

FINANCE COMMITTEE STANDARDS *Revised February 2024*

The Finance Committee Standards are guidelines used by the Student Senate Finance Committee to provide consistency in the allocation of funds. While these standards are the norm for funding, the committee does have the discretion to deviate from the standards. These standards govern funding policies for the Chartered Organizations Fund, the Senate Fund, the Summer Senate Fund, and Semester Budgets.

The goal of the Student Senate Finance Committee is to provide equitably allocated funding for student-led events that foster engagement in the campus community and further the academic experience at the university.

PLEASE NOTE: The Committee will not consider funding organizations to pay SMU students for entertainment or services.

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Section 1. ETIQUETTE & ELIGIBILITY

- I. All communication regarding organization funding requests and budgets to the Finance Chair must take place through the following email address: studentsenate@smu.edu
 - i. Any message received through phone call, text, or social media platforms such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and Slack will be ignored.
- II. The Committee's funding is limited to organizations with Full and Temporary Charters. The Committee may consider funding for individuals if the opportunity is deemed to be relevant.

Section 2. TRAVEL

- i. The Committee will consider funding lodging at a rate of \$150 per room, per night for a maximum of 3 nights.
 - i. Funding is based upon four individuals per room
 - ii. The Committee will consider funding hotel rooms at a rate of \$200 per night if proof can be provided that hotel is official conference hotel
 - iii. The Committee may consider a longer stay with proof of conference
 - iv. The Committee will not consider funding for travel during the event, except to provide transportation from an airport to the hotel and from the hotel to the airport; this cost will not be funded in an amount to exceed \$100
- ii. The Committee will consider funding \$0.30 per mile per necessary vehicle to an event. The Committee will not consider funding for chartered van/bus rentals or car rentals.
- iii. For air travel, the Committee will fund each individual no more than the following for a round-trip ticket:
 - a. Asia - \$500
 - b. Europe - \$500
 - c. Africa - \$500
 - d. North America - \$300
 - e. Central / South America - \$500
 - f. Australia - \$500

Section 3. CONFERENCES

- i. The Committee will consider funding individual or group participation in conferences if the conference is shown to be beneficial to the SMU community. The Committee will consider funding an average of 4 individuals per conference trip but may choose to fund more based upon a sufficient need/impact stated by an organization.
- ii. If funded for a conference, the Committee will adhere the following guidelines:
 - i. The Committee will consider funding only one (1) conference per organization per semester.
 - ii. The Committee will consider funding registration fees for up to four (4) individuals per conference.
 - iii. The Committee will not consider funding for food, travel, or miscellaneous expenses at the conference.

Section 4. COMPETITIONS

- i. The Committee will consider funding for competitions if the competition is shown to be beneficial to the SMU community. The Committee will consider funding an average of 4 individuals per competition but may choose to fund more based upon a sufficient need/impact stated by an organization.
 - a. The Committee will not fund any food at these competitions.
- ii. Playoffs and Invitationals should be requested during the weekly funding process through the Chartered Organizations Fund or the Senate Fund; they will not be funded through the Semester Budget process.
 - i. The Committee will consider funding the rental costs of facilities necessary for competitions or practices.

Section 5. PROGRAMS

- i. General Requirements
 - i. Programs must be open to the entire student body.
 - ii. Programs must be related to the organization's core purpose.
 - ii. Programs must be advertised to the entire SMU Community.
 - iii. Organizations are required to use SMU360 to advertise events as well as take attendance. Attendance information will be required by the Committee when reviewing weekly/budget requests.
 - a. Intentional misstatements of attendance to the finance committee on weekly/budget requests may lead to funding repercussions.

- b. Organizations are required to advertise the Student Senate logo on all promotional materials (excluding t-shirts) for any events funded by the Committee. Organizations are expected to use an official Student Senate logo that clarifies that funding by the Committee does not constitute an endorsement by the Committee.
 - c. The Committee will consider funding for creative promotional material that aids in the advertisement of a campus-wide event.
 - ii. Events Funded Through Semester Budgets
 - i. The Committee will consider funding up to two (2) speakers per semester per organization.
 - 1. The Committee will consider funding speakers'/entertainers' fee, including setup and technical assistance.
 - 2. The Committee will consider funding speakers'/entertainers' airfare and accommodations.
 - 3. The Committee will consider funding honorariums if and only if the speaker does not charge a fee.
 - 4. The Committee will NOT consider funding accommodations, meals, or transportation for DFW-based speakers/entertainers.
 - 5. The Committee will NOT consider funding honorariums or fees for SMU students, faculty, or staff.
 - iii. Events Funded Weekly Through the Chartered Organizations Fund
 - i. The Committee will consider funding speakers'/artists'/performers' fee, including setup and technical assistance.
 - ii. The Committee will consider funding on-campus events for chartered organizations that actively advertise to the entire SMU Community. Large events are defined as those with reasonable expectation of attendance over 350 people. The Finance Committee will consider exceptions to the large/small event cost breakdown if attendance exceeds 750 people at an event.
 - i. The Committee will consider funding up to \$750/\$375 for activity/entertainment expenses at large/small events unless specific contract opportunities are presented.
 - ii. The Committee will consider funding up to \$750/\$150 for general decoration expenses at large/small events.
 - iii. The Committee will consider funding up to \$1,000 for rental equipment at large scale events unless specific contract opportunities are presented. Organizations should consider

utilizing rooms in the Hughes-Trigg Student Center to avoid rental equipment expenses.

- iv. The Committee will not fund stake signs.
 - v. Stickers will be considered advertising and be funded at a rate of \$0.50 per sticker.
 - vi. The Committee will consider funding give-away items deemed educational to the organization itself and that are available to all members (e.g., books relating to the club's mission, etc.).
 - vii. The Committee will not consider funding for give-away items deemed as prizes that are only available to a select few (e.g., AirPods, gift cards, trophies, etc.).
 - viii. The Committee will consider funding an additional \$75 for a banner to be used and reused for event advertising, with expenses for changing time and location to be later considered by the Committee.
 - ix. The Committee will consider funding \$300 for an event disk jockey.
 - xii. The Committee will only consider funding the student rate for facilities and rentals on campus.
- iv. The Committee will not see an event a second time, even after denying it.
 - v. When student organizations collaborate with each other, only one request may be presented by one of the organizations with the full amount.

Section 6. COMMUNITY SERVICE AND PHILANTHROPY

- i. The Finance Committee shall allocate funding towards events that provide monetary compensation or advantage(s) to third parties (non-university affiliated groups or organizations) if and only if they are approved as a fundraising organization through the university president's office.
 - i. Such organizations include United Way and Dance Marathon.

Section 7. FOOD

- i. Food for a specific program will be funded according to the following guidelines:
 - i. The Committee will consider funding for food at a specific event if and only if said food is deemed to be a critical component of the event.
 - i. The Committee recommends food costs to amount as close to \$11.00 per person.

- ii. The Committee will consider additional funding for food in the case that that food is culturally significant to the organization or is required due to dietary restrictions.
- ii. The Committee will fund \$300 for general body meeting food per semester (\$600 for annual budgets).
- iii. The Committee will not fund alcohol.
- v. The Committee will not consider funding for plates and utensils for catered events, unless it is demonstrated that the caterer will not provide these items.

Section 8. GENERAL SUPPLIES

The Committee has the discretion to fund any requested supplies.

Section 9. PRINTING REGULATIONS

The Committee has the discretion to fund copies at a rate of \$0.05 per copy.

Section 10. SALARIES

- i. With the exception of the provisions contained in the Senate Bylaws, no compensation will be funded for officers of student organizations, advisors of student organizations, or coaches of club sport teams.
- ii. The Finance Committee may fund the following compensation:
 - i. Students' Association staff member overseeing the Student Comptroller's office
 - ii. Up to four Students' Association Student Workers, for the Comptroller, Assistant Comptroller, and Clerk roles
 - iii. Intramural Officials

Section 11. TAXES

- i. The Finance Committee does not fund sales tax. Sales tax does not include fees on an airline tickets or hotel expenses.
- ii. Tax-exempt forms may be picked up at the Students' Association Comptroller's Office or found [online](#).

Section 12. TIPS

- i. The Finance Committee will fund tips up to 20% of pre-tax amount, unless contractually obligated to pay more than 20%.

Section 13. MISCELLANEOUS

- i. The Finance Committee will not fund for discretionary funds (except for the Student Body President), non-specific miscellaneous expenses, emergency cash, petty cash, or non-specific maintenance requests.

- ii. The Finance Committee will not fund for prior debt (any expenses incurred or financial commitments made before the presentation of a funding request).
- iii. The Finance Committee will not consider funding for apparel (including no funding for homecoming t-shirts), with the exception of: Athletic uniforms for club sport organizations.
- iv. The Finance Committee does not fund for prize money or donations.
- v. The Finance Committee is not responsible for the maintenance or storage of any items purchased using allocated funds.
- vi. The Finance Committee will consider funding software programs deemed necessary to organizations' functions.
- vii. The Finance Committee does not fund cents and will round down to the nearest dollar when presented funding requests with line items including cents.

Section 14. SEMESTER BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

- i. Chartered organizations requesting funding for semester programs must submit a budget request form by the previously specified due date to studentsenate@smu.edu
- ii. Budget Penalties
 - i. Budget requests are due at 11:59 P.M. on the specified due date. Late Budget requests will be penalized 10% the first day and an additional 15% on the second day from the total amount allocated. On the third day, a group may no longer submit a budget.

Section 15. REALLOCATION REQUESTS

- i. Requests must be turned in at least two weeks prior to event.
- ii. Reallocations will not be granted after the event has been completed.
- iii. Requests must be communicated through the form posted on SMU360
 - i. Communication must be worded in the form of a request, not demand.
 - a. Event, line item, and amount must be specified.

Section 16. CHECK REQUESTS

- i. If check requests do not follow the following requirements, they will be denied:
 - i. Specify if funding source is from Summer Senate, Senate Weekly, or Semester Budgets
 - ii. Match the description on the check request to the description on the budget and provide a reasonable explanation of the funds

- iii. For appropriated requests, include the event name and specific line item (e.g. Homecoming – Food, Diwali – Décor, National Conference – Flights)
- iv. The event name should match what was submitted to Senate in the Budget or Weekly funding request.
- ii. More detailed information can be found under the “Finance” section on smustudentsenate.com
- iii. Check requests are due by Mondays at 5 p.m. for payment on the same Thursday at 3 p.m., unless otherwise posted on the Student Comptroller Check Schedule, found in SMU360.