



## Annual Report/Budget Increase Request Cover Sheet

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

**Department:** Study Abroad Program

**SSF Account #:** 211220

**UAF Account #:** 237076

**Department Budget History:**

|   | FY 2011   | FY 2012   | FY 2013   | FY 2014   |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total Budget  | \$841,281 | \$834,129 | \$870,238 | \$888,519 |
| Total Current SSF/UAF Allocation                                | \$189,562 | \$191,052 | \$193,748 |           |
| SSF/UAF Increases Requested                                     | \$6,840   | \$2,460   | \$0       | \$0       |
| SSF/UAF Increases Funded  | \$6,840   | \$1,490   | \$2,696   |           |
| Total End-of-Year Reserve Balance Across All Operating Accounts | \$7,057   | \$118,273 | \$76,287  | \$40,283  |

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

NA

**SSF/UAF Increase Request History & FY 2014**

**Summary:**

| <i>Program, Service, or Operation Requested</i> | <i>Amount Requested</i> | <i>SSFAB Recommended? (y/n)</i> | <i>VPSA Approved? (y/n)</i> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>FY 2012</b>                                  |                         |                                 |                             |
| Replacement of SAPO Emergency Phone (one-time)  | \$250                   | N                               |                             |
| Annual phone service (permanent)                | \$720                   | N                               |                             |
| Overseas day (permanent)                        | \$1,490                 | Y                               | Y                           |
| <b>FY 2013</b>                                  |                         |                                 |                             |
| NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS REQUESTED                   |                         |                                 |                             |
|   |                         |                                 |                             |
|   |                         |                                 |                             |
| <b>FY 2014 Proposal Summary (Prioritized)</b>   |                         |                                 |                             |
| NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS REQUESTED                   |                         |                                 |                             |
|   |                         |                                 |                             |
|   |                         |                                 |                             |
|   |                         |                                 |                             |

## 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.**

**SUCCESSFUL:**

The Study Abroad Programs Office is helping the university reach its goals as outlined in Vision 2020 and Action Plan 2015 by facilitating high impact international experiences for all Texas A&M University students. The goals outlined in the university's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) – Aggies Commit to Learning for a Lifetime – focuses on many of the core values instilled through an international experience. "Our rapidly changing world needs people who can learn and keep learning, adapt to change, and create new opportunities for themselves and others." Through study, research, internships, or service learning experiences around the world, Aggies acquire these outcomes. In AY2012, 2,946 A&M students participated in study abroad experiences. This represents a 2 percent increase in participation over AY 2011. Although a lower annual increase than the last 5 years, more students enrolled in credit-bearing opportunities; in AY2011 TAMU had 1980 students enrolled in credit-bearing programs whereas in AY 2012, that number increased to 2161 – a 9 percent increase. The study abroad office continues to serve all A&M students overseas by providing 24/7 emergency support when necessary.

The study abroad office reviews and continues to update and improve the on-line services available to the A&M community. *The SSFAB-supported database has been instrumental in helping the university to manage information regarding international activities for students.* Having the database has given the Study Abroad Programs Office the ability to provide more effective and efficient emergency assistance to students overseas. Communications with students while they are abroad has also improved greatly. The study abroad office can quickly and efficiently notify students overseas when important travel alerts are issued by the state department, such as the one attached.

*Overseas Day* – SSFAB support has allowed the study abroad office to improve the quality and quantity of outreach to the A&M student community in the weeks surrounding the annual Overseas Day study abroad fair. We are also inaugurating partnerships with other departments at A&M to offer a broader array of activities associated with Overseas Day, including: 1) a panel on writing effective study abroad scholarship essays; 2) An informational session on how to capitalize on your international experience when applying for jobs. This mini-conference is sponsored with the Career Center and International Studies Abroad (an affiliated program provider) and will include presentations, break-out sessions, and mock interviews for students; 3) Funding your international experience presented with staff members from Scholarships and Financial Aid; 4) a panel with students who studied abroad recently. All these activities focus on optimizing international opportunities and experiences for A&M students. Study abroad staff members have continued a vigorous schedule of presentations and outreach activities. Study abroad staff delivered 36 presentations in fall 2011, 60 during spring 2012, and 28 during summer 2012. These include: class presentations, Aggie Mom club groups, MSC open house, and tailored presentations to different student groups.

*Raise awareness of university locations and international opportunities* – SSFAB supported printing quality posters highlighting the 4 A&M locations overseas (Italy, Costa Rica, Mexico City, and Qatar). With the display of these posters in strategic locations across campus, and increased mention of these facilities in

presentations to students, and assistance in the development of a Research Experience for Undergraduates at the center in Costa Rica contributed to the increase in numbers of A&M students visiting university centers.

The study abroad office also participated in the MSC re-opening ceremony with a display of photographs from recent study abroad students.

*Emergency response for students overseas* – SAPO continues to provide 24/7 service to students overseas when they have an emergency. Situations this year included assisting students who were robbed, lost passports, hospitalized, and injured.

*Passport Services* – The study abroad office is now a passport acceptance facility. This serves the student community by providing all passport needs, visa, and OPT photo capability on campus. This service grossed approximately \$28,000 in FY 11 (in fees required by the US State Department for passport acceptance facilities) and gave students the convenience of fulfilling their passport and visa requirements on campus, rather than going to the Bryan or College Station post office.

## **IMPROVING**

*Assessment of services* – The Study Abroad Programs Office identified assessment of services as a weakness, and is working closely with the Assistant Vice President of International Operations to upgrade our assessment of learning outcomes. Each ‘program type’ (ie faculty-led program, internships, etc.) is reviewing and upgrading the assessment tool/survey used to gauge the student’s international experience.

The study abroad office worked with the Office of Institutional Assessment to administer the Global Perspective Inventory (GPI) survey to all study abroad students. “The GPI measures how a student thinks, views him/herself as a person with a cultural heritage, and relates to others from other cultures, backgrounds, and values,” (from the GPI website). The survey contains a pre-departure and post-program component. The student responses will be compared to incoming freshman (pre-departure) and graduating seniors (post-program) at gauge the effect of a study abroad experience on a student’s global perspective and intercultural growth.

*Marketing efforts* - SAPO reviewed and re-prioritized its marketing efforts. All purchased advertisement now goes directly into publications that serve students (rather than the broader A&M community.) By printing one color brochure instead of a myriad of B&W brochures, we have reduced printing costs significantly over the last 2 years. All marketing efforts are now directed to student-oriented direct outreach.

*Orientation materials* – In AY2013, the study abroad office strives to significantly improve the orientation materials for students who go abroad. Currently the orientation materials are a ‘one-for-all’ tool that does not have the flexibility to allow students who have traveled abroad before ‘skip’ through the basic materials and delve into more directed information regarding student health and safety. For example, students who have a passport and know how to get a visa will be able to pass through these sections, and concentrate more on the information regarding their specific program. We are looking at different tools that will allow us to customize on-line orientations for students depending on destination and knowledge of travel. This will greatly improve our services to 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.**

The study abroad office currently has 2 vacant positions that will remain unfilled in FY2013 – Administrative Coordinator and Senior Study Abroad Advisor I. By introducing department-wide efficiencies, launching more on-line resources, and utilizing experienced Peer Counselors (student workers) more effectively, and office has been able to meet the needs of the growing number of students going abroad despite the reductions in staffing. Having the SSFAB-funded student intern has helped tremendously; student intern works primarily with the short-term credit and non-credit bearing programs overseas (known colloquially as ‘field trips’) and facilitating the approval of A&M courses taught overseas with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). We have also taken advantage of other resources available – this semester the study abroad office has an intern from the Higher Education Administration MA program who has helped considerably with PR-related activities with no cost to the department. More broadly, the recently re-organized Global Program Support offices (under the Vice Provost, of which study abroad is one of three units), is looking carefully at how services can be shared across the three units to achieve greater efficiencies.

The SSFAB funds have been used as requested without shifting the department priorities. No SSFAB initiatives have been curtailed because of reductions in funding to the department; instead, the study abroad office has found other areas where savings have been identified and cost efficiencies implemented.

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

- 1) Restructuring the current study abroad administrative fees** – Currently the Study Abroad Programs Office has a jumble of different administrative fees that are charged to students who enroll on its programs, depending on the length of the program and the level of service requested by the faculty member or department. The study abroad office would like to flatten the fee structure, with the longer-term goal of lowering administrative fees charged to the individual students. The projected difference in revenue will be covered by increased student participation and (anticipated) re-alignment of the budgets for the Global Program Support unit.
- 2) Work with other units in the Global Program Support offices to provide cost-effective services to the Texas A&M University community** – GPS (Global Program Support) is the new name for the recently re-aligned offices known previously as the International Programs Office. The goal of the unit is to help colleges achieve their goals in offering global opportunities to students. The three units within GPS are working together to identify unit-wide efficiencies and areas of shared services.
- 3) Continue to move more services on-line and improve quality of on-line resources to better assist students in getting information about international opportunities.** We are working to improve both the quantity and quality of on-line resources to help students and faculty find the resources they need quickly.
- 4) Upgrade department infrastructure, particularly computer equipment and software.**

**How many reclassifications did you have approved in FY12? 2 Total financial impact: \$1,400**

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

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

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

**How much money in salary savings did you acquire in FY12? \$29,915**

**Additional comments, special considerations, etc.**

The study abroad office serves the entire A&M community through its effort to bring an international experience and perspective to students and the campus community. As a support office, study abroad continually reviews its processes and procedures to ensure that all Aggies receive the most efficient and cost-effective support available. SAPO works closely with academic units, student organizations, the Career Center, and SFA to provide as many Aggies as possible with an international experience before they graduate. This mission fulfills the goals outlined in Vision 2020 and Action Plan 2015 to provide a high-impact learning experience to all Aggies.

*SSFAB Comments/Notes:*

**STUDENT | SERVICE | FEE | ADVISORY | BOARD**