

S&A Committee Decisions – Final 4-23-2020

The Services & Activities Fee Committee, hereafter referred to as the Committee, acknowledges the importance and value of the programs across Bellevue College. Denial of funding is not an indication of a lack of support for the programs. This year has been particularly difficult as the college is taking significant steps to align with applicable laws and regulations. Additionally, like the rest of the college, S&A funding is decreasing due to declining state-supported student enrollment. Ultimately, S&A funding approval is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, based on a student-led S&A budget process.

Next year will bring an updated process that is more aligned with regulations and with the changes in an updated ASG financial code. The past practice that limited requests to specific groups will be eliminated and all student groups will be eligible to submit requests. More information on that process will be forthcoming.

The Committee has made final decisions on the S&A appeals. Throughout this process, it has become apparent that the rules, process, and all things student activity fee-related have not been well communicated. The following bullets are intended to provide clarification and additional context related to comments raised during both the original presentations and appeal hearings:

- A. S&A is not a standalone fee, but a portion of tuition from state-supported students. The amount per student is set by the legislature, not by the college. S&A funds are intended to fund a broad range of activities as identified within the Killian document. They do not follow the student to their respective area of academic interest. Hence, it would be false to assume that the total amount of student fees paid by students who participate in a particular club or activity would follow them.
- B. The **Office of Student Programs does not control allocations for S&A funds**. The Committee makes all funding recommendations. The Office of Student Programs manages the S&A process and provides **two non-voting advisors** – the Budget Manager for calculations and note-taking and the Director who manages the funding request process, appointments and scheduling of meetings, etc.
- C. **The voting members of S&A Committee include four BC students and three professional staff members. Students hold the majority vote (per applicable RCWs). ASG officers chair the Committee.**
- D. Many cited the number of students in their program as a percentage of total students. Everyone used a different measure for the total number. For instance, the total number of graduates do not represent the total student body headcount.
- E. Comparing the year-to-year allocation does not provide a complete picture. The Committee considered the total program costs, rollover amounts, and other funding sources.
- F. Although S&A fees are theoretically paid by each student, the reality is that only about half of the student body pays S&A fees while all students are included in the activities to support them.
- G. **The fact that an activity meets the Killian guidelines does not mean the students are obligated to fund it or to continue providing funding.**
- H. **Because things were previously funded does not mean that they were in compliance with Killian, RCWs, or other regulations regarding appropriate expenditures of funds.**

- I. In many of the program budgets, there appeared to be insufficient controls around recordkeeping and appropriate use of funds.
- J. Although previous practice has been to allow rollover unspent funds, it is not best practice or aligned with general institutional practices. This will be the final year that funding may roll over.
- K. The Committee determined that advising a student organization (commonly referred to as a club) or academic program that is requesting S&A funding will not be paid for with S&A funds. This is to address equity concerns since a few groups have paid advisors, but the vast majority do not. The Committee acknowledges that some of the faculty who currently receive payment to advise a group have stated that they may choose to reduce or eliminate their involvement as a result. The Committee trusts that the instruction will examine this issue and address it as they do with other faculty obligations and within the scope of the union contract. As advisors in classified and exempt employment categories do not receive additional payment, the Committee encourages the institution to examine these categories as well for appropriate remedies as both an equity issue and to support student success. Please note that, per the faculty contract (section 18.7), there are identified faculty positions that receive release time or an equivalent stipend for such things as performance, workshops, and other student organization related work.
- L. The Committee recognizes the importance of the arts and the reality of the depleting nature of associated funding. The Committee feels that there should be a pathway to support the arts on campus via S&A fees. To that end, the Committee recommends that Academic Affairs & Students Affairs, along with other stakeholders, convene to develop a plan that is in compliance and includes ongoing review and oversight processes. These processes should apply to any instructional area requesting funds through student fees.
- M. Every state employee is responsible to understand and comply with state ethics rules. It is the state that investigates and enforces reported violations. If there are activities for which you are unsure violate state ethics rules, you should contact BC's Ethics Officer, Suzette Yaezenko, VP HR. You can also ask the question directly of the Washington State Ethics Board. The applicable laws, training, opinions, and enforcement can be found at:
<https://ethics.wa.gov/enforcement/laws-and-rules>.
 - i. As budget authority, everyone is responsible for complying with all state laws regarding appropriate expenditure of funds as well as the state ethics board rules.

Recommendations for institutional consideration:

- Facilities related requests (e.g. lighting) should be addressed by Admin Services.
- All hiring and personal service contracts should be vetted through an HR process.
- Examine and develop a plan to equitably address the additional work of club advisors.

Appeals Decisions

Many of the decisions include “as they work to transition”. The intent is to provide a transition year for those activities that the Committee feels do not meet Killian guidelines and/or for which funding may have been denied for other reasons. The Committee invites those groups to work with their respective departments and the ASG to determine appropriate alignment and eligibility to request future funding.

1. KBCS

Appeal status: Denied, appellant may keep rollover fund estimated at this time at \$27,430, this year only as they work to transition.

Vote: 5-0-0

Rationale: Per the appellant, there is not an active student driven group or club. The goal to grow a program does not reflect the intent of a student activity, therefore, it does not currently comply with Killian.

2. Dance Productions

Appeal status: Denied, appellant may keep rollover funds, estimated at \$12,463, this year only as they work to transition.

Vote: 6-0-0

Rationale: Appellant indicated that the Dance program does not receive institutional support, and the group is comprised of students who may or may not be enrolled in dance classes, in that students are not required to be in the class to participate. There was some question regarding some of the performances being partially paid out of S&A may be class performances.

3. Business Leadership Community

Appeal status: Denied, original allocation of \$ 42,961 stands. Group may retain rollover currently estimated at \$36,868. No funds may be used to pay faculty/staff for working with the group.

Vote: 6-0-0

Rationale: The Committee recognizes this group has significant student involvement with some decision making and planning events. Reference item K above as it relates to payments to advisors.

4. Center for Career Connections

Appeal status: Denied, original allocation \$40,977 stands. Group may keep rollover, if any, but it may not be used to pay Federal Work Study students during college breaks or non-student part-time hourly.

Vote: 4-0-1

Rationale: The Committee recognized the importance of the Career Center at BC to aid students in preparing for the next step in their careers. Appellant also stated the vital importance of the Career Center to the college. The Committee feels that the work of the Career Center is part of the operations of the college but that students working in the center offer added value to their peers. The Committee funds student employment, which is permissible under Killian, but declined to pay for work by Federal Work Study students during breaks or for alumni/part-time hourly workers.

5. Academic Internship Program

Appeal status: Denied. Group may not retain rollover, if any.

Vote: 5-0-0

Rationale: The Committee members felt this program is very valuable to students in readying them for the workforce and agrees that it is of great benefit to those students. However, payment for 2 credits of tuition (as outlined by the appellant) is not permissible use per Killian. Tuition paid with S&A funds by this program has been rendered to the college for operational use. From Killian, P.3:

“Tuition-funded Programs. As a general principle, S&A fees should not be used to supplant tuition (building fee and operating fee) support for employees and facilities supporting the academic programs and business operations of the institution.”

Appellant indicated that the program could be run, and has been run in the past, without S&A funding.

6. The Watchdog

Appeal status: Denied, original allocation of \$119,500 stands. Group may retain rollover. Reference item K above as it relates to payments to advisors.

Vote: 5-0-0

Rationale: This program has a professional staff member who runs the day to day operations, generates ad revenue and performs all administrative functions for the Watchdog, in addition to other duties within the Office of Student Programs. See item K above regarding payment to advisors. Please note that the faculty advisor position is one that is identified in the faculty contract under section 18.7.

7. Sustainability Student Organization

Appeal Status: Denied, rollover estimated at \$11,879 may be retained during this transition year as the group moves to funding by SESF. When funding source is moved to SESF, remaining funds will be returned to S&A.

Vote: 5-0-0

Rationale: The Committee recognizes the value that this student organization (which is comprised of several smaller student organizations) brings on campus. With the availability of more than \$1M in SESF funds, the Committee feels this group should be funded out of that budget. The Committee recognizes that ASG has not been able to call consistent meetings of the SESF committee which may have prevented timely funding of initiatives. ASG is reworking financial code and putting interim measures in place to ensure regular meetings of SESF take place in order to allocate funds.

8. Math Lab

Appeal Status: Denied, original allocation of \$80,000 to pay student workers as tutors stands.

Vote: 3-1-1

Rationale: The Committee does not dispute that people should be paid appropriately for their work. However, a decision by the department to increase student salary does not automatically

encumber the funding source for that decision. The funding body, ASG, was not aware of or consulted about increasing student salary. Determinations made to do so by the department were with the knowledge that it could negatively impact access to services. The ASG plans to address equity in student salaries funded through S&A fees as they update the financial code.

9. Civil Rights Pilgrimage

Appeal Status: Denied, group may keep \$15,000 in rollover funds (the total amount of the original funding request) during this transition year.

Vote: 4-0-1

Appellant indicated that the class requirement was recently added in an effort to provide students with an opportunity to receive academic credit for their work. In so doing, the appellant inadvertently became non-compliant with Killian. The appellant proactively outlined proposed changes to the program to render it compliant with Killian Guidelines.

10. Model UN

Appeal Status: Denied, group may keep up to \$32,810 (the total amount of the original funding request) in rollover funds during this transition year.

Vote: 6-0-1

Rationale: The Committee appreciated the appellant's openness and willingness to make changes to the program based on the Committee's concerns.

11. Belletrist

Appeal Status: Denied, group may keep up to \$1500 to pay for production and distribution of the Bellezine (100% student work) only.

Vote: 7-0-0

Rationale: The appellant articulated the value of the Belletrist as a literary magazine with a national reputation that promotes Bellevue College and the academic program. The Committee determined that the limited number of students published in the Belletrist does not reflect the intent of a student activity. However, the Committee has decided that S&A may fund the student-only publication, the Bellezine, up to a total of \$1500.

12. Art Gallery

Appeal Status: Approved to keep rollover funds for use during the transition year, up to \$18,199.

Vote: 7-0-0

Rationale: While the Committee recognizes the value of an on-campus art gallery for the BC community, it was determined that does not meet the intent of a student activity. The appellant indicated that they plan to align the gallery more with instruction and requested to retain current rollover to aid in this transition for the 20-21 year.

13. Drama Productions

Appeal Status: Suspended. Committee moved to immediately freeze current funds in 522-264-1943, estimated at \$10,916 at the time of this decision. Funds may be made available pending resolution of questions/concerns of the Committee. See below.

Vote: 5-0-1

Rationale: Per the appellant, there is clear connection with course enrollment and the development of the academic program. The Committee has additional concerns regarding clarity of recordkeeping, potential expenditure of funds, and the disparate proportion of financial support between institutional and student dollars. Funds will be frozen pending a meeting between Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, ASG, Human Resources, and Finance to determine appropriate next steps. Specific concerns will be forwarded to the respective areas.

14. Instrumental Music Activities

Appeal Status: Suspended. Committee moved to immediately freeze current funds in 522-264-1944, estimated at \$27,088 at the time of this decision. Funds may be made available pending resolution of questions/concerns of the Committee.

Vote: 5-0-1

Rationale: Per the appellant, there is clear connection with course enrollment and the development of the academic program. The Committee has additional concerns regarding clarity of recordkeeping, potential expenditure of funds, and the disparate proportion of financial support between institutional and student dollars. Funds will be frozen pending a meeting between Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, ASG, Human Resources, and Finance to determine appropriate next steps. Specific concerns will be forwarded to the respective areas.

15. Vocal and Choral Music Activities

Appeal Status: Suspended. Committee moved to immediately freeze current funds in 522-264-1937, estimated at \$32,423 at the time of this decision. Funds may be made available pending resolution of questions/concerns of the Committee.

Vote: 5-0-1

Rationale: Per the appellant, there is clear connection with course enrollment and the development of the academic program. The Committee has additional concerns regarding clarity of recordkeeping, potential expenditure of funds, and the disparate proportion of financial support between institutional and student dollars. Funds will be frozen pending a meeting between Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, ASG, Human Resources, and Finance to determine appropriate next steps. Specific concerns will be forwarded to the respective areas.