



Student Bar Association Finance Handbook

Spring 2022

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Article I. Administrative Matters

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION AND SBA FINANCE POLICIES.

This Handbook constitutes the Student Bar Association (SBA) Finance Policies and provides the requirements for how money is allocated to, spent by, and reimbursed to student organizations (and their relevant agents) recognized by the SBA. While almost everything you do involving money will require attending a meeting, filling out paperwork, or both, your organization's leadership is responsible for having constructive knowledge of this handbook's contents.

SEC. 2. FINANCE DUTIES OF STUDENT ORGANIZATION'S PRESIDENTS AND TREASURERS.

Your organization's President and Treasurer are the chief officers and should maintain diligent records of all organization activities and stay up-to-date on any information related to their organization. It is their duty to maintain an up-to-date budget of how much the organization has spent and how much is remaining. It is also their duty to certify and keep records of all receipts and reimbursement requests submitted to the SBA Finance Committee Chair. Duties of the Treasurer also include preparing the organization's yearly budget and depositing any revenue made through fundraising with the WCL Finance Office within one business day. The Treasurer must ensure that anything submitted to the SBA Finance Committee Chair complies with the rules in this handbook as well as WCL and American University policy.

In the event your organization elects new chief officers for any reason, the organization must notify the following people as soon as possible:

- SBA Senate Finance Committee Chair (Finance Chair): SBAFinance@wcl.american.edu • SBA Groups & Organizations Committee Chair: (SBAgando@wcl.american.edu) • SBA Director of External Affairs: SBAextaffairs@wcl.american.edu

If your treasurer has been replaced for any reason, the organization must also notify the following people as soon as possible:

- SBA Senate Finance Committee Chair (Finance Chair): SBAFinance@wcl.american.edu • SBA Director of Finance (Finance Director): sbareimbursements@wcl.american.edu

The responsibility for maintaining your organization's money and inventory passes to those new officers once the SBA Groups and Organizations Committee Chair and Director of External Affairs are notified of the change in leadership. While it is also the responsibility of the outgoing

President and Treasurer to make sure that this handbook is passed to new officers and that the new officers know they need to get an updated copy from the Finance Committee Chair, ignorance will not be a defense for contemporaneous officers to a breach of these rules.

Note: If you have not yet elected a new board, your organization is still responsible for submitting a budget through the annual budgeting process by the original due date determined by the Finance Chair.

Article II. Obtaining SBA Funds

An organization's operating budget is the day-to-day money it uses during the year. Organizations may spend SBA-allocated funds at their discretion, subject to the requirements in this handbook. Except for Level 1 organizations and subject to the discretion of the SBA Finance Committee and the SBA Senate, an organization may be granted additional funding during the year if the organization has a demonstrated need for money in excess of its original budget allocation. (*See Article II, Section 2(b) [Contingency Grants](#)*)

SECTION 1. YOUR ORGANIZATION'S YEARLY BUDGET.

Only SBA-recognized organizations and committees may apply for operating budgets from the SBA. If your organization is no longer recognized by the SBA, you must re-apply for recognition through the Groups and Organizations Committee of the SBA (GANDO). The budgets are dispersed in the spring semester for use during each fiscal year (May 1 – April 30).

To qualify to apply for an SBA budget, your organization must:

- (1) Meet the requirements established by GANDO policy
- (2) Have your organization's president and/or treasurer attend or view a mandatory SBA sponsored budget training

Important: If an organization has not met the requirements established by GANDO policy, then it will not be provided a budget. If an organization already has a budget, they will be unable to access their budget for [P-Card](#) and [Budget Use for Reimbursement](#) requests.

Note: Ignorance of the rules is not an excuse for not following them. It is the organization's responsibility to read the Finance and GANDO handbooks and be knowledgeable of their contents to follow the established policies.

(a) Annual Budget Request Process

The budget allocation process takes place every Spring semester.

- (1) The Finance Chair will send out an email to the student organizations at the end of February or early March, describing the budgeting process for all organizations and setting deadlines.

- (2) Every organization that intends to seek money from the SBA must attend or watch a recorded mandatory finance training session.
- (3) Each student organization will have about a month to fill out its budget for the next school year. **Failure to do so will result in the organization being deemed inactive for the next school year.**
- (4) The Finance Committee will convene and go over each organization's budget request line item by line item. Each group's budget will need to be approved by a majority vote of the finance committee to be approved.
- (5) Each organization will receive an email from the Finance Committee Chair providing the approved budget.
- (6) After the organization receives the Finance Committee's recommendation, the organization will have one week to decide if it wants to accept or challenge the approved budget.
 - (A) If the organization decides to accept the approved budget, the organization can accept by following the directions in the email granting the budget.
 - (B) If an organization is unsatisfied and decides to challenge the approved budget, please see *Article II Section(b)*, [Appeals Process: Guidelines for Challenging an Organization's Budget](#).

Funds in your organization's yearly budget may be reallocated within reason with the approval and at the discretion of the Finance Chair. To request a reallocation of funds, please see *Appendix C*, [Email Format: Reallocation of Funds Request](#).

The SBA Finance Committee reserves the right to deny any budget request that is outside of the organization's mission, a violation of the SBA non-discrimination clause, excessive, or especially wasteful.

Note: All Journals and Law Reviews do not submit budgets through the annual budgeting process. They have a separate process done through a faculty representative. The Senate shall not act in any way to jeopardize the contract between the ABA and the ALR. ALR is only required to disclose information about the funding that it receives from the SBA.

(b) Appeals Process: Guidelines for Challenging an Organization's Budget

If an organization decides to challenge the approved budget,

- (1) the organization's treasurer (or operator of the organization's budget) must email the Senate Finance Committee Chair at sbafinance@wcl.american.edu and indicate their intent to challenge their Finance Committee approved budget within one week (7 days) of receiving the Committee's decision;

(2) the Finance Chair will set a date and time for a budget appeal meeting, and a representative from the organization will need to attend the budget appeals meeting; and

(3) the budget appeals meeting will be during the last SBA Finance meeting of the semester. Remember, the budget appeal is not a negotiation: your organization will be allotted five (5) minutes to present your arguments. After attending the appeal meeting, your organization will receive the Finance Committee's decision on your appeal via email.

Notice regarding the SBA Finance Committee's decision will be given within seven (7) to ten (10) days of the meeting.

(A) If this produces unsatisfactory results, your organization may appeal to the full SBA Senate during the annual Budget Meeting. All decisions of the SBA Senate are final. Appealing to the full Senate voids the Finance Committee's initial offer; therefore, the Senate may reduce or increase the request as it sees fit. Remember, the budget appeal is not a negotiation: your organization will be allotted five (5) minutes to present your arguments. After attending the SBA Senate appeal meeting, your organization will receive the Senate's decision on your appeal via email. Notice regarding the decision will be given within seven (7) to ten (10) days of the meeting.

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL FUNDS.

(a) Co-sponsored Events and Projects

Co-sponsorship allows one organization to contribute towards another organization's expenses for a specific event or project. Funding may be reimbursed for functions with students or organizations from another law school(s), provided that your organization can demonstrate that The SBA Constitution's non-discrimination clause governs funding for co-sponsored events. SBA funds may not be expended in support of any organization or event that discriminates on the basis of any prohibited category or any other substantial sense of identity.

(b) SBA Contingency Grants

Any active SBA-recognized organization and other WCL affiliated programs and initiatives, except for Law Review and Journal organizations, can apply for contingency funding, provided its budget does not already include sufficient funding for the expense.

Please Note: Funds in your organization's yearly budget may be reallocated within reason with the approval and at the discretion of the Finance Chair. To request a request a reallocation of funds, please see [Appendix C](#). If no such approval is given by the Finance Chair, that is when an organization should proceed to the contingency grant stage. Depending on the amount being requested, the approval can come from the SBA Finance Chair, the Finance Committee, or the SBA Senate.

How to Apply for a Contingency Grant —

- (1) Fill out Contingency Grant Application Form completely and in as much detail as possible.
 - (A) The form can be found on MyWCL under “Offices” → “Student Bar Association” → “Finance Documents.”
 - (B) **Note:** The Contingency Grant Request Process can take between **two to four weeks** to complete, not including any appeal proceedings. *Please plan accordingly and submit your requests with enough time in advance to avoid missing any personal deadlines.*
- (2) If your contingency grant is —
 - (A) **<\$500** The SBA Senate Finance Committee Chair may approve contingency grants requests for \$500 or less. Denials may be appealed to the Finance Committee. If denied by the Finance Committee, denials may be appealed to the SBA Senate, where they can be approved by a simple majority.
 - (B) **<\$1,000** The SBA Senate Finance Committee may approve contingency grants for \$1,000 or less by a majority vote of the Finance Committee. Denials may be appealed to the SBA Senate, where they can be approved with a simple majority.
 - (C) **\$1,000 - \$1,500** The SBA Senate Finance Committee may approve contingency grants between \$1,000 and \$1,500 only by a unanimous vote. Denials may be appealed to the SBA Senate, where they can be approved with a simple majority.
 - (D) **\$1,500+** Requests exceeding \$1,500 need approval by a simple majority of the SBA Senate.
 - (E) Requests may be approved by the Finance Committee Chair, Finance Committee, or Senate for a lesser amount than originally requested. Contingency Grants approved for less than the requested amount may be appealed to the Finance Committee if the original request was <\$500 and to the SBA Senate if the original request was >\$500.
 - (F) Decisions made by the SBA Senate are final. Any appeal to the Finance Committee or the Senate must be for the original request amount.
- (3) Email the Contingency Grant Application Form to the SBA Finance Chair at sbafinance@wcl.american.edu.
 - (A) Any Contingency Grant request that needs to go before the Finance Committee or the full SBA Senate must be submitted **72 hours** before the next SBA Senate Finance Committee Meeting (for grants between \$500-\$1,500) or SBA Senate Meeting (\$1,500+).
 - (B) If the request is submitted less than 72 hours before the SBA Senate Finance Committee Meeting or SBA Senate Meeting, your organization will have to wait until the next SBA Senate Finance Committee Meeting or SBA Senate Meeting for consideration of your contingency grant.
- (4) A representative of the organization’s executive board (e.g., the president or the treasurer) must be present when addressing the SBA Senate Finance Committee or the full SBA Senate. If the aforementioned representative is not present when the organization is called, the organization will be called a second time at the end of the Committee’s agenda.

Contingency Grant Uses

Contingency grant funds may only be used for the purposes and expenses explicitly listed in the contingency grant application as approved by the SBA. If there are issues and the event cannot occur, but the organization wants to do something else with the funds granted, the organization can seek approval from the SBA Finance Chair if the event is substantially related to what was granted in the contingency grant. If it is not substantially related, the organization must let the Finance Chair know as soon as possible. If there are multiple aspects or line items to your contingency grant, you are free to move the funds around within reason as long as they are substantially related. If in doubt, reach out to the Finance Chair for approval. Contingency grant request funds may not be used in violation of any provision of the SBA Finance Handbook or any other relevant rules provided by Washington College of Law or American University.

(c) Fundraising and Funding from Outside SBA

Organizations are strongly encouraged to fundraise. This fundraising can either be through raising cash from events, accepting donations of goods or money, or receiving support funding from non-SBA sources.

External, informal, or off-the-books accounts are strictly prohibited. All money raised by your organization, including any dues collected that are not owed to a regional or national chapter, must be deposited into the SBA General Account. SBA will not reimburse or be liable in any way for any amount of donated or raised money that is lost, stolen, misappropriated, or otherwise disbursed without first being deposited with the WCL Finance Office.

Funds deposited into the SBA General Account will be added to your organization's yearly budget under a "fundraised funds" line item. Any unused fundraising funds will be included in your budget for the following year. Your organization may use your fundraised budget for prohibited items, including:

- Honoraria;
- Individual members' chapter dues; and
- Gifts (excluding cash and gift cards).

Your organization **must seek pre-approval** from the Dean of Finance and SBA Finance Chair before using funds for the above purposes. Once approval is received, and for using fundraised funds in general, your organization will need to fill out either a [P-Card](#) or [Budget Use for Reimbursement](#) request and specify what the funds will be used on. Please note in your request that the expense will be coming out of your "fundraised funds" budget item.

Please Note: Always notify the SBA Finance Chair before making a deposit with the WCL Finance Office so that the SBA Finance Committee is aware of all budgetary changes in your organization. Deposits can be given to the WCL Finance Office from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Monday through Friday. Never leave money in the SBA Finance dropbox or a Senate mailbox.

Article III. Using Allocated Funds

SECTION 1. PURCHASE CARD “P-CARD.”

The University Purchase Card “P-Card” is WCL’s credit card and the main tool organizations should utilize to use their allocated SBA funds.

(a) How to use the University P-Card —

- (1) Email the SBA Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu) your P-Card request **at least five (5) business days** prior to the purchase in the format found in Appendix A, [Email Format: Budget Use Request](#).
- (2) The SBA Finance Chair will review and approve the P-Card request and connect your organization to the Finance Office
 - (A) If your request falls outside your organization’s approved budget, the SBA Finance Chair reserves the right to deny your organization’s request.
- (3) The Finance Office will help you utilize the P-Card
- (4) Receipts must be submitted within seven (7) days of the purchase to the WCL Finance Office (finance@wcl.american.edu) AND the SBA Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu) in the format found in Appendix B, [Email Format: Submitting Receipts](#).

Please Note: If a receipt for a P-Card purchase is not received within seven (7) days, the Finance Chair reserves the right to deny the organization’s future *P-Card* and *Budget Use for Reimbursement* requests until the missing receipt is received.

SEC. 2. BUDGET USE FOR REIMBURSEMENT.

This is the procedure to be used when the P-Card is unavailable/not working or an organization wants to purchase something off-campus that cannot be done online. An organization can only be reimbursed for allocated line items in their SBA-approved budget or for SBA contingency grant-approved expenses.

(a) How to Use your Budget for Reimbursement —

- (1) Email the SBA Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu) your *Budget Use for Reimbursement* request **at least five (5) business days** prior to the purchase in the format found in Appendix A, [Email Format: Budget Use Request](#).

- (2) The Finance Chair will review and approve your *Budget Use for Reimbursement* request
- (A) If your request falls outside your organization's approved budget, the SBA Finance Chair reserves the right to deny your organization's request.
- (3) An organization will designate a student to pay out of his/her/their own pocket for the SBA-approved budgeted expense.
- (4) Once the purchase has been made, the purchaser will need to fill out the following forms:
 - (A) a Student Payment Certification Form
 - (B) a Student Payment Form; and
 - (C) a W9 (unless the purchaser already has one on file with the WCL Finance Office).
 - (D) Note: Forms can be found on MyWCL under "Offices" → "Student Bar Association" → "Finance Documents"
- (5) The Reimbursement Package (consisting of the above forms and receipts) must be submitted within 30 days of purchase to the SBA Finance Director (sbareimbursements@wcl.american.edu) AND the SBA Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu) in the format found in Appendix B, [Email Format: Submitting Receipts](#).
- (6) The SBA Finance Director will approve the purchaser's Reimbursement Package and send it to the WCL Finance Office
 - (A) If your request falls outside your organization's approved budget, the SBA Finance Director reserves the right to deny your organization's reimbursement package.
 - (B) Alcohol costs are strictly prohibited. If alcohol is on a receipt, you are responsible for that expenditure.
- (7) The purchaser will receive the funds either by check or wire transfer (A) **It can take three to four weeks to receive reimbursed funds, so plan accordingly and don't spend money you can't spare.**

No reimbursement requests will be processed during the summer session unless a summer finance committee is appointed, which is not guaranteed. All reimbursements of summer expenditures will come out of the organization's fall budget.

Please Note: If a receipt and Reimbursement Package are not received within 30 days, the Finance Chair reserves the right to deny the organization's future *P-Card* and *Budget Use for Reimbursement* requests until the missing receipt and/or reimbursement package is received.

Potential Honor Code Violations: Submission of a fraudulent reimbursement or charging a reimbursement to an organization that has not authorized you to spend money on its behalf may lead to an Honor Code Violation.

SEC. 3. BUDGET USE FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT/DISBURSEMENT

This is the main reimbursement procedure to be used for expenditures on travel costs. Expenditures **must be substantively related** to the reasons or purposes for which money was allocated to your organization's budget or contingency grant.

How to Use your Budget for Travel —

- (1) Email the SBA Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu) your *Budget Use for Reimbursement* request **at least two weeks** prior to travel in the format found in Appendix A, [Email Format: Budget Use Request](#).
 - (A) Please indicate how much per diem the traveling students will require:
 - (i) Within D.C, Maryland, and VA = \$50/day per student
 - (ii) National Competitions = \$80/day per student
 - (iii) International Competitions = \$110/day per student
 - (B) Per Diem expenses include:
 - (i) transportation costs such as taxis, Lyfts, Ubers, etc. outside the D.C. area;
 - (ii) meals; and
 - (iii) other incidentals/reasonable costs incurred during the course of the travel.
- (2) The Finance Chair will review and approve your *Budget Use for Reimbursement* request
 - (A) If your request falls outside your organization's approved budget, the SBA Finance Chair reserves the right to deny your organization's request.
- (3) Students will cover the cost of their per diem while traveling.
- (4) Once the trip has concluded, the purchaser will need to fill out the following forms within 30 days of the purchase:
 - (A) a Student Travel Support Payment Form
 - (B) a Student Payment Certification Form
 - (C) a Student Payment Form; and
 - (D) a W9 (unless the purchaser already has one on file with the WCL Finance Office). (E) Note: Forms can be found on MyWCL under "Offices" → "Student Bar Association" → "Finance Documents"
- (5) The Travel Reimbursement Package (consisting of the above forms and receipts) must be submitted within 30 days of the trip to the SBA Finance Director (sbareimbursements@wcl.american.edu) AND the SBA Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu) in the format found in Appendix B, [Email Format: Submitting Receipts](#).

- (6) The SBA Finance Director will approve the purchaser's reimbursement package and send it to the WCL Finance Office
- (A) If your request falls outside your organization's approved budget, the SBA Finance Director reserves the right to deny your organization's reimbursement package. (B) The SBA will only reimburse for transportation and meal costs during the days of the competition.
 - (C) The SBA will **not** reimburse for costs associated with snacks, laundry, or international phone service.
 - (D) Alcohol costs are strictly prohibited. If alcohol is on a receipt, you are responsible for that expenditure.
- (7) The purchaser will receive the funds either by check or wire transfer
- (A) **It can take three to four weeks to receive reimbursed funds, so plan accordingly and don't spend money you can't spare.**

Please note: Per diems roll over from day-to-day, and full per diem rates will be provided for the first and last days of travel. However, purchasers must demonstrate that they used SBA funds responsibly to receive full reimbursement. The SBA is entrusting you to use these funds responsibly, and not doing so may result in honor code violations.

Article IV. Allowed and Prohibited Expenditures

SECTION 1. ALLOWED EXPENDITURES.

Expenditures available through your organization's budget, contingency grants, or fundraised funds may be used on —

(a) Dues (for National and Regional Chapters)

- (1) SBA funds may be used for national or regional chapter dues if
 - (A) The chapter complies with WCL's and the SBA's non-discrimination policy.
 - (B) The organization can show that such membership is necessary to further its purpose and/or mission.
- (2) SBA Finance Committee reserves the right to limit funding for these dues.
- (3) SBA Finance will not reimburse dues for individual students.
- (4) SBA funds may be used to seek representation for national or regional boards.

(b) Competitions and Conferences

- (1) All trips should be booked as far in advance as practical to minimize costs. (2) SBA funds may be used for the total cost of travel, lodging, and registration fees for two (2) people per event.
 - (A) The SBA Finance Committee may exceed the two (2) person restriction only in exigent circumstances with a waiver from the Finance Chair
 - (B) The two (2) person restriction shall not apply to organizations sending a competition team to a tournament.
- (3) Travel/Transportation

- (A) SBA funds may be used on all reasonable travel costs to and from events outside the D.C. area, including flights, trains, and busses.
- (B) Personal Vehicle
- (i) SBA funds may be used to reimburse for gas.
 - (ii) To receive reimbursement for gas, an organization should turn in (in addition to the Reimbursement Forms in [Article III, Section 2](#)).
 - Travel Expense Form, and
 - A map that shows the distance traveled.
 - The SBA utilizes the current IRS mileage rate for charitable organizations for reimbursements.
- (C) Rented Vehicle
- (i) SBA funds may be used for actual expenses, which may include:
 - cost of the rental vehicle;
 - gas (reimbursement); and
 - other necessary costs associated with the rental.
 - (ii) To receive reimbursement for gas, an organization should turn in (in addition to the Reimbursement Forms in [Article III, Section 2](#)).
 - Travel Expense Form; and
 - a map that shows the distance traveled.
 - The SBA utilizes the current IRS mileage rate for charitable organizations for reimbursements.
 - Add-ons will not be reimbursed (e.g., supplemental insurance, GPS systems, etc.).
- (4) Lodging (outside the D.C. area)
- (A) SBA funds may only be used to cover lodging for the length of the event, unless travel cannot reasonably be accommodated the day the event begins or ends (the SBA Finance Committee may approve these additional days on a case-by-case basis).
- (B) Absent exigent circumstances, team members of the same gender identity are expected to share rooms.
- (5) Ad-Hoc Competitions
- (A) Students who are not members of a formal competition organization but wish to attend a competition on an independent basis must obtain permission from: (i) The Dean of Finance
- (ii) The SBA Finance Committee
- (B) Absent exigent circumstances, the SBA will not fund Ad-Hoc competition expenses for students that are already members of a formal competition team. (i) Exigent circumstances may include:
- A member of a competition team who does not compete for that competition team, or
 - A competition in which there is no other qualified or interested student who can participate.

(c) Food

- (1) General Events:
 - (A) General events include those recurring or minor events that provide limited value to the student body, such as general body meetings (GBMs), recruitment events, e-board meetings, and training sessions.
 - (B) Food budgets will be capped at \$300 in total for general events.
- (2) Special Events
 - (A) Special Events (including banquets) shall be interpreted on a case-by-case basis by the SBA Finance Committee
 - (B) While there is no cap on food budgets for special events, the SBA Finance Committee will consider average catering prices, the number of people attending, and the total price of the event to determine whether an expense will be allowed.
- (3) If the event is held on campus, for any order over \$100, Sodexo has the right of first refusal.
 - (A) Pizza is permitted in lieu of Sodexo for orders over \$100.
- (4) If an order is placed with Sodexo or another WCL Approved Food Vendor, all invoices should be directed to the WCL Finance Office.
- (5) If an individual places an order with Sodexo, that student should not spend personal funds for such an order.
- (6) If an organization places an order with Sodexo, that organization should charge the order to the SBA Account number 40-086553-52101-03613.

(d) Other

- (1) Miscellaneous Administrative Costs
 - (A) SBA funds may be used for miscellaneous administrative expenses, including printing, office supplies, podcasting microphones, Adobe Suite (to be obtained through WCL), and promotional materials.
- (2) Accessibility
 - (A) SBA funds may be used to make events more accessible, including for closed captioning (to be obtained through WCL).
- (3) Publishing
 - (A) SBA funds may be used for publishing costs for briefs twice a year.
- (4) Speaker Travel
 - (A) SBA will pay for travel and hotel expenses, subject to the limitations in the *Competitions and Conferences* section, for non-local speakers.

Please Note: Allowed expenses are subject to change. Expenses not included in this list may be approved at the discretion of the Finance Committee. This is not a complete list.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITED EXPENDITURES.

Expenditures for goods and services listed in this Section are generally prohibited (with exceptions).

In order to utilize funds for the below-listed expenditures, the organization must receive prior

express approval from the SBA Finance Committee and WCL Finance Office.

If already purchased, the equivalent amount will be subtracted from the organization's current budget. If the expense goes over the allocated budget, the amount will be subtracted from the organization's budget for the following year.

(a) Alcohol

- (1) SBA funds cannot be spent on alcohol unless
 - (A) the event conforms to AU's alcohol policy; and
 - (B) has been pre-approved by the Dean of WCL and the AU Provost.
- (2) Process [Generally takes one (1) Month]
 - (A) Complete Approval Process Request
 - (B) Obtain the Dean's Signature on the Request Form
 - (C) Send the Form to AU Main Campus for the signature of the AU Provost.

(b) Contracts for Services

- (1) If an individual not connected to WCL provides services for an event, he/she/they must sign a contract with AU to receive remuneration for services prior to the event occurring.

(c) Honoraria

- (1) Absent a prior arrangement, SBA funds cannot be used for honoraria. (A) An Honorarium is a one-time payment to an individual not employed by the University. Examples of such payments can include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) guest lecturers,
 - (ii) reading of papers,
 - (iii) workshops,
 - (iv) presenting research results; and
 - (v) an invited international speaker.
- (2) Organizations may use fundraised funds for honoraria (*See Section Article II, Section 2(c), [Fundraising and Funding from Outside SBA](#)*).

(d) Gifts

- (1) SBA funds cannot be spent on gifts.
- (2) Gifts will be broadly interpreted and will generally include items or services gratuitously provided to group members or leadership for any purpose not directly related to the mission of the organization.
 - (A) Examples of gifts are cash, gift cards, club "swag," electronics, graduation chords, scholarships, etc.
 - (B) Donations to non-WCL nonprofit organizations are also considered gifts. WCL is a 501(c) and prohibited from donating to outside organizations.
- (3) Organizations may use fundraised funds for gifts (*See Section Article II, Section 2(c), [Fundraising and Funding from Outside SBA](#)*).

(e) Items for Fundraising

- (1) SBA funds cannot be used for items or other purchases that will directly be used to raise money for the organization. (e.g., items to be auctioned off). Items must be donated or purchased with non-SBA money.

(f) Personal Service Contracts

- (1) The WCL Finance Office shall not reimburse expenditures of Student Activity Fees on personal service contracts unless arrangements have been made before any expenditure takes place. The WCL Finance Office needs, at a minimum, two weeks of lead-time to process a request to approve a personal service contract.

Article V. Miscellaneous Provisions

SECTION 1. TAX-EXEMPT NUMBER.

Students shall use the tax-exemption number for American University when purchasing goods for use by a student organization in an SBA-approved event. Failure to use the tax-exemption number may result in the denial of reimbursement for the respective taxes.

Tax-Exempt Number: 53-0196549

SEC. 2. FISCAL YEAR.

The SBA shall operate on the same fiscal year as American University: May 1 – April 30. All budgets allocated by the SBA shall operate during the fiscal year. At the end of the fiscal year, all remaining funds in each organization’s budget shall return to the SBA General Account. Any funds given to organizations over the summer shall be through the contingency grant process and shall not be accounted into that organization’s budget for the following fiscal year. The summer term is counted separately and will not be budgeted for in advance by the SBA, except in exigent circumstances.

SEC. 3. GENERAL PENALTIES.

The following is a list of the kinds of penalties that can be imposed upon organizations for violating SBA Finance Policies. The purpose of penalties is to safeguard Student Activities Fee money and to hold individuals responsible for their actions rather than penalizing entire organizations.

- (1) Any violation of the SBA Finance Policy may result in the SBA Finance Committee, by a three-quarters vote, revoking the budget of a student organization. Such action must be reported to the SBA at the next meeting and may be overridden by a majority vote of the full SBA Senate.
- (2) The Finance Committee may also reduce or freeze an organization’s budget by a three quarters vote if an organization has violated SBA Finance Policy. Such action must be reported to the SBA at the next meeting and may be overridden by a majority vote of the full SBA Senate.

- (3) If a receipt and/or reimbursement package for a *P-Card* or *Budget Use for Reimbursement* purchase is not received within the time periods specified in Article III, the Finance Chair reserves the right to deny the organization's future *P-Card* and *Budget Use for Reimbursement* requests until the missing receipt and/or reimbursement package is received.
- (4) Legal or ethical violations will be referred to the Dean of Students for possible Honor Code proceedings and potentially referred to law enforcement. The SBA Senate Finance Committee Chair shall notify the president of the offending organization of any and all penalties in writing. All penalties shall be **automatically appealed** to the full SBA Senate at the meeting immediately following the Finance Committee Chair giving notice. If the organization is present, its representative shall have an opportunity to present its case, and the penalty shall only be upheld upon a majority vote of the full Senate.

SEC. 4. POLICY EXCEPTIONS.

The SBA Finance Committee may make exceptions to the provisions in this handbook on a case by-case basis. Decisions contrary to Finance Policy will require a two-thirds vote in both the Finance Committee and in the full SBA Senate for passage.

SEC. 5. SBA FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR DUTIES.

(a) Senate Votes on Financial Matters —

The Finance Committee Chair shall make available to the SBA Senate all documents submitted to the Finance Committee by a student organization.

(b) State of the Budget —

The Finance Committee Chair shall give an update on the SBA's finances throughout the year at the request of a member of the SBA Senate or SBA Executive. The Finance Committee Chair shall track all organization expenditures each fiscal year through a spreadsheet and update it in real-time as funds are approved and expended.

(c) Contingency Grants —

During SBA Senate meetings, the Finance Committee Chair shall report all decisions made since the last Senate meeting regarding applications for contingency grants.

(d) SBA Reserve —

The SBA shall never let the funds in its reserve account fall below \$40,000. Should the reserve account fall below \$40,000, the SBA shall run a budget surplus during the next fiscal year that equals the difference between \$40,000 and the level of the reserve account.

SEC. 6. WCL LAW REVIEWS.

While the ultimate oversight authority of the law reviews remains with the SBA, the special needs of the Law Reviews have necessitated the delegation of some of this oversight and management authority to the WCL Finance Office. The Law Reviews are only allowed to have up to 52% of the SBA budget. The Finance Office oversees the year-to-year operation of the Law Reviews, including approving their budgets, processing their expenditures, and overseeing their operations.

Any initiative by the SBA to alter the funding structure of the law reviews must be coordinated through the Finance Office, the law review staff administrator, the Finance Committee Chair, the SBA Executive, the Editor-in-Chief of each law review, and any other relevant party.

Appendix A. Email Format: Budget Use Request

Subject:

[Organization] – [P-Card Request or Budget Use for Reimbursement]– [Budget Item Number or Contingency Grant and date grant was approved]

Body:

Organization: *[Official title of your organization]*

What kind of request is this?: *[P-Card Request or Budget Use for Reimbursement]*

Budget Item Number/Contingency Grant: *[Which budget item from your approved budget does this request come from? Or if the budget item was granted via contingency grant, please specify that and the date the grant was approved (e.g., Contingency Grant approved 11/18)]*

Event/Expenditure: *[Title/Description of Event or Expenditure]*

Amount Granted via Budget or Contingency Grant: *[Total amount approved for the budget item]*

Amount already spent from this budget item: *[Total you have spent from this budget item from other budget use requests or from reallocation of funds from this budget item to another budget item]*

Amount Requested: *[Amount your organization wants to use from the total amount granted] [If you need a per diem, include the length of the event//how much you're requesting]*

Purpose: *[What will you use the budget item for? (E.g., pizza, Sodexo catering, registration fees, closed captioning, parking, etc.)]*

Questions: *[Any questions you may have about this request for the Finance Chair]*

Note: Please send this email to the Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu)

Appendix B. Email Format: Submitting Receipts

To submit receipts and/or a reimbursement, please respond to your organization's initial *Budget Use Request* approval email ([Appendix A](#)). Send this new email (on the same chain) to the Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu). If the email also includes a Reimbursement Package, send it to the Finance Director (sbareimbursements@wcl.american.edu) as well as the Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu).

Body:

Did you use the P-Card, or do you need to be reimbursed?: [P-card or Reimbursement?] [Note: If applicable, attach your reimbursement forms to this email]
Amount Used: [Sum of Receipts] [Note: Attach your receipts in a single PDF to this email] **Breakdown of Costs:** *[What each receipt was for/amounts]*

Note: Please send this email to the Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu). If the email also includes a Reimbursement Package, send it to the Finance Director (sbareimbursements@wcl.american.edu) and the Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu).

Appendix C. Email Format: Reallocation of Funds Request

Subject:

[Organization] – Reallocation of Funds – [Budget Item Number]

Body:

Organization: *[Official title of your organization]*

Budget Item Number/Contingency Grant: *[Which budget item from your approved budget does this request come from?]*

Event/Expenditure (Original): *[Title/Description of Event or Expenditure you'd like money reallocated from]*

Amount Granted via Budget or Contingency Grant: *[Total amount approved for the budget item]*

Amount already spent from this budget item: *[Total you have spent from this budget item from other budget use requests or from reallocation of funds from this budget item to another budget item]*

Event/Expenditure (Reallocated): *[Title/Description of Event or Expenditure you'd like money reallocated to]*

Amount Requested to be Reallocated: *[Amount your organization wants to be reallocated]*

Purpose for Reallocation: *[What will you use the budget item for? (e.g., pizza, Sodexo catering, registration fees, closed captioning, parking, etc.)]*

Questions: *[Any questions you may have about this request for the Finance Chair]*

Note: Please send this email to the Finance Chair (sbafinance@wcl.american.edu)