



Elon University
Student Government Association
Finance Bylaws
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Article I: Funding Sources

A. Annual Student Activity Fees

- a. Student Activity Fees (SAF) are set at the discretion of the Elon University Board of Trustees. SAF are collected from all undergraduate Elon University students and are administered under the jurisdiction of the Vice President for Student Life.
- b. The Vice President for Student Life allocates a fixed amount of the SAF that are to be distributed at the discretion of the SGA Finance Board and/or Senate during the following academic year under the advisement of the Student Government Association (SGA) Advisor(s).
- c. The Finance Board has been designated as the advisory/approval committee for allocating funds (up to \$5,000 per request) from this fixed amount of the SAF.
- d. For events within a quarter budget exceeding \$5,000 the Finance Board must review the request and make a recommendation that will then be voted on by the SGA Senate.
- e. The SGA Senate must approve any changes to the Finance Bylaws.

B. Legislation

- a. All proposed legislation which authorizes funds for use from the SGA Reserve Fund should be presented to the Finance Board before being presented to the SGA Senate.
- b. A formal recommendation from the Finance Board will be given and presented by the VP of Finance to the SGA Senate with the proposal of the legislation.

C. Student Activity Fee Funding Vision

- a. To allocate the SAFs in a way that maximizes the benefit for all undergraduate students, the SGA Finance Board seeks to promote an environment where:
 - i. Funds are primarily used for student activities.
 - ii. Events are inclusive and open in nature.
 - iii. Collaboration between student organizations is encouraged and emphasized in the interest of promoting campus unity.
 - iv. Events catering to large groups of students are balanced with those which cater to a smaller number.
 - v. Funding shall be spread out among a variety of organizations to ensure a wide array of events in all facets of campus life.
- b. Students should keep in mind that funding is limited, not all requests will be funded, and those approved may not be fully funded.

D. Acorn Fund

- a. While there are many mechanisms of monetary support for students interested in undergraduate research and planning/implementing events for the student body, Student Government Association felt there was a need to provide financial support to individuals pursuing other projects and ideas. On May 1, 2014, SGA approved an endowment of \$175,000 for the creation of the Acorn Fund.
- b. The annual Acorn Fund is designated to financially support two Elon students for an original, innovative, and feasible invention; a for-profit or non-profit company/organization; or other initiatives with the potential for positive impact beyond the classroom, aligning with SGA's Executive Priorities.

- c. Winning projects/ideas will be awarded based on the viability and feasibility of their concepts, which includes but is not limited to the use of other campus initiatives that offer guidance and support to their ideas, projects, and/or ventures, which provides business and professional counseling and support to student-led ventures and projects.
- E. Micro-Grants
 - a. In May 2009, the Student Government Association created a \$150,000 endowment to establish the SGA Fun Fund. In 2024, SGA voted to repurpose that fund to support ad hoc micro-grants for student applicants who have smaller requests to advance their innovative ideas. The Fun Fund has been renamed to the Micro-Grants Fund and now falls under the Acorn Fund's stipulations regarding the dispersion of funds.
 - b. The Finance Board is the appointed selection committee for the Acorn Fund and, in turn, the ad hoc micro-grants that fall under it.

Article II: The Finance Board

- A. Membership
 - a. All members of the Finance Board must meet the GPA requirement of 2.7 or higher and be in good student conduct standing.
 - b. The Finance Board shall be made up of ten members comprised of four (4) elected SGA Class Treasurers, four (4) non-senator representatives, the Assistant Comptroller, and the Vice President of Finance (VPF).
 - c. The voting members of the Finance Board are as follows:
 - i. SGA First-Year Class Treasurer
 - ii. SGA Sophomore Class Treasurer
 - iii. SGA Junior Class Treasurer
 - iv. SGA Senior Class Treasurer
 - v. Four Non-Senator Representatives
 - vi. Assistant Comptroller of the Finance Board
 - d. The four (4) non-Senator Finance Board representatives will be elected by the student body during the SGA general election in the spring semester.
 - e. In the event of a vacancy, the VP of Finance will recommend an individual to the Executive President to be appointed to the Finance Board. The President will present the nominee to the Senate for review and confirmation.
 - f. Members of the Finance Board fall under the jurisdiction of the SGA. If any member of the Finance Board neglects their duties, has excessive absences, or violates the Finance Bylaws, they are subject to the authority and disciplinary action of the SGA Review Board.
- B. SGA Vice President of Finance (VPF)
 - a. The VPF serves as the Finance Board Comptroller and as a non-voting member.
 - b. The VPF is responsible for:
 - i. all duties assigned in the SGA Constitution and Executive Bylaws; and
 - ii. facilitating the weekly Finance Board meetings;

C. Assistant Comptroller

- a. The Assistant Comptroller of the Finance Board will be appointed at the discretion of the VP of Finance with subsequent approval by the Senate.
- b. The Assistant Comptroller is responsible for:
 - i. Conducting meetings and rendering decisions in the absence of the VPF;
 - ii. Sending follow-up emails to each organization regarding the decisions made by the Finance Board following each meeting;
 - iii. updating the spreadsheet with the appropriate pricing and necessary information;
 - iv. Logging the votes for each funding request;
 - v. Updating inventory/equipment spreadsheet; and
 - vi. assisting with other duties at the discretion of the Vice President of Finance regarding individual budget requests.
 - vii. Organizing and executing the Acorn Fund and Micro-Grant award processes.

D. Finance Board Meetings

- a. The Finance Board typically meets at least once a week between the first and last days of class in the fall and spring semesters to vote on budget requests. The Finance Board will not meet from Reading Day through exams. They may meet during other breaks, J-Term and Summer, as deemed necessary by the Vice President of Finance.
- b. Quorum must be met to run a Finance Board meeting and is set as five (5) out of the nine (9) voting members. A simple majority vote is required for a funding request to pass. In the case of a tie, the Vice President of Finance retains the right to vote.
- c. The board deliberations shall be closed, but all records of the votes shall be entered into the Senate Records.
- d. The board may invite a student(s) or an organization's representative(s) to deliver a proposal or be present during deliberation of an allocation to provide additional information on the organization's behalf.
- e. Attendance is mandatory for all Finance Board members. Up to three (3) absences per year are permitted but surpassing five (5) will be considered excessive and will require a meeting with the Vice President of Finance and the Finance Board Advisor, and the member may be removed from the Board at their discretion.

Article III: Eligibility for Funding and Budgets

All SAF funded events must adhere to the University's nondiscrimination statement, the Student Handbook, the Honor Code, and the University's Code of Conduct.

A. Funding for SGA

- a. SGA may use a portion of their annual SAF allocation for the following expenses:
 - i. Executive Stipends
 - ii. Administrative fees and operational expenses
 - iii. Homecoming
 - iv. The Dr. Leo M. Lambert Awards
 - v. Administrative Professional Day Recognition

- vi. The Academic Opportunities Fair
- vii. Senate Dinner
- viii. SGA Retreat
- ix. Organizational education and bonding events not to exceed \$2,500 per fiscal year
- x. SGA One Phoenix Committee All-Student Tailgates
- xi. Fireside Chats and Town Halls
- xii. All SGA events outside of those listed above are required to adhere to the Finance Bylaws

B. Undergraduate Student Organizations

- a. Only undergraduate student organizations recognized by and in good standing with Student Involvement and the Office of Student Conduct are eligible to receive SAF funding.
- b. Organizations which have requirements for membership including tryouts, auditions, receipt of an invitation for membership (bid), or academic criteria, are eligible for funding for events which are open and inclusive to the entire student body. Examples of such events include tailgates, speaker events, social events, and educational programs.
- c. Travel requests for competition or conference attendance are eligible for funding, but only if organization membership and the travel group selection process are open to all students, with the exception of leadership conferences. Such requests will be considered on a demonstrated need basis.
- d. Organizations must have completed all obligations directed and required by the VP of Finance and/or Finance Board for previous events to be considered for additional funding.
- e. Several organizational clusters receive SAF funding at the discretion of the Vice President for Student Life prior to the allocation of SGA's funding for distribution. For this reason, organizations in the following categories are not eligible to receive operational funding from the Finance Board:
 - i. Campus Programs
 - ii. Club Sports
 - iii. Honorary Organizations
 - iv. Media Organizations

C. Individuals

- a. Individual undergraduate students are eligible to apply for SAF funding, adhering to the same guidelines as organization requests.
- b. Individuals may not submit requests on behalf of any organization that is not in good standing or is ineligible to receive SAF funding.
- c. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Finance Board.
- d. Individual undergraduate students are also eligible to apply for Acorn Fund and Micro-Grant awards.
- e. Graduate students are not eligible to receive SGA's SAF funding.

Article IV: Budget Decision Criteria

A. Quarterly Budget Requests

- a. All SGA funding is allocated on a quarterly basis upon submission of a request to PhoenixCONNECT. A budget request must include all required fields, attestations, and approvals.

B. Review and Approval Allowances

- a. The following review and approval guidelines are in effect for total cost of any budget request:
 - i. For funding requests up to \$4,999.99 the Finance Board makes the decision to approve or deny the request.
 - ii. For events within a quarter budget exceeding \$5,000 the Finance Board must review the request and make a recommendation that will then be voted on by the SGA Senate.
 1. The request requires a simple majority vote by the SGA Senate to pass and be approved.
 2. The SGA Senate can pass the request with conditions.

C. Funding Decisions and Requirements

- a. The Finance Board is responsible for funding events for the undergraduate student body. All students/groups should keep in mind that funding is limited and not all requests will be funded.
- b. The Finance Board will consider funding events that are open to all undergraduate students at Elon University and do not appear to be excessive in nature.
- c. The Finance Board will consider the following factors to determine an event's benefit to the undergraduate student body:
 - i. student appeal;
 - ii. experiential value (e.g. educational, cultural, entertainment);
 - iii. correlation to the university or student organization mission statement;
 - iv. strength of promotional plan;
 - v. anticipated attendance;
 - vi. co-sponsorship;
 - vii. inclusivity;
 - viii. presentation to the Finance Board (if requested);
 - ix. thorough completion of a budget request in accordance with deadlines; and
 - x. previous attendance/participation.
- d. Events may be fully funded, partially funded, or not funded. The Finance Board may reduce allocations based on any information given in the request or during the presentation.
- e. 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.
- f. Allocation decisions of the Finance Board are generally communicated electronically within one week of the Finance Board's decision.

- g. The total amount to be reimbursed may not exceed the amount allocated by the Finance Board. Groups and individuals whose expenses exceed the allocation are responsible for any overages.
- h. Funds are only able to be spent on the items or services initially approved through budget requests, regardless of leftover funds.
- i. If any expenditure exceeds what was approved, both in items and monetary terms, it is the responsibility of the organization to cover the additional costs.
- j. All events funded by SGA must be registered and listed on the Events page on PhoenixCONNECT.
- k. Marketing (including PhoenixCONNECT) must bear the statement “funded by SGA” visibly and include the SGA logo on materials including, but not limited to fliers, programs, tickets, and social media posts.
- l. The Finance Board 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.
- m. Organizations are required to complete and submit a post-event form within 1 week following the conclusion of any funded event. The post-event form must include a summary of the event, attendance data, and an itemized list of actual expenditures. Failure to submit the form by the deadline may result in a suspension of future funding requests until compliance is achieved.
- n. All SGA-funded events must use Phoenix Card readers or the PhoenixCONNECT Event Check-in app for attendance tracking and submit data in the post-event form. Failure to comply may result in future funding restrictions. Exceptions require prior approval from the Vice President of Finance.

D. Deadlines

- a. Any individual/organization may petition the VP of Finance to submit a budget 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 PhoenixCONNECT budget request.
- b. It is the responsibility of the student organization to seek out deadlines and request information. Members of the Finance Board and the VP of Finance are not responsible for contacting vendors or service providers on behalf of student organizations.
- c. The specific dates for each quarter shall be determined by the Vice President of Finance, and approved by the Finance Board based on the Undergraduate Academic Calendar for that academic year, and publicly announced.
- d. Allocation decisions shall be made by the Finance Board the quarter before an order must be placed/purchased and/or the event is scheduled to be held so as to require organizations to plan ahead and ensure they have sufficient time to make purchases and contracts.

- e. Submission Timeline:
 - i. Quarter 1:
 - 1. June 1st - October 31st
 - 2. Requests for Q1 spending/events must be submitted by the deadline in Q4
 - ii. Quarter 2:
 - 1. November 1st - January 31st
 - 2. Requests for Q2 spending/events must be submitted by the deadline in Q1
 - iii. Quarter 3:
 - 1. February 1st- March 31st
 - 2. Requests for Q3 spending/events must be submitted by the deadline in Q2
 - iv. Quarter 4:
 - 1. April 1st - May 31st
 - 2. Requests for Q4 spending/events must be submitted by the deadline in Q3
 - 3. Summer conferences shall be requested in alignment with Q4 spending
 - v. If not submitted within the timeframe, please provide an explanation as to why it is late within the description.

Article V: Activity Expense Guidelines

- A. Limitations on types of events/activities: SGA and the Finance Board impose the following limitations on the use of SAF for some types of activities.
 - a. Service Events
 - i. It is encouraged that community service events funded by SAF work with local and state partners.
 - ii. Direct financial donations/contributions to charitable or philanthropic groups will not be funded by SAF.
 - b. Political Events/Activities/Services
 - i. Political events, activities, and services may only be funded when they are educational in nature.
 - ii. Events that support the campaign of an individual candidate or party for a political office cannot be funded.
 - iii. All requests for political events must adhere to University policies and guidelines regarding speakers on campus.
 - c. Religious Events and Activities
 - i. Religious events and activities funded by SAF must be open and inclusive in nature.
 - ii. Events may not discriminate based on a student's religious beliefs.

- d. Conferences
 - i. Requests to attend conferences will be reviewed with all standard information, an anticipated student-to-faculty attendance ratio, and a statement of clear outcomes to be achieved during the experience.
 - ii. Conferences must be for the educational and experiential purposes of the organization.
 - iii. SGA can allocate funding for one conference per organization per semester.
- e. Competitions
 - i. Requests to attend competitions will be reviewed with all standard information, including an anticipated student-to-faculty attendance ratio and a statement of clear outcomes to be achieved during the experience.
 - ii. Competitions must align with the organization's mission and serve its educational and experiential purposes.
 - iii. SGA can allocate funding for competitions, with no limit on the number of competitions an organization can request funding for, provided they are directly related to its mission.
- f. Retreats
 - i. Requests for retreats must include all standard information and demonstrate how the experience will contribute to organizational development, collaboration, or team-building.
 - ii. Retreats must align with the organization's mission and objectives.
 - iii. SGA can allocate funding for one retreat per organization per semester.
- g. Off-Campus Events
 - i. Requests for off-campus events must include all standard information and demonstrate how the event aligns with the organization's mission and objectives.
 - ii. These events should provide educational, experiential, or community engagement benefits.
 - iii. SGA can allocate funding for off-campus events, with no limit on the number of off-campus events an organization can request funding for, provided they are directly connected to its mission.
- h. Tailgates
 - i. Student organization-sponsored tailgates can be funded at the discretion of the Finance Board, dependent upon the organization's private funding capabilities.
 - ii. Tailgates can only be funded if they are open and inclusive in nature.
 - iii. Organizations may receive up to \$500 per tailgate.
- i. Equipment Rentals
 - i. Equipment rentals for events may be funded if the venue equipment cannot meet the expectations of the planned event and the requestor has explored all on-campus options for obtaining adequate equipment.

- ii. Essential materials and equipment may be funded if they are integral to an organization's events or activities, including but not limited to scientific, engineering, and culinary supplies. Items must directly contribute to the execution of the event.

B. Fundable Items and Spending Caps

While the best price available should always be sought after, the Finance Board has instituted caps for frequently requested items:

a. Giveaways/Gifts/Prizes

- i. Giveaways/gifts/prizes solely intended for student organization members will not be funded by SAF.
- ii. Giveaways are considered promotional items and distributed without cost with no expectation that the item be returned to the organization.

- 1. Printed materials: \$300 per event

iii. Prizes

- 1. Prizes are items that can be won during an event sponsored by an organization (i.e. trivia, or bingo).
- 2. Prizes can be requested for events with an expected attendance that is larger than an average meeting and are integral to the purpose of the event.
- 3. Prizes must be integral to the event and not merely serve as door prizes.
- 4. \$30 maximum per item
- 5. Gift cards must be business specific (no Visa)

b. Guest presenter/speaker gifts: \$20 total per recipient

c. Food for Events:

- i. Food purchases/events/meals must follow University guidelines. Elon University Campus Dining, Harvest Table, has exclusive rights to sell and distribute food on campus.
- ii. Organizations and individuals must obtain prior approval from Harvest Table/Catering to use any vendors outside of Elon's partnerships.
- iii. \$20 per person, per meal, including gratuity and tax (maximum 3 meals per day for on-campus events)
- iv. Tips: Maximum of 20% tips on all services
- v. Organizations hosting recurring meetings, including but not limited to chapter meetings and all-organization meetings, are permitted to allocate funding for food at a maximum of two (2) meetings per semester.

d. Travel

- i. Flights: \$350 per person
- ii. Conference registration fees
- iii. Gas for university vehicles

- e. Costumes/Uniforms/Props/Decorations
 - i. Organizations are encouraged to rent unless items can be reused on an annual basis.
 - ii. If requested, purchase of costumes, uniforms, or props must be necessary for the creation and enhancement of the event.
 - iii. Should costumes and/or props be funded, items must be reusable and maintained at the expense of the organization, with inventory kept.
 - iv. Decorations: \$200/event
 - f. Open Tabs
 - i. \$500/event with a maximum of 2 per semester
 - ii. Open tabs may not include the purchase of alcohol or merchandise under any circumstances. Any violations of this policy may result in the denial of reimbursement and potential suspension of future funding privileges.
 - g. Movie Rights
 - i. Movie Rights can be requested for events with an expected attendance that is larger than an average meeting.
 - h. Organization Fair
 - i. \$200/organization for both Fall and Spring Organization Fair
- C. Non-fundable Items/Events
- a. Items, events, services, or trip expenses purchased prior to budget request approval.
 - b. Expenses for personal or private use.
 - c. Alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, weapons, and items mimicking these items.
 - d. Direct contributions/donations to individuals, charities, charitable foundations, educational institutions, or other non-profit organizations.
 - e. Fundraisers or any items that directly generate revenue for the organization's cash index.
 - f. Membership selection events and other exclusive organization events requiring an invitation for participation or membership.
 - g. Late fees/expediting charges/penalties of any type.
 - h. Scholarships or tuition/fees for a curricular event or program, including study abroad/USA.
 - i. Requests from individuals from any of Elon's graduate schools.
 - j. Local/National/International Membership Dues
 - k. Promotional T-Shirts
 - l. University Department Events
 - m. Where the purchase of a ticket is required (and serves as a fundraiser for the organization)
 - n. Individual travel

Article VI: Purchasing Procedures

- A. All purchases for approved items must be made using either the Vice President of Finance's P-Card, the Administrative Assistant in Student Involvement's P-Card, or a designated representative's P-Card.
- B. Under no circumstances shall purchases be made using a student's personal funds.
- C. An event submission must be submitted to PhoenixCONNECT before any purchases can be made.
- D. Any exception to this policy must be approved in advance by the Vice President of Finance.

Article VII: Overriding the Bylaws

- A. While it is important to note that the Finance Bylaws holds true for the majority of cases regarding SAF usage, it is also important to recognize that an exception may be needed on occasion.
- B. The Finance Board and/or Senate may override any portion of the Finance Bylaws on a case-by-case basis with a 2/3 majority vote.
- C. Any override of the Finance Bylaws shall be specifically documented and disclosed when funding decisions are released to the Senate/public. Documentation must include the name of the organization, date of request, reason for override, and vote breakdown.
- D. Overrides are considered on a case-by-case basis with appropriate documentation and do not set precedent for future decisions.
- E. This override clause is excluded for requests over \$5,000, which must be reviewed/approved by the SGA Senate.

Article VIII: Appeal Process

- A. Grounds for Appeal
 - a. The fact that the Finance Board did not fund a request in its entirety does not itself constitute grounds for an appeal.
 - b. The following appeals process will allow students/organizations to request decisions made by the VP of Finance, Finance Board, or Senate be reconsidered. An appeal may only be based upon the following criteria:
 - i. Established policies and procedures were not followed.
 - ii. The funding allocation decision was arbitrary or biased.
 - iii. The severity of consequences was unnecessarily harsh in nature compared to the severity of the infraction.
- B. Appeals Process
 - a. If an organization chooses to appeal a decision rendered by the VP of Finance, the Finance Board, or the Senate they must submit an appeal request on PhoenixCONNECT within seven business days of the funding decision notification. The written appeal should include the following, when applicable:
 - i. The request for which the decision was made, along with all supporting materials;
 - ii. The funding decision;
 - iii. The sanction decision;

- iv. Any other related communication from SGA; and
 - v. The criteria on which the appeal is based, noting the specific policies within the Finance Bylaws that were violated or the information/evidence related to a potentially arbitrary/biased decision.
 - b. The SGA Finance Board or Review Board will receive the appeal and determine if the appeal has merit based on the aforementioned criteria.
 - i. For appeals, \$0-\$300, the Finance Board will be the judging body.
 - ii. For appeals, over \$300 (with original decisions made by the Finance Board and/or the SGA Senate), the SGA Review Board will be the judging body.
 - c. An appeal that has been found to have merit will typically be considered by the Finance Board or Review Board within five business days of receipt.
- C. Appeals Decision
 - a. Appeals will be made with a simple majority vote and the board may:
 - i. Uphold the original decision
 - ii. Amend the decision to allocate funding for items not originally funded, but not exceeding the originally requested amount
 - iii. Amend imposed sanctions
 - b. Once a decision has been made, the Executive Vice President will provide the rationale of its decision typically within five business days in an email to the Vice President of Finance, Finance Board, the student organization's advisor(s), president, and treasurer (or funding requestor).
 - i. On appeal decisions over \$5,000, the Executive Vice President is encouraged to share relevant information about the decision with the Senate.
 - c. Decisions made by the judging body will not have precedent on future appeals, and all appeals will be considered independently.
 - d. The decision of the designated judging body is final.
 - e. In the event that SGA is the appealing organization, the Vice President for Student Life, or a designee, will make the decision on the appeal.

Article IX: Annual Budgets allocated by the Vice President for Student Life

- A. The Finance Board recognizes that there are organizations that plan numerous events on a large scale, for which this model may not be feasible. For that reason, organizations that meet the following criteria are eligible to apply to receive a fixed SAF budget from the Vice President of Student Life:
 - a. Provide a service, events, and/or membership open to the entire undergraduate student body and are available throughout the academic year.
 - b. Has demonstrated proper spending habits, as evidenced through requests from the past year.
 - c. Is in good standing and has not been sanctioned/on probation within the past year.
 - d. Has a paid, full-time University faculty or staff member whose advising responsibilities are included in their job description. The advisor is responsible per their position description for assisting its student leaders in the proper

administration of these Student Activity Fees.

- B. Organizations who feel they meet the above criteria must submit their application on PhoenixCONNECT to the Finance Board by the deadline specified by the VP of Finance.

- C. The Finance Board will review the request and submit a recommendation to the Vice President for Student Life who will communicate their decision to the requestor. No decision made by the Vice President for Student Life sets precedent for future decisions.
- D. If the Vice President for Student Life approves an organization to receive an annual budget, the student organization will only be eligible to apply to the Finance Board for additional SAF funding at the discretion of the VP of Finance.