

SECTION 4: BUDGET AND REIMBURSEMENT ISSUES

While a few student groups have their own separate budgets at the School, most simply use Student Assembly funds for all of their events. Even those groups with their own account never add or remove funds from their account themselves, and so have no need to know account numbers or other information except for the balance. *All transactions that occur to budgets held at Student Affairs (which includes every group's budget except the MPH groups and departmental groups that get funding from their respective departments) are handled by the SA Treasurer.* This is because all student group budgets at Student Affairs fall under the Student Assembly budget, and any overdrafts come from the Assembly's funds.

This is an important point so read it carefully again: *It does not matter where your funds came from or how they will be spent – ALL actions on your account MUST be handled by the Student Assembly Treasurer.*

Appendix 2 of this handbook lists the reimbursement guidelines. Your group President and Treasurer must read these guidelines and sign a letter of release stating that they have read and understood them before your group may apply for Student Assembly funding. However, **the reimbursement guidelines apply whether or not your funds came from Student Assembly.**

If your group spends more money than what was in the group account, the excess is taken from the Student Assembly account. This is not a situation you want to have happen. Please, please avoid this problem from ever happening by making sure you know how much is in your account (ask the treasurer - satreas@jhsph.edu). If you overspend your budget, your group will be assigned negative flags under the “unauthorized budget modifications” criteria listed in Section 5, Part B of this handbook. It doesn't matter if you had originally requested any funds from Student Assembly or not. Accumulated negative flags will reduce the amount of money you get from Student Assembly if you do apply for funds, and may lead to a suspension of your group's official status.

We get complaints all the time about the complicated nature of reimbursements and funding requests. Many very talented people have worked for the past 3 years to streamline the system, and it's about as easy as it's every going to get. Funding, reimbursements, check requests, and budget modifications are simply hard to keep track of for 30+ groups and the paper trail is absolutely necessary. The key to success is to designate one or two people in your group who will keep track of your spending, collect all the receipts and invoices, and fill out all the paperwork.

SECTION 5: FUNDING OPTIONS

A. Group administrative funds

A new resource that Student Assembly has made available to groups beginning this year is funding for group administrative purposes. This year it amounts to \$150 for all student groups that have met certain requirements. Requirements and appropriate uses for this fund are given below. These funds are not added to your group account, but are rather kept in the Assembly account until used. You must still submit budget action forms to the SA treasurer and follow all other appropriate budget guidelines when spending this money (see Appendix 2). It is acceptable to spend the money out of your pocket and request a reimbursement afterwards *as long as* the money has been spent on appropriate items (as listed below). If you have any questions about whether a particular item is acceptable to purchase with this money, ask the SA Treasurer at satreas@jhsph.edu.

Requirements

- Group must have elected its leadership for the academic year, and announced the names of all officers to the VP for Student Groups, sastdgrp@jhsph.edu. Interim boards or temporary officers are not acceptable. The names of the officers given should be expected to serve in those positions through the end of the academic year.
- Groups must have all financial issues appropriately settled. This means there cannot be any past budget issues left unresolved and all budget forms must have been submitted.
- Groups must have returned completed follow-up forms to the VP for Student Groups for *all* Student Assembly sponsored events held during the past year or over the summer.
- Groups must have a constitution on-file with the Student Assembly. There is a template for a very basic constitution in Appendix 8 of this handbook. Contact the VP for Student Groups, sastdgrp@jhsph.edu, if you have questions or need help developing a constitution for your group.

Administrative funds were created so that groups could have some funds for meetings or events that are for group members only (and are therefore ineligible for Student Assembly or Alumni funding). This could mean food at your group meetings, hand-outs for your table at student activities fairs, small awards or gifts for group members, etc. The Assembly urges groups to refrain from spending this small pot of money on open events (because a simple application to Student Assembly can usually cover your open events), but ultimately the \$150 administrative fund is for your group to spend in whatever manner you deem best.

B. Student Assembly funding

The Student Assembly budget for student group events is somewhere around \$25,000 for nearly 40 groups. Because there is no way to predict year to year which groups will be very active and which will not, funding is allocated per application per event. As a way of making the funding system more manageable, accessible, transparent and fair, a set of funding guidelines was drafted. Before your group will be able to apply for funding from Student Assembly, the President and Treasurer of your group will have to sign a release verifying that they have read and understood the funding guidelines (summarized in this section of this handbook) as well as the Reimbursement guidelines (given in Appendix 2).

Application procedures

To apply for funding, you must fill out the Student Assembly funding form, which can be downloaded from the Assembly website, <http://www.jhsph.edu/assembly/fundingmain>. The form must be filled out entirely, and the budget must be itemized. The form is coded with instructions, and placing your computer cursor over the small triangles on the form will bring up the instructions. The form is also coded with the Student Assembly funding by-laws. If your funding request is over Assembly by-laws for any item, the amount that it is over will appear in red in the right-hand column. This does not mean there was an error or that you have to change anything, but you should be aware that it is much easier to have amounts approved that are within the guidelines.

Submit the form electronically to satreas@jhsph.edu, and cc assembly@jhsph.edu. The application will be reviewed by the Finance & Appropriations Committee at the committee's next regularly scheduled meeting (a posting of the meetings should be available on the SA bulletin board and website), and you will be informed of the amount of funding granted. You may appeal the decision of the Finance & Appropriation Committee to the general Student Assembly to be voted on at the next General Assembly meeting. The F&A committee may only approve amounts within the guidelines, so any request over guidelines also must be voted on at a general Assembly meeting. Keep this in mind when you apply, and *make sure* to submit your application in time for *both* an F&A meeting *and* a general Assembly meeting before your event.

Student Assembly funding is on a 'per semester' system, with 10% of the funds reserved for the summer terms, 45% for the 1st semester (1st & 2nd terms) and winter intercession, and the remaining funds granted for events in the 2nd semester (3rd & 4th terms). You should plan on applying early in the semester, as there is no guarantee that there will be funds for groups applying later in the semester. You may apply for funds at any time for events within the fiscal year (July 1st – June 30th) – you do not need to wait until the beginning of the semester in which the event will be held.

Rules and Restrictions

In order to apply for funding, a group must have been officially recognized by the Student Assembly and must be in good standing (not on suspended status). The following additional restrictions apply:

- Funding will not be approved for events that have already occurred;
- Funds will not be granted for events that benefit only the members of the group (including food or refreshments for group meetings);
- Funds will not be granted for awards or gifts for student group members;
- Student Assembly does not fund scholarships or travel for individual students to attend conferences or training programs;
- Funds will not be granted for events that conflict with a Student Assembly meeting or that are held at the same time or in the same weekend as a Student Assembly event;
- Groups must name JHSPH Student Assembly as a sponsor on *all* advertisements and announcements for the event;
- Groups must advertise the funded event on the on-line Student Events Calendar and on the activities-1@jhsphe.edu listserv. Advertisements should be made at least one week prior to the event, and again shortly before the event. Groups must save or print a copy of all advertisements to be submitted to the Vice President for Student Groups with the Follow-up Form after the event;
- All advertisements must be accompanied by an English translation, and an English translator must be available during events which are not primarily in English;
- The Student Assembly cannot grant general funds, and will only fund specific line items for specific events. Funds granted for one item cannot be used for any other item. If all funds granted for one line item are not used, the excess may not be applied to other line items;
- Groups are required to submit a Follow-Up form along with copies of advertisements to the Vice President for Student Groups within one week of the event.

Priorities for funding

Priority will be given to events that are of high educational or academic value, high cultural value, involve community service or civic engagement, have high social value or have a high level of estimated interest or need on the JHSPH campus. Additional consideration will be granted based on the following:

- High number of participants expected
- Event involves more than one department or campus
- Creative innovation, planning and design of event
- Well written application, with detailed budget
- Sought funding from other sources
- Collaboration with other student groups
- SA funding critical to event (other funding streams unavailable)
- Group has been active during the year and previous years

The following will count against groups receiving funding:

- Funding application incomplete, poorly written or does not have itemized budget with those items the group is requesting SA funds for clearly marked
- Budget has not been minimized (i.e. exorbitant amounts listed for items or other expenses listed that are deemed unnecessary for the success of the event)
- Past events had lower-than-expected participation or were not adequately advertised or planned
- Funding already received by the group from the Student Assembly equals or exceeds an amount determined by the Student Assembly at the onset of the year to be a reasonable limit for a single group that year (*usually around \$2,500/group/year*).

Line-item funding limits

There is no guarantee that your group will obtain up to the maximum amount requested or listed below, but you should be aware that it is difficult to be granted funds in excess of the limits set in the by-laws and explained below.

Each request is ultimately judged on its own merits. Student Assembly will do its best to apply these guidelines fairly and consistently to each complete funding request.

(i) Food

- (a) Food will only be funded for events open to all students
- (b) When possible, groups are asked to provide food themselves or from off-campus, inexpensive sources, as opposed to catering or restaurant service.
- (c) Funding for events in which food is not a central theme of the event will be limited to light refreshments only. The maximum rate for refreshments is \$2/person or \$400 for any one event.
- (d) Funding for food for events in which food *is* a central theme of the event and is deemed critical to the success of the event will be limited to \$8/person subject to a maximum of \$1,600 for any one event.
- (e) Funding for non-alcoholic beverages for any event will be limited to \$2/person to a maximum of \$400 for any one event.
- (f) Groups proposing to feed large numbers of students or planning to exceed the per person rates listed above will be asked to consider charging a small, non-prohibitive amount (\$1-3) to participants to reduce food costs.
- (g) Additional costs related to food such as utensils, cups, plates, waiter fees or tips, etc. shall be limited to \$25 for events of less than 50 people, \$50 for events of less than 100 people and \$75 for events with 100 or more people. Delivery charges, deserts, and snacks are included in the basic per person limits as outlined above.
- (h) Candies or food items given out as gifts or awards and food items that are symbolic or used as props (such as during a cultural or religious event) may be included either under the per person food limits given above or under the gifts/hand-outs/special items limits, as decided by the group.

(ii) Advertising

- (a) Maximum funding for advertising is \$50 for events being advertised at JHSPH
- (b) Maximum funding for advertising is \$120 for events being advertised on multiple campuses

- (c) Maximum funding for banners is \$150. Banners must be reusable (meaning no dates or other information that would limit the use of the banner to one occasion only should be printed on them), and must be kept by either the group or by the Student Assembly. Groups may have banners that are specific for a certain event if the event is held every year and the banner can be used each year, otherwise the banner should be limited to general group information. Groups are limited to two banners *total* per group in any 5 year period.
 - (d) The cost of printing tickets for an event should be covered by the price of the tickets.
 - (e) Printed material used *before* an event or during an event to announce the location and the title of the event is considered advertising. Printed material used *during* an event and related to that event, such as hand-outs, table-top displays, leaflets, booklets, etc. are considered educational material and fall under a separate category *provided these materials are not used to announce a separate group event.*
- (iii) Honorariums / speaker fees / contracted services**
- (a) Honorariums or speaker fees are limited to \$1000/speaker. The amount approved up to that limit will depend on the perceived value of the speaker and the number of expected attendees. If both a speaker fee and an honorarium are requested, the combined limit remains at \$1,000/speaker.
 - (b) No funds will be granted for contracted services if it is deemed that the service could be provided by students or other persons involved with the group for free or for a reduced cost.
 - (c) Fees for instructors or trainers are limited to \$150 per instructor per day, with a total maximum for all instructors over all days of \$1,000
 - (d) Expenses for other contracted services will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Groups seeking expensive services should not expect to have the full amount funded by the Student Assembly, and should seek outside funding.
- (iv) Travel Expenses & Student trips**
- (a) For Participants
 - (1) Travel will not be funded for individual students to attend conferences or seminars.
 - (2) Travel expenses for participants will only be considered if the event is open to all students, of high perceived value to participants, and travel expenses for participants are unavoidable and prohibitively high without subsidy from Student Assembly.
 - (3) Buses: Student Assembly may fund up to 75% of the total cost for a bus or van rental or \$1,000, whichever is smaller
 - (4) Other transportation: Student Assembly may subsidize up to 75% of the total per person costs for travel or \$75 per person, whichever is smaller, to a maximum of \$1,000
 - (5) Food during trips: Student Assembly may fund up to \$2/person per meal to subsidize meal costs during trips away from campus, up to a maximum of \$6/person per day or \$300 total per day for a maximum of two days. Up to 5 non-students may be included to receive subsidies for food if the group will be accompanied by speakers or other hosts at location.
 - (6) Hotels: Costs for a hotel stay for students will not be funded
 - (b) For Speakers
 - (1) Airfare expenses will be limited to \$500. Groups must either buy a

refundable ticket or purchase insurance for the ticket so that some funds may be recovered if the speaker cancels after the ticket has been purchased. An additional \$50 can be granted to cover this insurance..

- (2) Funding for transport by train will be limited to \$300.
 - (3) Funding for transport by automobile will be limited to the current IRS per mile business driving rate for US taxpayers. This funding can be used for speakers who will be driving themselves or the persons who will be picking up a speaker.
 - (4) Funding for taxi cabs will be limited to \$50/speaker per day for a maximum of two days.
 - (5) Funding for parking is limited to the current cost of a visitor pass for the Washington Street or other JHSPH-accessible garage.
 - (6) Groups applying for any ground transportation funds *must be specific* in their requests. A request that simply lists taxi fares, parking fees and a per mile gas reimbursement will not be approved unless details are given on why all three are necessary.
 - (7) Funding for hotel fees for speakers will be limited to \$120 per speaker per night for a maximum of two nights. Hotel fees will only be granted if it deemed necessary (meaning it is unreasonable to expect the speaker to travel in one day and the event cannot be scheduled at such a time to make a hotel stay unnecessary).
 - (8) Funding for meals for invited speakers will be limited to \$40/speaker per day for a maximum of two days, and will only be granted for speakers traveling from out of town for the purpose of the event. Up to \$25/speaker may be requested for a single meal for speakers traveling shorter distances.
- (c) The following criteria will be considered when determining whether to grant funds for travel for speakers:
- (1) The higher the travel expense, the greater the speaker's merit and value to the student body must be.
 - (2) Speakers closer to JHSPH have been asked and are unavailable.
 - (3) Travel was arranged in an economical manner (i.e. no last minute plane tickets.)
- (d) Groups are limited in the amount of Student Assembly funding they may receive each year, and should therefore consider co-sponsoring an event that will involve an expensive guest speaker with another student group or organization.

(vi) Alcohol

- (a) Funding for alcohol will be limited to \$3/person, subject to a maximum of \$300 for any one event.
- (b) Groups planning events with alcohol costs exceeding this amount will be asked to consider donations from participants to reduce the cost of alcoholic beverages.
- (c) Any event that has alcohol *must* also provide non-alcoholic beverages.

(vii) Security

- (a) Funding for security will be based on rates set by Parking & Security Services.
- (b) Groups hosting events with excessive security costs may be asked to consider alternative dates, times or locations for the event to reduce costs, or may be asked to charge a small, non-prohibitive fee of participants.

(viii) Housekeeping

- (a) Custodial services have offered to work with student groups to minimize housekeeping fees. Student groups should discuss their events with the housekeeping office-before submitting a budget that includes housekeeping fees
- (b) Funding for housekeeping will be limited to the amount requested by the Housekeeping office.

(ix) DJ / Bands

- (a) DJ expenses should not exceed \$500 per event.
- (b) Funding for live music services, including bands, orchestras, dance teams or singers, is limited to a *total* of \$1,000 per event.
- (c) Groups planning an event with expensive fees for music services may be asked to consider a small, non-prohibitive (\$1-3) fee for participants.

(x) Decorations

- (a) Funding will only be granted for decorations for events in which decorations are critical to the success of the event (holiday events, dances or cultural events may require decorating - a seminar or speaker event generally does not).
- (b) Groups should keep decorating costs at or under \$1/participant, up to a maximum of \$300 per event.

(xi) Gifts, hand-outs, special items.

- (a) Gifts or items to be distributed to participants at an event should be limited to \$2/person with a maximum of \$200 for any one event.
- (b) Candies or food items given out as gifts or awards and food items that are symbolic or used as props (such as during a cultural or religious event) may be included either under the per person food limits (described in section i) or under the gifts/hand-outs/special items limit given above, as decided by the group.
- (c) Prizes or awards given only to certain persons at an event or only to group members will not be funded. Items given out in return for the purchase of a ticket or other donation of money will not be funded. Prizes for lotteries, contests, games or other such activities should be funded through ticket sales or entry fees.

(xii) Videos and movies

- (a) Groups which intend to host a public viewing of a movie or video should ensure that they obtained proper permission to do so whenever necessary. In the event that a group must purchase permission to show a video publicly, the total amount of both licensing and rental of any number of videos shall be limited to \$500 per event.
- (b) The purchasing of movies or videos will be limited to \$500 per event.

(xiii) Educational or Informational material

- (a) Leaflets, hand-outs, booklets, signs, posters, table-top displays or other informational or educational material shall be limited to \$2/person or a maximum of \$400 per event. This may not include material used to advertise or promote other group events.
- (b) The rental of art, furniture or materials from off-campus for an event shall only be considered if it is deemed pivotal to the success of the event. Funding for such rentals shall be limited to a maximum of \$200 per event, including any insurance fees that may apply.
- (c) Office supplies, such as envelopes, stamps, pens, paper, poster-board, markers, etc. shall be funded up to \$50 per event if such supplies are necessary for the

event and are not part of advertising or decoration costs. Examples would be a letter-writing campaign, invitations for non-students, posters or signs used during the event (such as for a rally or march), materials for use in an information desk, etc.

(xiv) Other items

- (a) Park permits and other unavoidable user fees will be decided on a case-by-case basis but generally should not exceed \$500 per event.
- (b) Club, pool or room rentals off-campus will be limited to \$200 plus the equivalent of the total housekeeping, security and audiovisual fees that would have applied had the event been held on campus.
- (c) The purchase of books, equipment, furniture, art or other materials will only be considered if the group can show that they will be used for other group activities in the future. Purchased materials must be stored at the School either by the student group (if appropriate space is available) or by the Student Assembly. The total amount granted for such materials will depend on the necessity of the purchase for the event, the likelihood of re-use in the future and the potential for use by other groups (if applicable).
- (d) Fees for items or services that will only benefit group members, or that will be donated, contributed to charity or will only benefit persons not participating in the event, will not be funded.

Up to an extra \$100 can be granted for events that focus on community service or community involvement. This funding may be used to augment or exceed the maximum of any of the above approved line items. Only groups whose primary focus is *not* community service or community involvement are eligible for this special funding.

Funding penalties and appeals procedures

In the past, it has fallen mainly on the Assembly members to track down groups and beg and plead for problems to be fixed. This muddles up the system and de-motivates your Assembly members. As a possible solution, the Assembly has created a penalty system.

The point of this system is to place the responsibility for handling problems where it belongs – with the groups. **Groups that fail to meet certain responsibilities will be assigned negative ‘flags’, and an accumulation of these will decrease the amount of funding you may receive from Student Assembly and will eventually lead to suspension of your group status. The flags are assigned automatically when a certain criteria is not met,** so that your Assembly members (who are often group leaders themselves and display a high degree of empathy with group leaders who run into problems) aren’t burdened with the guilt of having to decide whether a group should receive a flag or not. A lot of effort has gone into devising a system that will motivate groups to follow the guidelines but that will not exact unreasonable penalties on

groups for small mistakes or honest errors (many small mistakes or honest errors will, however, lead to penalties, as eventually you just get into the realm of irresponsibility).

The Assembly would greatly appreciate any feedback or suggestions you can offer during the year with regards to this system. The goal is to keep the funding process running smoothly while allowing the greatest amount of freedom and support to both our student groups and our Student Assembly members.

Actions (or inactions) that lead to penalties

The following circumstances will lead to groups receiving negative flags. Penalties are implemented after 3, 6 or 9 flags have been accumulated. Flags remain on a group's record until the end of the budget year (June 30st).

1 Flag will be assigned when the group:

- Fails to submit complete documentation, consisting of all appropriate Budget Action Forms, receipts, etc. to the SA Treasurer or other designated individuals within one month of an event;
- Has a cost overrun, defined as the total sum of money spent above the amount approved by the Student Assembly for each approved line item, of less than \$25;
- Has an unauthorized budget modification, defined as money spent on any line item not approved by the Student Assembly, of less than \$25.

2 Flags will be assigned when the group:

- Has a cost overrun, defined as the total sum of money spent above the amount approved by the Student Assembly for each approved line item, of \$25 or more but less than \$100;
- Has an unauthorized budget modification, defined as money spent on any line item or items not approved by the Student Assembly, of \$25 or more but less than \$100.

3 Flags will be assigned when the group:

- Fails to comply with the requirements of the funding award, such as a failure to advertise the event properly, a failure to recognize Student Assembly as a sponsor on all advertisements, a failure to make the event open to all students at JHSPH, etc.;
- Has a cost overrun, defined as the total sum of money spent above the amount approved by the Student Assembly for each approved line item, of \$100 or more but less than \$200;
- Has an unauthorized budget modification, defined as money spent on any line item or items not approved by the Student Assembly, of \$100 or more but less than \$200
- Misrepresents information on the application for funding including, but not limited to, misrepresentation of the goals, format, audience or agenda of the event, or purposeful exaggeration of the estimated costs for any line item

6 Flags will be assigned when the group:

- Has a cost overrun, defined as the total sum of money spent above the amount approved by the Student Assembly for each approved line item, of \$200 or more but less than \$400;

- Has an unauthorized budget modification, defined as money spent on any line item or items not approved by the Student Assembly of \$200 or more but less than \$400

9 Flags will be assigned when the group:

- Has a cost overrun, defined as the total sum of money spent above the amount approved by the Student Assembly for each approved line item, of \$400 or more;
- Has an unauthorized budget modification, defined as money spent on any line item or items not approved by the Student Assembly, of \$400 or more;
- Signs a contract (only Dean Ward can sign contracts).

Whenever your group falls into one of the above categories, the SA Treasurer *is required* to assign the flags to your group, and to report the flags to your group and the members of the Finance & Appropriations Committee. *Even when the Treasurer knows ahead of time that one of the above situations will arise, he or she must still apply the flags.* In instances where the Treasurer was informed ahead of time and gave approval for the situation to arise without penalty, you must simply appeal the flags once they have been assigned to have them removed. I know that this seems burdensome, but it is the only way to make sure the system is standardized and fair to all persons and groups involved.

Penalties

If you accumulate 3 flags, the amount of funds you get from Student Assembly on your next funded event will be decreased by 20%. This means that, *after* the Finance & Appropriations committee has decided how much funding to grant your group, each line item that they approved will be reduced to 80% of what it would otherwise have been. This penalty applies *only* to the funding application received first after the third flag was assigned to your group. If you submit two applications at the same time after receiving the third flag, the one with the earlier event date will have the funding reduced while the other one will not. All subsequent funding applications will be restored to 100% of the approved amount *provided you do not accumulate more flags.* If you accumulate 3 flags but do not submit another funding application before the end of the budget year, the penalty will apply to the next funding application submitted by your group in the next budget year.

If you accumulate 6 flags during the year, the amount of funding you get from Student Assembly on your next funded event will be decreased by 50%, in the manner explained above. Once again, this penalty applies only to the first application submitted after the 6th flag is assigned, and once again if you do not submit another application before the end of the budget year after receiving the 6th flag then the penalty will apply to the first application your group submits in the next budget year.

If you accumulate 9 flags during the year, your group will be placed on suspended status until the end of the budget year. This means you will no longer be eligible for any funding from Student Assembly, and will not be able to reserve rooms for meetings or events in the Wolfe St. or Hampton House buildings. Additionally, the first funding application submitted by your group in the next budget year will have its approved funding reduced by 50%.

Flags are only removed from your group's record at the end of the budget year. If, for example, you have already been penalized at the 3 flag level and then accumulate 3 more flags before the end of the budget year, you will receive the 6 flag penalty.

The purpose of carrying over penalties into the next budget year is not to penalize the new group coming in. This seemingly harsh rule was determined for two reasons. First, we want to deter groups from being sloppy or irresponsible during 4th quarter or whenever they know that they will not be submitting any more applications for funding before the end of May. That's the most important time of the year for Student Assembly to have all the paperwork and accounts in order, and it would be a nightmare if groups let their responsibilities slide at the end. Second, we're hoping that no groups ever accumulate enough flags to get any sort of penalty. If a group *has* accumulated enough flags, we want to make sure that the problems haven't continued into the next year. This is especially the case when a group has received 9 flags. That first 50% reduction will hopefully persuade the new leadership of the group to plan a small event that doesn't need much funding (thus the 50% reduction won't be too much of an obstacle) right off the bat, giving both them and us a chance to see if the problems have been corrected.

If two or more groups co-sponsor an event and apply for funds, and one of the involved groups has a penalty pending, the penalty applies only to the portion of funds attributed to that group. For example, say Group A has a 3 flag penalty pending and they submit a request for \$500 from Student Assembly for an event that will be co-sponsored with group B, which has no flags. Student Assembly considers the funds it grants equally distributed between all groups co-sponsoring an event. In this case, if the full \$500 was originally approved, Group A's penalty would reduce *their* share of the funds (\$250) by 20% (to \$200). The total amount granted to these two groups for their event would therefore be \$450. Co-sponsoring an event with another group is therefore an excellent way to get past a penalty. It's our hope that such cooperation will also help the group that had the penalty get back on track.

How flags are assigned

The assignment of flags is automatic, and can only be reversed if it is found that a mistake has been made. In other words, if you receive notice that you have not submitted a certain form in the allowable amount of time and have been assigned a flag as a result, it is already too late to give explanation and ask for additional time. If you think that your group may run into a circumstance that could earn you a flag and it does not seem avoidable, contact the SA Treasurer **immediately** to explain. You will still have the flag assigned, but upon appeal it can be removed if the Treasurer states that he or she was aware of the problem and had granted leeway.

It is not the responsibility of the Treasurer or VP for Student Groups to warn or remind your group that you are soon to receive a flag if a problem is not corrected. Often you will find that they do it anyway (we're actually quite nice people on the Student Assembly, and will be *very* happy if not a single 'flag' gets assigned all year or ever), but they are students with other responsibilities and cannot be expected to keep track of what your group is doing (or not doing). Part of the agreement with becoming a recognized student group and with applying for Student Assembly funds is that you agree to stay informed about the responsibilities of your group and to follow the appropriate

guidelines. An answer of “but nobody told me we were running late with that form”, or “but I never got a warning that I had to do X or we would get a flag” is **not** acceptable and will not be grounds for the removal of flags. **ASK** if you are in doubt, satreas@jhsph.edu or sastdgrp@jhsph.edu.

Appeals process

Your group has the right to appeal any flags that are assigned. Mistakes happen on all sides, and it's quite possible that your group may receive a flag in error. When you get notice that you have been assigned a flag, and you believe it to be in error, simply reply to the Treasurer, satreas@jhsph.edu, and the VP for Student Groups, sastdgrp@jhsph.edu, with a description of the circumstances surrounding the issue. The appeal will be reviewed by the Finance & Appropriations committee at their next regular meeting, and will inform your group of the decision within 3 days of that meeting.

If the decision by either the Treasurer or the Finance & Appropriations committee is not in your group's favor, you may appeal to the General Assembly. In this circumstance, you must write a letter of appeal and submit it to the Assembly at assembly@jhsph.edu as well as the Treasurer satreas@jhsph.edu. Your appeal will be reviewed at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Student Assembly. The Treasurer or member of the Finance & Appropriations committee will initially describe the situation to the Assembly members. A representative from your group should be present to then explain why the flags were not appropriate and to answer any questions. A majority vote by the Student Assembly will decide the issue, and the decision will be final.

While your group may appeal flags that are assigned, you may *not* appeal funding penalties imposed due to an accumulation of flags. The funding penalties are standard and automatic. If your application received reduced funding when one or more of the flags leading to the reduction is under appeal, your group will only be able to have access to the reduced amount of funding until the appeal procedures are settled. This is one more reason why it is always good to plan ahead!

Follow-up

As mentioned previously, follow-up forms must be submitted to the VP for Student Groups within one week of a Student Assembly-funded event. A sample of the form is included in Appendix 3. Make sure to attach a copy of all advertisements used to promote the event. Also, be aware that these forms are not only used to help the Student Assembly, but are also for the benefit of student leaders who will come after you. If something went very wrong or very right with your event, put it on the follow-up so others can learn from your groups' mistakes/successes. Failing to submit follow-up forms will result in the group being unable to access the administrative funds in the next year (described in part A of this section).

D. Alumni Association funding

The Alumni Association offers funding for Student Group Activities each year. You can pick up an application form from the Student Affairs Office (E1002) or can contact the Assembly Alumni Liaison (check the website or bulletin board to find out the contact information for that person). Applications for spring funding are due December 1st, and applications for summer or fall funding are due April 15th. The maximum amount per year is \$1,500 per group. The Alumni Association will typically only fund a group for three consecutive years. A sample application form and a more detailed description of this funding are included in Appendix 3.

E. Other possibilities

Co-Sponsorship

Co-sponsorship is an excellent way to reduce the amount of funding you need for an event. This does not only have to be with another student group. There are a variety of programs and offices at the school that often are willing to co-sponsor an event.

Some examples of programs that have co-sponsored Student Group events in the past are:

- Diversity Office
- SOURCE
- CIEDRS
- Mid-Atlantic Public Health Training Center
- Academic Departments
- Career Services Office

Find the program or office that is particularly interested in the topic of your event, and you may be able to get not only funding support, but probably some good information and contacts to possible guest speakers, etc. as well.

Ticket sales

Charging an entrance fee to your event is perfectly fine as long as the cost is not prohibitive. How much you charge should depend on how much the event is costing your group and how much the participants will get out of the event. If you will require the purchase of a ticket, you must **make sure** to advertise when and how students may purchase the tickets, and what the price will be. Otherwise your event will not be considered 'open to all JHSPH' students, and your group will be at risk for being placed on suspended status or, if funding for the event came from Student Assembly, of receiving funding penalties. If you charge JHSPH students for an event, the ticket fee must apply to **all** participants other than group members and guest speakers. It is, however, acceptable to charge a fee to all participants **other than** JHSPH students (we are, after all, JHSPH student groups, and our events are supposed to be of primary benefit to JHSPH students).

Fundraising

Any fundraising activity on campus must first be approved by both Dean Ward and Dean Hansen. More likely than not, these activities will not be approved. With very rare exceptions, you may not hold sales, auctions, lotteries or other money-making activities on campus with the purpose of earning money for your group.

It is acceptable, however, for your group to perform fundraising activities *off-campus*, or to approach organizations, businesses or foundations to solicit funding. **Be careful** how you go about this, though. Remember that your group does not represent JHSPH or the Student Assembly. Also, if you plan to approach a business or foundation with *possible* relations to JHSPH (pharmaceutical companies, biotech companies, etc.), make sure you get permission from Dean Ward first. Funding to your group from certain entities may create a conflict of interest or bad publicity for the School, and such a situation will make many people very unhappy with you!

APPENDIX 2: REIMBURSEMENT GUIDELINES

Introduction

In order to draw on any funds in student group accounts, you must follow the procedures outlined here. Please note that these guidelines include important revisions from the last handbook. We've tried to make these guidelines readable, and to make important information as easy to find as possible. A list of Frequently-Asked Questions is found at the end. Please contact the Student Assembly Treasurer (satreas@jhsph.edu) with any questions or feedback.

General Information on Reimbursement Procedures

All student group expenditures must be approved in advance. A Budget Action Form (BAF – details below) must be completed fully and signed by the student group requesting the funds for all types of reimbursement. Use one form per payee (person or group). If funds were obtained from Student Assembly, please note that reimbursements will be made **only** for those line-item expenses approved by the Assembly in the funding request and approval process. Expenditures not so approved will **not** be reimbursed.

Please note that the reimbursement process takes **time**. Why? Because...

...communication and paperwork take time. All reimbursement requests must go through the Student Assembly Treasurer, who will coordinate with the Student Affairs office. Thus you need to allow time to for a couple meetings with the Treasurer and/or Student Affairs, and for paperwork to be processed. We are doing our best to streamline the process, and your patience – and planning ahead – are appreciated.

...reimbursement processing takes time. If you plan to use Student Assembly and/or student group funds for **M&S** and **Copy Center** services (details below), you will need to allow **at least** two to three business days to have paperwork processed. In order to pay outside vendors, check requests must be submitted at least 15-20 business days in advance of due dates. It also takes a minimum of 10 business days for reimbursement checks to be issued. **We do not have any means of providing reimbursements sooner, nor are we able to provide reimbursements in the form of cash (checks only).**

...bad things sometimes happen, and they also take time. It's always better to have some padding in your schedule, rather than chicken-minus-head running around in panicked attempts to get things done at the last minute. It lessens your stress, and just as importantly, it lessens the stress on the people who will be working to get your money where it needs to go.

Please make every possible attempt to avoid paying large amounts out of personal funds. As students, we should not have to shell out large wads of our precious cash to pay for student group events. Generally vendors are familiar with the School and won't have a problem working via invoice. The STUDENT AFFAIRS office is perfectly capable of cutting checks to vendors, provided there is enough notice (see: **time**, above) given. For more information, please see **Check Requests**, below. Neither the Treasurer

nor the STUDENT AFFAIRS office will be pleased to receive a personal reimbursement request indicating a student paid hundreds of dollars out of their own pocket.

Budget Action Form (BAF)

We'll say it again: you **must** fill out a Budget Action Form (BAF) for every reimbursement or M&S request. The BAF is only available in electronic format, at www.jhsph.edu/assembly/fundingmain..

Types of Reimbursements

As seen on the BAF, there are four types of reimbursements. In brief, they are:

M&S Form: Used to pay for in-Hopkins services like housekeeping, security, etc. In addition to the BAF, requires an M&S Form to be filled out, signed by Student Affairs, and submitted to the appropriate Hopkins service provider.

Copy Center Form: Used to pay for copy services within Hopkins. In addition to the BAF, requires a Services Request Form to be filled out, signed by Student Affairs, and submitted to the Copy Center.

Check Request: Used to pay outside vendors. In addition to the BAF, requires an invoice – **not** a receipt – from the vendor. Note that while group representatives may negotiate vendor contracts, **only Dean Ward (Student Affairs) can sign them. Do not, under any circumstances, sign contracts with vendors. You could be held personally liable!**

Reimbursement: Used to pay people back for things they've bought. In addition to the BAF, requires proof of receipt – **not** an invoice – from the vendor.

Invoices versus Receipts

An invoice is not the same thing as a receipt, and vice-versa. This is an important distinction.

Invoices are submitted by vendors who have agreed to provide goods and/or services at an agreed-upon price and time. They have "Invoice" written at the top. An invoice is **not** proof of receipt, since no one should have paid for anything yet. Invoices submitted for payment must be original – please keep a photocopy for your records. Again: while group representatives may negotiate vendor contracts, **only Dean Ward (Student Affairs) can sign them. Do not, under any circumstances, sign contracts with vendors.** This includes invoices. The School pays invoices on a "Net 30" basis – that is, payment will be tendered to the vendor after no more than 30 days.

Receipts are given to a purchaser by the vendor of goods and/or services after the purchaser has paid for those goods and/or services. At their most basic, receipts include identification of the vendor and the purchaser, as well as description, quantity, cost per item, and total cost of goods and/or services paid for by the purchaser. Receipts submitted for reimbursement must be original – please keep a photocopy for your records. Note that no substitutes for receipts will be accepted (*i.e.* “I paid this for that but lost the receipt” notes are not acceptable).

Tax-Exempt Certificate

Tax is not reimbursed! A tax-exempt certificate should be obtained from the Student Assembly Treasurer (satreas@jhsp.edu). The Tax-Exempt Certificate may only be used for purchases associated with official business of your student group. **It is not for personal use under any circumstances.** Violators are subject to sanctioning according to the Student Conduct Code in addition to criminal prosecution.

M&S

An M&S form is used throughout the University to contract for services within the Hopkins community. You cannot pay for these services with money; you must use this form to bill a budget number. You must have had your event cleared and have sufficient funds from your student group account or from a Student Assembly award to use an M&S form. If you want to use these funds to pay for M&S services for an event:

- (1) Pick up blank M&S forms from the Student Affairs office (E1002, ask for either Steve Bazzetta or Sharon McCollough) *along with an instruction sheet* (ask for one or download one from www.jhsp.edu/assembly/fundingmain);
- (2) Fill out the M&S form, entering “Student Assembly/Student Affairs – E1002” under ‘Request Placed By’. Put your own name or group’s contact person name under ‘Mark for’, and add their cell phone or contact number.
- (3) Return the M&S to the Student Affairs office, E1002. Place it in the Student Assembly drop-box located at the back-right side of the front desk.
- (4) Download a Budget Action Form (BAF) from www.jhsp.edu/assembly/fundingmain and complete one form for each M&S that you submitted. E-mail the completed BAFs to satreas@jhsp.edu to complete the process.

Keep in mind that the M&S forms *are not processed* until the SA Treasurer receives the completed BAF forms and forwards them on to Student Affairs. It’s best to complete the BAFs and e-mail them in *before* you turn in the M&S forms so that you don’t forget.

Copy Center

A Services Request Form is used to order copy services from the Copy Center. You must have had your event cleared and have sufficient funds from your student group account or from a Student Assembly award to use an M&S form. If you want to use these funds to pay for copy services for an event:

- (1) Download a blank service request form from <http://www.jhsph.edu/supportservices/CopyCenter/index.html>
- (2) Drop off the completed service request form to the Student Affairs office (E1002) in the Student Assembly drop-box (at the back-right corner of the front desk).
- (3) Download and complete a Budget Action Form (BAF) for the exact amount of the service request form. E-mail the completed BAF to satreas@jhsph.edu to complete the process.

If an event is being sponsored by some other department in the school (or by the MPH office), ask your contact in that department for a Services Request form. You are only permitted to use their budget number, not the budget number of your group or Student Assembly. Only Student Affairs can sign Services Request forms using the budget number of your group or Student Assembly.

Filling out the Services Request Form:

- (1) Fill out all appropriate blanks in the lower area, based on your copy needs.
- (2) Fill out the “Dept:” blank with Student Affairs/[your student group name] – for example, “Student Affairs/Latin Student Network”.
- (3) Fill out the “Name” blank with your name.
- (4) The other blanks will either need to be filled out by Student Affairs or at the time you submit the form to the Copy Center. The Signature will also be provided by Student Affairs.

Check Request

This is the method of reimbursement used to pay outside vendors. In order to pay outside vendors, check requests must be submitted at least 15-20 business days in advance of due dates. Although group representatives may negotiate vendor contracts, **only Dean Ward (Student Affairs) can sign them. Do not, under any circumstances, sign contracts with vendors. You could be held personally liable!** You must have had your event cleared and have sufficient funds from your student group account or from a Student Assembly award to make a check request. If you want to use these funds to pay for an outside vendor’s provision of goods and/or services for an event:

- (1) Download a BAF from www.jhsph.edu/assembly/fundingmain.
- (2) Fill out the BAF: check the line for Check Request, and fill out lines 1-6, 8, and 9. Note the need for the vendor's Federal Tax ID number; you must get this from the vendor. Note also that **we do not reimburse for tax**: in other words, you must show the Tax-Exempt Certificate to the vendor, and the vendor must agree not to include tax in the prices agree to within the invoice/contract. (See **Tax-Exempt Certificate**, above, for details.)
- (3) E-mail the BAF to satreas@jhsph.edu. Drop off a copy of all contracts/invoices to the Treasurer's Box, found at the front desk of the Student Affairs office (Suite E1002). For your records, keep a copy of the contract/invoice.
- (4) The Treasurer will bring the form and copies to Steve Bazzetta in Student Affairs, who will process the check request.

Some tips on using outside vendors: Shop around for the best price. It saves you money. Make sure vendors have specified their terms and are aware of any and all important dates. This avoids any last-minute confusion with orders, and insures you pay the price you've agreed to pay. Also, make sure you know how the goods and/or services are going to be delivered (or picked up).

Reimbursement (Personal)

This is the method of reimbursement used to pay individuals who have spent their money for approved expenditures. Again, such personal expenditures should be avoided if possible, and in any event kept to a minimum. It takes a minimum of 15-20 business days for reimbursement checks to be issued. **The School does not have any means of providing reimbursements sooner, nor is it able to provide reimbursements in the form of cash (checks only).** You must have had your event cleared and have sufficient funds from your student group account or from a Student Assembly award to make a reimbursement request. If you want to use these funds to pay for an individual's expenditures on goods and/or services for an event:

- (1) Download a BAF from www.jhsph.edu/assembly/fundingmain
- (2) Fill out the BAF: check the line for Reimbursement, and fill out lines 1-7, and 9. Note the need for the recipient's Social Security number; you must fill in this or an equivalent identification number. Once you fill in the social security number, it will seem to disappear. This is OK, as Student Affairs has the key code to make it appear again. Note also that **we do not reimburse for tax**; if you paid tax for the purchase, you cannot receive any compensation. (See **Tax-Exempt Certificate**, above, for details on how to avoid paying tax.)
- (3) E-mail the BAF to satreas@jhsph.edu. Drop off a copy of all receipts to the Treasurer's Box, found at the front desk of the Student Affairs office (Suite E1002). For your records, keep a copy of the receipts.
- (4) The Treasurer will bring the form and copies to Steve Bazzetta in Student Affairs, who will process the reimbursement.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: Why in the world do you need such a complicated system? Can't reimbursements be simpler?

A: Contrary to just about everyone's opinion, the process is already incredibly streamlined. Budgets at the School are huge and complex, and it's not just your one group putting in requests and receipts. While the system may seem complicated, it's not really that bad and is necessary for keeping track of everything.

Q: Why do all reimbursement requests have to go through the Student Assembly Treasurer?

A: Because it's the Treasurer's job at the School to keep track of all expenditures and reimbursements thereof related to Student Assembly awards and student group funds. The most efficient way for the Treasurer to do this job is by assuring all relevant documents will pass through his or her hands before reimbursement can be made.

Q: I can't find/contact the Treasurer. What do I do?

A: If you need to get a hold of the Treasurer ASAP, and you've emailed once and gotten no response, email again (satreas@jhsph.edu); sometimes bad things happen. If you still get no response – a highly unlikely scenario – then contact the Student Assembly President at assembly@jhsph.edu. If all else fails, contact Steve Bazzetta (sbazzett@jhsph.edu). Please note that if you just need to turn forms in, you can go to the Student Affairs office (Suite E1002) and give it to the person at the desk, telling them it's for the Student Assembly Treasurer. They'll put it in the appropriate drop box, and the Treasurer will pick them up at some point during every business day.