's accounting system or approved by the Vice President for Financial Affairs. If a carryover is allowed, it will be discussed at the next General Activity Fee meeting.
 - 2. Any department with a net deficit in its accounts at the end of the fiscal year will have its next year's budget reduced by the amount of the prior year's deficit.

GENERAL ACTIVITY FEE AND STUDENT HEALTH FEE RESERVES

- A. Funding
 - 1. Once the approved, budgeted revenue has been allocated to the individual departments, any monies collected more than the approved budgets will be deposited into the associated reserve.
 - 2. In addition to increased collection fees, the remaining departmental balances as of June 30 will be deposited into the associated reserve account. Any remaining balances deposited into the reserve as of June 30 are considered general reserve monies and are not identified in departments.
- B. Purpose
 - 1. The primary purpose of the reserve is to provide resources for one-time emergency purposes. (The intent of the reserve is not to fund permanent, on-going obligations or general operating expenditures.)
 - a. Requests for emergency funding from the General Activity Fee reserve will be authorized only after it has been demonstrated that an emergency exists. Each request must be documented to explain the expenditure and the impact the funding or lack of funding will have on the requested unit. It should be noted that a budgetary unit will not receive consideration for expenditures for traditional budget category items that are a part of the normal business of the program or office. That is, expenditure on travel, contractual services, supplies and materials, part-time temporary labor, and capital assets that are a part of the annual budget will not be funded from the General Activity Fee reserve account.

Examples of emergency situations are as follows:

- 1) Equipment failure of a major piece of equipment that represents a significant expenditure on funds. This would not include standard office equipment such as telephones, typewriters, and calculators.
 - 2) Mandatory change in the scope (mission) of the program that will require adding new staff and/or purchasing new equipment for use in the expanded program. The reservation should only include the expenditure necessary until the next budget is approved.
 - 3) Unanticipated and unknown resignations of personnel which will require a significant expenditure on terminal annual and/or sick leave payments.
- b. Requests for funding from the General Activity Fee reserves are made to the Vice President for Finance and Administration and approved by the President.
2. Special student activities which are not funded by the fee may request funding from the General Activity Fee reserve if it appears the activity is of sufficient importance to most of the student body.
 3. When the Vice President for Finance and Administration determines that sufficient reserves have accumulated, the reserve may be used for one- time allocations or to stabilize the fee to avoid significant changes in the amount assessed. The General Activity Fee Advisory Committee will not make its allocation decisions with this in mind unless requested to do so by the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

V. RELATED DOCUMENTS, FORMS AND TOOLS

[South Dakota Board of Regents Policy Manual, Policy 3.8.1](#) - Recognition of Funding of Student Organizations.