

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

**ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY:
STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE PROPOSAL**

November 2020

Objective

Student Activity Fee: The purpose of revising the Student Activity Fee structure is to better support registered student organizations in their mission to positively affect the student experience at the University of Mississippi through Student Organization Allocations, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programming, and Large Scale Programs.

Planned Use of Supplement Funding from Fee

The Student Activity Fee will be allocated towards three different categories of funding for student organizations:

- **Student Organization Allocations:** SAF funding for student organizations in this category will be allocated to student organizations to support their programming and needs through:
 - Organization Open Events: events put on by the organization that are open for all students at the University of Mississippi to attend. These events engage and open access to all students.
 - Organization Focused Events: events put on by the organization that are only open to members of that organization.
 - Speaker Fees: external guests invited to educate, inform, or engage student organization members through an open or closed event.
 - Operational Expenses: items needed for the organization to function and best fulfill their mission.
 - Promotional Materials: any items that are needed by the organization to promote their organization such as apparel or marketing expenses.
 - Professional Development: conference fees, travel expenses, and lodging expenses for conferences that promote academic or professional development of student organization members.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programming:** SAF funding for student organizations in this category will support events, workshops, conferences, or any programming that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion within the student organization or on the University of Mississippi campus as a whole. This will be a source of funding that supports organizations developing creative and engaging opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of diversity issues.
- **Large scale programming:** SAF funding for student organizations in this category will assist with leadership programs for student development, late night programs that provide structured involvement opportunities, and engaging campus programs open to all students. This will promote collaboration among organizations to bring meaningful programming to the University of Mississippi campus.

Regulations of the Fee

- Viewpoint neutral criteria for evaluating funding proposals should only consider factors that are NOT tied to viewpoints such as fiscal responsibility, procurement policy compliance, relevance to mission, and level of services provided.
- In order to ensure that the funding is used to its fullest potential, the funds incurred from the Student Activity Fee must strictly be supplemental and not the sole purpose of funds received. The fee should not become a replacement funding under any circumstance.

- The funds from the Student Activity Fee will be allocated to various student organizations and programs to further support the efforts and passions of our diverse student body. For example, at the University of Mississippi, we will be able to help support over 300 different student organizations that could apply for appropriations from these funds.
- Students will not be charged the fee during the summer semester.
- This fee will be embedded into tuition for the Spring and Fall Semesters.
- All funding is subject to guidelines from the University of Mississippi and State of Mississippi Procurement services.

Fee Calculations

Figures below are listed on OLEMISS.EDU or MISSISSIPPI.EDU websites.

- Current fee amount per student: \$5.00 per semester, \$10.00 per year

Current Impacts of the Student Activity Fee

- Providing funding for student organizations increases membership and allows for a greater percent of the student body to become involved. Statistics show that increased student involvement often leads to increased success, both academically and personally.
- Increasing involvement should also lead to increased student retention rates at the university. By giving students more opportunities to become involved, students will have more means to build communities on campus, and by finding a niche within a larger university setting, students are more likely to be satisfied and stay at the university.
- Creating new events can lead to increased involvement from the immediate surrounding area and state. By involving more families in university functions, it aids in the recruitment of Mississippi youth and encourages them to stay in state for college, making us competitive to four-year colleges outside of the state.
- Funding allows the University to increase leadership opportunities within programming and student government boards. This in turn helps to increase planning and programming opportunities for students, as well as generates more future leaders to become distinguished alumni.
- Funding can also help provide students with hands-on opportunities to learn leadership, teamwork, and communication skills, as well as build a sense of community through bringing in speakers or funding organizational trips and events.
- Funding could benefit students by providing more opportunities for community service. Student organizations are dedicated to giving back by enhancing the environment, tutoring their peers, arranging partnerships with local non-profits for fundraising events, and more.
- Lastly, a universal benefit from funding more student organizations is to create a strong forum for the exchange of information, ideas, and to promote the discussion and debate of religion, values, etc.

Potential New Impacts of the Student Activity Fee

- Better support the specific needs of student organizations at the University of Mississippi as they strive to create engaging programming for students. Greater specification and

definition of the Student Activity Fee will allow for greater transparency and accessibility of information.

- Give student organizations the power to positively affect the student experience outside of the classroom. Student organizations have the unique ability to supplement, assist, and influence a student's collegiate experience. After classes, students go to organization meetings, organization events, or experience organization programming. The Student Activity Fee changes will help organizations provide more positive experiences for students by providing enriching experiences outside of the classroom.
- Further the impact of the Student Activity Fee on registered student organizations.
- Inspire organizations to include Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programming such as events, speakers, conferences, or training. By creating a specific source of funding for diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, changes to the SAF will inspire organizations to provide creative, innovative, and engaging programming that emphasizes celebrating and supporting diversity on the University of Mississippi campus or in their organization.
- Create opportunities through large-scale programming funding for student organizations to collaborate on large projects that will be open for the entire University of Mississippi community to experience. These large-scale programs will foster a sense of campus identity and collaboration among RSOs.

University of Mississippi Associated Student Body Referendum

No referendum was taken from the University of Mississippi.

Public Universities with a Student Activities Fee

These are just a few schools that have a successfully implemented Student Activity Fee.

Auburn University \$839 per semester
Vanderbilt University \$542 per semester
University of Tennessee \$519 per semester
Harvard University \$200 per semester
Carnegie Mellon University \$131 per semester
Virginia Commonwealth University \$90 per semester
University of Georgia \$78 per semester
University of North Carolina \$49 per semester
Ohio State University \$40 per semester
Clemson University \$40 per semester
University of Arkansas \$32.50 per semester
University of Southern Mississippi \$20 per semester
Louisiana State University \$5.50 per semester
Mississippi State University \$5 per semester
University of Mississippi \$5 per semester