THE STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION

Budget Committee Guidelines
And
Allocation Procedures

The Pennsylvania State University
Dickinson School of Law

Revised: August 2013
I. Purposes of the Budget Guidelines

A. To provide guidelines, subject to modification by the Board, by which the Budget Committee (the Committee) shall make a determination in formulating a proposed annual/semester budget and any subsequent allocation/reallocation in the amount of five hundred dollars ($500.00) or less.

B. To provide a process by which all Student Bar Association (SBA) funds, whether allocated by the Committee or by the Board, may be reimbursed or recaptured.

C. Compliance with these guidelines and procedures is mandatory for all business conducted by the Committee.

D. For purposes of the SBA Constitution (Constitution), these guidelines shall be considered the Committee bylaws.

II. Goals of the Budget Committee

A. To create a budget that allocates the SBA funds to the student groups, organizations, and SBA Committees of The Pennsylvania State University – Dickinson School of Law (PSU-DSL).

B. To allocate money in a fair and uniform manner that will benefit the greatest number of students at PSU-DSL.

C. To allocate money in a way that will allow student groups and SBA Committees to contribute to the overall law school experience of PSU-DSL students.

D. To promote unity and cooperation between the PSU-DSL campuses.

III. Definitions and Explanations

A. Group: Refers to groups of students that have been chartered by the SBA.

B. SBA Committee: Refers to both standing and ad hoc committees established by the SBA.

C. Organization: Includes both groups and SBA Committees.

D. Committee Composition: The SBA Budget Committee shall be comprised of the five (5) voting members as laid out in Article III, Section 6 of the SBA Constitution, in addition to any non-voting members appointing by the SBA President. Where possible, appointments of both voting and non-voting members should reflect symmetry between second-year and third-year law students.
E. *Committee Decisions:* All decisions by the Committee shall be by a majority of those voting members present as stipulated by Article III, Section 6 of the SBA Constitution, unless otherwise indicated.

F. *Committee Meetings:* The Committee shall meet as often as necessary to fulfill the requirements of the SBA Constitution and these guidelines according to a schedule determined by the Treasurer. The Committee shall not be required to meet in-person unless in-person hearings are required at the request of an organization. However, if the Treasurer chooses to meet in-person or in some forum other than in-person, the meeting must be announced to all members of the Committee in a reasonable amount of time before such a meeting.

G. All words and phrases are as defined in the SBA Constitution unless expressly defined otherwise.

**IV. Annual/Semester Budget**

**A. Budget Process**

1. The SBA Treasurer (Treasurer) shall determine a date by which all organizations shall submit a “Budget Request Form” (budget proposal).

2. At least one week before the date determined in Section IV(A)(1) these guidelines shall be published and available to all SBA members.

3. All organizations submitting a budget proposal must either adopt the SBA Model Constitution or create their own constitution. If the organization chooses to create its own constitution it must be presented to the SBA Budget Committee and approved by simple majority vote of the Committee. If the constitution does not pass a simple majority vote the organization will have the ability to appeal to the entire voting board of the SBA.

4. Organizations can access the budget proposal on the SBA website. The budget proposal shall be completed in its entirety, even if the organization is not requesting any funds at this time.

5. After the date determined in Section IV(A)(1), the SBA Budget Committee shall develop, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in IV(B), an annual/semester budget in sufficient detail to enable a reader to determine the basis of the allocation for each event or other allocation requests presented by the organizations.

6. All organizations are entitled to an in-person hearing before the Committee in order to explain their budget proposal, but such a hearing shall not be mandatory.

7. The Committee’s proposed annual/semester budget is to be presented, by way of the Treasurer, to the SBA President (President), who may approve or veto the proposed
annual/semester budget. Upon veto, the proposed annual/semester budget returns to the SBA Budget Committee for revision and continues in this process until receiving approval by the President. Upon approval by the President, the proposed annual/semester budget shall be presented at a meeting of the Board for final approval.

8. At least forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting where the Board will approve the proposed annual/semester budget, the Treasurer shall submit it to all Board members and organization leaders.

9. Upon final approval by the Board, the annual/semester budget shall take immediate effect and the funds shall be made available to all approved events.

B. Guidelines for Formulating a Proposed Annual/Semester Budget

1. The SBA Budget Committee may consider the following factors:

   a. Attendance: Has the organization attended SBA meetings and events?

   b. Specificity and Validity: Does the allocation request provide sufficient detail and itemization and are educated estimates provided?

   c. Benefit to Law School Student Body: Will a significant number of PSU-DSL students benefit from the activities of the organization?

   d. History: Has the organization efficiently used allocated resources in the past?

   e. Sources of Income: Are there outside sources of income other than the SBA funding, including, but not limited to, dues, ticket sales, the University Park Allocation Committee (UPAC), and the Graduate Students Association (GSA)?

   f. Dual Campus Cooperation: Has the organization, where appropriate, worked to promote unity between the two campuses?

   g. Uniqueness: Does the event duplicate or repeat an event put on by another organization?

   h. Adherence to Budget Guidelines: Has the organization previously adhered to the procedures outlined in these Guidelines?

   i. Overuse of Mass E-mails: Has the organization previously overwhelmed the student body with redundant and excessive e-mails promoting its events?

2. The SBA Budget Committee may determine if an event furthers the goal of the SBA as evidenced by:

   a. Non-exclusivity: All SBA funded events shall be open to all PSU-DSL students.
b. **Viability**: The likelihood of a significant number of students benefiting, indicated by, among other things, location and accessibility of the event.

c. **Event History**: Success of the event if held in previous years.

d. **Impact on the SBA Budget**: Inhibitive effect the event will have on future events, which are of greater benefit to the student body.

e. **Co-sponsoring**: The event is likely to have better student turnout when there is cooperation between multiple student organizations.

3. **General Limitations for Items Which Shall Not Be Funded**

   a. **Common Items**: Those items which students may already have, such as board games, playing cards, towels, markers, etc.

   b. **General Body Meetings**: The SBA Budget Committee shall not allocate funding for more than one general body meeting per organization per semester.

   c. **Student Services**: Compensation for a student’s performance of a duty or service.

   d. **Speakers**: Honorariums for speakers are handled by the Speaker’s Trust Fund and shall not be paid for by SBA funds.

   e. **Travel Expenses**: All charges incurred including transportation, parking, gas, lodging, etc.

   f. Tips in excess of 20%.

   g. Fees, Dues, Political Contributions, Donations, etc.

4. **Requirements for Organizational Budget Proposals**

   a. Timely, fully, and accurately complete a budget proposal.

   b. **Date of Event**: All proposed events and requests shall include at least a predicted month in which the event shall occur.

   c. **Description**: Provide sufficient detail of the event so that the Committee can evaluate the event according to Section IV(B).

   d. **Itemization**: To the best of the organization’s ability, provide and itemization of costs that shall be incurred in order to ensure the event’s success.
V. Allocation/Reallocation Requests

A. Allocation/Reallocation Process

1. Organizations may access the online “Budget Allocation/Reallocation Request Form” (allocation/reallocation form) throughout the academic school year and request funds as needed. The allocation/reallocation form shall be filled out in its entirety with as much detail as the organization can provide.

2. Within two weeks of receiving an allocation/reallocation form the SBA Budget Committee shall convene and come to a decision with regard to any allocation/reallocation form in the amount of five hundred dollars ($500.00) or less.

3. Organizations are entitled to an in-person hearing before the SBA Budget Committee in order to be present while the Committee comes to a final determination with regard to their allocation/reallocation form, however, such an in-person hearing shall not be mandatory.

4. All decisions, which shall be in accordance with the Guidelines set for in Section V(B), shall be delivered to the organization that made such request accompanied by a brief explanation of the Committee’s ruling.

5. At each meeting of the Board a report shall be given, by way of the Treasurer, in which all allocations/reallocations requested and granted shall be reported. Organizations may inquire for further information and detailed explanation of the Committee’s ruling by way of a Board member.

B. Guidelines for Allocation/Reallocation of Funds

1. The SBA Budget Committee may consider the following factors:

   j. Attendance: Has the organization attended SBA meetings and events?

   k. Specificity and Validity: Does the allocation request provide sufficient detail and itemization and are educated estimates provided?

   l. Benefit to Law School Student Body: Will a significant number of PSU-DSL students benefit from the activities of the organization?

   m. History: Has the organization efficiently used allocated resources in the past?
n. **Sources of Income:** Are there outside sources of income other than the SBA funding, including, but not limited to, dues, ticket sales, the University Park Allocation Committee (UPAC), and the Graduate Students Association (GSA)?

o. **Dual Campus Cooperation:** Has the organization, where appropriate, worked to promote unity between the two campuses?

p. **Uniqueness:** Does the event duplicate or repeat an event put on by another organization?

q. **Adherence to Budget Guidelines:** Has the organization previously adhered to the procedures outlined in these Guidelines?

r. **Overuse of Mass E-mails:** Has the organization previously overwhelmed the student body with redundant and excessive e-mails promoting its events?

2. **The SBA Budget Committee may determine if an event furthers the goal of the SBA as evidenced by:**

f. **Non-exclusivity:** All SBA funded events shall be open to all PSU-DSL students.

g. **Viability:** The likelihood of a significant number of students benefiting, indicated by, among other things, location and accessibility of the event.

h. **Event History:** Success of the event if held in previous years.

i. **Impact on the SBA Budget:** Inhibitive effect the event will have on future events, which are of greater benefit to the student body.

j. **Co-sponsoring:** The event is likely to have better student turnout when there is cooperation between multiple student organizations.

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j. **Student Services:** Compensation for a student’s performance of a duty or service.

k. **Speakers:** Honorariums for speakers are handled by the Speaker’s Trust Fund and shall not be paid for by SBA funds.
1. **Travel Expenses**: All charges incurred including transportation, parking, gas, lodging, etc.

m. Tips in excess of 20%.

n. Fees, Dues, Political Contributions, Donations, etc.

4. **Requirements for Allocation/Reallocation Requests by Organizations**

   e. Timely, fully, and accurately complete a budget proposal.

   f. *Date of Event*: All proposed events and requests shall include at least a predicted month in which the event shall occur.

   g. *Description*: Provide sufficient detail of the event so that the Committee can evaluate the event according to Section IV(B).

   h. *Itemization*: To the best of the organization’s ability, provide and itemization of costs that shall be incurred in order to ensure the event’s success.

VI. **Alterations to an Allocation**

A. Any alteration to an allocation, including amount allocated, description, itemization, etc., must be requested by the organization through use of the allocation/reallocation form and is subject to a decision by the SBA Budget Committee, if for five hundred dollars ($500.00) or less, or the Board, if for more than five hundred dollars ($500.00).

B. At the request of the organization, the Treasurer shall have the discretion to alter the date of the allocated event.

C. It is the Treasurer’s responsibility to ensure that the organization’s allocation reflects any alternation approved by the Treasurer, the Committee, or by the Board.

VII. **Dispersal of Funds**

A. **Reimbursement Process**

   1. Organizations (and member thereof) may access the “SBA Fun Reimbursement Form” (reimbursement form) on the SBA website. This form shall be completed in its entirety.

   2. Itemized receipts that attest to the actual amount of funds that were spent and which are to be reimbursed shall accompany all reimbursement forms. No reimbursement shall be awarded without an itemized receipt.
3. The completed reimbursement form and all receipts that accompany the form are to be
delivered to the Treasurer’s school mail folder within five (5) business days of the event
or run the risk of not having the funds reimbursed.

4. The Treasurer shall deliver the reimbursement form to the appropriate administrative
agent.

B. PSU-DSL Purchase Card Process

1. Organizations (and members thereof) may request use of the PSU-DSL purchase card
during the allocation/reallocation process.

2. All expenses incurred on the PSU-DSL purchase card must be in accordance with the
funds allocated in the SBA budget.

3. Itemized receipts are required for any and all expenses incurred on the PSU-DSL
purchases card and are to be delivered, within five (5) business days of the event, to the
administrative official through whom the card is used, with a copy of the receipts also
forwarded to the SBA Treasurer.

4. Prior to authorization granting use of the purchase card, the organization shall make
arrangements with the vendor(s) such that the administrative official possessing the
purchase card shall solely need to submit the card number to the vendor(s). Organizations shall not take actual possession of any purchase card.

5. Prior to authorization granting use of the purchase card, the organization shall make
arrangements to use the purchase card with the administrative official possessing the
purchase card at least two (2) weeks prior to said use, unless the planned use falls within
two (2) weeks after the annual budget is finalized or the use is a supplementary request
not in the initial annual budget.

6. Authorization for use of the purchase card shall be granted by the Treasurer upon
compliance with VII(B)(4) and VII(B)(5).

7. Failure to adhere to the allocations granted or to the process set forth in this section may
result in the organization’s assumption of liability for the expenses incurred on the
purchase card.

VIII. SBA Event Participation Reporting

A. Any and all events that is allocated SBA funds in the budget is subject to mandatory
event participation reporting, to allow accurate records of the event’s history of success to
aid the future budgeting of the SBA Budget Committee.
B. A leader or other representative of the organization hosting an event must print out a “SBA Event Participation Form” (event participation form), found on the SBA website, and bring said form to the event.

C. The organization leader or other representative has the responsibility to have all event attendees and participants present at the event sign their names to the event participation form.

D. The event participation form is required to be delivered within five (5) business days of the event to the Treasurer’s student mail folder, and can be attached to the reimbursement form and itemized receipts of the event.

E. If an organization fails to return the event participation form within the given time, the organization may be subject to recapture as outlined in Section IX(B).

F. If an organization fails to have event attendees and participants sign an event participation form, the organization leader or other representative can submit in writing an approximation of the event participation, as well as an explanation for the lack of an event participation form. This must occur within five (5) business days of the event.

G. Exemptions:

1. *Events with Ticket Sales*: For any organization’s event in which tickets are sold (ex: Barrister’s Ball, Spring Soiree, etc.) this requirement is waived. In lieu of the event participation form, the organization leader or representative may submit its list of ticket sales to the Treasurer’s student mail folder, within five (5) business days of the event.

2. *Infeasibility*: If an organization’s event has an anticipated attendance so large that it would be infeasible for all attendees and participants to sign an event participation form (ex: Senior Picnic, Welcome Back Parties, etc.), this requirement is may be waived with prior approval of the Treasurer. One week prior to the event, the organization leader must contact the Treasurer to make him/her aware of such infeasibility. In lieu of the form, the organization leader or other representative may submit in writing to the Treasurer’s student mail folder an approximation of the event participation within the five (5) business days of the event.

**IX. Recapture of Funds**
A. Unused allocated funds for a specific event will be placed back into the SBA general fund if the funds are not reallocated through the reallocation process.

B. The Treasurer shall exercise this recapture provision if the organization has failed to submit the appropriate reimbursement, reallocation, and event participation forms within five (5) business days after the event’s scheduled date. If the scheduled date is only the month in which the event was to be held, the Treasurer shall exercise this recapture provision only after five (5) business days of the last day of that month.

C. The recapture provision shall be exercised after the time allotted in Section IX(B) by notifying the organization of the recapture of the funds. The organization shall have five (5) business days after receiving notice to file a grievance with the Committee.

D. If no grievance is filed pursuant to IX(C) or the grievance is denied, the funds shall be recaptured and returned to the general SBA unallocated budget.

X. Emergency Funding

A. In the event of an emergency, the Treasurer plus one other member of the SBA Budget Committee shall have the power to allocate up to two hundred dollars ($200.00) to alleviate such an emergency.

B. Once such an allocation is made, the Treasurer and a representative of the organization that received the allocation shall promptly inform the Board of the circumstances surrounding such an allocation.

XI. Amendment

A. These guidelines shall be amended by a majority vote of the SBA Board.