



Budget Request Form FY2019

Department should complete one form for each individual request

Department: Graduate and Professional Student Council

Program, Service, or Operation Requested

Student Research Week Graduate Assistant Position

SAFAB Use Only	
YES	NO

General Description:

Student Research Week (SRW) is one of the largest university-wide, student-led research week programs for both graduate and undergraduate students in the nation. The mission of SRW is to recognize and celebrate student research at Texas A&M University, showcasing the excellence and broad range of this research to the University community each spring semester. The Student Research Week Director Position is a Graduate Assistantship designed to supervise the planning and coordinating this large-scale event. It includes assembling and organizing over 100 sessions with about 800 student participants, 200 judges, and 161 volunteers to ensure a successful event. Currently, the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) has contributed ½ of the funding of this half-time position (equal to ¼ of a full-time employee), and the second half has been solicited externally on an annual basis. One time funding was received in FY13 and FY15 from SAFAB. Both funding requests covered two fiscal years. As we have had matching funding for the past ten years since the inception of the SRW Director, permanent partial support from UAF would allow us to focus on expanding the event.

Request Type: Full Increase One-Time Partial/Matching

Type of Funds Requested UAF Other

General Questions:

How does this address an important need and positively impact students?

SRW is an event that gives both undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to showcase their research at Texas A&M University. This past year we had 797 competitors register, 200 judges, and 161 volunteers. SRW exemplifies Texas A&M University's long-standing commitment to providing educational research opportunities for students at all levels. It also provides a unique opportunity to enhance your organizational and project management skills while gaining crucial insights in conference planning and logistics. This competition directly benefits every participant. It is a high impact experience and aligns with the mission and goals of the University, as well as, with the expectations of faculty and senior level administrators. SRW has been able to create a high impact learning atmosphere and aligns it with undergraduate, Master's, and Doctoral learning outcomes as outlined by the institution. Learning occurs through the practice of

communicating efficiently through the showcasing of subject material in a wide range of contexts, and demonstrates critical thinking through executed research.

This event is fully planned and run students and provides not only graduate students, but also undergraduate students with many learning experiences ranging from presentation skills, effective communication to program planning and execution. There is a true connection between the skills students are learning in the classroom, to their participation in SRW. In fact, 95% of our survey respondents said they agreed or strongly agreed they were able to apply knowledge of their research and other information gained in the classroom setting; 94% agreed or strongly agreed they were able to apply written/graphic communication skills learned in the classroom to their presentation; and 91% said they agreed or strongly agreed that SRW contributed to their overall learning/development.

It is needless to mention that it takes immense expertise and a substantial time commitment to successfully execute such a research symposium with such positive impact for our participants. The huge success of SRW is therefore attributed to the dedication of the SRW Director. To respect the service provided for such a significant event, it is essential that a stable source of funding be secured. This can help ensure that appropriate attention is given to SRW in order to sustain and maintain it at the high level of execution and upheld this institutional leadership opportunity to provide a rich learning experience.

What department/Division Strategic Plan item does this support?

What is the impact if not funded?

SRW fits well into the realms of the Division of Student Affairs as it serves students to provide an environment of learning, leadership and prepares a student to achieve academic success. It supports the Division of Student Affairs Strategic Plan in a variety of ways. First, it aligns with Goals 1 and 3 of enriching the learning experience of students by cultivating an environment of intellectual curiosity and creating an inclusive environment that develops global citizens and leaders who productively engage in a wide spectrum of ideas, perspectives, and cultures. By providing students an opportunity to present their research they are not only able to receive feedback from peers and faculty but simultaneously learn from the wide variety of research topics that are under investigation around them.

Further, the three tenets of the organization, GPSC: advocacy, community, and research are all supported by Student Research Week (SRW). The communal gathering of students and faculty created by SRW advocates to the Texas A&M community to facilitate critical thinking, and the sharing of the knowledge gained through the universities' many research endeavors undertaken by students and faculty.

SRW participation is widely recognized among University administrators, faculty and students as a research opportunity to nurture the seeds of professional development. The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) have included SRW participation in their Professional Development Certificate program G.R.A.D. Aggies to be counted towards the completion of the advanced certificate, the highest category offered. The high-impact educational experience program LAUNCH for undergraduates, in the Division of Academic Affairs also recognizes it to be a great platform for students to be able to present their research.

The Student Research Week Director is pivotal in the planning, execution, and operating procedures of SRW. Without a director the entire event would not be viable. The responsibilities of the Director are quite substantial and necessitate the position to be a Graduate Assistant Position versus a volunteer position. Securing the funding for the director position is the key to SRW's continued success.

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Updated 8/21/17

Please provide any data, evidence, input (student faculty, staff, other) you gathered to help you determine the need for additional resources.

Based on feedback received from our 2007 and 2008 SRW directors, the graduate assistantship position was created in 2009. The continued growth of SRW, increasing campus expectations, and adapting to student feedback each year, has raised the volume and standard for the event in such a way that has exceed a volunteer position. The SRW Director is required to fundraise the \$25,000+ awards budget, attend a number of institutional meetings and external meetings to promote the value and experiences students receive while participating in SRW. Further, this position being a paid graduate assistantship allows for increased accountability for the Director for the quality and timeliness of the work associated with the planning and implementation of the event. This assistantship for an individual student will allow the University administrators to promote the learning opportunities of a large number of students and thereby promote the value of the high impact learning environment as needed.

When the position was created, the Offices of the Dean of Student Life and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies acknowledged the need for additional resources and supported the SRW Director position with funding. Additionally, SAFAB has acknowledged our need for additional resources since FY13 as we have previously been allocated full one-time funding to cover ½ of the assistantship salary for two years.

What actions have you implemented internally to address the identified need?

Within our limited budget we allocate money to cover the operating costs of SRW related expenses (materials, general operating costs, judge's refreshments, awards, etc.) As SRW expands it requires more resources. Due to past success, we need additional funding to cover our base costs. We continue to seek outside sources of funding to assist in this increase. Cash awards are offered to first and second place competitors within topical categories and are covered by the generosity of the Vice President for Research, Vice President of Student Affairs, Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS), University Honors and Undergraduate Research, and most of the colleges on campus.

We have received an approved funding memo from OGAPS for FY17 and FY18 providing ½ the SRW Director assistantship funding in each of those fiscal at the rate of \$7500.00 per fiscal year.

Generally, what assessment tools will you use to evaluate this program/service?

Student Research Week as an event works with Student Life Studies to assess the event. An annual report is written and published, and includes specific areas such as attendance of the competitors, volunteers and judges, areas for improvement in the event and also seeks for suggestions. Additionally, the director's position is evaluated throughout the year and a formal graduate assistant performance evaluation is completed at the end of the year.

***How have other sources of funding (fundraising, sponsorship, reserves, etc.) been considered?
Please explain.***

We seek ½ the funding for this position from the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. Additionally, Student Research Week requires a substantial financial outlay to cover the costs of room reservations within the MSC for one full-week, technology rental and purchase of equipment, as well as additional materials to

run the event smoothly. GPSC allocates a line item number annually from their budget to cover such operating expenses and receive additional operational funding from the Vice President for Research.

All award dollars are collected through the gracious support from the academic side of the University as the Vice President of Research, most colleges on Campus and directly benefit student competitors.

Funding Description:

	Dollar Amount
Total Estimated Cost	\$15,500.00
<i>Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if applicable)</i>	<i>\$7,500.00</i>
TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED	\$8,000.00

SAFAB Comments/Notes: