

# **SPENDING YOUR S&A FEE ALLOCATION**

*A Guide for Advisors, Staff, and Students*

*Washington State University*

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## Services and Activities Fees Expenditure Guidelines

Each year, the Services and Activities Fee Committee proposes and the Board of Regents approves program priorities and corresponding budget levels for University organizations funded by Services and Activities Fees (S&A Fees). These fees are collected from students at registration and are allocated to budgets either as direct allocations from the Board of Regents or indirectly through other organizations. In either case, you, as a student officer or student adviser, are responsible for spending the money in an acceptable and appropriate manner, following state of Washington and Washington State University guidelines.

This brochure provides you with an overview of the more important rules that apply to S&A Fee expenditures. The first part provides general guidelines to help you determine how to spend and account for S&A Fee monies. The second part provides answers to commonly-asked questions.

### General Rules For Spending

There are two major points to remember when spending S&A Fees:

- First, S&A Fees are collected from students for the express purpose of funding nonacademic student activities and programs.
- Second, S&A Fees are considered public monies of the state of Washington. As such, each purchase from your organization's account must be allowable, authorized, recorded, and appropriately used.

It is not difficult to comply with University and state requirements if you follow these guidelines:

- You must discuss a planned purchase with your adviser *prior* to buying the item or service. He or she can tell you what is allowable and appropriate or direct you to a University office for resolution of questions.
- Individual students cannot unilaterally make purchases. *Without prior approval, a student cannot make a purchase with personal money and seek reimbursement later.*
- The proper paperwork, signed in advance, is the vehicle for the purchase.
- All of the University paperwork must be completed and signed by your adviser *before* the purchase can occur.
- Not even your adviser can sign contracts which obligate the University. Contracts must be signed by a University official with delegated authority.
- Purchases supported by S&A Fee monies must conform to your organization's approved objectives and expenditure plan.

## **General Rules For Spending (cont.)**

- All expenditures of state of Washington money, including S&A Fee money, must be recorded on University forms which are retained for a specified period by the organization's adviser or officers. An auditor should be able to determine exactly how your organization spent its S&A Fee allocation. Your adviser knows which forms to complete and how long to keep them.

Proper stewardship of your allocated share of S&A Fee monies will enhance your chances of continued funding by the S&A Fee Committee and the Board of Regents.

## **Commonly-Asked Questions**

The answers to the following questions provide guidelines for management of your organization's allocation. If you have additional questions regarding any aspect of managing S&A Fee monies, do not hesitate to contact the responsible administrative office, e.g., Business Services/Controller's Office, Office of Student Affairs, Office of Purchasing Services, and the University's Internal Audit Office.

The following answers include frequent references to the University's *Business Policies and Procedures Manual (BPPM)*. You can find a copy of the *BPPM* online at:

<http://www.wsu.edu/~forms/manuals.html>

### **AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURES**

#### **How are expenditures approved?**

Each expenditure from an organization's account must be authorized in writing by the adviser *before the purchase*. Usually the adviser shows approval by signing the appropriate University form, e.g., Interdepartmental Requisition and Invoice (IRI), Departmental Requisition.

#### **Who can be an adviser?**

Generally, an adviser is a staff or faculty member who is affiliated with the University department overseeing the organization that receives S&A Fees.

#### **How does the adviser get authorization to sign expenditure documents?**

If the organization is affiliated with the adviser's department, the authorization comes from the adviser's department chair. If the organization is unrelated to the adviser's employing department, expenditure authorization comes from a University administrator who oversees the organization. See *BPPM 70.02* to find out how expenditure authority is delegated.

## **SPENDING**

### **What does an advisor check for when asked to authorize an expenditure from an S&A Fee account?**

The advisor makes sure that:

- The item is an allowable and legal purchase. The Division of Purchasing Services is available to answer questions. (*BPPM 70.03*)
- There is enough money in the account to pay for the item.
- Purchase of the item conforms to the group's approved objectives and expenditure plan.
- The purchase is supported by a consensus or majority of group members.
- The purchase is reasonable and prudent.
- The purchase does not directly or indirectly result in personal material benefit to any individual.
- The item will be used in a manner that promotes and conforms to overall University missions.

### **What are the rules for buying food with S&A Fee money?**

The cost of restaurant meals may not exceed rate limits specified in *BPPM 95.19*.

Food may be purchased in the following situations:

- Meals may be purchased while on official travel status in accordance with University travel regulations. (*BPPM 95.13*)
- Meals may be purchased for a lecturer or entertainer if food costs are specified in the contract as part of the payment for the performance.
- Meals may be purchased for students who take a speaker/entertainer dining out if the students are involved in the program organization. Meals may be purchased for no more than three such students per event. Likewise, meals may be purchased for an organization's adviser.
- Banquet meals may be purchased for student(s) receiving awards at an award banquet.
- Banquet meals may be purchased for banquet guest speakers.

## **SPENDING (cont.)**

### **Rules for buying food with S&A Fee money? (cont.)**

- Banquet meals may be purchased for individuals required to attend a banquet or who are directly involved in the banquet program.
- Light refreshments may be purchased for consumption at approved student programs in conformance with *BPPM* 70.31. Light refreshments include nonalcoholic beverages and edible items commonly served between meals, e.g., coffee, soft drinks, doughnuts, sweet rolls, fruit, cheese. (*BPPM* 70.31)
- Meals may be purchased for student meetings in conformance with *BPPM* 70.31.

### **May S&A Fee money be used to pay for food for a banquet?**

S&A Fee monies may be used to host an approved event where food is served. An example would be a banquet where participants pay for the food or purchase tickets to attend. In such cases, the sponsoring organization must submit a budget to the adviser. The plan should have a reasonable likelihood of success before being authorized by an adviser.

### **How should proceeds from an event be handled?**

It depends upon the organization conducting the event.

If the organization is funded by S&A Fee monies, all proceeds from the event must be treated as S&A Fee money and are to be placed in an S&A Fee account.

If the organization conducting the event receives S&A Fee monies as a donation from another organization, proceeds from the event are placed in the conducting organization's account, usually in program 17C. Such an arrangement is usually termed a "cosponsorship."

### **Is it acceptable for my organization to use S&A Fee money to buy decorations?**

S&A Fee monies may be used to purchase decorations for a banquet, dance, or other approved event. The cost of the decorations must be reasonable and appropriate for the event.

### **May I use S&A Fee money to purchase door prizes?**

Door prizes may be purchased with S&A Fee money and given away at an approved student event if an entry fee is charged and all promotional materials indicate that door prizes will be awarded. If an entry fee is not charged, the organization may award door prizes if the value of each prize does not exceed nominal monetary value, i.e., \$50.

## **SPENDING (cont.)**

### **Can someone from my organization win and keep a door prize if my organization conducts the event?**

Those individuals who arrange the event are not eligible to receive door prizes. A member of the sponsoring organization could be eligible to win if he or she did not coordinate or assist with event arrangements.

### **May I use S&A Fee money to purchase items to be given away, e.g., flowers, birthday cakes, or awards?**

Generally not. Purchasing flowers or cakes to be given away on special occasions, e.g., funerals and birthdays, is prohibited.

On the other hand, awards such as engraved plaques, trophy cups, and monogrammed clothing *may* be given away if the following criteria are met:

- The award must be personal to the recipient, having intrinsic sentimental or personal value, and
- The award must be reasonable under the circumstances and should not have more than nominal monetary value (less than \$50), and
- The award must be presented for some sort of participation or achievement.

### **Does the S&A Fee Committee approve allocations to large organizations intending the monies to be spent on behalf of smaller subsidiary groups?**

This is a common practice. The expenditure plans of larger (umbrella) organizations must include the details of planned expenditures on behalf of smaller groups. The subsidiary groups must be approved WSU organizations.

### **May I use S&A Fee money to pay the wages of a person employed by an approved Faculty/Student/Alumni group?**

S&A Fee money may be used for wages if the wages have been specifically itemized in the organization's request and approved by the S&A Fee Committee. S&A Fee money cannot be used to pay wages for purposes unrelated to the group's approved goals.

### **How do I purchase goods and services from University vendor departments?**

*Prior to the purchase* prepare an Interdepartmental Requisition and Invoice (IRI) form. Submit the completed and approved form to the vendor department. (BPPM 70.05)

Some larger University vendor departments have other methods. For example, a purchase from Central Stores may be processed by using the Stores Ordering computer application. (BPPM 70.35)

## **SPENDING (cont.)**

### **Do I have to use the University's printing plant or may I get my printing done by a private outside printer?**

Most University printing jobs are done by University Printing and Publications. Emergency jobs and jobs originating at non-Pullman WSU locations can be exceptions. (*BPPM 80.05*)

### **How do I purchase items from non-WSU vendors?**

The University provides several different methods for making purchases from non-WSU vendors, most requiring that the vendor accepts a WSU Purchase Order. As such, you should initially verify that the vendor accepts a Purchase Order.

- You may use a Departmental Requisition form for any purchase. (*BPPM 70.10*)
- To make a purchase of less than \$2500, you may use the computerized Department Order. (*BPPM 70.07*)

Refer to *BPPM 70.01* for a more comprehensive orientation to University purchasing methods.

### **When does the state require that a purchase be bid?**

Purchases over \$2500 in value are subject to competitive bidding. If Purchasing believes a better price will result, purchases under \$2500 may be bid. (*BPPM 70.13*) Purchases exceeding \$35,000 must be processed as sealed bids.

### **How do I hire a performing artist or speaker?**

At WSU Pullman, contact the Office of Campus Involvement in CUB 337 at least five to six weeks in advance. They will provide you with the appropriate forms and instructions. For ASWSU-sponsored events, a contract must be completed and signed by both parties at least four weeks before the event. At other WSU locations, contact the campus student services office well in advance of the event.

Only delegated WSU officials may sign a WSU contract for the University. (*BPPM 10.11*)

To hire a speaker follow procedures included in *BPPM 95.25*.

### **How do I document and pay for student travel?**

Before departure, a Travel Authority (TA) must be completed and signed. (*BPPM 95.05*)

Student travel, with minor exceptions, is handled the same as staff and faculty travel. See *BPPM* chapter 95 for travel information. Refer to *BPPM 95.13* for details regarding student travel.

## ACCOUNTING

### **How do I keep track of my organization's account?**

One option is to create a spreadsheet and keep it updated with expenditures, allocations, and revenues. Another option is to use the filing method described in *BPPM* 30.06. Regularly monitor the status of your organization's account by reconciling the spreadsheet or file folders with the online Account Balances/ Detail Application. (*BPPM* 30.07)

### **What happens if I overspend my account?**

S&A Fee accounts are *not* to be overspent. You must carefully monitor your expenditures and allocations.

### **Is it a problem if I mix my organization's S&A Fee allocation with money from other sources?**

S&A Fee monies *must not* be commingled with other types of funds. The Controller's Office sets up special accounts for S&A Fees. (*BPPM* 30.05)

### **When an outside organization wants to assist with the financial support of a fund-raising event, how do I manage the donated monies?**

Do not place the money in your S&A Fee account. Deposit the money in a discretionary account or a Faculty, Student, and Alumni (FS&A) account. Make expenditures for the fund-raising event directly from that account.

If an FS&A or discretionary account is not available, have the outside organization make the purchase and donate the purchased item or service directly to the organization.

### **Can I put my group's money in a private bank?**

This is not done. All University groups are to keep their funds in University accounts.

## EQUIPMENT

### **Who keeps track of property and equipment acquired with S&A Fee money?**

Items purchased with S&A Fee money belong to WSU and the state of Washington. Equipment costing more than \$5000 and certain "small and attractive" items costing less than \$5000 are inventoried by the Controller's Office. The Property Inventory Section sends out an inventory tag for each equipment item. (*BPPM* 20.50) You may inventory and track other items of lesser value by using the Departmental Inventory System. (*BPPM* 20.51)

## **EQUIPMENT (cont.)**

### **May I use equipment purchased with S&A Fee money for private purposes?**

The University does not loan out equipment for personal use. Under certain circumstances you may rent an item. (*BPPM* 20.35, 20.37, 20.40)

### **How do I dispose of an equipment item when it is no longer needed?**

You can sell or give it to another University department or to Surplus Stores. You cannot give or sell it to a private individual or a non-WSU organization. Surplus Stores handles all off-campus disposals for the University. Disposals and movement of equipment are recorded on Inventory Control Report forms. (*BPPM* 20.50, 20.76, 20.80)

## **SUPPLIES**

### **What should be done with an organization's office supplies at the end of the academic year?**

Usually, the group's adviser takes custody of any remaining supplies, storing them in a secure location for use in the following year.

## **FOLLOWING THE RULES**

### **What happens if we do not comply with WSU and state of Washington rules and regulations?**

University disciplinary processes apply to breaches of University policies. Also, you could jeopardize your organization's continued funding from S&A Fees.

### **How would anyone know if my organization did something wrong?**

The records of all University organizations are subject to audit by the University's Internal Auditor and State Auditors. (*BPPM* 30.12) In addition, there are checks and balances in the University's accounting system.

When your organization submits its next request for S&A Fees, the committee considers how the last allocation was managed. A well-documented history of prudent expenditures will improve your organization's chances for continued funding.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

### **How do we keep track of monies paid to participate in or to enter fund-raising events?**

Most organizations use numbered tickets. You record the beginning and ending ticket numbers in a log. The receipts from the event should match the number of tickets sold. The log and any unsold tickets are to be retained by your organization for audit purposes.

## **RECORD KEEPING (cont.)**

### **What are the rules for retaining the expenditure records of my organization?**

Refer to the All-University Records Retention Schedule in *BPPM* 90.01. This retention schedule lists required minimum retention periods for University expenditure records. Contact the Manager of Procedures and Forms with questions about records retention.

## **CONCLUSION**

Services and Activities Fee revenues are collected and distributed in order to maintain and improve the quality of student experience at WSU. You are encouraged to spend and account for your monies in a wise and prudent manner. If you need help, feel free to contact any of the administrative offices mentioned in this brochure.