

Changes to the Conference Funding Guidelines

Ratified unanimously by Budget Committee 11/5/15

Ratified by a majority of Senate 11/16/15

What do the guidelines change about conference funding?

1. *Rename conferences to off-campus events*
All off-campus events already fall under the conference guidelines.
2. *Increase the base cap from \$150 to \$207 (i.e., three-quarters of the Student Activity Fee)*
Off-campus event funding should increase with inflation.
3. *Create an absolute cap of \$966 (i.e., 3.5 times the Student Activity Fee)*
Off-campus events should also increase with inflation
4. *Create a preference for groups driving to events within 420 miles off-campus*
Driving is significantly more cost-effective than flying. We chose 420 miles as slightly more than the distance to Chicago (i.e., 402 miles).
5. *Create a flying cap of \$332 (i.e., six-fifths of the Student Activity Fee)*
Students simply need more money to fly to conferences.

Proposed New Guidelines

Section III: Travel and Conferences (during winter and spring breaks):

1. Budget Committee is disinclined to fund more than \$150 per person toward winter and spring break trips.
2. Budget Committee follows Section III 5 through 7 when funding winter and spring break trips.

Section IV: Travel and Off-Campus Events (during the term)

1. Budget Committee is disinclined to fund air travel (i.e., plane tickets) for more than two students to travel within 420 miles of Carleton or for teams to fly to tournaments during the term.
2. Budget Committee does not fund more than 3.5 times the Student Activity Fee (i.e., \$996 in the 2015-2016 academic year) per off-campus event, rounded up. Budget Committee funds students attending the same off-campus event on a first-come, first-serve basis.
3. Budget Committee is disinclined to fund research conferences, hackathons and office or otherwise departmental off-campus events.
4. Budget Committee considers two approaches to funding off-campus events:

- a. Within 420 miles: Budget Committee is disinclined to fund more than three-quarters the Student Activity Fee (i.e., \$207 in the 2015-2016 year) per student towards off-campus events within 420 miles of Carleton.
 - b. Beyond 420 miles: Budget Committee is disinclined to fund more than six-fifths the Student Activity Fee (i.e., \$332 in the 2015-2016 year) per students towards off-campus events more than 420 miles away from Carleton.
5. Groups are encouraged to send the smallest number of students possible to off-campus events. Preference will be given to groups that best reflect the Carleton community.
 6. Off-campus events funded by CSA must provide benefits to the campus community. This benefit must be demonstrated to the Budget Committee upon application for funding.
 7. For off-campus events, Budget Committee may consider experiential learning to be a sufficient benefit to the Carleton community. The benefit to campus of this experiential learning must be demonstrated to the Budget Committee upon application for funding.

All other section numbers changed accordingly.

Anticipated Questions

Does this apply to Spring and Winter Break Trips?

The guidelines clarify that we will fund Spring and Winter Break Trips exactly as before.

Why separate driving and flying to off-campus events?

Flying is more expensive, especially more expensive per-person, than driving. For instance, we compared \$200 for a single plane ticket to a location 420 miles away from compared to \$210 for a van carrying seven people for 420 miles away from here. The former is \$200 per person. The latter, \$30 per person.

Why fund flying at a higher per-person cost than driving?

When Budget Committee decides to fund students attending an off-campus event, Budget Committee should support them as best as practical. We considered how Budget Committee cannot differentiate between people with differing financial needs. And we can consider how one or two or even three people attending an off-campus event cannot fundraise. They simply don't have the human-power.

How would the first-come-first-serve model work for conferences?

With the absolute cap of three and a half times the Student Activity Fee, Budget Committee only funds a maximum of \$966 to any single conference. When multiple individuals or groups come to Budget Committee for the same conference, Budget Committee funds the first to submit the conference request, then the second to submit a request for the same conference, continuing until the depletion of the absolute cap.

Why the first-come-first-serve model?

Without a first-come-first-serve model, Budget Committee does not know who it should fund when separate individuals request funding. The first-come-first-serve model gives a Budget Committee a fair way to spend money on a single conference when multiple, unconnected people want to go to a conference. It rewards people who “have their act together” and encourages people attending conferences to submit their requests earlier.

Why the limit on academic and sports teams?

It is too expensive to fund airfare for academic and sports teams during the term. And no academic or sports teams has requested money for airfare during the term.

What is 420 miles from Carleton?

It's the distance to Chicago.

Why require driving to anywhere 420 miles away from Carleton?

We chose the number assuming 7 hours of driving at 60 miles per hour. Groups can set out at the end of the class period on Friday (assuming a weekend) and still get to any location within 420 miles by dawn. And we assume groups will have replacement drivers given the size of cars and vans.

Why we did not do diminishing returns?

We thought it gave an unfair advantage to people who came in individually as opposed to those who came in a group. Ultimately, we worried it would incentivize two people attending a conference together to come to separate Budget Committee meetings to avoid the diminishing returns.

Cap Justifications

Base Cap: \$207 (updated each year to be three-quarters of the Student Activity Fee)

- Rationale: the current \$150 fee has not kept pace with inflation (if the \$150 cap came into existence in 2010, it would currently stand at \$174 with 3 percent inflation each year).

Flying Cap: \$332 (updated each year to be six-fifths of the Student Activity Fee)

- Rationale: \$500 purchases a two-way ticket to almost everywhere in the United States (e.g., \$521 is a two-way ticket to New Hampshire).

Absolute Cap: \$966 (updated each year to be six times the Student Activity Fee)

- Rationale: we want the cap to start, at least, under \$1,000.