Introduction:

Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening and welcome, it is a pleasure to meet with all of you here tonight. If you are here as an applicant thank you for your willingness to share your evening and answer questions; if you are here as a Director, Assistant Vice President, or in support of an application thank you for bringing your perspective to this deliberation; and if you are here as a student, journalist, or other interested party, we are indebted to you and grateful for your attendance.

Tonight we look at the thirty-eight proposals which come before the board for deliberation. Yet before we get there I would like to make a few remarks. Last semester this board set out three objectives and it continues to pursue them whole-heartedly. I would like to discuss them and then close with some comments about the process.

Directives:

The Student Services Fee Advisory Board has committed itself to serving University of Arizona student by promising to achieve three goals – impact, integrity, and excellence.

• As mentioned at the December meeting. The board will provide for impact by funding a set of proposals which shall, in some way, affect every student, at some level.

• The board shall provide for integrity by establishing a process which is consistent, transparent, and served by a diverse student board. I am proud to announce that this board now operates with 100% transparency. We hope other organizations will follow our lead.

However, we also have room to grow. The process is still new for us all and can benefit from greater consistency. To address this we will be holding an Open Forum meeting in April. Everyone is invited and encouraged to share their observations, criticisms, and suggestions. This meeting will be on a Friday from 5:00-6:00pm, so please look at your calendars and organize your thoughts.

• I would like to leave this section of my report with a few remarks on excellence. The division of Student Affairs has a lot to be proud of. It has countless nationally recognized and emulated programs and departments. There is the National Collegiate Leadership Conference, the University of Arizona Bookstores, the Student Union, Dining Services, Campus Recreation Expansion, Disability Resource Center, Daily Wildcat, Career Services, and many others. With so much success and achievement you have all set the bar high. This you shared with us in our trainings last fall.
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Acknowledging this excellence, the board was not afraid to create a demanding application process. The board wanted to give everyone yet another opportunity to showcase their remarkable creativity and passion for students. And in many ways, you all did just that – meeting if not surpassing the level of excellence you have demonstrated in the past.

However, there are a few applications which are lackluster – a few applications in which applicants did not bother to proof-read their budgets, their summaries, or their appendices – did not bother to justify the need for a requested staff position – did not clearly explain their budgets – or did not even elucidate the purpose of their application. For a division which boasts such incredible thoughtfulness and accomplishment – these applications did not reflect that from the applicants and their departments. The board cannot justify funding a poorly written application.

As a personal note, with the perspective you have all shared with me in the last two years, and with the many experiences I have had with your programs I could not help but feel disappointed and let down by these applications.

As such, I will encourage the incoming board solidifying the timeline and expectations for the application process.

Process:

I would like to leave you with some food for thought. This year the fee has $1.2 Million for distribution and $3.6 Million was requested. I challenge you to ask yourself these questions. How would my program look with only a third of the budget? How critical is my program? How many students does my program impact? What is depth of that impact? Is my program redundant with other programs in Student Affairs? Could my program benefit from collaboration with other departments in Student Affairs? And, can my program be financially sustainable in other ways?

These are the questions board members found themselves asking most frequently. These are the questions they posted for all of you. So as we begin tonight I challenge you also to ask these questions of yours and each others’ applications, to listen to the thoughtfulness of your colleagues, and maybe in future applications, work with them.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen.

Prepared and Submitted by Matthew Totlis: Chair