



**Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Proposal for The Blend  
Prepared by Amie Rosenblum & Benjamin Weinstock**

## SECTION 1: CONTACT INFORMATION

*Please provide at least one contact that will be on next year's executive board for your club or organization. Four spaces have been provided below. If you need additional spaces, please add more rows to the table.*

Name and Class Year	Email Address
Ben Weinstock (Treasurer) '14	<a href="mailto:weinstock_benjamin@wheatoncollege.edu">weinstock_benjamin@wheatoncollege.edu</a>

\* We will hold elections for President, Vice President, and Business Manager in April 2011.

## SECTION 2: MISSION STATEMENT OF CLUB OR ORGANIZATION

*Please write a brief (no more than 1500 characters) mission statement about your club or organization.*

The Blend is Wheaton's only co-ed a cappella group, founded in 2002. As of Spring 2011, we have fifteen members. To become a member of the Blend, students complete a two-part audition process and are thoroughly considered for talent, personality and overall "Blend" with the group.

Led by a president and pitch-pipe, the Blend rehearses three days a week, not including additional arrangement time, performances, and our weekly Blend Dinner ("Blinner"). We maintain a performance repertoire by arranging two to five new songs each semester, either through group collaboration or by the pitch-pipe. Often we supplement our arrangements with purchased scores of music. In addition, all seasoned members are entitled to solo a "senior song," performed while in one's final year at Wheaton.

At Wheaton the Blend performs at a variety of events; including Jams and Slyphes each semester, as well as other concerts, gatherings, parties, and showcases for other organizations and offices on campus. We also perform off-campus at private and public events, as well at other colleges and universities, representing Wheaton much in the way a varsity sports team does.

### **SECTION 3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS/GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR**

*Please discuss the club or organizations accomplishments for the current fiscal year, 2011; and elaborate on the goals the club is prepared to work towards during the upcoming fiscal year, 2012. Please use as much space as needed.*

In FY2011, the Blend's accomplishments have been many and varied. We've learned five new songs this year and plan to learn three more by the end of the semester. We have held many performances on campus, including showcases and our well attended Fall "Fruit" Jam. We also plan to have an off-campus performance before the end of the semester. We are in the process of preparing for our Spring Jam.

Our Jams are our most expensive investment every year. With a discount from *Corporate Light and Sound* (Attleboro, MA), light and sound for each show costs between \$565 and \$700.

In FY2011, the Blend has actively used the Internet to promote our group and our performances. We use our Facebook page to connect to Wheaton students, other groups and our fans. Our website, [www.theblendacapella.com](http://www.theblendacapella.com), receives anywhere between 20 and 200 unique hits every day. Thanks to our web presence, numerous organizations, companies, and musical groups have contacted us, soliciting performances and other services, such as "blend-o-grams".

We have also worked hard to fundraise for our group. We are paid to perform, host workshops, and sell live recordings from past Jams. We also fundraise by selling Blend t-shirts to members, family and friends. These t-shirts double as free advertising and as our casual performance uniform. Since we began to sell t-shirts in Spring 2010, we've fundraised over \$800.

Our efforts to limit spending and increase fundraising are in preparation of our largest financial investment to-date: recording a CD. In the Spring 2010, we began working in Wheaton's recording studio, hoping to affordably record and edit a few songs. We quickly realized that this "at home" strategy might save us money, but lacked the polish and professionalism a cappella recording requires. We have spent the last year interviewing and budgeting with at least five different professional a cappella recording companies, some of whom work with college groups (including the Wheatones, Whims and GC's). We have also discussed the recording process with other groups and are familiar with the challenges, costs and rewards of a professionally recorded, edited and mastered CD. A 5-8 track CD will cost approximately \$5,000 to record, edit, mix and master. We hope to record over a period of 18 months, with a tentative release in Fall 2012, just in time for our 10-year anniversary and reunion.

In FY2012, we plan to expand our musical horizons and networking opportunities by becoming official members of CASA (The Contemporary A Cappella Society) for \$30 a year. We also hope to attend a weekend workshop or festival affiliated with CASA to learn from a cappella experts as well as network our group. The cost of attending a workshop is usually \$45 a person.

In FY2012, we also plan to continue to perform regularly on Wheaton's campus. If our budget allows, we would like to travel more for off-campus performances as well.

Our 10-year reunion in Fall 2012 does not fall within FY2012, but will be an important event we are preparing to host in the foreseeable future. It can be expected that some of our time and budget in Spring 2012 will be dedicated to organizing our group's reunion.

**SECTION 4a: REQUIRED EXPENDITURES**

*In the summary table below, please provide the Finance Committee a summary of expenses that your club or organization requires to operate throughout the next fiscal year. These expenses include conference or athletic fees, obligatory payments, or purchases the club or organization needs to make in order to operate.*

**Summary Chart: Required Expenditures**

#	Item	Cost
1	Fall: Light & Sound at Jam	\$700
2	Fall: Hospitality/Refreshments for Guest Group at Jam	\$75
3	Fall: Live CD "production": Blank CD's and cases (for sale)	\$50
4	Fall: Transportation to performance, 60 miles away	\$250
5	Spring: Light & Sound at Jam	\$700
6	Spring: Hospitality/Refreshments for Guest Group at Jam	\$75
7	Spring: Live CD "production": Blank CD's and cases (for sale)	\$50
8	Spring: Transportation to performance, 60 miles away	\$250
9	Website Domain - 2 years	\$75
10	T-Shirts (Performance Attire/Fundraising)	\$250
	<b>FINAL TOTAL REQUEST</b>	<b>\$2,475</b>

## SECTION 4b: DETAILED REQUIRED EXPENDITURES

*This is the section where you will type out the body of your budget request for required expenditures. You should number each request to correspond with its number on the summary chart, and include a detailed description of the item. Of particular importance is the reason your club needs the item, why you need financing to purchase it, and how it will be used. If you have large events with multiple expenses, please include an overall description for the event and place the items pertaining to that event together. Feel free to make this document as long as you need it to be to give each item its proper justification.*

1 & 5: Light & Sound at our Fall and Spring Jams \$700/semester  
\$1,400/year

In FY2011, we paid approximately \$565 for light and sound at our Fall Jam. This price included a discount for our group because we collaborated with VUJ on equipment transportation costs. In FY2012, the price for light and sound, equipment transportation, and sound technician are expected to increase. For this reason we are requesting \$700 per Jam to guarantee the same quality light and sound we have had in the past.

Professional light and sound is essential to provide the best experience for our audience, which usually consists of Wheaton students, faculty, family and friends. Unfortunately, the Chapel does not have an in-house light or sound system. Renting equipment is our only option, as equipped spaces like Weber Theater are unavailable to a cappella groups. Our provider, *Corporate Light and Sound*, undercuts their competitors' prices to give us the most "bang for our buck," but it remains a hefty expense each year. We try to recoup some of these costs by recording the live show through the soundboard and selling CDs of the show. More information on our live CDs is available below.

2 & 6: Hospitality/Refreshments for Jam Guest Groups (Fall & Spring) \$75/semester  
\$150/year

Every semester the Blend invites a guest a cappella group to open for our Jam and perform at intermission. They usually travel 1-3 hours the day of the Jam to attend and are unpaid. In lieu of compensation, The Blend provides a modest dinner before the show, water bottles for the performance, and a place to stay for the night. In past years we have provided pizza, but any type of dairy product, for example, the cheese on pizza, is bad for the voice before a performance. We are requesting \$75 per Jam to provide a more singer-friendly option, such as salad or sandwiches for our guest group.

3 & 7: Live CD "Production"/Fundraising (Fall & Spring) \$50/semester  
\$100/year

At our Jams, showcases, and Activity Fairs, we have sold Live CDs, which we record and edit ourselves. We produce these CDs for little to no cost; the process of producing consists of the purchase of blank disks, cases, and the time our members put into editing and burning the CDs. We sell our CDs for about \$5.00, depending on the date and quality of the recording. Live CDs generally sell out very quickly and have proved to be an excellent way to contribute to



## SECTION 5a: ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES

*In the summary table below, please provide the Finance Committee a summary of expenses that your club or organization might spend if your club or organization could receive additional monies for the next fiscal year on top of your expenditures outlined in the previous section. These expenses should not be a complete wish list, but expenses that club might need to undertake in order to make the upcoming year better than the previous year.*

### Summary Chart: Additional Expenditures

#	Item	Cost
1	CASA Membership (1 year)	\$30
2	Arrangements (\$10-\$50/song)	\$100
3	Fall: Jam Decorations/Costumes	\$50
4	Weekend Workshop/Festival	\$1,500
5	Spring: Jam Decorations/Costumes	\$50
	<b>FINAL TOTAL REQUEST</b>	<b>\$1,730</b>

## SECTION 5b: DETAILED ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES

*This is the section where you will type out the body of you budget request for potential additional expenditures. You should number each request to correspond with its number on the summary chart, and include a detailed description of the item. Of particular importance is the reason your club needs the item, why you need financing to purchase it, and how it will be used. If you have large events with multiple expenses, please include an overall description for the event and place the items pertaining to that event together. Feel free to make this document as long as you need it to be to give each item its proper justification.*

1: CASA Membership \$30/year

CASA, the Contemporary A Cappella Society is the premier organization for a cappella groups in the world. For \$30 a year, CASA provides music downloads of contemporary recordings, access to news and articles relating to a cappella, arrangement libraries, feedback from industry experts, as well as discounts at Festivals and with recording companies.

2: Arrangements \$100/year

A cappella arranging requires extensive knowledge of music theory, a creative ear, and a wealth of time. In FY2012, the Blend will graduate five seniors– and will subsequently learn and perform five senior songs, in addition to the 2-5 new songs we will add to our repertoire. Our elected pitch-pipe is generally responsible for arrangements, but realistically cannot arrange this many songs during a school semester. We are requesting \$100 to purchase professional and amateur arrangements (\$10-\$50 a song).

3 & 5: Jam Decorations/Costumes \$50/semester  
\$100/year

The Blend takes great pride in the quality of our seasonal Jam performances. Our last five Jams (Harry Potter, Fairytales, Video Games, Camp Blend, and Fruit Jam) transformed the Chapel for an evening of entertainment. We take advantage of the resources the school provides for free (Paper, Posters, etc) and reuse materials from the previous semester, but the cost of our decorations and costuming supplies adds up. Our regular expenses for Jams include tape, rope, chalk, paint, markers, string lights, poster board, cardboard, face paint, and fabric. We are modestly requesting \$50 per semester to cover costs associated with our Jam decorations and costumes.

4: Weekend Workshop/Festival\* ~\$1,500

In FY2012, we hope to expand our events by attending at least one Workshop or Festival. Workshops, like SoJam (North Carolina), SingStrong (Virginia), or VocalNation (New York), are held on a weekend and focus on advancing a cappella groups and arrangers through classes lead by some of the nation's top vocal music experts. Hundreds of groups attend for the showcases, competitions, and master-classes and to network with other groups that take their musicality seriously. The Blend would benefit immensely from this experience.

VocalNation, held in New York City in the spring, is the closest workshop to Wheaton; we have budgeted what it would have cost to attend this year.

A single student weekend-pass is \$45 – For 15 members, \$675. Transportation (mileage, not including NYC parking) would come to about \$816 (400 miles round trip x 4 cars = 1600 miles x .51 mileage reimbursement = \$816) Blend members would be willing to pay for our weekend-pass expenses but we would require some assistance for transportation costs. Housing will be provided for free at a Blend member's home. We would estimate the total cost to attend a workshop in New York City\*\* to be around \$1,500.

\*While many groups choose to compete at the ICCA's (International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella), The Blend would like to spend FY2012 improving our skills and competing in smaller competitions held at these workshops. We feel a weekend of classes and coaching is more beneficial than one evening of performing for judges.

\*\*If a new workshop is announced in the Boston-area, transportation costs will be reduced significantly. At this time, there are no plans for a Boston-area workshop.



## SECTION 6a: "WISH LIST" EXPENDITURES

*In the summary table below, please provide the Finance Committee a summary of expenses that your club or organization would expend if there were no financial constraints for the next fiscal year on top of your expenditures outlined in the previous sections. There are no restrictions on what should be included in this summary table.*

### Summary Chart: Wish List Expenditures

#	Item	Cost
1	Professional CD Production – 5-8 song EP	\$5,000
2	Additional Transportation Funds	\$1,000
3	Weebly Pro Website (2 years)	\$72.00
	<b>FINAL TOTAL REQUEST</b>	<b>\$6,072</b>

## SECTION 6b: DETAILED WISH LIST EXPENDITURES

*This is the section where you will type out the body of your budget request for all expenditures (including those from Sections 4 and 5). You should number each request to correspond with its number on the summary chart, and include a detailed description of the item. Of particular importance is the reason your club needs the item, why you need financing to purchase it, and how it will be used. If you have large events with multiple expenses, please include an overall description for the event and place the items pertaining to that event together. Feel free to make this document as long as you need it to be to give each item its proper justification.*

1: Professional CD Production \$5000.00

The Blend has been working hard to fundraise for our upcoming CD. As discussed in **Section 3**, the total cost for recording, editing, mixing, and mastering a CD is \$5,000. We expect to fundraise for the majority of this project, but would appreciate any assistance from the SGA. The last Blend CD was released in 2007 and was not recorded professionally. We are hoping to produce a quality recording that we can sell and submit to competitions. Our goal is to create a CD that is similar to the Whims' 2010 release.

2: Additional Transportation Funds \$1000.00

As discussed in **Section 4**, it costs approximately \$250 for our group to make a 120-mile round trip to a performance, workshop, competition, etc. Increasing our transportation funds to \$1000 would allow us to travel more frequently or travel outside of the greater-Boston area.

For example, when we travelled to Boston, Connecticut and New York during our Fall 2009 tour, we performed at a store, competed in a festival, and hosted a workshop at a high school. Our group acted as ambassadors for Wheaton, promoting our group and showcasing our talents to previously untapped audiences. With additional funds to travel, we can replicate and build on this experience.

3: Weebly Pro Website (2 years)

\$72.00/2 years

[www.theblendacapella.com](http://www.theblendacapella.com) is currently hosted with Weebly, a company that helps create easy to maintain, professional looking websites. Currently, we only pay for our domain name. Upgrading to Weebly Pro (\$2.99 a month or \$72 for two years) would allow us to access more of Weebly's features including advanced web statistics (search terms, top pages, referring sites), password-protected pages, audio/video players, file uploads, removing/customization of the Weebly footer on our page, and more. As our website traffic continues to boom, maintaining a sophisticated web presence becomes increasingly more important. We are requesting \$72 to pay for two years of "Weebly Pro".

## SECTION 7: EVENTS PAST AND FUTURE

*In this section, the Finance Committee would like you to discuss some of your club or organization's past events of magnitude and three potential major events that could occur next fiscal year. Please use as much space as needed.*

I have broken our events into the following categories: **Recruitment, Rehearsal, Performances, and Workshops**

**Recruitment** occurs at the beginning of each semester.

Activity Fairs, Open Rehearsals, Auditions, Callbacks/Slype are all ways The Blend promotes itself to recruit new members. These events are generally cost-free.

**Rehearsal** is held multiple times a week. We rehearse at least six hours (3 days) a week and eat once a week in Chase after a rehearsal. All members are expected to attend rehearsals and dinner ("Blinner"). Rehearsals are cost-free.

**Performances** are usually on-campus. These include Showcases, Slype, Homecoming, Benefits, Jams, and Senior Week events. We also perform off-campus at private parties, stores, schools and concerts. The Blend's colorful and themed Jams are our biggest performances, largely attended, and are what we work toward every year. However, other performances are essential to our group's function and we're constantly looking for new outlets to showcase our talent.

Cost associated with performance includes attire (like Blend t-shirts, purchased by members), transportation, decoration, light and sound, and hospitality for guest groups.

**Workshops**, as discussed in **Section 5**, are a fantastic opportunity to improve our skill and knowledge of a cappella while networking with other groups. The Blend hopes to attend at geographically convenient workshop in Spring 2011.

## **SECTION 8: COLLABORATION**

*The Senate Finance Committee would like your club or organization to explicate where collaboration might be possible.*

The Blend frequently performs with other a cappella and musical groups on campus – The Wheatones, Whims, GC's and VUJ.

Most recently, the Blend collaborated with VUJ in budgeting light and sound for the Fall Jam by sharing equipment for the weekend, saving money for both groups. We have also spent time discussing recording with the Whims and the Gentlemen Callers, who have provided useful information and advice to help save us money in the long-term.

At Freshman and Prospective Student showcases every semester we collaborate with the Office of Admissions to create an evening of entertainment for students. During Homecoming Weekend and Commencement/Reunion Week, the Blend performs, entertaining alums, grads and their families. In anticipation of the senior week performance, we volunteer at Mary Lyon, assisting with a variety of Reunion-related tasks.

The Blend has also lent its voice to SGA for elections/campaigning, activity fairs (for current and prospective students) and more.

Looking forward, we are in the process of working with the SEA Board to find more opportunities to volunteer in the local Norton area. We are talking about a possible upcoming performance at a nursing home in Norton, as well as a workshop we will host for students from the Latin School in Boston. We would like to continue this relationship with the SEA Board and look for more opportunities to use our talent and skills to give back.