



University of Washington, Seattle Services & Activities Fee Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Request Graduate and Professional Student Senate

Unit Leads

Richard Schure
GPSS President, gpsspres@uw.edu

Ryan Wicklund
GPSS Vice President of Finance, gpssvpfb@uw.edu

Contributors

GPSS Finance & Budget Committee:
Christian C. Ball, Franco Carlos, Pavandeep Singh Josan, Henry R. Mangalapalli, Janet OLAOLU, Muhammad Abu Bakar Tariq, Kokou T. Tighankpa

Budget Request Highlights

In this section, please list all line items for any changes in request amount greater

than \$1000, along with a short description of each line item and the amount requested. For all other changes under \$1000, please list the total summed figures in a final “miscellaneous expenses” item at the bottom. Please ensure that all the SAF funded line items below and previous SAF allocation total add up to the requested amount. Our goal with this section is to provide an overview of the current financial state, along with any changes in SAF funding that are being requested this year.

Each unit’s FY26 request may only represent a maximum increase of 6% or \$35,000 over the unit’s allocation for FY25 (whichever is higher in context of the unit’s FY25 allocation).

While we would love to fund everyone’s full request, SAF is financially constrained by the Washington State Legislature. RCW 28B.15.069 limits the amount that the Services and Activities Fee (SAF) is allowed to increase each year. For FY26, the SAF amount can be increased by a maximum of 3.55%.

Our unit’s request in FY24 was **\$492,152.00** and our award was **\$484,299.00**.

Our unit’s request in FY25 was **\$523,042.00** and our award was **\$521,799**.

Our request for FY26 is **\$556,799**, which represents a **7% (\$35,000)** increase from FY25.

In this section, please break each increase into its own sections (e.g. wage & benefits changes, increases in current employee hours/FTE, funding new positions, etc.). Example sections have been provided (you may delete the example sections).

Wage & Benefits Increases

\$11,551.79

In keeping with inflation and wage increases, our wages and benefits will be increasing by 2.5%. This represents the only increase in our budget for this coming fiscal year outside of programming.

Programming Budget

\$23,448.21

Our programming budget entails all of our expenses for social events, committee events and senate meetings. Expanding this year is our Interdisciplinary Graduate Research Symposium which will be a major investment allowing graduate and professional students to present their research and network for major opportunities in their fields. Previously, our programming budget was entirely covered by discretionary funds granted by the provost. Recently, we were informed that this source of funding will no longer be offered to us. GPSS monthly Senate meetings average an attendance of about 80, and approximately 85 RSVPs to our Husky on the Hill event. Elected Senators represent the collective interest of their department with no additional compensation.

Full Budget Overview & Justification

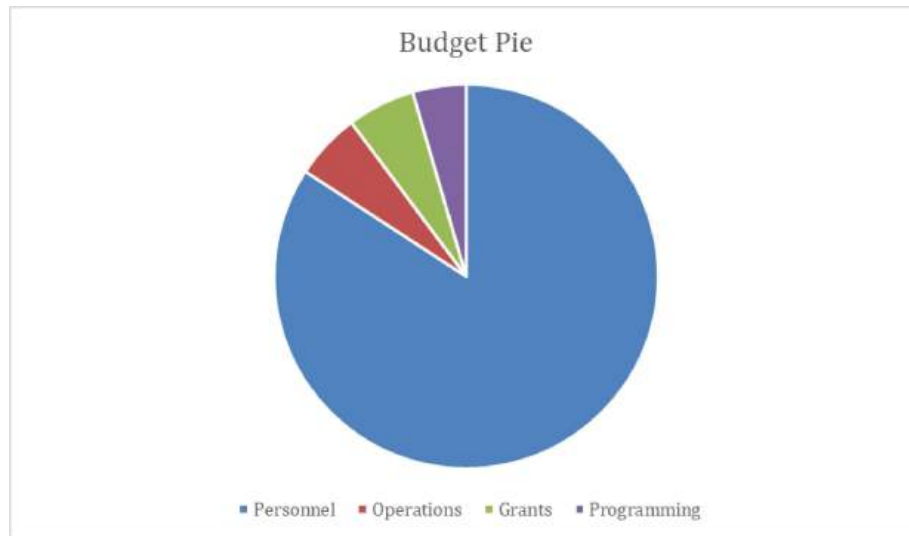
In this section, you will have the opportunity to explain your request in greater detail via the guiding question(s) below. You are encouraged to use graphs, charts, or other visual tools. Your goal for this section is to provide the SAF committee (and the public) with sufficient (and substantive) context and justification for the use of these funds.

- 1. How are expenditures distributed across the programs and/or services your unit offers? Please provide a general overview of how much spending is allocated to each category of expense, such as staffing, materials, etc., as is applicable.**

The table below summarizes key components of GPSS expenditures:

Expenditures	FY25	FY26	FY25 % of total
Personnel	\$474,221.68	\$485,773.47	84.2%
Operations	\$35,300	\$32,250	5.6%
Grants	\$50,000	\$33,000	5.7%
Programming	\$25,000	\$26,000	4.5%
Total	\$584,521.68	\$577,223.47	100%

84% of GPSS expenditures are wages and benefits for student employees (6 officers and 6 staff). 4.5% and 5.6% are for operating and programming costs respectively for various GPSS functions and events. Finally, 6% are grants awarded to individual students and registered student organizations to support the graduate student body. The GPSS has historically applied for discretionary funds from the provost to cover our programming budget, received \$20,000 in FY24, and expected to receive \$25,000 in FY25. However, after applying for funds at the beginning of this school year, we were informed months later that provost discretionary funds are no longer available and nor shall they be in the future. This represents a new and very significant hole in our sources of funding that we will have to fill partially using SAF funds and represents the cause of using our SAF allocation to support our programming.



2. Please give a summary elaborating on how SAF Funding has been used to support students *(Please refer to dollar amounts in this discussion when possible).*

- a. In what ways has SAF funding been essential to supporting your unit's on-going services and role in the university? Please provide at least one specific example of a program/service.

SAF allocations have historically composed over 90% of the GPSS' entire annual funding sources. This year has further increased the demand that we have for SAF funding as we no longer have one of the few other major sources we historically used. The allocations of SAF directly cover our expenses for staff and officer compensation. The SAF funds also cover our grants budget which provides funding to graduate students for major club activities, departmental retreats and developments, and our officer operating budget minus discretionary funds. The operating budget includes supplemental funding for social and committee events, promotional materials, office supplies, and legislative events such as Huskies on the Hill and the DC Day on the Hill. These services are used to directly and indirectly benefit the student body in a myriad of ways. Promotional materials such as our informational booklets and flyers serve to engage the graduate student body to come to social events, give feedback, and get involved in GPSS directly as a senator, staff member, committee member, or officer candidate. Social events serve to further drive-up engagement, as well as provide a service for transdisciplinary graduate and professional student social cohesion, an opportunity that is difficult to otherwise set up or pursue as an individual graduate or professional student given the increased workload thereof. Legislative events and our legislative staff and officers serve to ensure that graduate and professional student interests are reflected in state policy, such as ensuring that no reductions would be made to the level of financial aid offered by the Graduate Student Loan Program.

All of these services culminate in the running of the GPSS Senate itself which serves to democratically represent the graduate student body in its resolutions to the UW, such as those urging the university to support undocumented students considering the federal political situation. The senate also democratically represents the student body in legislative policy by approving the GPSS lobbying agenda every year. Lastly, the senate also makes the final determination on the budget that the GPSS will use for the following year, ensuring that the GPSS' funds are democratically, fairly, and effectively used.

- b. How have your unit's services and programming changed over time, and how have you adapted the use of SAF funding?

Since the return to in-person classes and operations, demand for in-person social events and other ways for graduate students to get involved on campus has seen a return to normalcy. This represents an increased demand for programming relative to the previous fiscal year.

- c. Are there programs/services that SAF has funded in the past that your unit no longer provides?

There are no programs or services that SAF has funded in the past that GPSS no longer provides.

- d. Are you currently using your unit's allocation for new programs or services that were not originally requested as an item in your SAF budget request?

Due to the loss in funds from the provost, we have had to use much more of our operational event funds to host events, and we intend to continue doing so until another source of funds and especially discretionary funds can be secured.

3. What is the nature of your reserves/fund balances? For what purposes do you hold reserves? How were they accrued? (Reserves/Fund balances are termed and considered differently in every unit. If you are unsure of what these terms mean or would like clarification on anything, please reach out and ask.)

The GPSS has a General Reserves Fund accrued in the past through underspending on tuition waivers and elsewhere with SAF Funding awarded in the past. At the beginning of FY24, the GPSS Reserves Balance was \$226,148.00. However, as you can see in the table below, the GPSS has been running a net deficit for the past several fiscal years. The expected difference

between revenue and expenses for FY25 is between \$43,000 and \$51,000. As such, the expected balance of the GPSS General Reserve at the beginning of FY26 is between \$94,000 and \$102,000 should our SAF request be fulfilled. The Reserve Balance exists to balance out annual fluctuations between GPSS revenue and expenditures. We build up the reserve during the years we underspend, and spend it down to cover gaps in funding. Additionally, the GPSS has an endowment fund with a principal balance of \$100,000 and approximately \$40,000 in unspent distributions. Each year, an interest of approximately \$5,000 is allocated from the endowment to fund GPSS activities.

Budget Breakdown

In this section, please include a breakdown of your requested revenues/expenses for FY26 and your unit's budget for FY25.

The template, instructions, and an example can be found here: [SAF FY26 Budget Breakdown.xlsx](#)

BUDGET BREAKDOWN			
	<i>FY26 Request</i>	<i>FY25 Expected</i>	<i>FY25 Actuals Notes</i>
REVENUES			
SAF Funding	\$ 556,799.00	\$ 521,799.00	
State/University Funding	\$ -	\$ -	
Self-Generated Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	
Grants/Subsidies	\$ -	\$ -	
Interest Revenue	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	Annual distributions from the GPSS Endowment Fund
Other Revenue	\$ 7,690.00	\$ 50,852.64	\$7,690 from STF and \$43,162.64 from the GPSS General Reserve Fund
Total Revenue	\$ 569,489.00	\$ 577,651.64	
Change in Revenues	\$ (8,162.64)	-1.41%	
EXPENSES			
<i>FY26 Request FY25 Expected FY25 Actuals Notes</i>			
Salaries & Wages:			
Classified	\$ -	\$ -	
Professional	\$ -	\$ -	
Graduate Appointments	\$ 143,436.45	\$ 139,939.00	Salary for 6 student officers
Temporary	\$ 121,179.60	\$ 118,224.00	Summer hourly wage for 6 officers and hourly wage for 6 staff during the academic year
Other Salaries & Wages	\$ 12,150.00	\$ 28,041.60	\$15,891.6 for a Web Developer covered by STF. \$12,150 for 7 executive senators and chairs of
Total Salaries & Wages	\$ 276,766.05	\$ 286,204.60	
Retirement & Benefits:			
Classified	\$ -	\$ -	
Professional	\$ -	\$ -	
Graduate Appointments	\$ 187,649.11	\$ 183,072.30	Includes fringe benefit load and tuition waivers for the 6 student officers
Temporary	\$ 21,352.31	\$ 20,837.38	Fringe benefit load for the 6 hourly staff student workers
Other Retirement & Benefits	\$ -	\$ 3,472.90	This was a Web Developer we hired to renovate our website in FY25 and was covered by STF.
Total Retirement & Benefits	\$ 209,001.42	\$ 207,382.58	
Operations:			
Personal Service Contracts	\$ 950.00	\$ 2,900.00	Reduced recurring telecom and printing service fees
Other Contract Services	\$ -	\$ -	
Grants & Subsidies	\$ 33,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	Grants to students and RSOs
Travel	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,000.00	Covers travel to Olympia and DC for students and GPSS representatives for lobbying efforts
Supplies	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 3,000.00	Office supplies and printing/promotional costs
Other Operations	\$ 42,600.00	\$ 44,400.00	Covers GPSS events programming costs and includes the Diversity Grant Fund
Total Operations	\$ 90,250.00	\$ 110,300.00	The GPSS has no self-generating revenue except interest distributions from the GPSS Endowment Fund. However, as this amount negligible at less than 1% of total annual operating costs. Therefore, we rely on SAF, STF, and Provost discretionary funding in order to pay our student workers and provide quality programming for our constituents who are the graduate and professional students at the UW.
Total Expenses	\$ 576,017.47	\$ 603,887.18	
Change in Expenses	\$ (27,869.71)	-4.62%	
Revenue - Expenses	\$ (6,528.47)	\$ (26,235.54)	

Information on Other Revenues:

If you have other sources of revenue, please give an overview of those anticipated revenues (including new sources) and how you expect them to change in the coming years. If relevant, include a breakdown of services & positions funded by SAF vs other revenues.

Endowment Distributions

Approximately ten years ago, the GPSS Executive Committee voted to set aside a portion of its General Reserve Fund as an Endowment Fund in order to provide annual distributions to be used for grants and operational costs. The initial amount was \$100,000, and the Endowment currently has approximately \$40,000 in unspent distributions. Beginning in FY24, the GPSS began to utilize the distributions (\$4,000 in FY24 and \$5,000 in FY25 and beyond). The endowment fund accrues interest at a rate of 5% per year which is currently approximately \$7,000 at this time, however, we are only able to withdraw up to approximately \$5,000 for use in a given year.

STF Funding

The GPSS applies for STF Funding each year to cover technology-related expenses such as CART Captioning costs and virtual meeting capabilities. For FY25, the GPSS received \$7,690 for CART Captioning and Zoom Webinar license. Any unspent STF Funding must be returned to the STF Committee at the end of the fiscal year.

Additional Questions

1.
 - a. **How would you adjust your operations if you did not receive your full request? Please elaborate on the potential impact on staffing and services.**

The GPSS Officers have convened to prioritize certain items if the funding situation were to be less favorable. Given that GPSS has already cut much of its operations' budget from running a deficit in previous years, further reducing our operations may result in needing to cut entire services. If we were to receive significantly less than our request, GPSS may need to entirely cut its Travel Grants program, as any further reductions would result in an incredibly select and inequitable number of students being able to benefit from the service. Similarly, the GPSS may need to merge staff positions together and ultimately reduce the number of staff hired from 6 to 5 in the worst-case scenario. Merging staff positions is an extreme measure that we would hope to avoid at all costs due to having merged several staff positions together in recent years already. For instance, there was originally a distinct office manager and a

distinct budget director position until deficits necessitated the merging of their responsibilities.

b. What if you received an amount less than your FY25 allocation?

If the GPSS were to receive less than its FY25 allocation, then we would have to merge 2 staff positions in addition to entirely cutting the Travel Grants Program.

c. What student services/programs are integral to your mission that you would not cut even if you received an amount less than your FY25 allocation?

The mission of the GPSS to act as the voice of the graduate and professional student body is integrally supported by the formation of our senate, its committees, and its officers. These bodies are what enable the GPSS to write and pass resolutions with broad student support, engage in legislative lobbying efforts, and generate graduate and professional student engagement. These committees include the Legislative Advisory Board, Judicial Committee, Elections Committee, Diversity Committee, Science and Policy Committee, and the Arts Council.

2. If financial resources were not a restriction, what is one program/service your unit would add/expand on to enhance students' experience at the University?

We would like to put more funds into our most integral operations, legislative activities, and community and outreach events. In particular, we would like to further invest in our interdisciplinary graduate research symposium and expand our promotional materials for both events and at the beginning of the year for distribution to orientations. We would also be able to send more GPSS representatives to legislative events such as Washington Student Association assemblies to help determine the legislative lobbying agenda, as well as DC day on the Hill to have more graduate students speak to more members of congress and represent the GPSS to the United States Student Association. This will greatly improve the GPSS' communication to and from the graduate and professional student body, as well as increase the impact of the student body's voice both on internal policy through resolutions and committees, and external policy through legislative activities.

3. How does your unit ensure that student fees do not subsidize non-student, academic, research, and other costs that are the primary responsibility of the University and its colleges?

This question will be answered in two parts.

First, approximately 84% of the GPSS's operating budget is for personnel. For FY24, the GPSS will employ 6 graduate-appointee officers and 6 hourly-wage

student staff. As such, the SAF committee members are rest assured that up to \$485,773.47 of SAF-provided funding is guaranteed to go to students for work directly tied to the GPSS.

Second, the GPSS organization is structured with robust check and balance systems to ensure that SAF-funded activities do not subsidize non-student, academic, and/or research costs. For example, the \$55,000 of grant awards will only be distributed to students approved by committees consisting of at least 3 students, 2 that are further checked by the GPSS Executive Committee (13 members consisting of 6 officers and 7 executive senators) and the GPSS Judicial Committee. Furthermore, the GPSS has 3 primary advisors and is supported by the Student Activities Office (SAO) who help the GPSS ensure that SAF funds are only distributed for approved activity purposes. To exemplify this, the Travel Grants program maintains a strict clause that funding is not eligible for anything that may be attributed to an academic course or class, therefore explicitly offered as an extra-curricular benefit for the graduate student recipients.

4. How are you utilizing the SAF logo? In what ways do you spread awareness of your affiliation with SAF?

The SAF logo is displayed in the GPSS Funding page (<https://www.gpss.uw.edu/fundings/>) with a call to the SAF webpage for those who are interested in learning more about the Services and Activities Fee. The GPSS Home page (<https://www.gpss.uw.edu/>) will also be updated to include the SAF logo in the near future.

5. If you are projecting a net deficit for FY26, please provide additional context for this net deficit (e.g. reallocation of carryover funds from previous fiscal years, extraordinary expenses necessary to meet operational needs, etc.).
(Optional – Answer “N/A” if not relevant to your unit)

Assuming that we will be receiving a full allocation from our requests from the SAF, we will be running a deficit of \$6,528.47 in FY26 which is an incredibly significant improvement from our FY25 deficit of \$43,162.64 worsened by the unexpected loss of provost discretionary funds and continues to ensure the longevity of the GPSS. This will allow us to build and pursue other sources of funding that require greater time to become effective.

6. When projecting out 1-3 fiscal years, what challenges, if any, do you foresee for your unit? How could SAF be helpful in navigating these challenges?
(Optional – Answer “N/A” if not relevant to your unit)

It is foreseen that without more consistently higher funding increases from SAF, or without changes to how SAF can distribute funds in and of itself, GPSS will have to gamble on less stable sources of funding such as fundraising, donations, and merchandise to not cut any further programs. These potential sources of funding are

currently being workshopped and will foreseeably take multiple years to get off the ground and provide significant, reliable funding for the GPSS. Having strong funding in the meantime on the other hand will allow us to safely and more effectively pursue these alternative funding strategies that will stabilize the GPSS' financial situation.