



Letter to Shippensburg University Students Regarding 2022-2023 Operating Budget

Shippensburg University Community,

Over the past year, our campus community has shown its resilience and immense growth as campus moves through the COVID-19 pandemic to a “new normal.” Your Student Government Association (SGA) Budget and Finance team has been working hard to ensure that student organizations are supported and prepared to serve the student body as it grows and changes in the coming year. This growth mindset governed how we designed the 2022-2023 fiscal year budget.

As your elected representatives, we have the opportunity to assist in the creation and oversight of the Shippensburg University Student Services, Incorporated (SUSSE)/SGA budget. SUSSE collects all undergraduate student activity fees and uses them, along with a few other revenue sources to fund all student activities, organizations, athletic teams, club sports, and events. Over the past few months, the SGA Budget and Finance committee has undergone our annual budget process and finalized and approved our annual operating budget for the upcoming year. This budget has been approved by SU Interim President, Dr. Charles Patterson. **All student groups may view their finalized student group budget on their Ship Link page. Final approval from the SGA Senate will take place at the SGA public meeting on Friday April 22, 2022, at 4PM in CUB MPR C if you wish to attend the public meeting.**

Due to declining enrollments and additional reliance on SUSSE reserves to balance the budget in previous year, the Budget and Finance committee had to make some very challenging decisions. This year’s budget is designed to reduce reliance on those reserves and reduce our structural deficit. That initial reliance was caused by the sale of housing to the University and never adjusting for those lost housing revenues. Our committee has reviewed many possible scenarios on how to address these problems and wish to outline how we decided to move forward.

Activity fees will remain the same for undergraduate students at \$23/credit for the seventh straight year. Graduate students and students enrolled in online courses will be charged an activity fee at \$20/credit going forward. This is in line with the previous fee schedule for graduate students in 2016. Our initial proposal was to slightly increase undergraduate activity fees to \$25/credit to generate revenue and mitigate cuts to the athletic program and other expense areas. This was not approved by Interim President Patterson due to his desire to reduce the overall cost to attend Shippensburg University when compared to other PASSHE universities. The committee then reworked and further cut expenses for the coming year. Administrative costs were greatly reduced in this years’ operating budget, including facility and transportation costs within the Department of Athletics. Personnel changes have aided in continued cost savings. Conferences and Collaboration Fund events will no longer be funded by the SGA in the coming



year as a way of prioritizing funds for operating budgets. This year's budget was ultimately decided to accomplish a few key goals:

- Reduce the deficit to around \$300,000/year, preserving reserves for three more years
- Equitably distribute activity fee monies to student groups
- Prioritize the day-to-day operations of student groups over additional experiences, such as conferences and post-season tournaments
- Mitigate the impacts of expense cuts to the student experience

This year, the committee underwent an extremely thorough process to ensure funding requests for student organizations were equitably distributed and allocated in a way that maximized cost efficiency. Some student organizations did receive budget decreases while others received budget increases. Decisions were made to cut budgets in areas where groups were not spending full amounts (thus freeing up monies to be allocated elsewhere) or in areas where costs could be optimized and/or reduced. This budget provides funding to new student groups and equitably distributes funding across our diverse array of student organizations while correcting what some have viewed as disproportionate and inequitable funding patterns. This is the first time in the last three years that the budget was reviewed on a per-group basis without a broad cut applied to groups. This budget paves the path forward for a continued robust campus life here at SHIP and the committee will work over the next year to create the first balanced budget in six years.

Addressing these changes and challenges will take a collective effort from our entire campus community. We will need to do the same (if not more) with less, show our Raider resilience, and persevere through these challenging financial times. We urge our student leaders to be profound, adaptive, creative, and more cost effective in the coming year as we collectively work to empower our underserved groups to grow and ultimately thrive. If you have any questions or concerns you may email Chase Slenker, SGA VP of Finance, at sgavpfinance@ship.edu or the SUSSI Executive Director, Adria Long at ALLong@ship.edu.

Sincerely,

SGA Budget & Finance Committee

Chair: Chase Slenker

Members: Nathan Augustin, Abigail Birtchet, Chase Carpenter, Austin Correll, Ian Davis, Katie Fischetti, Matthew Leonard, Khalilh Jackson, Brea Neal, Steven Matheson, Jordan Miller, Faith Mummert, Ethan Rosenberry, Zach Steffy, Erica Weaver

Advisors: Adria Long, Kay Stottlemyer