

# TREASURER'S MANUAL

Voted On: December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Effective Date: June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019



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## **The Student Activity Fee and Finance Board**

### **Overview:**

Student Activity Fees (SAF) are collected from all full-time Elon University students and are administered under the jurisdiction of the Vice President of Student Life. SAFs are set at the discretion of the Elon University Board of Trustees. The Vice President of Student Life decides on a fixed amount of the SAF that is to be distributed at the discretion of the Finance Board during the following academic year under the advisement of the Student Government Association (SGA) Advisor. The Finance Board has been designated as the advisory committee for the allocation of funds from this fixed amount of the SAF. The SGA Senate will be required to review the Treasurer's Manual annually. Additionally, being that the Finance Board is technically under the jurisdiction of the SGA, if any member of the Finance Board neglects their duties or violates the Treasurer's Manual, they are subject to the authority and disciplinary action of the SGA Judicial Committee.

### **The Finance Board:**

The Finance Board will be made up of ten members comprised of elected SGA representatives and non-SGA representatives. The Executive Treasurer will serve as the Finance Board Comptroller and a non-voting member responsible for facilitating the weekly Finance Board meetings and notifying organizations of the Finance Board's decision. The breakdown of the rest of the Finance Board is as follows:

- SGA First-Year Class Treasurer
- SGA Sophomore Class Treasurer
- SGA Junior Class Treasurer
- SGA Senior Class Treasurer
- Assistant Comptroller of the Finance Board
- Four Non-SGA Representatives

A simple majority vote is required for a funding request to pass. In the case of a tie, the Executive Treasurer retains the right to vote.

### **Selection of Non-SGA Representatives:**

The Assistant Comptroller of the Finance Board will be appointed at the discretion of the Executive Treasurer and will be responsible for conducting meetings and rendering decisions in the case of an absence of the Executive Treasurer. The Non-SGA representatives will be application-based and require a 3/4 majority vote of the SGA Executive Board to be appointed to the Finance Board for the 2019-2020 academic year. Pending amendments to the SGA Constitution, Non-SGA Finance Board representatives will then be elected by the student body for the following academic years.

### **Funding Vision:**

In order to allocate the SAF in a way that maximizes the benefit for all undergraduate students who pay the annual fee, the Finance Board seeks to promote an environment where:

1. Events are inclusive and open in nature.
2. Collaboration is emphasized in the interest of promoting campus unity and higher quality events.

3. Events catering to large groups of students are balanced with those which cater to a smaller number.
4. Funding shall be spread out among a variety of organizations to ensure quality events in all facets of campus life.
5. Funding shall be distributed to promote long-lasting and sustainable operations.

### **Overriding the Manual:**

While it is important to note that the Treasurer's Manual holds true for the majority of cases regarding SAF usage, it is also important to recognize that an exception may be needed on occasion.

1. The Finance Board may override any portion of this Treasurer's Manual on a case-by-case basis with a 2/3 majority vote.
2. Any override of the Treasurer's Manual shall be specifically documented with a decision memorandum prepared by the Executive Treasurer.
3. Overrides are considered on a case-by-case basis and do not set precedent for future decisions.
4. This override clause excludes the Large Events Request requirement of bringing the request to the SGA Student Senate.

## **Eligibility for Funding and Annual Budgets**

### **Eligibility for Funding:**

Only undergraduate student organizations recognized by and in good standing with the Office of Student Involvement are eligible to receive SAF funding. Greek organizations that are fully recognized and in good standing with the Office of Student Involvement and their respective national organization are also eligible to receive funding.

1. Before requesting SAF funding, a representative from the organization's executive board must attend a Student Leader Training Workshop put on by the Office of Student Life. The Executive Treasurer will hold a training session to educate students and organizations on the policies and procedures of using SAF funds.
  - a. At the discretion of the Executive Treasurer, additional workshops regarding the usage of SAFs can be held in partnership with the Office of Student Involvement.
2. Organizations must have completed all obligations (i.e. spending reports) for previous events funded by the SAF as set by the Finance Board.

Individual undergraduate students are welcome to apply for SAF funding. Individual undergraduate student requests will have to adhere to the same guidelines as organization requests and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and approved/denied at the discretion of the Finance Board.

Additionally, several organizational clusters receive SAF funding at the discretion of the Vice President of Student Life prior to the allocation of the Finance Board's fixed amount for distribution. For this reason, organizations in the following cluster are not eligible to receive funding from the Finance Board:

1. Campus Programs/Departments
2. Club Sports

3. Honorary Organizations
4. Media Organizations

**Budgeting:**

The request pool eligible for organization funding will be derived from the SAF after the Finance Board has allocated funds for annual budgets. All organizations will be eligible for an annual budget based on the size quartile of their organization, as reflected by membership rosters on Phoenix Connect.

1. Phoenix Connect Membership Quartile 1 (0.00-25.00%) - \$100.00
2. Phoenix Connect Membership Quartile 2 (25.01% - 50.00%) - \$200.00
3. Phoenix Connect Membership Quartile 3 (50.01% - 75.00%) - \$300.00
4. Phoenix Connect Membership Quartile 4 (75.01% - 100.00%) - \$400.00

Organizations interested in being eligible for a budget for the upcoming academic year must submit a formal budget to the Executive Treasurer by a date set at the discretion of the Finance Board. Organizations must be given two weeks to prepare and submit a budget to the Executive Treasurer. Failure to submit a budget by the specified deadline will result in an organization not receiving a budget for the following academic year. Organizations who fail to submit a budget will still be eligible for SAF funding through the application process.

**Annual Budgets:**

The Finance Board recognizes that for organizations planning numerous events on a large scale, this model may not be feasible with their leadership structure. For that reason, organizations who meet the following criteria are eligible to apply to receive a fixed SAF budget from the Vice President of Student Life:

1. The organization provides a service to the entire undergraduate student body.
2. The organization's services are available throughout the academic year.
3. The organization is unable to function on an event by event basis.
4. The organization has demonstrated proper spending habits, as evidenced through requests from the past year.
5. The organization has not been sanctioned/on probation within the past year.
6. The organization has a paid, full-time faculty member whose advising responsibilities are included in their job description.

Organizations who feel they meet the above criteria must submit their application to the Finance Board by the deadline specified by the Executive Treasurer. If the Finance Board approves an organization to receive an annual budget from the Vice President of Student Life, the student organization will be only eligible to apply to the Finance Board for additional SAF funding at the discretion of the Executive Treasurer. Decisions administered by the Finance Board will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; no decision made by the Finance Board sets precedent for future decisions.

## Event Criteria and Spending Requests Guidelines

### Event Requests:

An event request must include the following:

1. A completed Phoenix Connect Budget Request, including all required fields, attestations, and approvals.
2. In addition, groups submitting an Event Request that contains a costume portion must include an up-to-date costume inventory in order to be considered complete.
3. A calendar of submission deadlines will be set by the Executive Treasurer, approved by the Finance Board, and made public to all student organizations at the beginning of each fiscal year.
  - a. Any individual/organization may petition the Executive Treasurer to submit an Event Request after the set deadlines have passed, provided there is justification of extenuating circumstances that the request could not have been submitted prior to the appropriate deadlines. This request to present late must be accompanied by a completed Event Request Form.
  - b. Organizations that require extensive preparation time for an event may petition the Executive Treasurer to submit an Event Request earlier than the set deadlines, provided the organization provides justification for the additional time. This request to present early must be accompanied by a completed Event Request Form.
  - c. It is the responsibility of the student organization to seek out deadlines and request information.
4. Organizations submitting an Event Request completed and on-time may be requested by the Finance Board to present their event request. Organization contacts listed on the Event Request will receive an email with the specific date, time, and location of the presentation no later than 24 hours prior to the presentation.
  - a. At least one member of the organization's executive board is expected to give a thorough presentation to the Board. An outside designee may be appointed in extenuating circumstances with the approval of the Executive Treasurer.
  - b. The representative should introduce themselves and their positions and present the details of the event. During the presentation, students should clearly state the purpose of the event and how it benefits their organization and the undergraduate community as a whole. The presentation is an opportunity for the organization to clearly define the reasons for each line item in their request. All groups should be prepared to identify which part(s) of their requests are absolutely necessary for the intent of the event to be successful. Groups should be prepared to rank line items in order of importance to the success of the event.
5. Individuals/Organizations will be notified within two business days of their Event Request presentation on the outcome of their request.

### Large Event Requests:

Any request for over \$5,000.00 will need additional documentation due to the nature of the request. Additional requirements include:

1. A completion of the large event form on Phoenix Connect.

2. At least two comparable quotes for all items to be requested or a documented explanation as to why providing two comparable quotes is not possible.
3. A copy of the Spending Report for the most recent iteration of the event.

The Finance Board will hear all large event requests and then submit a formal recommendation on the request to the SGA Student Senate. The individual/organization who submitted the request will then be invited to present their request to the SGA Student Senate at the next SGA business meeting. All large requests will require a simple majority to pass and the requesting individual/organization will be notified of the outcome of their request within two business day of the SGA Student Senate meeting.

### **Event Expenditure Restrictions:**

The Finance Board will impose the following limitations on the use of the SAF in order to best utilize the funding:

1. The following types of events will be funded according to these restrictions:
  - a. Community service events may only be funded if the event is in partnership with a community partner; direct donations/contributions to an off-campus community partner will not be funded.
  - b. Political events, activities, and services may only be funded when they are educational in nature. Events that support, in whole or in part, the campaign of an individual candidate or party for a political office, cannot be funded.
  - c. Religious-themed events and activities must be open, and advertised as open, to all students. Events may not discriminate based on a student's religious beliefs.
  - d. All SAF funded events must be open to students and must adhere to the University's nondiscrimination statement, The Student Organization handbook, the Honor Code and University's Code of Conduct.
2. Costumes and props may be funded on a case-by-case basis. Organizations are encouraged to rent all costumes and props unless the items can be reused on an annual basis. Should the Board fund costumes and/or prop purchases, the following stipulations are required:
  - a. Items must be reusable and maintained at the expense of the organization.
  - b. Items must be appropriately stored by the organization in a location where they will be secure from damage and theft, and be accessible for similar events in future years.
  - c. Organizations must keep an inventory of any and all costumes and/or props purchased detailing the specific item. Inventories must be submitted to the Finance Board at the start of each Academic year.
  - d. A program request containing costumes or props must include an up-to-date inventory to be considered complete.
3. Equipment rentals for events may be funded if the following can be proven:
  - a. The event cannot occur without the requested equipment.
  - b. The current equipment of the venue cannot meet the requirements of the performer or planned event.
  - c. The organization has explored all on-campus options for obtaining adequate equipment.
4. Giveaways/Food:

- a. The total cost of food and drinks for an event/meeting should not exceed \$15.00 per anticipated attendee.
  - b. Off-campus meals for an organization executive board must be approved by the Finance Board. Reimbursement of these meals is contingent upon a submission of members in attendance and notes from the meeting.
  - c. Giveaways will be considered as promotional items and should not exceed more than \$5.00 per anticipated attendee.
  - d. T-shirts will be considered as giveaways and therefore should not exceed more than \$5.00 per anticipated attendee.
    - i. T-shirts will not be funded when the purpose is solely for the distribution or personal wear amongst group members.
  - e. Program hand-outs, such as those outlining the cast or sequence of a performance, are considered as giveaways, are limited to expected attendance, and should not exceed \$3.00 per program.
5. Marketing is critical to the success and openness of SAF funded events. All events funded by the SAF must be listed on the Events Page through Phoenix Connect.
- a. All advertising and program handouts must bear the official SAFs logo, available on the SGA website. All logos should be of sufficient size and Phoenix Connect postings should state “Supported by the SAF.”
  - b. All advertisements for a SAF funded event must bear the phrase and logo “Supported by the SAF.” This includes, but is not limited to, fliers, Phoenix Connect postings, and Facebook events.

**Equipment:**

Organizations may submit either one equipment request or one capital equipment request per semester.

1. Equipment Request:
  - a. Equipment being requested must have a minimum life of one year.
  - b. Organizations may not request more than a total of \$1,500.00 for equipment per semester.
2. Capital Equipment Request:
  - a. Capital equipment is defined as equipment that has a life of at least two years and has a cost-per-unit of at least \$1,500.00.
  - b. Organizations may be funded for one Capital Equipment Request per semester. A request is not utilized during one semester and may not be submitted during any following semester.
  - c. A Capital Equipment Request will be defined as a single piece of equipment accompanied by the minimum auxiliary equipment necessary to complete the functions for which the requesting groups have justified necessity to purchase equipment.
3. An organization that wishes to purchase equipment should provide a detailed inventory of the equipment that is already in the group’s possession along with the equipment request. This must include, but is not limited to, year of purchase, any repairs that have been made, and the current condition of the equipment.
4. The Finance Board may request an inventory report at any time, as well as any information it deems necessary.

5. All Equipment and Capital Equipment Requests should include the following documentation:
  - a. A strong justification indicating the necessity to purchase the equipment.
  - b. A justification of how this equipment will benefit the Elon University community as a whole.
  - c. Complete specification of the item(s) to be purchased.
  - d. Price quotations from two or more vendors.
  - e. Methods of providing upkeep/maintenance services and supplies consumed in the use of the equipment.
  - f. Affirmation from the organization's advisor verifying the need for the purchase of the equipment and a proposed equipment storage location.
6. Any equipment funded by the SAF is encouraged to bear the sticker "Supported by the SAF," provided by the Executive Treasurer upon request.

**Conference, Competition, and Retreat Funding:**

Organization requests to attend conferences, competitions, or retreats will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may be funded within the following guidelines:

1. Conferences
  - a. National Conferences:
    - i. 2-3 member's registration fee
    - ii. 2-3 member's lodging and travel
  - b. Regional Conferences:
    - i. 6-10 member's registration fee
    - ii. 6-10 member's lodging and travel
  - c. If a National Conference is located regionally, an organization may apply to send additional members under the guidelines for Regional Conference funding.
2. Competition
  - a. Up-to the cost of entrance for one team of Elon students
3. Retreats
  - a. Retreats will be funded on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Finance Board. In order for a retreat to be eligible for funding, the submitted request must include:
    - i. All costs associated with the retreat
    - ii. Agenda of the retreat
    - iii. Itinerary of the retreat
    - iv. Expected members in attendance
  - b. Retreat costs will only be funded for undergraduate members of the organization and their respective faculty advisor.
4. Travel and Lodging:
  - a. Airfare:
    - i. \$250.00, or the best available rate (if <\$250.00)
  - b. Gas:
    - i. \$0.10 per mile
  - c. Hotel/Lodging:
    - i. \$80.00 per night per room, or best available rate



**Non-Fundable Items:**

1. Items, events, or trips purchased prior to authorization by the Finance Board/Comptroller cannot be funded.
2. Expenses for personal or private use cannot and will not be funded and will be regarded as larceny.
3. The following cannot be funded for any expenditures from the SAF:
  - a. Alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products
    - i. On-campus events where alcohol may be present, provided there is an environment where equal access and entertainment is provided for both of-age and underage students, may be funded.
    - ii. Additional costs associated with the presence of alcohol will not be funded.
  - b. Charitable contributions/donations
  - c. Designer/design fees
  - d. Fees associated with the production of products that may generate revenue for an organization's cash index
  - e. Fundraisers or any items that generate revenue for the organization's cash index
    - i. Events that are considered charitable fundraisers may request only for on-campus space fees from the SAF.
  - f. Jewelry, personal items, or other body decorations
  - g. Late fees/expediting charges/penalties of any types
  - h. Loans (Outside of the Student Loan Program)
  - i. Plaques, trophies, prizes, gifts
    - i. Gifts for speakers will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
    - ii. Gifts for individual student members will not be funded by SAFs.
  - j. Scholarships/awards
    - i. With the exception of Article IV of the SGA Senate Bylaws.

## Finance Board Decision Criteria and Organization Appeal Process

### Funding Decisions:

The Finance Board is responsible for funding events for the undergraduate student body. All student groups should keep in mind that funding is limited and not all event requests will be funded. The Finance Board will consider funding for events that are open to all undergraduate students at Elon University and do not appear to be excessive in nature. The Finance Board will consider the following factors to determine an events benefit and priority to the undergraduate student body:

1. Student appeal
2. Experiential value (e.g. educational, cultural, awareness, entertainment)
3. Correlation to the university or student organization mission statement
4. Strength of promotional plan
5. Anticipated attendance
6. Co-sponsorship
7. Inclusivity
8. Presentation to the Finance Board (if requested)
9. Completeness of Event Request
10. Submission of Event Request in accordance with deadlines
11. Group participation in event planning
12. Spending report history

Events may be fully funded, partially funded, or not funded. Any organization that requests funding for an event and receives less-than-full funding will be provided with the Finance Board's rationale for its decision. Allocation decisions of the Finance Board will be communicated electronically within two business day of the Finance Board's decision. A violation of this clause is only grounds for an appeal when such a delay has specifically impacted the request. If the Finance Board is unable to fully fund the request within the budget and the organization states that everything in the request is necessary for the event to remain successful, then the event will not be funded. The Finance Board may reduce allocations based on any information given during the presentation or request. Once an event has been funded, an organization cannot request additional funds from the Finance Board for that event. ***The total amount to be reimbursed may never exceed the amount allocated by the Finance Board.***

### Spending Reports:

The Finance Board requires every organization that receives funding to provide a detailed spending report no later than one month after the event concluded. Event spending reports must include the following:

1. A completed Phoenix Connect Payment Request Form.
2. A detailed accounting for all expenditures, including itemized receipts.
3. An explanation to any budget line item spending variance of 10.00% or more.
4. Advertising samples.
5. Any additional information requested by the Finance Board or the Executive Treasurer.

The Executive Treasurer will review all Event spending reports and either approve, approve with an educational letter, or disapprove a report based on the following criteria:

1. Failure to submit a report by the deadline.
2. Misrepresentation of information.
3. Failure to adequately explain budget line item spending variances of 10.00% or more.
4. Failure to complete all sections of the Event Spending Report Form.
5. Failure to follow spending guidelines set forth in the Treasurer's Manual or those indicated at the time of the allocation.
6. Failure to submit all documentation.
7. Failure to use the SAF logo or phrase "Supported by SAF" on promotional materials.
8. Failure to include advertising samples with the SAF logo.

Organizations may be subjected to sanctions as a result of a disapproved spending report. Additionally, following a disapproved spending report, an organization's next request will be limited to maximum of \$1,000.00. Student organizations may not request funding while any previous spending reports are past due.

**Audits:**

The Finance Board, to determine the overall SAF utilization, reserves the right to perform random audits of organizations, accounts, membership, and events. If an audit reveals evidence of misspending of funds, the student organization may be subjected to sanctions.

**Sanctions:**

Sanctions may be imposed upon an organization for the following:

1. Failure to submit a spending report by the deadline
2. Disapproval of a spending report
3. Unauthorized spending of SAF funds
4. Spending which violates any clause of this Treasurer's Manual
5. Inappropriate storage or record-keeping of equipment, costumes, or props
6. Falsifying information on any submissions to the Finance Board

Sanctions that may be implemented upon an organization include but are not limited to:

1. Loss of eligibility to request funding for a specified time period
2. Requirement to co-sponsor events for a specified time period or number of events
3. Required weekly meetings with the Executive Treasurer or Board liaison
4. Referral to the Office of Student Life for organization status review
5. Referral to the Office of Student Conduct
6. For annual budgets, required submissions of monthly spending reports

All sanctions with specified time periods will be imposed from spending report due dates. Sanctions imposed upon organizations will be detailed and outlined in a written memorandum to the organization president, treasurer, and faculty advisor. Appeals on sanctions may be submitted on any decision made by the Finance Board or Executive Treasurer. Appeals should follow the guidelines set forth in the Appealing a Decision section of this Treasurer's Manual.

### **Appealing a Decision:**

The following appeals process will allow student organizations to request that decisions made by the Finance Board be reconsidered. An appeal may only be based upon the following criteria:

1. Established policies and procedures were not followed.
2. The funding allocation decision was arbitrary or capricious.
3. The severity of imposed sanctions was unnecessarily harsh in nature compared to the severity of the infraction.

The fact that the Finance Board did not fund a request in its entirety does not in itself constitute grounds for an appeal.

If an organization chooses to appeal a decision rendered by the Finance Board, they must submit a written appeal request to the Student Body President within seven **business** days of funding decision notification. The written appeal should include the following, when applicable:

1. The request for which the decision was made, along with all supporting materials.
2. The funding decision.
3. The allocation and spending workbook.
4. The Spending report submitted.
5. The sanction decision.
6. Any other memorandums from the Finance Board related to the matter.
7. The criteria on which the appeal is based, noting the specific policies within the Treasurer's Manual that were violated.

The President of SGA will receive the appeal and determine if the appeal has merit based on the aforementioned criteria. An appeal that has been found to have merit will be considered by the Appeals Board within five business days of receipt. The Appeals Board will consist of the following members:

1. SGA Executive Treasurer
2. SGA Executive President
3. SGA Executive Vice-President
4. SGA Executive Secretary
5. Designated Appeals Board Member (Appointed by the President of SGA)

In the event that SGA is the appealing organization, the Vice President of Student Life, or a designee, will make the decision on the appeal.

The Appeals Board will consider all aspects of an appeal, including but not limited to:

1. Criteria on which the appeal is based
2. Treasurer's Manual policies that were or were not followed.
3. The ability of the event to succeed without the items that were not funded, if applicable.

The Appeals Board may make one of the following decisions with a simple majority vote:

1. Uphold the original decision of the Finance Board
2. Amend the decision to allocate funding for items not originally funded
  - a. The Appeals Board may not allocate funding above the originally requested amount
3. Fully fund the event

Once a decision has been made, the Appeals Board must provide the rationale of its decision within three business days in a memorandum to the student organization, the organization's advisor, and the Finance Board. Decisions made by the Appeals Board will not have precedent on future appeals, and all appeals will be considered independently. The decision of the Appeals Board is final.

## **Additional Sources of Funding**

### **Fun Fund:**

On October 23, 2008 the Student Senate approved an endowment of \$150,000.00 to the university. This was done in order to implement a “Fun Fund” separate of other funding projects of the SGA to enhance the ability of students to produce events on campus for the entertainment of the entire student body. Fun Fund procedures may be found in the Fun Fund Manual location on the SGA website.

### **The Student Loan Program:**

Any currently enrolled undergraduate student may come to SGA for a loan through the Student Loan program. This program is designed to help students who may need assistance buying textbooks or paying for other student expenditures. A student loan may not exceed \$500.00. To receive a loan, a student must complete a Promissory Note form, an Application Form and the Pre-Loan Checklist. In completing these forms, student accept the following conditions, should the loan not be repaid in full by the due date:

1. The student shall not receive their semester grades;
2. The student shall not attend classes the following semester;
3. The student shall not receive a loan in the future;
4. The student shall not be allowed to graduate;
5. The student shall no receive their transcript until the loan is paid in full;
6. The student shall be charged a 10% late fee of the principle amount for each semester the loan goes uncollected. Should the loan be sent to collections, there will be an additional \$25.00 charge.