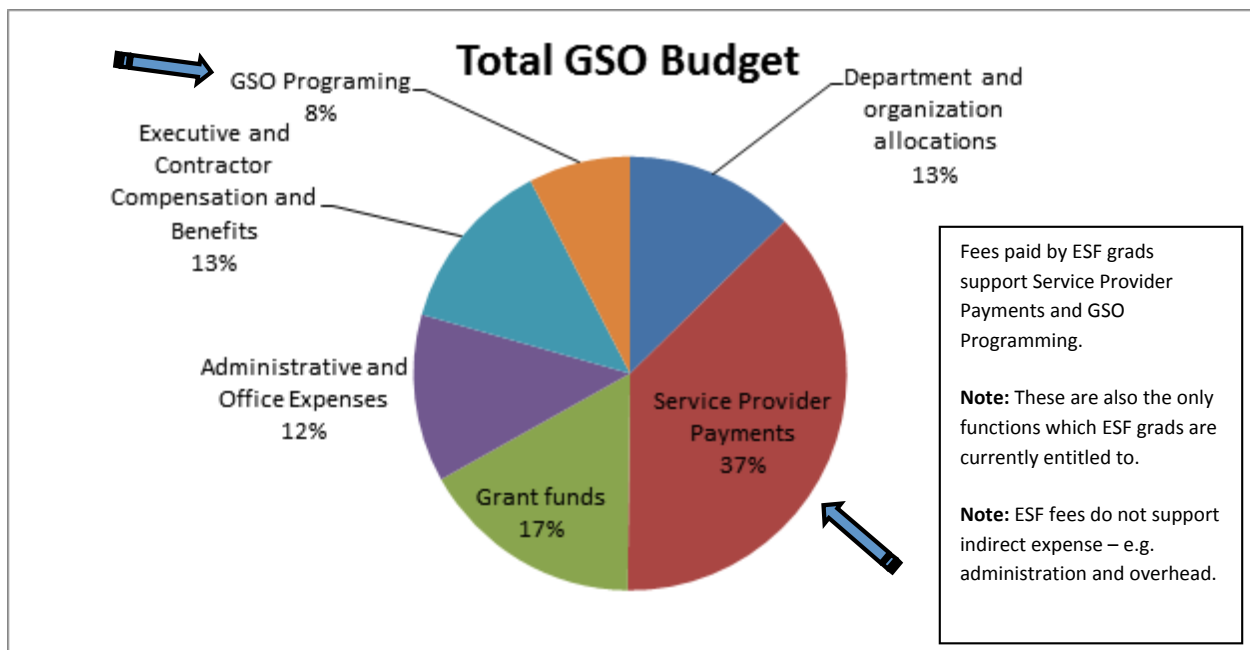


## ESF Graduate Student Fees Paid to Support GSO-Provided Services

### Overview:

Currently, ESF graduate students are assessed an annual \$15 fee at the outset of the fall semester to directly support access to Graduate Student Organization (GSO) services and programming. This \$15 fee is transferred from the ESF bursar to the Syracuse University (SU) bursar and, subsequently, into the GSO account. It is billed and appears on fee statements separately from the ESF Student Activities Fee, a portion of which supports the ESF Graduate Student Association (GSA). To the best of our knowledge, the \$15 fee has not changed in over a decade, and we now pay substantially less than SU graduate students for equivalent access to GSO services. Consequently, the GSO has indicated that ESF needs to increase fees to \$30 per academic year or lose access to some services yet to be determined. Outlined below are a cost breakdown of the GSO operating budget, including portions supported by ESF contributions; cost breakdown of services and programming currently available to all ESF graduate students; new GSO services available next year; and GSA's position on the fee change.



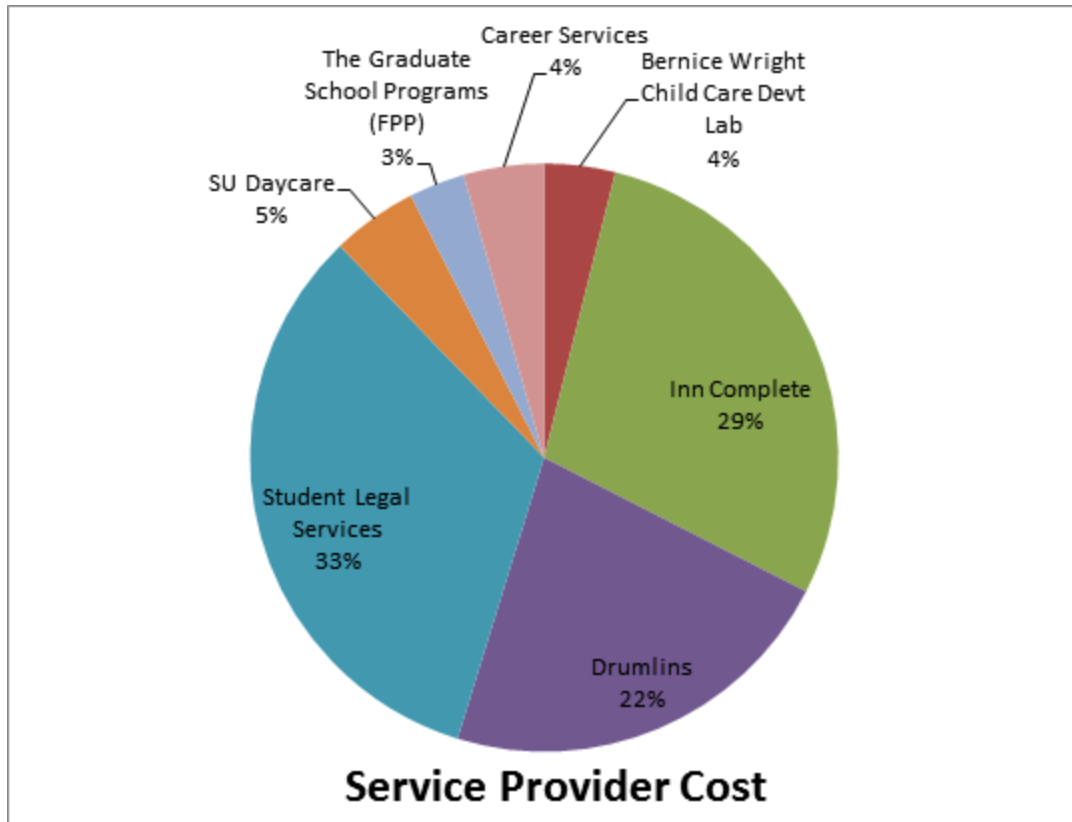
**Total GSO Budget FY 2012-13:** \$479,143

**GSO Programming:** \$36,500 (7.6%)

Funds for large scale GSO sponsored programming like the opening and closing picnics, dome partnership, and various events like wine and beer tastings at the Inn Complete

**Service Provider Payments:** \$179,868 (37.5%)

Student Legal Services, SU Daycare, Graduate School programs, Career Services, Bernice Wright Child Care, Inn Complete, Drumlins



- Subtotal of programming and service provider costs: \$216,368
- Total contributions by ESF graduate students: \$8,190
  - Equates to **3.79%** of subtotal

**Note:** Annual ESF grad fee = \$15; SU grad fee = \$80; Law School student fee = \$30

Proportion of ESF grads to SU grads and Law School students entitled to services and programming:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| • Full-time SU graduate and Law School students: | 4634        |
| • Part-time SU graduate and Law School students: | 1597        |
| • Subtotal SU graduate and Law population:       | 6231        |
| • ESF graduate students:                         | 546         |
| • Total population receiving services:           | <b>6777</b> |

**NOTE:** ESF graduates make up **8.06%** of service and programming recipients; however, ESF student fees cover **3.79%** of related costs.

### **New services/changes in services beginning academic year 2013-14:**

- New York State Parks '*Empire Pass*' available for \$10 (normally \$65)
  - This annual pass provides unlimited day use vehicle entry to most of New York's State parks and recreational facilities
- Golf membership at *The Links at Erie Village*
  - Still under negotiation, but will likely replace role of Drumlins
  - Student membership purchase for ~\$20 (normally \$499)
- Discounted indoor golf at Destiny USA (still under negotiation)
- Increased money to subsidize and expand Rec. Services and SUOC for graduate students

### **GSA's Position on the Fee Change**

In short, after careful and thorough research, discussion, and debate, the GSA supports and endorses this fee change for three main reasons:

1) Generally, the GSA feels it is in the best interest of the ESF graduate student body to maintain its current relationship with the SU graduate student body, as reflected through the GSO. At this point, ESF students pay far less than SU grads or SU Law students. In order to continue to receive services and programming, ESF students need to increase their contribution from \$15 to \$30 per student, which would be consistent with what SU Law students pay, but far less than the \$80 paid by SU grads. The GSA feels that the proposed fee change is a reasonable and fair request that still affords an excellent overall value for ESF graduate students.

2) Importantly, there are several services which would be very cost-prohibitive for many graduates to obtain on their own. Although fall survey results indicated a number of ESF grad students do not use all of these services, the majority were aware of at least some of the services provided and reported using them. Moreover, the services reported to be used least by ESF students (e.g. SU Daycare, Bernice Wright Childcare, Career Services) are proportionally small (13% of service expenditures) compared to the services (e.g. Inn Complete, Legal Services, Drumlins) highly used (84% of service expenditures). Therefore, the majority of ESF graduate fee payments seem to be largely supporting services reported as being used by ESF grads in the GSA survey this past fall.

3) The GSA believes the new services being offered, particularly the New York State Parks '*Empire Pass*' and expanded Outdoor Education subsidies, will be of high value and interest to ESF graduate students in future years.

Taken together, and based on meetings with GSO and ESF administrators, as well as survey results compiled from graduate student feedback on the issue, the GSA supports this fee change that would increase total annual payments for ESF grads from \$15 to \$30 for the academic year, likely to be assessed as a \$15 fee once each semester. However, the GSA also feels it is important to work to increase graduate student awareness of these services and will be working to do so in the future.