

Policies and Procedures Governing Student Activity and Other Mandatory Student Fees

The College policy on the collection and use of mandatory student fees can be found in Section 7.3.2.1 of the ABAC Policy Manual (www.abac.edu/policies). In keeping with that policy, the following procedures have been established for the administration of Student Activity Fee funds.

I. Responsibility for Administration of Funds

Section 1. *Chain of Authority.* Board of Regents policy dictates that “all mandatory student fees collected by an institution shall be budgeted and administered by the president using proper administrative procedures, which shall include the advice and counsel of an advisory committee composed [of] at least 50 percent students. Students shall be appointed by the institution’s student government association. All payments from funds supported by student mandatory fees shall be made according to approved business procedures and the appropriate business practices of the institution.” At Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC), the President has delegated responsibility for allocation and accountability of Student Activity Fee (SAF) funds to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and has established a Student Activity Fee Committee (SAFC) to allocate SAF funds.

Section 2. *Composition of the Student Activity Fee Committee.* The Student Activity Fee Committee (SAFC) shall consist of ten (10) persons to include the following:

- a. The president of the ABAC Student Government Association (SGA)
- b. Four (4) students to be selected by SGA
- c. One (1) non-student member to be appointed by the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs
- d. One (1) non-student member to be appointed by the Dean of Students
- e. One (1) non-student member to be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs
- f. Two (2) members to be appointed by the President.

Section 3. *Procedures of the Student Activity Fee Committee.* During spring semester each year, the Vice President for Academic Affairs solicits budget requests for the following academic year from each chartered student club or organization. After the submission deadline has passed, the Vice President for Academic Affairs convenes the SAFC to consider requests from each organization and to recommend allocations of SAF funds within the budget provided by the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and in accordance with this Policy. Proceedings of the committee are open to ABAC students and personnel, and records of the meetings are available upon request. The student members of the SAFC, under the direction of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, shall be responsible for the solicitation of student input prior to the meeting of the SAFC.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs shall provide a written report to the President to include the proposed Student Activities Budget and comments from the SAFC on the budget.

Upon receiving the aforementioned report, the President shall present a proposed Student Activity Budget to the Cabinet for consideration. Upon Cabinet approval the Student Activity Budget shall be incorporated into the College budget.

Section 4. *Notification.* Student clubs and organizations who have requested SAF funds will be notified in writing of the amount of funds allocated to the club or organization by the SAFC with approval by the President and his Cabinet. Information regarding allocations will also be available at www.abac.edu/sga.

Section 5. *Amendments.* Changes to allocations may be made as a result of budget requirements to control expenditures, requests for budget amendments from clubs or organizations, or sanctions imposed as a result of failure to adhere to standards of accountability as set forth in this Policy. The SAFC will be reconvened to recommend reallocation of funds in each case.

II. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of SAF funds is to provide financial support for activities, projects, and events which benefit the students of ABAC. Activities, projects, and events which are funded will meet at least one, and preferably several, of the following criteria:

- Directly or indirectly benefits students
- Leads to students' personal, physical, social, intellectual, academic, or cultural growth
- Increases the participation of students in campus activities
- Provides service to the community
- Encourages local community members' participation in campus activities
- Improves the quality of campus life
- Supports co-curricular activities
- Encourages harmony, understanding, and an appreciation of diversity among various student cultures and groups
- Supports retention and graduation rates

III. Priority for Allocating SAF Funds

A tier system will be used in determining SAF allocations. Different policies may be applied to organizations based on their tier status in order to provide organizations serving the largest number of students with the greatest access to SAF funds.

Every organization shall be assigned to a tier, and tier assignments will be determined by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the SAFC.

Tier I organizations provide major services to a substantial portion of the campus or provide information or services which substantially impact the student body. Current Tier I organizations include the following:

- Ambassadors
- Aquatics
- Arts Connection
- Baldwin Players
- Campus Activities Board (CAB)
- College Magazine—*Pegasus*
- Music Program (Chorus, Jazz Ensemble, Concert Attire, Music Transportation, Concert Band, George Scott/Jazz Festival)
- Student Publications (*Stallion*)

WPLH Radio (Copyright and License also)
Recreational Sports
Residential Housing Association (RHA)
SGA
Student Leaders Scholarships
Student Leadership Banquet

Tier II organizations represent groups of students that focus primarily on common interests, backgrounds, and activities. They include all student clubs and organizations not included in Tier I.

IV. Budgets

Section 1. *Eligibility.* Any Tier I organization or any chartered student organization (Tier II) in good standing as determined by the SGA may submit a budget request.

Section 2. *Submission.* Budget submissions for the following academic year must be made during the spring semester according to the deadline published by the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. At least two weeks prior to the deadline for budget submission, the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall publish the required format for organizational budget requests and may designate differing formats based on tier status. At a minimum, Tier II organizations must:

- Clearly and succinctly state the primary goals of the organization;
- Clearly explain how the funding will aid the organization in accomplishing its goals;
- Show that the organization has sought or plans to seek other funding support;
- State the current membership fee per semester (if applicable) and any anticipated changes to that fee for the next academic year;
- State the current number of members;
- If travel is requested, show that travel is necessary in order to attain one of the primary goals of the organization.

Section 3. *Review.* No later than two weeks after the budget submission deadline, the SAFC shall meet to review all budget requests. If the committee deems necessary, it shall schedule a hearing for any organization submitting a budget to ask questions regarding the requests. Notice of the scheduled hearing shall be emailed to presidents and advisors of these student organizations at least three business days prior to the date of the hearing. If an organization which is requested to meet with the committee fails to do so, the organization may not be granted a budget.

The committee shall determine each organization's recommended budget consistent with its tier status, budget submission (including organizational goals, reasonableness of proposed expenses, and necessity of expenditures to the organization's mission), prohibited allocations, tier-specific additional budget restrictions, and funding formulas.

Section 4. *Notice.* No later than two weeks after the recommendations of the SAFC have been approved by the President and his Cabinet, each organization submitting a budget request will be notified in writing of its budget for the following academic year.

Section 5. *Budget Amendments.* If an organization wishes to spend any of its allocated budget for items, activities, or events not included in its initial budget request, it must submit a budget amendment to the President of SGA and the Vice President for Academic Affairs **prior to** expenditure of funds. If prior approval is not obtained, the organization may be required to reimburse SAF funds for the expenditure.

Section 6. *Prohibited Allocations.* No budget may include any allocation for

- Any event with alcohol present.
- Any event not open to the entire campus.
- Any event intended as a fundraiser for the organization or an outside party or organization.
- Loans.
- Inflated requests.
- Individual or local dues.
- Items unrelated to the primary purpose of the organization.
- Activities or expenditures for which the primary purpose is to support the election or defeat of a candidate for public office or to provide a monetary contribution to a political party.
- Activities or expenditures which support religious worship and proselytizing.
- Food or food-related items, except for banquets or club-sponsored campus-wide activities. Organizations must retain records of attendees, and the cost of food purchased may not exceed per diem amounts set by state regulations (\$6 for breakfast, \$7 for lunch, and \$15 for dinner).
- Clothing, unless intended for operational use or safety.

Tier II organizations are subject to the following additional budget restrictions:

- Gifts, prizes, scholarships for members, or honoraria will not be funded.
- No personal items shall be funded, including but not limited to nametags, name plates, and business cards.
- No postage expenses shall be funded.
- No apparel shall be funded that does not remain with the organization.
- Clubs and organizations are mandated to use WPLH and the *Stallion* to publicize events.

V. Accountability

Section 1. *Reimbursement Timing.* It is recommended that all requests for reimbursement from SAF funds be submitted within 30 days of the date on the receipt or invoice. Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 60 days of the date on the receipt or invoice. In exceptional circumstances, the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs may approve reimbursement requests submitted after this deadline, solely at his/her discretion.

Section 2. *Reimbursement Procedures.* It is the responsibility of the club or organization advisor to manage SAF funds in accordance with standard business policies and procedures of the Board of Regents, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, and the Policy of the SAFC. All requests for expenditures or reimbursement of expenditures must be submitted to the office of

the Dean of Students. If the Dean of Students or his/her designee approves the request, he/she will submit it to the ABAC Business Office for payment.

Section 3. *Annual Reports.* All organizations receiving SAF funds will submit a report at the end of the budget year comparing the budget plan and actual expenditures over the academic year. Failure to submit a report by the deadline published by the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs shall constitute a major infraction of the Policy of the SAFC and shall result in appropriate penalties.

Section 4. *Investigations.* The SGA President, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, or the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs may call for a review of the finances of any student organization. The review will be conducted by the SAFC.

Section 5. *Sanctions.* If a review finds any misuses of funds, the following steps can be taken at the discretion of the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs:

- a. For minor infractions (as defined by the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs), the club or organization will receive a written notice of the infraction and a warning of future possible consequences should additional infractions occur.
- b. For repeated minor infractions, an amount equal to the total amount involved in the infractions shall be re-encumbered and an equivalent amount deducted from the organization's next budget.
- c. For major infractions (as defined by the Vice President for Fiscal Affairs), the organization shall be prohibited from using its budget for the remainder of the fiscal year and shall be ineligible to request or receive budget funding in the following fiscal year.
- d. For repeated major infractions, the organization shall be prohibited from using its budget for the remainder of the fiscal year, shall be ineligible to request or receive budget funding for the following three (3) fiscal years, and shall be referred to the SGA for consideration of possible charter suspension or revocation.