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"GRANVILLE'S BIGGEST PUBLICATION (WE ARE THE BEST)"

Vol. XLIV, No. 116

UPC's Letter to DCGA on Rejection of Iftar Celebration in Collaboration with MSA

University Programming
Council (UPC),
Submission

A. CONTEXT:

UPC and MSA are collaborating on an event called Iftar Celebration on March 30th to celebrate Iftar in the holy month of Ramadan. UPC requested a reallocation of \$3,500 from *Casino Night* to the *Iftar Celebration*, which the DCGA Finance Committee rejected

To start with, here is the direct quote of the rationale: "rejected on grounds of event being radically different from the purpose of the original event and for a purpose different from UPC's mission as an organization." Scan the QR code to read the full appeal.

Below, we address and counter these claims.

B. UPC'S INQUIRIES AND CONCERNS:

1. Claiming these two events are not "in the same spirit" is FALSE and UNSUPPORTED.

A. These two events hold the same purpose: a celebration of community.

- The *Casino Night* is designed to welcome all Denison students to enjoy the first week of a new academic year. It allows students to reconnect with peers, and forge new friendships, fostering a sense of belonging and unity within the Denison community.

- The *Iftar Celebration* also represents a unifying event within Denison, inviting Muslim and non-Muslim members to commemorate the holy month of Ramadan. This occasion is a special moment for the Muslim community and an open invitation to the entire Denison community, emphasizing inclusivity and cultural exchange.

B. There is no definition of "spirit" in the current finance rules.

- DCGA Finance Committee's interpretation of the term "in the same spirit" remains ambiguous because the finance rules do not explicitly define it.

C. Using this budget, the DCGA Finance Committee has approved expenses not used for SuperGames for various events, including *GALA* and *Otherworld*.

- Here is the direct reason we received from the DCGA Finance Committee: "We can't reallocate SuperGames rental funding towards the Iftar celebration." These events (*GALA* and *Otherworld*) share the same values as community celebrations, and none were spent on SuperGames. How are these events in the same spirit as the original event, but not the *Iftar Celebration*?

D. Categorizing SuperGames rental as the "spirit" of the event undervalues the efforts and commitment of student organizers in delivering impactful events to the campus.

- SuperGames rental/outside vendor is merely a method for creating this event alongside other activities and should not be considered the "spirit" of the event.

E. UPC needs to adapt and reflect Denison students' evolving priorities and interests in our event planning.

- In the current month of Ramadan, directing UPC's resources to support the *Iftar Celebration* is appropriate and honors Denison's cultural diversity.

2. The DCGA Finance Committee’s assumptions of UPC prevent us from achieving an inclusive campus environment, a goal that Denison urgently needs to address.

A. DCGA Finance Committee must uphold the importance of cultural events and student collaboration.

- For example, the *Lunar New Year Celebration* celebrated by Asian students has grown into a significant, campus-wide event due to the support of UPC for DASU and VSA. This progress is a testament to student collaboration’s impact, and the commitment of UPC to produce diverse events on the Denison campus.

B. UPC has collaborated and financially sponsored events with multiple C3 communities, including Outlook, DASU, DISA, and BSU, without receiving any obstructions from DCGA. What sets the Iftar Celebration and MSA apart?

C. The DCGA Finance Committee's obstruction of our partnership with the MSA contradicts the principles of inclusivity and collaboration that the DCGA purports to uphold.

3. This rejection of funding creates a divisive environment among student organizations and isolates C3 organizations on campus.

A. The reasons provided by the DCGA Finance Committee demonstrate the lack of thorough understanding of students’ purpose and commitment on campus.

- The assumption is that “C3 organizations like MSA are for events related to their specific culture or identity. While the Iftar celebration is open to the whole public, it’s primarily for members of a single religious group, so it wouldn’t be a large, general event as UPC is expected to throw.” actively ignores UPC’s past efforts and commitment and contradicts our missions and values.

B. This notion, if becomes widespread, will discourage the collaboration between UPC and other organizations on campus.

- This will prevent student organizations from uplifting each other and limiting the potential of students’ capabilities to impact the Denison campus.

C. DCGA Finance Committee's assumption perpetuates existing campus stigmas towards students of color (in this case, Muslim students), unintentionally or intentionally contributing to preferential treatment of certain cultures over others.

- This prevents C3 organizations from having a significant and enduring impact on campus, thereby constraining these organizations from fulfilling their established missions and values.

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