

Roger Williams University School of Law Student Bar Association

Policy & Sanctions for Inactive Student Organizations and Groups

The purpose and power of the Student Bar Association comes through the budgeting of funds to approved student organizations. Each year, the financial officers of the law school mandate the maximum amount to be budgeted for student organizations. Each summer, the Finance Committee and a full SBA Board of Governors (hereinafter, the Board) meets with each group to determine their budget. Once money is approved for an organization, the amount left in SBA's overall allowable budget dwindles.

It is the opinion of the Student Bar Association that certain student organizations have become inactive, as defined below. This inactivity harms the Student Bar Association by holding hostage limited funds within the overall SBA budget. Therefore, the Board has promulgated the following policy regarding inactive student organizations.

Definitions

Inactive Student Organization means an SBA approved student organization which, over the course of a given academic year, has either:

- a) not spent at least one half of its budgeted funds; or
- b) has failed to conduct half of its student events which the Board has approved funding for in a given academic year.

Determining Group Status

At the request of the SBA President, the Treasurer will convene a meeting of the SBA Finance Committee and conduct an audit of each student organization funded for the academic year. Upon completion of the audit, the Finance Committee will make a determination on which groups, if any, are inactive. The Treasurer will then present the Committee's findings to the Board at a regularly scheduled SBA meeting.

Sanctions

After the Finance Committee recommends a group be deemed inactive, the Board *may* revert the organization back to "new group status," imposing a mandatory \$500 budget cap rule for that group to be imposed the next academic year. This determination will carry by a simple majority vote at a regularly scheduled SBA meeting.

Factors to Consider

When discussing whether or not to sanction a group due to inactivity, the Board must take the following factors into consideration:

- 1) The amount of money budgeted and the amount of money actually spent by the group *or*, the number of events budgeted for by the Board and the amount of events actually held by the student organization
- 2) The testimony of the group leaders regarding their perceived inactivity.
- 3) The overall performance of the student organization throughout the year.
- 4) Any other relevant considerations.

Rights of Group Leaders

As a matter of fairness, the Board must

- 1) Promptly notify organization leaders that their group has been recommended by the Finance Committee as “inactive.”
- 2) Provide the organization leaders an opportunity to attend the SBA meeting in which the Board will vote on whether to cap funds at \$500 for the next academic year.
- 3) Allow the organization leaders to make statements regarding their use of funding before a discussion about capping the group for the upcoming year.

Restitution

The Board recognizes that it may be penalizing a completely new board in the following academic year for the inactivity of an old board. The \$500 budget cap, if imposed, must be used for the sanctioned group at the summer budget meetings held by the Finance Committee and the Board. During the next academic year, organization leaders may come in and request that the \$500 budget cap be dropped. If and after the organization leaders proffer evidence, the \$500 budget cap can be removed by a simple majority vote of the SBA board.