

Benjamin Erhardt, *Keough Hall Senator*
Maclane Farrel, *Fisher Hall Senator*
Elizabeth Gonzalez, *Ryan Hall Senator*
David Haungs, *Judicial Council President*
Zachary Cortez, *Siegfried Hall Senator*
Maddie Tupy, *Club Coordination Council President*
Emma Eckstein, *Howard Hall Senator*
Luke Blazek, *Pangborn Hall Senator*

AN ORDER CALLING FOR A REFERENDUM REGARDING THE ADJUSTMENT OF THE METHODS OF STUDENT UNION FUNDS ALLOCATIONS

Whereas, Article III, Section 3(d) of the *Constitution of the Undergraduate Student Body of the University of Notre Dame du Lac* states that the Senate “shall establish the fiscal policies of the Student Union and supervise the proper implementation of these policies;”

Whereas, Article XVI, Section 3(b) of the *Constitution* dictates that 40% of Student Union funds to be allocated annually by the Financial Management Board (FMB) must be made available to student clubs and organizations;

Whereas, Article XVI, Section 3(d) of the *Constitution* dictates that 59% of Student Union funds to be allocated annually by FMB must be distributed amongst Student Union Organizations;

Whereas, pursuant to Article XVI, Section 2(a) of the *Constitution*, \$95 of each undergraduate student’s tuition¹ is annually collected as student activities fees to fund the Student Union in the manner described above;

Whereas, Club Coordination Council (CCC) President Maddie Tupy shared in a December 1, 2021 [presentation](#) to the Senate that the CCC allocations to clubs typically cover “no more than 15% of club projected expenses;”

Whereas, the CCC creates a final adjusted request for each club by setting an absolute cap on the amount of money allocated to any given club, imposing an additional maximum allocation of five times the amount of money fundraised by the club, and deprioritizing portions of club requests that are not central to the club’s mission through a “tiering” system;

Whereas, even after significantly cutting down on clubs’ requests, the CCC still only has sufficient money to fund 50 to 60% of clubs’ final adjusted requests per year;

Whereas, based on [data](#) from the Office of the Student Union Treasurer, since the 2017-2018 Student Union term, an average of 80.66% of Student Union Organization funding requests have

¹ This value is based on a [presentation](#) by Student Union Treasurer Meenu Selvan and Assistant to the Student Union Treasurer Claire Sison, delivered to the Senate on September 15, 2021, which reports that student activities fees are \$95 per undergraduate student.

been fulfilled through FMB allocations, even though FMB does not impose any absolute caps, maxima tied to fundraising, or tiering protocols;

Whereas, the above figure for Student Union Organization funding requests fulfilled only varies by 0.3% if the fiscal years impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are neglected;

Whereas, it is therefore apparent that Student Union Organizations receive a far higher percentage of their allocation requests than clubs even after club requests have been adjusted downwards;

Whereas, if the percentage of final adjusted club requests that are fulfilled is taken to be 60%, equalizing this percentage with the percentage of Student Union Organization requests fulfilled would require that 7% of the funds available for allocation are shifted from Student Union Organizations to clubs, such that Student Union Organizations receive 52% of the funds and clubs receive 47% (see Appendix for calculations);

Whereas, given this data, it is the position of the co-sponsors of this Order that it is prudent for the Senate to debate possible amendments to ensure thoroughness, equity, and clarity in the distribution of Student Union funds;

Whereas, it is the position of the co-sponsors of this Order that the question of an amendment to the funding allocation methods of the Student Union outlined in the *Constitution* should be presented to the undergraduate student body to gauge their opinion prior to the Senate taking any binding action on this matter, given that such an amendment would directly impact how students' activities fees are spent across the Student Union each year;

Whereas, Article XIV, Section 3 of the *Constitution* grants the Senate the authority to “gauge undergraduate student opinion on a certain issue by placing the issue in ballot form” as “a referendum item;” therefore, be it

Ordered, by the Student Senate of the University of Notre Dame du Lac,

- I. That the opinion of the undergraduate student body shall be gauged via referendum on the matter of amending Article XVI, Sections 3(b) and (d) of the *Constitution* to adjust Student Union funds allocation percentages.**
- II. The referendum shall include the following question as it pertains to the proposed amendment to Article XVI, Sections 3(b) and (d):**
 - A. Currently, 40% of the funds available for allocation to student groups are allocated to clubs, while 59% of such funds are distributed among Student Union Organizations (Senate, Executive Cabinet, Student Union Board, Hall Presidents Council, Club Coordination Council, Class Councils, Off-Campus Council, Financial Management Board, and Judicial Council). Do you favor shifting up to 7% of funds available for allocation from Student Union Organizations to clubs?**
 - 1. YES**

2. NO
3. ABSTAIN

III. The Judicial Council shall take swift action to conduct the referendum and report the results to the Senate.

Appendix

Definitions:

Symbol	Description
c_{current}	Current fraction of funds going to clubs
s_{current}	Current fraction of funds going to Student Union Organizations
c_{ideal}	Ideal fraction of funds going to clubs
s_{ideal}	Ideal fraction of funds going to Student Union Organizations
T	Total amount of funds available
r_c	Final adjusted club request
r_s	Total Student Union Organization Request

Analysis:

Currently,

$$0.6 = \frac{\text{amount going to clubs}}{\text{final adjusted club requests}} = \frac{c_{\text{current}}T}{r_c}, \quad (1)$$

so,

$$r_c = \frac{c_{\text{current}}T}{0.6}. \quad (2)$$

Similarly,

$$0.8 = \frac{\text{amount going to Student Union Organizations}}{\text{Student Union Organizations requests}} = \frac{s_{\text{current}}T}{r_s}, \quad (3)$$

so,

$$r_s = \frac{s_{\text{current}}T}{0.8}. \quad (4)$$

Ideally, the percent of final adjusted club requests fulfilled equals the percent of Student Union Organization requests fulfilled, so

$$\frac{c_{\text{ideal}}T}{r_c} = \frac{s_{\text{ideal}}T}{r_s} \Rightarrow \frac{c_{\text{ideal}}}{s_{\text{ideal}}} = \frac{\cancel{T}r_c}{\cancel{T}r_s} = \frac{r_c}{r_s}. \quad (5)$$

Now, substitute the values of r_c and r_s derived in Equations 2 and 4, respectively:

$$\frac{c_{\text{ideal}}}{s_{\text{ideal}}} = \frac{\frac{c_{\text{current}}T}{0.6}}{\frac{s_{\text{current}}T}{0.8}} \Rightarrow \frac{c_{\text{ideal}}}{s_{\text{ideal}}} = \frac{c_{\text{current}}}{s_{\text{current}}} \left(\frac{8}{6} \right). \quad (6)$$

In other words, the ratio of the fraction of funds going to clubs to the fraction going to Student Union Organizations should increase $\frac{4}{3}$ times. So,

$$\frac{c_{\text{ideal}}}{s_{\text{ideal}}} = \left(\frac{0.40}{0.59} \right) \left(\frac{4}{3} \right) = 0.9039. \quad (7)$$

So,

$$c_{\text{ideal}} = 0.9039s_{\text{ideal}}. \quad (8)$$

We still want

$$c_{\text{ideal}} + s_{\text{ideal}} = 0.99. \quad (9)$$

Substitute in c_{ideal} :

$$s_{\text{ideal}} + 0.9039s_{\text{ideal}} = 0.99, \quad (10)$$

so,

$$1.9039s_{\text{ideal}} = 0.99. \quad (11)$$

Thus,

$$s_{\text{ideal}} = 0.5200. \quad (12)$$

So ideally, Student Union Organizations should get exactly 52% of funds and clubs should get exactly 47%.