

Funding at Columbia University, 2007-2008 Allocation

Activities Board at Columbia

Introduction

Included below is the amount that the Funding at Columbia University (FaCU) committee has recommended as the allocation for the Activities Board at Columbia (ABC) for the 2007-2008 academic year, as well as a set of guidelines drafted by the committee which will govern all future allocation cycles, beginning with the current year. These guidelines are the same set which were distributed to each governing board at this year's FaCU meeting, and were created in an effort to increase the transparency of the funding process and ensure that the improvement of student life on campus is always the primary focus of the committee and the governing boards. In addition, this year's allocation numbers for each governing board will be publicly available on a website to be established in preparation for the Fall 2007 semester.

Allocations Overview & Reasoning

The FaCU Committee has allocated \$363,016.65 to ABC for the 2007-2008 academic year, which represents a 9.23% increase over the previous year's allocation of \$332,348.68. This figure represents a reduction from the initial budget request submitted to FaCU, and while the committee would have liked to allocate an amount equal to the original request, the budgets of the student councils are unable to accommodate such an expansion over last year's allocations. In general, the cuts made by the committee included a reduction of governing board programming, limitation of student group growth to "reasonable" rates, and the liquidation of any governing board surplus from the 2006-2007 academic year.

The growth of student groups and the governing boards is seen by the FaCU committee as beneficial to student life so long as that growth is manageable and sustainable. Therefore, "reasonable growth" is defined as no more than a budgetary growth of no more than 10% per year per group. Exceptions to this are exemplary groups which have demonstrated significant potential and need for growth, but even these groups have been limited to a benchmark of 20% growth per year by the FaCU committee to prevent abuse of the funding process.

This year's allocation figure was derived in the following manner from the information provided to the committee:

	2006-2007 Amount	Requested	Allocated '07-'08
1. <i>Estimated Surplus</i>		64,000.00	64,000.00
2. <i>Initial Allocations</i>	327,391.69	362,211.65	362,211.65
3. <i>Board Programming</i>	2,646.75	3,941.75	2,441.75
4. <i>New Group Recognition</i>	2,648.70	17,500.00	3,500.00
5. <i>Appeals & Co-Sponsorships</i>	78,683.21	56,910.00	43,863.25
6. <i>Debt Recovery</i>	8,246.64	15,000.00	15,000.00
Total (less surplus)		391,563.40	363,016.65

Table 1: Allocation overview

The funding allocation that ABC will receive next year will be in the form of one lump sum; the allocation breakdown given in the above table is meant only to provide insight into how the final figure was determined. Details are provided below.

ABC's justification for the increase in Initial Allocations for 2007-2008 (Table 1, line 2) was the inclusion of the Varsity Show as an Emergency Allocation rather than an Appeal, as it had been in 2006-2007. Therefore, the FaCU committee found it to be reasonable for the Appeals budget for 2007-2008 (Table 1, line 5, column 4) to decrease from the 2006-2007 figure by the same amount that the Initial Allocations budget increased, calculated as follows:

<u>06-'07 Appeals</u>	<u>07-'08 I.A. Budget</u>	<u>06-'07 I.A. Budget</u>	<u>07-'08 Appeals</u>
78,683.21 -	(362,211.65 -	327,391.69) =	43,863.25

Table 2: Calculation of '07-'08 Appeals Budget

In addition, the FaCU committee reduced the Board Programming budget by \$1,500.00, the amount budgeted for a new Theater Equipment Storage Program and used toward storage costs. While the committee feels that this is a promising idea and would like to see it implemented, the budgets of the student councils cannot safely accommodate all of the expansion plans of the five governing boards as presented for the '07-'08 academic year.

Therefore, the total amount allocated to ABC for next year will be \$363,016.65, which is the total adjusted budget for '07-'08, \$427,016.65, minus the \$64,000 expected surplus.



Governing Document for Funding at Columbia University

Mission Statement

Funding at Columbia University (hereafter known as “F@CU”) was created to facilitate, support and enrich student development in the form of student activities on campus. F@CU strives to support student development on campus, through fair and transparent allocation of student activities fee, based upon the needs of each student group.

First Principles

F@CU is committed to the process of allocating resources fairly and adequately. To accomplish this task, F@CU roots decisions in three (3) primary principles:

1. Historical Precedence
2. Governing Board Growth
3. Trusting our Governing Boards

Historical precedence is important and will be considered provided data and information exists. No member of F@CU will let personal impressions of past issues influence their decisions on allocating resources; all decisions will have a foundation in available data. To facilitate the collection of information, the Office of Student Development and Activities will maintain duplicates of all documents presented to F@CU.

Governing board growth will be based upon two criteria: demonstrated need and predicted need. Demonstrated need is rooted in the performance of groups over the past year and can also be hinged to historical data. Predicted need is based on governing board desired growth. F@CU makes no promises regarding the fulfillment of desired growth for each governing board.

Most importantly, F@CU places an immense amount of trust in each of the governing boards to succeed in their mission to foster student group activities across campus. The board trusts that each governing board properly manages its groups. As a result, F@CU will not engage in the micromanaging of a governing board’s groups. This tenet is the most important – without trust in each governing board F@CU cannot function appropriately.

F@CU COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

CCSC – ccsc@columbia.edu

ESC – esc@columbia.edu

GSSC – gsidea@columbia.edu

SGA – sga@barnard.edu



What F@CU Expects from Each Governing Board

F@CU has put together a list of items expected from each governing board to facilitate the board in the allocation procedure. The board believes that each item is necessary to help fairly and transparently allocate resources.

- Explanation of big changes in student group allocations.
 - A big change is defined as a shift of greater than 10% in either direction of a student group's allocation
- A copy of the governing board's constitution and guidelines, both internal and external.
 - Specifically, a sheet which highlights all changes made to the constitution and guidelines since the previous F@CU process
- Inclusion of the past three years of historical data, minimally including F@CU Form II.A.
 - Data must be included in the packet and may be included in the presentation by each governing board to F@CU as well.

What Each Governing Board Can Expect from F@CU

F@CU is committed to providing each governing board with as much information regarding the process of allocating resources. This will be accomplished through two routes:

1. F@CU will provide each governing board with a detailed description of reasoning for the allocation given. This will include, but is not limited to, the primary reasons for each individual cut as well as any historical perspective taken into account.
2. F@CU will fully disclose the allocations to all governing boards on a web portal to be setup solely for F@CU.

The governing boards have the right to demand both #1 and #2 from the F@CU board at any time after the finalization of all allocations.

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