University of Washington, Seattle
Services & Activities Fee
Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Request

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Budget Request Highlights

Our unit's request in FY23 was **$237,078** and our award was **$237,078**.
Our unit's request in FY24 was **$267,078** and our award was **$251,170**.
Our unit's request in FY25 was **$283,670** and our award was **$273,013**.
Our unit's request in FY26 was **$308,013** and our award was **$284,887**.
Our request for FY27 is **$319,887,** which represents an **12.3% ($35,000)** from FY26**.**

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 **$11,269**

Meeting the growing pace of wages and benefit increases for our three professional staff positions is crucial to the operation of our unit. For FY27, we are requesting additional funds for wages and benefits, which addresses gap coverage of the Director position, and full coverage of the Assistant Director and Office Manager positions.

Services Increase **$15,560**

Additional funding for Services is requested due to ongoing inflation costs that have increased the cost of a variety of our programs and key events for Student Veterans and Military-Connected Students. Aside from vendor increases in cost, venue costs have also been increased, and various permitting portions of events have increased in cost over the last fiscal year. To maintain the standard of events and operations that Student Veteran Life (SVL) execute each year, additional funding is crucial and necessary. This also covers our events that fall outside of our "key-events" (e.g., Veterans Appreciation Week, Calling Home, Memorial Day, and Celebration of Excellence). This is inclusive of indoor and outdoor recreation, wellness, mental health, Dawg Daze, and Beyond the U events. With increases in student requests, additional funding would assist in meeting the needs of students that access our services and provide a holistic student experience for our diverse population.

Supplies and Other Increases **$8,171**

Supply costs for SVL have risen dramatically over the last several years and is inclusive of scantrons, calculators, paper, toner, IT charges, printer charges, consumables, and various other necessary components that make SVL what is – A home away from home for students, and a hub to access resources that otherwise would not be readily available for students on a fixed budget. Although we work with partners throughout the state to access resources at lower costs or through donation, this isn't always enough to cover necessary materials for students.

Full Budget Overview & Justification

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.**

Professional Staff Salaries & Benefits are **83.9%** of our total SAF request this year. Our staff have extensive knowledge of the U.S. Code (USC), Veteran Benefits (Education, Disability, Vocational Rehabilitation), City & County Veteran Programs, and other significant areas that benefit Veterans and military-connected family members that attend the University of Washington. Our staff also build and maintain fruitful relationships with local Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs) which often lead to financial sponsorship of events, allowing us to supplement our SAF support to serve more student veterans and military-connected students.

We are able to maintain lower budgets in comparison to other units due to the use of a federal program, exclusive to veterans and military-connected students utilizing the G.I. Bill for education – The VA Work Study program. This allows us to employ, on average, 13-17 students each quarter that are certified to attend the University of Washington, at no cost to the institution, SAF, or our office. The average contract offered from the VA for student workers is **286** hours per quarter, at the state minimum wage (**$17.13**), totaling **$4,899.18** per student worker, covering **$63,689.34 - $83,286.06** per quarter, or **$191,068.02 - $249,858.18** per academic year (excluding summer quarter due to alterations in contract hours and term length). These students are trained in FERPA, Sexual Assault & Harassment Prevention, Mental Health First Aid, and a variety of other useful and necessary skills. Due to this program, we save approximately **$200,000-$250,000** in student wages annually.

Within the non-compensatory sections of our budget, it makes up the remaining **16.1%** of our SAF request. These funds are utilized for office supplies, office improvements, events, venues, vendors, and other programmatic needs that are requested or necessary for the Office of Student Veteran Life. These events and services are a hallmark of the college experience for many veterans and their family members at the University of Washington.

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 provided at least one specific example of a program/service.

SAF funding is instrumental in serving our student veterans and military-connected students by providing resources, community, and engagement opportunities with not only our campus, but with UW Tacoma and Bothell. SAF has funded events such as resume building workshops, transfer courses, advising and orientation groups, indoor recreation programs spanning from board games, multiplayer games, and bowling. With SAF's support for our professional staff positions, we are able to assist in processing veteran disability claims, education claims, and expanding opportunities for many student veterans and military-connected students in their educational endeavors, allowing for a wider range of pursuits and fulfillment from their University experience.

Furthermore, through successful and sustained partnerships with other entities such as ASUW, UWAA, GPSS, STF, The President's Office, UW Athletics, Waterfront Activities Center (UWREC), and various departments, we continue to increase our impact and reach of our SAF support through our keystone programs, which includes Veterans Appreciation Week, Calling Home, Memorial Day, and the Celebration of Excellence, as well as many other events conducted throughout the quarters.

We strive to reduce the costs on our operations at every turn of the academic year, whether that is through creative partnerships or finding alternative means to deliver a similar experience at a different venue or with another vendor. Some portions of our budget are mandatory costs such as I.T. costs, Workday, and other university administrative requirements.

To give more detail on a specific event, I present the Veterans Appreciation Week (VAW). This includes mutual events for Tri-Campus, Bothell, Seattle, and Tacoma. Partnership with UW Athletics allows for over 700 Salute to Service football tickets to be donated to the campuses and programs. Through the President's Office (UMAC), most of the costs of the Veterans Day Ceremony are supported. Through our relationship with UWAA, we have support for the Salute to Service tailgate as well as the UWAA Veteran Alumni Reunion, all occurring throughout this week. This event draws in thousands of students, prospective student veterans, families, alumni, and a variety of other populations, bolstering our connection to the community. VAW roughly costs $1,500 for venue rentals, $500 for permits, $10,000 for vendors (food, beverages, swag, supplies), and is supported by well over $50,000 in support from other campus entities. To state it succinctly, this specific event would not exist without SAF nor our campus partnerships.

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

Typically, services and programming have expanded over time to meet the growing needs of our student veterans and military-connected students. We continue to see an influx of new students as the military draws down from active war service requirements, and veterans begin to embark on the next leg of their life journey. For some of those individuals, their children or spouses utilize their VA education benefits they have earned and attend school – This is a large part of the population that we serve on the campus. With that, there are varied requests in programming, as the two populations (veterans & military-connected) have differing needs. An example of this is that a veteran may need assistance with applying for VA disability or Vocational Rehabilitation – These are programs that are not available to military-connected students. However, military-connected students may need assistance in accessing state benefits for a tuition waiver, federal benefits, such as the Dependents Education Assistance (DEA) program, or being looped in with overarching entities, such as FourBlock, for career assistance specific to military and military-connected family members.

We have not reduced any offered service that has been advertised since our founding, and we are intent on refining these programs and molding them to the current needs that students bring forth to SVL. Of note, however, is a large expansion of art-based programs, health & wellness programs, and more physical group activities (such as running groups and workout groups) to promote healthier living for our students. These have been shown to be positively received per student feedback over the last year.

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

No – We are currently hosting all programs that have been funded by SAF in the past in every given academic year. We have expanded services and events for specific types (e.g., outdoor recreation, health and wellness, mental health) based on student requests. We continually evaluate program interest, investment, and attendance, and through this, we will alter programming to best fit events that students show excitement and need for.

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?

No – Only programs that have been discussed and approved in conjunction with SAF in previous budget requests are being executed during the academic year. We may have brought more robust partnerships or the expansion of the events themselves, but we have not introduced new programming and services at a base level.

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 majority of our fund balance is associated with scholarships and gifts of which we cannot spend except in alignment with donor intent. Through underspending and revenues received from partnerships, we have a small reserve balance intended to supplement current programming activities and serve as an emergency reserve fund. Our reserves are well below the recommended 3 to 6 months of operating expenses that organizations should maintain.

Budget Breakdown

Budget Breakdown				
Operating Revenues	**FY27 Request**	**FY26 Budgeted**	**FY25 Actuals**	**Notes**
SAF Funds	$ 319,887	$ 284,887	$ 287,028	SAF Capital request received in FY25
Core Funds	$ 90,714	$ 100,793	$ 103,456	
Grants	$ -	$ -	$ 6,859	One-time reimburseable External Grant received in FY25
Other Student Fees	$ -	$ 13,524	$ 25,797	
Auxiliary Revenues	$ -	$ -	$ 13,500	Support received from UWAA, VEBO, and sale of graduation stoles.
Total Revenue	**$ 410,601**	**$ 399,204**	**$ 436,640**	
Change From Previous FY (%)	**2.85%**	**-8.57%**		
Operating Expenses	**FY27 Request**	**FY26 Budgeted**	**FY25 Actuals**	**Notes**
Salaries & Wages				
Permanent	$ 257,264	$ 254,241	$ 248,902	
Student/Temporary	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Retirement & Benefits				
Permanent	$ 83,611	$ 82,120	$ 78,435	
Student/Temporary	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Supplies and Materials	$ 35,000	$ 28,000	$ 66,553	
Professional & Purchased Services	$ 28,560	$ 20,000	$ 27,007	
Travel	$ -	$ 3,000	$ 3,972	
Utilities	$ 230	$ 230	$ 230	
External Funding Allocations	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Capital Projects/Expenditures	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Other Operating Expenses	$ 1,830	$ 659	$ 2,090	
Total Expenses	**$ 406,495.00**	**$ 388,250.00**	**$ 427,189.00**	
Change From Previous FY (%)	**4.70%**	**-9.12%**		
Fund Balance	**FY27 Request**	**FY26 Budgeted**	**FY25 Actuals**	**Notes**
Unallocated	$ -	$ -	$ -	This is addressed in Question 3 of the budget document - Please refer to the submitted document.
Allocated	$ 56,453	$ 52,347	$ 48,470	
Restricted	$ 225,397	$ 214,664	$ 152,303	
Total Fund Balance	**$ 281,850.20**	**$ 267,011.00**	**$ 200,773.00**	
Change From Previous FY (%)	**$ 0.06**	**$ 0.33**		
Total Change From Previous FY ($)	**$ 7,991.20**	**$ 67,741.00**	**$ 116,127.00**	Change from FY24 - 25 result of restricted gift deposited to department.
Total Change From Previous FY (%)	**102.87%**	**132.22%**		

Information on Other Revenues:

The only non-SAF revenue/funding we typically receive is through the General Operating Fund (GOF) for the SVL Director position, which does not fulfill the present salary requirements for the position, which is why additional “gap funding” has been requested for several years from SAF to fully fund the position. Other funding that is received is generally through donations to specified programs or initiatives of SVL and cannot be utilized for compensatory portions of our budget.

Aside from this, we are beginning to investigate other revenue generating resources such as the sale of certain items to alumni student veterans, such as shirts, hats, beanies, and other items. As we explore this, we intend to keep any “swag” items for students available at no cost. We will continue to work with our financial partners within Student Life to ascertain ways to better implement revenue generation.

Additional Questions

1. **The following questions will help us understand your unit’s priorities.**
    a. **How would you adjust your operations if you did not receive your full FY27 request? Please elaborate on the potential impact on staffing and services.**

If our services were not fully funded, we would have to make the decision on what portions of events would need to be removed, reinvented, or altered. We have many capstone events that serve as a fundamental experience for student veterans and military connected students at UW, without them, we feel it would be a disservice to this population of students. Due to the wealth and breadth of knowledge possessed by our staff members, it would not be feasible to remove any position within the office at this time.

    b. **What if you received 4% less than your FY26 allocation? Please elaborate on the potential impact on staffing and services.**

A 4% reduction (approximately $11,395) from our FY26 allocation would lead to significant impacts on programming. At present, that would account for an inability to lead non-keystone events that students request, such as our outdoor recreation, indoor recreation, or wellness programming. We operate on a razor thin budget and attempt to find resources exterior of the University for discounted events or gifted events. However, this is not a reliable medium for consistent event preparation or execution. More than likely, we would reduce the entirety of our travel budget ($5,000) and reduce contractual service components ($7,000) to make up for the decline of funding in this instance. This would impact programming across the breadth of our academic year and would likely minimize our ability to meet requested needs of students on some avenues.

c. **What student services/programs are integral to your mission that you would not cut even if you received an amount less than your FY26 allocation? Why?**

We feel that our keystone events (VAW, Calling Home, Memorial Day, and Celebration of Excellence) are far too important to cut if we received less than our FY26 allocation. These are the events that bring the community together, promote healing, remembrance, and partnerships for students and the entities that support our mission. We would reduce additional events outside of these key events in order to preserve the foundation of our program and the intended taskings we have set forth for the unit. Additionally, we would not cut access to disability claim services, vocational rehabilitation services, nor partnerships that bolster the opportunity for internships or career advancement for students as they prepare to graduate.

2. **If you are projecting a net deficit for your overall FY27 budget, 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.) and how this might impact your operations.** *(Optional – Answer "N/A" if not relevant to your unit)*

N/A

3. **What is one program/service your unit would like to work towards building to enhance students' out-of-class experience at the University? How much would it cost?**

We would like to expand our outdoor recreation programming as well as our Wellness/Mental Health components. At present, our veteran liaison counselor is housed under the Counseling Center due to constraints in state fund and the necessary salary compensation for the position. Our unit cannot make up the necessary monies for this position at present, and as such, we have a limited amount of time with our liaison. In the perfect world, we would be able to fully fund this position and have it under our purview, which would allow more interaction and engagement with students over the course of any given year. The funding this position would require (as a portion of it is funded by GOF due to legislative efforts of UW and our unit) would be approximately $65,000. Expansion of our outdoor recreation programming and Wellness/Mental Health components would (per our estimates) be approximately $9,000, based on prior event costs and frequently requested programming from student feedback.

4. **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?**

None of our funds are utilized to benefit non-students. Our primary goal is to benefit the University of Washington, Student Veterans at UW, and the military-connected family members at UW. Student fees that are awarded to our office go into specific salaries and events and are only utilized for those matters.

5. **What active roles do students and their views play in your unit's decision making?**

Students have an active role in the decisions that our unit makes. With a wealth of knowledge and experience from our VA Workstudy students (Veteran Peer Mentors), we have ensured that they are able to collaborate with the professional staff, run programming that they are passionate about, and receive assistance from our units staff for new events or programming they would like to see brought to the University of Washington.

At the end of the day, our unit was founded by student veterans, for student veterans. We hold that as a central and core piece of what makes our mission beautiful. We seek feedback actively from student workers and students who attend our events and attempt to gather as much information and feedback through a variety of sources and time frames.

6. **How are you utilizing the SAF logo? In what ways do you spread awareness of your affiliation with SAF? Attach an example if applicable.**

The SAF logo is proudly posted throughout our office and on all of our marketing. We let students know when they first enter the University of Washington through our Advising and Orientation sessions that SAF is what funds our department and allows us to provide resources, events, and community to them.

7. **When projecting out 1-3 fiscal years, what challenges, if any, do you foresee for your unit (policy changes, financial, etc.)? How could SAF be helpful in navigating these challenges?**

The primary challenge we typically face is ensuring that we have competitive wages for professional staff that are not covered under the GOF (state) funding. However, the GOF funding has yet to meet the full salary of the Director position, and we would like to petition the state to cover the entirety of the Director position to reduce the burden on SAF as well as streamline budget processing. In our fiscal year forecasts that are required each year by Student Life, GOF typically has some form of increase in funding, but this is not always guaranteed, as we have seen in previous years. We believe that SAF could potentially help us with petitioning for full coverage of the Director position from GOF. Furthermore, we are excited about the potential of a health & wellness fee being implemented at the University of Washington, potentially allowing a wider breadth of events and services for our constituents and housing our Veteran Liaison Mental Health Therapist under our Department to create a more accessible environment for students.