

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MORRIS
ACTIVITY FEE REVIEW COMMITTEE (AFRC) GUIDELINES

Compiled from assorted documents as noted 11/1/95, last updated 12/4/03

Board of Regents Policy: Student Affairs Student Services Fees Definition

Student Services Fees are mandatory assessments on each campus and provide non-instructional activities and services that make significant contributions to student development. These non-instructional programs and activities supplement the academic curriculum and are an integral part of the University educational experience. Both the level and scope of assessment are set through a representative process determined by the Chancellor/Provost on each campus under guidelines determined by the Board of Regents. Each campus will have a fees committee with student majority membership that will recommend a fee to the Chancellor/Provost. Each campus administration will recommend a fee to the Board of Regents. Any exceptions from payment of this fee require authorization by the Board of Regents.

Adopted July 9, 1982
Amended July 12, 1987
Adopted for policy book March 8, 1991

Viewpoint Neutrality

Public universities may compel students to pay a student activity fee even if students object to the student organizations that receive funding, so long as universities *do not discriminate* against student organizations on the basis of their viewpoint in deciding how to *allocate* student fees. This viewpoint-neutrality in deciding how to allocate funds strengthens the protections of all students' First Amendment rights.

The University's student fees committee must evaluate the student organizations that apply for funding on the basis of the viewpoint-neutral standards and criteria for funding outlined in this policy. The fees committee may not make decisions based on an organization's viewpoint or committee members' own personal disagreement with an organization's point of view. To ensure viewpoint-neutrality, the committee should structure its evaluation of organizations' applications around the standards and criteria outlined in this policy.

Tracy M. Smith, University of Minnesota, Office of the General Counsel, October 2003

To that end:

- funding decisions will be made without regard to the viewpoint of an organization's programming
- all organizations should be held to the same standards in the application submission process, i.e. as those standards relate to meeting submission deadlines and accuracy and clarity of text and figures submitted
- fees committee members must not insert their own beliefs into the decision making process. If an organization meets all of the requirements for fee funding, the fees committee should be prepared to offer that group comparable funding despite strong personal opposition to the content of their programming.

University of Minnesota Student Services Fees Task Force June 25, 2001

Activity Fee Review Committee Structure and Responsibilities

Membership

The Activities Fee Review Committee is a special committee of the Chancellor. It is comprised of nine student members selected by an AFRC subcommittee and endorsed by the MCSA Forum, two faculty/professional & administrative representatives appointed by the Chancellor, one Staff representative (appointed by the United Staff Association), and the Director of Student Activities, ex officio/non-voting. (See Appendix A for additional description.) AFRC has detailed policies - Guideline pages 7-8, related to the use of activity fee funds for food, travel, clothing, gifts/awards. Groups requesting student fee funding are responsible for following all AFRC and University policies.

AFRC Attendance Policy

Every member of AFRC will be expected to attend each meeting. However, if one has a legitimate conflict or other reason why one cannot attend, the Chair or Secretary must be notified. All other absences will be considered unexcused and any member of AFRC who accumulates more than three unexcused absences in a year will be asked to leave the committee.

Requirements for Applying for Student Fees

- All organizations, departments or programs receiving student services fees funding must have students participating in deciding how fee money is spent. Students must be involved in the development of policies and budgets for any proposal that comes before the Student Services Fees Committee
- Organizations, departments or programs receiving funds from student service fees shall demonstrate expenditures in general compliance with their submitted budgets or provide justification for the changes in budget.
- All budgets and financial records for all organizations, departments or programs which receive student fees shall be available for student inspection. Financial records for most of the organizations requesting allocations are maintained by the Office of Student Activities. Groups who have their own checking or savings accounts must submit bank statements and organization ledgers with expenses and income details with their request for student fee funding
- Eligibility of all organizations applying for student service fees must be reviewed by the Director of Student Activities or her/his designee and/or by AFRC. All financial records must be provided in a timely manner.
- All organizations applying for student service fees must demonstrate that they have procedures in place to ensure accountability. Examples of this accountability include: attendance figures for events, numbers related to publications or listenership, etc. The intent is to create a descriptive record of each organization's activities/products/events.
- Membership in the organization requesting student service fees and access to programs and services must comply with the University of Minnesota's Equal Opportunity Statement.
- All organizations applying for student services fees must complete the standardized request form(s) and adhere to deadlines established by the Activity Fee Review Committee.

Taken from the 1995-96 Student Services Fees Request Preparation Instructions

UMM Activity Fee Review Committee (AFRC): Criteria Used for Allocating Fees

- AFRC funding should provide support for educational, cultural, and recreational activities and services. These activities and services should be consistent with the liberal arts mission of the campus. The activities and services should not be a part of the regular academic curriculum. That is, activity fee funding should not be used where the primary focus of the activity is academic credit. Where the awarding of academic credit is incidental to the primary function of the activity, funding is permissible.
- The interest in, support for, and potential number of students to be served by the activity will be a consideration in the allocation process. However, a more narrowly focused activity or service

designed to meet the needs of a significant special interest group may be considered for funding as long as the activity or service is potentially available to all students.

- The precedent with which previous activity fee allocations have been administered will be a consideration. Organizations, departments or programs receiving funds from student services fees should demonstrate expenditures in general compliance with their submitted budgets.
- The overall effectiveness with which the activity or service meets its stated purpose will be a consideration.
- A comparative evaluation of previous allocations and the projected budget shown in the request will be a consideration. The overall financial base necessary for effective functioning of the activity or service will be taken into consideration.
- All organizations, departments or programs receiving student fee funding must have students participating in the decision as to how fee money is spent. Students must be involved in the development of policies and budgets for any proposal that comes before the Activity Fee Review Committee. The director or administrator of a University department receiving student fee funds shall ensure that adequate student participation occurs regarding the proposed student fee request.

Taken from p. 3 from the 2000-01 AFRC Budget Request Packet, which was based on a report from the Board of Regents

Student Fee Funding Mechanisms at UMM

AFRC oversees two funding mechanisms at UMM: Annual Allocations and the Assistance to Student Group (ASG) fund. Groups may request allocations from either of the funding sources but **not** both. Registered student organizations, campus departments or programs have the opportunity to request Annual Allocations if the group's spending and programming is consistent over a three-year period. Stability of programming and associated financial need will be determined through a review of the group's ASG history and/or through a review of other approved financial records. ASG is reserved for groups who don't receive annual AFRC funding. These groups typically do not have ongoing budgetary needs, but wish to request money for special projects.

I.) Annual Allocations

A) Application for funding is a multi-step process that includes preparation of a comprehensive, web based budget request application:

- Descriptive narrative of groups purpose, activities, participation, changes in budget activity (Form I)
- Full report of the group's past year's fiscal activity (Form II)
- Report of actual and projected fiscal activities for current year (Form III)
- Projected fiscal activities for following year (Form IV)

B.) All applying groups will work with a designated AFRC representative. Any requests received from organizations for annual activity fees will be determined by the full committee

C) AFRC initial allocation meetings - groups requesting funding will be invited to attend the meetings and have the opportunity to answer committee questions, clarify and/or add additional detail to their written request.

D) There is an opportunity to appeal AFRC's initial allocation. The appeal must be related to procedural concerns and not related to dissatisfaction regarding the amount of an allocation.

E) AFRC recommendations and annual report will be made to the Chancellor.

F) The Chancellor makes the final recommendation to the Board of Regents.

G) Awards are for the fiscal year following application.

Criteria used by AFRC in funding decisions for groups requesting an annual allocation

In general, these funds are allocated based upon the **priorities** listed below. Type A categories are the most likely to be funded and type E categories are the least likely.

- A) organizational activity/event on campus open to all students
- B) organizational activity/event off campus (in Morris or immediate area) open to all students

- C) organizational activity/event off campus (generally out of town) open to members or representatives of an organization
- D) organizational activity/event off campus appearing to have more benefit to individual participants than to the organization as a whole
- E) organizational activity/event on campus with restricted attendance

In C, D, & E activities, participants will be expected to contribute a significant portion of the funding for the proposed activity.

Other criteria will also be considered in making decisions. These include:

- Size of membership of organization
- Actual dollar amount requested
- Anticipated attendance or participation
- Size of past allocations to the organization or other organizations for such activities
- Openness of membership -- organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability, age, creed, marital status, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation are ineligible to receive University funds
- The benefit to students and the campus
- Reports of success or failure of other ventures of a similar type
- Longevity of the organization and its programming
- History of spending allocated funds for the purposes and in the amounts requested, or presence of justification for the changes in budget.
- Programs and services targeted to the largest number of students consistent with the need for the programs and services.
- Programs and services consistent with the mission of the University.
- Uniqueness of programs and services. Are they provided elsewhere on campus or in the community?
- Alternative and/or additional sources of funding
- Contribution to the University educational experience beyond the academic curriculum.

II.) Assistance to Student Groups (ASG) Fund for funding of individual activities. These requests may be submitted throughout the year.

- A) Groups submit an ASG request form (available in Student Activities) for AFRC consideration.
- B) A minimum of two weeks notice should be given to designated Student Activities staff for review and awarding of ASG funding requests. For requests of less than \$400, the Director of Student Activities and AFRC chair or her/his designee will make the award determination. For requests of more than \$400 or multiple requests in a given year totaling more than \$400, the full AFRC will review and make the award determination.

How to request funds from the ASG Fund

These procedures and priorities are established to yield the most benefit to students and campus organizations as a whole rather than individual students or organizations. There is no guarantee that any request will be approved.

- 1) An ASG Fund Request form is available from the Office of Student Activities to request funds. Some of the information requested on this form include:
 - A) itemized breakdown of the cost of the project/event/trip
 - B) non ASG sources of income: e.g. co-sponsorships, admissions to be charged, individual participant contributions to help defray expenses, etc.
 - C) the rationale for requesting ASG funds
 - D) what the anticipated benefits are, e.g. cultural, educational, etc.
 - E) a statement of the organization's assets: this includes funds in campus accounts, checking accounts, grants, etc.
 - F) how many people are involved

Criteria used by AFRC in funding decisions for groups requesting an ASG allocation

In general, these funds are allocated based upon the **priorities** listed below. Type A events are the most likely to be funded and type E events are the least likely.

- A) organizational activity/event on campus open to all students
- B) organizational activity/event off campus (in Morris or immediate area) open to all students
- C) organizational activity/event off campus (generally out of town) open to members or representatives of an organization
- D) organizational activity/event off campus appearing to have more benefit to individual participants than to the organization as a whole
- E) organizational activity/event on campus with restricted attendance

In C, D, & E activities, participants will be expected to contribute a significant portion of the funding for the proposed activity.

Other criteria will also be considered in making decisions. These include:

- Size of membership of organization
- Actual dollar amount requested and cumulative dollar amount requested for the year.
- Anticipated attendance or participation
- Size of past allocations to the organization or other organizations for such activities
- Openness of membership -- organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, disability, age, creed, marital status, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation are ineligible to receive University funds.
- The benefit to students and the campus
- Reports of success or failure of other ventures of a similar type
- Longevity of programming of the organization
- Programs and services targeted to the largest number of students consistent with the need for the programs and services.
- Programs and services consistent with the mission of the University.
- Uniqueness of programs and services. Are they provided elsewhere on campus or in the community?
- Alternative and/or additional sources of funding
- Contribution to the University educational experience beyond the academic curriculum.

Appeals of decisions for requests that fall under the purview of the Director of Student Activities and AFRC chair, i.e. requests under \$400, can be made to the Activity Fee Review Committee.

Policies Regarding Specific Areas of Expenditure

The many, very different student organizations on the UMM campus make it unrealistic to create a set of rules that would address all possible specifics related to requests for fee funding. The policies that follow focus on some specific areas, but it is important that organizations be aware that AFRC expects clear justification for all expenditures appearing on budgets and that organizations should be prepared to answer very specific questions relating to all aspects of their budget.

Policy: Co-sponsorships

When events are co-sponsored by two or more student organizations, your organization will either be a parent organization and all others will be a contributing organization (see definitions below). Please note your expenses as follows:

1. Parent organization (the organization acting as the main sponsor of the event; contract fees and event expenses are charged against this group's budget): List the name of the event and date, the total cost shared, then the other co-sponsoring groups with their contributions noted as a negative number and the breakdown of major expenses related to the event.
2. Contributing organizations (any organization contributing monetary support to the parent organization): List the name of the event & date, the parent organization to which your funds were/will be transferred, and the total dollar amount your organization contributed.

For projected co-sponsorships, please follow the same format. It is imperative that you confirm your intentions to co-sponsor with the other organizations involved prior to the submission of both groups' budget requests.

Policy: Leadership Stipends and Employment

The policies related to employment evolved from a policy originally established in 1983 with major revisions and additional stipulations adopted by AFRC in 1991. The current version of this policy was adopted by AFRC in October 2001.

Stipends

On December 5, 1991 AFRC adopted a policy restricting salaried positions in student organizations. The Committee was concerned about the proliferation of paid leadership positions. Leadership salaries originally were paid out as non-work study employment through the Financial Aid Office. In a series of meetings between Financial Aid, MCSA, and Student Activities held in 1999-2000, leadership stipends replaced leadership salaries.

1) Stipends are leadership awards that represent special responsibility and service to the UMM campus. They do not reflect actual time/effort/qualifications/responsibilities within any organization, i.e. this is not employment.

Organizations like KUMM, *University Register*, CAC, and MCSA provide services to the entire campus community. Because of the campus-wide scope of these organizations, we recognize the need for coordinators and administrative assistants to insure the successful management of these organizations. We also recognize the need for such organizations to decide for themselves the specific stipend levels for specific positions. However, we believe we must set ceilings on the total stipend amount available to these organizations. We recommend that no campus service organization allocate more than \$1200 yearly per position. The total allocation for leadership positions in one organization shall not exceed \$6000. If an organization decides that it must have more than the \$6000 limit, then the organization must provide adequate justification to AFRC.

2) Special interest groups and specific service groups should be separated from campus-wide service organizations when considering stipend positions and non-work study student employment.

Employment

We recognize that certain organizations require the skills of specially trained personnel that provide services geared towards the successful management of an organization. These jobs are non-work study student employment (Hourly Employment). These positions must be advertised campus-wide. Examples include:

- 1) CAC & Student Activities Graphic Artists
- 2) Student Center Tech. Crew
- 3) Student Activities Office Assistants and Bookkeeper
- 4) AFRC Secretary

Approved by AFRC February 3, 1983 in order to add further clarification regarding employment expenditures by activity funded groups. Updated February 2000 and October 2001

Policy: Clothing

The purchase of clothing with Activity Fee money is considered appropriate by AFRC when:

- 1) Fundraising is the main goal and the cost of the clothing is covered by the income generated through sales.
- 2) The clothing is used as a special recognition of services volunteered and not to outfit an entire organization.
- 3) The clothing is given out for a promotional purpose or used in marketing, but is not the main attraction.
- 4) The clothing is used for uniforms and ownership is retained by the organization, and not by individual participants.

Adopted by AFRC 11/5/ 1991, revised 10/24/01

Policy: Food

Activity Fee funds may **not** be used for food/meals while traveling. Activity fee funds should be used sparingly to purchase food in the following instances:

- 1.) Purchasing food with Activity Fee money is acceptable when it is used to enhance an organization's activity that is open to the entire campus e.g. receptions at public events, programs promoting cultural awareness and diversity.
- 2.) On occasion it may be deemed appropriate to supply food as a form of volunteer recognition, but not if the sole purpose is to increase meeting attendance.
- 3.) The purchase of food with Activity Fee funding is also allowed (with AFRC discretion) for meetings that aren't considered 'routine', e.g. AFRC's initial allocation meetings, first of the year/welcome back/celebratory meetings, meetings or events with campus speakers/guests.

The purchase of food by members of an organization for an event that does not directly fall under the goals/purpose is allowed, but should not be funded with Activity Fee funds.

Organizations have autonomy/discretion in purchasing food with money raised through fundraiser net profits that have not been previously identified to AFRC as earmarked for other programs, travel, etc.

AFRC Minutes 4/30/03

Policy: Travel Expenditures

Travel should be used economically and sparingly. In travel situations, groups should send only a very small number of responsible representatives when it is too expensive to send the entire organization. The committee appreciates any effort directed toward devising more economical travel. Food on trips cannot be funded through Activity Fee funds. Lodging and other costs should be offset by financial contributions from participating students.

The committee may fund up to 90% of an AFRC or ASG group's travel expenses. The unpaid balance can come from co-sponsorships from non-activity fee funded groups, fundraising, and participant contribution. The exception is for groups whose sole purpose is to procure campus programming. Such groups will receive 100% funding.

Adopted By AFRC 1/15/03

AFRC support for travel-related expenses for student organizations has the following priorities and guidelines. Under our proposed category 1, travel is most likely to receive funding and under 4, least likely.

Categories:

1. Highest Priority Travel is for groups traveling to conferences with the primary intention of procurement of programming and/or skills for campus events.

Example:

A. Campus Activities Council

2. Second Priority Travel is viewed as essential to the organization's purposes.

Examples:

A. Intercollegiate Speech Team

B. Mock Trial.

3. Third Priority Travel to a conference, workshop and/or retreat which, though not essential, would clearly benefit the campus and the organization, as well as the individuals involved.

Example:

A. Leadership conferences

4. Last Priority Travel in which the benefit appears to be primarily for the individual and only remotely so for the campus and/or organization.

Examples:

A. Organizational travel for largely social, academic, or recreational purposes

In addition, we recommend the following:

It should be emphasized to student organizations that they make every effort to identify, prior to departure, the most efficient, but least expensive means of transportation and the best commercial rate for lodging.

Adopted by AFRC 2/9/ 1986

Policy: Gifts/Awards

Organizations may use activity fee funding for gifts or awards following the current AFRC guidelines:

Gifts/Awards are only appropriate when used as a recognition of a person's contributions/achievements to the campus and, then, only on rare occasions. Expenditures for such items will come under strict scrutiny by AFRC. Examples of acceptable expenses are the mugs given to graduating student leaders at the annual Student Leadership Recognition Banquet.

As with all expenses and revenues, the purchases must also conform to all-University policies and information about gifts/awards should be included in the groups' budget request to AFRC.

Organizations have autonomy/discretion in purchasing gifts/awards with money raised through fundraiser net profits that have not been previously identified to AFRC as earmarked for other programs, travel, etc.

Policy revised by AFRC 4/23/03

Role of MCSA in the Budget Process

From AFRC Structure and Responsibilities

Adopted May 23, 1988

Allocations: AFRC is responsible for sending final recommendations to the Chancellor, but only after MCSA reacts to and advises AFRC after reviewing the preliminary recommendations of

AFRC. AFRC traditionally publishes the initial awards in the *University Register*. After reviewing the initial allocations, the MCSA Forum has the option of hosting an open hearing to field questions from dissatisfied organizations. These questions must be related to concerns about AFRC process of review, not the amount of money awarded. MCSA then provides AFRC with its reactions and recommendations. AFRC considers those recommendations and then makes its final recommendations to the Chancellor.

Appendix A: AFRC Membership

Six student members are selected each spring. Three are selected for one-year terms and three are selected for two-year terms. If any of the students selected to a two-year term the previous year are unable to serve, a replacement is selected to complete their term ensuring nine student representatives on the committee.

The United Staff Association, faculty and professional & administrative representatives are appointed to one-year terms each year. The Director of Student Activities, who serves *ex officio*, has the responsibility to ensure that the committee is formed each year, and outlines the major responsibilities of the committee. The Student Activities Office maintains the committee file and provides staff and materials support for the committee. The Director of Student Activities is responsible for ensuring that necessary materials are prepared in a timely fashion.

The election of a Chairperson is conducted in the spring at a joint meeting of the outgoing and incoming members with all those present voting. The Vice Chair is typically elected at the first meeting in the fall. The student secretary is an employee of the Office of Student Activities and that office coordinates the hiring process with input from AFRC Chair or his/her designee. The student secretary is not a member of the committee and does not participate in the budget deliberation discussions other than to clarify points for the record.

Voting:

As stated in the Guidelines for Student Fees (approved by Board of Regents: June, 1987), “all members shall vote.” University guidelines, as described in a February 18, 1987 memo by Frank Wilderson say, “No executive of any organization that receives funds from Student Services Fee shall be a member of the Student Services Fee Committee. For the Morris Campus, the policy was modified in a memo from Steve Granger on November 23, 1981. Summarizing, Granger stated that since this is such a small campus it is unlikely that some members would not be involved as an executive in an organization. Those members selected to the committee would not be allowed to participate in budget deliberations or to vote on allocations when their organization is being reviewed. The Director of Student Activities is a non-voting member.

Appendix B: Assessment of Student Services Fees

Activities Fee

A fee of \$90.00 per semester is charged to all students registered for 6 or more credits. Those registered for fewer than 6 credits have the option to pay the fee to participate in the activities, events, and services it funds.

Athletic Fee

A fee of \$15 per semester is charged to all students registered for 6 or more credits. This fee is meant to strengthen and support UMM's intercollegiate athletic program and to aid in the University's commitment to comply with Title IX in the establishment of more women's sports.

Health Services Fee

A fee of \$52.50 per semester is charged to all students registered for 6 or more credits. Those registered for fewer than 6 credits may elect to pay the fee in order to have access to the Health

Service, which provides limited outpatient care (students must have adequate health insurance coverage to supplement this care).

Student Center Fee

A fee of \$39 per semester is charged to all students: \$20 debt service for the new facility (built in 1992), \$13 - services and operating expenses, \$6 facility repair and improvement.

Regional Fitness Center Fee

A fee of \$45 per semester is charged to all students registered for 6 or more credits to grant them full access to the Regional Fitness Center.

Appendix C: Supplemental Fees Relevant to AFRC

Minnesota Public Interest Research Group Fee (Refusable/Refundable)

The Minnesota Public Interest Research Group (MPIRG) is a nonprofit, non-partisan, student-run organization funded by an optional student fee of \$ 4.13 per semester. Students may, at the time of registration, elect not to be billed for the fee or may recover it during a refund period scheduled each semester by local representatives.

Student Legislative Coalition Fee (Refusable/Refundable) was eliminated in 2002-03.

Student Fee Summary -- Per Semester, Per Student

Year	Activity Fee	Student Center Fee	SC Debt Service	Athletic Fee	RFC Fee	Tech Fee	Health Service	Total
1999-00	\$78	\$13.50	\$25.50	\$15	\$30	\$52.50	\$52.50	\$267
2000-01	\$78	\$13.50	\$25.50	\$15	\$30	\$52.50	\$52.50	\$267
2001-02	\$85	\$13.50	\$25.50	\$15	\$30	*	\$52.50	\$221.50*
2002-03	\$85	\$13.50	\$25.50	\$15	\$45	*	\$52.50	\$236.50
2003-04	\$90	\$19.00	\$20.00	\$15	\$45	*	\$52.50	\$241.50
2004-05	\$90	\$19.00	\$20.00	\$15	\$45	*	\$52.50	\$241.50

[Notes: *Beginning in 2000-01 the UMM Technology Fee was re-classified as an academic fee rather than a student services fee to conform to the designation of the other University of Minnesota campuses. See AFRC archives in Student Activities for student fees paid per quarter prior to 1999-00.]