



## Student Activity Fee

November 2001

### Purpose

Students were asked about their knowledge of the student activity fee and criteria for allocating these funds.

### Implications/Highlights

Students felt uninformed about criteria for funding decisions allocating student activity fee monies, who is eligible to apply, and who reviews requests.

### Participation Rate

Phone: N = 185 (61%) N = 116 (39%)  
 Web: N = 1493 (37%) N = 2507(63%)  
 agreed to participate did not participate

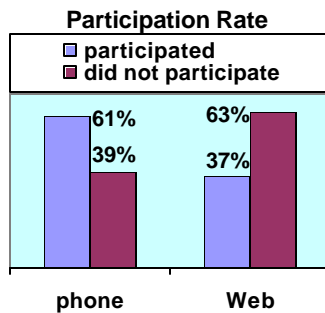


Figure 1. Participation rate

### Findings

Three-fourths of the respondents were aware there was a student activity fee. A majority over-estimated the actual cost of the activity fee.

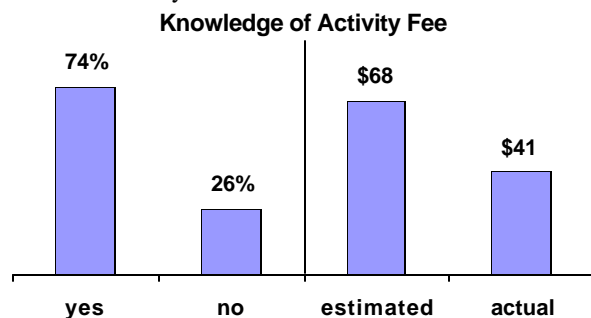


Figure 2. Three-fourths of the students were aware there was a student activity fee; most over-estimated actual fee

Most students (69%) felt *uninformed* about the way in which the student activity fee was being used. (This compared to 58% who responded they felt *uninformed* in a 1999 Pulse survey.)

Some of the respondents felt the student activity fee was being allocated fairly although most were unsure or said they didn't know.

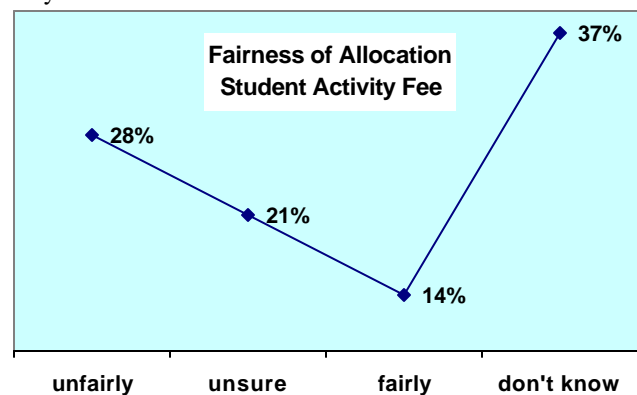


Figure 3. Most of the respondents didn't know whether the activity fee was being allocated fairly

Students were asked to what extent they agreed the student activity fees should be used to support specific requests.

### Agree These Requests Should Be Supported

those requesting funds should subsidize a <u>basic percent of own costs</u>	35%
should be a maximum amount allocated to <u>any group or activity</u>	54%
agree funding should support travel to student conference or competition	46%
agree funding should support intramural sports	44%
agree funding should support passes for <u>on-campus fitness facilities</u>	56%
agree funding should support HUB <u>Robeson Center</u>	57%
agree funding should support Late Night Penn State programs	57%
agree funding should support student tickets for Performing Arts	54%
agree funding should support <u>Distinguished Speakers Series</u>	60%

\*Statistically significant at the .05 level

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Student Affairs

Students indicated the importance of various criteria for evaluating requests for funding. Students assigned less importance to 'educational value' and 'multicultural awareness' than they did in 1999.

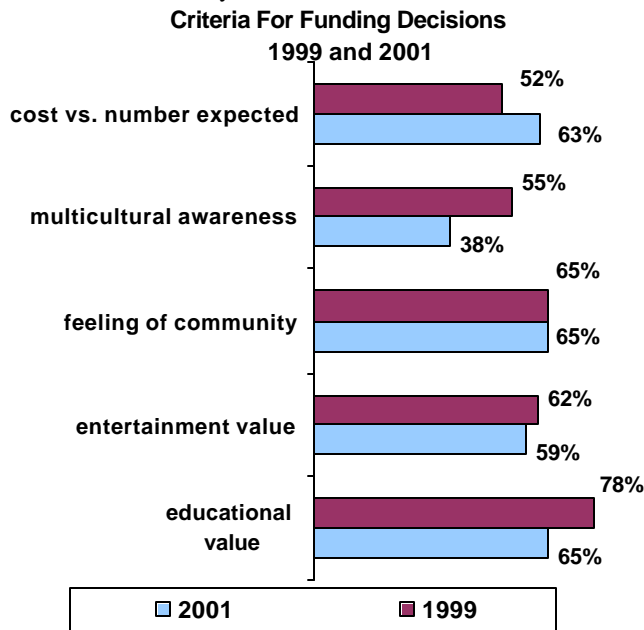


Figure 4. Students' criteria for funding decisions changed between 1999 and 2001

Other factors that individual students felt should be considered when making decisions about funding included:

- previous record of handling funding
- allocate 'my' money only to 'my' groups
- impact on university image
- what other options group has to raise money
- smaller groups should receive priority
- let students vote on activities to be funded
- activity should be of interest to general student body
- how often organization has been funded before
- additional consideration should be given to community service projects
- originality of activity or event

Most students understood that the University Park Allocation Committee (UPAC) was more instrumental in reviewing student activity fee funding requests than Undergraduate Student Government (USG), Student Affairs staff, or University administrators. (Actually UPAC makes all funding decisions.)

**Impact on Funding Decisions**

	none	some	major
UPAC	2%	25%	73%
USG	12%	66%	22%
Student Affairs	14%	64%	22%
Administrators	19%	48%	33%

A majority of respondents thought that the composition of UPAC included students (82%), faculty (73%), and staff (85%.) (Actually all members of UPAC are students.)

Almost all students realized that registered clubs and organizations were eligible to request funding for their programs and activities. Fewer were aware that funding requests can be submitted also by individual undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty and staff.

Two-thirds of the respondents overall (64%) said they belonged to a registered student club or organization. More women than men,\* undergraduates than graduate students,\* and upperclass students than first year students\* said they belonged to a registered student club or organization.

**Belong to a Registered Organization**

64%	overall	67%	women
58%	first year	62%	men
67%	sophomores	65%	undergraduates
68%	juniors	55%	graduate students
67%	seniors		

Two-fifths (44%) did not think their student organization had received any funding through the student activity fee.

**Number of Funded Programs For Their Organizations**

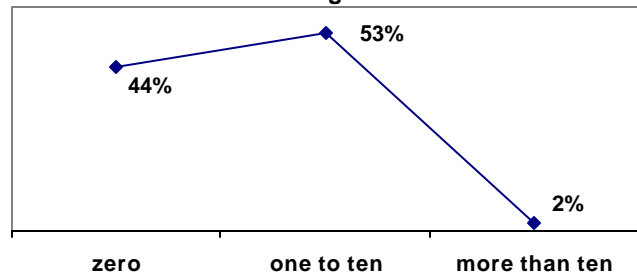


Figure 5. Two-fifths of respondents did not think their organizations had received student activity funding for a program

Respondents were asked what percent of the cost of student fitness passes they thought should be funded by the activity fee. Most (85%) thought some of the costs should be subsidized; 15% thought no costs should be covered. Overall, students felt that 49.92 percent of the costs should be supported by the activity fee.

**Percent of Cost of Fitness Passes Should Be Covered**

15%	zero	1%	sixty percent
6%	ten percent	1%	seventy percent
6%	twenty percent	9%	eighty percent
9%	thirty percent	2%	ninety percent
27%	fifty percent	22%	100 percent

**Final Comments Submitted by Individuals**

- shouldn't have to pay activity fee when away from campus (internship, student teaching)
- abolish overall fee and have students pay individually for activities or clubs
- need to do more to inform students how monies are used
- split allocations Fall and Spring so UPAC won't run out of monies like last year

\*Statistically significant at the .05 level.