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Student Affairs Fee
Advisory Board
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Funding Request Form FY2023

Department should complete one form for each individual request

Department:

Student Life Studies

Program, Service or Operation Requested:

Full-time Staff Professional Development funding

General Description:

The knowledge base of our staff drives our performance. In recent years with budget cuts and increases in operating expenses, SLS has removed professional development funding from our operational budget. However, in our field, it is important that (1) we have professional development opportunities, such as attending conferences and workshops, to maintain and improve our student affairs assessment and research skills, and (2) be presenting at professional conferences based on the work that we do, especially around the co-curricular student experience.

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?

Although Texas A&M has had Student Life Studies since 1998, the student affairs assessment field is still fairly new and evolving. There are new data collection techniques, statistical models, and data visualization options that are being shared through workshops and conferences. These skills help the SLS staff in providing effective assessment support to the Division of Student Affairs and student organizations. Those skills help us not only gather data, but make sense of it for our clients and the public, and communicate results broadly.

What department/Division strategic plan item does this support?

This addresses the Division goal related to staff expertise. Historically, Student Life Studies has been a national leader in the student affairs assessment field, but we need to maintain our skills and reach by going to and presenting at conferences and workshops. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs frequently encourages our department to present, publish, and expand our reach in the field. Our recent Comprehensive Program Reviewed recognized our contribution to the field and encouraged that to continue.

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

There are five full-time professional staff and one associate staff in the department. Because of our limited operating budget, we have been taking funds from our reserves to cover expenses, and not all of our staff have gone to major professional development events in the last two years. With the pandemic, there have been more online options, some of which are lower/no cost, but national associations/organizations are now planning in-person events. (As examples, for the 2022 NASPA national conference, registration is \$450 (early bird, member rate), the flight will probably be about \$700, hotel (double occupancy) will be about \$700 (5 nights), food will be about \$150 [total about \$2000]. The Qualtrics user conference registration alone is \$1,799. Costs vary greatly by conference and location.)

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

In recent years, we have used funds from our reserves to cover travel expenses. But, as we continue to draw down those funds, that is not a long-term viable option.

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

We will review the effectiveness and efficiency in our department processes, as well as track the number of presentations/publications produced. In selecting professional development options, we will look at the applicability of the opportunity to be sure it will benefit our department.

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

We have been using reserves for professional development/travel, but our reserves will be drawn down fairly quickly with other operating expenses taken out of reserves.

Total Estimated Cost

Funding Description	Amount
Full-time Staff Professional Development Funding	\$20,000
<i>Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if Applicable)</i>	
TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED	\$20,000