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Owner	Carol Lee
Department	Financial Services Master Procedures

Viewpoint Neutral Funding Guidelines

What are viewpoint-neutral funding decisions?

Viewpoint-neutral funding decisions means ASI mandatory student fee funds shall be allocated without regard to a group's viewpoint, in accordance with the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In other words, a group cannot be denied funding because it advocates a particular opinion, no matter how unpopular or unusual. Viewpoint neutrality protects students' free speech rights and allows the exchange of ideas to flourish. When funding decisions are made, actions must be taken in an even-handed way and must not discriminate based on the viewpoint, message, or popularity.

Focus on the process, NOT the outcome

Viewpoint-neutral funding refers to the funding process, NOT the outcome. The key is the funding method must be fair, open, and done without regard for a group's viewpoint or popularity.

Examples of **process-based** funding decisions that a decisionmaker should follow

- Allocate funding based on a group's needs. Funding levels may be significantly different for different groups, but differences cannot be due to the viewpoint of a group
- Allocate funding based on the service level a group provides to students. For example, a tutoring program would need more funding than a program that only requires funding to print flyers
- Set other objective funding criteria that is not based on a group's viewpoint

Examples of **outcome-based** funding decisions that a decisionmaker should **NOT** adopt

- Automatically give all groups the same amount of money. This is not an acceptable practice because giving all groups the same amount means over-funding some programs at the expense of others

- Purposely balance out funding so all views on a particular issue are represented
- Automatically fund an "opposite" viewpoint. Providing funding to "Save the Earth" does not mean that "Destroy the Earth" automatically receives funding. Likely, the "opposite" group may not even exist

Create viewpoint-neutral funding criteria

Prior to making any funding decisions, decisionmakers should publish the objective criteria from which to decide whether a group receives funding and at what level. Some examples include but are not limited to:

- Items requested comply with ASI, University, CSU, and applicable state and federal rules and regulations
- Funding request outlines a detailed plan
- Presentation is thorough and clearly explains the budget
- Supporting documents for estimates are included
- Availability of carryover or funds from other sources
- Requests are within the pre-established funding cap per group or per student

Denial Notification

Decisionmakers should promptly issue a written explanation where a funding request is denied or reduced. Explanation should include why the activity does not meet pre-established viewpoint-neutral funding criteria.

Appeal process

If a group feels the denial violates or did not comply with viewpoint-neutral funding guidelines, the group may file an appeal. The deadline to file an appeal is five (5) business days after receipt of the written denial notification. Such appeal must be in writing and state the reason funding was believed to be wrongfully denied or reduced. The appeal shall be limited to the question of whether the application was properly denied pursuant to the viewpoint-neutral funding guidelines or whether viewpoint or opinion played an impermissible role in the denial or reduction.

The CPP Dean of Students ("DOS") or the DOS's designee will review the appeal and issue a written decision as soon as reasonably possible but no later than ten (10) business days of receipt of appeal.

Attachments

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Carol Lee: Chief Financial Officer	Nov 05, 2021



Viewpoint-Neutral Funding Process Form

To ensure all ASI-funded groups adhere to ASI's Viewpoint-Neutral Funding Guidelines, all groups with the function of allocating the ASI mandatory student fee to other groups (e.g., registered councils) must submit this form outlining their funding process along with the ASI Budget Transfer Form to complete the budget allocation process.

Name of funding organization
Explain the funding criteria used to determine allocations or attach a separate written document

Groups shall report all claims of viewpoint discrimination in ASI funding decisions to ASI Financial Services. The ASI Executive Director, or designee, shall investigate the claim and make a determination. All appeals beyond this point shall go to the University's Vice President for Student Affairs, or designee.

We certify that our funding decisions comply with ASI's Viewpoint-Neutral Funding Guidelines.

Signature of Authorized Signer	Name & Title	Date
Signature of Authorized Signer	Name & Title	Date
Signature of Advisor	Name & Title	Date