

# COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL STUDENT SENATE

## Applying for Student Group Funding: The Budget Process At-A-Glance

- 1) Mandatory treasurer orientation sessions will take place on September 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Two identical sessions will be offered, and attendance by a treasurer at one of these sessions is mandatory in order to receive funding for the upcoming year.
- 2) Each group will be assigned a Budget Liaison. Your budget liaison will contact you to arrange a meeting and work on your funding submission. Treasurers should attend the initial meeting with a first draft of the funding request. Funding request forms, as well as past budget allocations, can be found at [www.clssenate.org](http://www.clssenate.org).
- 3) Student group treasurers will work with their budget liaisons during a one week period in order to develop each group's final funding request. Budget Liaisons will provide guidance throughout the budget process, and will ultimately present each group's request to the Budget Committee.
- 4) Final budget requests must be submitted to online by Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup> at 5pm in order for groups to receive funding. Any groups experiencing problems must contact the treasurer at least 24 hours before the deadline to resolve the issue.
- 5) The Budget Committee will meet on Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup> to set the fall budget. Each group's request will be presented to the committee, and will then be put to a majority vote. The Budget Committee will then make the proposed budget available and groups will be able to see the funds that have been allocated.
- 6) In rare cases a group may wish to appeal the Budget Committee's decision to the full Senate. Groups wishing to file an appeal may do so within one week of the Budget Committee meeting. Please contact the Treasurer and your Budget Liason with concerns.
- 7) Ad hoc requests may be submitted to the Budget Committee at any point during the semester. Groups should contact their Budget Liasons, who will present the ad hoc requests to the Committee for a vote. Please keep in mind that the Ad hoc budget is limited, and should be used only in the case of an unforeseen opportunity that comes up during the semester.
- 8) Please feel free to contact your group's Budget Liason or the Treasurer with any questions. The Treasurer's email is [gillianhorton@gmail.com](mailto:gillianhorton@gmail.com).

### Some Factors Considered by the Budget Committee When Evaluating Requests

In evaluating funding requests, the Committee considers factors including, but not limited to, the following:

- the clarity and presentation of the funding request, including names, dates, itemized cost lists, and as much detail as possible;

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- the efforts of the group to communicate with the Budget Committee in an open and timely manner;
- the size of the group and how membership is calculated;
- whether the event is readily accessible to all students, or only to members of the group;
- the number of students likely to benefit from the event;
- the availability of alternative funding from other sources, including firms, associations, and member dues;
- the depth and impact of the organization's events and programs on the Law School community;
- and the extent to which the event in question will expose students to exceptional opportunities which would prove unavailable without Senate backing.

The Committee typically does not fund events or items such as the following, though all requests are evaluated on an individual basis:

events that are limited to group members and not open to the entire law school;

- membership meetings;
- requests for tentatively scheduled events, without confirmed details;
- fundraising, publicity, or advertising costs for any event;
- events or items where a large amount of money benefits only a small number of students;
- hotel accommodations for speakers;
- transportation costs for speaker, absent extraordinary circumstances;
- transportation and accommodation requests for students, absent extraordinary circumstances;
- requests in excess of \$3 per expected student or \$150 total for lunch speakers;
- more than two film screenings per group per semester, or film screenings without named films or other details;
- personal items for individual group members, such as t-shirts or hats;
- expenditures that appear unnecessary or wasteful.

A word about co-sponsored events: when several groups co-sponsor an activity, they should coordinate before making requests, and one group should request the entire amount for the event, clearly noting its partners, while the other groups make a note of their participation, but refrain from requesting funding.

This year CLS faces some unique challenges in terms of funding. Therefore, we ask your patience and understanding as we evaluate each request in the fairest manner possible. We look forward to your help in making your student activity fee go further, and in creating the most active and vibrant Law School community possible! Thank You!

Gillian Horton  
Treasurer  
Columbia Law Student Senate