

Cleveland State University



Cleveland State
University

General Fee Advisory Committee Bylaws

PREAMBLE

The General Fee Advisory Committee (GFAC) is an independent and impartial student body that distributes general fee funds. Members review budget proposals submitted by student organizations of CSU and make determinations based on requests, supporting documentation, and campus priorities.

Priority is given to programs, events, and training that support CSU's educational mission and enhance campus life - things like student engagement, programming, and community building. All reviews will look at the number of students benefiting from the proposal and the overall enhancement of the student experience at CSU.

COMMITTEE CHARGE

GFAC recommends how to spend student fee money to the Chief Student Affairs Officer. GFAC reviews funding requests for all the areas below:

- Annual funding for student organizations
- Special project funding
- Reserve funds from unused budgets
- Any changes to student fee amounts

GFAC operates as a year-round organization but is busiest during budget season at the outset of each semester. GFAC is comprised of nine students who make decisions by majority vote.

GFAC, following budget review and discussion with student organizations makes budget allocation recommendations to the CCE, who will work with the Vice President of Student Belonging and Success to finalize budgets for the upcoming semester. GFAC does not have the authority to make final determinations on budgets, nor adjust GFAC guidelines.

ARTICLE I: DEFINITIONS

- A. General Fee: What every CSU student pays per credit hour to support campus life.
- B. Annual Summary Report: Report due April 30 to the Center for Campus Engagement from all organizations recapping the year and the use of allocated funds.
- C. Funded Organizations: Student groups or organizations receiving funding from the General Fee. Organizations are reviewed annually for funding eligibility based on their submitted budget request.
- D. Annual Funding: Funding allocated for the academic year based on student enrollment, budget request, and organizational needs.

- E. Temporary Funding: One-time money for special projects beyond regular budgets that require a separate budget request and presentation to the Student Government Association.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

GFAC is composed of nine student volunteers from within the Cleveland State University student body. To be eligible to serve on GFAC, a student must maintain full time status and be in good standing with the university. Of the selected members of GFAC, the Vice President of Student Belonging and Success will designate a Chairperson.

Members are selected to GFAC for one academic year and are eligible to seek a position for a second year. While serving, members are unable to be a part of any conversations of budgets in which they are active members of the organization under consideration to remain any concern of partiality.

The Center for Campus Engagement and Faculty Senate will each provide an employee to serve as an ex-officio member of GFAC to provide guidance and answer any questions of the committee; however, these members will not have voting privileges, as they are reserved for the students selected to the committee.

ARTICLE III: FUNDING PROCEDURES

A. Annual Review Process:

1. Organizations submit funding requests at the end of the Spring semester, for the next fiscal year.
2. Comprehensive budget proposals must follow the guidelines set forth in this document and must contain clear line-by-line requests with proof of costs.
3. All budgets are to be submitted utilizing the VikesConnect form and template provided by CCE.
4. Organizations not submitting a budget, failing to meet budget submission requirements, or missing the deadline will not be eligible for funding from GFAC and instead will have to make temporary budget requests through Student Government.
5. Guidelines for budget submissions and a sample budget will be provided to all Treasurers to ensure clarity and consistency in budget requests.

B. Important Considerations:

1. Funding levels are determined by enrollment and may therefore be adjusted based on enrollment changes. In cases where budget cuts are necessary due to an over allocation by GFAC, all approved budgets will be cut in a uniform way.
2. All available funds that are not allocated by GFAC due to a lack of sufficient requests, will be transferred to the SGA excess account, which will be made available for temporary funding through a designated process.
3. Annual funding does not automatically renew; all organizations are required to submit a new budget proposal for each fiscal year to be considered for funding.

4. Failure to provide the required annual report for the current year will result in a lack of review of the following year's budget proposal.
5. Allocated funds that are not spent during the fiscal year are swept into the SGA Excess account.
6. Registered Student Organizations are capped at a request of \$1,000 per semester.

ARTICLE IV: FUNDING GUIDELINES

GFAC will review budgets for several factors in determining appropriate funding for each requesting organization. These criteria include, but are not limited to:

- The organization's roster, compliance with university rules, and overall visibility on campus.
- The potential positive impact that the funding will result in for the organization and for the broader campus community.
- The reach of the proposed events, programs, and activities of the organization.
- The request's alignment with the organization mission.
- The supporting documents and their ability to specify the needs of the organization.
- The adherence to the GFAC budgetary guidelines.

Any budget proposals missing the deadline will not be accepted and organizations will have to make temporary budget requests from Student Government when funds become available. Additionally, items that do not align with the GFAC guidelines or that lack sufficient documentation will be denied.

GFAC, in coordination with CSU administration, has established baseline funding guidelines that must be adhered to:

1. GFAC will not fund items which will become personal property except for branded apparel or merchandise that furthers the mission of the organization, within the guidelines set below for personal property.
 - a. Funds used for merchandise or apparel which will become personal property of club members cannot exceed the greater of either 10% of the proposed budget or \$300 dollars.
 - b. Items that become personal property will receive the most scrutiny from GFAC.
2. Personal property items distributed to attendees at an event and will not become personal property of club members are not bound by the below personal property funding restrictions.
3. If a speaker is contracted, GFAC will not fund over \$500 inclusive of travel and other expenses.
4. If the speaker is not contracted, GFAC will fund honorariums up to \$250.00 for honored guests.
5. GFAC will not reimburse club members for out-of-pocket expenses that were not approved in the GFAC proposal.

6. GFAC will not reimburse club members for punitive charges incurred by the club during an event or for failure to return items borrowed from the university.
7. GFAC will not fund the purchase of alcohol or other illegal substances.
8. GFAC uses \$10/person for breakfast, \$15/person for lunch, and \$20/person for dinner as a benchmark for meals.
 - a. When proposing food, clubs must specify the expected event attendance.
9. Organizations that send representatives to a conference will be funded up to \$750 for expected expenses. Additional funds may be requested through the SGA temporary funding request process.
 - a. GFAC will fund up to \$150/night for hotel rooms.
 - i. For group travel, GFAC expects at least two people to be housed per hotel room. Students of different genders will not be allowed to share a room.
 - b. Organizations are required to provide documentation for the conference and the hosting entity.
10. GFAC will not fund retreats or year-end celebrations.
11. GFAC will reimburse organizations that choose to travel in personal vehicles with mileage (\$0.70/mile). However, personal vehicles are the least preferred method of travel. Arrangements should be coordinated with the CCE.
 - a. Mileage costs vary per year. Rates will be adjusted based on current rates provided by the Business Office.
12. GFAC will not allocate funds for organizations to make charitable donations. All donations must be made through an organization's agency account.

ARTICLE V: DOCUMENTATION

Any applicable price quotes for items for events, meetings, games, or club functioning must be submitted with the proposal in the form of:

- Screenshot: online purchases (take a screenshot of your final "cart" including total).
- Pictures: in-store purchases (take a picture of an item next to its assigned price in the store).
- All budgets should be itemized, but detailed documentation is only required for items above \$50, while items under \$50 only require a general cost estimate.
 - Receipts are required for all purchased items, regardless of cost.
 - Space reservation confirmations for events, club meetings, etc. for off campus events.
 - Travel calculations must be submitted in miles:
 - MILEAGE: Google Maps: <https://maps.google.com/> Make sure to include the round-trip total miles.
- All vendor, performer, guest speaker, and catering requests must be submitted with:
 - Price quotes in the form of an email from the person you wish to book or an invoice quote.

ARTICLE VI: ALLOCATION PROCESS

- The organizations approved budget will be uploaded to the documents section of your VikesConnect page within a week after allocations/reallocations.
- All the items approved on your budget will be highlighted in green.
- If a line item was not approved, it will be highlighted in **red** with the reasoning documented next to that line.
- If a line price was adjusted, it will be highlighted yellow with the new amount listed. The reasoning for the adjustment will also be documented next to that line item.
- To purchase items, you can:
 - Ask your Campus Engagement Advisor to purchase the items. Requests should be made in a timely manner.
 - If a CE Advisor is not available, **personal funds may be used as a last resort**. Save all receipts and submit for a reimbursement to take place. You must include a bank statement showing the charge with your name on it. These may take several weeks to process.
 - Reimbursements generally will not be provided.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

- A. Regular Meetings: GFAC will convene at least once during the first two weeks of each semester to review budget proposals. Additional meetings will be scheduled as necessary to process all budget requests in a timely manner.
- B. Transparency: Budgets with clearly marked determinations for each budget item will be returned to the submitting organization with the approved budget total. This budget will also be uploaded into the organizations VikesConnect for future reference as purchases are made throughout the semester. All budget requests and approvals will be maintained in alignment with the CSU Record Management and Retention Policy.