PART I: POLICY

MISSION

The Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) manages the allocation process of a portion of the graduate and professional student portion of the student activity fees to registered graduate or professional student organizations. GSBB strives to provide funds for graduate and professional student organizations in a fair and equitable manner, consistent with the votes of the representative board of GSBB. The purpose of funds allocated by GSBB is to enrich the graduate and professional student experience at Virginia Tech both socially and professionally.

SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

The views and opinions expressed by organizations that are funded through the Graduate Student Budget Board do not reflect any official policy, stance, or position of the Board and are solely the opinions, viewpoints, or reflections of that specific organization.

Graduate and professional students at Virginia Tech who pay the student activity fee, and registered graduate/professional student organizations are eligible for GSBB funds.

During the pilot phase 1 (March 2021-August 2021), the funding of GSBB will be limited to Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) having “Graduate” in their title.

GRADUATE STUDENT BUDGET BOARD PURPOSE

The creation of the Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) was initiated by the members of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA), in order to have a mechanism for reviewing and making fund allocation decisions to support graduate and professional student organization programming consistent with their organization’s purpose. The funding comes from the graduate and professional portion of the student activity fees.

GSBB STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP POLICY - PILOT PHASE

The current membership of GSBB is only applicable for the pilot phase

Board Members

During the pilot phase, The Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) will consist of:

- Three (3) members from the Finance Committee of the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) including the Finance Director of GSA, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee and the Secretary of the Finance Committee;
- One (1) Executive Board member of the Graduate Student Assembly;
● Three (3) Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) Delegates, who are nominated by the Finance committee of GSA and confirmed by the General Assembly
● All members Board members of the GSBB should be confirmed by the General Assembly

Chair

The Chair of the GSBB will be the Finance Director of the GSA. During the pilot phase, the Chair will serve from March 1, 2021 through August 1, 2021. The responsibilities of the chair include:

● Set agendas for the GSBB meetings;
● Facilitate and attend all meetings;
● Maintain a GSBB Chair email account;
● Guide the GSBB without bias in the application of policy and precedent when reviewing funding requests
● Hold regular office hours to meet with organizations for questions and clarifications on GSBB policy and procedure;
● Attend university meetings as necessary;
● Act as a liaison between the SECL and the GSBB;
● Delegate tasks to the Vice Chair and/or other GSBB board members
● The Chair will not be a voting member of the Board except for when there is a tie among the votes
● When there is a tie among votes, the Chair will be voting to break the tie

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair of the GSBB will be the Chairperson of the Finance Committee of the GSA. During the pilot phase, the Vice Chair will serve from March 1, 2021 through August 1, 2021. During this phase, The Vice Chair will be a voting member of GSBB. The responsibilities of the chair include:

● Attend all meetings;
● Support and take delegation from the Chair;
● Take the place of Chair at meetings, if needed, or during the Chair's absence;
● Represent the Board’s interests at Appeals meetings;
● Coordinate appropriations strategy with the SECL
● Coordinate meetings with the board members and take meeting minutes during the GSBB meetings
● The Vice Chair will be the voting member of the board

GSBB Advisor

The advisor for the Graduate Student Budget Board is a full time staff member appointed through the Student Engagement and Campus Life (SECL) and the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA).
Proposed Structure of GSBB

The Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) will be structured under the Student Budget Board (SBB), a standing committee of the Commission of Student Affairs (CSA). The SBB will manage the allocation process of a portion of the student activity fees to the GSBB according to GSBB and SBB policy. The Chair of the GSBB will be reporting to the Chair and Advisor of the Student Budget Board. The Chair of GSBB will also be a member and have a seat on the Student Budget Board.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The roles of the members of GSBB are listed as follows:

- Attend all GSBB meetings, each member is allowed two (2) absences per semester;
  - Excused absences including but not limited to: illness, personal/family emergency, or exam scheduled during the meeting time
  - Unexcused absences are the discretions of the Chair and Vice Chair
- Actively participate in meetings;
- Respond to any and all eVotes;
- Accept and complete delegated tasks from the Chair;
- Communicate decisions quickly and efficiently to relevant organizations
FUNDING CATEGORIES AND MAXIMUM- PILOT PHASE

Funding of the Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) during the Pilot phase will only be available to Graduate student organizations having “Graduate” in their title.

Below are the types of funding available to each eligible graduate organization. All maximums outlined are per organization and per the following timeline (March to Aug, 2021). Details for maximums within line items can be found later under Funding Guidelines and restricted Items. Please note that you may not apply for more than one funding category per event.

Food and Beverage for Events/Meetings

- This category will be funded up to $200 per meeting/event
- Food service charges, delivery charges, supplies, food, and beverages will only be funded for meetings and events specific to the organization
- Organizational meetings or events will be formal meetings or events among the board members, members, and potential members of the organization
- Meetings or events may include weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual gathering hosted by the organization. The purpose of the meeting or event and justification of how it aligns with the mission of the organization must be outlined in the request for funding
- The meeting or events must be held on the Virginia Tech campus or at a space subject to the approval of the Board, based on justification by the organization
- If the event is being sponsored by a graduate organization at the Roanoke campus, the events must be within 5 miles of the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute or at an approved space that will be subject to discretion of the board
- Alcoholic beverages may be served for organization meetings/events, but will not be funded by the GSBB
- Submit requests minimum 30 calendar days prior to the meeting/event date

Conference Travel Funding

- This funding category will be funded up to $3000 per organization during the pilot phase
- Student organizations must apply for funding on behalf of their members.
- The Organization requesting funds for their members must justify their role in conference attendance which includes and is not limited to presenter, moderator, speaker, volunteer;
- Organizations must demonstrate how conference attendance:
  - Meets the organization’s mission; and
  - Benefits the organization and individual members of the organization
- Conference attendance with a purpose, or intention, of presenting work or projects specific to, or associated with, academic progress that benefits the members in the student organization will be considered for funding
- There are no limitations or restrictions on the number of students applying for conferences from each graduate organization. No individual member can apply for funding independently
● There are no limitations or restrictions of the number of conferences per academic year for graduate student organizations
● Conference funding includes: travel accommodations (airfare, gas, train, car rental, parking, shuttle), registration fees, and lodging only
● This funding category will be eligible for online/virtual conference registration
● Requests that fall under this funding category must be submitted 30 calendar days prior to the conference start date
● Student organizations applying for this funding category are also eligible to apply for other funding sources (GSA Travel Fund Program, Departmental funding, etc)
● This category will be funded on a first come first serve basis during the pilot phase

Outreach Events

● This category will be funded up to $500 per organization during the pilot phase
● This funding category includes logistics required for outreach events including but not limited to travel accommodations, registration fees, lodging, etc.
● Food or beverage will not be funded in this category
● Outreach events are limited to 50 miles surrounding the campus of the applicant organization, for example, a graduate student organization located at the Roanoke satellite campus could apply for outreach funds if the event is located within 50 miles of the Roanoke campus
● Outreach events are limited to events pertaining to the local community, for example, events with the target audience of middle or high school students

Contingency Funding

● Contingency Funding will be available to graduate students during the pilot phase
● The contingency funding program is designed to address unforeseen needs relating to existing or new programs arising throughout the pilot phase
● In case the total budget allocation for all the three categories of the GSBB exceeds the cap, the contingency budget will be used for funding organizations in any of the categories
● Organizations must submit their requests at least 30 calendar days prior to the scheduled event or before the requested items need to be paid for, whichever is first

FUNDING GUIDELINES- PILOT PHASE

● All the funding categories for the Graduate Student Budget Board (GSBB) will be allocated on a first come first served basis.
● Conference funding will be capped at 40% of the total budget for GSBB
● Food and beverage funding will be capped at 30% of the total budget for GSBB
● Contingency funding will consist of 20% of the total budget for GSBB
● Outreach Event funding will be capped at 10% of the total budget for GSBB
PART II: PROCEDURE

GSBB PILOT PHASE TIMELINE

Pilot Phase of the Graduate Student Budget Board starts March 1, 2021. Items requested from the eligible graduate organizations will be fundable through Aug 1, 2021. The GSBB board members will be responsible for structuring the board, conducting meetings for hearing requests from organizations, approving funding according to policy and coordinating payments and reimbursements with SECL. The GSBB will reconvene during Summer 2021 to reevaluate policy & procedure for Phase 2 pilot which is expected to go live at the start of Fall 2021.

GSBB MEETING PROCEDURE

Frequency of Meetings

- The board will meet bi-weekly during the pilot phase starting from the first week of March, 2021
- Extra meetings may be scheduled if needed and can be called by the Chair of GSBB.
- If a meeting is not needed, it can be cancelled by the Chair of GSBB

Quorum

- Quorum is needed for each GSBB meeting in order to vote on requests
- Quorum is any amount of members above 50% of voting members
  - Voting members could be the primary member of the board or the replacement member sent if the primary member is unable to attend

EXPECTATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

GSBB has expectations for the graduate student organizations that apply for funds. The expectations are as follows:

- Requests are adequately described, reasonable, and logically align with the mission of the applicant organization;
- Applicant organizations conduct themselves with fiscal integrity with funds used efficiently and appropriately;
- Applicant organizations abide by GSBB deadlines;
- Programming and events are diverse, engaging, and educational for the graduate community
The finance committee will have the final decision on appropriation of funds for the fundable categories listed in the policy.

Eligible organizations will be trained on the funding application process, policy and procedure for GSBB.

**FUNDING APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

The following criteria must be met to apply for funding with the GSBB:

- Have the word “graduate” in the title of their organization;
- Complete the training module of GSBB before applying for funds;
- Meet the established application deadline set by GSBB with forms filled out correctly;
- Only student organization members in the roster of Gobblerconnect can apply for funding.

**DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION**

- During the pilot phase, there will be no restrictions on how early organizations can apply for funding.
- During the pilot phase, the submission deadline for all the categories will be 30 calendar days prior to the event date or the date that the money needs to be spent.
- Funding requests received less than 30 days prior to the event date will be denied.

**REQUEST HEARING**

- Requests will be heard on a first come first served basis of the order submitted from the student organizations.
- GSBB meets bi-weekly and every effort is made to hear funding requests as quickly as possible.
- GSBB makes their funding decision based on:
  - How the funding request helps the organization meet its mission.
  - If the request follows funding policies and precedents.
  - How well justified and estimated the funding request is with appropriate supporting documentation.
- GSBB reserves the right to a) ask for additional clarity if needed or b) meet with organizations before awarding funding.
- If the organization is sent an email seeking clarity on a request, they have one week (7 calendar days) from the date the email is sent, to respond.
- If a response is not given within 7 calendar days, the request will be voted on with the information, or lack thereof, provided.
- If the organization is asked to meet with the Board, the organization will be notified of the date and time.
- If a representative of the organization is not present, the request will be voted on with information, or lack thereof, provided.
**APPROVED FUNDS**

- Once a request is approved, the organization will be notified of what the board approved in their request.
- The organization is approved for ONLY what is on the request and award letter.
- If funds are spent outside of what was approved and/or the amount approved, the organization will be solely responsible for paying those expenditures.

**PAYMENTS AND REIMBURSEMENTS**

- There are several documents that must be completed and submitted to the Student Organization Accounting Office in Squires 225, before a check request can be forwarded to the Controller’s Office.
- Approved funds are only dispersed through reimbursement during the pilot phase.
- If the invoice or charge is more than what was approved through SBB, the graduate organization is responsible for paying the remainder of the costs.

**Reimbursement for Personal Purchases**

- The organization should submit the original detailed receipt along with any appropriate backup documentation and the Student Payment Processing Form, via the [RSO/USLP-- SBB Electronic Payment Processing Submission (2020-2021)](https://gobblerconnect) on GobblerConnect.
  - If paying with cash, check, or card, only the original detailed receipt is needed.

**Payment for University Services**

- Invoices from University Services/Departments should be submitted via the available [RSO/USLP-- SBB Electronic Payment Processing Submission (2020-2021)](https://gobblerconnect) on GobblerConnect.
  - These invoices can be paid directly from the invoice and not through a reimbursement.

**APPEALS**

- Appeals during the pilot phase may only be based on the following criteria:
  a. Established policies and procedures were not followed.
  b. The decision was not made within parameters with previous decisions of the board, in the same timelines of the pilot phase.
- The fact that the Board did not fund an item at the requested level does not constitute grounds for appeal.

**Hearing Appeals**

- Graduate Student Organization appeals will be heard by the GSBB Appeals Committee.
- The GSBB Appeals Committee:
  - Consists of an independent commission of 3 Graduate delegates nominated by GSA.
○ The chosen members to sit on any appeal, must not have been present and/or voted on the original request.
● An appeals schedule will be created one month after the appeal has been made by a student organization
  ○ If an appeal needs to be heard that week, Appeals committee members will hear the appeal.

Filing an Appeal
● All appeals must be submitted by the organization, and filed in accordance with the following appeal criteria.
  ○ All appeals of the GSBB allocation decisions must be submitted, no later than 5 PM on the date two (2) weeks from the date on the award letter.
  ○ The appeal will be delivered to the GSBB Advisor to begin the appeal process.
  ○ The GSBB Advisor will review the appeal and determine if it meets the appeal criteria.
  ○ If it does, the SBB Advisor will convene the GSBB Appeals Committee for the upcoming week.

Hearing an Appeal
● The convened panel will review the request and meet with members of the organization who filed the appeal and the Chair or Vice Chair of the GSBB.
● The GSBB Advisor will be present to take minutes and to ensure that both sides are being presented.
● Once both sides are presented, and the panel feels they have enough information to make a decision, they will privately deliberate.