



Student Affairs Fee Advisory Board

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Funding Request Form FY2024

Department should complete one form for each individual request

Department:

Student Affairs Planning, Assessment & Research

Program, Service or Operation Requested:

Graduate Assistant Non-Teaching (GANT) funding

General Description:

The graduate assistants in Student Life Studies perform statistical (SPSS) and qualitative analysis for many of the ~300 projects we do in the office annually. They may also write summary reports for those projects. We usually hire doctoral students early in their programs, so they stay with SLS for several years. Typically, we have recruited students in Education Psychology/Research and Measurement because their interests and skills align with the position, but we are open to all students who are interested and have basic skills. Their work also frees up time for the Data Analyst to perform more advanced analysis and modeling.

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?

A graduate assistant improves the speed in which we can give information back to our clients (DSA departments that serve students and also student organizations). Then, our clients can make more timely decisions about changing programs, policies, and services to support students. A graduate assistant also brings the student perspective to our office, in terms of interpreting results, creating effective communication with students, and writing reports for specific audiences. The graduate assistant benefits by bringing theory to practice: they are using what they learn in the classroom (i.e., statistics and research classes) on a daily basis in our department. This position supports the Texas A&M University doctoral student learning outcomes (effective communication, using appropriate technologies to communicate, conducting research, and problem solving).

What department/Division strategic plan item does this support?

Indirectly, this supports all of the Division goals because the information SLS provides to clients helps them improve the student experience, contribute to student success, develop global leaders, support well-being, and increase effectiveness. As an example, we work with departments who are interested in first to second year retention; because we have access to university data, we can provide that information, so departments can look at their program in relation to university priorities. As part of the SAPAR strategic plan, our mission focuses on providing quality assessment services to our clients so they can make decisions about student learning, effectiveness, and efficiency. We also work to contribute to the knowledge base about student experiences.

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

In the past we have had up to two graduate assistants, which helps us complete projects in a timely manner (we track that process internally). Most recently, we have been paying the GANT salary out of reserves, but the reserves are decreasing rapidly. The Vice President for Student Affairs and departments have also been asking for more complex statistical predictive modeling using large data sets. The Data Analyst is spending more of his time on those larger projects. Having a graduate assistant would alleviate some of the demands on his time. As a department, we also administer customer satisfaction surveys and focus groups to understand client experiences, which includes the timeliness of getting information back to them. Because graduate students are also recruited by their academic departments for graduate assistant positions, we have to be competitive with our salaries.

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

For a few projects, we have been able to run very basic statistical analysis in Qualtrics that does not require GA work, but we will usually use SPSS statistical software for most client projects. We have paid the GANTs out of reserves in the past to be able to meet our needs. In FY22 and FY23 we have had one GANT, after not having one the previous year.

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

We will continue to track the efficiency in our in the data analysis phase of our processes.

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

We have been paying the GANT position out of our reserve account, but that is not a long-term solution. We have had very preliminary discussions with the DSA Development staff about creating scholarship/endowment for this position.

Total Estimated Cost

Funding Description	Amount
Graduate Assistant Non-Teaching funding	\$20,000
Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if Applicable)	
TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED	\$20,000

