

**GRADUATE ACTIVITY FEE
ALLOCATION COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTION**

Fall 2024

GRADUATE ACTIVITY FEE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION

Statement of Purpose and Function

In order to broaden the base of decision making, preclude the risk of arbitrary judgment, help insure that the Graduate Activity Fee distribution will be in the best interests of the University of Miami, and promote the welfare of the greatest number of students, individuals and group representatives; GAFAC (Graduate Activity Fee Allocation Committee) is hereby established to determine the distribution of the unallocated portion of the Graduate Activity Fee. GAFAC will only meet during the Fall and Spring Semesters.

I. Membership will be determined as follows:

- A. GAFAC will be composed of : (a) Nine (9) graduate students in good academic standing, who pay their respective Activity Fees and are currently enrolled throughout their term of office, and (b) One (1) Advisor.
 - 1. One of the graduate representatives will be the Treasurer of the Graduate Student Association, or their appointee.
 - 2. Eight (8) representatives, one from each School and each College, and eight (8) alternates, one from each School and each College, will be appointed by each School and each College. The Schools are: Architecture, Business, Communication, Education, Music, Nursing and Health Studies, the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, and Engineering.
 - a. Each alternate shall have the full duties and powers and meet the same requirements for representativenesship of the replaced representative, and shall not require a written proxy or other manifestation of intent to exercise such powers.
 - b. Each alternate shall constitute a representative for quorum purposes when acting as a replacement for the regular representative.
 - 3. The Advisor will be appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

II. Terms of Office

All representatives of GAFAC will serve a term of office that shall run from the beginning of classes Fall Semester to the end of classes of the following Spring Semester. All representatives (primary and alternate) will be appointed by their respective dean or his/her designee no later than August 15th.

III. Vacancies or Incapacitation of Representatives

- A. In the case of a vacancy or incapacitation in the seat held by the Treasurer of the Graduate Student Association, the procedure specified in the constitutional document of the governing agency shall be followed to designate a new or acting representative to serve for the duration of the disability or to serve the duration of the term affected by the vacancy.
- B. In case of a vacancy or incapacitation of a representative, the alternate will assume the seat. The Dean or his/her designee of the affected school will then select a new alternate.
- C. In case of a vacancy or incapacitation of the Advisor, a new Advisor will be designated by the Vice President for Student Affairs.

IV. Removal from Office

- A. GAFAC, upon verification by the Advisor as to the attendance record of the representative, shall have the power to remove any of the representatives, for three or more unexcused absences from normally scheduled meetings of GAFAC of which the representative is a representative, for which notice was attempted to be given under Section V and X.
- B. Removal from office is at the discretion of the Advisor.
- C. Certification of such removal shall be transmitted in writing and authenticated by the autographic signature of the presiding officer of GAFAC to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

V. Duties of Representatives

- A. Representatives shall hear presentations brought to GAFAC in accordance with the normal and emergency provisions of the guidelines contained in Section XIII.
- B. Representatives shall base their decisions concerning fund allocations on the award criteria contained in Section XIII, paragraph C and the by-laws.
- C. Each school and each college is to be represented (either by its representative or alternate) at all meetings of the Committee. Failure to do so can result in the removal of a representative in accordance with Section IV.
- D. No representative shall take actions or make statements under the apparent authority of GAFAC without the prior authorization of GAFAC.

- E. It is expected that each representative to GAFAC will approach the responsibilities thereto with the highest sense of integrity, fairness, and without undue bias. In the event a representative feels that there is a personal doubt as to his/her ability to render a fair appraisal of any given matter, then the representative may advise the Chair of such, and may thereupon decline to participate in any discussion or voting on the matter (other than an abstention if needed to ensure that a quorum exists.) This privilege shall also extend to the Chair.
- F. The representative is responsible for making available to students in his or her School or College updated GAFAC information, a copy of the GAFAC Constitution, and any additional material distributed by GAFAC. Representatives are responsible for informing faculty, administrators and students in their respective School or College of the availability of GAFAC funding.
- G. Upon completion of a representative's term, it is the representative's responsibility to inform the Dean that a new representative should be appointed in a timely manner as outlined in Section II.

VI. Censure of Representatives

- A. Any GAFAC representative may be censured for actions taken or statements made under apparent authority of GAFAC without the prior authorization of GAFAC. Censure will require six affirmative votes of GAFAC.
- B. Any statements (without the prior approval of GAFAC) or misuse of authority by a representative will be considered non-binding of GAFAC.

VII. Official Voting Procedures

- A. Actions of GAFAC:

All official actions taken by GAFAC in recommending the allocation of funds or in rendering other recommendations must be approved by a simple majority of the representatives present. Representatives must vote yes or no; there shall be no abstentions except in cases of conflict of interest. In the event an application or constitutional matter is tabled and time is of the essence, the Chair may call for a vote via electronic mail. Only those members who were present at the meeting when the application or constitutional matter was discussed may participate in the electronic vote.

- B. Whereas, a quorum of six representatives is required to convene a GAFAC meeting; And whereas, occasions arise when a quorum of six is not possible; And whereas, a majority of a quorum is required to approve or deny funding to proposals; Be it, therefore, resolved that when fewer than a quorum are present, meetings may still be held provided that four of the representatives present agree unanimously on approval or denial of the proposed funding application. When four representatives cannot reach agreement, the proposal is to be tabled until the next meeting in which a quorum is present.
- C. All presentation sessions will be open unless the representatives vote to close the session.
- D. All voting sessions will be open only to those GAFAC representatives as designated in Section I, paragraph A.
- E. All official actions of GAFAC will be recorded and placed on file in the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and will be available for public review.
- F. Proxy votes are unacceptable.

VIII. Allocation of Funds

- A. Students must seek alternate sources of funding prior to applying to GAFAC.
 - 1. All funding commitments and/or rejections from other sources are to be submitted in writing along with the proposals.
 - 2. The written statement must include the dollar commitment by the funding source.
 - 3. Funding commitments from alternative sources will be applied toward total costs before GAFAC monies will be committed.
- B. GAFAC will have the responsibility for recommendations dealing with the unallocated portion of the Activity Fee paid by graduate students each semester. The fixed portion of the Fees and unallocated portion of the Fees will remain as indicated on Table I (see page 13) unless modified by the Board of Trustees. In regard to any changes, modifications or the distribution of fixed or unallocated portion of the Fees, the Board of Trustees, at its discretion, may consult with GAFAC and/or call for receipt of affirmative referenda from the students affected.
- C. All allocations for funds will be voted upon according to Section VII.
- D. All funds will be distributed in accordance with the GAFAC allocation guidelines in Section XIII and the by-laws.

- E. All allocations and recommendations for allocations of funds shall be approved in accordance with the provisions of this document. All unallocated funds or funds not used for the purpose for which they were allocated shall revert to the central GAFAC account so that they can be reallocated in the following years in accordance with Section G below.
- F. All recommendations by GAFAC for the expenditure and disbursement of unallocated funds are to be submitted to the Vice President for Student Affairs who will act within ten days of his/her receipt to either approve the recommendation or refer those recommendations which in his/her sole discretion warrant action by the Provost or the Board of Trustees. In any instance where the Vice President for Student Affairs finds that he/she cannot approve or accept the recommendations of GAFAC, or must refer it to the Provost or the Board of Trustees, such recommendations will be submitted in complete form, along with the observations of the Vice President for Student Affairs and GAFAC to either the Provost or the Board of Trustees.
- G. Recipients of funding must submit receipts within 30 days of the funded event/program or 30 days from notification from GAFAC, whichever is later, or funding will revert to the general GAFAC fund. Exceptions must be approved by the GAFAC Committee prior to the end of the 30 days.
- H. All recommendations by GAFAC shall specify the date upon which all uncommitted and unspent funds in the allocation shall revert to the contingency account. The day specified may be prior to, or subsequent to the end of the fiscal year or the academic year. Such date may be extended prior to the original reversion date by GAFAC after justification has been received.
- I. All GAFAC funds will be allocated in accordance with stated guidelines. These guidelines will be available from the GAFAC Committee or the GAFAC Advisor. Any exceptions to said guidelines must be approved by a simple majority vote by a quorum of GAFAC representatives.
- J. A GAFAC operating budget in the amount of \$1,500.00 per year shall be established from the GAFAC account to meet the operating needs of the Committee. Any unused funds shall revert back to the GAFAC disbursement account by June 1 of each academic year.
- IX. The Chair and the Vice Chair will be elected by GAFAC at the first GAFAC meeting when a quorum is present. The Vice Chair will serve in the absence of the Chair**
- X. Duties of the Chair:**
 - A. The Chair is a voting representative of GAFAC.

- B. The Chair shall call regular meetings of GAFAC at least once a month or more frequently if needed.

- C. The Chair shall call special meetings upon the request of at least two or more representatives of GAFAC.
- D. The Chair will be responsible for conducting all meetings in accordance with the rules and guidelines adopted by the GAFAC Committee.
- E. The Chair will be the official agent for GAFAC in formally transmitting over his/her signature all GAFAC recommendations and resolutions voted on by the Committee as provided under Section VIII.
- F. The Chair will be responsible for notifying all representatives of GAFAC of normally scheduled meetings at least six days in advance.
- G. The Chair shall perform other such duties as determined by GAFAC.
- H. The Chair shall not be held by a representative from the same school or department for more than one academic year in succession, unless approved by the Committee.

XI. Vacancies of the Chair

In case of vacancy of the Chair, a new Chair will be selected by election at the meeting where the resignation is accepted.

XII. Duties of the Advisor

- A. The Advisor shall be a non-voting representative of the GAFAC Committee.
- B. The Advisor shall set the date of the initial GAFAC meeting of the academic year.
- C. The Advisor of GAFAC is selected to serve as the policy information resource person; to assist GAFAC and the various account signatories in the consideration and approval of the applications; to assist in the implementation of allocated and approved funding recommendations through the disbursement and expenditure of allocated and approved funding applications; and to monitor the allocation/expenditure functions in conjunction with the Chair of GAFAC, the Treasurer of the Graduate Student Association and the respective signatories.
- D. The Advisor shall advise GAFAC at each formally scheduled meeting of the status of all GAFAC expenditures and income accounts.

XIII. Guidelines for applications of funds from GAFAC

A. Submitting an application:

1. The applicant(s) must be degree-seeking graduate student(s) and must have paid the Graduate Activity Fee for all enrolled semesters. GAFAC will check the applying student's records for this information. A student who has paid the Activity Fee and has received GAFAC funding and who neglects, for whatever reason, to pay his/her fees for any future semester, forfeits the right to apply to GAFAC for future funding.
2. All applications must be submitted online. The online application can be found on the GAFAC website <https://gafac.miami.edu/>.
 - a) Student must seek other sources of funding a) from their department; b) Max and Peggy Kriloff Graduate Student Travel Scholarship (Arts and Sciences students only) AND submit a letter or e-mail from their department administrator or faculty advisor supporting the GAFAC application.
 - b) The names listed in a group application cannot be changed or added after the application has been submitted. Only deletions will be permitted. If the applicant would like to add or change names, then the application must be withdrawn and resubmitted. The date of the revised application will determine when the applicant is scheduled to appear before the Committee.
3. Each applicant shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to make an oral presentation on the submitted fund allocation application.
4. Retroactive applications will not be considered. The application for funding must be submitted to the Committee before the scheduled event/conference takes place. In such instances where an event/conference takes place when GAFAC is not in session, then the Committee may consider the application at the earliest reconvening of GAFAC, provided the application is submitted online prior to the event/conference.
5. Summer applications will be considered either before or after the event/conference, however the application must be submitted online prior to the event; the year that the application is heard by the GAFAC counts as the applicant's request for that academic year.

B. Availability of Applications, Guidelines, and the GAFAC Constitution

1. Application, instructions, Guidelines, and the GAFAC Constitution can be found online at <https://gafac.miami.edu/>.
2. It is the applicant's responsibility to comply with these guidelines when completing the GAFAC online Application.

C. Scheduling of Application Hearings

1. The GAFAC will only hear applications during the semester in which the event/conference/purchase of equipment will occur. The deadline to submit an application is November 1 for the fall semester and April 1 for the spring semester.
 - i. The GAFAC is in session during the fall and spring semesters.
2. If time and funds permit, applications for a Spring semester event/conference/purchase will be heard only in the final weeks of the Fall semester.
3. In the instance where an event /purchase of equipment will occur when the GAFAC is not in session, the application must still be submitted online before the event/conference/purchase. In this instance, applications will be scheduled at the earliest reconvening of the GAFAC in the next semester.
3. If the applicant(s) fails to appear on their designated hearing date and time, the hearing will be rescheduled on the next available day.
 - i. In the event where the applicant(s) fail to appear at their rescheduled hearing, this second failure to appear will result in termination of the application.
4. In order to receive funding, the first day of the event must occur prior to the applicant's graduation from the University.

D. Awarding of Funds:

1. Recommendations to approve applications for allocations of student activity fee funds shall be considered by GAFAC only on the following criteria:
2. If funding is granted by GAFAC for specific events, any advertising put forth by said group must bear the statement **"A GAFAC SPONSORED EVENT."**
3. The merits of the individual application.
4. Whether or not the application provides either a direct benefit or an indirect benefit to the University and graduate students.

5. Whether or not the applicant has documented reasonable effort to generate or obtain funding from sources other than GAFAC or the governing agency of the graduate student community.
6. The amount of funds available for allocation.
7. It is the GAFAC policy that no individual student will be funded more than once during the same academic year.
8. Funds must be used for the expressed purpose for which they are awarded. Any deviation without prior approval from GAFAC will result in the loss of said funds.
9. Application for funds does not guarantee receipt of funding. Previous receipt of GAFAC funding does not guarantee future funding.
10. Every effort will be made to e-mail the applicant of the Committee's decision as soon as possible. Final notification of the allocation of funds cannot be made until the Chairperson and the Vice President for Student Affairs have signed the minutes of the meeting when the applicant applied.

E. Upon Receipt of Allocation:

1. Under no circumstances shall applicants commit the expenditure of, or expend activity fee funds prior to receiving written notification of the approval of the GAFAC recommendation to allocate activity fee funds. This does not preclude applicants from expending other funds, but it is expressly understood that there is no guarantee by GAFAC of any reimbursement unless such procedure is specifically authorized by GAFAC and approved by the Vice President for Student Affairs.
2. Funds must be used for the expressed purpose for which they are awarded. Any deviation without prior approval from GAFAC will result in the loss of said funds.

F. Upon completion of the funded activity, the applicant will:

1. Conduct a lecture or seminar, when appropriate, for graduate students on a topic of relevance to his/her project.
2. Submit to GAFAC copies of all posting and other notices publicizing the project (if appropriate).
3. Collect and make relevant materials readily available to other graduate students through his/her department.

4. Ensure that all equipment purchased with GAFAC funds be clearly marked in some fashion with the following: **“PAID FOR WITH GAFAC FUNDS.”**

G. Appeal of GAFAC decisions

The decisions taken by GAFAC representatives at a regularly scheduled meeting on funding applications are final. If applicants wish to ascertain the reason for a denial they may contact the Student Affairs GAFAC Advisor for a brief verbal explanation.

In the event that an error has been made on a funding application, GAFAC has the authority to reconsider its decision. The procedure is:

1. There must be a quorum at a regularly scheduled meeting.
2. A motion to set aside a previous decision must be proposed by a GAFAC representative, seconded, and passed by simple majority.
3. Discussion on why a GAFAC decision should be reversed must ensue, with specific reference to as why an incorrect decision was made previously.
4. A motion to approve or deny funding may then be made, seconded and passed by a simple majority.
5. This will be the final decision of GAFAC and is irreversible. No oral presentation by the applicant is necessary. However, it is the prerogative of the Committee to approve or deny a second oral presentation for the applicant in an appeal. The Chair does not have the authority to unilaterally grant a second oral presentation.
6. A brief verbal explanation of GAFAC’s decision may be obtained from the GAFAC advisor.

H. GAFAC funds cannot be used towards the payment of any tuition and/or required texts, this includes all materials and/or resources provided by their respective departments.

I. GAFAC funds cannot be used to pay a salary to an individual, e.g. an actor/actress, accompanist, performer, etc. GAFAC may approve the payment of an honorarium to a guest speaker or performer if the event is open to all graduate students and is held on the University of Miami campus.

XIV. Amendments

- A. Amendments to this Constitution must be made with a total of six affirmative votes by the GAFAC Committee, representing at least two-thirds of the total membership of GAFAC, and must be approved by the Administrative Head of the Graduate School and the Vice President for Student Affairs.**

- In special circumstances where the normal funding of expenses to graduate students is not possible, the GAFAC Committee may approach the Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School to allow the utilization of GAFAC funds to provide financial support to graduate students as needed.

1. By-laws.

- a. The purpose of the by-laws is to clarify funding allocations as outlined in the Constitution.
- b. Amendments to the by-laws must be made with a total of six affirmative votes by the GAFAC Committee, representing at least two-thirds of the total membership, and must be approved by the Administrative Head of the Graduate School and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

- B. Ratification by GAFAC will take place when six affirmative votes by the GAFAC Committee, representing at least two-thirds of the total membership, signs the Constitution.**

- C. This Constitution will become binding when ratified by the GAFAC Committee and approved by the Vice President for Student Affairs.**

TABLE I

**DISTRIBUTION FOR STUDENT ACTIVITY FEES PAID BY GRADUATE
STUDENTS PER SEMESTER**

**ALL CATEGORIES APPLY TO ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS THAT HAVE PAID
THE ACTIVITY FEE**

PAID BY ALL FULL-TIME GRADUATE STUDENTS

Description	Fee
University Center Improvements	3.41
Ibis Yearbook	1.52
The Miami Hurricane	0.34
Wellness Programming	0.68
Student Activities Programming	1.09
University Center Programming	3.41
WVUM	0.34
Rathskeller Membership	1.02
GSA Merit Scholarship	3.14
GSA Graduate Student Orgs	1.50
GSA Technology Upgrades	1.00
Graduate Student Assoc.	12.75
Total Fixed Fees	30.20
GAFAC COMMITTEE	15.80

TOTAL ACTIVITY FEE:	46.00

**GRADUATE ACTIVITY FEE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (GAFAC)
BY-LAWS**

Definition: Applicant refers to a person or a group

By-law #1 –Students applying for funds from GAFAC must answer all questions in the online application.

By-law #1 a. GAFAC will not fund food or drinks-

By-law #2 - Categories of Funding for Individuals.

1. Conferences and/or Workshops

- A. Applicant is presenting at the conference. To qualify for funding, the applicant must:
- be presenting original work.
 - be one of the authors (only one author will be funded at any single conference).
 - submit documentation confirming his/her presentation at the conference.
- B. Applicant is attending a conference. To qualify for funding the applicant must:
- describe the conference and organizing body.
 - describe the purpose of attendance.
 - explain what he/she expects to present upon return.
- C. Applicant is organizing a conference or lecture. This must be a student organized and run conference or lecture.
- describe the location, duration, and how organizing the conference or lecture specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
- D. Participation in workshops and courses shall be fundable if:
- A sufficiently similar course is not offered at the University of Miami.
 - The student provides documentation from their advisor to show the importance of the event for their professional or academic development.

- The course is not a class in another University that involves payment of tuition.

2. Equipment

GAFAC funds may be used to purchase equipment provided that the equipment is:

- reusable.
- returned to the applicant's department after use.
- marked "**PURCHASED WITH GAFAC FUNDS.**"

No group application is accepted under this category, as well as no application for computer hardware. Equipment must be used for individual research or in activities directly related to field of study.

3. Field Research

A. Data collection that is specifically related to the applicant's field of study. To qualify for funding, the applicant must:

- describe in detail the location, duration, itinerary and purpose of the research.
- describe how the research specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.
- collect data that specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

B. Applicant is involved in the production of a film. To qualify for funding, the applicant must:

- explain the purpose of the film
- if applicable, list any additional participants, describe their role, and fill out the GAFAC Group Application Agreement

C. Gift card incentives for any research endeavors will not be supported by funding through GAFAC.

- Due to the complicated financial logistics of processing gift card reimbursements, GAFAC does not have a precedent of funding these requests. Therefore, GAFAC will not provide funding for gift card incentives that researchers may provide for subjects' participation in various forms of research.

4. Events

GAFAC will fund an event provided that the event:

- open to all graduate students.
- has documented departmental sponsorship or approval.
- is held on a University of Miami campus.

5. Performances

GAFAC will fund costs associated with one of the following categories:

A. Applicant is performing.

- describe the location, duration, and how the performance specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

B. Applicant is having his/her work performed.

- describe the location, duration, and how the performance specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

- describe performance and organizing body.
- describe the purpose for attending the performance.
- explain what the applicant expects to present upon return.

D. Applicant is staging a performance. This must be a student-organized and student-run performance.

- describe the location of the performance being staged.
- describe the duration of the performance being staged.
- explain the purpose of staging the performance and how the performance specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

6. Exhibitions

A. Applicant is curating an exhibition. This must be a student-organized and student-run exhibition.

- describe the location of the exhibition being curated.
- describe the duration of the exhibition being curated.
- explain the purpose of curating the exhibition and how the exhibition specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

B. Applicant is exhibiting his/her work.

- describe location of the exhibition.
- describe the duration of the exhibition.
- explain how the exhibition specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

C. Applicant is attending an exhibition.

- describe the location of the exhibition being attended.
- describe the duration of the exhibition being attended.
- explain the purpose of attending the exhibition and how the exhibition specifically relates to the applicant's field of study.

7. Publications (including audio, visual, digital publications).

GAFAC will consider funding a publication related to the applicant's field of study; except for the publication of a thesis or dissertation.

By-law #3 – Caps on funding for Individuals.

1. Conferences

- A. Applicant is presenting at the conference.
A funding cap of \$500.
- B. Applicant is attending a conference.
A funding cap of \$500.
- C. Applicant is organizing a panel or lecture.
A funding cap of \$500 per student involved in the organization of the panel or lecture.

2. Equipment

A cap of \$500.

3. Field Research

- A. Applicant is conducting field research
A cap of \$500 per student involved in conducting the field research.
- B. Applicant is involved in the production of a film.
A cap of \$500 per student involved in the production of a film

4. Events

- A. Applicant is hosting an eligible event on campus. A cap of \$500 for one eligible event, per academic year, with a cap of \$250 for food and non-alcoholic beverages provided for event attendees. For example, the applicant is hosting an outreach event to share graduate student research with the broader UM community and the public. These funds could be used for hot beverages and snacks for attendees.

5. Performances

- A. Applicant is performing.
A cap of \$500 per student performance.
- B. Applicant is having his/her work performed. A cap of \$500.
- C. Applicant is attending a performance. A cap of \$500.

- D. Applicant is staging a performance.
A cap of \$500 per student involved in staging the performance

6. Exhibitions

- A. Applicant is curating an exhibition.
A cap of \$500 per student involved in curating the exhibition.
- B. Applicant is exhibiting his/her work.
A cap of \$500 per student exhibiting his/her work.
- C. Applicant is attending an exhibition
A cap of \$500

7. Publications (including audio, visual, digital publications).

A cap of \$500 per student involved in the process of putting the publication together.

By-law #4- Categories of Funding for Graduate Student Organizations.

- 1. The Graduate Student Organization funding process is handled through the Graduate Student Association.

By-law #5- Deadlines for applications

- 1. November 1 is the deadline for applications for events commencing in the fall semester (prior to fall graduation).
- 2. April 1 is the deadline for applications for events commencing in the spring semester (prior to spring graduation).
- 3. Applications for events commencing in the summer semester (after spring graduation) must be submitted prior to the event and may be heard by the GAFAC in the spring or fall semester.