

Students' Union of St. Thomas University, Inc.

Policy Manual

A Policy respecting Financial Administration

This Policy may be cited as the "Finance Policy."

Part I – Definitions

S.1. In this Policy:

- (a) "**Academic Year**" means the academic session from September to April, as in the University Calendar;
- (b) "**Appropriate Documentation**" means verifiable receipts, itemized statements, or other evidence of covered expenses paid;
- (c) "**Chair**" shall mean the Chair of the Finance Committee unless otherwise indicated;
- (d) "**Constitution**" shall mean the Letters Patent, Constitution, By-laws, and Policy Manual of the Union, except where they may be independently recognized;
- (e) "**Employee of the Union**" includes any of the President, Vice Presidents, Representatives, Employees, and other persons employed by the Union and deemed to be an Employee of the Union by the President and Vice President Administration;
- (f) "**Fiscal Year**" shall mean the fiscal year from 1 June to 31 May of any year;
- (g) "**General Manager**" shall mean the General Manager of the Union as in the Human Resources Policy;
- (h) "**Human Resources Information**" means any information that is sufficiently detailed that, if used in conjunction with information available to the public or Members, could reveal, with reasonable effort, the salaries or benefits of Employees of the Union who are not Representatives, but shall exclude such information as is required by law;
- (i) "**Member**" shall mean Member of the Union as defined by the *Constitution*;

- (j) “**Mission Statement**” shall mean the Mission Statement and Objectives as stated in the *Constitution*;
- (k) “**Policy**” means this document, unless otherwise specified;
- (l) “**Professional Service**” means any legal, accounting, contracting, maintenance or other service or services determined to be a Professional Service by the Committee;
- (m) “**SEC**” shall mean the Students’ Executive Council, as in the *Constitution*;
- (n) “**SRC**” shall mean the Students’ Representative Council, as in the *Constitution*;
- (o) “**Summer Months**” shall mean Summer Session and Intersession as defined in the University Calendar;
- (p) “**Terms of Reference**” shall mean the Terms of Reference of the Finance Committee as in the SRC Committee Policy and regulated by S.7 through S.12 of this Policy;

Part II – General

S.1. This Policy shall support the Union’s Mission Statement by ensuring that the Union’s resources are properly appropriated and those appropriations are spent in a manner that ensures as many Members as possible receive optimal benefits from their membership in the Union (the “**Financial Mission**”).

S.2. The Vice President Administration shall be responsible for enforcing this Policy.

S.3. The Committee shall be responsible to the SRC and the Members for upholding the Financial Mission of the Union.

S.4. The Fiscal Year of the Union shall begin on 1 June and end on 31 May.

S.5. Neither the Union nor any of its Representatives, Employees, Members or agents shall disclose any Human Resources Information except where the Information is disclosed to the individual to whom it relates or where the individual to whom it relates authorizes in writing its disclosure.

S.6. While budgetary and financial decisions made may draw upon the experience of the Union and past decisions, it is recognized that these decisions do not create binding precedents for future decisions;

S.7. The Finance Committee shall observe the Budgetary Line Descriptions as in this Policy in their decisions, unless otherwise directed by the SRC;

Part III – Finance Committee

S.1. Finance Committee shall review the financial activities of the Union and shall:

- (a) Receive and make recommendations on requests for Union funds, and the care of any other financial matters, with the exception of emergency bursary requests;
- (b) To develop, review and make recommendations on Union financial policies;
- (c) To, in collaboration with the SEC, formulate and oversee the Union's budget;
- (d) To actively pursue fundraising and corporate sponsorship opportunities on behalf of the Union;
- (e) To seek business opportunities and develop strategies to procure alternative sources of income beyond student fees to serve the Members of the Union in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

S.2. The Vice President Administration shall be the Chair of the Committee, and the Committee shall include at least two (2) other sitting members of the SRC, and shall permit interested Members of the Union to sit on the Committee;

S.3. The Committee shall meet no less than once per week, in advance of the SRC meeting for that week during the academic semester.

S.4. The Chair shall report on the Committee's discussions and decisions at the SRC meeting immediately following the Committee meeting.

S.5. Quorum of the Committee shall be composed of the Chair of the Committee or designated alternate, and at least two other members of the Committee.

S.6. One member of the Committee shall be designated to keep a written record of discussion and decisions undertaken in each meeting of the Committee.

S.7. The Terms of Reference of the Committee shall be binding and in the event of conflict between this Policy and the *Constitution*, the *Constitution* shall prevail.

Part IV – Budget

S.1. The Finance Committee shall begin deliberations on the following fiscal year's budget no less than eight (8) weeks prior to the 1 May transition of office.

S.2. The proposed operating budget shall be given no less than one week's notice, and shall be approved by the SRC on or before the last regular meeting of the SRC in the Academic Year.

S.3. The Vice President Administration, with the Finance Committee, SEC elect and in consultation with, at the discretion of the Committee, members of the SRC, the SEC, employees, Members of the Union, or any other person or persons they determine, shall prepare the budget.

S.4. If the SRC does not approve any operating on or before the date set forth in S.16, no expenditures shall be made from the accounts of the Union beginning on 1 June until the SRC approves the budget in question.

S.5. The Committee may convene as often as necessary to prepare and review a budget, and may enter into *in camera* proceedings upon motion to that effect adopted by a majority of its' members;

S.6. The SRC may eliminate, amend, or otherwise modify in any manner it considers appropriate a line item or items of the budget presented by the Committee, and where the SRC has approved any such elimination, amendment or modification, the budget may be approved as amended.

S.7. The SRC may refer a budget back to the Committee for further review, and shall indicate to the Committee the reasons for its dissatisfaction and terms for further review.

Part V – Accounts

S.1. The Union shall maintain an account with a financial institution as determined by the SEC from time to time, and the account shall be used exclusively for the purposes set forth for that account.

S.2. The Union shall maintain an Operating Reserve Fund, which will maintain a balance of at least \$60,000 whenever possible, and which shall only be dispensed as required to fund the basic operations of the Union.

S.3. The Union may maintain an Extra-budgetary Fund, of which requires a two-thirds majority approval of the SRC to dispense, and which shall contain any surplus accumulated after each fiscal year.

S.4. The Union shall undergo an audit each year, and the Auditor shall be supplied with all necessary documents by the Vice President Administration and General Manager, and the Auditor's findings shall be released to the SRC as soon as they are available.

Part VI – Authorization of Expenditures

S.1. No expenditures shall be made from the accounts of the Union other than those that have been approved under the most recent budget.

S.2. The SRC must approve any expenditure exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500.00).

S.3. The Finance Committee must approve:

- (a) any capital expenditure;
- (b) any expenditure exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100.00); and
- (c) any expenditure on Professional Service.

S.4. The Finance Committee shall present all proposals for Charitable Assistance to the SRC for approval.

Part VII – Telephone, Transportation, *per Diem* & Conferences

S.1. Representatives and Employees of the Union may submit to the Committee a claim in a prescribed form for the reimbursement of transportation costs incurred through the course of performing work for the Union, and a reimbursement that has been approved shall be made for each kilometer travelled at a rate of reimbursement per kilometer as set forth in this Policy, or shall be made to cover the costs of services purchased from a common carrier such as bus, charter, taxi, or airline.

S.2. *Per diem* expenses shall be covered by the Union as prescribed in this Policy, and claims shall be filed with the Finance Committee along with receipts.

S.3. Representatives and Employees of the Union may apply to the Committee for the approval of expenditures for the purpose of attending a conference, and any such application shall outline the full costs of attending the conference and the benefits that the Union will gain through the attendance of a delegate at the conference.

S.4. Where the Committee approves expenditures for a conference, the SRC shall be informed.

S.5. A Union delegate to a conference may apply to the General Manager for an advance of monies for the purpose of defraying the incidental costs of attending the conference, and the General Manager may approve the advance and shall cause the advance to be issued.

S.5. Expenses incurred for conferences of lobby organizations to which the Union is a member shall not require a summary of benefits that the Union will gain.

S.7. Where a request has been made for a *per diem* expense, the Finance Committee shall observe the following rates: for breakfasts and lunches, ten dollars (\$10.00) per day; for dinners, twenty dollars (\$20.00) per day.

S.8. Transportation expenses incurred by representatives and employees in the regular and appropriate conduct of their duties shall be reimbursed at a rate of thirty cents (\$0.30) per kilometer travelled or by providing receipts which demonstrate how much was spent on transportation throughout the duration of the trip.

Part VIII – Control of Expenditures

S.1. The Vice President Administration shall ensure that appropriate control mechanisms exist to ensure that only approved expenditures and expenditures that comply with this Policy are made out of the accounts of the Union.

S.2. Goods and services may be purchased using any one of the following payment methods:

- (a) a purchase order;
- (b) a cheque; and
- (c) monies disbursed from the petty cash.

S.3. The preferred payment methods shall be:

- (a) where the Union has credit, a purchase order; and
- (b) where the Union does not have credit, a cheque.

S.4. The preferred method of payment shall be used unless the General Manager finds that it is inappropriate, impractical, or impossible.

S.5. A reimbursement may be issued only for an expense which has been approved in accordance with this Policy before the expense is incurred.

S.6. No payment exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500.00) shall be issued unless the person or organization to whom the payment is to be issued submits an invoice requesting the payment.

S.7. No person may authorize the disbursement of Union funds for the purposes of any payment or reimbursement made payable or issued to him or herself.

S.8. A cheque drawn on the account of the Union shall be signed by one of the President, Vice President Administration and/or General Manager, and the preferred signatories shall be the Vice President Administration and the General Manager.

S.9. Where a reimbursement is to be made using a cheque, the person making the purchase or approving the reimbursement shall submit a requisition for the cheque to the Finance Committee, and the cheque shall be produced as set forth in this Policy.

S.10. A requisition for a cheque for the purchase of a good or service shall be submitted before the good or service is ordered, and appropriate documentation supporting the purchase shall be attached before the Finance Committee will review or authorize the disbursement of monies.

S.11. Where a Representative or Employee of the Union requires a cash float for the purpose of conducting the business of the Union, the Employee shall submit an application to the General Manager, who shall approve or deny the request, and the float shall be returned in its entirety no later than one day following the event.

S.12. The Petty Cash fund shall be maintained in an amount not exceeding \$100 and shall be managed as set forth in this section.

S.13. The Petty Cash shall be entrusted to the General Manager and shall be managed by that person solely.

S.14. The use of Petty Cash shall be avoided unless a cheque is not possible in accordance with S.3 and S.4 of this Policy.

S.15. The Petty Cash shall be replenished by the use of a cheque for which a proper requisition must be filed.

S.16. An individual may make a request to the general manager for the distribution of Petty Cash, not exceeding the amount of \$25.

S.17. Requests may be made to the General Manager for a disbursement from the Petty Cash, and if the expense has not yet been made, a note outlining the expense with the attachment of appropriate documentation after the expense has been made, and, if the expense has been made, the attachment of appropriate documentation.

Part IX – Budgetary Line Definitions

S.1. The Finance Committee shall observe the following definitions in preparing and executing each Operating Budget.

S.2. The Operating Budget shall not be restricted to the following lines solely, and this Part shall be updated as required by the development of Operating Budgets.

S.3. All budget lines shall be overseen and administered by the Finance Committee, except where defined in this Policy.

S.4. The following shall define the Lines used in the Operating Budget:

- (a) **Audit** shall be used for the annual audit or review of the finances of the Students' Union performed by a chartered accountant as professional service.
- (b) **Capital Expenditures** shall be used for substantial purchases of equipment including, but not limited to, furniture, computers and associated electronics, computer hardware, etc.
- (c) **Cell Phone Per Diem** shall be \$25.00 distributed monthly to the President, Vice President Administration, Vice President Education, Vice President Student Life, and Welcome Week Chair to compensate for charges incurred due to necessitated personal cell phone use.
- (d) **Equipment Lease** shall be used for payment of the photocopier lease.
- (e) **Equipment Repair** shall be used for ongoing repair and maintenance of office equipment, excluding the leased photocopiers.
- (f) **Office Supplies** shall be used to purchase ordinary office supplies for the use of Union representatives and employees in the proper conduct of their duties, such as paper, pens, pencils, staples, etc.
- (g) **Postage** shall be used to cover postage costs of the Union through regular mail.
- (h) **Telephone** shall be used to operate all telephone and fax lines required for the business of the Union.
- (i) **Insurance** shall be used to purchase and maintain insurance policies on the contents of the office, as well as directors' and officers' liability insurance.
- (j) **Legal Fees** shall be used to retain legal counsel at all times for the Students' Union.
- (k) **Communications** shall be used to design, produce, execute and maintain advertising for Union initiatives, activities, events and services as well as purchasing the

required software and materials needed to fulfil the duties of the Director of Communications.

(l) **Annual General Meeting** shall be used to fund the Students' Union annual general meeting, associated catering, and awards as per Policy.

(m) **Executive Salaries** shall be used to pay the Executive of the Students' Union.

(n) **SRC Attendance** shall be used to compensate councillors of the Students' Union who attend 80% of meetings for the academic year.

(o) **Salaries** shall be used to pay salaries for employees of the Students' Union, as well as health insurance premiums and Receiver General payments.

(p) **SRC General** shall be used for expenses that do not otherwise fall under a specific budgetary line.

(q) **Conferences** shall be used to participate in conferences held by CASA and NBSA, and any other conferences as deemed necessary by the SRC.

(r) **Elections** shall be used to cover expenses associated with Students' Union elections, including, but not limited to, poll workers' salaries, returning officers' salaries, and office supplies.

(s) **Teambuilding** shall be used to fund the annual SRC Transition.

(t) **Emergency Bursaries** the criteria of which shall also be at the discretion of the Emergency Bursary committee in funding the Emergency Bursaries Program.

(u) **Academic Assistance** shall be used to fund student undertaking enhancing their academic experience, through proposals to Finance Committee.

(v) **Charitable Assistance** shall be used at the discretion of the SRC, advised by the Finance Committee, to fund charitable, not-for-profit initiatives within the University community.

(w) **Food Bank Donation** shall be used to fund the St. Thomas University campus food bank.

(x) **STUgenda** shall be used to produce the yearly handbook and day planner of the Students' Union.

- (y) **Safe Ride** shall be used to provide the Safe Ride service to Members of the Union.
- (z) **Activities** shall be used to fund social activities and events of the Union during the Fall and Winter Academic Semesters.
- (aa) **Welcome Week** shall be used to fund the annual Welcome Week directed by the Students' Union.
- (bb) **Yearbook** may be used to purchase *Aquinas* Yearbooks for graduates each year.
- (cc) **Clubs & Societies** shall be used to fund ratified clubs and societies registered with the Students' Union, through proposals submitted to the Finance Committee.
- (dd) **Theatre St. Thomas** shall be used to provide start-up funding to Theatre St. Thomas, which shall be repaid by that organization by the end of the fiscal year.
- (ee) **CASA** shall be used to pay membership fees to the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations. .
- (ff) **NBSA** shall be used to pay membership fees to the New Brunswick Student Alliance. .
- (gg) **Lobbying** shall be used to fund external lobbying initiatives at the direction of the Vice President Education and the Academic and University Affairs Committee.
- (hh) **Off-campus Committee** shall be used to fund the undertakings of the Off-campus Representatives, as determined by the Off-campus Committee and authorized by Finance Committee.
- (ii) **Campus Engagement** shall be used by Members of the SRC to plan and execute the "SRC Projects" related to their respective positions.