

#### **D. Year-End Reconciliation**

1. The Union fiscal year ends on June 30. All bills incurred by clubs and or organizations must be submitted by June 1 to be accounted for in the current budget year and to avoid running the risk of being charged against the next year's account. Following June 30, the Finance Coordinator and the SARP will review each club and organization budget to determine their actual performance throughout the prior fiscal year. In addition to the policies stated above, the following guidelines will be used at this time, including the incentive and budget savings to reward a job well done.
2. It is the responsibility of each club to verify its financial status no later than October 15 of each year, justify whether it deserves a budget savings or incentive income award, and rebudget its current budget due to **over-expenditure** if necessary.

#### **E. Outstanding Commitments**

1. Upon notice to the Union thereof, unpaid legal financial commitments or responsibilities for services incurred prior to June 30 will be paid from Union reserves. The club or organization account responsible for the expense will be adjusted to reflect the actual year-end balance, and the club will be responsible to fulfill all its obligations as stated heretofore in this document, including rebudgeting its current budget to take care of the expense.

#### **F. Incentive Income and Budget Savings**

1. Per the definitions below, the E-Board may award incentive income and/or budget savings to clubs based on the Union's and the clubs' prior year's budget performance. Because Rensselaer Union budget balancing is a continuous process and because income sources vary, the Union Budget may need to be adjusted at any time. Earned incentive income and budget savings will be awarded to clubs if the E-Board is able to absorb the cost of that award and still balance its budget.
2. The purpose of Incentive Income is to encourage and reward those clubs which raise additional income in the course of carrying out their programs. Incentive Income will not have the effect of diminishing or penalizing club budgets in the next fiscal year. Incentive Income (income exceeding budgeted income line) will be used to balance off over expenditures. After that, any unused Incentive Income

may be carried over to the next year and must be spent in that year unless it is designated as an approved long term saving plan.

- a. Incentive Income can be used for most current approved programs. The club may choose to write an E-Board Proposal to see if the E-Board will approve the purchase with the club's incentive income. The same criteria for approval used for reallocations or requests from contingencies and new programs apply to the use of incentive income.
  - b. In the next fiscal year, the club may spend a maximum of 50% or \$200 of the incentive income, whichever is less, toward the purchase of food for a club-sponsored event. It must write a memorandum to the club's E-Board representative within ten business days before the date of this expenditure. This memorandum must indicate how much money will be spent, how the money will be spent, and how many people it will directly benefit. It will be filed in the club's account file in the *Union Administration and Student Activities Office*.
3. The purpose of Budget Savings is to reward those clubs that are able to save money in the course of carrying out their programs. Budget Savings is contingent upon the completion of a club's approved programs; in no event will clubs be rewarded if they do not conduct their budgeted programs. Fifty percent of the unused subsidy will be considered as Budget Savings and will be carried over to the next budget year, but can only be used after a formal program proposal has been approved according to the proposal policy. Budget Savings will not have the effect of diminishing or penalizing club budgets in the next fiscal year. It must be used in the next fiscal year unless it is designated to help finance a capital expense.

Rensselaer Union  
Executive Board

Motion # 1

Date: 9/21/17

I move that the Rensselaer Union Executive Board allocate \$1158 from  
~~the Blue Community Center~~ club  
contingencies for buses and a DJ  
at ~~the~~ <sup>BSA's</sup> 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary celebration.

So moved by:

Raniv Zkheh

Signature

Raniv Zkheh

Printed Name

Seconded by:

Ezra Tebor

Signature

Ezra Tebor

Printed Name

For    Against    Abstaining

Motion: Passes/Fails

12 - 1 - 2

12 - 1 - 2

Rensselaer Union  
*Executive Board*

Motion # 2

Date: 21 Sept 2017

I move that the Rensselaer Union Executive Board set reallocate \$175  
from contingencies to Goal F, Program  
3: Reception Fund of the Black  
Students Alliance Budget.

So moved by:

Erica A Lane  
Signature

Erica A Lane  
Printed Name

Seconded by:

Anissa N. Choinière  
Signature

Anissa N. Choinière  
Printed Name

For    Against    Abstaining

15 - 0 - 0

Motion: Passes/Fails

Rensselaer Union  
*Executive Board*

Motion # 3

Date: 9/2/17

I move that the Rensselaer Union Executive Board establish the  
Human Resources Interview Committee  
as an ad-hoc joint committee of the  
Executive Board and the Student Senate.

So moved by:

Rasika Ekharior  
Signature

Rasika Ekharior  
Printed Name

Seconded by:

Erica A Lane  
Signature

Erica A Lane  
Printed Name

For    Against    Abstaining

13 - 1 - 3

Motion: Passes/Fails

Rensselaer Union  
Executive Board

Motion # 4

Date: 9/21/17

Union Club and Organ-  
ization Policies and

I move that the Rensselaer Union Executive Board Approve the Procedural Guidelines  
Budgeting Guidelines as attached. pending revisions GA  
as approved by the Executive Board. ANC

So moved by:

Anissa N. Choinière  
Signature

Anissa Choinière  
Printed Name

Seconded by:

Erica A Lane  
Signature

Erica A Lane  
Printed Name

For Against Abstaining

16 - 0 - 1

Motion: Passes Fails

Rensselaer Union  
*Executive Board*

Motion #     

Date:           

I move that the Rensselaer Union Executive Board postpone the

Increases of the reception fund and lodging fund  
from the <sup>Union Club and Organization Policies and Guidelines</sup> ~~Procedural Budgeting Guidelines~~ until <sup>5/1</sup> ~~ANC~~  
FY 2019.

So moved by:

Anissa N. Choinière  
Signature

Anissa N. Choinière  
Printed Name

Seconded by:

Erica A Lane  
Signature

Erica A Lane  
Printed Name

For    Against    Abstaining

Motion: **Passes/Fails**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This revised *Budget Policy and Procedures* approved on 09/21/17 has been put in place by the Union Policies Committee according to the *Rensselaer Union Constitution* and the *Executive Board Bylaws* and in accordance with all the terms approved by the Rensselaer Union Executive Board (E-Board) in the *Club Starter Constitution* on 12/3/15. All policies are reviewed every two years by the Policies Committee and presented to the E-Board. This document will serve as the official guidelines for all Rensselaer Union-funded activities and will be used when reviewing budget proposals and approvals, when monitoring appropriated funds, and when approving programs for all Union Recognized Clubs. This document will go into effect immediately for Fiscal Year 2018. It will be used in the development and approval of all proposed and final budgets for future fiscal years. Addendum(s) may be added to these policies with majority approval of the E-Board. Union clubs and organizations will be notified immediately of such change(s).

The Union E-Board must balance the Rensselaer Union Budget and must fairly weigh all requests it receives to ensure that the student activity fee and its other income sources are equitably distributed. Club budgets are an expense line under the Rensselaer Union Budget and Rensselaer Union Budget balancing is a continuous process that is regularly evaluated for the E-Board. Because income sources vary, both the Union Budget and/or club budgets may need to be adjusted during the fiscal year. No account is to exceed budget; if a club's account is at or near budget, it may be frozen by the E-Board to prevent further expenditure.

Every Union Recognized Club or organization must be approved for funding by the E-Board before the club or organization is entitled to submit an annual budget request for the following year. The E-Board must approve the purpose and constitution of the club before the club can apply for funding. Approval for funding, or the fact that a club or organization has received funding in the past for any specific program, does not guarantee that a program will continue to receive Union funding. The Union will not subsidize any religious or political organization or any group which claims affiliation with such an organization, nor will it fund any organization that endorses a particular political or religious viewpoint.

The *Rensselaer Union Budget Policy and Procedures* is a "line-item" budget policy, meaning that each line (sub-account) will be considered a budget within itself. Accordingly, re-allocation of funds between sub-accounts will need prior authorized approval.

"Club subsidy" is defined as expenses minus income; the actual subsidy will change over the course of the year for each club relative to the income it raises and the expenses it incurs. Clubs should adjust their programming accordingly over the course of the year so that they do not go over their original budget. In no event, except with prior E-Board approval, will the overall club subsidy be in excess of what is granted to the club through the annual budget approval process.

Every November, each Union Funded Club or organization must project and propose a budget for their activities for the next fiscal year (i.e., July 1–June 30) by specifically stating what their expenses and income are for each integral part of their programs. Each club or organization must research prices for all expenses for the upcoming budget, in preparation for submitting an accurate budget. Funds may be spent and/or collected only as stated in the approved budget and the *Rensselaer Union Budget Policy and Procedures*, by June 1 in the approved budget year. Incentive income and/or penalties will be discussed in Section VII. Clubs and their officers are accountable for the implementation of these policies and their budgets. The policies will be distributed to all officers who are authorized by the club to make expenditures. Upon being elected and by submitting an officer list, all officers agree to accept ownership of these policies and of the responsibility to implement them with respect to their budget.

The *Rensselaer Union Budget Policy and Procedures* are the generally accepted policies for dealing with all club and organization related budget issues. In unusual circumstances, the E-Board, by simple majority vote, may choose to deal with all clubs in another way, on a case-by-case basis.

## **II. STUDENT ACTIVITIES RESOURCES TO HELP CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

### **A. E-Board Representatives**

The President of the Union assigns an E-Board Representative to each Funded Club. E-Board Representatives are available to help their clubs with issues relating to their budgets and programs, and are the official liaison of the club to the E-Board throughout the fiscal year including throughout the budgeting process. E-Board Representatives have the responsibility of representing each of their clubs' interests to the E-Board, while at the same time representing the interests of all the students in the Union.

### **B. Director of the Union**

The *Rensselaer Union Constitution* provides for a Director of the Union whose "duties shall include the administration of Union activities and moneys in accordance with the policies of the Rensselaer Board of Trustees, the *Rensselaer Union Constitution*, its bylaws, and further legislation of the Executive Board."

### **C. Student Activities Resource Person**

The E-Board has budgeted for other personnel to assist in the operation of the Union in various capacities. In the Union Administration and Student Activities Office these employees are the Student Activities Resource Persons (SARP). In relation to clubs and organizations, some SARPs provide direct services needed to conduct all clubs' day-to-day business inside and outside of the Union. Others are available as resources for information relating to club activities. Each Funded Club is assigned a specific SARP who is

knowledgeable about the issues relating to the club's specific activities. Signatures by SARPs on documents as required by the *Rensselaer Union Budget and Policy Procedures* and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute indicate only that the issue in question is consistent with said policy and do not endorse a particular program unless specifically stated. SARPs are available to provide information and work with all clubs and organizations on the matters including, but not limited to, the items set forth below.

**1. Membership**

- Membership types: Regular, Voting, Associate, and Volunteer
- Conducting effective meetings for recruitment and retention
- Using teams and committees effectively
- Leadership development and advising

**2. Club Operations**

- Requirements for Officer Lists
- Requirements for Membership Lists
- Utilizing the Activities Fair
- Budget responsibilities
- How to complete Union forms
- Deadlines required of Union clubs

**3. Finance**

- The *Rensselaer Union Budget and Policy Procedures* and what the Union will budget for programs
- Individual club budgets and approved programs
- How to use budgets effectively
- Income, subsidy and expense, and what they mean to clubs
- The Budget and Expense Statements (B&Es) - club monthly statements
- B&E reconciliation, i.e., balancing club accounts
- E-Board Proposals, re-allocations, new programs and contingency requests
- Contract negotiation strategies
- Fundraising strategies

**4. Programming**

- Idea development for potential programs
- Ideas and planning for activities and events
- Sponsoring events with other clubs
- Risk assessment: planning a safe program
- Logistics for optimizing approved programs
- Comprehensive planning for the future

**5. Marketing**

- Advertising for recruitment of new members or promotion of activities
- Advertising events for more successful attendance

- The Marketing, Advertising, and Publicity Committee of the E-Board is available for consultation on marketing projects
- 6. **Legal Services for Student Organizations and Liability and Risk Assessment**
  - Consultation together with the Rensselaer attorney and Rensselaer’s Risk Management staff

### III. TYPES OF CLUBS AND THEIR PRIVILEGES AND OBLIGATIONS

#### A. Types of Clubs and Organizations

As stated in the *Rensselaer Union Constitution*: “The purpose of this Union shall be to unite all its members in a commitment to the ideals for which Rensselaer stands, to expand the extracurricular life at Rensselaer, to coordinate all student organizations, to act as a medium through which student opinion may be expressed, and to work with all other members of the Rensselaer community to encourage student initiative and to lead student action in all interests which will serve the welfare and betterment of Rensselaer.”

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute may assume liability for all activities of the Institute. Rensselaer and the Executive Board of the Union must determine in its view whether or not the scope of any proposed club or specific club program presents an abnormal risk to students, to the Union as a whole, to the Institute, or to the Rensselaer Community at large. It may need to consult recognized experts in determining the level of risk. Because of its responsibility to the Institute, Union policy mandates that all activities of Union Recognized Clubs be approved in advance. Written approval must be obtained prior to any Union Recognized Club activity, through either an approved budget or an E-Board Proposal for a new program, regardless of whether or not the activity is subsidized by the Union so that the members will be covered in the event of an accident related to the activity. The Institute will not cover liability resulting from an unapproved program and the student members of the club responsible for the activity will be held personally liable.

The E-Board, as the budgeting group of the Union, categorizes all student clubs and organizations as they relate to the Rensselaer Union. There are five different types of Union clubs and organizations and several other categories that the Rensselaer Union uses to coordinate student clubs and organizations. Each of these categories are listed below:

#### 1. **Union Recognized Clubs**

Union Recognized Clubs are those clubs that meet the *Criteria for Club Approval* and have a Union approved purpose and constitution. A Union Recognized Club may or may not be a Union Funded Club; in any event, Union Recognized Clubs receive administrative support from the Union and at a minimum must conform to general Institute policy.

- All Class Councils and the Graduate Council are considered Union Recognized Clubs. These organizations, however, are funded through class dues and aside from issues relating to liability, do not have to conform to the *Rensselaer Union Budget Policy and Procedures*. They must have copies of their current constitutions on file at the Union and are encouraged to have a list of current officers on file in the Administration Office at all times.

**a) Union Funded Clubs**

Union Funded Clubs are those clubs that are recognized and have been given a subsidy by the E-Board. A Funded club holds programs for which the expenses exceed the income, and thus requires additional funds, or a budget, to maintain its operations. The budget is a “starter budget”, an “annual budget”, or an “interim budget”.

1. An “annual budget” is provided for all Union Funded Clubs as per the guidelines set forth in the *Union Budget Policies and Procedures* document.
2. A “stop-gap budget” may be provided for any Union Provisionally Funded Club that is in the process of completing the *Rensselaer Union New Club Funding Policy*. This budget is to provide money to the club while they are waiting to submit a budget proposal during normal budgeting times, and before the fiscal year where their proposed budget would go into effect. The club must present a budget proposal for review. The Policies Committee will review the club’s budget request and will make a recommendation to the E-Board on the level of approval.

**b) Provisionally Funded Clubs**

Provisionally Funded Clubs are those clubs that are in the process of completing the *Rensselaer Union New Club Funding Policy* and are working towards becoming Fully Funded Clubs. A Provisionally Funded Club will be given a provisional budget to hold programs as a trial to prove that the club can effectively utilize a budget from the Rensselaer Union and is truly in need of one. The Union Starter Budget that has been granted to the club will come from the Contingencies fund of the E-Board to subsidize club activities. Provisionally Funded Clubs must meet all of the requirements detailed in the *Rensselaer Union New Club Funding Policy* in order to become a Fully Funded Club. The status of a Provisionally Funded Club will be changed to that of a Fully Funded Club once that club enters the first fiscal year for which they are receiving a subsidized budget that was submitted to the E-Board during the Board’s normal budgeting process.

1. A “starter budget” is provided to Rensselaer Union Provisionally Funded Clubs until they are able to submit a budget proposal as part of the regular budgeting review process in November for the next fiscal year. The “starter budget” is given to each funded club to advertise their meetings and to provide for a reception for new members. The E-Board will provide starter budgets at a rate of no more than \$200 nominally, though the final amount will be given at the E-Board’s discretion. If the club would like to conduct an additional program, the club must submit an E-Board Proposal for approval of that program.

## **2. Union Affiliated Organizations**

Union Affiliated Organizations are those student organizations that are recognized by the University by virtue of their association with a department or their approval by the Dean of Students Office (such as an officially recognized fraternity or sorority). An Affiliated group may be comprised of RPI students, faculty, or members of the surrounding community and must have a purpose aligned with the values of Rensselaer. An approved Affiliated group cannot apply for funding but still receives certain resources from the Rensselaer Union.

## **3. Newly Forming Union Clubs**

Newly Forming Union Clubs are those clubs who have started the process of becoming a Union Recognized Club. First, a new club must register by filling out the New Club Registration form and create a starter constitution. They must meet with the Assistant Director of Student Activities and be registered with the Union Administration Office, must meet the *Criteria for Club Approval*, and may be at any stage of the process of trying to get recognition. They must abide by the guidelines and hold only those privileges as set forth in the *Club Affiliation/Recognition Procedure*. The club will undergo an interview conducted by the Policies Committee with recorded minutes and attendance from three general body meetings and a completed *New Club Evaluation* form. The Policies Committee will submit a recommendation to the E-Board, who will make the final determination by vote on recognition or affiliation. Each forming club will only have one year from the original date of submission to become Union Recognized; in the event recognition has not occurred within this timeframe, the forming club may appeal to the E-Board for an extension of time to complete the process.

## **4. Provisional Status Clubs**

It is important to note that there is one more classification for clubs. Clubs that have not been officially recognized by the Union, have had three meetings, but are not ready to come before the Policies Committee and apply for Affiliation/Recognition may apply for Provisional Status. This status allows a club to continue to reserve rooms within the



Rensselaer Union and continue to garner interest in their club before officially completing the club recognition process.

**B. Privileges of Union Clubs and Organizations**

The chart below summarizes the basic privileges of the different categories of Union clubs

<b>Type of Club or Organization</b>	<b>Meeting Room Space</b>	<b>Listing in Union Publications</b>	<b>Notification of/ Participation in Union Programs</b>	<b>Mailbox, Union Web Space and Email Lists</b>	<b>Union Budget</b>
<b>Not a Union Club</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Club with Provisional Status</b>	Yes	No	No	No	No
<b>Union Unfunded Club</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Union Funded Club</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Provisionally Funded Clubs</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, as “starter budget” only
<b>Newly Forming Union Clubs</b>	Yes	Yes, as “forming”	Yes	Yes, as “forming”	No
<b>Affiliated Club or Organization</b>	Yes	Yes, where appropriate	Yes, where appropriate	Yes, where appropriate	No

**C. Accountability**

All Rensselaer Union Recognized Clubs are accountable to the Rensselaer student body by virtue of the rights and privileges afforded them through the recognition process. Additionally, all Rensselaer Union Funded Clubs and organizations are held responsible for using Student Activity Fees to conduct their approved programs. The E-Board has established the following requirements for all Union Funded Clubs and organizations (in addition to working within their approved budgets) in order to retain their funding:

1. Participate in the Activities Fair and Financial Workshops
2. Turn in Club Officer and Membership Lists
3. Submit an Annual Budget

4. Adhere to the rules of the Rensselaer Union and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

All clubs will be notified at least two weeks in advance of the precise dates for E-Board required activities, either in their club mailboxes by email or via postings on the Union web page. A description of each of these activities follows along with their approximate attendance or submission dates, and penalties that may be assessed to clubs or organizations due to non-compliance. A club may choose to fundraise to make up deficits caused by penalties (see Article IV Section A).

**A. Activities Fair (Fall – First week of the Academic Year)**

1. The Activities Fair showcases of all Union Recognized Clubs and organizations, by providing an opportunity for clubs to represent their programs and recruit new members. All Union Funded Clubs are required to participate. Union Recognized Clubs and organizations are invited and encouraged to participate. Affiliated clubs may participate only if space allows. A group of people or a club that is not recognized by the Union, or whose purpose has not been accepted by the E-Board, will not be permitted to participate in the Activities Fair.
2. For Union Funded Clubs, the penalty for missing the Activities Fair or failure to provide a written request to be excused from the Activities Fair is a charge against the club's account in an amount equal to 10% of subsidy or 5% of expenses, whichever is greater. The budget is then frozen to prevent its use by the club. Within two weeks of written notification of failure to comply, a club representative must set up a table outside the McNeil Room or another mutually agreed-upon location for three days during lunch, for a duration of two hours each day, for club information/recruitment purposes. In the event that the club is unable to attend the Activities Fair, it must make a request in writing to its SARP to be excused, at least one week in advance of the fair; upon written approval by the SARP the club will be excused but must set up a table as per the terms stated in this paragraph, above.

**B. Financial Workshop (Fall – Before the end of September)**

1. The Financial Workshop is the mechanism used by the Union Administration and Student Activities Office and the E-Board to convey information relating to the Rensselaer Union Budget and Policy Procedures to all Union Funded Clubs. Each Union Funded Club must send its treasurer and/or president to this workshop. A club that cannot make the workshop for appropriate reasons can request a one-on-one meeting with their SARP three days after the workshop.
2. The penalties for not complying will be followed in stages. Clubs will be notified in writing.
3. The first penalty will result in financial assets being frozen—no transactions will occur until the club complies with policies.
4. The second penalty will occur after two weeks of non-compliance and may result in a loss of 5% of the funded subsidy or 2.5% of expenses whichever is greater.

5. After 3 weeks of non-compliance, the club will be required to submit an explanation in writing and a request for reinstatement of funding to the E-Board.

### **C. Officer Lists**

1. Current Officer Lists are required at three times during the year for all Union Funded Clubs (Fall – second Monday following the Activities Fair | Spring – second Monday of the semester | Summer Contacts – second week of Summer). It is recommended that all Union Recognized Clubs also submit their Officer Lists. The lists are necessary so that accurate communication can be made to the clubs and so that the Union will know who is responsible for acting on behalf of the club, as set forth by the *Rensselaer Union Budget and Policy Procedures*. Upon being elected and by submitting an Officer List, all officers agree to accept ownership of these policies and of the responsibility to implement them with respect to their budget.
2. The penalties for not complying will be followed in stages. Clubs will be notified in writing.
3. The first penalty will result in financial assets being frozen—no transactions will occur until the club complies with policies.
4. The second penalty will occur after 2 weeks of non-compliance and may result in a loss of 5% of the funded subsidy or 2.5% of expenses whichever is greater.
5. After 3 weeks of non-compliance, the club will be required to submit an explanation in writing and a request for reinstatement of funding to the E-Board.

### **D. Membership Lists**

1. Membership Lists are required three times during the academic year for all Union Funded Clubs (Fall – Second Friday in October | Spring – second Monday in February | Summer – second week of Summer Session). It is recommended that all Union Recognized Clubs also submit their Membership Lists. They are necessary to insure that Student Activity Fees are being spent on students in accordance with approved budgets. For liability purposes, they also act as an approved roster of students participating in Union Recognized Club activities.
2. The penalties for not complying will be followed in stages. Clubs will be notified in writing.
3. The first penalty will result in financial assets being frozen—no transactions will occur until the club complies with policies.
4. The second penalty will occur after 2 weeks of non-compliance and may result in a loss of 5% of the funded subsidy or 2.5% of expenses whichever is greater.
5. After 3 weeks of non-compliance, the club will be required to submit an explanation in writing and a request for reinstatement of funding to the E-Board.

**E. Budget Workshops (Mid-Fall)**

1. Budget Workshops are held by the SARP to help students as they begin to prepare their budgets for the next fiscal year. Budget filing procedures and policy changes are the focus of these workshops. Union systems administrators will be available to help students learn how to electronically input their budgets in the format approved by the Union.
2. Attendance at the Budget Workshops is optional though recommended. No penalties are assessed for failure to attend the Budget Workshops.

**F. Preliminary Budget (Date set by first month of Fall Semester)**

1. Preliminary Budgets are “drafts” in preparation for submitting the final budget. They should be submitted in the Budget Management System on CMS so that they can be reviewed by the E-Board Representative and SARP for comment prior to the club’s submission of its final budget.
2. No penalties are assessed for failure to submit a preliminary budget. However, if a club does not submit a Preliminary Budget, it will be reminded in writing of the submission date for final budgets.

**G. Final Budget (Date set by first month of Fall Semester)**

1. Final Budgets are those submitted by Union Funded Clubs to the E-Board for approval for the next fiscal year. An E-Board Budget Committee reviews them for approval during December. Final Budgets must be in accordance with the budget template in order to be accepted for review and approval by the E-Board. The E-Board will approve budgets consistent with the *Rensselaer Union Budgeting Guidelines* and will release the approved budgets to the club immediately. Clubs will have the opportunity to make appeals on the decisions of the E-Board within 24 hours. Generally, appeals are reviewed the day after appeals are submitted. All club budget decisions of the E-Board following appeals are considered final, except as provided for in Article V of the *Rensselaer Union Budget and Policy Procedures*.
2. The timeline for budget approval, appeals and reviews are adjusted to comply with the Institute budgeting cycle. The above may change as necessary.
3. The penalty for failure to file a final budget, or failure to file on time is that the budget that is ultimately submitted may be approved by the E-Board at a level no greater than 75% of the previous year’s budget (Interim Budget).

**H. Financial Close Out (Spring – Tuesday following Commencement)**

1. At the end of the fiscal year in June, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute requires that the Union closeout its financial books. The E-Board requires that the Director of the Union and the Business Administrator conduct the financial closeout for all Union clubs and organizations. SARP assist in this process. All clubs and

organizations should reconcile their club accounts prior to this date, as per Article V Section B. Results of the financial closeout will be distributed to clubs as soon as they are available.

2. All bills submitted after June 1 run the risk of being charged against the club's next year budget. Any deficit remaining at the end of the fiscal year will also be charged to the club's next year budget. No additional penalty will be assessed by the Union.

#### **I. Obligations of Club Officers**

1. All club officers must be in Good Academic Standing (have a GPA of above a 2.0) to be eligible for the position. This rule will be monitored by the Administrative Staff.
2. Failure to adhere to this policy may lead to the removal of an officer.

#### **J. Social Media Policy**

1. Any Rensselaer Union Club or Organization must adhere to the following guidelines:
  - a) Any posts must be in the "spirit of Rensselaer" and may not negatively reflect upon the Union or the Organization.
  - b) Social Media may not be used to promote products, services, or other pages not associated with RPI or the Rensselaer Union.
  - c) No posts may contain explicit material.
2. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in legal action pursued by the Union.

### **IV. UNION CLUB AND ORGANIZATION AFFILIATION AND PARTICIPATION**

#### **A. Definition of Membership**

Union clubs and organizations should refer to the *Club Starter Constitution* and policies dated 12/3/16 for all definitions on membership affiliations.

#### **B. Membership for the Rensselaer Union**

Membership in a Union club or organization does not qualify an individual to be a member of the Union. According to Article II of the *Rensselaer Union Constitution*, only currently registered students who have paid an activity fee shall constitute the membership of the Union. Article IX, Section 2 states that only members of the Union at the time of elections shall have the right to vote. Spouses of currently registered RPI students who have paid an activity fee may be eligible to be Voting Members within a club or organization, but they are not considered members of the Union and may not participate in Student Government

elections. No activity fee in addition to the “activity fee” paid by RPI student members shall be charged.

### **C. Volunteer Member**

The *Rensselaer Union Constitution* defines volunteer members as “Those who are not eligible to be Regular or Associate Members because they are not affiliated with the Rensselaer Union or Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, but whose talents, skills, or knowledge will assist the organization in fulfilling its purpose.” The volunteer or non-affiliated membership of an organization should not equal more than 5% of the total membership without E-Board approval. Community members may not have voting rights, may not hold any officer position, control access to facilities or computer accounts, and may not have direct access to any Rensselaer Union funds unless specific approval has been given by the E-Board.

### **D. Expenses Related to the Participation of People Who Are Not RPI Students**

The participation of people who are not RPI students in a club may be valid if the person adds value to the club through their participation. The determination of added value is initially that of the club and ultimately that of the E-Board. If there are direct expenses for travel, uniforms, or other expenses deemed necessary for an individual’s participation that would not otherwise be incurred by the club, the expenses may not be subsidized by the Student Activity Fee or other income budgeted by the E-Board. Those not affiliated with RPI as students or their spouse or legal dependent, faculty, staff, alumni, or students of Hudson-Mohawk Consortium schools currently enrolled in courses at Rensselaer may not comprise more than 5% of the membership of any Rensselaer Union club without specific approval of the E-Board.

## **V. BUDGETING AND PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**

### **A. Budgeted Income, Dues, and Fundraising**

#### **1. Budget Income**

- a. The Union does not subsidize certain program expenses. Unsubsidized expenses must have an accompanying income line in the budget to cover this difference. This income can be generated from dues, fees for services, fundraising, or by personal contribution.
- b. All club income (cash, checks, student charges) must be deposited in the Union Administration and Student Activities Office within one business day of collection. If a check bounces, the club will be charged \$25.
- c. Clubs authorized to charge fees for their services must adhere to rates set by the E-Board.

- a. Estimated earned income must be based off of actual earned income over the previous two years.

**2. Dues**

- a. Clubs that are required to collect dues must collect at least the dollar amount per person in dues set by the E-Board during the budget process.
- b. Clubs that collect dues shall collect 50% more from members who do not pay an activity fee. This does not apply to legal dependents of activity-fee-paying persons.
- c. Clubs that hire a coach must have dues that cover 50% of the coach's salary.

**3. Fundraising**

- a. Clubs may desire to fundraise income to meet their obligations for programs. The E-Board must approve all fundraising initiatives as programs in advance during normal budgeting procedures based on if it is consistent with Rensselaer community standards, violates any known local, state and national laws, and it is in the "spirit of Rensselaer." Any unauthorized fundraising may be referred to the Judicial Board.
- b. In the event a club would like to conduct additional fundraising, the club should submit an E-Board Proposal for approval, stating why and how they intend to raise the money, and how much money they intend to raise. Most fundraising initiatives require some up-front money (e.g., money to buy the t-shirts they want to sell). The club must choose any of the three methods stated below to acquire the up-front money:
  - a. Prepaying: The club members may choose to prepay to the Union the cost of goods. The Rensselaer Union will then issue a purchase order for the goods.
  - b. Reallocating: The club may choose to reallocate funds from another program within their budget to pay for the goods. In this event, the club must repay the cost of the goods before they are able to realize any income from the sale of the goods. This method is subject to the reallocation rules stated in Article VII, Section A.
  - c. Requesting a loan from "contingencies": In the event that there are insufficient funds within a club budget to pay for the goods by means of a reallocation, the club may write a proposal to the E-Board requesting a loan from contingency funds. This loan must be repaid before the club receives any income.

**B. Budgeted Expenses**

1. Budgeted expenses are those expenses that are eligible for and have been approved for funding by the E-Board during budgeting. Each club or organization must research prices for all expenses for the upcoming budget, in preparation for submitting an accurate budget each November for the next fiscal year. Prior to

- actually purchasing the items, new bids and quotes must be obtained when necessary, as detailed throughout this section.
2. For clubs requesting equipment purchases of over \$3,000 per unit item, the submitted budget proposal must include at least three quotes from RPI approved vendors for the specific item, as well as a justification for both the purchase and the amount requested. These requests will be reviewed by the E-Board during normal budgeting procedures. This clause also applies to clubs submitting for Contingencies funds.
  3. If the club does not purchase the specific item quoted, the purchase will need to be approved by the President of the Union, the Club Representative, and the club SARP.
  4. The Rensselaer Union will not prepay or make deposits for products or services not yet received unless determined by the club and the Business Administrator. A pre-payment, deposit, or other special payment term requires documentation from the vendor to support the requirement.
  5. All materials, supplies, and equipment delivered to the Rensselaer Union must be inspected immediately upon receipt to determine the condition and completeness of the shipment. Damages and shortages must be reported within five (5) days of delivery to the Rensselaer Union Finance Office Staff. They will coordinate any resultant claim with the vendor or the carrier.
  6. All clubs and organizations are required to purchase materials from RPI Approved Vendors. If a club cannot obtain the necessary materials/equipment from a pre-approved vendor, the club can work with the Union's Finance Office to get a specific vendor approved for the purchase.
  7. The E-Board has the ability to make exceptions for all budgeting policies mentioned above, provided substantial reasoning is given and a 3/5th majority vote, as specified in the *Executive Board Bylaws*.

### **C. Food**

1. The amount of subsidy for receptions will not exceed \$3.50† per activity fee paying club member per semester. Reception Funds are intended to be used throughout the semester at the club's discretion. It is recommended they be used for recruitment and end of year receptions. Reception funding is only to be used for events where all club members are invited to attend and a plan for its use should be included in the budget request for Reception Funds. Reception Funds will not exceed \$700 per year, regardless of membership.
2. The E-Board may choose to subsidize food for specific events where food is an integral part of the event's or club's purpose or for specific events that are a service to the club



and that require a substantial amount of work. Work Food Funds will not exceed \$3.00† per activity fee paying participant per event.

3. Other programs involving food in the budget must also include an appropriate income line to cover the cost of the food.
4. No individual meals will be subsidized. Examples of this would be food over the course of a budgeted trip or an “away” competition in which the club participates.

#### **D. Lodging**

1. When a club is required to stay overnight for an event in which the members are competing or representing Rensselaer, the cost of lodging will be subsidized for each gender. The maximum price that the Union will subsidize for lodging is \$125† per night for rural locations and \$175† per night for urban locations. Clubs are expected to budget based on a maximum of 2 people per room.
2. Examples of rural trips would be to places like Burlington, Utica, etc. Urban trips would be to metropolitan places like New York City, Boston, etc. In the event a trip is planned to a “resort” area, e.g., Virginia Beach, Lake Placid, etc., then clubs or organizations should use the urban rates in preparing their budgets.

#### **E. Programs Involving Travel**

Following the guidelines below, and after approval of a program by the E-Board, the Union may subsidize travel for organized instruction, competition, entertainment, and recreation, in the name of Rensselaer or in service to the Union, according to each club’s purpose and goals. Anything stated herein does not guarantee E-Board approval of a proposed program involving travel. All clubs are required to file a Travel Itinerary Form to the Administration Office and to Public Safety before leaving campus on all trips.

##### **1. General Travel Subsidy Guidelines**

1. The Union will subsidize transportation at the rate of \$.25 per mile per vehicle, or actual gas receipts and toll costs, whichever is less, whenever personal cars are the E-Board-approved method of transportation for a program. The Union can subsidize the cost to rent vans or buses. The maximum price that the Union will subsidize for van rentals is \$65† for one day trips and \$195† for weekend trips.
2. The Union promotes other modes of transportation (besides personal car) that may be safer and more economical. Groups traveling distances should consider renting a van to avoid potential personal liability. If there are more than four people going on the trip, it is recommended they go by seven-passenger rental van. All drivers must take the RPI Risk Management Defensive Driving course

before they can drive the van. If there are more than 30 people, it is recommended they travel by chartered bus. Students should realize that anytime a personal vehicle is used, in NYS, the insurance policy of the owner of the car is the primary policy for all accident/damage claims.

3. The Union will subsidize the transportation of equipment at the same rate as if the equipment were a student. Approximately 150 lbs. or 15 cubic feet of equipment will count as one person; whichever yields the larger number of equipment/people.
4. In the event of unforeseen complications which will result in the circumstance that a club or organization must stay overnight, the club or organization must notify Public Safety when the decision is made and their SARP upon their return. The overnight stay will be reviewed at the next E-Board meeting.
5. **Union Vehicle Policy** – Clubs may request to use the Union vehicles for local use (primarily on-campus). The person who signs out the vehicle will be personally responsible for the timely return of the vehicle, its keys. Only Rensselaer students over the age of 21 with a valid driver's license may drive the Union vehicles. All drivers must take the Risk Management Defensive Driving course before they can drive the van. The SARPs may make some exceptions at their discretion. Penalties will be charged to individuals who return the vehicles late or lose the keys. Any damages to the vehicle will be assessed to the club, unless determined to be the result of negligence or willful damage on the part of individual(s); responsible individuals will be assessed for damages, and/or deductibles. The privilege of being able to drive the Union vehicles will be taken away from any Rensselaer student driver found "at fault" for any accident involving a Union vehicles.

## 2. **Competitions / Tournaments / Performances**

(Hereafter referred to as "event(s)" in this section)

1. The Union must approve any club-sponsored event(s) in advance, and will set the appropriate subsidy level, if any, for that event(s).
2. The entry fees from club-sponsored event(s) hosted by Union clubs must cover the costs for prizes and trophies for that event(s).
3. For approved trips, each participating club member will pay an individual "trip fee" which, combined, will account for at least 60% of the total trip cost. Trip fees = Total trip expense (lodging, registration fees, gas and tolls, transportation, any other associated fees excluding meals) x 60% divided by the total number of club members traveling.

4. If a club has won the right to participate in a local, regional or national event(s) that is not in their budget, after approval of the program by the E-Board, the Union may subsidize up to 70% of the cost of all expenses associated with the event(s) excluding meals, not to exceed \$4,000. In the event that both men's and women's teams qualify, then the total subsidy must be split equally between the two.
  5. If a club is invited to compete or perform in an "Invitational" event(s), after approval of the program by the E-Board the Union may subsidize up to 40% of the cost of all expenses associated with the event(s), excluding meals, but not to exceed \$2,000<sup>†</sup>. In the event that both men's and women's teams qualify, then the total subsidy must be split equally between the two.
  6. If there are direct expenses for travel, uniforms, or other expenses deemed necessary for a non-RPI individual's participation, the expenses will not be subsidized by the Student Activity Fee or other income budgeted by the E-Board.
- 3. Educational / Instructional Trips**
1. The Union may subsidize up to 40% of the total costs including, but not limited to, fees, transportation and lodging, but excluding meals, of E-Board-approved educational or instructional programs. Approval is based on the expectation that the club will bring back whatever information they learned to teach the rest of the club and to impact the greater student body. The allowance for any lodging that may be subsidized will follow the guidelines for rural and urban lodging.

**F. Uniforms / T-shirts / Personal Items**

1. Clubs may choose to take advantage of the purchasing power of the Union to acquire uniforms, t-shirts and personal items related to their club's activities, whether they are approved budget items or not. If uniforms, t-shirts or personal items are not approved budget items, the club or organization must pay the Union up-front for the cost of the items and the Union will then issue a purchase order. In any event, as approved budget items or not, the design of all uniforms, t-shirts and personal items must be consistent with Rensselaer Community standards, must not violate any known local, state or national laws, and must be in the "spirit of Rensselaer."
2. The Union may subsidize uniforms, t-shirts or other approved items that have a lifetime of less than 1 year or remain the property of the club/team.
3. The Union will not fund uniforms, t-shirts or personal items that become the property of the individual members of the team/club or are customer-tailored or purchased to individual specifications.

4. In most cases, clubs will be required to take advanced orders and collect funds up front before a payment will be processed on all t-shirts and memorabilia for club functions.
5. Prizes and trophies won in club-sponsored events hosted by Union clubs must be covered by entry-fees for said event.

#### **G. Referees / Coaches / Instructors**

1. Prior to being contracted, coaches and instructors must submit proper certification to the Finance Coordinator or SARP.
2. Instructors/Coaches may be subsidized up to 50% of the cost of the coach's compensation that includes salary plus fringe. Club dues must offset at least 50% of a coach's salary plus fringe benefits.
3. Coaches should not be given salary or benefit increases in club budgeting. Any changes made to these items will be discussed by the E-Board during general budgeting.
4. Funds allocated for coaches, instructors, or referees cannot be transferred to other programs or vice versa.
5. The Union may subsidize the cost of officials necessary to conduct valid competition. Any student may be paid for his or her services in this capacity.

#### **H. Equipment / Supplies Policy**

##### **1. Comprehensive Plan for the Purchase of Equipment / Supplies**

- a. Clubs that need to purchase and/or replace capital equipment (all equipment costing more than \$3,000) must present a comprehensive budget proposal for purchasing and/or replacing equipment to the E-Board, which shall include three quotes for the piece of equipment in question. The E-Board will review each plan during budgeting and determine whether they can support the club's proposal. Each subsequent year the club must revise their plan to reflect purchases made and any adjustments they feel should be made to their plan; the E-Board will determine if it can support any changes to the plan.
- b. Clubs should request each purchase in the annual budget, but in certain circumstances may make requests to purchase capital equipment ahead of schedule. The E-Board may not be able to approve funds to purchase the capital equipment in one budget year. Each club must designate how it would like to finance this capital equipment in advance of its purchase. Clubs should consult with their SARP or their E-Board Representative as they prepare their budgets.
- c. To finance equipment that will require a large capital expense, clubs should create a distinct "reserve account" for the sole purchase of the equipment. These

accounts are intended for large, recurring purchases or for large, one time purchases that may not be able to be purchased during any particular fiscal year.

**2. General Procedures to Purchase Equipment / Supplies**

- a. All budgeted equipment over \$100 should be purchased before March 31.
- b. Any budget-approved equipment purchase under \$3,000 may be made without obtaining new bids before the actual purchase is made. All equipment costing more than \$3,000 must have 3 written current bids/quotes before a final decision is made on purchasing, except as follows: Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute has certain provisions for “State Contract Items,” “Rensselaer Contract Items,” and “Sole Source Purchases”. If, in the course of getting bids from companies, a club is told that the item under question can be purchased under New York State Contract or is under a blanket order with Rensselaer, or finds that they can only purchase the specific item from one supplier, the club should consult with their SARP on how to proceed. In any event, the club must prepare a note for the file justifying why it made its final decision.
- c. The club should strive to purchase the lowest bid, but valid reasons such as quality or service might justify purchasing at a higher cost. Anytime a club or organization desires to use a higher bid it must prepare in writing the reasons for doing so for review and consultation with SARP.

**3. Penalties for Unauthorized Purchases**

- a. If a club fails to follow the guidelines set forth in this section specifically and makes equipment purchases without proper approvals, the individual(s) who made the purchase will be held responsible and will accordingly own the item(s). There will be no penalty charged to the club because the club does not own the equipment. However, if the owner of the equipment wishes to allow the club to use the equipment, the club must notify the SARP so that the Union can address potential liability issues relating to the nature of the increased or varied activity in relation to the club’s approved program

**I. Charitable and Philanthropic Events**

1. The intent of the Student Activity Fee is to enrich student life on campus and not be a direct or indirect donation to charity or other philanthropy.
2. The E-Board may choose to subsidize philanthropic or charitable events if the event provides substantial benefit to campus, student life, or student development. The

- philanthropic or charitable event must be accessible to all students and predominantly focus on students (e.g. spread awareness or entertain).
3. Events requiring mandatory donations, such as entrance fees, will not be subsidized. An entrance fee that is used exclusively to offset the cost of the event is not considered a mandatory donation.
  4. If an event raises more from its entrance fee than what covers the cost of the event, that extra money is not eligible for donation.
    - a. This clause is intended to ensure that the entrance fee is not inflated with the intent to garner extra money to donate.
    - b. Note that compliance with the above does not guarantee funding for a program, but only enables it for consideration.

## **J. Affiliations**

1. The Union may subsidize 100% of the cost of organizational membership fees for clubs in national organizations for affiliations that the E-Board approves.
2. Any club that has national dues to an outside organization must have club membership dues that are accurately proportioned to offset the cost of unsubsidized national dues.
3. Club members' individual membership fees in applicable national organizations may be subsidized at a rate of up to 40%. The remaining fees should be covered by club membership dues.

## **K. Club Services and Miscellaneous Expenses**

### **1. The Rensselaer Polytechnic Advertising**

*The Rensselaer Polytechnic* advertising is approved through the budgeting process by the E-Board, but is allocated as Poly Credits, which are equal to 1/8 of a page. Each Credit is valued at \$20. The E-Board will evaluate each request and determine how much space they will be able to approve for allocation. The use of Poly Credits is contingent on space availability in *The Polytechnic*. Allocations will not be made for announcing club meetings, as Poly Credits should be used for special events.

### **2. UPAC Sound and Lights**

Union Funded Clubs are not required to pay the rental fee on equipment but are required to pay technician fees for the students who work the event at the rate set by the E-Board. Contracting UPAC Sound and/or UPAC Lights requires a two-week notice; late fees are assessed to any club that does not give proper notice.

### **3. Public Safety**

Many events may require Public Safety for crowd control and/or liability purposes. Public Safety evaluates each program on an individual basis to determine if their services will be required. Each club should consult with their SARP on budgeting for this service. The Union budgets for the total cost of Public Safety at these events. Requests for Public Safety must be received 2 weeks prior to an event or the event can be cancelled.

### **4. Club Technology Services**

The Rensselaer Union provides storage space on a separate club web hosting server that is made available to Union Recognized and Affiliated clubs. The Union provides a single username and password for that club to use to edit its resources.

1. Clubs can contact Rensselaer Union System Administrators to create Websites advertising their services and providing information to members and the RPI community. All Union Recognized and Affiliated clubs shall develop home pages that are consistent with Rensselaer Community standards, that don't violate any known local, state or national standards, and that are in the "spirit of Rensselaer." They will be periodically reviewed by the Union to make sure that they are being used properly. Inappropriate use of this Rensselaer Union resource may result in the loss of storage and Web space for the club.
2. Although the Rensselaer Union provides and administers its own group of servers, those servers still fall under the jurisdiction of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. All Rensselaer policies, including the Policy for Electronic Citizenship, and all other Rensselaer computing guidelines, must be followed by all users of our computer systems at all times.
3. For private file storage needs, clubs can create shared Box Enterprise accounts through RPI's Box subscription. Access to the space will be provisioned to members of the club as listed in CMS and ownership will be provisioned to officers of the club. To get access, contact the Associate Director of Union Operations.

For more information about the technology services provided by the Rensselaer Union or to ask questions regarding these policies, please email the Union Systems Administrators.

### **L. Club Materials**

1. The Union may subsidize a maximum of 250<sup>+</sup> copies for general club advertisement.
2. All club belongings, including generic supplies or materials, must be documented and accounted for in club inventory. The inventory must include the type of item (or type of group of items), its dollar value to replace, and number of those items. Any item that is

integral to club operations or has a value greater than \$100<sup>†</sup> must be individually inventoried.

**M. Reserve Accounts**

1. In the cases where large one-time or infrequent but recurring purchases are required, clubs may and are encouraged to request Reserve Accounts to save portions of the expense every year for a number of years leading up to the purchase.
2. Reserve Accounts may only be established for a single purpose unless an exemption is granted by the E-Board. A club may establish and maintain one Reserve Account, with multiple projects attached to that one account.
3. The budget lines for Reserve Accounts will list the amount to be saved each year, over how many years money is to be saved in the account, what year the account is currently in, and how much money has been saved in the account to date.

**N. Club Printer Access**

1. The Rensselaer Union provides a laser printer for club use that is located in the Student Government Suite. The printer is made available to Union Funded clubs, and fees for printing are charged back to the appropriate club's budget.
2. To take advantage of the Club Printer, clubs must contact the Rensselaer Union Systems Administrators to have their account activated. Once active, the same username and password assigned for the club's Web Storage Space can be used for printing. The password is made available via the Club Management System, and can be reset via the System's interface. All printing activity on the Club Printer is logged to encourage clubs to only use the resource for club-related purposes.

**O. Other Miscellaneous Expenses**

1. Clubs are advised to consider the “other costs of doing business” when they prepare their annual budgets. If they have any questions, they should consult with their E-Board representatives and/or their SARP when proposing budgets for items such as, but not limited to, long distance telephone calls, copies, outside advertising, postage, Instrumentation and Media Services, performer fees, outside vendors and office supplies.



## **P. Purchasing Policies**

### **1. General Purchasing of Items**

- a. Each club is responsible for purchasing the items listed in its approved budget. The SARP and the Business Coordinator will, on request, assist the club in obtaining the best price available for approved purchases. The recommended procedure for purchasing any items not available at the Rensselaer Union, or on campus, is to determine the best price (as per the Budgeting Guidelines specified above) and then fill out a “Purchase Requisition Form” for the vendor. The Finance Office will then generate a purchase order to be given to the vendor in return for the item. When a purchase order is written, the Rensselaer Union (and not the individual) is paying for an item, and therefore assumes ownership of the item as well as all risks associated with the purchase. The club will be directly billed for the actual cost of the items. All items should be delivered to the Rensselaer Union Finance Office.
- b. There are occasions when a club member may want to purchase an item without a purchase order. This is not the recommended purchasing method, but on occasion the Union will make exceptions for this, especially with regard to the purchase of small miscellaneous items and food. If the club wants to make a purchase without a purchase order, they should first consult with their SARP. If the SARP agrees, a club member may use his/her own funds to pay for the purchase with the expectation of reimbursement upon providing a receipt for the items. The club member should be sure to obtain a tax-exempt certificate from the Finance Office prior to making any purchases since sales tax will not be reimbursed (see Article III Section C Part 3). In no event will purchases of equipment on an individual's personal card be reimbursed.
- c. An alternative option is the use of the Union’s credit card. The card can only be used to pay for travel and entertainment. A purchase order is required for any services rendered on campus. In order to use the credit card, club members must work with the Finance Office to complete the appropriate paperwork to provide a record. Since the Institute audits the Union’s credit card purchases on a monthly basis, the Union must be ready to submit the appropriate paperwork to prove that they are following the Institute’s purchasing guidelines.

### **2. Bank Accounts**

- a. It is a policy of Rensselaer that external bank accounts for club use are not permitted in the name of a club officer or the club itself. No Union Funded Club is to obtain a federal ID number of its own.

### 3. **Receipts Policy**

- a. Receipts of club-budgeted expenditures must be turned in, in English, within TEN business days to the Union Administration and Student Activities Office in order to receive reimbursement. Receipts should be itemized and include: the date the purchase was made, the business the item(s) was/were purchased from, and the purpose of the expenditure.
- b. New York State sales tax may be reimbursed. Tax exemption forms can be obtained upon request from the Business Administrator prior to your expenditures.
- c. All reimbursement requests need the signatures of one authorized club officer and the club's SARP.

### 4. **Charge Slips and User Codes**

- a. In the course of conducting club business, there are several opportunities for clubs to charge purchase amounts to the club's account, or for students to charge club-related fees to their student accounts. The proper charge slip (completed accurately) or user code must be used in each instance for the transaction to be valid.
- b. **Rensselaer Charge/Payment/Adjustment Sheets** – Upon approval from a club's SARP, a club may use this form to collect income from students for an approved club program. Personal items such as dues, t-shirts, trip fees, materials, etc., may be charged directly to a student's personal student account. The form must be carefully completed and each student charged must sign his/her initials on the form, acknowledging that his/her account is being charged for the said purpose of the charge. The charge sheet must be accurately tallied by an officer of the club, and then given to the Financial Office in the *Union Administration and Student Activities Office*. The student's account will be charged for the amount they agreed to, and the club will be credited in that amount. Charge slips should be turned in weekly.
- c. **Rensselaer Collegiate Store Charge Slips** – Charge slips may be used to purchase approved budget items totaling more than \$10 from the Rensselaer Collegiate Store. In an instance when a charge slip is needed, a club officer must obtain one from the Financial Office in the *Union Administration and Student Activities Office*. After making the purchase, the club officer must immediately return the receipt to the same office. The amount of the purchase will be automatically charged to the club's account.

- d. **Food Service Charge Slips** – For internal vendors, department charge slips are available for use at all Union food service outlets in the Rensselaer Union for approved Union programs. A club officer must obtain the Food Service Charge Slip from the Financial Office. It will be used as tender in the outlet; the club should ask for a receipt for the total amount of the purchase, and return that receipt to the Financial Office within the next five business days. Any time a club wants to make a high volume purchase, e.g., ten pizzas for a recruitment party, they should call ahead to ensure that their order is ready when they need it.
  - a. For external vendors, a club must participate in the America-To-Go program. The club may order through a list of approved vendors, and submit a requisition form to their SARP for approval. Once that form has been approved, the form will then go to the finance office for processing and ordering. The food will be paid for through the program and will be available for pick-up by the club or delivery.
  - b. An exception to this rule can be made for multicultural clubs who are ordering from a specific vendor to meet their needs. The Union’s credit card can be used to purchase food in this case.
- e. **Copier** – The treasurer of each club that has an approved budget to make copies will be given a copier code to use the copier in the Union. The cost of each copy made is automatically charged to the club’s account. Clubs should take special care to see that access to the code is secure, and should periodically check to see if the total usage is correct. Under no circumstances is the code to be used for personal business. If an individual is found to be in violation, personal restitution will be made. Any discrepancies should be reported immediately to the club’s SARP. The club will be notified of any changes to their copier codes.

**5. Conflict of Interest**

- a. There is a “conflict of interest” policy of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute’s Purchasing Department that concerns the purchase of goods and services. Goods and services provided by Rensselaer employees, students or independent contractors affiliated with the Rensselaer Union shall not be considered a conflict of interest if they are in compliance with the Institute’s Policy. The Business Coordinator of the Rensselaer Union will monitor compliance. For more information on policies see Rensselaer Purchasing Department policy #1.3.

† Numbers updated yearly, may be modified at any point prior to budgeting in December

## **VI. BUDGET RECONCILIATION**

It is the policy of the Union that all club budgets are monitored on a regular basis by SARPS to ensure that they balance. The following guidelines should be used in the event that a budget adjustment may be appropriate, either throughout the year or specifically resulting from year-end reviews of club budgets.

The Union budgets a limited amount of money each year for unforeseen expenses relating to safety, broken or stolen equipment or the increase in cost of approved programs. This money is referred to as the Union Contingency Fund. In some cases this money may be used for costs associated with new programs that clubs would like to conduct within the current fiscal year that are not provided for in the clubs' current approved budget. This money can also be used to fund a Starter Budget for a newly formed club that was not assigned a budget during yearly budgeting sessions; it can also be used to fund a Stop-Gap budget. If possible, a club should reallocate funds from within their own budget to pay for these items. If a club is not able to reallocate, a club must present an E-Board Proposal to request the use of the Contingency Fund.

In general, the E-Board will not consider reinstating items denied from budgets during the previous year's budgeting. If a club thinks it has a special case, it should discuss it with its E-Board representative.

## **VII. GENERAL PROCEDURES**

The following procedures may be followed year-round, and in conjunction with year-end reviews of club budgets, where appropriate.

### **A. Reallocation of Funds and Requests from Contingencies**

Clubs which would like to re-allocate approved funds from one budget line to another, or would like to propose a new use for the funds rather than the pre-approved budgeted use, or propose a new program, may do so per the following guidelines:

1. Re-allocations over \$500, new programs, and contingency requests require the approval of the E-Board. All E-Board Proposals should be submitted on the standard form (available in the Union Administration and Student Activities Office), along with appropriate attachments, to the Union Administration and Student Activities Office by 5:00 p.m., 3 business days prior to the E-Board meeting at which the proposal will be discussed.
2. If a club would like to re-allocate up to \$500 from another of its approved budget lines, the President and Treasurer of the club should submit a proposal form to their SARP and their E-Board Representative, explaining why a reallocation is necessary. Reallocations less than \$500 will require authorization from a club's

SARP, E-Board Representative, the Business Administrator, and the President of the Union. If these re-allocations are not approved, they may be submitted to the E-Board for review.

3. This clause does not apply to any funds allocated for salary or benefits. No funds may be reallocated for the purchase of food.

#### **B. Re-Budgeting for Over-Expenditures**

1. Any club that has overspent their budget in the previous Fiscal Year, must rebudget at the start of the Fall Semester. This will include formulating a new budget with the club's SARP that will compensate for the deficit.
2. Any club which has a deficit due to an over expenditure at any time during the fiscal year must re-budget to compensate for the deficit. The club should follow the procedures discussed in the point above to comply.

#### **C. Unauthorized Debt**

1. Unauthorized debts are unapproved expenses incurred by a club or organization.
2. Unauthorized outstanding debts incurred by funded clubs may be settled with Rensselaer Union funds. Such debts are to be financed by funds allocated from the club's current budget after review by the E-Board.
3. If circumstances dictate, the E-Board may opt to deal with the club in another way, including but not necessarily one of the following:
  - a. Financing from the club's budget which would make the club no longer viable;
  - b. Financing part of the debt for one or several years;
  - c. Not requiring repayment at all;
  - d. Holding an individual or any part of the collective group of the club's members personally responsible for the unauthorized debt.
4. If there is reasonable evidence to show that an individual or individuals benefited personally from the debts incurred, the board may attempt to collect the debt from the individual(s) responsible.
5. Clubs that run a deficit in one year will have that amount subtracted from the next year's budget and returned to the Rensselaer Union Facilities Reserves. If a funded club or organization continuously run significant deficits over a period of 3-5 years, the E-Board of the Rensselaer Union will evaluate the situation and cause of the debt. The E-Board will then either make adjustments to the club budget to rectify the situation or decide to cease funding for that club or organization.

#### **D. Year-End Reconciliation**

1. The Union fiscal year ends on June 30. All bills incurred by clubs and or organizations must be submitted by June 1 to be accounted for in the current budget year and to avoid running the risk of being charged against the next year's account. Following June 30, the Finance Coordinator and the SARP will review each club and organization budget to determine their actual performance throughout the prior fiscal year. In addition to the policies stated above, the following guidelines will be used at this time, including the incentive to reward a job well done.
2. It is the responsibility of each club to verify its financial status no later than October 15 of each year, justify whether it deserves an incentive income award, and rebudget its current budget due to over-expenditure if necessary.

#### **E. Outstanding Commitments**

1. Upon notice to the Union thereof, unpaid legal financial commitments or responsibilities for services incurred prior to June 30 will be paid from Union reserves. The club or organization account responsible for the expense will be adjusted to reflect the actual year-end balance, and the club will be responsible to fulfill all its obligations as stated heretofore in this document, including rebudgeting its current budget to take care of the expense.

#### **F. Incentive Income**

1. Per the definitions below, the E-Board may award incentive income to clubs based on the Union's and the clubs' prior year's budget performance. Because Rensselaer Union budget balancing is a continuous process and because income sources vary, the Union Budget may need to be adjusted at any time. Earned incentive income will be awarded to clubs if the E-Board is able to absorb the cost of that award and still balance its budget.
2. The purpose of Incentive Income is to encourage and reward those clubs which raise additional income in the course of carrying out their programs. Incentive Income will not have the effect of diminishing or penalizing club budgets in the next fiscal year. Incentive Income (income exceeding budgeted income line) will be used to balance off over expenditures. After that, any unused Incentive Income may be carried over to the next year and must be spent in that year unless it is designated as an approved long term saving plan.

- a. Incentive Income can be used for most current approved programs. The club may choose to write an E-Board Proposal to see if the E-Board will approve the purchase with the club's incentive income. The same criteria for approval used for reallocations or requests from contingencies and new programs apply to the use of incentive income.
- b. In the next fiscal year, the club may spend a maximum of 50% or \$200 of the incentive income, whichever is less, toward the purchase of food for a club-sponsored event. It must write a memorandum to the club's E-Board representative within ten business days before the date of this expenditure. This memorandum must indicate how much money will be spent, how the money will be spent, and how many people it will directly benefit. It will be filed in the club's account file in the *Union Administration and Student Activities Office*.