Student Affairs Fee Advisory Board

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Funding Request Form FY2023

Department should complete one form for each individual request

Department:
Student Activities

Program, Service or Operation Requested:
Learning Management System - Thinkific

General Description:
A learning management system (LMS) is a software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, automation and delivery of educational courses, training programs, or learning and development programs. The university transitioned from eCampus to CANVAS this year. Non-academic units in the past had access to eCampus to form groups, deliver content, and track progress. As of today, non-academic units do not have access to CANVAS. As such, there are a number of needs that the Department of Student Activities, student groups, as well as other units have to deliver trainings, store content, and document progress. Some trainings are to be in compliance with risk mitigation strategies expectations at scale for large institutionally imperative student programs. The LMS system, Thinkific, had been used on campus in recent years and is an approved system through TAMU IT and has been approved by the TAMU President's office for platform accessibility requirements.

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?
Thinkific can address numerous needs within the Department of Student Activities. The scope of our work is far reaching. We see this tool being used in the following arenas: 1) Freshman Leadership Advisory Council (FLAC) student leader training of all FLO Members; 2) New Student Organization (NSO) process; 3) Fish Camp and T-Camp leader and member training; 4) Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life council and leader training; 5) Big Event Site leader and volunteer trainings; and 6) the Department of Student Activities online education and training platform that serves over 1,100 recognized student organizations.

Not to mention a number of other offices could benefit from the use of this resource: 1) Office of Student Success Hullabaloo U instructor training; 2) Department of Multicultural Services; 3) Career Center; 4) TAMU Foundation; 5) Association of former Students, and many more.

What department/Division strategic plan item does this support?
Goal 1: Enrich the Student Experience (a, c)
-Students learn both in and out of the classroom. Our programs, services, and experiences provide co-curricular opportunities for students to make progress toward achieving the Texas A&M Student Learning Outcomes, to integrate their learning as well as prepare for a lifetime of learning and development.
a. Increase the number of opportunities for students to engage in high-impact, transformational learning experiences in the Division
c. Provide innovative programs, services, activities, and facilities that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population

Comments: With stronger technological capabilities, our service to staff, advisors, and recognized student organizations could be high impact, innovative, and efficient. If we are to meet the students where they are, then we need to meet them online as well as in person.

Goal 5: Ensure Future Effectiveness (a, c)
-As the landscape of higher education funding continues to evolve, the Division is dedicated to being good stewards of financial and human resources in order to serve students efficiently and effectively. The Division will continue to explore new and innovative entrepreneurial approaches to finance initiatives.   The Division will continue efforts to maximize shared resources (technology, marketing, assessment, etc.) to provide departments with the tools, support, and resources needed to provide quality programs, facilities, activities, and services for students.
a. Design an effective and evolving staffing structure to meet the needs of the Division and departments, maximizing departmental impact and efficiency
c. Create an annual process to identify anticipated technological solutions in order to prioritize technological resources that provide a differentiating position and add business value

Comments: In order to serve our students effectively, we need to identify technological solutions to add value to the great work that the staff and recognized student organizations are doing.

Please provide data, evidence, and/or input (student faculty, staff, other) you gathered to help you determine the need for additional resources.
We have begun piloting a free version of the software in the Student Organization Development and Administration area. Due to the growing number of staff and the lack of growth of staff compared to our student population, this has been a new approach that we are piloting this fall.

The Freshman Leadership Advisory Council (FLAC) received some seed money to initiate the "premium package" of the system for the next few months. This allowed them to house resources for FLAC leaders, conduct training focused around Title IX, FLO recruitment, and a number of other processes.

As we move forward with recent Extended Orientation external review findings, we have found that a significant need in formalizing some of the training needs via a Learning Management System for Fish Camp and Aggie Transition Camp in the immediate future.

Additionally, this platform would integrated with the Get Involved platform that is being built through DoIT.

What actions have you implemented or discontinued internally to address the identified need?
We have begun piloting a free version of the software in the Student Organization Development and Administration area. The Freshman Leadership Advisory Council (FLAC) received some seed money to initiate the use of the system for their recent leadership training.

It is evident that our staff cannot keep up with the growing numbers, demands, and need for intentional learning and tracking for the masses that cross our doors. As such this is an immediate need that a number of areas would benefit from.

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

Tracking analytics of usage and certifying knowledge gained from modules through surveys/quizzes will be essential in quantifying metrics to evaluate success.

Have other sources of funding (fundraising, sponsorship, reserves, etc.) been considered? Please explain.
Currently, funds have been pieced together from student organizations in need of the tool. Staff have been using the free version to share content, but the free version is not as robust and does not fully meet our needs.

Total Estimated Cost

Funding Description	Amount
Thinkific Platform - *$500/month (totaling $6,000 per year). Given the timeline for Get Involved (approximately 2-3 years) and the dissolution of MaroonLink (approximately 2-3 years), we are requesting funds for 4 years to ensure overlap.*	$24,000
Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if Applicable)	
TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED	$24,000