

Budget Committee Guidelines

Purpose: This document is to be used by the Treasurer and the Budget Committee in the execution of their job. These guidelines are not binding, but are to be used as a reference.

Article I – Structure of the Budget

What follows is a detailed description of the budget categories and procedures associated with each category. The actual structure of the budget is at the discretion of the Treasurer with approval of the Senate.

A) Operational Expenses

The money allocated for GSO operations is broken down into the following categories: GSO Office, Payroll, Accounting, and Internal GSO Functions. All of the budget lines under these categories are Executive Council items and do not require Senate approval. Senate approval is still necessary for reallocation of funds unless noted.

a. GSO Office

This category is for the purchase of general office equipment and supplies, postage, office rental equipment, telephone service and insurance policies including necessary employee liability and dishonesty insurance in addition to fire and theft insurance for the GSO office. The GSO Executive Council will have the authority to reallocate money in the subcategories as is necessary to perform GSO business, up to the total amount specified under the heading “GSO Office.”

b. Payroll

1. The GSO will pay its officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Speaker of the Senate) stipends for their services. The category Officer Stipends is designed for the purpose of paying the officers stipends. No other category should be used for this purpose.
2. The category Office Manager is to pay the GSO administrative personnel.
3. The last category under Payroll is Payroll Tax/Insurance. This is designed to pay Social Security, Disability, Workers Compensation and Unemployment for any GSO office or executive personnel.

c. Accounting

As mandated in the GSO Constitution, the GSO employs a Custodial and Disbursal (C&D) Agent to manage the GSO bank accounts and disperse funds for payment in accordance with the GSO constitution, Budget Committee Bylaws and the current GSO budget. The C&D agent also maintains financial records for the GSO. The allocation is based on the contract between the FSA and GSO.

As is mandated by the Chancellor's Guidelines, New York corporate law and both Federal and State tax law, the GSO will contract an Accountant to provide a year-end audit. The Accountant will also prepare the GSO tax return.

d. Internal GSO Functions

1. Elections

The GSO holds elections every April/May to choose new officers as well as to vote on any referenda or amendments. This category is used to print ballots, pay the Election staff, and cover any incidental expenses that might incur.

2. Meetings

The GSO provides food for appropriate functions necessary to the normal course of running the GSO.

e. GSO Sponsored Advertisements

The GSO also, from time to time, produces informational mailings, poster campaigns, and newspaper inserts, as well as supporting letter-writing campaigns to advance the interests of graduate students. This category may also be used for advertisements for the Graduate Student Lounge and GSO sponsored events.

f. The GSO website

This amount is used to pay the Webmaster.

g. Travel

This category is for the travel expenses of the members of the Executive Council and the GSO Senate, as well as other GSO members, in the course of performing their duties related to the GSO, or for travel expenses incurred during student advocacy.

h. Miscellaneous Expenses

This category is to be used for any unplanned expenses. The expense proposals will be reviewed by the Budget Committee and brought to the Senate for the vote.

B) Program Expenses

The remaining expenses are defined as Program Expenses. These are expenses that are directed at the graduate student population, campus community, and general welfare of graduate students.

a. GSO Publications

This category is to be used for the funding of the annual publication, the Survival Guide and the GSO newspaper.

1. Survival Guide

The GSO Survival Guide provides incoming graduate students with information about the services available on campus and the surrounding area. The line is divided in two subcategories: printing and editor.

In addition, the editorial staff may solicit advertisement for the Survival's Guide with a finder's fee to be determined on a year-to-year basis. They must create an advertising rate structure detailing the costs per advertisement before soliciting advertisements.

2. Newspaper Editorial Staff

The editorial staff will consist of at least one primary editor who will be responsible for the GSO newspaper publication and distribution. Additional personnel may be hired in response to any future changes in the demands of

the job as determined by the Executive Council. The exact breakup of the stipend to the editorial staff will be determined by the Executive Council.

3. Newspaper

The GSO will publish a regular newspaper of 9 issues (4 issues per semester plus a welcome to SBU issue in August). Funding for the newspaper will come from two sources. The GSO will subsidize most of the cost, and the rest will come from advertisement revenue. The Budget Committee will monitor the exact distribution of funds. This category will cover the cost of publishing the paper, the printing costs, distribution costs and the fee for invited articles. In addition, the editorial staff may solicit advertisement for the paper with a finder's fee to be determined on a year-to-year basis.

C) Contributions and Public Service

The GSO provides money and resources to a number of public service organizations and also provides several services specifically for graduate students. All of the money has to be requested by the groups in the current fiscal year (July 1-June 30).

a. Orientation

The GSO contributes funds to the Graduate School for new graduate student orientation. Also, the GSO may organize orientation events for new graduate students.

b. Faculty Staff Retreat

The GSO provides funds to the University to cover the cost of the annual retreat.

c. NYPIRG

The GSO provides funding for the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG). This money will be allocated by a referendum every four years, voted on at the time of the general GSO elections. Neither the GSO Senate nor Executive Council can withhold these funds if the referendum leads to an approval for the release of the funds, unless there is a breach of contract.

d. WUSB

The GSO subsidizes the SBU campus radio station WUSB for the subscription to Pacifica News. In return WUSB will provide free advertisement of the GSO sponsored events and programs at the Graduate Student Lounge; also, WUSB will acknowledge GSO support during their broadcasts.

e. Child Care

The Stony Brook Child Care Services, Inc. provides child-care services for graduate students. The GSO provides money to Stony Brook Child Care Services' general fund; without this subsidy, Stony Brook Child Care Services would not be able to provide care on a sliding scale, charging less to lower income students.

f. Volunteer Ambulance Corps

The Stony Brook Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc. provides free ambulance service to all persons needing medical transport on all state lands, including the University and the residence halls. The GSO provides a direct subsidy to the Ambulance Corps to help defray the cost of insurance and equipment.

g. NAGPS

The National Association for Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) provides all graduate students with an alternative to the University health insurance, a resume service, as well as various leadership-training seminars. It also acts as a clearinghouse for information on various resources available to graduate students.

h. Campus Life Awards

This category contributes to the Student Activities annual event that celebrates campus wide achievements. The Senate and the Executive Council will propose which students should be recognized at this event.

D) Program Funding

The GSO provides money and support for a wide variety of social organizations and events for the purpose of enhancing graduate students' social interaction and development. In particular, the GSO provides for Student Clubs and Organizations, General Cultural and Social Events, Speaker Series & Conferences and Student Publications.

Program funding is designed to increase social, educational and on-campus directed activities. These funds will be available to groups of graduate students who wish to provide events that are well planned, well advertised and of general interest to the entire graduate student community. Money from these categories will not be allocated for the following:

- Events that do not have a graduate student presence in attendance
- Events not open to all graduate students
- Funding for food except under an amount specified in the current GSO budget.

Funds must be requested during the fiscal year that the event will be held from the current GSO Treasurer.

Events must be advertised in English, this means that the date, time, location, sponsoring group (including the GSO), and title of the event must be in English. Other information included on the advertisement may be in any language.

In each request for funding there must exist a single individual, designated by the group requesting the funds, who will be responsible for dispersing the funds. This person shall be responsible to see that the funds are dispersed in the proper manner as detailed in the request, and that the conditions listed below are carried out as stated.

All requests for funds to be used to pay a specific individual (i.e. performers, speakers, etc.) for their services must be submitted to the GSO Treasurer prior to the event in order to receive funding for that service. Upon the Senate's approval the GSO will pay these individuals directly after the reception of the proper paperwork (a W-9 and a Services Rendered form).

E) Student Clubs and Organizations Funding

Funding will be provided as follows:

- a. Money from this category is available only to graduate student clubs and organizations recognized by the SBU Student Union and Activities Department. To be considered a graduate club 50% of the membership and the Executive council must be graduate students.
- b. The Treasurer will review requests after receipt of a properly completed Funding Request Proposal. A Funding Request Proposal shall consist of:
 1. A signed memo from the club's or organization's president to the GSO Treasurer expressing a brief description of the activity and purpose of the club, and a statement of its benefits to the graduate student community. Included in this memo must be the names of all the officers of the club organization, as well as a means of contacting these officers,
 2. An itemized budget for the current fiscal year,
 3. A current club roster,
 4. The club's constitution, with a meaningful equal opportunity clause.
- c. The maximum amount that can be allocated to any Club or Organization from this category shall not exceed a total amount stated in the current GSO budget.

F) General Cultural and Social Events

The GSO provides funding for events of interest to graduate students. In the interest of fairness these events must be open to all graduate students and widely publicized. This money is available to graduate student clubs and organizations, and graduate student event committees. Money from this category is available only to graduate student clubs and organizations recognized by the SBU Student Union and Activities Department and committees of greater than three graduate students formed for the purpose of planning and organizing an event. Each event must have a chairperson who is responsible for coordinating and running the event. The chairperson must be the person designated to be responsible for the event.

Graduate students cannot be charged to attend the event more than the members of the organizing club. The Treasurer reviews requests for funding provided under this category, after receipt of a completed funding request proposal.

G) Speaker Series/Conferences

The GSO provides support for speakers and conferences of general interest to the entire graduate student community.

H) Student Publications

The GSO provides support for graduate student run literary or general interest publications.

I) Departmental Allocation

The GSO encourages departmental activities and programming. Each graduate department may use their allocation for whatever purposes their graduate students as a whole may decide, provided that benefits of these funds are available to all members of the department. Funding to each department will be provided up to a maximum rate of \$5.00 per full time student plus \$1.00 per part time student with a "CAP" of a \$1,000 per department. The Treasurer will process these requests.

J) RAP (Resource Access Project)

One of the most important and most accessible sources of funding from the GSO is provided through the Resource Access Project (RAP). The GSO RAP program is meant to provide small support to allow graduate students to attend conferences or workshops that will help them advance their careers.

K) The Graduate Student Lounge

The GSO and the FSA jointly operate the Graduate Student Lounge. The GSL shall be managed as outlined in the Lounge Advisory Committee Guidelines, and shall be overseen by the Lounge Committee and the C&D Agent (from FSA) for the GSO.

L) Graduate Bash

The GSO will sponsor several graduate student events during the academic year. The purpose of these events will be to provide a regular event/occasion when students from different departments can come together and socialize.

M) Spring Fest

The GSO sponsors an outdoor festival during May.

N) Cabaret Club

The Cabaret is an economically independent unit and its expenses should never be greater than its income. Since it is a graduate student group, it will run its finances through the GSO Budget. The Treasurer of the Cabaret will meet with the GSO Treasurer at least once a semester to discuss the Cabaret Budget issues.

O) Other clubs

Any club may run their finances through the GSO.

- 1) The Chancellor's Guidelines require that 'Excessive surpluses in student fees shall not be allowed to accumulate'. Within the Chancellor's Guidelines, we may establish reserves for long-range programs.
- 2) The Chancellor's Guidelines require that funds from part 1) must be invested in such a way as to preserve the principal. Such investments include savings accounts and certificates of deposit.
- 3) The GSO, from time to time, makes capital purchases, and these assets are depreciated in manner specified by its accountant. When a capital asset is sold, the revenue from such a sale is listed as miscellaneous revenue, and funds are administered as with cash surpluses from part 1) and invested as in part 2).
- 4) The GSO may spend any funds covered in this article. A proposal for such expenditure may originate from any member of the GSO or from the C&D Agent. Such a proposal must be brought to the Executive Council and then is referred to the Budget Committee for recommendation. Such a proposal is then included in the Budget Committee Report for consideration by the GSO Senate. Such funds may be used to justify increases in budget categories above the level of expected revenues or may be committed directly to a proposed project.

Article III – Responsibilities of the Treasurer

Other responsibilities of the Treasurer are to apply for RAP grants at the beginning of the Spring semester and to have regular meetings with the C&D agent.
