I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As a standing committee of the Graduate Student Association (GSA), the Graduate Financial Allocation Committee (GFAC) is charged with the responsibility of reviewing and making decisions regarding funding of proposals submitted by Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) and all other funding opportunities provided by the GSA. This funding comes solely from the Student Assessment Fee paid by graduate students on main campus. All proposals are evaluated to ensure that they meet the two primary goals of the GSA: increasing graduate student participation in the University community and guaranteeing that graduate student needs and concerns are being represented.

II. GENERAL FUNDING RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. In accordance with the University Policy on Discrimination, funding shall not be determined on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status.
2. Being a recipient of Student Assessment Fee (SAF) funds should not be interpreted as meaning that funded organizations or individuals are associated with or controlled by Western Michigan University; the University is not responsible for the organization’s or individual’s contracts, acts, or omissions.
3. All funding applications must be submitted by the application deadline corresponding with the GFAC meeting in which they want to be considered, as listed on GSA’s website at http://www.wmich.edu/gsa/funding.
4. Requests for reimbursements of previous events or purchases made before application approval will be denied.
5. All University and legal requirements regarding the disbursement and use of SAF will be enforced. The Office of Student Engagement will manage the transfers and will work with the sponsoring group and the GFAC Chairperson to ensure compliance.
6. The Graduate Financial Allocation Committee must be comprised of at least Six (6) members; the Chairperson, and at least five graduate students who volunteer to serve as members. Moreover, any graduate student can be part of the Committee at any given time prior notification via email to the Chairperson. In addition, the GSA advisor and the OSE Program Manager will serve on the committee in an advisory capacity.
7. The Committee’s Chairperson shall act as a moderator without voting rights. Moreover, although any graduate student can participate in discussions, only the official committee members shall have voting rights.
8. The Committee’s quorum is achieved when 60% of the voting members are present. Final decisions cannot be made without meeting this quorum. In the event the Committee’s Chairperson is unable to attend, the Association’s President shall chair the meeting; in the event that the GFAC Chairperson and the GSA President cannot be present, the Association’s Parliamentarian shall chair the meeting. Excluding extenuating circumstances, a committee member who is absent for two consecutive GFAC meetings will be asked to cede their position on the Committee.
9. In the event the Committee cannot meet, a review committee with the power of approval or denial can review the proposed budget and/or funding request. This committee shall be comprised of the GSA President, the GFAC Chairperson, the GSA advisor, the Parliamentarian, and at least two other graduate students.
10. If a decision is made to deny or partially approve an application, organizations or individuals can appeal the GFAC decision directly to the GSA President. If the GSA President feels that the appeal is warranted, the appeal will be brought up for discussion at the following GSA Executive Board meeting. The individual or organization appealing the GFAC’s decision must be present at
III. RSO USE OF FUNDS, RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. In order to apply for and receive funding from the GFAC, a graduate registered student organization or Mixed RSO must have representation at monthly GSA general assembly meetings as scheduled. An RSO is allowed one (1) absence per semester (Fall and Spring). If an RSO misses more than one general assembly meeting in a semester, they will be denied funding for the remainder of the academic year.

2. Requests for RSO funding of events or operational budgets will be denied if they do not benefit the graduate student community. Mixed Registered Student Organizations that apply to the GFAC for funding must follow the guidelines defined in 2B. In cases of Mixed RSOs, at least one (1) graduate student member must be present at the GFAC meeting to present their proposal(s).

   A. Registered Student Organizations will be considered graduate organizations when their membership is comprised of at least 50% by graduate students.

   B. Registered Student Organizations will be considered mixed organizations when their membership is comprised by less than 50% of graduate students.

3. Annual caps on each Graduate Student RSO’s allocated funding will be $750.00 for operational expenses and $5,000.00 for events. Annual caps for Mixed RSOs will be up to $500.00 for operational expenses and $3,000.00 for events. RSOs may seek funding twice per academic year, as long as they do not exceed these annual caps. The academic year runs from Summer II through Summer I of the following year.

4. Any RSO event wholly or partially funded by the GSA must include the words: “Student Assessment Fee Funded” or “SAF Funded” on all publications and promotional material (radio, television, newspapers, flyers, social media, etc.), other than classified advertisements. The absence of this message will be considered a misuse of funds and will be penalized with a written warning. Warnings will be kept for two academic years. If the Organization commits the violation above mentioned after a written warning, they may be ineligible for funding for the rest of the academic and the one that follows. The GSA logo must also appear on all aforementioned materials for any event for which the GFAC has provided funding. Logos can be found on the GSA website at: http://www.wmich.edu/gsa/funding/rso-funding.

5. When applying for RSO event funding, all sponsoring groups must submit electronic draft copies of the aforementioned materials to the GFAC Chairperson at gfac-info@wmich.edu, clearly demonstrating that the SAF phrase and GSA logo are present. Failure to do so may result in the denial of future funding.

6. All RSOs requesting funding from the GSA are required to complete RSO Orientation online every academic year. RSO Orientation are available through ExperienceWMU and is offered by the Office of Student Engagement.

7. Under no circumstances will GFAC funds be transferred to a student account at a bank outside of the University. GFAC funds will only be transferred to an existing University account.

8. Funds may be used for operations, events, or other purposes already approved by the GSA. Funds are expected to be spent only for items budgeted for and approved by the GFAC. Misuse of GFAC allocated funds may result in the suspension of future SAF funding.

9. Funds must not be awarded for the personal benefit of individuals or private corporations, charitable organizations or programs, financing political candidates and/or campaigns, religious purposes (i.e. worship, devotional exercises, proselytizing), or to finance any activity contrary to
the laws of the State of Michigan and/or the Federal Government. Proposal for fundraising purposes will be denied.

10. Any allocated SAF funds not used by the RSO for the purposes they indicated in their application will be funded back to the GSA after thirty (30) days. If an extension is necessary, the RSO is responsible for contacting the OSE Program Manager to request a later deadline. If your event date changes after initial funding by the GSA, you are required to notify the GFAC of that change (2) days prior to the original event date.

11. Operational funding must be used to offset the expenses of running the organization, such as, but not limited to, meetings or other activities that occur on a regular basis, general office supplies, advertising, clothing, or food and beverages.

12. Operational funding for food and beverages will not exceed 50% of the total amount requested and awarded, and not more than $250 for Mixed RSOs or $375 for Graduate RSOs per academic year.

13. Event funding must be used in the planning, organizing, and implementation of the events, such as but not limited to, speaker fees, room and equipment rentals, food and beverages for the event, or promotional products.

14. Event funding for food and beverages will not exceed 50% of the total amount of funds requested and awarded, and not more than $1,500.00 for Mixed RSOS or $2,500.00 for Graduate RSOS per academic year.

15. All RSOs that are awarded event funding from the GSA must submit an event summary report and final summary of actual expenses to the GFAC no later than 30 days from the date the event took place. Failure to submit this report will jeopardize future GSA funding to the RSO. Criteria for the summary report can be found at http://www.wmich.edu/gsa/funding/rso-funding.

IV. RSO FUNDING APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

The funds managed by GSA come solely from the Student Assessment Fee (SAF) paid by main campus graduate students. The following eight questions will be the primary points of consideration for the GFAC, when reviewing proposals submitted by RSOs for funding purposes. While proposals do not necessarily need to meet all of the following criteria, those that do so will be given more favorable consideration by the GFAC. If the proposal does not meet a substantial proportion of the criteria, please be prepared to justify why the proposal should be funded.

1. Does the proposal enrich the academic, cultural, social, or professional experiences of the graduate student community?

2. Does the proposal ensure that graduate student needs and concerns are being represented?

3. Does the activity promote interaction between graduate students and increase graduate student participation in the University community?

4. How many graduate students are involved in the RSO, and how many will benefit from the proposed funding request?

5. Does the group submitting the proposal have additional sources of funding to offset the project’s costs or can the organization demonstrate that additional sources of funding are unnecessary?

V. RSO FUNDING APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

1. All organizations seeking funding from the GSA must become Registered Student Organizations through the Office of Student Engagement. More information can be found at https://wmich.edu/studentengagement and https://wmich.edu/studentengagement/rso/finances respectively. Organizations must be an active RSO for at least eight weeks before they can apply for
funding. An RSO representative must complete the online [RSO Orientation](https://wmich.edu/gsa/funding/roso-funding) by the Office of Student Engagement before they apply for funding.

2. Any Graduate or Mixed RSO that has been active for at least eight weeks must complete and submit a complete GFAC Funding Application available at [https://wmich.edu/gsa/funding/roso-funding](https://wmich.edu/gsa/funding/roso-funding). The GFAC Chairperson may be contacted with questions or for assistance in preparing the proposal at gfac-info@wmich.edu.

3. For RSO event and operational funding requests, RSOs are required to send at least one graduate student representative to defend their application at the GFAC meeting; the time, location and date of that meeting would be communicated in advance by the GFAC Chairperson. The GFAC Chairperson will inform the RSO’s representative that their proposal has been received, whether it is accepted as following the guidelines, and that they are on the agenda for the next GFAC meeting for funding consideration. If the GFAC Chairperson does not contact the RSO within three (3) business days, the RSO should contact the GFAC Chairperson via email and copy the GSA president (gsa@wmich.edu) to ensure that their application was received. Failure to attend the meeting and present the proposal will result in the denial of the proposal.

4. If a proposal does not follow the funding guidelines, the proposal will be denied and returned to the RSO. Therefore, it is recommended that RSOs submit their proposal as far in advance as possible. The GFAC Chairperson may be available to work with RSOs to improve their proposal. However, this advisement is not meant to take the place of an RSO reading and following these guidelines.

5. The GFAC will review all proposals received at the monthly GFAC meeting and make decisions regarding RSO funding proposals. The Committee’s Chairperson must report their decisions to the GSA at the general body meeting. All approved funds will be transferred to the appropriate University Fund and Cost Center. The Committee’s Chairperson will notify all RSOs via email the final decision within five (5) business days of the Committee’s monthly meeting. If a request is denied or partially funded, the GFAC Chairperson will provide the RSO with the reason(s) why the request was denied.

6. Purchases may be made by the RSO and reimbursed, or the RSO may request that the OSE Program Manager make purchases on their behalf. Purchases made before the funding application was approved will not be reimbursed.

7. For event funding, all invoices and payments must be submitted within seven (7) days after the event took place. For operational funding, all purchases must be completed and receipts submitted within 30 days of funding approval. If funds are refunded to the GSA and there are still outstanding payments, the RSO will be responsible for those payments.

8. RSOs seeking funding from the GFAC are also encouraged to seek funding from other sources at the University and within the community. In addition to the GFAC, the Western Student Association (WSA) has an allocation committee to which RSOs can apply for funding. WSA’s website is: [http://www.westernstudentassociation.org/](http://www.westernstudentassociation.org/). Further funding information may be found through the Office of Student Engagement or the RSO Financial Advisor.

9. Additionally, RSOs are encouraged to engage in fundraising activities or seek other sources of funding within the community to supplement funding that may be awarded by the GFAC.

**VII. USE OF FUNDS, RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR INDIVIDUAL GRANTS**
1. All current graduate students in good standing at Western Michigan University are eligible to apply for the following GSA grants:

   A. Licensure, Certification and Professional Training Grant
   B. Conference Grant
   C. Data Collection Grant

2. Students are eligible to receive one GSA grant (either Certification, Conference or Data Collection) over the course of their graduate program. Students who complete more than one graduate degree at WMU are eligible to receive one grant for each degree program.

3. Students may apply for only one grant per month. Students can apply multiple times throughout the year, however, once a student has been approved for a grant all subsequent applications will be denied.

4. If a student is awarded a grant but later realizes it is no longer needed, the student may contact the GFAC Chairperson at gfac-info@wmich.edu to request that the grant award be voided. If the request is granted, the student will be eligible to apply for future grants.

5. Purchases may be made by the student and reimbursed, or the student may request that the OSE Program Manager make purchases on their behalf. Purchases made before the grant application was approved will not be reimbursed.

6. Licensure, Certification and Professional Training Grant or Data Collection Grant receipts must be submitted within 30 days of grant approval. Conference Grant receipts must be submitted within 30 days after the last day of the conference. All receipts must be submitted prior to the student’s graduate date.

7. In the event that the GFAC receives more eligible applications than the budget allows, GFAC will evaluate applicants based on GPA, the number of credits completed at WMU, and the relevance of the funding request to the student’s field of study.

8. The Committee’s Chairperson will notify students via email regarding application approval or denial within five (5) business days of the Committee’s monthly meeting. If a request is denied or partially funded, the GFAC Chairperson will provide the student with the reason(s) why the request was denied.

9. Conference Grants are intended to allow graduate students to attend a conference at which they are not presenting. Students who have been asked to present at a conference are encouraged to apply for the Graduate College Travel Grant. However, a student who is presenting can still apply for and receive a GSA conference grant if:

   A. The student has applied for the Travel Grant and was denied.
   B. The student was awarded the Travel Grant, but the amount awarded will not cover the total costs associated with the conference.
      i. In this instance, the Travel Grant must be applied to costs first, and the GSA Conference grant will be used for remaining costs.
   C. The Travel Grant application window has already closed for the semester.
10. Data collection grants cannot be used to provide monetary compensation to the researcher or research study participants. This includes both direct payments and gift cards.

VIII. GFAC FUNDING APPLICATION FORMS

Please complete the GFAC Funding Application Forms as found at http://www.wmich.edu/gsa/funding and submit this with all other applicable documents electronically via ExperienceWMU. Required documents for each grant type are listed below.

1. Certification Grant: In addition to the completed ExperienceWMU form, applicants must upload an updated resume or curriculum vitae and copies of an unofficial transcript (available for download on the WMU portal).
2. Conference Grant: In addition to the completed ExperienceWMU form, applicants must upload an updated resume or curriculum vitae, an itemized budget of expected expenses, and copies of an unofficial transcript (available for download on the WMU portal).
3. Data Collection Grant: In addition to the completed ExperienceWMU form, applicants must upload an updated resume or curriculum vitae; a letter of support from a dissertation or thesis director or committee member, copies of an unofficial transcript (available for download on the WMU portal), an itemized budget for the items to be funded by the grant, and a copy of the approval letter from the Institutional Review Board (if applicable).
4. RSO Event Funding: In addition to the completed ExperienceWMU form, applicants must upload a roster of current organizational members; a detailed budget for the event; supporting documents as rationale for each budget item; and a four-slide PowerPoint presentation to be used during the RSO presentation.
5. RSO Operational Funding: In addition to the completed ExperienceWMU form, applicants must upload a roster of current organizational members; a detailed budget for operational expenses; supporting documents as rationale for each budget item; and a brief description of how the RSO will use the proposed items.

VIII. AMENDMENTS TO GFAC FUNDING GUIDELINES

1. These Guidelines are subject to be amended under the discretion of the GFAC. In the event of changes to these guidelines, the interested party will be able to find them on the GSA website: http://www.wmich.edu/gsa/funding.
2. Proposed amendments will be presented to the GSA General Assembly for approval through voting procedures.
3. Amendments will take full effect as soon as they are approved, unless otherwise indicated by the amendment itself or as a condition for its approval stipulated by the Association’s general body.