



Funding Request Form FY2024

Department should complete one form for each individual request

Department:

Graduate and Professional Student
Government

Program, Service or Operation Requested:

Grad Camp

General Description:

Grad Camp is an extended orientation event hosted by the Graduate and Professional Student Government(GPSG) each August. The aim of the program is to help new graduate students “make the most of your time at this great university by helping you connect with people and resources and by introducing you to our culture. Grad Camp brings new graduate and professional students together for a once in a lifetime learning and networking experience in Aggieland” (<https://gradcamp.tamu.edu>).

The history of Grad Camp started in 2009 as a multi-day off campus event. Now the program has evolved into a single day, on campus event, providing informative, interactive activities and presentations led by peers and other on campus partners. The program was developed especially for incoming graduate students.

Request Type:

Full Increase One-Time Partial/Matching

Type of Funds Requested:

UAF Other

General Questions

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

Grad Camp offers an opportunity for new students to learn about Texas A&M values, culture, and community. Interactions with the population have shown that graduate students seek a connection to the institution outside of their own field of study. Grad Camp not only offers an opportunity to learn about the culture of A&M, but also offers a chance to meet people outside of their cohort which creates a sense of community and networking which is vital to their retention.

What department/Division strategic plan item does this support?

In the 2020-2025 strategic plan, there was mention of Texas A&M making a commitment to elevate the graduate and professional support. One of the performance indicators was to improve the graduate and professional climate. The climate for this population is extrapolated from the survey data collected looking at the following metrics: (i) I feel that I

belong at Texas A&M University; (ii) I feel welcome at Texas A&M University. Grad Camp provides an opportunity to improve the climate among this population by providing new graduate students an avenue to learn about the tradition at A&M and to create their own community outside of their department right at the start of the journey at A&M.

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

Since the start of Grad Camp, there has been continual growth and interest in the number of incoming graduate students registering for the event. Based off previous survey data, there was a substantial increase in the Net Promoter Score from 5 to 31 in 2020. The Net Promoter Score signifies those participants who would recommend the program to others. Participants of the program enjoyed learning about campus traditions and resources and appreciated the efforts of the staff. Between 2020 and 2021, there was an increase in registration size from 500 to 682 students. For 2021, we initiated a scholarship program to help cover the cost of camp for incoming students, which 106 graduate students applied for and received.

While the data for 2022 has not been finalized, we did meet our benchmark for 500+ registrants for the Grad Camp sessions. We had to close our registration due to limits of physical spaces for the events and the amount of volunteer staff. For our in-person sessions, we saw a 76-80% percent attendance rate which has been higher than previous years.

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

There have been on-going talks with the VPSA to discuss the need for Grad Camp and to expand support for the program. In addition, there have been meetings with different campus partners to look at further collaborations to further improve the quality of Grad Camp.

If funding is granted, what metrics will you use to evaluate success of this program/service/operation?

Camp attendance and attendee satisfaction would be our primary metrics of success. Our goal is to serve as many students as possible by continuing to provide a high-quality extended orientation experience. We would maintain the increasing registration numbers benchmark as an indicator of our success. Attendee and orientation team satisfaction will be measured via surveys sent out to all individuals involved.

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

Currently, we are in on-going conversations with the Association of Former Students in order to get connected with graduate networks to seek sponsorship from alumni to create an endowment for Grad Camp. In addition, we are seeking avenues for possible outside sponsorship from local businesses and other organizations. Currently, we receive an allocation of \$3500.00 to fund Grad Camp every year.

Total Estimated Cost

Funding Description	Amount
Total Estimated Cost	\$7000.00

<i>Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if Applicable)</i>	\$3500.00
TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED	\$3500.00