

# STUDENT APPROVED PROJECTS ON CAMPUS: WHAT COULD GO WRONG AND WHAT COULD GO RIGHT?

Each year, Western Michigan University offers students a grant to fund their sustainable programs, projects, and initiatives on campus.

## What does the grant do?

- Empowers students to make sustainable change on campus.
- Makes initial investments to spur on university funded programs and infrastructure.

## Where’s the money coming from?

- \$50,000 offered each semester.
- \$100,000 from an enrollment based fee. Remaining fee money funds student jobs and the Office for Sustainability operations.
- Money not awarded in the fall semester rolls over into the spring semester.
- Money not awarded at the end of spring semester rolls back to the Office for Sustainability.

## Who decides what grants are funded?

- Project Manager screens for grants that are safe, legal, and feasible.
- New committee of eleven students decides on what grants are funded every year.

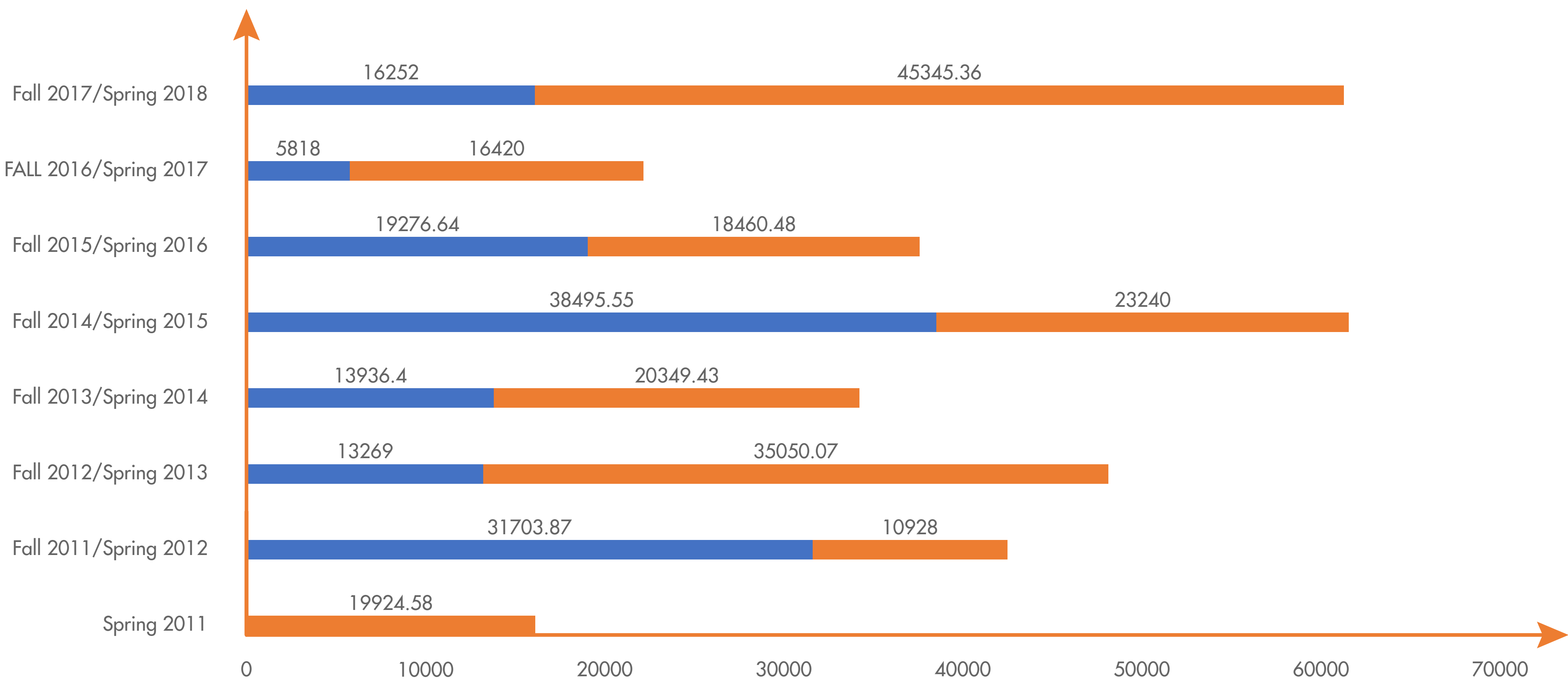
## What could go wrong?

- Office of Student Engagement oversees finances.
- Students projects might not align with university sustainability goals.
- University fails to adopt new initiatives or infrastructure beyond initial grant investment.
- With enrollment declining the fixed dollar amount could hinder Office for Sustainability operations.
- Grants cannot provide long term funding for projects (O&M, removal, site restoration).
- New group of students every year means lack of consistency.
- Students may award money to grants that are not aligned with university sustainability goals or that lack required university pre-approvals.
- Students may lack technical expertise to evaluate proposals properly.

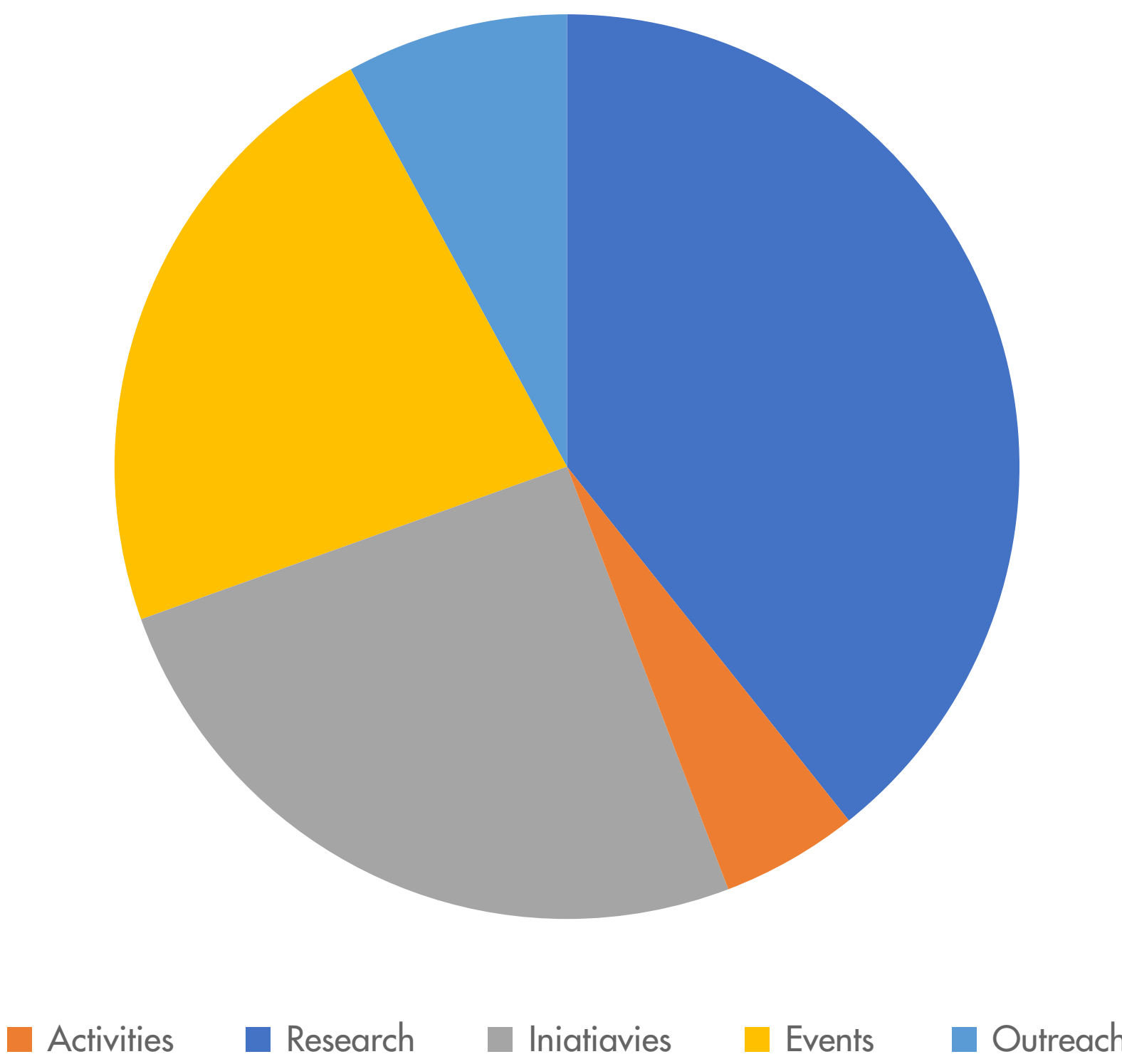
## Where to go from here?

- Use grant money to supplement capital projects.
- Change fixed dollar amount to a percentage of the fee.
- Allow student committee to serve on committee multiple years to retain expertise.
- Train student committee members on sustainability principles before they decide on grants.

## Award Amounts by Academic Year



## Types of Grants Proposed by Students



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