

S+A Allocations Committee Process 2020-2021 - FAQ

The S+A Committee process is governed by several intersecting sets of guidelines and laws:

1. RCWs (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/stupro/how-your-tuition-fees-are-spent/>)
2. ASG Financial Code (http://studentweb.bellevuecollege.edu/asg/files/2011/03/financial_code.pdf, has not been updated since 2008. ASG is currently revising the document to bring it up to date and in line with applicable RCWs. In the event that the RCW and the Financial Code do not agree, the RCWs take precedence.
3. Killian Guidelines
4. Service and Activities (S+A) Use – Compliance and Guidance – Document developed with a workgroup in 2019 and vetted by College’s executive leadership to assist staff and students in determining appropriate use of S+A funds.
5. Past practice and practical considerations.

What Does the S+A Committee Do?

The S&A Committee is charged with reviewing all funding requests for Services and Activities fees, and then to recommend a yearly S+A budget to the Associated Student Government for review and vote. The ASG will then propose the budget to the campus’ Board of Trustees for approval.

Per the RCWs and ASG Financial Code, the S&A Committee is charged with reviewing and allocating SA funds each year. No other group may oversee or manage the process.

“Responsibility for proposing to the administration and the governing board program priorities and budget levels for that portion of program budgets that derive from services and activities fees shall reside with a services and activities fee committee, on which students shall hold at least a majority of the voting memberships... RCW 28B.15.045 (3).” Therefore, the S+A paid by individual students enrolled in an academic or extra/co-curricular program cannot be pulled out of the S+A funds by the academic unit or manager of any program to determine how it will be spent.

The ASG Financial Code sets the members of the Committee, in conjunction with the RCWs. By law, the committee or its budget process are not managed by other groups.

Who Was on the S+A Committee for 20-21? How Were They Chosen?

The composition of the S+A Committee is set by the applicable RCW and the ASG Financial Code. Per applicable RCWs, the S+A budget process is student-led, students hold a majority vote on the Committee. Per the ASG Financial Code, membership is comprised of 2 ASG officers, 2 students at large, 1 exempt employee, 1 classified employee and 1 faculty employee. Non-voting advisors are the Director of Student Programs (position of Asst. Dean was eliminated) and the Director of Finance. As there is no longer a Chief Justice position, the Budget Manager of the Office of Student Programs serves a secretary to the Committee.

Student Voting Members

Past Practice has been that ASG and Student Programs professional staff reach out to students to gauge interest and availability for serving on the committee. The past two years, ASG has allowed Student Programs staff to assist in finding the 2 students at large and has appointed candidates informally. Nora Lance sent emails to students that had previously expressed interest in being more involved, including club leaders and students in affinity groups. Two students expressed interest. Both had the availability and interest to serve their fellow students by sitting on the committee. Given the time and effort required, the committee was fortunate to get two students who stayed engaged during the whole process even though they were not compensated. The other two students are the ASG President and the ASG Treasurer, who chair the committee. The students represented diverse interests and viewpoints, and it happened this year the all four students were students of color.

Professional Voting Members

The current ASG Financial Code stipulates that the President of the College appoints professional voting members. However, that practice has not been in effect for several years. Staff and faculty have been appointed informally based on interest in serving our students and on their availability given the extended and intensive process. This will be addressed in the revision of the Financial Code.

Exempt Rep - Rachel Wellman, Title IX Coordinator, who has CTC experience in Student Activities, Compliance as well as budget review expressed interest last year, and was contacted this year as the person who represented Exempt employees last year asked to step away. Given the breadth of Rachel's experience in the system, she was brought onto the committee with the ok from ASG.

Classified Rep – The person who served last year is no longer with the college, so the Director of Student Programs reached out to the Chair of the Classified Governance Council who recommended Lindsey Powers. The Director of Student Programs met with her to go over what the committee entails and she was brought onto the committee with the ok from ASG

Faculty Rep – The Director of Student Programs reached out to the Chair of the Faculty Governance Council to ask if anyone had been tapped for the Faculty Rep. The response was no, but an offer was extended to work together in the future. The faculty member who served last year, Dr. Trevor Gamble, was available and could bring some experience to the committee since it was his 3rd year serving. Dr. Gamble was brought onto the committee with the ok from ASG.

Non-voting Members

Jim Craswell, Director of Finance -to provide budget information, history and advice in the larger context of the College's budgeting process.

Carrie Moore, Director of Student Programs- to provide administrative services to the committee, setting appointments, drafting communications and arranging meetings. Since the staff in Student Programs process a wide range of paperwork for programs and clubs, the Director with Jim Craswell was able to answer questions about expenses for some of the groups over the last year. The Director was

also a member of the working group that developed the BC Guidelines last summer, and so was able to answer questions about that document and process.

Hristo Stoynov, Budget Manager for the Office of Student Programs- historically has served as secretary preparing funding request documents, and tracking the allocations

Invitation to Apply

On Jan. 23-25, 2020, groups that applied in previous years were invited to apply. This has been past practice and will be revised for the 21-22 fiscal year to be open to all student groups on campus. Included were instructions, Killian Guidelines and the Service and Activities (S+A) Fee Use – Compliance and Guidance document were included.

Funding Requests were due on Feb. 10, 2020. Requests were compiled and prepared for the Committee by Hristo Stoynov.

How Did the Committee This Year Make Their Decisions?

Initial Meeting - After the Committee members were set, the Director of Student Programs arranged an initial meeting in which the Committee received an overview of S+A processes per the RCW and the guiding documents (Financial Code, Killian Guidelines and Compliance Guidelines). Each member was given binders containing all the funding requests submitted by departments and programs. Each funding request included a narrative with questions about the department or program and a budget work sheet for the request

The amount available for allocation which comes from the Finance Dept. was shared with the members: \$2.7M. When totaled up, the requested for S+A funds totaled \$3.5M.

Committee members, per past practice, shared what they felt priorities should be for the Committee during deliberations. Priorities have to be set once it is determined how much funds are available and the \$700K shortfall meant that there were tough decisions to be made. Students on the committee particularly were focused on the on-campus student experience and on campus employment. This rubric was drafted and sent to the members to review and approve after the initial meeting. The rubric (perhaps a misnomer, as they were more guiding principles to consider during the review) was duly approved by the Committee. Committee members used these guiding principles as they began the comprehensive review of funding requests.

Does the department/program focus on improving the student experience on campus?

Does the department/program help students succeed academically?

Does the department/program offer services and activities that enrich student life outside of class?

Has the department/program actively engaged students in the past year?

Is the department/program planning to increase student engagement in the upcoming year?

Are the department/program services and activities open to all BC students?

Does the department/program only want money for travel?

If they ask for travel, is that all of their request or does the bulk of the request go to on campus student activities and services?

Is this service/activity sustainable over time? What funding sources would they have if S&A does not fund?

Review and Deliberations - Committee members were given a week to review the funding requests, make notes, write down questions on their own to become familiar with all the requests. This was the first year members had the documents in advance to review. This was to ensure students were prepared to discuss requests and could make decisions collectively, factoring in all asks.

At the first deliberation meeting, the committee members chose to review each request, to discuss, ask and answer questions, prior to putting anything up for a vote. Over the course of two deliberation sessions, the committee members discussed every funding request as they worked toward a decision on each.

Jim Craswell advised the Committee as they moved forward on budgeting best practices per the College Budget process that he oversees.

The members then went through each request again as they discussed and put each request up for a vote. All motions, seconds, and votes were recorded by Hristo Stoyanov budget manager for Student Programs. During some of the votes, not all members were present. Quorum is 4/7 voting members and the group had quorum for all discussions, deliberations and votes. However, ALL voting members reviewed ALL funding decisions and votes, and approved those decisions.

The Committee members had questions for several of the groups requesting funds, and could not resolve or answer those questions, so for some, no funds were allocated pending the appeals process. The Committee members wanted to ask questions or get clarification from some of these groups prior to making a final allocation during the appeals process. Committee members expressed shock and dismay at the virulent reactions from some program managers and others across campus when the process was only in the first stage.

The timeline set by the Board of Trustees was very tight, so preliminary allocations notices were sent out on Monday, Mar. 2, 2020.

Appeals Process and Adjustments- Initially, based on past practice, the appeals process was not an open meeting. However, concerns were raised by some groups about this. AAG Bruce Marvin confirmed that the appeals meetings are subject to the Open Meetings RCWs, therefore the process was altered to be in compliance. AAG Marvin further clarified that the appeals presentations and Q+A with the Committee should be open, but that deliberations of the Committee were not open.

Due to the Covid-19 stay home orders, the appeals were rescheduled for the 2nd week in April under a revised budgetary timeline.

Appeals were scheduled and held via Teams Live events, April 13-17. The appeals format was expanded to include a 10 min presentation from the appellants with up to 5 people participating. The Q+A was expanded to 20 minutes so the Committee members could get their questions answered.

Fifteen programs appealed their initial allocation decision.

Committee members stressed that they understood the personal value of the programs to individual students and requested that testimonials not be included so as to allow for questions regarding how programs were set up and run, what they were spending funds on, etc. However, appellants who chose to submit testimonials or have students provide testimony were allowed to do so.

Final Deliberations and Decisions - The Committee met for 5 hours of appeals deliberations on April 17 and 20. Appeals documents were drafted by Rachel Wellman, with assistance from the Director of Finance and the Director of Student Programs. Committee members reviewed the Appeals Decision and it was accepted and posted for ASG to review and vote at their April 28 meeting.