



The Government of Which Student Body?

By TAYSHA MURTAUGH

Photography LAUREL SCOTT

Design MAGGIE THILGES

Every year, the Government of the Student Body receives funding from you to allocate to student organizations. Last year, GSB cut thousands from student organizations. Some groups feel they are at a disadvantage when asking for funding. Is it personal, or is it just politics?

The International Student Council left the Government of the Student Body allocation meeting feeling defeated last spring. After a lot of complicated discussion, GSB had cut the club's funding from \$9,180.80 to \$5,652.04 for the following year.

"I felt sad, disappointed," recalls Wiwi Tjandra, treasurer of the International Student Council. "[Our club] serves basically all international students and almost all our events are free, not only for international students but all students."

International Student Council had requested an increase in funding last year to go toward food and entertainment for the annual International Food Fair. Some of their requests included a new sound system and hiring a capoeira, or group of dancers, to perform.

"We were trying to bring them to campus so we can show our international dance as entertainment for everyone," Tjandra explains. Despite attending allocation meetings in both the

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spring and fall to discuss their funding request, International Student Council's budget was still cut. "If the budget is not approved, you can't really do a bigger event and you are limited," Tjandra says.

The International Student Council wasn't the only club hit hard by last year's allocations. GSB cut about \$300,000 from student organizations last year during regular allocations. "Sometimes we'll have years where we only have to cut out \$100,000," says GSB Finance Director, Anthony Maly. "Last year we had to cut \$300,000, so it's harder and we had to cut deeper, and people don't like that, but we can't spend money we don't have."

Every spring, GSB's finance committee meets with organizations requesting funding for fifteen to twenty minutes each. These are called "regular allocation meetings." Last year, the committee spent about forty hours total discussing funding with about 140 different

groups. During the hearings, each group, including International Student Council, proposed its budget and discussed its goals as an organization. Then, based on GSB's budget, the committee allocated money to each group.

Where does this money come from? You. The students at Iowa State.

In case you haven't been paying attention to your U-Bill, there are a number of mandatory fees added to your tuition each year, including an "activity, services, building and recreation fee." This fee covers services like CyRide, provides student admission rates to concerts and games and — last but not least — funds GSB.

GSB currently gets \$33.75 per student, per semester, totaling about \$1.8 million which, according to the GSB website, is to be spent "enhancing students' experiences at ISU and specifically in student organizations." So if this money is meant to fund student organizations, why did so many budgets get cut this year?

A lot of it has to do with the increase in the student body, Maly says. More students means more clubs which means a need for more money -- money that GSB didn't account for when it projected the student fees for the 2010-2011 school year. Because the student fee of \$33.75 stayed constant from last year to this year, GSB's budget remained constant and was unprepared to deal with the increase of funding requests. Maly says there are only about thirty groups who consistently ask for funding every year, and this year there were 140.

So why didn't GSB see this coming and increase the student fees?

"GSB is a student organization, but people still have to get elected," says Jacob Wilson, former GSB senator. "We don't really think about the politics of it, but ... if a group of students runs and says 'we're going to increase your student fees,' that's all students will hear. They won't

listen to how much it is. They won't know where that money is going to go."

Instead, the senators played it safe and cut funding from student organizations. "Because we had to make \$300,000 in cuts last year," Maly says, "we had to supplement that with one-time funding that we had leftover, so we won't have that funding in the future." In other words, student fees will increase next year in order to cover a loss of back-up funds this year. But GSB is only proposing to raise student fees from \$33.75 to \$35.

Who gets cut?

Some cuts were across-the-board, or applied to all clubs, such as setting a maximum number of Iowa State Daily advertisements GSB buys for each club. Other cuts, however, were decided on a case-by-case basis. The Finance Committee has a list of priorities and criteria that groups have to meet in order to be eligible for funding. This list, which can be found on the GSB website, says organizations are required to provide justification for every line in their budget during their budget meeting.

The committee also wants to see groups' overall plans for events, activities and operations for the fiscal year and full documentation of any income and the number of members in the organization, among many other things. The final decision is made based on the Finance Committee's discussions with the group during and after the hearings. Most senators have their own criteria of judgment.

Wilson says he looked for a number of factors while he was a senator allocating money (Ahem: if you feel like your club got screwed over, now's the time to listen up):

1) Did you ask for funding or lobby for more money? "Sometimes groups will become disorganized and forget to ask for funding," Maly says. "Either groups are just not wanting money or they're not wanting to put in the time to ask for more money."

2) How many students is this club going to benefit? "For every person, you get up to a certain amount of funding," Wilson says.

3) Did you actively try to fundraise? Wilson said GSB expects clubs to bring in some kind of money through fundraising or fees, and this effort shows ownership and commitment to the organization.

4) Partnerships: Can you work with other groups to make a particular event better?

5) Is this a one-time expenditure or a capital expenditure? For any expense, GSB senators like to see that you've shopped around for the best price.

Many groups ask GSB to fund one-time expenditures, like conferences and events. Capital expenditures are usually for equipment that will last for at least three years, and those kinds of expenses are preferred by GSB senators. That way, Wilson says students can be sure they're getting the full value of their dollar. "If we spent all this [money] in one year," Wilson says, "how would that benefit Iowa State the next five years? You might have some really kick-ass events for one semester, but after that it's gone."

6) Will the money improve the overall campus climate for a variety of students, and in particular, minorities? "I think we have a lot to learn from our vastly multicultural campus," Wilson says.

Does all of GSB think in these terms, though? Wilson says when he was a senator, he took time to visit with different groups requesting funding. "I think where GSB is really lacking is having a diverse presence within the senate," Wilson says. For instance, many senators were confused last year when an international student organization requested money to purchase a lion's head costume for a cultural celebration.

"Some of them even said during a meeting, 'Why would you buy a lion's head?' The thing is, very few of the senators are international," Wilson says. "Most of them are white, Christian males. They're not always the best representation of the campus as a whole. If the student organization is trying to purchase something and no one is really sure of what it is, they have the extra job of educating the senate, and that's a lot to ask of a student

organization, frankly."

Tjandro said the language barrier and meeting procedure is confusing for the international students like him to follow, and that puts them at a disadvantage. "It's too complicated," Tjandro says, "and it's different from the way our International Student Council meeting goes. The whole process — they didn't really describe for us when we were supposed to talk, and I wasn't sure how it was going to be."

Wilson says although it's true, in theory, that everyone has an equal opportunity to run for a student government position, the reality is that GSB hasn't done a very good job of promoting senate elections.

"I would like to know how many times senators have gone to the LGBTQA Alliance meetings?" Wilson asks. "How many times have they gone to a Multicultural Council meeting? How many times have they gone to an Atheist and Agnostic meeting? These are three examples of student groups that are generally marginalized on campus. How many times has GSB reached out to them? When I was a senator, that's what I did. Honestly, that's one of the reasons I felt bad leaving, because I don't know how many other people are going to continue that."

Wilson resigned from GSB after a year and a half of service in order to focus more on his studies and application to grad schools. He ran for vice president last year under Chandra Peterson but lost to Nate Dobbels and Luke Roling. Now an outside spectator, Wilson notes that GSB is doing an overall good job, but they're lacking in campus communication and representation.

Anna Howie, president and former treasurer of the LGBTQA Alliance, agrees that GSB isn't representative of the university. "I feel that they kind of lack a general sense of diversity from something as small as a general interest to something like sexual orientation. I feel that not every organization is completely represented in the senate. There could be someone who lobbies for the similar interests of the organization, but if they're not a member of the

G\$B Facts and Figures

By EMILY BLOOMQUIST

- \$33.75** Amount of student fee the GSB receives
- \$62.60** Amount of student fee that CyRide receives
- \$24,000** GSB discretionary fund available for unexpected and unplanned club events
- \$250,000** 'Capitol Projects' account left over from unused club funds

President
Vice President
Financial Director



Receive scholarship as 'salaries'

1/2

GSB has to pay half of the copyright fees for elevator music



HINT

When less groups petition for funds more money goes to groups that do

Funds Allocation

- Atheist / Agnostic Society** \$219.00 - 35 members
- Cuffs Club** \$843.06 - 25 members
- KURE 88.5 Station** \$9,556.00 - 60 members
- Hope 4 Africa** \$245.00 - 50 members
- ISU Hip Hop Dance Club (DubH)** \$4,765.00 - 478 members
- Mock Trial Club** \$2367.22 - 18 members
- Juggling and Unicycle Club** \$380.76 - 9 members

Majors of the Major Players

- President, Luke Roling** Chemical Engineer/Mathematics
- Vice President, Nate Dobbels** Agriculture Education
- Finance Director, Anthony Maly** Political Science
- Chief of Staff, Jordan Lass** History
- Speaker of the Senate, Halley Stille** French/History
- Chief Justice, Andrea Mallarino** Political Science

14 

current GSB senators won their place with 6 or less votes

29.78% 

of the senators on GSB each received support from .021% OR LESS of the student population



organization, it gets kind of hard to represent them.”

Last year, the LGBTA Alliance’s funding was cut. Although the organization eventually found alternative funding through group fees and LGBT Student Services, GSB’s lack of representation caused issues while discussing their funding. During a meeting, GSB’s Finance Committee wanted to deny the alliance a portion of its requested funding because the organization refused to provide an email list of its members. Since the number of active members directly affects the funding the group receives, the Finance Committee wanted to see a list. Of course, the alliance explained, not every member of the club is openly gay or wants to be identified as part of the alliance.

“The alliance only had about forty people signed up on the mailing list,” Wilson says. “A lot of people go to the meetings, but they don’t necessarily feel comfortable being part of the list, for a multitude of reasons.” Wilson says he looked deeper at the issue and determined that the attendance at the alliance’s meetings nearly doubled the number of names on the mailing list. Because of his support, the senate increased LGBTA’s budget. “If these groups of students don’t even know GSB is there to support them -- if GSB doesn’t make a conscious effort to reach out to them, they’re not going to feel like they have any part in GSB, let alone have a desire to be involved in the group,” Wilson says.

And being uninvolved in GSB

can mean exclusion from important campus decisions about your money.

The Varsity Theatre Debacle

Remember that \$300,000 that was cut from student groups this year?

The same amount of money and more—\$346,000, to be exact—is tucked away in a separate bank account for the purpose of renovating the Varsity Theatre. The project, called “Cyclone Cinema,” began last year to provide low-cost movies to ISU students. The project’s funding comes from money left over from student groups last year, and like the theatre, this money is currently in a stalemate. The theatre project stopped after more than \$4,000 had already been spent on architectural rendering and building maintenance.

In April, the city of Ames and Iowa State University teamed up on a project to revitalize Campustown. Kansas City property development group, LANE4, was selected to oversee the project. LANE4’s proposals would essentially wipe out many of the bars and eateries students frequent each weekend. Among LANE4’s ideas for Campustown were restaurants, a hotel, small shops and—you guessed it—a movie theatre.

“You don’t want to put two theatres right next to each other,” Maly says. “That really doesn’t logistically make any sense. We’re waiting for [LANE4] to come back with their plan ... before we move

forward with our plan. Obviously we don’t want to move forward too hastily.”

GSB’s theatre plan started long before LANE4’s plans, however. The student government even had a lease fully negotiated with the family that owns the theatre. It was supposed to be up and running by the fall 2010 semester, but according to Maly, they were unable to move forward with the plan due to the LANE4 discussion.

“Students voted and overwhelmingly supported this,” Wilson says. “They want this, and they want it to be a student-run theatre. They don’t want this to be a privately-owned theatre that’s going to jack up the prices any time they want.”

Although GSB’s initial surveys showed that students were in favor of “Cyclone Cinema,” a later survey by then-GSB President Jon Turk, found that students absolutely rejected it. Turk said the first survey was greatly flawed and left out details of the cost of the theatre and how few times it would actually be showing movies.

With all this money now frozen in an account, though, students just want to know what’s going on; Wilson says they deserve communication from GSB. He suggests the GSB student leaders stand up to the university administrators, not budge on issues and keep the student body informed about what’s going on. “GSB came out strong and talking about this and got people excited,” Wilson remarks, “and now students hear this and think, ‘Oh why should we trust you, if you can’t really even do anything?’ I think it’s really harmful to the image of GSB.”

While \$346,000 remains on reserve in an account for a cinema that may or may not happen, clubs like International Student Council have to limit their events and get by on a tight budget. “The number of international students is increasing every year, but our budgets are cut ... so we can’t improve an event,” Tjandra points out. “If we had a bigger budget, we could have a bigger event for the students.”

Additional reporting from Emily Bloomquist 