ASSOCIATED STUDENTS SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

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POLICY STATEMENT #103
REVISED 04/29/2026

HOSPITALITY POLICY

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This policy establishes clear and consistent standards for the use of Associated Students (AS) funds for hospitality-related expenses. Hospitality, as defined by the California State University (CSU), includes expenses that promote goodwill, recognize contributions, support official guests, and advance the mission of the organization.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that hospitality expenditures by AS:

- Support student engagement, community building, and organizational objectives;
- Are reasonable, cost-effective, and necessary to carry out official business;
- Comply with CSU systemwide policy, state and federal regulations, and AS financial controls; and
- Promote transparency and accountability in the stewardship of student fees and other funding sources.

POLICY STATEMENT

Associated Students (AS) will incur hospitality expenses only when they directly support the organization's mission and official business. Such expenses must:

- Be reasonable in amount, necessary to achieve a legitimate business purpose, and cost-effective relative to the intended outcome;
- Be properly documented with a clear statement of purpose, event details, and supporting receipts;
- Comply with CSU policy, state and federal regulations, and AS internal financial controls; and
- Be authorized in advance through established approval procedures.

Hospitality expenditures may include food and beverages, gifts, entertainment, or other costs that promote goodwill, recognize contributions, or support student engagement, provided they are consistent with this policy.

APPLICABILITY TO THE POLICY

☑ Budget Area Administrators	☑ Elected/Appointed Officers	☑ Grant Recipients
☑ Management / Personnel	☑ Program Advisors	☑ Volunteers
☑ Supervisors	☑ BOD appointed Individuals	☑ Staff

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Approving Authority	The individual(s) responsible for reviewing and authorizing hospitality expenses. At AS, this includes the Department Approver and the Executive Director (or designee).
Approved Event	A meeting, program, or mission-driven activity that directly advances AS's objectives and has received prior approval through established procedures. This may include outreach, tabling, receptions, or student leadership events.
Employee	For the purposes of this policy, includes all AS staff, student employees, volunteers, and interns.
Food and Beverage Costs	All expenses related to meals, refreshments, beverages, service charges, gratuity (not to exceed 20%), sales tax, and delivery fees.
Gifts	Tangible items, awards, or gift cards/certificates provided to recognize contributions, express appreciation, or encourage engagement.
Hospitality Expenses	Expenditures for food and beverages, gifts, entertainment, or other activities intended to promote goodwill, recognize service, support official guests, or advance AS's mission.

Official Host	An AS employee or elected officer who organizes and hosts an official meeting, event, or gathering on behalf of AS.
Personnel-Related Hospitality	Hospitality provided to AS employees, student staff, Board of Directors, or interns for recognition events, morale-building activities, or other approved business purposes.
Entertainment Costs	Expenses related to tickets, venue rentals, or activities designed to foster employee morale, donor cultivation, or community goodwill, when consistent with CSU and AS policy.

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Hospitality expenses must be directly related to, or associated with, the active conduct of official AS business. When an AS employee, student staff, Board of Directors, intern, or volunteer serves as the Official Host, the occasion must serve a clear AS purpose, and with no personal benefit derived by the official host or any other employees. The Approving Authority must always weigh the importance of the event against its cost.

GIFTS

A gift is a non-cash item provided to express appreciation, recognize contributions, or encourage engagement. All gifts must:

- Serve a legitimate business or programmatic purpose;
- Be reasonable in value; and
- Be approved in advance.

Tax and shipping costs are excluded from stated thresholds.

Gift Types

- **Tangible Gifts** – Mission-aligned physical items that support the department's or event's purpose.
- **Gift Cards / Certificates** – Limited to $50 per card. Not allowable for AS employees, student staff, Board of Directors, Interns, or volunteers. Permitted for students and external guests only when tied to a documented business purpose.

Allowable Gifts For Employees

- **Occasional Tangible Gifts** (morale/team building, prizes at approved events): Up to $100 cumulative per year, per individual.
- *Awards and Achievements:* Certificates, plaques, or medals up to $200 (valued separately from occasional gifts).
- *Bereavement:* Sympathy gifts such as flowers or baskets up to $200 (valued separately).

- *Service Milestone / Farewell Gifts:* Tangible, mission-driven items for professional staff at defined service milestones:
    - 5 years – $100
    - 10 years – $200
    - 15 years – $ 300
    - 20 years – $400
    - 25 years – $500
    - 30+ years - $600
- *Personal Life Milestones* (birthdays, baby showers, graduations): **Not allowable.**
- *Gift Cards:* **Not allowable.**

Allowable Gifts For AS Events

- *Engagement Prizes:* May not exceed **$50 per individual**. Intended solely to encourage participation in AS events or programs.
- *Competition Prizes:* Up to **$300 per winner**. If the prize is a cash equivalent, it must be processed in accordance with the Purchasing Policy.

Allowable Gifts For Guests and Campus Partners

- Maximum value of **$75 per individual**.
- Appropriate for acknowledging speaking engagements, participation in AS programs, collaboration, or distinguished service.
- Must include documented business purpose, event details, and justification on the Hospitality Form.

ADMINISTRATIVE EVENTS & PERSONNEL EVENTS

Meal Rate Limits (Administrative & Personnel Events)

AS procedures should identify a maximum per-person rate(s) for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and light refreshment, inclusive of the total cost of food, beverages, labor, sales tax, delivery fees, or other service fees.

- Breakfast $30.00
- Lunch $40.00
- Dinner $50.00
- Light refreshments $15.00

Note: A copy of hospitality expenditures should be submitted to the President and Vice President of Finance.

Administrative Events

Administrative events are gatherings that advance AS's operational, strategic, or governance functions. These may involve official guests, campus partners, professional organizations, or AS staff, and must clearly support AS's mission.

Examples include:

- Business meetings directly related to AS operations or programs.
- Hosting official guests with an interest in AS or San Francisco State University.
- Serving as host or co-sponsor of a meeting of a learned society, professional organization, or student leadership body.
- Receptions or meetings in connection with conferences, professional gatherings, or student leadership activities.
- Community relations or partnership events to strengthen collaborations, cultivate donors, or recognize distinguished service.
- Staff orientation sessions to introduce, train, and integrate new staff into AS policies, procedures, and organizational culture.
- Strategic planning sessions, governance retreats, or milestone meetings that support AS's internal capacity.

Personnel Events

Personnel events are designed to recognize and celebrate the contributions of AS employees, student staff, Board of Directors, interns, and volunteers. These may include food, beverages, entertainment, event space rentals, or vendor-provided service packages, provided they are reasonable and aligned with AS's mission.

Examples include:

- *Team Appreciation* – One event per department per semester, recognizing collective contributions.
- *Staff Appreciation* – An annual event acknowledging staff contributions and milestones.
- *Retirement / Farewell* – Gatherings to honor employees concluding significant service with AS.

PROGRAMMATIC EVENTS

Programmatic events are mission-driven activities directly tied to AS programs, services, and initiatives. These events primarily serve the student body or community and are expected to further AS's educational, cultural, or engagement goals.

- Entertainment costs are **not allowable** for programmatic events.
- Allowable costs include food, beverages, and gifts, subject to event scale:

Occasion Type	**≤25 Attendees**	**26–100 Attendees**	**100+ Attendees**	**Notes**
Regular Mission-Driven Events	up to \$400	up to \$2,000	up to \$5,000	Recurring or annual events (e.g., workshops, engagement activities, educational programs).
Milestone Celebrations	up to \$2,000	up to \$7,500	up to \$20,000	Large-scale events (e.g., festivals, campus celebrations, donor/community outreach).
Programmatic Large Events	up to \$3,000	up to \$10,000	up to \$25,000	Significant program anniversaries, expansions, or achievements.

PROHIBITED EXPENSES

Hospitality funds may not be used for:

- **Alcoholic Beverages** – unless specifically authorized in writing by the Executive Director (or designee) and in compliance with CSU policy and campus regulations.
- **Cannabis or Controlled Substances.**
- **Tobacco Products** – including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, vaping products, and related items.
- **Personal Life Events** – such as birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, graduations, or baby showers.
- **Gift Cards Provided to AS Employees, Student Staff, Board of Directors, Interns, or Volunteers** – regardless of value.
- **Gift Cards Exceeding \$50** for any recipient.
- **Political or Religious Activities** – contributions, lobbying, or events primarily promoting political or religious purposes.
- **Fines, Penalties, or Personal Memberships** unrelated to official AS business.
- **Expenditures Providing Primary Benefit to an Individual** rather than serving a documented AS business purpose.
- **Other Costs Expressly Prohibited by CSU Policy, State Law, or Federal Regulations.**

FORMS

All hospitality expenses must be supported by the following required forms:

1. **Hospitality Form** – Required for all hospitality expenses. Must state the business purpose, event details, estimates, and approving authorities.
2. **Guest List** – Required for events and meetings. Must include names, titles, and affiliations of attendees to demonstrate a business or programmatic connection.
3. **Gift Release Form** – Required when non-AS-branded tangible gifts or gift cards are distributed. Must identify the recipient and acknowledge receipt.

EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy are limited and must be explicitly authorized.

1. **Grant-Funded Programs** – Higher thresholds (e.g., gift cards up to $100) may be allowed if:
   - The expense is documented in the grant budget or guidelines.
   - It is used solely for program participants (not AS employees, student staff, Board of Directors, interns, or volunteers), and
   - It complies with CSU Auxiliary and IRS regulations.
2. Only in extraordinary circumstances. Requests must:
   - Be submitted in writing before the expense is incurred.
   - Provide a detailed justification of necessity; and
   - Receive written approval from the Executive Director (or designee).

HOSPITALITY POLICY APPROVAL AND REVISION HISTORY

Hospitality Policy was revised and approved by the Board of Directors on:

Revised and Approved on:	06/24/2003
Revised and Approved on:	04/29/2026