Student Service Fees Rationales

Off Year Updates:
Learning Abroad Center

Off Year Update

Requested Allocation: $119,568  
Recommended Allocation: $119,568

Comments:

The Committee recognizes that the Learning Abroad Center provides a service to the full study body, supports the academic curriculum, and targets the largest number of students consistent with need. Further, the Committee appreciates the Center’s diverse funding sources, which decreases its reliance on student service fees. The Learning Abroad Center has set a goal to increase the number of students going abroad over the next several years. The Committee encourages the Center to seek input from students during their decision making processes, especially as it relates to operations. Finally, the Committee would like the Center to provide a projection that describes how an increase in the number of students going abroad will impact student service fees.
Radio K

Off Year Update
Requested Allocation: $242,999   Recommended Allocation: $242,999

Comments:
At the Committee’s request, Radio K provided an all-funds budget in their fees request. This helped the committee gain insight into how the unit is funded and operates as a whole and the role that student services fees play in the Radio K’s operating budget. The Committee was impressed by the operation of Radio K and their initiative to use a mobile application to make their content available to students despite changing trends in technology. The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the handbook guidelines for decision-making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

1) Radio K fosters a sense of community on the Twin Cities campus as a source of information and a guide to activities and events on campus and the greater community. Whether providing enjoyable content for students to listen to while studying or serving as an instant medium available during emergencies to communicate necessary information, the committee recognizes Radio K as a unit that provides an excellent service to the student body. GDM 1

2) The program reaches out to a wide range of audience GDM 1, 2 and 5

3) The program offers diversity in programming that meets the diverse preferences of the student body. GDM 4, 5

4) Their pledge drives show an effort to secure funding in addition to the student services fees. GDM 7

Directives:
The Committee notes that the current information about the timing for when they will be renovating their tower is still unclear. Now that their funding for the tower is a separate line item in their budget, it is the Committee’s request that Radio K attempt to plan exactly when the tower will be replaced rather than wait until the tower is completely inoperable. This will ensure the tower will be replaced before their broadcasting is affected and make budgeting more precise in the future.
The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

1) The Committee agrees that the SCRC has continued to provide services of high quality and importance to student. In particular it has developed new materials, such as the Do It Yourself Series, to address specific problems within the student body.
   GDM: 2) Quality and quantity of programs and services provided to the student body, consistent with the mission of the organization.

2) The SCRC has continued to reach a broad and growing array of student at all levels of their education.
   GDM: 4) Breadth of service to students across academic department or academic unit.

3) The SCRC has provided data giving ample justification of their success in serving students.
   GDM: 3) Extent of and demand for the programs and services provided. Groups must specify the method of tabulation and provide specific documentation upon request.

Directives:

The Committee recognizes that the SCRC has made strides in becoming more visible to the student body. That in mind, the Committee would like to see continued efforts to market the center and its services to reach a larger number of students.
Northrop Concerts and Lectures – 2015 Special Request

Committee Vote: 7-0

*Requested Allocation:* $500,000  
*Recommended Allocation:* $156,600

*Comments:*

The Committee was pleased to hear back from this group in an unusual circumstance to hear their special budget request for FY 2014. Northrop did as the previous Committee asked by rethinking how best to serve students in light of the renovations going on at Northrop Auditorium. However, the Committee did not see fit to recommend the full $500,000 that was requested. The Committee was unable to support the expansion of the organization to include subsidizing tickets to events that happened as part of the Northrop series, in particular when so many of these events will be taking place off campus for much of the requested budget year. This was also a cause for concern for the enhanced “experience events” that were included in the budget. Finally, discussion of the Committee regarding the Subsidized Northrop Spaces focused on the unlikelihood of students needing a full 40 hours per week in the summer so the committee recommends that number be decreased for the weeks out of the year when students will not be on campus.

However, the Committee does find the expanded programming of concerts and Spring Jam participation to be encouraging and supports Northrop’s use of Student Service Fees for that purpose.

*The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:*

1) The Committee feels that the programming that Northrop has put on and plans to put on in the future with expanded funding is of high quality and will serve a greater number of students than ever before. Furthermore, Northrop has demonstrated constant monitoring of performance attendance and metrics of their success.  
   GDM: 2, 3

2) Particularly with the expansion of services into the spring and fall semesters, Northrop has demonstrated that it will continue to serve a broad pool of students.  
   GDM: 4
3) Northrop functions with a large student involvement and non-student staff continues to be funded by other means than student service fees. This allows for student focused events and input into the running of the unit. GDM: 9

4) The Student Service Fees are a primary source of income for this unit, but they seek alternate sources of revenue by establishing partnerships with other organizations and businesses to minimize overall cost. Additionally the service provided by this unit could not be provided without an allocation from Student Service Fees. GDM: 7, 8

Directives:

The Committee urges Northrop to continue to think about how best to serve students and how to reach more of them through their existing program structure. Demonstrating new successes with the renovated space at Northrop Auditorium will be needed before the growth of additional programs will be supported.
Requesting Units
Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education

Fiscal year 2014
Committee Vote: 8-0
Requested Allocation: $302,802  Recommended Allocation: $253,000

Fiscal year 2015
Committee Vote: 8-0
Requested Allocation: $309,443  Recommended Allocation: $278,000

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

The committee was pleased that the Aurora Center’s recent move was funded from reserves and that the Aurora Center makes extensive use of volunteers. We arrived at our recommendation by adding $7,000 for salary increases and $20,000 for the step up program to our fiscal year 2014 recommendation of $253,000. The committee felt that the Aurora Center could fund the 4 existing intern positions out of their central allocation as they have in the past.
1) The Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education provides an essential service to students in a time of need.  GDM: 1
2) They have been reaching out to greater numbers of students across the University consistent with the need for this organization  GDM: 4, 5
3) The committee based a smaller increase than requested on the availability of the central allocation, which is an alternative source of funding.
Boynton Health Service

Fiscal year 2014
Committee Vote: 8-0

Requested Allocation: $8,517,713  Recommended Allocation: $8,517,713

Fiscal year 2015
Committee Vote: 8-0

Requested Allocation: $8,696,333  Recommended Allocation: $8,596,333

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

The committee was impressed with the range of services provided by Boynton. We were pleased with the financial soundness of Boynton’s operations, and in particular with Boynton using profitable segments of their service to fund unprofitable, but essential, services. We were happy to see that Boynton has a comprehensive long-range capital plan, which allows Boynton to spread out costs over a number of years.

1) Boynton provides a wide variety of essential services to the student body, consistent with its mission as the campus health center. GDM: 1, 2

2) They have demonstrated a demand for their services, and a constant effort to adapt their services to meet the changing needs of students. GDM: 3

3) The majority of Boynton’s funding comes insurance providers and other outside sources of funding. They have made a successful effort to maximize the percentage of their funding coming from sources other than student fees. GDM: 7

4) The committee felt that the increase of approximately $100,000 in carry forward and increase of $50,000 for non-salary expenses was not fully justified. GDM: 9
Boynton Health Service – Gopher Chauffeur

Fiscal Year 2014
Committee Vote: 8-0
Requested Allocation: $ 87,491  Recommended Allocation: $ 87,491

Fiscal Year 2015
Committee Vote: 8-0
Requested Allocation: $ 88,870  Recommended Allocation: $ 88,870

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

The committee was pleased with Boynton increasing the number of vehicles from 3 to 4. We feel that this increase will shorten wait times and allow more students to benefit from this program.

1) The Gopher Chauffer provides a service to the student body.  
   GDM: 1

2) This program is consistent with Boynton’s mission of creating a healthier and safer campus.  
   GDM: 2

3) This program was created in response to a demand for a service. Usage statistics suggest that increasing to 4 vehicles will better meet demand and increase the number of students served.  
   GDM: 3, 5
Unit: Boynton Health Service – Mental Health Expansion

Fiscal Year: 2014
Vote: 8-0-0
Requested Allocation: $383,412  Recommended Allocation: $289,892

Unit: Boynton Health Service – Mental Health Expansion
Fiscal Year: 2015
Vote: 8-0-0
Requested Allocation: $402,150  Recommended Allocation: $308,630

Comments:
At the Committee’s request, Boynton provided an all-funds budget in their fees request. This helped the committee gain insight into how the unit is funded and operates as a whole and the role that student services fees play in the Boynton’s operating budget.

Additionally their presentation to the Committee for the mental health expansion provided research data and graphs about usage rates at the UMN campus as well as national figures. It addressed how this expansion would link to student academic success and have an impact across the student body.

The Committee decided to allocate fees money to fund two major items. First, four of the six requested staff position salaries will be partially funded with SSF dollars. Second, funding will go to remove the current co-pay. The Committee supports hiring the other two staff but recommends that Boynton absorb the cost of the other two staff positions from their reserve money or other parts of their budget.

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the handbook guidelines for decision-making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:
1) Targeting of services to the largest number of students consistent with the need. Boynton provided documentation of number of students with mental health needs served from 2004 to the present and showed projections out until 2020. They explained how the new staff will enable them to meet capacity needs and to maintain quality standards for students served.
GDM 1, 2, 5
2) Demonstration of benefits of services to students who pay the student service fees but do not participate in the services. GDM 6

3) Boynton demonstrated that their financial need to support two more mental health staff would be possible as shown in their contingency plan but not for all six and not for the co-pay removal. Thereby the Committee is only supporting four positions. GDM 8

4) Fees money to pay staff is being used because it is a necessary component of Boynton’s ability to provide high-quality, relevant services to students. GDM 10

Directives:

Because the co-pay removal is expensive and its impact can only be estimated, the Committee supports its removal with the understanding that Boynton will track a range of usage data over the next two years. This will help future committees to clarify and quantify the impact this removal actually has on campus. If this research fails to show relevant and valid data to support this funding decision, it is expected that the co-pay not be expensed to SSF dollars. This Committee noted that the co-pay was re-implemented already once before. Future committee’s can also exercise this option.
Unit: Recreational Sports – Operational Fee

Fiscal Year: 2014
Vote: 7-0-1
Requested Allocation: $3,708,527 Recommended Allocation: $3,708,527

Fiscal Year: 2015
Vote: 7-0-1
Requested Allocation: $3,804,127 Recommended Allocation: $3,804,127

Comments:

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

1) The Committee recognizes that the various facilities managed by Recreational Sports require staff and other resources to operate them and provide the programming they offer to the student body. These resources are used to maintain the quality of the programs and foster the student experience with Recreational Sports.
GDM: 2) Quality and quantity of programs and services provided to the student body, consistent with the mission of the organization.

2) The new expansion will require workers to operate facilities. Recreational Sports is the largest employer of students on campus and the growing number of student and professional employed by the program justifies an increase in Operational Fees.
GDM: 3) Extent of and demand for the programs and services provided. Groups must specify the method of tabulation and provide specific documentation upon request.

3) In light of sizable increases in Operational Fees, Recreational Sports has shown financial accountability by taking steps to decrease the cost for students. In particular, they have appointed a specific person in charge of student employment and charged with maximizing the department’s subsidies from the Federal Work Study program. This number will likely increase along with student employment. Recreational Sports has also
agreed to cover certain expenses, such as a mandatory 2.5% increase in salary for FY 2015, so as to minimize the fees request.

GDM: 8) Demonstration of financial need that cannot be fulfilled with alternative sources of income.

*Directives:*

The Committee would like detailed accounts of operational expenses over the next year so that the next committee has a chance to review the operational fee with substantive data.
Unit: Recreational Sports – Advancement Program

Fiscal Year: 2014
Vote: 8-0
Requested Allocation: $122,400      Recommended Allocation: $109,400

Fiscal Year: 2015
Vote: 8-0
Requested Allocation: $122,400      Recommended Allocation: $0

Comments:
The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

1) The Committee supports the Advancement Program’s mission of providing a self sustaining stream of donor income for Recreational Sports. More donor contribution will decrease the department’s reliance on student fees and provide for a point of contact where alumni can reconnect with the University.
   GDM: 1) Quality and quantity of programs and services provided to the student body, consistent with the mission of the organization.

2) The Advancement Program is working to decrease its reliance on student’s fees in hopes that it will no longer require them in future years.
   GDM: 7) Efforts to secure funding in addition to the student services fees.

Directives:
The Committee recognizes that alumni and donor involvement programs take time to develop. The Advancement Program is a long term investment for Recreation Sports. Although, the Committee doesn’t expect completion within the next year, members do expect to see progress in the form of increase donations and donor involvement. To facilitate a review of this progress, the Committee has deemed that the Advancement Program shall have a year-to-year update. Whether or not they receive continued funding shall depend on their shown improvement for that year.
Unit: Recreational Sports – Facilities & Sports Fee

Fiscal Year: 2014
Vote: 8-0
Requested Allocation: $4,972,030  Recommended Allocation: $4,922,030

Fiscal Year: 2015
Vote: 8-0
Requested Allocation: $5,382,030  Recommended Allocation: $5,172,030

Comments:
The Committee looks forward to the grand opening of the department’s new expansion. Construction and renovation has been undertaken with great accountability by faculty and the new space will provide a great service to students.

1) The Committee believes the department’s services are important to students and the activities undertaken in their facilities are integral to student life.
   GDM: 2) Quality and quantity of programs and services provided to the student body, consistent with the mission of the organization.

2) Recreational Sports reaches a broad array of student through their various facilitates and encourages involvement through activities held inside those facilities.
   GDM: 4) Breadth of service to students across academic departments or academic units.

3) Recreational Sports has also taken steps to quantify projected expenses necessary for the management of the new facility and all of the other ones. These enable the Committee to consider the fixed expenses of merely “keeping the lights on” at these new facilities. Recreational Sports has used such data to make their case regarding the need for financial reserves as a form of insurance for their large capital holdings.
   GDM: 9) All organizations must fully justify their fees request, including any financial reserves.

Directives:
The Committee recognizes that the significant increase in funds requested this year is a result of the grand opening of the new expansion. At this point, the costs of facilities
management are highly projected by Facilitates Management department and set outside the control of Recreational Sports. With that in mind, the Committee would like detailed accounts of facilities management expenses over the next year so that the next committee has a chance to review the facilities fee with substantive data.
Unit: The Minnesota Daily

Fiscal Year: 2014
Committee Vote: 8-0-0

Requested Allocation: $505,000    Recommended Allocation: $505,000

Comments:

The Committee recognizes that the MN Daily serves a crucial service for the student body. Without the newspaper, the Committee feels that the reporting currently published about community events, neighborhood issues, and student perspective would be lost to the detriment of the sense of community on campus. GR: 1.

In addition, the Daily runs a quality newspaper that is consistent with the mission of the organization. GR:2.

The recent decrease in advertising revenue over time has underscored the importance of student service fees in supporting this organization, and the Committee feels that funding the Daily at its requested allocation of $505,000 will meet this need. GR:8.
The Committee feels that the Daily has an adequate reserve amount for the size of its budget. However, the Minnesota Daily presents their total expense above on their fiscal page as higher than the realized expenses. The reason for this is the University’s reimbursement of rent costs associated with its current lease. The Committee feels that this inflation of costs constitutes a reserve above the current, adequate level.  GR:9.

Directive:

The Committee would like to recommend a one-time balance sweep of $70,000 to reduce the excessive cash reserves that the Minnesota Daily currently holds, and will have the effect of bringing revenue more closely in line with actual expenses reflected in the fiscal page.
Minnesota Daily – Balance Sweep Minority

Committee Vote: 7-1-0

Requested Allocation: $0  
Recommended Allocation: $70,000

Comments:

The Minority felt that the actions taken to implement a balance sweep by last year’s committee had the desired intent of reducing the size of the large reserves held by the Minnesota Daily. The Minority felt that there was no further need to reduce the reserves of the Minnesota Daily, particularly as the market for newspapers continues to change and the Minnesota Daily will need to potentially reach further into these reserves to continue to adapt.

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

1) The Minnesota Daily provides high quality services to the student of the University of Minnesota and the Fees they pay represent the student subscription to the paper. Without the support of Student Service Fees, the Daily would have no way to serve the students. Advertising is just one way the Daily uses alternative forms of revenue, but the paper’s officers have made clear that they would not be able to operate without these fees. The Minority fears that this balance sweep puts that in jeopardy and will require substantial increases in the future.  

GDM: 8,9
Student Unions and Activities – Operating 2014

Committee Vote: 8-0

*Requested Allocation: $ 5,505,854*  *Recommended Allocation: $ 5,505,854*

Student Unions and Activities – Operating 2015

Committee Vote: 8-0

*Requested Allocation: $ 5,553,710*  *Recommended Allocation: $ 5,553,710*

Comments:

The Committee was impressed with the management of the Student Unions and Activities. Their budget was stable and they managed their assets well. Operationally, they are constantly seeking ways to minimize their reliance on students and are seeking new sources of revenue. Their employment of University Students is also admirable.

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

1) SUA provides services to students that are of the highest quality and is known to almost all students on campus.  GDM: 2,4

2) In expanding the festivities at Homecoming and Spring Jam, in addition to their weekly programming and unique programming, SUA has successfully targeted their programming to their audience.  GDM: 5

3) SUA does a good job of seeking additional funding other than student fees, while demonstrating the need for fees as well.  GDM: 7,8

Directives:

As always, the Committee urges SUA to continue to look for new sources of income and to continue to put on quality programming for the students of the University of Minnesota. The Committee also recommends seeking news ways to engage students in their programming that is less popular.
The Committee feels that Student Unions and Activities unit is critical to providing a sense of community on campus, and the second floor renovations help support this goal. GR: 1. The Capital Asset Maintenance request for FY14 represents a marked increase from FY13, and the Committee feels that such a large increase is not justified as this time. The total cost of the SUA FY14 Capital Asset Maintenance List is well below the requested allocation, so the Committee is recommending that the current funding level for FY13 be carried forward to FY14. This funding level allows SUA to fund a large portion of its Capital Asset Maintenance list while holding increases in the budget closer to prior year’s student services fee request. GR: 12.
Fiscal Year: 2015
Committee Vote: 6-0-2

*Requested Allocation:* $1,250,000  
*Recommended Allocation:* $875,000

*Comments:*

The Committee acknowledges the fact that Coffman Union has significant capital maintenance needs, and these needs are increasing over time. Thus, the Committee feels that an increase over the recommended FY14 funding level is appropriate. This funding level of $875,000 allows SUA to fund needed improvements at a reasonable rate of increase to the student body. GR: 8.
Student Unions and Activities –Capital Asset Maintenance Minority

Committee Vote: 5-3-0

Requested Allocation: $1,000,000  Recommended Allocation: $724,207

Comments: The Minority agreed with the Majority that the request of $1,000,000 was too high, particularly coupled with the increase that was requested for FY 2015 as well. However, the Minority hoped for more moderation in the request and would have rather seen a slightly larger investment that would at least have covered the cost of the proposed maintenance and capital upgrades that need to happen within the next year. The Minority recognizes that the facilities that SUA inhabits are getting older and maintenance in improvements are more expensive as a result.

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

1) The Minority believes that there is no other source of income for SUA within this account other than student service fees. Without the support of this Committee’s Recommendations, SUA will have no way to properly maintain their facilities in a manner befitting the student of the University of Minnesota GDM: 8

Directives: Continue to make smart decisions regarding the Capital Asset Maintenance going forward, with a reduced recommendation these decisions will be more important.
Unit: University Student Legal Services

Fiscal Year 2014 & 2015
Vote: 8-0-0
Requested Allocation: $1,076,000
Recommended Allocation: $1,076,000

Comments:
The committee acknowledges and appreciates the conscious approach to spending and budgeting made by the Student Legal Services by requesting no increase in fees for the fiscal years of 2014 and 2015.

The following points explain the recommended allocation figure and include the SSF handbook guidelines for decision making reference (GDM) numbers supporting each point:

1) The benefits to students outweigh the fees students’ pay. GDM: 1
2) Student Legal Services serves effectively a large number of students annually. GDM: 5
3) Most students might not be able to access professional legal advice without the Student Legal Service. GDM: 3

Directives:
The committee reiterates the directive of the 2012 Off Year Update by recommending USLS to continue their effort of making their service more known to the student body.