Western Washington University

SERVICES & ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE GUIDELINES

Each year, the Services & Activities (S&A) Fee Committee proposes and the Board of Trustees approves program priorities and corresponding expenditure budgets for the S&A Fee Committee constituents. The University collects these fees from students and allocates the funds to the constituent budgets as directed by the Board of Trustees.

By statute, S&A Fees are for the purpose of supporting student activities and programs. The boards of trustees of the state’s colleges and universities have the express and exclusive authority to determine what constitutes bona fide student activities. In its ordinary and usual meaning “student activities” refers to any college/university co-curricular or extra-curricular activity in which students participate in the furtherance of their education.

The university administration has the responsibility to ensure that state and university regulations and guidelines are followed. University personnel are responsible for spending S&A Fee revenue in an acceptable and appropriate manner following State of Washington and Western Washington University rules and guidelines. This document provides an overview of the more important rules that apply to S&A Fee expenditures.

Basic Principles

- The budget authority for an S&A Fee funded program may approve an expense if: 1) It is directly related to a student activity or program. 2) the item is an allowable and legal purchase under state and university policies, 3) there is sufficient money available to cover the expense, and 4) the purchase conforms with the S&A Fee Committee and Board of Trustees approved objectives and expenditure plan.

- S&A Fee dollars may not be used to cover core academic or administrative costs.

- The state constitution prohibits the gifting of public money or property. The State Supreme Court has defined a gift as “a transfer of property without consideration and with a donative intent.”

General Rules of Spending

S&A Fee are collected from students for the express purpose of funding co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and programs. S&A Fees are considered public monies of the State of Washington. Accordingly, purchases made with S&A Fee dollars must be allowable, authorized, recorded and appropriately used. In situations where state or institutional policies are unclear about the appropriateness of a purchase budget authorities are expected to consult and
consider relevant sources of guidance and discuss with appropriate administrators as needed before authorizing an expenditure.

Management of S&A Fee Money

Each S&A Fee funded area must identify an administrator responsible for budget oversight. S&A Fee funded areas are responsible for tracking their budget accounts and carefully monitoring expenditures, allocations and revenues. All expenditures must be made in compliance with established university policies and records of purchases must be retained as required by university policies.

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits – S&A Fee money cannot be used to pay wages or benefits for any purpose that is unrelated to the operation of student programs and activities.

Artists, Performers and Speakers – Contracts with artists, performers and speakers must comply with university policies and procedures.

Property and Equipment – Property and equipment purchased with S&A Fee money belongs to Western Washington University and the State of Washington.

Travel – All travel arrangements and expenditures must be in compliance with university policies and procedures. While it is expected that most of the travel paid for with S&A Fee dollars will have been itemized in a group’s approved budget it is understood that travel that results from success in competitive activities cannot always be predicted in advance.

Reserve Funds – Constituents are expected to maintain a reasonable designated reserve fund to allow for uncertainties in expenditure and revenue streams.

Examples of Permissible Expenditures

- Traditional and time-honored activities such as student government, clubs, student governmental or programming organization’ activities or events; health and wellness programs; retreats; conferences; musical, dramatic, artistic, and other presentations of a co-curricular or extra-curricular nature; student publications and other mass media initiatives. S&A Fee money may be used for the expenses associated with these activities including meals and lodging during group travel. These costs must be paid as a return for participation.

- Trophies, certificates or engraved plaques, sweaters, warm-up jackets, rain clothes, monogrammed attire, etc., may be provided to students and others who have earned them by serving as members of student programs and teams, provided they are a result of participation.

- Support for university employees in student program operations with the caveat that S&A Fee money may be used only to the extent that an employee is engaged in student activities and programs as opposed to normal maintenance and operation functions of the university.
• Meals for receptions or award ceremony attendees provided for members of a student activity group.

• Costs associated with childcare centers for the children of students.

Examples of Impermissible Expenditures

• Gifts of appreciation or concern for anyone (farewell gifts, flowers for bereavement, etc.) unless in return for participation or an award for which one has competed and won.

• Tips or gratuities for services except as authorized by OFM.

• Meals, lodging, coffee hours, receptions for a guest entertainer, speaker, etc., unless required by the contract made for their services.

• Salaries of professional employees in teaching, administrative of clerical positions not directly related to a student program’s operations.

• Complimentary tickets of admission as a gift.

• Programs, personnel, facilities, equipment and maintenance that are considered basic services provided by the university or supported by existing contracts.

• Free meals and/or lodging for anyone without consideration and with a donative intent.

• Food or refreshments purchased by a student group without the board’s approval.¹

Approved by S & A Fee Committee May 5, 2016

¹ As officers and employees of the college in “travel status” or engaged in an official “working meeting or activity approved by the board constitute an exception to this rule. Thus, funds may be used for “working” official student officer sessions or retreats which are an approved student activity. However, the cost of meals cannot be paid for employees (nonstudents) for such a meeting unless the employee is in travel status as defined by OFM.