



GSA Bill #8

A bill adopting the Special Rules for the Special Projects Grants Program

1 **WHEREAS**, Part V – Article III – Section 1 of the GSA Bylaws establish that the Graduate
2 Student Assembly may adopt Special Rules with a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and
3 voting, and

4 **WHEREAS**, the Committee for Professional Development has submitted Special Rules
5 for the Special Projects Grants Program (SPGP), and

6 **WHEREAS**, the GSA Executive Committee has reviewed and approved these Special
7 Rules.

8 **THEREFORE, LET IT BE ENACTED**, that the Special Rules for the SPGP be adopted.

Submitted by	Committee for Professional Development	DATE	09/19/2016
Referred to	Executive Committee	DATE	09/19/2016
Committee action	Approved with amendments	DATE	09/20/2016
Floor action	Adopted by voice vote	DATE	10/04/2016
Presidential Signature	(s) President Correas	DATE	10/05/2016

Association of Students of the University of Nebraska

Graduate Student Assembly

Special Rules - Special Projects Grants Program

Section 1. Definition

The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN) Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) Special Projects Grants Program (SPGP) allocates funds from the GSA budget for activities, events, or projects organized by and benefitting graduate students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Section 2. Objective

Funds from the SPGP shall promote professional development and networking opportunities for graduate students at the University. These funds shall support diverse programming of activities, events, or projects in the various academic, professional, and disciplinary fields represented within the University.

Section 3. Committee for Professional Development

1. The Committee for Professional Development (“the committee”) shall manage the SPGP.
2. The committee shall be composed of no less than six (6) GSA representatives appointed by the Executive Vice President and one (1) Chair as elected by the membership of the Assembly by simple plurality of votes.
3. Committee members shall be disqualified from applying to and receiving any SPGP funds during the academic year they serve on the committee.

Section 4. Grants

1. The amount and number of grants will be determined by the SPGP fund budget. The GSA shall allocate any monies received during the current academic year, as well as rollover funds from previous years, to the SPGP fund.
2. Grants shall not exceed one thousand dollars (\$1000) each. This amount may only be altered by the GSA at the beginning of each academic year.
3. All recipients must acknowledge the funding received from ASUN and GSA in any publications, broadcasts, or advertisements pertaining to the activity, event, or project arising from the grant.
4. Grants shall only be awarded to graduate students and not to recognized student organizations (RSOs).

Section 5. Deadlines

The following periods and deadlines shall apply to the SPGP.

Period	For Events Between	Application Deadline	Notification
Fall	September 1 December 31	July 31	August 15
Spring	January 1 April 30	November 30	December 15
Summer	May 1 August 31	March 31	April 15

Section 6. Eligibility

1. No student or students from a University department or graduate program who has failed to appoint or elect and maintain a Departmental Representative to the GSA during the previous academic year shall be eligible to apply or receive any SPGP funds.
 - a. This requirement shall not be enforced during the first year of the SPGP.
2. Applicants that have requested and received a refund for University Program and Facilities Fee (UPFF) Fund A during the current or previous semester shall not be eligible to apply or receive SPGP funds.
3. Applicants must be enrolled in a graduate degree program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and be in good academic standing.
4. All activities, events, or projects receiving SPGP funds must be open to all graduate and undergraduate students at the University.

Section 7. Application

1. All applications, as established in Annex 1, and application materials will be available year-round on the GSA website and should be filed on or before the application form deadline.
 - a. The committee may establish an electronic or paper filing procedure, but both mechanisms may not be used at the same time.
2. All applications must include:
 - a. A detailed description of the activity, event, or project.
 - b. An event timeline or agenda.
 - c. A budget that outlines estimated expenses and all other sources of revenue.
 - d. An endorsement of the activity, event, or project from a graduate faculty member in the department or graduate program where it will be held.
 - e. An event planning and registration (EPR) form as required by Student Involvement.

Section 8. Evaluation

1. Applications will be blindly reviewed by a subcommittee composed of three (3) committee members, which will be designated at the beginning of each application period by the committee chair.
 - a. Committee members may not review applications originating from their own department or graduate program.
 - b. An alternate subcommittee member will join the subcommittee to review an application if that application came from a subcommittee member's department or program.
2. The subcommittee shall review all the applications in a given application period to ensure consistency among the evaluations.
3. If a fund request exceeds two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250), the subcommittee may request additional supporting materials.
4. Special projects grant applications shall be evaluated on a one hundred twenty (120) point scale with each individual member of the subcommittee granting up to forty (40) points each, in accordance to the rubric in Annex 2.
5. The committee chair shall refer all applications to the subcommittee which shall return completed evaluation rubrics to the committee chair no later than ten (10) calendar days after receiving them.
 - a. If any subcommittee member fails to return their completed evaluation rubrics within the allotted time, a new subcommittee member may be appointed, with the stipulation that the evaluation rubrics must be returned in no more than five (5) calendar days.

Section 9. Ranking, Awarding, and Notification

1. The committee chair shall consider the final score of all applications in the ranking process, with the highest ranked application receiving the requested funds, and proceeding downwards until all monies have been allocated.
2. Provided two or more applications are tied for the last funds to be allocated the committee shall determine the recipient by a simple majority vote, with the committee chair breaking any ties.
3. Recipients shall be notified electronically via email on or before the notification deadline, and shall be required to formally accept or decline the grant within five (5) calendar days.
4. If a recipient declines a grant, or is unable to pursue the activity, event, or project, they must notify the committee within five (5) calendar days. The committee may re-grant the funds for that period to the next qualifying applicant.
5. Any grants that are not formally accepted or are declined by the recipient within five (5) calendar days will be forfeited and shall be made available to the next suitable applicant from the applicant pool.
 - a. Individuals who do not formally accept the funds within five (5) calendar days will be contacted to inform them that their awarded funds have been forfeited.

Section 10. Disbursement and Expense Reports

1. The subcommittee responsible for an application period shall also be responsible for following the awards through to completion by filing final expense reports and reimbursement forms with ASUN.
 - a. The subcommittee shall verify that all claimed expenses comply with University, ASUN, GSA, and SPGP regulations, and verify that no expense has been claimed more than once.
2. Approved and accepted grants shall be used to reimburse individuals for the expenses incurred in carrying out the activity, event, or project.
 - a. Grant recipients shall work through ASUN for event planning purposes to comply with all University regulations.
 - b. Costs may be directly billed to the ASUN office with an invoice, contract, or through a University account; costs that cannot be directly billed will be processed only as a reimbursement with appropriate documentation.
3. An expense report shall be submitted to the committee no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the conclusion of the activity, event, or program.
 - a. Expense reports will include itemized expenditures, as well as the associated receipts.
 - b. Any SPGP funds awarded but not spent will be returned to the SPGP fund.
4. The subcommittee shall have thirty (30) calendar days to process the recipient's expense report.
5. The subcommittee shall report to the Assembly after all expenses have been verified and approved, and all remaining funds have been reallocated to the SPGP Fund.
6. Special provisions shall be taken if the activity, event, or project occurs close to the end of the fiscal year, so that the granted monies are disbursed from the appropriate budget.

Section 11. SPGP Fund Regulations

1. Funds may only be used as approved by University policies and as set forth by the committee.
2. The recipient will only receive funds to cover the exact expenditures, and only up to the amount awarded.
3. Special Projects Grant funds may not be used to fund the following:
 - a. Anything found in violation of law and/or University rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
 - b. Personal expenses.
 - c. Personal travel.
 - d. Items and expenses not included in the original application.
 - e. Purchase of beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages.
 - f. Plaques, prizes, scholarships, awards, trophies or medals, or other related gift items.
 - g. Payments to invest in or provide capital for any business or commercial enterprise, or any activity intended to generate profit.
 - h. Telephone, electronic facsimile, Internet, cable or communication device charges.
 - i. Prohibited purchases include:
 - i. Firearms, weapons, or ammunition.
 - ii. Tobacco or tobacco related products.

- iii. Illegal or illicit substances or devices.
 - iv. Controlled substances
 - v. Pornography or other products that are demeaning or degrading to people.
 - j. Any court actions.
 - k. Costs or litigation against the University, of its employees in fulfillment of their duties, or against its students.
 - l. Association dues.
 - m. Strictly social events.
 - n. Departmental or graduate program publicity, brochures, or operating expenses.
 - o. Food, supplies, or any other items required for regular departmental or organizational meetings.
 - p. Services already provided by the University, ASUN, or GSA.
 - q. Recurring events or activities.
4. Any funds that are allocated by the GSA budget but not awarded during the given application period shall roll-over to the following application period. Any funds that are awarded but are refunded by the award recipient to the committee shall roll over to the following application period.
 5. Funds not allocated during the academic year shall roll over to the SPGP the following year with the authorization of the GSA.
 6. No SPGP funds may be used for any other purpose than those set in the application, and no grant may be awarded any later than ten (10) calendar days past the notification deadline.

Section 12. Compliance

1. It is the responsibility of all graduate students seeking SPGP funds to read and understand the policies and procedures of the University, the Graduate School, ASUN, and GSA. Individuals that receive SPGP funding must be in compliance with all policies and procedures at all times. Individuals that are found to be in violation of any policy of the University, the Graduate School, ASUN, GSA, and/or SPGP must reimburse any and all funds they received during the time they were in violation of these policies. Furthermore, individuals that attempt to defraud or mislead the University, the Graduate School, ASUN, GSA, and/or SPGP will be subject to disciplinary review, and individuals may be held individually responsible and criminally liable for any funds received illegally or under false pretenses.
2. Any applicant may request the committee permission to review their application and evaluation materials, but at all times the confidentiality of the reviewers shall be maintained.

Approved by the Graduate Student Assembly on October 4, 2016

Annex 1. SPGP Application

Primary applicant information

Name	_____	NU ID	_____
Email	_____	Phone	_____
Department	_____	Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Masters

Secondary applicant(s) information

Name	_____	NU ID	_____
Name	_____	NU ID	_____
Name	_____	NU ID	_____
Name	_____	NU ID	_____

Activity, event, or project information

Name: _____

Location: _____

Date: _____

Please attach:

1. A detailed description of the activity, event, or project
2. A timeline or agenda
3. A budget that outlines estimated expenses and all other sources of funding secured or requested for the project.
4. An event planning and registration (EPR) form as required by Student Involvement

Budget and funding information

Funds requested: \$ _____

1. Have you (primary applicant and/or secondary applicants) applied for a GSA special project grant in the past? (circle one) Yes/No
2. Have you (primary applicant and/or secondary applicants) been granted a GSA special project grant in the past? (circle one) Yes/No
3. If you are awarded the funds, will you be requesting direct billing for any of your costs? (Only services that are provided by a University-affiliated department, that require a contract, or that can be invoiced may be direct billed.) Yes/No
 - a. If yes, please indicate which expenses you wish to bill directly to ASUN.

Primary applicant

I certify that I have read and agree to the current rules and directions for the Special Projects Grant Program (SPGP) and certify that all information I have provided in this application is accurate. I further grant permission to the GSA Committee for Professional Development and the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska to verify my status as a graduate student in good standing at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and my eligibility for the special projects grant competition. I further certify that, to the best of my knowledge, I have not received a UPFF Fund A refund.

Signature _____

Date _____

Graduate faculty member

I certify that I have read this special projects grant application, including the budget, that the applicant is a graduate student in my department and at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in good standing, that all information in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge, the budget is realistic, and this student and/or students are likely to organize the aforementioned activity, event, or project.

Signature _____

Date _____

Annex 2. SPGP Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Points		
	1-3	4-6	7-10
<p>Impact Priority will be given to projects that will benefit the largest number of graduate students.</p>	Project benefits a small number of graduate students (a subset within a department).	Project benefits a moderate number of graduate students (all those in a department).	Project benefits many graduate students (more than a single department).
<p>Need for project Priority will be given to projects that explicitly highlight that the project is fulfilling an unmet need of graduate students.</p>	A similar service is available through Graduate Studies or some other office on campus.	Applicant makes a weak case for how the project is meeting an unmet need for graduate students.	Applicant makes a strong case for how the project is meeting an unmet need for graduate students.
<p>Financial need Priority will be given to projects that have secured matching funds and still have a need for additional funds.</p>	No matching funds were sought.	Matching funds were requested and may or may not be secured.	Matching funds were requested and are secured.
<p>Preparation Priority will be given to projects that are well-organized and have clear leadership to ensure a positive outcome of the project.</p>	Poor project planning and unlikely that the project will succeed.	Project planning could be improved but is likely to succeed.	Project is well thought-out and planned appropriately and has a high chance of success.