

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**POLICY ON A STUDENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FEE**

*Adopted by the Board of Trustees on June 19, 2014*

**SECTION 1. PRIOR POLICIES AND FEES SUPERSEDED.**

This policy shall supersede any and all Board of Trustees' policies or statements concerning student activity fees that fund Student-Organized Programming, as defined in Section 10 of this policy, including the University Programs and Services Fee authorized by the Board on August 18, 1971. The Student Programs and Services Fee (SPSF) authorized by this policy shall supersede any and all previously authorized student activity fees, including the University Programs and Services Fee.

**SECTION 2. AUTHORIZATION OF THE FEE.**

The campuses of The University of Tennessee are authorized to assess, use, and allocate funds derived from a student activity fee only in accordance with this policy. Campuses may exempt certain classes of students from paying all or part of the SPSF (e.g., part-time students; distance education students). The SPSF authorized by this policy shall be the only campus fee that funds Student-Organized Programming.

**SECTION 3. PURPOSE OF THE FEE.**

The purpose of the SPSF is to advance the University's educational mission by funding non-instructional services, activities, programs, and facilities that promote student satisfaction and retention or promote the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, cultural, or leadership development of students.

**SECTION 4. RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF SPSF FUNDS.**

- A. All expenditures of SPSF funds shall comply with University fiscal policies and procedures. The expenditure of SPSF funds shall be audited in the same manner as other University funds.
- B. Funds derived from the SPSF may be used only to fund the following:
  1. expenses relating to student services, activities, and programs organized or operated under the auspices of the Chief Student Affairs Officer (e.g., operating expenses and equipment; wages, salaries, and benefits);
  2. Student-Organized Programming;
  3. the student government association recognized by the campus administration;
  4. student media (e.g., student newspaper, student yearbook) recognized by the campus administration;
  5. intercollegiate and intramural athletics;

6. the costs of acquiring, constructing, installing, or enhancing any University property or facilities primarily used for non-instructional purposes, including the satisfaction of indebtedness; and
  7. the operating and maintenance costs of facilities primarily used for non-instructional purposes.
- C. Campuses may establish additional restrictions on the use of SPSF funds.

**SECTION 5. CONTROL OF THE FEE.**

- A. The **Board of Trustees** retains ultimate control of the SPSF by virtue of this policy and by setting the amount of the SPSF at each campus annually upon the recommendation of the Board's Finance and Administration Committee.
- B. The **President** shall:
1. exercise ultimate executive control over the administration and fiscal management of the SPSF;
  2. make recommendations to the Finance and Administration Committee at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees concerning the amount of the SPSF at each campus, after considering the recommendations of the Chancellors; and
  3. submit an annual written report to the Finance and Administration Committee at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees concerning the use of SPSF funds at each campus for the previous academic year, which shall include a report detailing the use of SPSF funds at each campus that discloses the activities, services, programs, and facilities were funded by the Student Programming Allocation Committee.
- C. The **Chancellor** shall:
1. exercise executive control over the administration and fiscal management of the SPSF at the campus, subject to the general supervision of the President;
  2. make an annual recommendation to the President concerning the amount of the SPSF prior to the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees;
  3. review and approve an annual budget for the use of SPSF funds submitted by the Chief Student Affairs Officer;
  4. provide the President with information to include in the President's annual report to the Board's Finance and Administration Committee concerning the use of SPSF funds; and
  5. perform any other duties described in this policy.
- D. The **Chief Student Affairs Officer** shall:
1. establish procedures for the general administration and fiscal management of SPSF funds;
  2. designate and supervise a fiscal officer for SPSF funds, who shall be responsible for the day-to-day administration and fiscal management of SPSF funds;

3. solicit and consider the recommendations of the recognized student government association regarding the amount of the SPSF and the budget for SPSF funds, after providing the recognized student government association with information concerning projections of SPSF funds reasonably sufficient to make informed recommendations;
4. make a recommendation to the Chancellor concerning the amount of the SPSF prior to the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees;
5. submit an annual budget for the use of SPSF funds to the Chancellor; and
6. perform any other duties described in this policy.

**SECTION 6. STUDENT PROGRAMMING ALLOCATION COMMITTEE.**

- A. The Chancellor shall establish a Student Programming Allocation Committee (SPAC), whose primary task shall be to allocate SPSF funds for Student-Organized Programming. The SPAC shall also make recommendations to the Chief Student Affairs Officer regarding how to use SPSF funds that students, pursuant to the opt-in procedure described in Section 7, have directed for a use other than Student-Organized Programming. The Chancellor may assign other tasks to the SPAC that do not conflict with this policy. The Chancellor may not assign the task of allocating SPSF funds to Campus Student Programming Boards, Registered Student Organizations, or to any other person or group other than the SPAC.
- B. The Chancellor shall determine the number of members of the SPAC, which shall be composed of University students and non-student University employees. A majority of the members of the SPAC shall be non-student University employees, but at least 40 percent of the SPAC shall be composed of University students. The Chancellor shall appoint the employee members of the SPAC. The Chief Student Affairs Officer shall appoint the student members of the SPAC after soliciting and considering the recommendations of the recognized student government association.
- C. The Chief Student Affairs Officer shall establish SPAC procedures for: (1) meetings; (2) recordkeeping; (3) the process and timing for the submission of funding requests to the SPAC; and (4) communicating funding decisions, including procedures for documenting the reasons for a denial of funding.

**SECTION 7. OPTIONAL FUNDING OF STUDENT-ORGANIZED PROGRAMMING.**

- A. Unless a campus is exempt under the provisions of Section 7.H., the Chancellor shall establish an opt-in procedure by which every student is allowed the opportunity to expressly authorize the University to allocate a certain amount or percentage of the SPSF for Student-Organized Programming. If a student fails, for any reason, to expressly authorize the University to allocate a

certain amount or percentage of the SPSF for Student-Organized Programming, then that amount or percentage of the student's SPSF shall be allocated by the Chief Student Affairs Officer for a use that benefits students, within the limits described in Section 3 and 4, but the funds shall not be used for Student-Organized Programming.

- B. The opt-in procedure shall be implemented before the beginning of the Fall Semester of 2014.
- C. As part of the opt-in procedure, the campus shall inform students in writing (printed or electronic) that Student-Organized Programming may be of a controversial nature or may be objectionable to students.
- D. The Chief Student Affairs Officer shall make available to students a list of every program funded by the SPSF during the preceding academic year that was Student-Organized Programming. The campus may provide additional information to students as long as it does not conflict with this policy. For example, the campus may inform students that the total amount of the SPSF will not change, regardless of whether they authorize the University to allocate SPSF funds for Student-Organized Programming.
- E. The opt-in procedure, including the written communication to students described in Section 7.C, shall be presented to the President for approval prior to implementation. Any subsequent material changes to the opt-in procedure shall be presented to the President prior to implementation.
- F. The Chief Student Affairs Officer shall determine the amount or percentage of the SPSF that is subject to the opt-in procedure. The Chief Student Affairs Officer shall solicit and consider the recommendations of the SPAC regarding how to use SPSF funds that students have not expressly authorized for allocation to Student-Organized Programming.
- G. Only programs organized by Campus Student Programming Boards and/or Registered Student Organizations, as defined in Section 10 of this policy, are eligible to receive funding from the SPSF.
- H. The Chancellor shall not be required to develop the SPAC, the opt-in procedure, and other procedures described in Sections 6-9 of this policy if:
  - 1. all student programming funded by the SPSF is sponsored by the campus, and the Chief Student Affairs Officer or his/her staff designee is the final decision maker concerning student programming funded by the SPSF; and
  - 2. the campus engages students in the student programming process only to generate ideas and/or to assist in the organization or execution of student programming selected by the Chief Student Affairs Officer or his/her staff designee.

**SECTION 8. CRITERIA FOR ALLOCATING SPSF FUNDS FOR STUDENT-ORGANIZED PROGRAMMING.**

- A. The SPAC shall consider the following criteria exclusively in evaluating requests for Student-Organized Programming:
1. Whether, and to what degree, the program would advance the University's educational mission by promoting student satisfaction and retention and/or by promoting the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, cultural, or leadership development of students;
  2. Whether the request complied with the procedures established the Chief Student Affairs Officer for the submission of funding requests to the SPAC, including whether the request was timely submitted to the SPAC;
  3. Whether the program will be held on campus, and, therefore, will be easily accessible to students (priority shall be given to programs held on campus, unless ongoing construction to University facilities funded by the SPSF substantially impairs the ability of students to hold programs on campus);
  4. The clarity of the request;
  5. The amount of the request;
  6. The total amount of SPSF funds available for allocation by the SPAC;
  7. Whether, and to what degree, the request demonstrates that the Campus Student Programming Board or Registered Student organization has been diligent in determining the anticipated costs of the program;
  8. Whether, and to what degree, the funding proposal is fiscally responsible;
  9. If applicable, how effectively and efficiently the Campus Student Programming Board or Registered Student Organization used SPSF funds in the past;
  10. If applicable, whether the Campus Student Programming board or Registered Student Organization complied with University policies concerning SPSF funds in the past;
  11. If a Registered Student Organization, whether, and to what degree, the program is relevant to the Registered Student Organization's purpose, as described in the Registered Student Organization's constitution on-file with the University;
  12. Whether the proposed program is substantially similar to a program that was funded by the SPSF (or the former fee known as University Programs and Services Fee at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville) and organized by any Registered Student Organization within the past two (2) years;

13. Whether the proposed program duplicates, in whole or in part, separate services or programs offered by other Registered Student Organizations, but this criterion shall not prohibit Registered Student Organizations from collaborating and submitting a joint funding request to the SPAC; and
  14. Whether the proposed program duplicates, in whole or in part, services or programs offered by an academic, administrative, or auxiliary department or division of the University.
- B. The viewpoint of a Registered Student Organization or of the speaker(s) included in a proposed program shall not be considered by the SPAC when making a funding decision.
  - C. Student-Organized Programming funded by the SPAC must be open to attendance by all students who opted in to directing that a portion of their SPSF funds be allocated for Student-Organized Programming or who are exempt from payment of the SPSF by campus policy or law.

#### **SECTION 9. APPEALS.**

A Campus Student Programming Board or Registered Student Organization may appeal the SPAC's decision to deny funding. An appeal shall be submitted in writing to the Chief Student Affairs Officer within five (5) business days of the date on which the SPAC informed the Campus Student Programming Board or Registered Student Organization of the SPAC's decision to deny funding. There shall be only two grounds for appealing a decision of the SPAC: (1) the SPAC denied funding based on the viewpoint of a Registered Student Organization or of the speaker(s) included in a proposed program; and/or (2) the SPAC failed to follow its procedures in making the funding decision. The Chief Student Affairs Officer shall issue a decision on the appeal within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Chief Student Affairs Officer is not appealable.

#### **SECTION 10. DEFINITIONS.**

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

- A. The term **“Campus Student Programming Board”** means a group of students recognized by the campus administration to organize campus-wide student programming and advised by a University staff member designated by the Chancellor or a Vice Chancellor.
- B. The term **“Registered Student Organization”** means a student organization registered with the University in accordance with University rules.
- C. The term **“Student-Organized Programming”** means programs organized by Campus Student Programming Boards and/or Registered Student Organizations.