RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Finance Manual

The University of Akron
2021-2022

Current University protocols related to Covid-19 may impact the information provided in this manual.
SOuRCe Contact Information

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Preface

While the Recognized Student Organization (RSO) Manual is intended to be a summary of information that is beneficial to student organizations and Campus Advisors, its readers should be aware that:

1. It is not a complete statement of all policies and procedures of The University of Akron.
2. The University of Akron reserves the right to change any policy, procedure, or program, without notice.
3. Divisions and departments on campus may have their own procedures and policies, which apply to student organizations.

Our goal is to make this manual as all-encompassing as possible, however policies and practices do change. If a policy outlined within does not seem accurate, please let us know and we will gladly review and update the manual accordingly.

Sources and Adaptations:

- The University of Akron
  School of Law Organization Handbook
- Kansas State University
  Office of Student Activities and Services
- Western Michigan University
  Student Activities & Leadership Programs
- Southern Methodist University
  Student Activities - Student Org. Manual
- University of Rochester
  Center for Community Leadership
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Philosophy Statement

The Department of Student Life is committed to building community through collaborative learning experiences that provide our students the opportunity to: Engage • Serve • Lead

The SOuRCE, as well as the Department of Student Life’s Business Office, support this mission by empowering student leaders to make decisions, assume financial responsibility, operate the day-to-day needs of their student organization, attend meetings, respond to administrative requests, and generally be aware of, and answer for, the overall operations of their organization.

Additionally, we believe the Campus Advisor(s) should engage with their officers on a regular basis in order to be aware of, and answer for, the overall operations of the organization. It is our intention to empower student leaders to interact with the SOuRCE and Business Office, which includes the submission of paperwork, responding to administrative requests, and generally assuming they will be the first point of contact should a need arise for a University office/officer to contact the student organization.

Common Terminology and Acronyms Used in this Manual

- SAF = Student Activity Funds
- UAF = Undergraduate Activity Funds
- EAF = Extracurricular Activities Fund
- USG = Undergraduate Student Government
- GSG = Graduate Student Government
- SORF = Student Organization Request for Funds

General Service Fee

Financial support (UAF/EAF) for registered student organizations comes from the General Service Fee

- Parameters of this fee include:
  - The General Service Fee is paid for by students taking credit courses and provides funds that support student activities and services, including:
    - the health professionals in Student Health Services
    - intramurals
    - UA-recognized student organizations
    - intercollegiate athletics
    - other co-curricular activities
  - Because of this support, certain restrictions are applied to UAF/EAF monies. Examples of approved and prohibited purchases are outlined below.

Ethical Decision Making

The SOuRCE, and Business Office, through the Department of Student Life expect all student organization leaders, advisors, or other representatives, to make ethical decisions, and serve as role models, on the use, implementation, and management of student organization funds. The General Service Fee funds, and Student Activity Funds are paid for, or raised by, University of Akron students and should be treated with respect.
USG/GSG Funding Allocation Process

Current University protocols related to Covid-19 may impact the information provided in this section.

Club Sports, Fraternity and Sorority Life, and Law organizations, please see your main contact for information.

UAF/EAF Account Overview

When a student organization requests, and receives, a funding allocation from USG or GSG, the following financial accounts through the SOuRce are utilized throughout the entire process.

Undergraduate Activity Funds (UAF) Accounts

UAF (9-90) are accounts designated to undergraduate or blended student organizations.

- These accounts are designed to manage funds that the Undergraduate Student Government allocates to registered student organizations.
- When an organization receives travel or project funding from the government(s), the funds will be disbursed into this account.
- Funds in these accounts are not transferred to SAF, academic, or departmental budget accounts.
  - You are not required to spend your entire allocation, but unused funds will be rolled back.
  - Allocated money cannot be permanently retained by your student organization.

Extracurricular Activities Funds (EAF) Accounts

EAF (9-90) are accounts designated to graduate student organizations.

- These accounts are designed to manage operating funds that are allocated to student organizations by the Graduate Student Government.
- When an organization receives additional travel or project funds from the government, the funds will be disbursed into this account.
- Funds in these accounts are not transferred to SAF, academic, or departmental budget accounts.
  - You are not required to spend your entire allocation, but unused funds will be rolled back.
  - Allocated money is not permanently retained by your student organization.

Application and Funding Overview

- All student organizations wishing to submit a funding request for travel or non-travel activities are required to be registered for the academic year before applications will be accepted by the SOuRce. If an organization has not completed the registration process, their application will not be considered.
- Any student organization wishing to request funds will need to submit a budget request through the parameters set forth by the SOuRce for the academic year located on RooConnect.
  - An organization officer or member will submit the funding application with the advisor approving the request before the application is reviewed and considered.
  - Purchases made prior to receiving an approved funding allocation from USG/GSG will not be funded.
  - The timeframe communicated is set forth to ensure that there is enough time for the SOuRce and USG/GSG to verify Good Standing, review your request, and process an approval/denial of funds.
    - We want to help ensure your organization has enough time to book your trip/event and receive the best deals. Please contact the SOuRce with any questions or concerns.
  - Due to multiple organization requests, we want to accommodate all organizations with enough time to provide the needed attention to review all applications individually.
- If an application is submitted and is deemed incomplete (missing documentation, no advisor approval, not submitted within the timeframe allotted etc.) it will not be reviewed.
• A student organization officer will create an expenditure request prior to a purchase being made and all receipts will be submitted to the SOuRCe within two business days after purchase or return from travel.
• If the organization does not properly utilize their funding allocation, or paperwork is not submitted, the funds may be rolled back to USG/GSG after a one-month period.
• The primary form of payment for any purchase by a student organization is through the utilization of the VISA Card Program (see page 12 for more information).
  o If you choose to make a purchase without first submitting an expenditure request to the SOuRCe, please be advised that reimbursements or payments are not guaranteed by the University.

Funding Requests for Travel and Non-Travel Activities

Current University travel restrictions related to Covid-19 will take precedence over the information in this manual.

Travel Policies:
• To qualify for travel, there will be at least three members of the organization (undergraduate or blended), or five members (graduate only organization) traveling and all students will be in “Good Standing” with The University of Akron.
• Organizations wishing to travel will register their plans within the parameters outlined for the academic year, regardless if requesting funds or wishing to use SAF or personal money.
• Groups attending a conference or competition or taking part in a trip that aligns with the educational mission of the University will be considered for travel funding.
• Student organizations requesting funds for overnight and day trips may request up to $2,500 (undergraduate/blended) or $2,000 (graduate) per fiscal year.

Non-Travel Activities Policies:
• Student organizations requesting funds can request up to $2,500 (undergraduate/blended) or $1,000 (graduate) per fiscal year.
• Non-travel activities that are free for University of Akron students, held on campus, and open to the campus community will be considered for funding.

Approved UAF/EAF Use of Funds:
• Travel expenses
  o Including, but not limited to: registration (in person or virtual), lodging (max $240.00/night per room in hotels; $300 per night for Airbnb or similar style lodging), airfare, buses, rental vehicle (through Enterprise or National), gas cards (in conjunction with a rental vehicle), mileage reimbursement parking, etc.
• Supplies for activities:
  o Including, but not limited to: balloons, table cloths, decorations, etc.
• On campus space rental fees for activities only will be limited to $500 per academic year.
• Food – for non-travel activities only and not to exceed $1,000.00
  o Requests for food go through Aramark, unless granted permission to purchase outside food by a catering exemption waiver.
• Vendors, speakers, or lecturers (in person or virtual)
• Non-travel activities hosted for charitable donation (100% of proceeds will be donated)
• Marketing materials may not exceed $500.00 per year
• Giveaways:
  o Giveaway purchases are capped at $250 per event
  o Gift cards/all-campus courtesy cards
    ▪ Can only be in the amount of $25.00 or less per card
Prohibited UAF/EAF Purchases:

- (Co)sponsorship for non-travel activities by academic or administrative departments
- Projects, programs, and series that are already offered by University Departments or other student organization(s)
- Purchases made prior to receiving an approved funding allocation from USG/GSG or expenses previously charged to an SAF account
  - Organizations are not permitted to use their SAF account to “pre-purchase” items. Allocations may only be utilized for purchases made after a funding decision is in place.
- Alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, and related paraphernalia
- Weapons
- Cash Advances or Petty Cash
- Food is not an eligible line item to be covered by travel funding
- Equipment
  - Equipment is defined as any tangible item having a useful lifetime of more than one year, and costs more than $50.
- Non-travel activities held exclusively for organization members and/or their families
- Student organizations cannot profit off a General Service Fee allocation and the allocated amount will be rolled back to USG/GSG.
- Financial donations for an organization or another entity
- General membership/affiliate dues or fees for national organizations
- Gifts, tokens of appreciation, clothing, awards, prizes, etc. for organization members, advisor(s), and/or alumni, for organizational benefit or individual person gain
- Per Diem food costs for special guests, speakers, etc.
- Legal Fees
- Loans or paying off existing debt(s)
- Salaries or stipends for student leaders
- Scholarships

#ZipsHeartbeat Account Details

Undergraduate Student Government will support the initiative known as the #ZipsHeartbeat movement. The movement seeks to foster the development of a better campus culture at The University of Akron by investing in the Zips community and the development of the Zip identity, mental health and wellness initiatives, and enhancing the student experience. As part of #ZipsHeartbeat, USG has created a source of funding for student organizations who want to take part in supporting this movement at the University of Akron. The criteria to apply for this funding is listed below.

- The sponsors of the proposed project/event will meet with the USG President or his/her designee to discuss the details of the project/event.
- The project/event will directly promote the mental health and wellness of students.
- The project/event will have the expected benefit and impact of at least 75 students.
- The project/event will be sponsored with either USG or at least 1 other student organization.

Limits to maximum allocations for projects/events will be determined on a case by case basis. Student organizations wishing to initiate a project or event, which meets the prescribed criteria, can apply for funding support on RooConnect or on the USG website.
Student Organization Self-Funded Accounts (Non-USG/GSG)

Current University protocols related to Covid-19 may impact the information provided in this section.

SAF Account Overview
All registered student organizations are entitled to have an SAF account through the SOuRCe.

**Student Activity Funds (SAF) Accounts**
SAF (9-96) are accounts designated to both undergraduate and graduate student organizations that are designed to manage self-generated funds for the organization.

- It is up to the organization’s discretion how these funds are utilized, as long as it is in accordance with University policies.
- The SAF account is used for all student organization activities that are not funded with a student government allocation.
- All funds collected by student organizations are to be kept within the assigned SAF account. These monies are monitored by the University and are subject to University financial policies.
- A student organization officer will create an expenditure with the SOuRCe prior to a purchase being made and all receipts must be submitted to the SOuRCe within two business days after purchase or return from travel.
- The primary form of payment for any purchase by a student organization is through the utilization of the VISA Card Program (see Page 13 for more information).
  - If you choose to make a purchase without first submitting an expenditure request to the SOuRCe, please be advised that reimbursements or payments are not guaranteed by the University.

**Prohibited SAF Purchases**

- Alcohol beverages, tobacco products, and related paraphernalia
- Weapons
- Equipment
  - It is not recommended that equipment is purchased due to the accessibility of the item for all members and the accountability to the members that the item will remain “organization-use only”
    - Equipment is defined as any tangible, non-expendable property having a useful lifetime of more than one year, and costs more than $50. Examples include, but not limited to, furniture, computers, printers, audio/visual technology, cabinets, chairs, uniforms, outdoor adventure equipment, etc.
Guiding University Policies for Registered Student Organizations

Current University protocols related to Covid-19 may impact the information provided in this section.

Bus Vendors

- Student organizations wishing to utilize any type of bus services for pre-approved travel are encouraged to use one of the university’s approved vendors. These include Anderson, Great Day, Barons, and Cardinal. Any other bus company needs to be approved prior to booking.

  Student organizations are not permitted to enter into any type of verbal or written contract other than the University Services Agreement with the SOuRCE office.

Gas card vs. Mileage Reimbursement

- Student organizations wishing to utilize a rental vehicle for organization travel will be asked to utilize a gas card for all gas expenses.
  - This card can be checked out in the SOuRCE and helps to track the expenses accurately for your trip.
  - To arrange a gas card for an upcoming trip, please see the SOuRCE liaisons

- If a student wishes to drive their personal vehicle on an organization trip, though discouraged by the University, the student organization can only be reimbursed for mileage.
  - The rate for mileage reimbursements will be dictated by the University’s current rate - which can be found on the Controller’s website: [http://www.uakron.edu/controller/travel.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/controller/travel.dot)
  - Reimbursement may not be awarded for mileage, if driving a non-rented vehicle, for trips outside of 140 miles from campus. The Campus Advisor will agree to reimbursement.

Missing Documentation

- A charge on the student organization account without an expenditure request is considered missing documentation. Student organizations may submit missing documentation requests twice per semester.

Reimbursements

- Unless previously approved, reimbursements are capped at two per semester for student organization accounts.

Reserving Rental Vehicles

- All student organizations are strongly encouraged to utilize a rental vehicle if traveling more than 140 miles away from the institution.
  - Due to liability and the unknown condition of student vehicles, the University strongly advises that student organizations utilize the rental agreements with two national car vendors.

- The University has agreements with two national vendors who are considered the rental vehicle vendors for campus.
  - Students over the age of 18 may rent a vehicle with these vendors
  - The University does not endorse the utilization of 15-passenger vans.

- If utilizing a rental vehicle, be sure to also request a gas card for your expenses.

- For a direct link to reserve a rental vehicle through these companies, please visit Purchasing’s website: [http://www.uakron.edu/purchasing/facultystaff/travel-information--forms.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/purchasing/facultystaff/travel-information--forms.dot)
Tax Exemption

- The University of Akron is a tax-exempt organization. When making purchases, student organizations are required to present a tax-exempt form at the point of purchase. If tax is charged the student organization will be required to recoup the tax charged.

T-Shirts or other Promotional Items

- The University has agreements with three local vendors:
  - Consolidus LLC (The UA Shop)
  - Global Promotions & Incentives (Shop UA Store)
  - AG PrintPromo Solutions
- Student organizations are restricted to utilize these vendors when looking to purchase promotion items, t-shirts, giveaways, etc. These vendors are aware of institutional brand standards and offer competitive pricing to University-affiliated parties.

University Food Policy

- Per the contract between the University and Aramark, dining services has first right of refusal on all food orders across campus. Additionally, due to health and liability issues, food purchased or made by an outside source is prohibited, unless proper approval has been granted by Aramark (Food Exemption Waiver).
- Aramark is aware that there are many dietary needs, including specific religious and ethnic requests, and will work with organizations to meet these needs and accommodate our guests.
  - In the event an organization wishes to bring food on campus, the “University Catering Waiver Request Form”, found on the Aramark website and/or RooConnect, will be completed and turned in prior to the event - through the procedures/timelines stated on the form.
- Please note: bake sales are strictly prohibited on campus (see Terms & Conditions).
- Aramark also offers a “Student Organization Budget-Friendly Menu” - be sure to ask when scheduling food for your event so you can potentially save money.

Utilizing an Outside Vendor/Contracts

- Any student organization wishing to utilize an outside contractor (DJ, Photographer, Lecturer, etc.) should complete the Contract Request Form on RooConnect 30-business days to any anticipated event, program, or performance.
- The organization event/program where a vendor is being utilized must be an approved venue by the University of Akron.
- Lodging/travel expenses/food for the vendor will be approved through the contract creation process and payment included in the contracted fee.
- After receiving this request, the SOuRCe will contact your organization to discuss the additional details that may be needed.
  - Note: the SOuRCe will not send a contract to a vendor without verifying available funds for the organization - this includes SAF/EAF/UAF.
    - In the event an organization is requesting funding support from the government(s), the SOuRCe will wait until an allocation has been made to send the agreement to the vendor(s).
  - Note: if the vendor you wish to use for your event is a University of Akron staff, faculty or student, they may be required to be paid through University Payroll, thus incurring additional fringe benefit costs to the student organization. The vendor, if a university employee, will also be taxed on their payment.
• The signed and completed agreement will be returned to the SOuRCe one (1) week prior to the event.
  o Failure to do so, by either the organization or the vendor, may result in the inability to utilize an outside contractor or cancellation of your event.

**Student organizations are not permitted to enter into any type of verbal or written contract other than the University Services Agreement.**

**Vendors are not permitted on campus without a signed University Services Agreement on file with the institution.**

**Utilizing Student Organization Finances**

*Current University protocols related to Covid-19 may impact the information provided in this section.*

**Account Overdrafts**

While the SOuRCe assists student organizations with the management of their account(s), it is the responsibility of the organization to be aware of their current account balance.

• For any overdrafts incurred by the organization, it will be their responsibility to deposit the funds into their account in order to bring it to a zero or positive balance.
• Failure to do so by the organization may result in suspension of the organization until the issue is resolved, and/or a referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

**Deposits and Donations**

For all registered student organizations, the SOuRCe provides the service of depositing and managing student organization accounts.

• To deposit funds into an account, the student organization representative simply needs to complete a deposit request via RooConnect.
• A donation differs in that it is money that is not fundraised by the organization itself, rather, it is a monetary gift given to the organization by an individual or group.
• This online form, and the cash/checks to be donated, can be brought to the SOuRCe during normal business hours following the parameters set forth by the SOuRCe.
  o Deposits should be made to the SOuRCe no later than 2 business day following the collection of funds.
• Deposits take approximately five (5) business days to process and show on an organization’s SAF account.
• Deposits for student organizations are not permitted to be processed directly to the Cashier’s Office; they first come through the SOuRCe.

**Student Organization Request Form (SORF)**

In order to utilize funds from any of their accounts (UAF/EAF/SAF), student organizations are required to complete an expenditure request on RooConnect, also known as the Student Organization Request Form detailing their desired purchases following the requirements set forth by the SOuRCe staff.

The expenditure request and all supporting documentation for each organization expense/purchase will be kept on file in the student organizations’ file folder maintained by the Student Organizations Financial Specialist.
University Procurement Card (VISA) Program

The VISA Procurement Card allows student organizations to purchase certain goods. This program allows for the payment of small dollar orders in a more efficient and cost-effective manner. Under special circumstances, credit limits can be increased. Thus, the VISA card can be used to purchase approved items wherever the VISA card is accepted and should be used for as many purchases as possible. All authorized users will be held accountable for their actions and are required to follow the established rules and procedures.

This program is designed to work side by side with existing purchasing procedures and to empower the user to make needed purchases without delay and with minimal paperwork. In addition, this eliminates the need to use personal funds and paperwork for personal reimbursements.

Security

- VISA cards are kept in a locked safe in the SOuRCe and checked in and out by a SOuRCe Liaison when needed.
- The VISA card is University property and should be secured just as you would secure your personal credit cards.
- Guard the VISA card account number and be suspicious of any requests for account information.
- Do not put your account number in an e-mail; only use the last 4-digits if necessary.
- Contact the SOuRCe and the Department of Purchasing should you have any questions regarding a fraudulent request.
  - If your card is lost or stolen, or you suspect fraud on your account, call Bank of America immediately at (888) 449.2273.
  - Also, report this to the Department of Purchasing at 330.972.7340 and the SOuRCe at 330.972.2483.

When calling for lost/stolen/ or fraudulent activity, Chase Bank will ask for:
- Mailing/Billing Address for Card – 302 Buchtel Ave Akron OH 44325.
- Verification ID Number- 1896.

Using the University VISA Card

In order to make a purchase, an authorized organization representative will need to bring their UA Zip Card after submitting an expenditure request to the SOuRCe.

- A SOuRCe Liaison will review your expenditure request and check your account balance in accordance with office procedure to ensure all necessary information is present and accurate.
- The cardholder or authorized user will also be required to sign the University of Akron’s VISA Cardholder Agreement each time they take out the card.
  - All VISA cards are due back to the SOuRCe within two (2) business days, unless prior arrangements have been made.
- A VISA limit Increase is needed if you exceed any of the following: $5,000 monthly limit, $2,500 single transaction limit, or (15) transaction limit per day.
  - It is the responsibility of the organization to notify the SOuRCe at least three (3) business days prior to an anticipated expense if an increase is needed on a card.
- After making a purchase the VISA card and all original and itemized receipts will be returned to the SOuRCe by the due date as noted on the Cardholder Agreement.
  - If you are unable to obtain or turn in receipt(s), it is your responsibility to contact the SOuRCe and make other arrangements.
Failure to return the organization VISA card by the stated deadline, with original receipts, may result in suspension or termination of the VISA card for the remainder of the academic year, or as deemed necessary by Student Life.

- If you have lost a receipt, it is the responsibility of the organization to contact the vendor to obtain a copy.
- If a copy is unable to be obtained, and the purchase is less than $50 the organization will complete a “Missing Documentation Form” with the SOuRCE.
  - Use of this form more than two (2) times per semester will result in the organization’s inability to utilize the card, if deemed necessary by Student Life.

**Restricted Vendors**

The VISA card is restricted from use with certain types of suppliers and merchants. Vendors are assigned a Merchant Category Code (MCC) based on the type of business they operate. If your VISA is being declined, please verify the item is not on the restricted list and contact the SOuRCE for additional assistance.

The following items should not be purchased on a VISA card without express permission from the University.

- **Advertising:** Internet, publications, etc. – Contact Student Life Marketing staff at 330.972.7886 who will contact Institutional Marketing if necessary.
- **Catering:** Contact Aramark.
- **Gasoline or Fuel:** The gas card, issued by the State of Ohio, is available through The Department of Purchasing and exempt from fuel and gasoline taxes and is required to use when using the vehicle rental program. The VISA and Gas card cannot be used when driving personal vehicle.
- **Promotional Products:** Items are to be purchased through University contracted vendors Consolidus LLC, Global Promotions & Incentives, LLC., and AG PrintPromo Solutions.
- **Printing:** For all off-campus printed materials, student organizations are required to work with Student Life Marketing staff at 330.972.7886 who will contact Institutional Marketing for approval.
- **Rentals / Leases:** Including but not limited to Vehicles, Parking Spaces, Halls, Tools, Tents, Property, Storage, Equipment, Halls, etc.
- **Services, including but not limited to:** Performance, Professional, Personal, Lectures, Construction.

**Improper Card Usage**

The following list provides examples of violations of the VISA card usage:

- Purchase of a prohibited and restricted item.
- Exceeding per transaction limits by splitting purchases (also known as pyramiding).
- Improper receipts or lack of recordkeeping.
- Failure to return the VISA card to the SOuRCE within the expected time frame.
- Excessive state sales tax applied to VISA transactions.