EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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University of Arizona Student Services Fee:
Graduate & Professional Student Council Travel Grants Program

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Executive Summary

The Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC) is the representative organization of graduate and professional students at the University of Arizona. In addition to serving as the representative body of the students to the University Administration and Arizona Board of Regents, GPSC promotes the professional development of graduate and professional students. The GPSC achieves this goal not only by providing for communication and fostering intellectual interaction between students, the organization also manages and disburses funds for the purpose of hosting and/or attending conferences and meetings central to the academic mission of the University of Arizona.

Travel Grants Program:

The GPSC travel grants program is among one of the most popular and widely used services available to our constituency. Graduate and professional students can apply for travel grants in order to assist in their participation of professional events conducted by major academic and business organizations through the country and the world. These events include conferences, symposia and meetings. Unbiased, independent evaluators; including deans, faculty members and graduate students at the University of Arizona, review all applications submitted to assist the student in their ability to attend the aforementioned major professional events. Based on the recommendations provided by these reviewers, students are awarded based upon sufficient proof of the importance to the professional development of the applicant up to $500.

Over the years, the Graduate College at the University of Arizona has been a strong supporter of the GPSC’s Travel Grants Program. The funds provided by the college have steadily increased throughout the period since the establishment of the program, as shown in the figure below.

![Bar Chart]

- 2003-04: $29,358
- 2004-05: $28,600
- 2005-06: $42,071
- 2006-07: $87,748
- 2007-08: $91,067
In the 2008-2009 academic year, in which the Student Services Fee has been instituted, the GPSC has requested $58,000 to help fund the Travel Grants Program alone. Since the start of FY 2009, the GPSC has awarded $25,439.00 to 56 students in the first two funding periods alone. The number of applicants that have applied for the competitive process numbered 119 students in two funding periods (June 1 and August 1) that are traditionally relatively slow due to the summer months. The recent October 1 deadline has already outstripped the first two, with well over 150 applicants applying to the program. This number has easily outpaced our busiest periods in past fiscal years, with each of these approximately 150 applications requesting an average of approximately $450. These numbers are preliminary from our office for the period, but are consistent with an average of $454 calculated from the University's Graduate College Budget Office. However, it is anticipated that the remaining Student Services Fee funding would be exhausted if even half of these applicants were deemed by our panelists to prove the necessity of their travel.

The remaining funding periods include December 1, February 1 and April 1. Traditionally, the February and April application periods are busier than the Fall Semester periods due to the timing of academic conferences and meetings across the nation and globally. We are projecting that the December period could see a total of 150 applications, the February period could see a total of 200 applications and the April period could see a total of approximately 100 applications. These projected increase is consistent with FY 2007 and FY 2008 trend that these two periods witnessed. What is not accounted for, and could be part of the high application numbers this fiscal year, is the recent University Transformation process that the University has instituted. Many major academic units within the University system have cut back on their travel grant programs, and the GPSC has been receiving more applications as a result of these cuts.

**Club and Professional Opportunities Development Funding Program:**

In another popular service, GPSC provides funds to Graduate and Professional Student clubs to promote professional club activities and diversity events. The GPSC also provides financial support to groups of students that help organize conferences and/or seminars where invitation of distinguished speakers to come to the University of Arizona has been extended. This program, which also saw increased funding since it's inception in FY 2003, is funded almost entirely by the University of Arizona’s Graduate College (please see figure below).
Conclusion

The Student Affair's Fee has opened a new avenue for helping foster the professional development of graduate and professional students throughout the University Campus. This year, the Student Services Fee Advisory Board awarded $58,000 to the GPSC for the travel grants program. The GPSC has disbursed $25,439 to 56 students in the current fiscal year and anticipates disbursing well over $120,000 before the fiscal year closes.

This program has proven quite beneficial to the students that have used this program, and we are proud to continue working with our constituent students to help ensure that this fee is entirely used to their benefit.