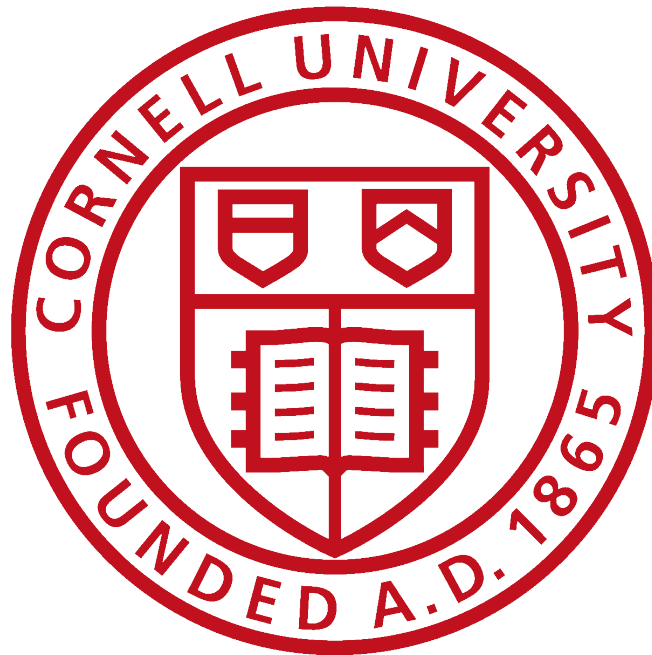


Graduate and Professional Student
Activity Fee (GPSAF) Recommendation
for 2022-2024



Graduate & Professional Student Assembly
Appropriations Committee



Graduate and Professional Student Activity Fee (GPSAF) Recommendation for 2022-2024 (Notes)

Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

Introduction

This document is a conclusion of analysis conducted by the Graduate & Professional Student Assembly (GPSA) Appropriations Committee (hereafter referred to as “Committee”), as mandated under the GPSA Byline Allocation Procedures in Article VIII of the GPSA Charter and amended by GPSA Resolution 8 of 2021. Contained herein is the Committee’s formal recommendation (hereafter referred to as “Recommendation”) for byline funding and, consequently, the Graduate and Professional Student Activity Fee (GPSAF).

Applications

Applications were developed in conjunction with the Office of Assemblies and the Student Assembly. Final applications inquired about funding request, mission, governing documents, summary of officers and events for the past two academic years, and detailed financial statements and budgeting documents. Funding amounts were requested as a dollar amount per student. In some cases, application materials or subsequent dialogue with applying organizations revealed a lump sum annual request. In these cases, this lump sum request was used to develop a funding recommendation.

Application Process

Internal staffing shortages in the GPSA and Appropriations Committee initially delayed the solicitation, and review of applications for funding. To accommodate this delay, the Committee Chair initiated outreach efforts immediately upon being elected, engaged in substantial dialogue with all interested organizations, and provided applying organizations with substantial leeway in terms of application timeline.

Review Process

After substantial outreach and repeated efforts by the Committee Chair and Office of the Assemblies Staff, the full slate of applications was completed by November 15th. Initial review was conducted by the Committee Chair in consultation with both Committee members and the Executive Committee. Due to the truncated application and review timeline a substantial amount of dialogue regarding specific organization’s applications has also been conducted via email between the Committee Chair and organizational leaders and representatives. Draft recommendations were then sent to organizational leaders and representatives for review and to solicit feedback. Public meetings to discuss these recommendations and to again solicit feedback from organizations were held the week of November 29th and a final set of recommendations was then crafted and submitted to the GPSA for review in advance of a special meeting on December 7th. Organizations applying for funding were also invited to present at the special meeting.

Special Notes

Byline funding amounts for the previous cycle were based on a projected student enrollment of 8,600. Projected enrollment for the 2022-2024 funding cycle is 9,200.

All of the organizations discussed in these Recommendations have experienced substantial disruptions over the past two years. The Committee wishes to express our sincere gratitude for their resilience in the face of the global pandemic.



Athletics and Physical Education

Group Profile

Cornell Athletics offers access for all graduate students to a wide array of sporting events on campus. Through the Big Red Sports Pass (part of the Cornell Student ID card) graduate and professional students and their immediate families gain free admission to all home athletic events, except for men’s ice hockey games and postseason contests. Funding through the GPSAF allows for graduate and professional students to sign up for the Big Red Sports Pass for free along with access to a host of other benefits.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$7.72	\$7.72	\$7.72	\$7.00

Analysis

The Committee believes that Cornell Athletics provides substantial benefits to graduate and professional students and we did not find any objections to their request for similar financial support on that basis. Considering the expected increase in student enrollments and the lump sum request provided, the recommended level of per-student funding will provide a slight increase in total financial support from the last funding cycle. This increase is intended to assist both in providing currently established services to students and to ensure that the organization can provide graduate attendance data for the 2024-2026 funding cycle.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the closure of all in person events on campus, including sporting events. As such, graduate and professional students did not receive the expected benefits from the GPSAF support provided to Cornell Athletics. The Committee agrees with the assertion made in application materials that reducing the byline funding allocation would create unnecessary hardship for the organization moving forward and further agrees that coming to a mutual agreement regarding the return of all, or a portion of the previously allocated funds is in the best interests of both the GPSA and Cornell Athletics. As such, this recommendation is made in good faith based on an understanding of the submitted application materials that such an agreement will be reached between the two groups over the course of the Fall 2022 semester.



Big Red Barn

Group Profile

The Big Red Barn Graduate and Professional Student Center (BRB) is the only centrally located gathering place for graduate and professional students at Cornell University. The Big Red Barn staff are tasked with providing programming aimed to increase social, cultural, and intellectual exchange among students. The weekly “Tell Grads It’s Friday” (TGIF) and other events are traditionally well attended and have resumed after an all-remote programming academic year. After a year remote, BRB is re-establishing itself as the hub for graduate life on campus by increasing internal programming and continuing to offer free BRB reservations to students and student organizations on campus. Additionally, BRB continues to offer beer, refreshments, and food at reduced cost for graduate events held at the BRB upon request.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$11.58	\$13.28	\$15.25	\$15.00

Analysis

BRB consistently surpasses obligations and expectations set by the Committee, GPSA, and graduate and professional student body in general and continued to do so throughout the pandemic. The Committee believes the BRB provides a tremendous value to the graduate and professional community.

Increases in minimum wage, the addition of BRB Fellows and staff, and equipment purchases and upgrades have led to a request for increasing funding over the last several funding cycles. This funding cycle the Committee is pleased to see a proactive move to save for future expenditures and our recommendation is intended to facilitate that change as well as to support ongoing programs by increasing the projected lump sum payment by 18%.

Notes on last funding cycle

GPSAF funding is BRB’s primary means of financial support, and the Committee is grateful that funding from the last byline cycle was able to off-set shortfalls in programmatic funding and enable BRB to continue remote operations while also ensuring that all employees continued in their positions throughout the pandemic.



Cornell Cinema

Group Profile

Cornell Cinema (CC) offers educational and popular film programming for the Cornell and Ithaca communities. Cornell Cinema’s primary mission is educational in scope, providing access both to a wide array of films not typically available – such as international, independent, classic, or documentary films. Mainstream films are also offered at prices substantially below other local venues. In addition to screenings, the Cinema organizes introductions by film scholars, panels with faculty and other experts from the field, and filmmakers to engage in post-screening discussions, as well as an array of special events including movies on the Willard Straight Terrace.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$11.00	\$9.00	\$7.00	\$7.00

Analysis

A Memorandum of Understanding between Cornell Cinema and the GPSA stipulates a reduction in byline funding by \$2 each cycle until funding reaches \$3. The Committee is concerned that this agreement is ill-timed due to the stresses of the pandemic but has chosen to encourage CC to apply for funds through the GPSA emergency fund rather than amend that agreement. This allows increased short-term flexibility for both the GPSA and CC while still honoring the intent of the original agreement, which was to encourage CC funding through the university rather than student organizations.

The Committee believes it is inappropriate that an organization such as CC must look for funding through student groups since it is so clearly an asset to the reputation of, and experience at, Cornell. The Committee encourages further funding through the University but also recognizes that CC provides unique benefits to the graduate and professional community in the form of reduced ticket prices and targeted programming, and we are happy to support those efforts through funding.



Concert Commission

Group Profile

The Cornell Concert Commission (CCC) seeks to “provide the student body with popular and diverse musical entertainment.” To do so, the CCC selects and produces a number of large, on-campus performances each academic year. CCC programming continued throughout the pandemic through remote and in-person performances and graduate students continued to benefit from free or subsidized tickets for these events. CCC aims to host one free concert per year and to dedicate 3-5% of its total operating budget to co-sponsoring musical events with other student organizations.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$5.76	\$5.76	\$5.76	\$5.76

Analysis

The CCC has a long history of providing high quality musical entertainment to the Cornell and Ithaca communities. Performers often include acts that many students would not otherwise have the opportunity to see, both due to limited performances and ticket prices. CCC also makes an effort to host one free show a year and support student organizations by co-sponsoring events. To re-coup the GPSAF investment in CCC, graduate students would only need to attend one show every 1-2 years. It is the opinion of the Committee that graduate and professional students generally receive excellent value for the investment in the CCC and it is for this reason that we recommend maintaining the current funding level. However, like Athletics and CUPB, CCC is showing substantial “rollover” in their budget which indicates a significant amount of unused funds from the previous cycle. As such, this recommendation is made in good faith based on a reasonable expectation that an agreement will be reached between the CCC and the GPSA regarding the possible return of all or a portion of the unused funding from the previous academic year.



CUEMS

Group Profile

The Cornell University Emergency Medical Service (CUEMS) is a certified, student-run EMS agency. Its mission is to provide professional, efficient, and effective Basic Life Support care to the entire Cornell community. CUEMS provides emergency response to medical emergencies on Cornell University Campus and surrounding university-owned properties. It also provides stand-by service for university events and provides CPR, First Aid, and other training seminars to the Cornell community, as well as providing services completely free of charge to patients.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$1.80	\$2.20	\$2.35	\$2.35

Analysis

CUEMS does important, live-saving work that benefits the entire Cornell Community. The group accepts new members each semester to be trained weekly in life-saving techniques for their work as EMTs or paramedics and the services provided by the group are available to all people within their service area.

CUEMS has been commendably forthright in providing budgets, financial reports, and narrative descriptions of their operating expenses and planning. Their requested per student amount is based on an under-estimate of student enrollments, but the Committee has chosen to recommend that their request be granted as presented because of concerns regarding the historic draw down of their capital reserve, which appears to have been done too swiftly and supported by decreases in funding. Our recommendation accounts for what we believe will be a small budgetary shortfall resulting from this decision and we hope that this slight increase in lump sum funding will provide the needed support for this important organization as it continues to adjust its funding allocations and recover from the pandemic.



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CUPB

Group Profile

The CUPB is a student organization that organizes major lecture and entertainment events for the Cornell and Ithaca communities. These events draw large crowds and provide an opportunity for community members to participate in many events that would likely not be available otherwise. Despite the pandemic, CUPB has done an excellent job of fulfilling their mission of enriching and inspiring the life of Cornellians by bringing both virtual and in-person events to campus that have recently included Spike Lee, Michael Che, and Carli Lloyd among several others. They offer advanced ticket sales to the Cornell community for their events and aim to allocate 5% of their yearly budget to co-sponsoring events with other Campus Groups. Graduate and professional students have the opportunity to purchase tickets at least one day prior to the general public and pay reduced prices.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$2.50	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$2.75

Analysis

We are impressed by the resilience of the group and their continuing commitment to a mission that we believe is a great asset to the Graduate and Professional Community. In recognition of the significant value that CUPB brings to the graduate and professional community we are recommending that funding of 2.75 per student be allocated, which is slightly in excess of the requested lump sum. However, we also note that the “rollover” portion of the CUPB budget has increased steadily and substantially over the past years and includes an estimated \$70,247.05 to be used in the coming year. In recognition of this increasing rollover budget line and the increased enrollments projected for the coming cycle, this recommendation is made in good faith based on a reasonable expectation that an agreement will be reached between the CUPB and the GPSA regarding the return of all or a portion of the unused funding from the previous academic year.



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Cornell University
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GPSA

Group Profile

The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly represents all graduate and professional students on Cornell University’s Ithaca, New York and Geneva campuses through the shared governance system. This body aims to advocate for the graduate and professional student community by offering policy recommendations to and requesting audiences with Cornell University administration. The GPSA also maintains the authority to recommend and allocate the Student Activity Fee to be distributed among the Byline organizations that enrich the graduate and professional student experience at Cornell University.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$4.90	\$4.90	\$4.90	\$4.90

Analysis

The GPSA has historically engaged in a very conservative use of funds. Committees have shown that they use their budgeted resources only when necessary, and the organization as a whole has been able to reduce basic spending required for meeting rooms and other basic necessities. Due to recent leadership turnover GPSA leadership has recognized a need to build a more resilient and agile organization and has begun plans to do so that will require a modest outlay of funds. However, the end of the GPSA agreement with Anabel’s grocery, and the subsequent budgeting for ad hoc emergency funds for the 2021-2022 academic year, will be finalized before the beginning of the 2022-2024 funding cycle and will adequately accommodate these new needs. Moreover, like Athletics, CCC, and CUPB, the GPSA has funding that was not used during the previous year that will be allocated towards providing for facilities and other needs. It is important to note, however, that use of this funding to support ongoing operations needs will likely necessitate an increase in funding for the 2024-2026 funding cycle.



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GPSAPB

Group Profile

The mission of the Graduate and Student Assembly Programming Board (GPSAPB) is to improve the quality of social and wellness-oriented programming for graduate and professional students at Cornell University. Their events have historically included the annual Grad Ball, Grads’ Nights Out, mixers, speakers, and other wellness-oriented events.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$2.22	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$2.75

Analysis

The GPSPB has historically been the only programming board on campus that directly targets the graduate and professional students for their events. Before the pandemic the GPSPB has taken effective steps towards increased publicity and more diverse attendance at events but unfortunately the pandemic and recent changes in leadership have derailed the organization. However, new leadership and more direct support from GPSA leadership has produced a recent return to events planning and a proactive approach to outreach and communications. As such, the Committee recommendation provides the requested lump sum payment with the expectation that the GPSPB will quickly regain its footing under new leadership and will once again provide substantial value to the graduate and professional student community.

Notably, the GPSPB did not host events during the previous cycle and as such this recommendation is made in good faith based on a reasonable expectation that an agreement will be reached between the GPSPB and the GPSA regarding the return of all or a portion of the unused funding from the previous academic year.



International Students Union

Group Profile

The International Students Union (ISU) promotes cultural exchange within and among the Cornell community and provides support and representation to the international community on campus in a variety of ways. As a programming, funding, advisory, and advocacy board, the ISU works with all Cornell students as well as the administration and represents the interests of the international students who make up at least 47% of the graduate and professional student community.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$1.46	\$1.62	\$1.62	\$1.62

Analysis

ISU plays a large and important role in the international student community on campus and has played a particularly important role in supporting students during the pandemic. Their efforts to include more professional and graduate students are noted by the committee and appreciated in addition to their many other events, resources, and advocacy work. We hope that the ISU continues to provide such meaningful support to the Cornell community and to that end we are recommending that their funding request be granted in full. However, as noted in their funding application, there are substantial irregularities in their accounting for the last year and as such this recommendation is made in good faith based on a reasonable expectation that these irregularities will be reconciled and that an agreement will be reached between the ISU and the GPSA regarding the disposition and possible return of all or a portion of any unused funding.



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Risk Management Club Insurance

Profile and Analysis

All independent registered graduate and undergraduate student clubs are covered by the student club insurance policy. This policy is therefore essential to the functioning of these clubs, which in turn provide innumerable benefits to the graduate and professional community. While this Committee believes that the policy should be funded by the University, rather than by the Assemblies, we are comfortable recommending that the full request be granted.

Request and Recommendation

2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation
\$5.50	\$5.50	\$5.50	\$5.50



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Recommendations

Group	2018-2020 Funding	2020-2022 Funding	2022-2024 Request	2022-2024 Recommendation	Change from 2020- 2022*
Athletics & Physical Education	\$7.72	\$7.72	\$7.72	\$7.00	-9%
Big Red Barn	\$11.58	\$13.28	\$15.25	\$15.00	13%
Cornell Cinema	\$11.00	\$9.00	\$7.00	\$7.00	-22%
Cornell Concert Commission	\$5.76	\$5.76	\$5.76	\$5.76	0%
CU EMS	\$1.80	\$2.20	\$2.35	\$2.35	7%
CU Programming Board	\$2.50	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	0%
GPSA	\$4.90	\$4.90	\$4.90	\$4.90	0%
GPSA Programming Board	\$2.22	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$2.75	-8%
International Students Union	\$1.46	\$1.62	\$1.62	\$1.62	0%
Orientation	\$1.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Risk Management: Club Insurance	\$5.50	\$5.50	\$5.50	\$5.50	0%
Subtotal		\$55.98	\$56.10	\$54.88	-2%
GPSAFC (>=35%)	\$29.56	\$30.02	n/a	\$30.12	0%
Total	\$85.00	\$86.00	n/a	\$85.00	-1%

*Note the percent changes are based on the per student allocation rather than the lump sum allocation which is more commonly used in budgeting.