



Student Service Fee Advisory Board

Annual Report/Budget Increase Request Cover Sheet

To be completed annually by each department. Please attach Budget Request Forms for each proposed increase.

Department: Graduate Student Council

SSF Account #: 237118-00000

UAF Account #:

Department Budget History:

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Total Budget	\$95,426	\$96,459	\$97,075	
Total Current SSF/UAF Allocation	\$95,426	\$96,459	\$97,075	
SSF/UAF Increases Requested	\$64,500	\$8,500	\$0	
SSF/UAF Increases Funded	\$47,500	\$2,000	\$0	
Total End-of-Year Reserve Balance Across All Operating Accounts	\$22,811	\$31,000	(Projected)	(Projected)

Please provide a reserve spending plan if ending FY13 reserves exceed University requirements.

Graduate Student Council has intentionally accounted for the technology replacement that must occur every 5-6 years and placed a specified amount in their budget to roll to reserves in anticipation of needed equipment upgrades in the future. Any other monies in reserves that exceed the University requirements will go towards savings for this specified use also.

SSF/UAF Increase Request History & FY 2014

Summary:

Program, Service, or Operation Requested	Amount Requested	SSFAB Recommended? (y/n)	VPSA Approved? (y/n)
FY 2012			
Full Time Advisor - SDS II (Permanent funding)	\$2,000	yes	yes
Student Research Week GA (permanent funding)	\$6,500	No	No
FY 2013			
FY 2014 Proposal Summary (Prioritized)			
Student Research Week GA (Permanent funding)	\$15,500		

Annual Report (cont.)

Additional Questions: *(to assist the Board when informing the student body about stewardship of the Student Service Fee)*

Briefly, what recent programs/services have been successful? Which need work? Explain.

Student Research Week (SRW)

The 2012 Student Research Week held Monday, March 19 through Friday, March 23, had student participation of over 500 participants, 270 judges and 200 volunteers assisting in its success. The event is a week-long student-led, university-wide event that provides graduate and undergraduate students the opportunity to showcase the research they perform at Texas A&M University. Around 350 graduate students and 200 undergrads students were able to demonstrate the application of their subject area in a range of contexts through oral and poster presentations. They communicated to student and faculty judges their research plans and the ways in which various methods were used to collect data for analyzing and solving problems. Through each of these encounters students were able to practice their communication skills as well receive feedback on their research on an educational environment. Awards for both poster and oral presentations totaled over \$20,000.

Grad Camp

Grad Camp 2012, an extended 2-day orientation program for graduate students, welcomed over 50 students to Texas A&M this summer marking the 4th year as part of the GSC. Current graduate students, all volunteers, are responsible for the yearlong planning and then execution of this annual event. For the director and assistant director position students were able to apply skills and knowledge from their educational backgrounds to program planning, budgeting, training, networking and logistical duties associated with the positions. The camp's environment encourages interaction between graduate students from various departments establishing social networks and support groups, items vital to the success of graduate students at Texas A&M. The camp initiated discussion about what to expect as a graduate student, focusing on community events and campus involvement. Several on campus and off campus support services were also welcomed to the event to provide information on their resources for graduate students. Students have still maintained connections past Grad Camp into the beginning of the semester.

Mix & Mingles

The Graduate Student Council recognizes the need to balance workloads and social activities and will continue this year to offer Mix & Mingle events allowing for outside interactions between students. These activities have included bowling, ice skating, nights at the movies, and a showing of the Ph.D. Comics movie and have been a way to offer a release from academic stresses. Each of these events have attracted between 100 and 600 graduate students

Please list actions taken in FY12 that were necessary due to the budget cuts, and tell us how that impacted Student Service Fees that may not be being used for their original purpose.

In order to be responsible stewards of student fee dollars the GSC has taken strategic steps in planning to ensure that all endeavors of the GSC reach the broadest population of graduate and professional students. The GSC executive team has cut many of their internal expenses in the yearly budget that they felt were not necessary to achieve their goals. They have also sought out ways to decrease costs of annual events such as Grad Camp and Student Research Week even though the costs of on campus facility rentals and dining options have continued to rise and event prices in the Bryan/College Station community have also risen.

What do you see as your department's financial priorities in the next 3 – 5 years (FY14-FY18)?

The GSC has identified three financial priorities for the next three to five years that will help ensure financial stability for the future of the GSC. The first and main financial priority for the GSC over the next three to five years is to establish an endowment that will provide a stable funding source for future GSCs. The recent funding cuts the GSC experienced this year makes establishing an endowment vital for the future success of the GSC. To accomplish this goal, the GSC is forming an ad hoc committee whose charge will be to develop a five to ten year Strategic Plan for a GSC Endowment and then will be responsible to begin the initial implantation phase of the plan. During the development of the Strategic Plan the Endowment Committee will work with the Association of Former Students, The Texas A&M Foundation, and Cindy Munson from the Development Office in the Division of Student Affairs. Establishing an endowment will provide the GSC the opportunity to continue to grow GSC events focused on academics, professional development, and community building among graduate and professional students.

The second financial priority of the GSC is to develop a technology life cycle fund. This year the GSC has allocated a proportion of our funding to a technology life cycle account to start this fund. Currently, the GSC has seven laptops, which are used for multiple GSC events, and two desktops used in the GSC office. These computers are five to six years old and will soon not be supported by our IT department. By developing a technology life cycle strategic plan and fund the GSC will be able to replace these computers without causing a major impact to one individual GSC year. The goal is to develop a funding plan that will allow the GSC to purchase and replace computers in a responsible yearly cycle.

Finally, the GSC has made a financial priority to secure corporate sponsorships for the GSC Student Research Week. With the current funding climate within Texas, the GSC can no longer rely solely on the existing funding sources for SRW, as these sources may not be available in future years. The current sponsorship levels for SRW are being revamped to be more attractive to corporate sponsorship. Securing corporate sponsorships for SRW is vital as we are looking to expand the event. This year SRW will include students from colleges, like the College of Liberal Arts, who traditionally have not participated in the past. Highlighting research at Texas A&M should also include research that is not in a STEM field. Expanding SRW to include all types of research will not only help students achieve their student learning outcomes but will also move the University towards reaching its Vision 2020 Goals.

How many reclassifications did you have approved in FY12? 0 Total financial impact: 0

How many equity adjustments did you have approved in FY12? 0 Total financial impact: 0

How many one-time merit increases did you have approved in FY12? 0 Total financial impact: 0

How many hiring adjustments did you have approved in FY12? 0 Total financial impact: 0

How much money in salary savings did you acquire in FY12? 0

Additional comments, special considerations, etc.

SSFAB Comments/Notes:

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