



Budget Increase Request Cover Sheet

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

Department: Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid

Account #: 210500

Department Budget History:

	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Total Budget	\$6,820,407	\$6,858,599	\$6,945,103	\$6,345,103
Total Current SSF Allocation	\$1,081,842	\$1,081,842	\$1,081,842	/
SSF Increases Requested	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$44,800
SSF Increases Funded	\$0	\$0	\$0	/
Total End-of-Year Reserve Balance Across All Operating Accounts	\$747,774	\$547,362	\$550,000	\$500,000

Please provide a reserve spending plan if ending FY11 reserves exceed University requirements.

SSF Increase Request History & FY 2012

Summary:

<i>Program, Service, or Operation Requested</i>	<i>Amount Requested</i>	<i>SSFAB Recommended? (y/n)</i>	<i>VPSA Approved? (y/n)</i>
FY 2010			
FY 2011			
FY 2012 Proposal Summary (Prioritized)			

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.

We have reorganized the way we process aid and advise students, enabling us to eliminate an advising position. As a result of the changes, we were able to disburse more aid on time and correctly, yielding a 50% decrease in daytime calls with a 30% increase in the number of calls answered during the week prior to classes starting and the first week of classes.

This fall during Gig'Em Week, we had 4 times more attendees at the Money Wise Aggie workshops, 3 times more people at our SEO workshops, and had over 1300 students stop at our resource tables and Aggieland Market promoting these events. This year we had over 700 students stop by for information at our resource table at the Graduate Student Orientation.

We had 5 times more Federal Work Study students hired into Community Service Program agency positions.

We have successfully achieved the designation as a "Military Friendly Campus" and are a proud member of Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges. We are also heading the Military friendly efforts for the System. This year we had our first Military Friendly System Symposium. We have developed a Troops to College Committee to bring together groups from across campus to help meet the needs of these students. Over the past year, we and the committee successfully implemented the new Chapter 33 benefits, a veterans new student orientation, a veterans new student conference, a military studies minor, the State's Hazelwood Legacy program, the federal Yellow Ribbon program, a military symposium for the System, a list serve, specialized workshops for FAFSA completion, Chapter 33 information sessions, and a strengthened relationship with Veterans Affairs Educations Liaisons.

We had a 62% increase in the number of veterans served from FY09 to FY10, with another 19% overall increase already just for this Fall semester. Our full-time staff have worked many hours of overtime over and above the work of the graduate assistant we have hired using reserves and the veterans college student assistants.

This year saw a dramatic shift from actual veterans to dependents of veterans and military served. The dependents have different needs than the veterans; so we must stratify our approach. In addition, "veterans" includes active duty, reserves, National Guard, and former military, also with different needs. We also have new federal programs that require more time.

Because of all the changes, we also implemented a stand-alone website for our Veterans Services.

One other area in Veterans Services that we implemented in Spring 2009 was a survey of our veterans. However, due to all the changes in programming and the increase in students processed and needing assistance, the office and the committee elected to postpone and revamp the survey and data gathering and will re-initiate the survey development process this year.

Please list actions taken in FY11 that helped reduce the pressure of increased fees, e.g., eliminated vacant positions, program cuts, increased revenues, development efforts.

Because more students had their money prior to classes starting, we had fewer students having to use emergency tuition & fee loans, using installment plans, or being charged late fees.

We eliminated 1.5 positions overall in our department. We have reduced printed materials, advertising, travel, and subscriptions for learning and training tools. We have also restructured our network servers to reduce costs.

We have reduced the interest rates on short term loans.

We have obtained outside funding for scholarships from the Greater Texas Foundation, the STARS Foundation, the Tillman Foundation, and the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation Foundation. We have started to participate in new programs from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, such as the State Engineering Scholarship, and the College Access Challenge Grant. We continue to search out apply to various grantors to obtain funds to help our students through school financially, as well as develop success programs to help them academically.

We continue to work with the Texas A&M Foundation on the One Mind – One Spirit Campaign to raise funds for endowed scholarships.

What do you see as your department’s financial priorities in the next 3 – 5 years (FY12-FY16)?

Based on our 5 year strategic planning process, we have 6 main areas of focus: (1) Elevate the military friendly status of Texas A&M; (2) Ensure world-class infrastructure and support for the services and programs for our customers; (3) Enhance our ability to ensure a degree from AYM remains affordable and continues as a “best value;” (4) Expand existing and identify new approaches to communications, marketing and services for our current and prospective students; (5) Support the University’s mission to increase enrollment of a diverse population through financial aid and associated SFA outreach; and (6) Build or improve collaborative relationships with key departments across the University. With several tactics to each the above goals, some will be met with internal reallocation of resources or seeking outside support, while some will be pursued with collaborative efforts, and still others truly require additional funds.

To achieve the objectives of the System and Texas A&M for the Military Friendly Status and all that entails, additional funds are needed for scholarships and other aid, as well as another full-time position to assist with coordination, processing, and programming.

Additional comments, special considerations, etc.

SSFAB Comments/Notes:

STUDENT | SERVICE | FEE | ADVISORY | BOARD