



## Student Activity Fee

November 2002

### Purpose

The goals of this survey were to monitor student awareness of how their student activity fees are allocated and to learn the priorities they think are important when funding decisions are made. Some of the questions replicate a 1999 activity fee study.

### Implications/Highlights

Most students think the current activity fee is much higher than it actually is. Half approve an increase for next year. Half the respondents think there should be a limit or maximum amount of funding from student activity fees allocated to any group or activity while just under a half feel that those requesting funding should subsidize a basic percent of the costs for their own programs.

### Participation Rate

Total Survey Response: N = 1576  
 Phone: N = 1109 of 1882 contacted (59%)  
 Web: N = 467 of 2000 contacted (23%)

### Findings

Few students (2%) knew that the current activity fee is \$43 per semester; nearly three-fourths of respondents thought the fee was higher. The mean figure guessed for the activity fee was \$73.28.

Half the respondents (53%) said they would support increasing the activity fee next year.

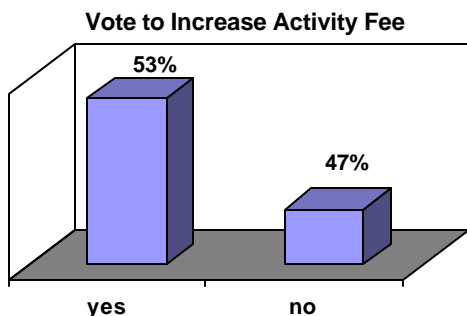


Figure 1. Students supported increasing the activity fee

More of the first year students (62%) and sophomores (58%) than of the juniors (45%) or seniors (51%) supported increasing the activity fee next year. \*

\*Statistically significant at the .05 level

The proportion of students who reported feeling informed about the way in which the fee is used was almost identical to the findings in an earlier 1999 survey. A majority of students *did not* feel they knew how the fee is used.

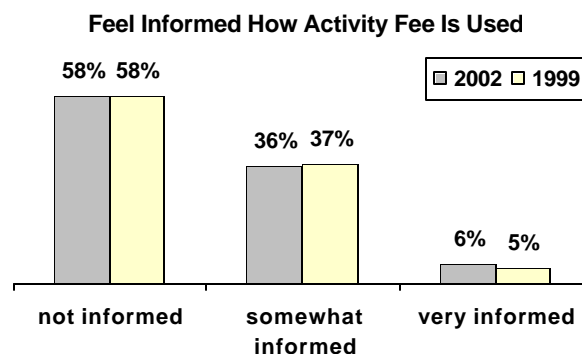


Figure 2. A majority of students *do not* feel informed about how the activity fee is used

The membership of the University Park Allocation Committee (UPAC), which makes decisions about dispersing student activity monies, is composed entirely of students. Students were *not clear* about the membership of UPAC.

### Membership of University Park Allocation Committee

	students ^	faculty	administrators
yes	63%	28%	29%
no	12%	43%	43%
don't know	25%	29%	28%

^ Students compose 100% of the membership of UPAC

Students were generally *unaware* that individual students, faculty and staff as well as student organizations are eligible to request UPAC funding.

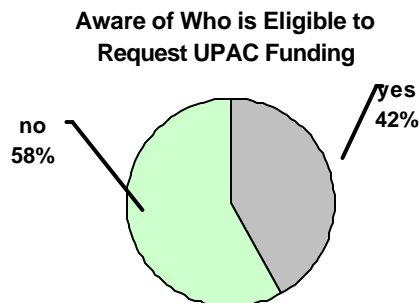


Figure 3. Most students *do not* realize that individual students, faculty and staff are eligible to request UPAC funding

For further information, please contact Dr. Betty Moore at the Student Affairs Research and Assessment Office.  
 315 Grange, University Park, PA 16802, (814) 863-1809, blm1@sa.psu.edu



About one-third of respondents (35%) said they had attended campus events this semester which were supported by the student activity fee. A little over a third (37%) said they had not attended funded events while a significant proportion of students (28%) said they did not know which events had been subsidized. (Ads for events include a note indicating UPAC funding.)

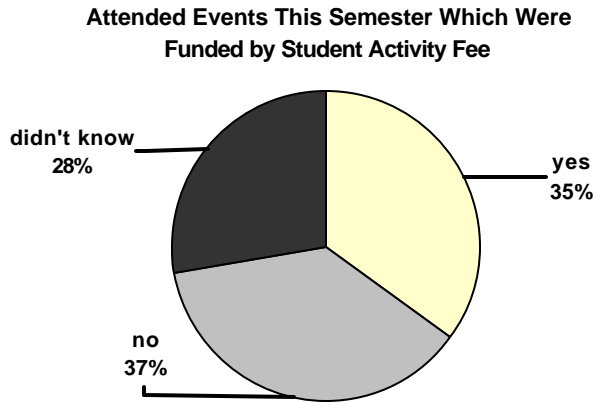


Figure 4. A third of the survey respondents said they had attended events this semester which were funded by the student activity fee

Sixty percent of the survey respondents belong to a student club or organization. Those who were members estimated that their organizations received student activity fee funding for 26% of their events.

Half the respondents (58%) thought there should be a limit or maximum amount of student activity fee monies allocated for use by any group. Nearly one-half (48%) felt those requesting UPAC funding should cover a basic percent of the costs of their programs.

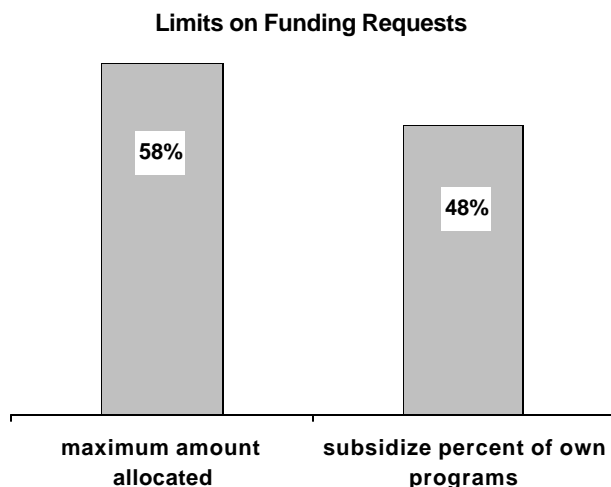


Figure 5. Students felt there should be limits on funding requests

Men were more likely than women \* and graduate students more likely than undergraduate students \* to agree that a basic percent of costs should be covered by those sponsoring activities.

Students were asked about the importance of specific criterion when student activity fees are allotted for campus programs or activities.

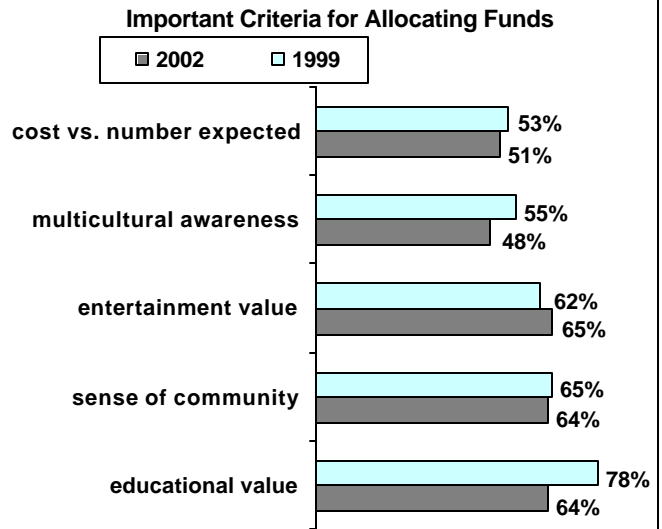


Figure 6. 2002 and 1999 comparison of importance of criteria for UPAC funding

Other criteria mentioned by individuals included: opportunity for funding from other sources, originality, past history of event success, activity does not offend, and effort to collaborate.

Students were asked to what extent they agreed the student activity fee should be used to fund the following:

Item	Percentage
HUB/Robeson Center facilities	69%
Distinguished Speaker Series	63%
Passes for on-campus fitness facilities	62%
Student tickets for Performing Arts	58%
Late Night programs	58%
Tickets for Bryce Jordan Center events	56%
Intramural sports	52%
Travel to student conferences/competitions	50%

Most respondents were *unsure* whether the student activity fee is currently being distributed fairly.

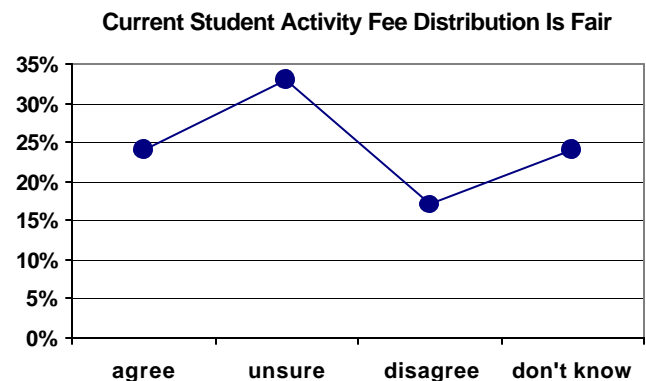


Figure 7. Students *unclear* about distribution of student activity fees

\*Statistically significant at the .05 level.