

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA  
ATLANTA DIVISION

**STUDENTS FOR LIFE AT GEORGIA TECH,  
BRIAN COCHRANE, and HALEY THEIS,**

*Plaintiffs,*

v.

**REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**—W. Allen Gudenrath, Erin Hames, Samuel D. Holmes, Bárbara Rivera Holmes, C. Thomas Hopkins, Jr., James M. Hull, Cade Joiner, Everett Kennedy, Rachel B. Little, Lowery May, Jose R. Perez, Neil L. Pruitt, Jr., Sarah-Elizabeth Langford Reed, Harold Reynolds, Sachin Shailendra, T. Dallas Smith, Kessel D. Stelling, Jr., Don L. Waters, and Philip A. Wilheit, Sr.,—each individually and in his or her official capacity; **ÁNGEL CABRERA**, individually and in his official capacity official capacity as President of Georgia Institute of Technology; **KELLY FOX**, individually and in her official capacity as Executive Vice President of Administration & Finance of Georgia Institute of Technology; **JAMES FORTNER**, individually and in his official capacity as Associate Vice President of Finance & Planning of Georgia Institute of Technology; **JIM PEIRCE**, individually and in his official capacity as Senior Director of Bursar & Treasury Services; **GLORIA KOBUS**, individually and in her official capacity official capacity as Bursar of Georgia Institute of Technology, and **THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY,**

*Defendants.*

Case No. 1:20-cv-01422-SDG

**PLAINTIFFS' NOTICE OF  
VOLUNTARY DISMISSAL  
WITH PREJUDICE**

### **STIPULATION OF VOLUNTARY DISMISSAL WITH PREJUDICE**

Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 41(a)(1)(A)(i) and a settlement agreement reached by the parties (attached as “Settlement Agreement” and reproduced in part below), Plaintiffs Students for Life at Georgia Tech, Brian Cochrane, and Haley Theis hereby give notice that all claims brought in Plaintiffs’ Complaint in the above-captioned matter are voluntarily dismissed with prejudice.

### **BACKGROUND**

Plaintiffs filed this action (“the Lawsuit”) on April 1, 2020. In the Lawsuit, Plaintiffs allege that Defendants’ actions and policies violated their rights to free speech, due process, and equal protection under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution by collecting mandatory student fees that were distributed to fund student expression without viewpoint-neutral criteria, by denying Plaintiffs equal access to that funding, and by compelling Plaintiffs to alter the content and viewpoint of their speech.

Without admitting wrongdoing, Defendants engaged in good faith efforts to resolve Plaintiffs’ claims without Court involvement, including working with Plaintiffs to revise the challenged registered student organization charting and funding policies. In August 2020, Defendants adopted the resultant revised policy, entitled Georgia Institute of Technology Registered Student Organizations Policy. The parties agreed to settle the remaining claims.

### **CONCLUSION**

Therefore, in accordance with and in reliance upon the terms of the settlement agreement, Plaintiffs hereby give notice that all claims brought in Plaintiffs’ Complaint in the above-captioned matter are voluntarily dismissed with prejudice.

Respectfully submitted this 10th day of September, 2020,

/s/ J. Caleb Dalton

J. CALEB DALTON\*  
Virginia Bar No. 83790  
Attorney for Plaintiffs  
ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM  
440 First Street, Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
Telephone: (202) 393-8690  
Facsimile: (202) 393-3622  
Email: cdalton@ADFlegal.org

DAVID A. CORTMAN  
Georgia Bar No. 188810  
TRAVIS C. BARHAM  
Georgia Bar No. 753251  
Attorneys for Plaintiff  
ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM  
1000 Hurricane Shoals Road, N.E.,  
Suite D-1100  
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30043  
Telephone: (770) 339-0774  
Facsimile: (770) 339-6744  
dcortman@ADFlegal.org  
tbarham@ADFlegal.org

TYSON C. LANGHOFER\*  
Virginia Bar No. 95204  
Attorney for Plaintiffs  
ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM  
20116 Ashbrook Place, Ste 250  
Ashburn, VA 20147  
Telephone: (480) 444-0020  
Facsimile: (480) 444-0028  
Email: tlanghofer@ADFlegal.org

BLAKE W. MEADOWS  
Georgia Bar No. 569729  
TRAVIS W. SMITH  
Georgia Bar No. 153045  
FOSTER, FOSTER, AND SMITH, LLC  
118 S. Main Street  
Jonesboro, GA 30236  
Telephone: (770) 478-4000  
Facsimile: (770) 478-8927  
bmeadows@fostersmith.law  
tsmith@fostersmith.law

*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

*\*Admitted pro hac vice*

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE**

Pursuant to Local Rule 7.1(D), I hereby certify that the foregoing has been prepared in compliance with Local Rule 5.1(C) in 13-point Century Schoolbook typeface.

Respectfully submitted this 10th day of September, 2020.

*/s/ J. Caleb Dalton*

---

**J. CALEB DALTON\***

**Virginia Bar No. 83790**

**Attorney for Plaintiffs**

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on September 10th, 2020, the foregoing was electronically filed with the Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system, which will automatically send a notice of such filing to all attorneys of record.

Respectfully submitted this 10th day of September, 2020.

*/s/ J. Caleb Dalton*

---

J. CALEB DALTON\*

Virginia Bar No. 83790

Attorney for Plaintiffs

## RELEASE AND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION of payment in the amount of \$ 50,000.00 (fifty thousand dollars), and other good and valuable consideration, the sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, Students for Life at Georgia Tech, Brian Cochran and Haley Theis (jointly, RELEASORS) do hereby release, satisfy, quitclaim and forever discharge any and all claims, demands, actions, causes of action and damages (including without limitation claims for attorneys' fees, costs and expenses of litigation) of every kind and nature, whether past, present, or future, and whether known or unknown, including without limitation all claims asserted or which could have been asserted in the civil action styled *Students for Life at Georgia Tech, et al. v. Regents of the University System of Georgia, et al.*, in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, Atlanta Division, No. 1:20-cv-1422 (the LITIGATION), relating to or arising from the incidents or matters described in the LITIGATION, against each of the following: Regents of the University System of Georgia, W. Allen Gudenrath, Erin Hames, Samuel D. Holmes, Barbara Rivera Holmes, C. Thomas Hopkins, Jr., James M. Hull, Cade Joiner, Everett Kennedy, Rachel B. Little, Lowery May, Jose R. Perez, Neil L. Pruitt, Jr., Sarah-Elizabeth Langford Reed, Harold Reynolds, Sachin Shailendra, T. Dallas Smith, Kessel D. Stelling, Jr., Don L. Waters, Philip A. Wilheit, Sr., Angel Cabrera, Kelly Fox, James Fortner, Jim Pierce, Gloria Kobus, and Student Government Association of Georgia Institute of Technology; and all other offices, authorities, agencies, departments, units, divisions, subdivisions, instrumentalities, institutions, commissions, boards, and entities of the State of Georgia; and any and all employees or agents and former employees or agents of the State of Georgia (collectively, RELEASED PARTIES).

This Release and Settlement Agreement is made by RELEASORS in full and final satisfaction of all such claims against the RELEASED PARTIES through the date of the execution of this Release and Settlement Agreement. The payment hereunder shall be by check in the amount of FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00) made payable to Alliance Defending Freedom IOLTA (as attorney for RELEASORS) by the Department of Administrative Services within ten days of the execution of this Release and Settlement Agreement.

RELEASORS expressly acknowledge as additional consideration for the releases herein that the registered student organization chartering and funding policies challenged in the LITIGATION have been revised and that the resulting revised policy, entitled Georgia Institute of Technology Registered Student Organizations Policy and attached to this Agreement as Exhibit 1, was implemented and published in August 2020.

RELEASORS expressly warrant, represent and agree as follows, and hereby expressly understand and acknowledge that the RELEASED PARTIES are relying upon these warranties, representations and agreements:

1.

RELEASORS represent and warrant that they are the Plaintiffs in the LITIGATION and that they are competent and of legal age to contract. They further represent that, as of the date of the execution of this Release and Settlement Agreement, they have the right and authority to execute this Release and Settlement Agreement and have not sold, assigned, transferred, conveyed or otherwise disposed of any claim, right, or interest surrendered by virtue of this Release and Settlement Agreement.

2.

No promise or agreement not expressed herein has been made to RELEASORS. In executing this Release and Settlement Agreement, RELEASORS are not relying upon any statement or representation made by the RELEASED PARTIES or by anyone who has acted for the RELEASED PARTIES, or on the RELEASED PARTIES' behalf, and RELEASORS are relying solely upon their own judgment and the advice of their counsel.

3.

RELEASORS agree that this Release and Settlement Agreement shall apply to all known and unknown, disclosed and undisclosed, anticipated and unanticipated injuries and damages of any kind or nature resulting from, or alleged to result from, the incidents or matters that are described in the LITIGATION, including any issues pertaining to attorneys' fees under 42 U.S.C. § 1988, *et seq.*, costs, and expenses.

4.

RELEASORS understand that this is a compromise of disputed claims and a final disposition of the dispute between the parties, both as to legal liability and as to the nature and extent of any injuries and/or damages resulting from alleged acts or omissions attributable to the RELEASED PARTIES; that the settlement and compromise hereunder are made to seek peace and secure resolution and to terminate further controversy respecting all claims that have been or could be asserted against the RELEASED PARTIES relating to or arising from the incidents or matters that are described in the LITIGATION, including attorneys' fees, costs and expenses; that this settlement shall not be construed as an admission of liability, fault or wrongdoing by the RELEASED PARTIES, all such liability, fault or wrongdoing being expressly denied by them; and that this Agreement in no way prejudices the rights of the RELEASED PARTIES to deny all



such liability, fault or wrongdoing including without limitation in any suit relating to or arising from the incidents that are described in the LITIGATION.

5.

It is expressly understood and agreed that this Release and Settlement Agreement releases the RELEASED PARTIES and any and all employees, agents, officials, representatives, or assigns of the State of Georgia and any of its agencies, departments or subdivisions, including those that are now known but not named in this document and those who are unknown. The RELEASED PARTIES and the RELEASORS intend to release ALL claims of the RELEASORS and any heirs, executors, administrators, successors, and assigns against all alleged tortfeasors and wrongdoers relating to or arising from the incidents that are described in the LITIGATION. RELEASORS are neither admitting that their constitutional challenges lack merit nor certifying that the Georgia Institute of Technology Registered Student Organizations Policy, attached to this Agreement as Exhibit 1, is constitutionally flawless.

6.

No insurance carrier, medical provider or other entity or person, including state and federal governmental entities or agencies, has any lien or subrogation interest or claim for reimbursement arising out of the aforesaid occurrence, specifically including but not limited to any liens or claims arising out of the payment of workers' compensation benefits; hospital, medical, and/or funeral expenses; ERISA, Medicare or Medicaid payments; or if there are any such liens, interests, or claims for reimbursement, they will be satisfied by the proceeds received by RELEASORS paid in connection herewith, and the undersigned will save and hold the RELEASED PARTIES harmless from, and indemnify them for, any and all claims of any nature

whatsoever that may hereafter be asserted against them by any person, agency or entity claiming any such interest, lien or reimbursement.

7.

RELEASORS specifically authorize and direct their attorneys to execute and file a Stipulation of Dismissal with Prejudice of the LITIGATION, such dismissal to be in substantially the form as is attached as Exhibit 2 hereto. RELEASORS shall file the dismissal as soon as possible but no later than five business days following the latter of the execution of this Release and Settlement Agreement and receipt of the payment described herein.

8.

RELEASORS acknowledge and agree that it will be the sole responsibility of RELEASORS and/or their attorneys to pay any taxes due on the settlement amount, if any; and that RELEASORS specifically agree to hold RELEASED PARTIES harmless as to any tax liability that may result. RELEASOR agrees to provide any tax forms, including but not limited to W-9 forms, required in order for the RELEASED PARTIES to process any payment agreed to upon request.

9.

Nothing in this Release and Settlement Agreement shall be construed as the State of Georgia's waiver of immunities available under state and/or federal law.

10.

All agreements and understandings between the parties hereto are embodied and expressed herein and the terms of this Release and Settlement Agreement are contractual and not mere recitals. This Release and Settlement Agreement constitutes an accord and satisfaction of any and all claims of the RELEASORS against the RELEASED PARTIES. The RELEASORS

further declare and represent that no promise, inducement, or agreement not expressed herein has been made to them and this Release and Settlement Agreement contains the entire agreement between the parties. All of the foregoing representations are made in order for the RELEASED PARTIES to rely upon them in effecting this compromise.

11.

This Release and Settlement Agreement may not be altered, amended, or modified in any respect whatsoever, except in writing, duly executed by all parties hereto; however, copies or facsimile versions of the original Release and Settlement Agreement may be used for any purpose for which the original may be used.

12.

This Release and Settlement Agreement is made and entered into in the State of Georgia, and shall in all respects be interpreted, enforced, and governed under the laws of Georgia. The language of all parts of this Release and Settlement Agreement shall in all cases be construed as a whole, according to its fair meaning.

13.

Except for any provisions relating to the payment to be made to RELEASORS hereunder, should any provision of this Release and Settlement Agreement be declared or be determined by any court to be illegal or invalid, the validity of the remaining parts, terms or provisions shall not be affected thereby and said illegal or invalid part, term or provision shall be deemed not to be part of this Release and Settlement Agreement.

14.

This Release and Settlement Agreement shall become effective following execution by the RELEASORS and their counsel.

**BY THEIR SIGNATURES BELOW THE UNDERSIGNED REPRESENT THAT THEY HAVE READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT AND THAT THEY FULLY UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ITS TERMS**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, RELEASOR Students for Life at Georgia Tech, has hereto set its hand and seal this 2 day of September, 2020.

Haley Theis  
Students for Life at Georgia Tech

By: Haley Theis  
Its: President

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, RELEASOR Brian Cochran has hereto set his hand and seal this 2 day of September, 2020.

Brian Cochran  
Brian Cochran

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, RELEASOR Haley Theis has hereto set her hand and seal this 2 day of September, 2020.

Haley Theis  
Haley Theis

**REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY:**

J. Caleb Dalton  
J. Caleb Dalton  
Alliance Defending Freedom  
440 First Street, NW, Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20001

Counsel for RELEASORS

# **Exhibit 1**



---

## Registered Student Organizations Policy

**Type of Policy:** Administrative

**Effective Date:** August 2020

**Review Date:** August 2023

**Contact Name:** Dr. E. Gerome Stephens

**Contact Title:** Associate Dean of Students, Center for Student Engagement

**Contact Email:** gerome.stephens@gatech.edu

**Reason for Policy:**

The Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) recognizes that extracurricular organizations enhance the student experience, provide an outlet for student voices to be heard, and contribute to the Georgia Tech community. The Division of Student Life works to foster unique communities on campus that help make Georgia Tech a place that engages and includes everyone. Georgia Tech supports opportunities that create a vibrant, safe, and engaged student experience that compliments the academic mission. This Registered Student Organizations policy defines RSOs and their respective types and categories; establishes the institutional requirements for RSO Chartering and Annual Registration; outlines requirements for RSO faculty/staff Advisors; provides requirements for RSO governance; and outlines the requirements for RSO funding.

**Policy Statement:**

Each Georgia Tech student organization must Charter and thereafter register annually with the Center for Student Engagement to be considered a Registered Student Organization (RSO). Because RSOs receive benefits and resources, Georgia Tech conditions official recognition on RSOs agreeing to comply with all applicable policies and procedures, including but not limited to, Georgia Tech's [Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, and Anti-Harassment](#) policy, and the Student Code of Conduct.

RSOs are student-led and student-focused and, while they may support the mission of a department, they must 1) have a process by which student officers are elected or selected by student members and 2) have autonomous function that is advised, not mandated, by a Georgia Tech Advisor.

All initial Chartering and Registration renewals are conducted on a content-neutral and viewpoint-neutral basis, and any approval or denial is not based on the mission, goals, or beliefs of the student organization. The decision on whether to approve a student Group's application to become an RSO is based solely on the submission of a properly completed registration application, as set forth herein. The Chartering and Registration of a student organization does not constitute endorsement by Georgia Tech or approval of the student organization's policies and activities.

All RSOs must comply with municipal, county, state, and federal laws, rules, and regulations, policies, guidelines, and standards of Georgia Tech and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia ("Board of Regents").

**Scope:**

This policy applies to students, faculty and staff at Georgia Tech.

**Policy Terms:**

<b>Advisor</b>	<p>The Advisor is a liaison between Georgia Tech and the RSO.</p> <p>Advisors must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be full-time employees of Georgia Tech or the Georgia Tech Alumni Association</li> <li>2. Be exempt employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act</li> <li>3. Receive annual supervisory approval to serve as Advisor to one or more RSOs.</li> </ol>
<b>Annual Registration</b>	<p>The process by which an RSO annually renews its registration with the Center for Student Engagement and maintains an active status. (See, Section 5.2)</p>
<b>Bill</b>	<p>A Student Activity Fee allocation request for a specific event, item, or activity. Bill requests are made during the fiscal year the funds are intended to be used.</p>
<b>Budget</b>	<p>A Student Activity Fee allocation request made by an RSO for the upcoming year's events, items, or activities. Budget requests are submitted in the fiscal year prior to the one in which the funds will be used.</p>
<b>Capital Expenditures</b>	<p>A Capital Expenditure is any payment for durable goods with an expected life of three or more years under normal use, individual components, raw materials, and the costs associated with the initial installation of these durable goods. Normal use is to be considered based on the physical longevity of the item and the length of the manufacturer's limited warranty. Individual components are to be considered a part intended to be combined, joined, or connected to other durable goods or other components, or split to achieve the material's desired purpose. Payments for goods with a price of less than \$10 each shall not be considered Capital Expenditures.</p>
<b>Category</b>	<p>RSO categories describe the common purposes that exist among RSOs with a similar primary mission, as set forth in Section 5.6. All RSOs fall into at least one Category and some RSOs may fall into multiple categories based on their operations.</p>
<b>Center for Student Engagement (CSE)</b>	<p>A unit of the Division of Student Life, including the Student Organizations department, which oversees the Annual Registration and Chartering processes and provides additional guidance and advising for all Registered Student Organizations.</p>
<b>Chartering</b>	<p>The process by which a student Group becomes an RSO, which is conducted by the Center for Student Engagement in collaboration with the Student Activities Committee. (See Section 5.1)</p>
<b>Constitution</b>	<p>The governing document of an RSO that provides a clear outline of the structure and mission of the organization and provides a basic set of rules that will govern the RSO. The Constitution for each RSO must contain a set of prescribed requirements as described in Section 5.7.</p>

<b>Group</b>	A number of persons who are associated with each other, but who have not completed Institute requirements for Chartering or Registering as a Registered Student Organization.
<b>Departmental Registered Student Organization (DRSO)</b>	<p>A DRSO meets the requirements of an RSO and has been assigned the Departmental designation by the Student Activities Committee (See Section 5.3) due to the RSO's defined relationship (e.g., assets such as property, space, resources, money, reputation are involved) with a Georgia Tech unit. That relationship must be defined in a Memorandum of Understanding.</p> <p>Student Groups, created by Georgia Tech units, that have not completed the Chartering process and are not RSOs are not DRSOs; additionally, an RSO that is affiliated with a department is not necessarily a DRSO. DRSOs do not have increased access to Student Activity Fee funding.</p>
<b>Home Department</b>	A Home Department is a Georgia Tech unit with which a DRSO has a defined relationship and from which their Advisor is assigned.
<b>Registered Student Organization (RSO)</b>	An RSO is an organization that has met and complied with the requirements for Chartering and Annual Registration as outlined in this policy.
<b>Student Activities Committee (SAC)</b>	<p>As outlined in 2.6.11 of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Activities Committee (SAC) is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate which:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receives and considers all proposed changes to the Constitution of a Registered Student Organization based on whether the requirements outlined herein have been met; and</li> <li>2. Considers all Charter applications of Groups recommended by the Center for Student Engagement based on whether the requirements outlined in this policy have been met.</li> </ol>

**Procedures:**

<b>5.1 Student Organization Chartering</b>	
<b>Requirements</b>	<p>A Group seeking to be Chartered as an RSO must provide documentation of the following requirements during the Chartering window:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Constitution which meets the requirements of Section 5.7;</li> <li>2. Submission of a New Organization Chartering Form;</li> <li>3. Student membership roster of at least 10 Georgia Tech student members, joined for a common purpose, who meet eligibility criteria for participation in extracurricular activity as outlined in the Catalog;</li> </ol>



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Two distinct elected student officers filling the roles of Senior Executive Officer and Finance Officer;</li> <li>5. Advisor who meets eligibility requirements of Section 5.5;</li> <li>6. Submission of forms required to be completed by the Senior Executive Officer, Finance Officer, and Advisor; and</li> <li>7. Attendance of at least one student member at an Organization Chartering Training in the semester the Group intends to Charter.</li> </ol> <p>After the SAC has approved its Constitution, the Group must also submit its first Annual Registration Form, which includes the approved Constitution and information about the Group's incoming officers.</p>
<p><b>Submission</b></p>	<p>The timeline and process for submission of the required documentation set forth above is determined annually by the Center for Student Engagement. Timeframes and deadlines for Chartering will be published and announced by the second week of classes each semester and will allow at least 6 weeks for submission of required materials.</p> <p>Groups that do not submit the required documentation listed above by the published deadline will have all pending forms denied and any limited privileges provided during the Chartering process revoked.</p>
<p><b>Privileges during Chartering</b></p>	<p>Upon attendance of the Organization Chartering Training; submission of the New Organization Charter Form; and completion of the required Officer and Advisor forms, Groups undergoing the Charter process will be granted Pending Status and provided the privilege to reserve space on campus to host purely informational meetings (i.e., meetings designed to garner interest or additional membership to allow the Group to meet the membership requirements to Charter).</p> <p>Groups with Pending Status may not request campus funding or campus accounts until the Chartering process is complete.</p> <p>The space reservation privileges granted to a Group with Pending Status will be revoked and the Chartering process for that Group will be terminated by Center for Student Engagement if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The requirements for Chartering are not met in the published Chartering window; or</li> <li>2. Activities of the Group are not in compliance with Pending Status limited privileges as outlined in this policy.</li> </ol> <p>Should the limited privileges granted to a Group with Pending Status be revoked, the Center for Student Engagement will send notice via email to the Group's last known Senior Executive Officer and last known Advisor stating:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The reason for revocation of privileges, and</li> <li>2. The requirements that must be met to have privileges restored, and</li> <li>3. A maximum time period for meeting these requirements.</li> </ol>

	<p>When temporary privileges are revoked and/or the Chartering process is terminated, that decision may be appealed following the appeals process outlined in Section 5.3 Appeals.</p>
<p><b>Review and Outcomes</b></p>	<p>The Center for Student Engagement (CSE) will review all Chartering applications for completeness. A Chartering application is complete upon receipt by CSE of the required documentation set forth in Section 5.1, <i>Requirements</i>. Within 10 business days of a Group’s submission of a completed Chartering application to CSE, CSE will send the completed application to SAC for Constitutional review.</p> <p>Within 15 business days of receiving a Group’s completed Chartering application from CSE, SAC shall either (1) approve the Group as an RSO if all Constitution requirements set forth in Section 5.7, below, have been met, or (2) notify the Group that changes are needed to bring its Constitution into conformity with the requirements set forth in Section 5.7 or to clarify areas of ambiguity or confusion.</p> <p>A Group that receives notice from SAC that changes to its Constitution are needed shall have 15 business days to provide SAC with a revised Constitution. If a Group fails to timely provide SAC with a revised Constitution, its application will be denied. Within 15 days of receipt of a Group’s revised Constitution, SAC shall either (1) approve the Group as an RSO if all Constitution requirements set forth in Section 5.7 have now been met, or (2) deny RSO status to the Group if it is determined that not all Constitution requirements set forth in Section 5.7 have been met.</p> <p>Denial of a Group’s Charter application, or a determination by the Center for Student Engagement that a Group’s Chartering application is not complete, may be appealed by following the procedures outlined in Section 5.3, below.</p> <p>Approval or denial of a Group’s Charter application, or a determination by the Center for Student Engagement that a Group’s Chartering application is not complete, will not be based on the mission, goals, or beliefs of the Group or any other content- or viewpoint-based determination, but will be based solely on whether the Group meets the requirements of Section 5.1, above, and the Constitution requirements in Section 5.7, below.</p>
<p><b>Denial or Revocation of Registration of an RSO</b></p>	<p>Georgia Tech will refuse to Charter or Register an RSO and will deny or revoke a student organization’s RSO designation at any time if it determines that the student organization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeks to accomplish its objectives, goals, purposes, or activities through the use or promotion of violence;</li> <li>• Engages in activities that materially and substantially interfere with the discipline and normal activities of GT or with the rights of others, including activities that present a danger to property, individuals, or the orderly functioning of GT;</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is organized for the financial benefit of an individual member or members, or for the financial benefit of a for-profit organization;</li> <li>• Falsifies or forges an official GT record or document;</li> </ul>

- Refuses to comply with federal or state laws, Board of Regents' policy, and GT policies and procedures, including GT's Code of Conduct, or states an intention to do so;
- Fails to provide all necessary registration information to GT; or,
- Fails to meet financial obligations to GT after receiving written notice of the failure and not curing it within 30 business days.

**5.2 Student Organization Annual Registration**

**Annual Registration Requirements**

No later than 2 weeks before the first day of final examinations in the Spring Semester, all RSOs are required to complete the Annual Registration requirements. These requirements consist of: (1) completion and submission of the Annual Registration application, and (2) completion and submission of the Senior Executive Officer form, the Finance Officer form, and the RSO's Advisor form.

An RSO may submit the required Annual Registration application and forms as many times as necessary to satisfy the Annual Registration requirements; an incomplete or incorrect submission does not automatically result in the suspension of an RSO. So long as an RSO submits a complete and correct Annual Registration application and forms before the deadline, the RSO will remain active. RSOs which do not meet these requirements by the deadline will have all pending applications denied, and the RSO will be suspended.

**Review and Outcomes**

Once the required Annual Registration application and forms are submitted by an RSO, the application will enter a pending status. A pending Annual Registration application is under active review by the Center for Student Engagement and will only remain pending until the Center for Student Engagement has confirmed that the Annual Registration application is properly completed.

Following pending status, an Annual Registration application will be either approved (i.e., the required Annual Registration requirements are properly completed and submitted) or denied (i.e., the required Annual Registration requirements are not properly completed and submitted). Annual Registration renewals are conducted on a content-neutral and viewpoint-neutral basis. Any approval or denial shall not be based on the mission, goals, or beliefs of the RSO, but only on whether the RSO meets the requirements for Annual Registration set forth in this policy.

**Organization Status**

Within 15 business days of an RSO's submission of all required documentation for renewal, a member of Center for Student Engagement will advise the RSO's Senior Executive Officer of the outcome of the Annual Registration submission. The RSO

will be assigned one of the following statuses:

Active: An RSO which has met all requirements to renew the Annual Registration.

Suspended: An RSO which has not met the requirements to renew the Annual Registration, and for which all RSO privileges have been revoked.

Inactive: An RSO which has held suspended (as defined herein) status for more than one calendar year. A DRSO will become inactive after two calendar years of suspension. Inactive student organizations are no longer registered and must complete the Charter process anew.

If the Annual Registration application is denied for failing to meet one or more of the requirements set forth above, the RSO will be notified, in writing, of the specific reason for the denial.

Denial of an Annual Registration application may be appealed by following the appeals process outlined in Section 5.3 Appeals.

**5.3 Appeals Process**

<p><b>Appeals for denial or revocation of Charter or Registration Status</b></p>	<p>If the Center for Student Engagement denies a Group Pending Status, determines that a Group's Chartering application is not completed by the deadline, or suspends and RSO's registration or designation, or if the Student Activities Committee denies a Group a Charter, the Group or RSO may appeal the decision in writing to Georgia Tech's Associate Dean and Director of the Center for Student Engagement within 5 business days of notification of the decision, unless the denial or revocation was initiated under Georgia Tech's Code of Conduct, in which case appeals are handled in accordance with Georgia Tech's Code of Conduct. The decision of the Associate Dean and Director of the Student Engagement or non-student designee shall be made within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal and shall identify in writing the reason(s) for the decision. Decisions of the Associate Dean and Director of the Center for Student Engagement or designee may, within 5 business days of notification of the decision, be further appealed to the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students in writing via email to johnstein@vpss.gatech.edu. The decision of the Vice President of Student Life/Dean of Students or designee shall be made within 10 business days of receipt of the appeal and shall identify in writing the reason(s) for the decision. The decision of the Vice President of Student Life/Dean of Students is final and no further appeal is available.</p>
--	--

**5.4 Departmental Registered Student Organization Designation**

<p><b>Initial Consideration for DRSO Status</b></p>	<p>Based on the criteria listed below, an RSO may be reviewed at any time (including during the Chartering process) for departmental designation by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Request from the Center for Student Engagement;</li> </ol>
---	---

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Request from SAC; or</li> <li>3. Petition from either the RSO or the Home Department</li> </ol> <p>The initial request or petition should be submitted in writing to the Center for Student Engagement, the Home Department, and the most senior RSO student leader.</p>
<b>Criteria</b>	<p>An RSO will be considered a DRSO if it is in a defined relationship (i.e., involving assets such as property, space, resources, money, reputation) with a Georgia Tech unit.</p> <p>DRSOs and departments will have a written and agreed upon MOU, which will be reviewed annually by the DRSO and department leadership. The MOU must address the defining features of the relationship between the DRSO and the Home Department, including but not limited to: advising, property, space, and financial resources.</p> <p>The MOU will be a required component of the Annual Registration for DRSOs.</p>
<b>Designation Forfeiture</b>	<p>Once DRSO status has been assigned, the relationship between the RSO and Home Department must be continuously maintained and renewed annually. Failure to do so will cause forfeiture of the DRSO designation and may cause reason to forfeit any and all RSO status.</p>

**5.5 Advisors**

<b>Requirement</b>	<p>Advisors are required for all RSOs.</p>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<p>Advisor responsibilities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completing required training;</li> <li>2. Consenting to receive electronic Advisor updates from the Center for Student Engagement;</li> <li>3. Meeting at least twice per academic year with the RSO Senior Executive Officer;</li> <li>4. Confirming their acceptance of the Advisor role during the Chartering and Annual Registration processes;</li> <li>5. Reviewing Georgia Tech policies with the RSO;</li> <li>6. Communicating with the Center for Student Engagement when the Advisor becomes aware that an RSO is violating a municipal, county, state, or Federal law, rule, or regulation; or policy of Georgia Tech or the Board of Regents; and</li> <li>7. Notifying the Center for Student Engagement when their Advisor role ends (e.g., leaving Georgia Tech, loss of eligibility, voluntary resignation, etc.).</li> </ol>
<b>Assignment</b>	<p>RSOs must identify an eligible employee to act as their Advisor.</p> <p>For DRSOs, the Georgia Tech Home Department must assign the role of Advisor to a full-time, exempt department employee.</p>

	<p>Regardless of the kind of organization served (RSO or DRSO), the Advisor must meet eligibility requirements as listed herein.</p> <p>Georgia Tech employees are required to have supervisor approval before accepting the Advisor role. An Advisor may serve more than one RSO but must consider whether taking on these additional responsibilities will impact their ability to provide beneficial advising to those student organizations.</p> <p>The Advisor role has no term limit. Advisors do not have voting rights or membership in the RSO.</p> <p>In the event that an RSO or a student Group seeking to be Chartered as an RSO is unable to find a faculty or staff member to act as the organization’s Advisor, an employee from the Division of Student Life will be assigned as the RSO’s advisor.</p>
<b>Training</b>	<p>Advisors must complete required training annually.</p>
<b>Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	<p>Advisors must comply with Georgia Tech policies and procedures and applicable law. Georgia Tech policies can be found online in the <a href="#">Georgia Tech Policy Library</a>.</p> <p>The Center for Student Engagement maintains a list of policies that Advisors must review with their RSO.</p>
<b>Contracts</b>	<p>Neither Georgia Tech students nor Advisors have authority to sign agreements on behalf of Georgia Tech. Should a Georgia Tech student or Advisor sign an agreement, they are signing in their individual capacity and can be held personally liable for failure to perform as agreed and for any breaches or omissions that may occur under the agreement.</p> <p>For DRSOs, all agreements involving procurement of goods, equipment, materials, services, or event space must be reviewed and executed by Georgia Tech Purchasing. Such agreements must be submitted to <a href="mailto:purchasing.ask@business.gatech.edu">purchasing.ask@business.gatech.edu</a> for review. All other agreements should be forwarded to the Office of Legal Affairs at <a href="mailto:asklegal@gatech.edu">asklegal@gatech.edu</a> for review.</p>
<b>Expectations</b>	<p>Advisors must have a conversation with the RSO and agree on a set of expectations for one another from the onset in order to maintain a consistent and beneficial relationship. This includes the Advisor’s role as the liaison between Georgia Tech and the RSO specifically to ensure that the members of the student organization are aware of Georgia Tech policies and procedures.</p>
<b>Removal</b>	<p>For RSOs, Advisors may be removed from their role by the internal processes established in the Constitution or other governing documents of the specific RSO.</p> <p>DRSOs must petition their Home Department for replacement of Advisor.</p> <p>Georgia Tech reserves the right to remove an Advisor for concerns of student safety, the violation of Georgia Tech policy or process, or the violation of law.</p>

	<p>A Georgia Tech supervisor has the authority to decline to allow an employee to continue to be an Advisor.</p>
<p><b>Additional and Off-Campus Advisors</b></p>	<p>In addition to the required Georgia Tech advisor, RSOs may also maintain additional advisors; these additional advisors may or may not be affiliated with Georgia Tech and are not held to the same requirements as the Georgia Tech Advisor. These individuals may only advise the RSO and may not make executive decisions for the organization or dictate organizational programs or services.</p>

**5.6 Registered Student Organization Categories**

<p><b>RSO Categories</b></p>	<p>Each RSO will have one or more category designations, the definitions of which are set forth below. Organization categories describe the common purposes that exist among organizations with a similar primary mission. All RSOs fall into at least one category and some RSOs may fall into multiple categories based on their operations.</p> <p>Academic/Professional Organizations are those RSOs dedicated to the pursuit of professional and academic development activities. They may be focused on a particular profession and strive to develop the interests of individuals exploring that profession, build public interest in that profession, and/or bring together people within a particular major, school, college, or unit.</p> <p>Arts &amp; Media Organizations have the mission of creating designed works, fine arts, technical arts, and media.</p> <p>Civic Engagement Organizations are RSOs whose focus emphasizes members' involvement in civic engagement initiatives such as philanthropy, service, advocacy, and/or awareness, as well as organizations whose focus is on social issues, community partnership, or education.</p> <p>Competitive Organizations are those RSOs whose focus is on the engagement of organization members in non-sporting competitive activities.</p> <p>Competitive Sports Organizations are those RSOs whose focus involves the engagement of members in competitive sporting events and competitions. RSOs categorized as Sports Organizations must meet requirements by GT Campus Recreation Center.</p> <p>Cultural Organizations are those RSOs that have organized around the celebration of one or more cultural or diversity-based traditions and practices.</p> <p>Honor Societies are RSOs whose focus is to recognize the excellence among peers in a variety of different areas, including, but not limited to, scholarship or leadership.</p> <p>Religious/Spiritual Organizations are RSOs whose mission is the engagement of members on the basis of faith(s) or other belief structures.</p> <p>Recreational/Leisure Organizations are RSOs whose focus falls outside of the scope of the categories given above. This will include non-competitive sport organizations.</p>
------------------------------	--

Social Fraternity & Sorority Chapters are social and service chapters of national organizations Chartered through the Collegiate Panhellenic Council, Inter-Fraternity Council, the Multicultural Greek Council, or the National Pan-Hellenic Councils. RSOs categorized as Social Fraternity & Sorority Chapters must meet requirements by GT Fraternity and Sorority Life.

**5.7 Governing Documents**

**Constitution**

All RSOs must have a Constitution that is approved by SAC.

Approval or denial of an RSO's Constitution will not be based on the mission, goals, or beliefs of the RSO or any other content- or viewpoint-based determination but rather will only be based on the RSO including the information below in the Constitution.

If an RSO's Constitution is denied for failing to include one or more of the following pieces of information, the RSO will be notified in writing of the specific reason for the denial:

1. Name of the RSO (RSO names may include "GT," "Georgia Tech," or "Georgia Institute of Technology," but only as "[Organization Name] at GT"; Listing the name as "GT [Organization Name]" or "[Organization Name] of GT" is not allowed;
2. Purpose/Mission Statement;
3. The following GT Affiliation Clause:
  1. This organization is a Registered Student Organization (RSO) at Georgia Institute of Technology but is not part of the Institute itself.
  2. In all correspondence and publications, it may refer to itself as an organization at Georgia Institute of Technology, but not as part of Georgia Tech itself.
  3. [Name of RSO] accepts full financial and production responsibility for all activities it sponsors.
  4. [Name of RSO] agrees to abide by all pertinent GT policies and regulations. Where GT policies and regulations and those of RSO differ, including those regulations and policies mandated by an external affiliated organization, the policies and regulations of GT take precedence.
  5. [Name of RSO] recognizes and understands that the Georgia Tech assumes no legal liability for the actions of the organization.
4. Identification of any affiliations with local, regional, national, or international entities or organizations;
5. Clear Membership Eligibility and Requirements (including a membership removal process and appeals process within the organization)
6. A clause limiting organization membership to only students who meet requirements to be eligible for participation in extracurricular activities as defined by the Georgia Tech Catalog;
7. A clause stating that voting privileges be given only to student members and that in order to vote, students must be eligible for participation in



- extracurricular activities as defined by the Georgia Tech Catalog;
- 8. A clause stating that only GT student members may run for or hold office;
- 9. Officers and Officer Responsibilities (including an officer removal and succession process);
- 10. At minimum, each Constitution requires a Senior Executive Officer and a Finance Officer
- 11. Elections or selections process and information;
- 12. Advisor responsibilities;
- 13. Clauses explicitly defining a method and a time frame for selecting or electing an Advisor, and the length of the Advisor’s appointment;
- 14. A method of parliamentary procedure to govern business meetings;
- 15. A method for proposing and ratifying Constitutional amendments;
- 16. A clause stating that "Written (hard copy) or electronic (e-mail) notification of all members must be made at least two weeks in advance of any proposed changes in the Constitution,";
- 17. A clause stating that "Amendments are subject to the approval of the Student Activities Committee of the Faculty Senate";
- 18. The following Non-Discrimination Statement:
  - 1. "Membership and all privileges, including voting and officer positions, must be extended to all students without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status, unless exempt under Title IX."
  - 2. However, religious student organizations will not be denied registration solely because they limit leadership positions to students who share the same religious beliefs.

The only Constitution that will be recognized is the one posted on the RSO’s Engage Portal in the “Documents” section.

**Roster**

To maintain Active status, an RSO must maintain a roster of at least 5 Georgia Tech student members (including the Senior Executive Officer and Finance Officer). Additionally, the roster must list the RSO Advisor, Senior Executive Officer, and Finance Officer. The only Roster that will be recognized is the one in the RSO’s Engage Portal.

**By-Laws & Other Documents**

In addition to a Constitution, some RSOs may elect to include bylaws, protocol manuals, membership agreements, or other documents that govern the operations of the RSO. The Center for Student Engagement does not routinely review those additional documents but will do so if requested. The Center for Student Engagement may review any such document and take action if the document violates any applicable law or Board of Regents’ or Georgia Tech policy or procedure; any action by the Center for Student Engagement will not be based on the mission, goals, viewpoints, or beliefs of the RSO, but rather will be based on the violation of the applicable law or policy. If the Center for Student Engagement reviews any document and decides to take action, the Center will notify the RSO in writing of the specific law or Board of Regents’ or Georgia Tech policy or procedure that the document violates and the reason for the violation.

<p><b>Policy Updates to Constitutions</b></p>	<p>If an RSO's Constitution does not include all provisions required by this policy, Center for Student Engagement shall serve as facilitator for the implementation of required methods and procedures until such time as the Constitution has been amended and these amendments have been approved.</p>
<p><b>Constitutional Amendments</b></p>	<p>RSOs which make changes to their Constitution following Chartering must submit them to the Center for Student Engagement for initial review. Final review and approval will be conducted by SAC.</p> <p>Approval or denial of an RSO's Constitutional Amendments will not be based on the mission, goals, or beliefs of the RSO or any other content- or viewpoint-based determination, but rather will only be based solely on the RSO including the information set forth above, Section 5.7, in its Constitution.</p> <p>To amend a Constitution, an RSO must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide written (hard copy) or electronic (e-mail) notification to all members at least two weeks in advance of any proposed changes in the organization's Constitution.</li> <li>2. Revised Constitutions shall be submitted to the Center for Student Engagement (CSE), along with a copy of the minutes of the organization meeting during which the vote was held, within seven days of revision. CSE shall review the changes for clarity and formatting before passing the documents on to the Student Activities Committee (SAC). The initial review by CSE must not last more than 5 business days and serves to highlight areas of discussion for the SAC.</li> <li>3. If the revisions of the Constitution are to fix minor errors in grammar or nomenclature, to rename the RSO while maintaining consistency with its purpose, or to update the Constitution to current standards, CSE shall have the direct discretion to approve such revisions without review by SAC. Such revisions, however, must be reported to the Chair of SAC.</li> <li>4. For all other revisions, the documents shall be reviewed by SAC, which shall review the materials solely for compliance with the requirements of this policy and transmit its approval or denial to the Faculty Senate of the Institute. SAC may refrain from immediate action on proposed revisions in order to ask the RSO to make any changes needed to bring its Constitution into conformity with the requirements set forth in this policy or to clarify areas of ambiguity or confusion. In any event, SAC shall approve or deny the revisions within 15 business days of SAC's receipt of the revisions from CSE.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Constitutional Interpretation</b></p>	<p>In the case of disagreements within an RSO regarding interpretation of the organization's Constitution, the Center for Student Engagement shall facilitate dispute resolution.</p>
<p><b>5.8 Organizational Expectations</b></p>	

<p><b>Student Self-Governance</b></p>	<p>Student self-governance is the central tenet of the RSO model, and all RSOs must function through Georgia Tech student governance and leadership;</p> <p>a. Faculty, staff, non-student community members, and any nonstudent entities may participate in RSO activities and act in an advisory role to the RSO but cannot serve as leaders or voting members of the RSO, engage in decision making on behalf of the RSO, or act on behalf of the RSO.</p> <p>b. Non-student affiliated entities can require that the RSO maintain certain policies or protocols to continue their affiliation (e.g., dues, annual reports) as long as the policies or procedures do not interfere with student autonomy or require the RSO to violate the law or Board of Regents or Georgia Tech policy or procedure. RSOs are not required to maintain an affiliation to retain their status as an RSO.</p> <p>c. All RSOs must engage in democratic style governance as evidenced in their governing documents (e.g., regular elections or selections, checks and balances for leadership). No RSO is allowed to give its student leaders unilateral control over organization decisions.</p> <p>d. All RSOs must include a leadership election or selection process in their Constitution. Elections or selections must be held regularly and RSOs are encouraged to hold elections or selections at least annually; a Constitutional provision for holding a regular vote on whether to open elections or selections meets this requirement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Voting in elections and votes to open elections cannot be limited to a smaller number of members than the number of members who would be able to vote on normal organizational business. Elections of a single slate of officers are allowed, so long as the proposed slate of officers is confirmed by a vote of the members eligible to vote.</li> <li>2. Voting in selections can be limited to a smaller, defined subset of the organization (e.g., executive board, selection committee), but must include at least 2 members at large. Additionally, no selection process may require a unanimous vote for a single office or for a slate of officers.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Institute Policy</b></p>	<p>RSOs are expected to comply with all applicable Institute policies.</p>

**5.9 RSO Finances**

	<p>The Student Government Association allocates Student Activity Fee funds to Registered Student Organizations and departments of the Division of Student Life and Campus Services through its Joint Finance Committee (JFC). RSOs requesting funds, whether in the form of an Annual Budget or a Bill, are required to do so in the timeframe and manner set forth below. All funding decisions made by JFC shall be based solely on the viewpoint-neutral decision-making criteria set forth below. JFC members shall receive annual training on this policy and its proper implementation.</p> <p><b><u>Annual Budget Request Submission and Required Information:</u></b></p>
--	---

Prior to the Budget Request period beginning each Fall semester, JFC will set the overall Budget cap based on the funding available for the following fiscal year.

Any RSO in Active standing as determined by the Center for Student Engagement may submit an Annual Budget Request. The request must include the following information:

- a. a detailed written description of the specific programs, activities, or events the RSO intends to sponsor;
- b. accurate written cost estimates of any required supplies or services that correlate to the programmatic needs (or logistical requirements) of the programs, activities, or events;
- c. if event funding is requested, a description of how the RSO plans to promote the event to the student body;
- d. if event funding is requested, a showing that students will be involved in the planning and implementation of the event;
- e. a written estimate of the revenue expected to be generated in the coming year through dues, ticket sales, fundraisers, donations, or other means;
- f. certification that the Advisor has been provided an opportunity to review the budget submission;
- g. for RSOs that were registered in the prior year, a written account of revenue received during the prior year through dues, ticket sales, fundraisers, donations, or other means; and
- h. for RSOs that received JFC funds in the prior year, a written statement demonstrating that the RSO effectively utilized the funds to accomplish the goals for which those funds were awarded.

**Submission Deadline:**

All Annual Budget Requests must be submitted via the online budget system by 11:59 P.M. EST on Friday of the tenth week of the fall semester. After the deadline has passed, no additional Annual Budget Requests will be accepted, regardless of circumstance.

**Budget Orientation:**

Prior to the Monday of the seventh week of the fall semester, the JFC shall hold at least three budget orientation sessions on different dates for RSOs. The dates and locations of the sessions will be published on the [SGA website](#) no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the Fall semester. At least one officer of each RSO must attend one budget orientation session. Failure to attend will result in denial of an RSO's Annual Budget Request.

**JFC Review:**

Each RSO that submits a timely Annual Budget Request shall select and schedule a hearing date through the SGA website to permit the RSO to present its request to the JFC and answer any questions the JFC may have about it. No later than the twelfth week of fall semester, the hearing schedule shall be published on the SGA website and emailed to all RSOs that have submitted an Annual Budget Request. If an RSO fails to meet with the JFC, the RSO's Annual Budget Request shall not be granted.

The JFC shall evaluate all Annual Budget Requests in a viewpoint-neutral manner solely for compliance with the criteria set forth in the "Funding Criteria" Section below. If available funds are not sufficient to fund all Annual Budget Requests at the requested level, all budgets will be reduced on a pro rata basis.

JFC will issue all RSO annual budgets by the second Friday in March of the academic year preceding the year in which the funds are sought to be utilized. If an RSO's approved budget is less than the total amount sought in its requested budget, the RSO can request a written decision setting forth the basis for the JFC's decision to award the RSO the reduced amount. Such a request must be made by the RSO within ten business days after the RSO receives its approved budget. Within 20 business days of receiving such a request from an RSO, the JFC will provide the RSO with a written decision detailing the reasons that its approved budget was less than the total amount requested.

The JFC shall provide a written report of all approved annual budgets to the Undergraduate House and Graduate Senate.

**Bill Submission and Required Information:**

Any RSO in active standing as determined by the Center for Student Engagement may submit a request for funds through a Bill. The request must include the following information:

- a. a detailed written description of the specific programs, activities, or events the RSO intends to sponsor;
- b. if event funding is requested, a showing that students will be involved in the planning and implementation of the event;
- c. accurate written cost estimates of any required supplies or services that correlate to the programmatic needs (or logistical requirements) of the programs, activities, or events;
- d. documentation that the RSO sought funding from other sources for the programs, activities, events, supplies or services for which the RSO is requesting funding;
- e. the amount of funding, if any, that the RSO has received from other sources for the programs, activities, events, supplies or services for which the RSO is requesting funding;
- f. the amount of funding, if any, that is being provided through an existing JFC Budget allocation for the programs, activities, events, supplies, or services for which the RSO is requesting funding;
- g. if event funding is requested, a description of how the RSO plans to promote the event to the student body; and
- h. for RSOs that received JFC funds in the prior year, a written statement demonstrating that the RSO effectively utilized the funds to accomplish the goals for which those funds were awarded.

Bills will be stamped upon submission to CSE to reflect the date and time of the Bill submission. A Bill shall not be deemed submitted until all required information, set forth above, is received by CSE.

**Submission Deadline:**

JFC will consider at each of its regularly scheduled meetings all Bills that were submitted at least thirty days prior to the meeting. Bills must be submitted in the same fiscal year as the

expense or event for which funding is sought.

**JFC Review:**

Within 7 business days of a Bill being submitted by an RSO, the JFC shall set a date to meet with the RSO to permit the RSO to present its Bill and answer any questions the JFC may have about it. The RSO shall be notified of the date and time of the meeting by email. In the event that no RSO representative is able to attend the meeting at the specified date and time, the JFC shall reschedule the meeting to a mutually agreeable date and time or, in the alternative, correspond through email with no fewer than two of the RSO's officers. If an RSO fails either to meet with the JFC or to correspond through email regarding a Bill, the Bill shall not be approved.

The JFC shall evaluate all Bills in a viewpoint-neutral manner and only for compliance with the criteria set forth in the "Funding Criteria" Section below. Bills will be processed on a first-come first-served basis according to the date/time stamp placed on the Bill at the time of submission. Bills which comply with the Funding Criteria shall be approved by the JFC, as long as funds are available.

If an RSO's Bill is denied or is granted in an amount less than the total amount sought, the RSO can request a written decision setting forth the basis for the JFC's decision. Such a request must be made by the RSO within ten business days after the RSO received notification of JFC's decision. Within 10 business days of receiving such a request from an RSO, the JFC will provide the RSO with a written decision detailing the reason(s) that its Bill was denied or was granted in an amount less than the total amount sought.

The JFC shall provide a written report of all approved Bills to the legislature.

**Appeals Process:**

In the event that an RSO's Annual Budget Request or Bill Request is denied or is approved in an amount less than the total amount that the RSO requested, the RSO may appeal the JFC's written decision setting forth the basis for the denial or the award of the reduced amount. An RSO may also appeal the JFC's determination if the JFC failed to issue a timely written decision after the RSO properly requested one. All appeals will be heard by the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students or non-student designee.

Appeals must be in writing and must be submitted to the Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students or designee within ten business days after the RSO receives the JFC's written decision or, if JFC failed to issue a timely written decision after the RSO properly requested one, within ten business days after the time for the JFC to issue the decision has expired.

An RSO's appeal must be based on one of the following grounds:

- a. JFC's disapproval of the Annual Budget Request or Bill Request, or JFC's determination regarding any allocation for an item therein, was arbitrary or capricious;
- b. JFC engaged in viewpoint discrimination or another legal violation; or,
- c. JFC failed to follow the Funding Request processes and procedures outlined in this policy.

Within 20 business days of submitting the appeal, the Vice President of Student Life/Dean of Students or designee will provide the RSO with a written decision granting or denying the

appeal and detailing the reasons for that determination. If the Vice President of Student Life/Dean of Students or designee grants the appeal and approves a new final budget, the new budget will be included in the written decision. JFC shall ensure that funds are available to cover any Annual Budget Request or Bill Request that is awarded to an RSO as a result of an appeal.

**Transparency:**

Beginning with the 2020–21 academic year, JFC will use the following procedures for all meetings at which it considers RSO funding requests: The minutes of JFC meetings that consider funding requests from RSOs will include the amount each RSO originally requested, the purpose for which the RSO requested those funds, how much of each request JFC approved, and JFC's reasons for rejecting or reducing a request. JFC will make the minutes of its meetings available on its website for at least three years.

**Funding Criteria:**

The amount of funding an RSO receives is determined by the RSO's stated programmatic needs as set forth in its detailed Annual Budget request or Bill request and is dependent upon submission of accurate documentation supporting the request. JFC's funding allocation decisions will be based solely on whether the requesting RSO has met the following viewpoint-neutral requirements, unless the RSO requests funding for the prohibited items listed later in this policy.

- a. The RSO must be in Active standing as determined by the Center for Student Engagement.
- b. The RSO's funding application must be submitted by the applicable application deadline.
- c. The RSO's funding application must be complete and include the required information set forth in this policy.
- d. The RSO must attend the required orientations and meetings as set forth in this policy.
- e. Events and activities funded through student activity fees must be open to all Georgia Tech students.
- f. The RSO's request must contain accurate cost estimates supported by reliable documentation or research, including by taking into consideration the number of students likely to attend an event; however, this criterion shall not be used to consider the content or viewpoint of an RSO's speech, including the presumed popularity or controversial nature of an RSO's speech.
- g. Any proposed facility must be suitable for the proposed events and activities based on the estimated size of attendance.
- h. Any travel expense estimates must be objectively reasonable for the type of event or activity proposed.
- i. The amount requested must not exceed the Item Maximum Allocation limits set forth in this policy.
- j. Any other viewpoint-neutral criteria that are determined by university legal counsel's written opinion. Any written opinion that contains additional viewpoint-neutral criteria will be published on JFC's website, and this policy shall be modified accordingly.

JFC will not use the following criteria when making funding decisions for RSOs:

- a. The presumed popularity of an RSO's viewpoint, including the existence among the student body of opposition to, or support for, the group. However, JFC may consider the number of students expected to be involved in specific activities or events as necessary to estimate variable expenses of the activity or event
- b. The length of time the RSO has been in existence
- c. The amount of JFC funding the RSO has received in the past.

**Prohibited Allocations:**

JFC will not approve funding in an Annual Budget or a Bill for any of the following:

- a. Funding requested solely for the benefit of individuals who are not currently enrolled Georgia Tech students
- b. Any items or resources that are more cheaply available by rental or reservation through Georgia Tech
- c. Actual or in-kind contributions to campaigns, candidates, or political parties
- d. Loans
- e. Items to be given out to individuals or organizations, including awards, gifts, and giveaways, except for low-cost printed publicity items such as flyers and stickers. Low-cost publicity items shall not be funded in excess of \$50 total per event. Giveaways shall include any equipment that is to be used in any capacity on or with personal equipment at non-organizational events.
- f. Food-related items such as plates, utensils, or napkins, unless for an event projected to involve at least 500 student attendees, in which case the total allocation for a single event may not exceed \$500 and none of the items may be composed of Styrofoam
- g. Alcoholic beverages or tobacco products, and any event at which alcohol and tobacco will be served
- h. Lodging
  - i. Travel expenses for a non-student
- j. Any event (including promotional items, marketing, or materials for the event) intended as a fundraiser for any individual, party, or organization
- k. FASET materials
  - l. Any expenditure occurring in the past or any expenditure guaranteed by a contract entered in the past, unless consideration by JFC is delayed through no fault of the RSO.
- m. Costs associated with hosting intercollegiate competitions, tournaments, or other events where the main intent is to rank among peers, obtain status, award(s), or reward(s)
- n. Costs associated with hosting conferences in which more than 25% of attendees are not students of the Institute at the time of the event or conferences from which the RSO will receive a portion of the profit
- o. Costs associated with any event for which an RSO has not yet qualified
- p. Costs in which the primary purpose is seeking, gaining or acknowledging sponsors (corporate or otherwise) for the RSO
- q. Costs associated with professional development activities or conferences for non-student personnel
- r. Costs associated with freight, shipping, delivery, or processing of any items
- s. Costs associated with retreats, unless open to GT students who are not members of the RSO
- t. Clothing that does not remain with the RSO



- u. Parking permits, fees and validations for road vehicles
- v. Email marketing services
- w. Any costs for which the actual expenditures are not known or "miscellaneous" costs
- x. Dues paid per individual through which students can compete outside of a Georgia Tech affiliated team
- y. Travel to locations within a 70-mile radius of Georgia Tech's Atlanta campus
- z. Any activities which violate the laws of the United States of America, the State of Georgia, the City of Atlanta, or the regulations of the Georgia Institute of Technology
- a. Food or drinks for human consumption at internal RSO meetings

JFC will not approve funding in an Annual Budget for any of the following:

- a. Capital expenditures, except for items required for maintenance of capital assets
- b. Benefits for part-time employees working less than twenty (20) hours per week
- d. Postage
- e. Costs associated with CRC-hosted intramurals
- f. Employee compensation and student stipends
- g. Speaker fees or honoraria
- h. Registration costs for Homecoming events
- i. Office supplies
- j. Personal items, including, but not limited to, nametags, photo albums, scrapbooks and business cards
- h. Food or drinks

### **Maximum Allocations**

*General Restrictions.* No Annual Budget or Bill shall allocate any funding in excess of or contrary to the following limits:

- a. Decorations
  - i. \$150 if the expected attendance is less than 500 Georgia Tech students
  - ii. \$300 if the expected attendance is 500 or more Georgia Tech students
- b. Costs associated with renting the Ferst Theater shall only be funded for events with an expected attendance of greater than 300 students, and only if no less expensive on-campus space exists that meets the needs of the program.

*Annual Budget Restrictions.* No Annual Budget shall allocate any funding in excess of or contrary to the following limits:

- a. No more than two conferences shall be funded
- b. Non-event-specific publicity shall not exceed a total of \$200.
- c. Liability insurance shall not exceed a total of \$2000.
- d. Publicity, including copying expenses, shall not exceed a total of \$250.

- e. No more than two away events at a maximum of \$1000 each, excluding travel. Travel costs shall only be funded for up to two away events.
- f. No more than two non-away events shall be funded in a budget. For each event, the following limitations are imposed:
  - i. Advertising via WREK Radio shall not be funded in excess of \$120.
  - ii. Sound equipment shall not be funded in excess of \$50.
  - iii. Projection equipment shall not be funded in excess of \$30.
  - iv. Lighting equipment shall not be funded in excess of \$100.

#### *Travel*

Automotive travel allocations shall be limited to the value obtained by utilizing the following Automotive Travel Formula:

- a. Allocation =  $0.05 \times R \times S \times M$ , Maximum =  $S \times \$75$ ;
- b. R shall be the current IRS Business Mileage Rate.
- c. S shall be the number of students travelling.
- d. M shall be the number of round-trip miles between Georgia Tech and the destination.
- e. Air Travel expense allocations shall be limited to the lesser of \$150 or 45% of the actual expense
- f. Only one type of travel shall be funded per person per event.

#### *Capital Expenditures.*

- a. JFC may fund at most the greater of \$10 or two-thirds of the total cost of each item that is part of a non-emergency capital expenditure.
- b. The one-year allocation from the capital outlay account to any RSO shall not exceed ten (10) percent of the funds available in this account at the start of the academic year.
- c. RSOs must ensure the safe storage of items purchased through capital expenditures.

*Non-Capital Expenditures.* No Annual Budget or Bill shall allocate funding for non-capital expenditures which exceeds the following limits:

- a. Conferences: \$1000 per conference, excluding travel, not to exceed \$100 per individual
- b. Tournaments and Competitions: \$1000 per competitive event, excluding travel, not to exceed \$100 per individual
- c. Program Fees for Off-Campus Activities: \$1000 per

activity, not to exceed \$100 per individual, excluding travel

- d. Speaker Fees and Honoraria:
  - i. \$500 per event if the expected attendance is fewer than 100 Georgia Tech students
  - ii. \$2,500 per event if the expected attendance is fewer than 500 Georgia Tech students
  - iii. \$5,000 per event if the expected attendance is fewer than 950 Georgia Tech students
  - iv. \$10,000 per event if the expected attendance is 950 or more Georgia Tech students
- e. Off-Campus Venue Rentals shall be funded at a maximum of \$10 multiplied by the number of Georgia Tech students expected to attend.

f. Publicity:

- i. Copies, programs, and fliers shall be funded at the current rates of the Office of Student Engagement.
- ii. Fliers shall not be provided in excess of one-third of current on-campus campus enrollment rounded to the nearest thousand.
- iii. Programs shall not be funded in excess of the event venue capacity.
- iv. Banners and posters shall not be funded in excess of \$180 total per event.
- v. No more than one half-page Technique advertisement or equivalently priced Technique advertisement(s), at the current student organization black and white rate, which is published on Technique’s webpage, shall be funded for any single event.
- vi. Social media advertisements (such as Facebook ads and Snapchat filters) shall not be funded in excess of \$25 total per event.
- vii. No more than \$20 of sidewalk chalk shall be funded per organization in a single Fiscal Year.

g. Food not intended for human consumption, not to exceed \$50

h. Background checks for non-criminal justice purposes may be funded at a maximum of \$15 per student.

i. Competitive Events and Programs. Any RSO participating in competitive events and programs is eligible to receive the following benefits:

i. Coaching stipends may be funded at a maximum of \$1,000 total per organization

iii. Costs associated with hosting intercollegiate competitions may be funded only if the following conditions are met:

- 1. The competition consists of only the RSO and one other team.
- 2. The RSO attends an equal or greater number of away competitions at which no registration fee is charged.
- 3. The total fiscal year allocation for all competitive events does not exceed \$6000.

j. Food and drinks shall not exceed \$5 per event attendee or 2/3rds of the total cost of the event, whichever is lower, and shall not exceed \$5000 per event

**Off-Campus Finances**

All RSOs reserve the right to maintain an off-campus bank account; however, no Institute Funds are permitted in these accounts.

It is recommended that the account be set up using a unique Federal Tax ID/EIN to the individual RSO, but it is not required. However, the GT Federal Tax ID/EIN may NEVER be used by any RSO.

More information regarding EINs and off campus accounts are available online through the Student Organization Finance Office.

**Enforcement:**

Concerns regarding student, faculty, staff, RSO, and DRSO compliance with this policy can be shared with Center for Student Engagement staff.

Concerns regarding RSO compliance with the Georgia Tech policies and procedures can be reported as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and Student Organizations Code of Conduct.

To report suspected instances of ethical violations, please visit Georgia Tech’s Ethics Hotline, a secure and confidential reporting system, at: [https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/report\\_custom.asp?clientid=7508](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/en/report_custom.asp?clientid=7508)

**Related Information:**

- [Georgia Tech Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Georgia Tech Student Organizations Conduct](#)
- [Georgia Tech Catalog: Extracurricular Activities](#)
- [Georgia Tech Student/Student Organization Alcohol Policy](#)
- [Presidential Signature Authority Policy](#)
- [Georgia Tech Campus Space Use Procedures](#)

**Policy History:**

---

Revision Date	Author	Description
08/26/2020	Center for Student Engagement	New Policy