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**Student Affairs Fee
Advisory Board**
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Funding Request Form FY2023

Department:

Marketing & Communication - Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs

Program, Service or Operation Requested:

Division of Student Affairs – Graduate Assistant for the Marketing & Communication Office

General Description:

NOTE: We made this request last year but have not been notified of whether our proposal was accepted. If our proposal for this position is not accepted for fall 2021, we would like to make the request again for fall 2022.

We request recurring funds to replace the graduate assistant in the Marketing & Communications Office so that we may better assist the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Division of Student Affairs departments with marketing and communications needs, including managing campaigns such as My Aggie Story (a video storytelling project), the DSA Student Affairs Advisory Board, COVID-19 awareness and prevention, Suicide Awareness and Prevention marketing, and other high-level special projects. This part-time position provides a high-impact student experience that enhances a student’s human development and employment skills.

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?

The central marketing office in the Division of Student Affairs handles a variety of marketing and communications projects for the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and many of our departments.

These projects include everything from research and strategy, to implementation and assessment. We conceptualize and create printed collateral such as banners, signs, and brochures, websites, social media campaigns, digital signs, press releases and other narratives, videos, photos, and presentations.

Ultimately, all of our efforts benefit the students of Texas A&M University as we work according to the division's strategic goals to enhance the student experience at Texas A&M in a variety of ways. Specifically, recurring funds to replace the graduate assistant position we have had for two years will:

- * Encourage student wellbeing through the creation, implementation, and assessment of awareness campaigns on a variety of topics, including COVID-19 awareness and prevention, Texas A&M history and traditions, belonging, sexual assault, suicide, depression, stress, and anxiety.
- * Engage students by sharing the value of student experiences as they relate to our division's departments. These experiences build camaraderie and leadership and life skills.
- * Assist BG Joe Ramirez and our associate and assistant vice presidents in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, as well as our directors and their staff within the Division of Student Affairs departments with marketing and communication needs as they serve nearly 73,000 students.
- * Provide a meaningful, hands-on employment experience to prepare a graduate student for a career related to marketing and communication after graduation.
- * Present unique opportunities to communicate the value of a Texas A&M education, and how it is unique among institutions of higher education.
- * Allow for powerful, relevant marketing and communication campaigns that highlight our strategic commitments of responsibility, wellbeing, discovery, diversity, and inclusion.
- * Free the full-time staff to devote more time to research, strategy, consultation, interaction with peer institutions, professional development, and assessment.

What department/Division strategic plan item does this support?

Goal No. 5 of our strategic plan calls for strategically leveraging resources and developing new strategies to ensure our future effectiveness and sustainability. Under our existing funding model and project demand, the ability to meet the marketing and communication needs of the OVPSA, our departments and student organizations at a high level of quality, professionalism, and timeliness, is a great challenge. Funding a graduate assistant for the Division of Student Affairs within its central marketing office would give the entire division access to additional resources that are not available at this time, or are available only with an extended waiting period.

This item would also support **Strategic Goals 1, 2, and 3** of our strategic plan. This student team would: 1) enrich the learning experience of a graduate student. 2) Contribute to his or her success by providing hands-on job skills. 3) Help to create an

inclusive environment that develops global citizens and leaders who productively engage in a wide spectrum of ideas, perspectives, and cultures. We would continue to contribute to this goal through an intentional process of content solicitation that targets a wide range of students, and we would disseminate our campaigns as widely as possible using various Texas A&M media channels.

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

During the past several years, we have logged more than 300 individual project requests annually, including from many student organizations.

For two of those years, the graduate assistantship was funded through a DSA College Completion Grant. Last summer, after our third graduate assistant earned her degree from the Bush School, we were unable to hire another graduate student to fill this key position because those one-time funds are depleted.

In close collaboration with our full-time and undergraduate student team, these graduate students have conceptualized, planned, implemented, and assessed the My Aggie Story video project, provided hands-on production such as filming and editing, provided assistance with key public and media relations projects, conducted research and assessment for other marketing campaigns, such as Fearless Leaders.

Graduate students provide a higher level of meaningful, specialized, and mature experience as they manage projects that requires more responsibility than we would normally assign to an undergraduate student. Our graduate assistants have been an invaluable addition to our marketing team as we serve the OVPSA, our departments, and Texas A&M students.

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

During the past several years, the marketing and communication office for the Division of Student Affairs grew to four full-time employees and at its peak in spring / early summer 2020 had five undergraduate student workers and a graduate assistant. This growth in our staff has moved us quickly toward a more organized, deliberate strategy and coordination with the OVPSA and departments. With strong funding support from SAFAB, we were able to hire a full-time videographer and invest in proper photo and video equipment, giving us the opportunity to share meaningful campaigns with Texas A&M students on a variety of topics, including suicide awareness, hazing prevention, and COVID-19 prevention and awareness. We have been sharing a video campaign titled My Aggie Story for more than two years now, work with TAMU MarComm and our CAPS group on Suicide Awareness and Prevention marketing, and completed the Fearless Leaders campaign to highlight the variety of student organizations and how they groom leaders.

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

Digital marketing campaigns

-social media analytics (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

-Google analytics (website)

-engagement (comments, feedback, reach, page and post views, shares, downloads, time spent on a video, and conversions).

With assistance from Student Life Studies:

-internal customer satisfaction survey

-student workers / student interns

-job satisfaction survey

-pre- and post-reflection questions

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

At this time, the marketing and communications group in our division does not have access to recurring funds for student positions. We have been advised that a proposal for recurring funds for a graduate assistant through private fundraising or sponsorship is unlikely.

Total Estimated Cost

Funding Description	Amount
Graduate Assistant Salary (\$13/hour for 20 hours per week + \$3,000 / year for benefits)	\$16,000/year
-Plan, strategize, manage, assess, and report on major DSA marketing campaigns, such as My Aggie Story, We Belong, and COVID-19.	
<i>Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if Applicable)</i>	
TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED	\$16,000/year