STUDENT SERVICES FEE (SSF) PROCESS REVIEW

Presentation of the process and recommendations of the Student Services Fee Review Task Force (SSFRTF)
Please participate!

Write questions/feedback on provided slips of paper

Time constraints may prohibit us from addressing all slips

Speakers can also sign up to provide comments to the Task Force at the side table

If we don’t get to your slip, we will answer via email or after the forum so that each no person’s feedback is ignored
Overview of This Presentation

SSF Process Overview

SSFRTF Charge

Review

Recommendations

Questions
Student Services Fee (SSF) distribution

Requests

- Student Groups (65 applications were received in 2012-2013)
- Administrative Units (10 Administrative Units apply annually)

Recommendations

- SSF Committee/Fees Committee/SSFC
- SSF Audits
- SSF Appeals Committee

Finalization

- Vice Provost for Student Affairs
- Sr. Vice President for System Academic Administration
- Board of Regents
OUR CHARGE

Why the Task Force was formed and how we were chosen to serve
Need for review

History

• Five years of proposed, yet unaddressed, issues had accumulated
• Collected list of issues from previous SSFCs and Vice Provost for Student Affairs
• Input needed from a variety of viewpoints
• SSF reviews have historically been done approximately every five years
• Previous review dates available in the Student Services Fee Handbooks
SSFRTF 2011-2012 Charge

Focus areas

- Committee operations
- Student group issues
- Financial issues
**SSFRTF Member Selection**

**Designed to be fair to students**
- Student majority on the Task Force

**Student representatives**
- Six representatives were selected by MSA and GAPSA
- One representative was selected from the Student Affairs Student Advisory Board
- Final appointment made by Vice Provost for Student Affairs

**Staff from SSF-receiving Administrative Units**
- Including Student Unions & Activities and The Learning Abroad Center

**Administration**
- Selected from legal, financial, and other departments to help understand topics in their area of specialty
SSFRTF Leadership

Co-chair – Student
- David Kraft, Minnesota Student Association
- Selected by student membership by online ballot

Co-chair – Administration
- Lincoln Kallsen, Office of Budget and Finance

Facilitator
- Megan Sweet, Office for Student Affairs
- Ex-officio member
OUR PROCESS

How we are making these recommendations, staying accountable to the student community and keeping in touch with the Office for Student Affairs.
Meetings

Agenda items

• Directly from SSFRTF charge letter
• Task Force has been meeting since December 2011

Deliberation

• Decisions by consensus
• In case of division, majority and minority opinions noted
Due in February 2012, summary of progress/recommendations was submitted to the Office for Student Affairs for feedback.

Only a few items from the charge letter were not discussed or addressed at that point.

Vice Provost and Chief of Staff in the Office for Student Affairs reviewed Task Force recommendations and we addressed their concerns.
Public Presentations

Student government (15 min. each)

- MSA: April 24 – 3:30 pm, CMU Mississippi Room
- Senate Committee on Student Affairs: April 25 – 3:00 pm, 300 Morrill Hall
- GAPSA: April 25 – 6:30 pm, CMU Board Room

Public forum (1 hour)

- May 1 – 5:00 pm, CMU “The Whole”
- We welcome as much input as possible – It’s your money!
RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMITTEE OPERATIONS

Our proposal for revisions to the processes of the Student Services Fee Committee’s yearly operation
Alternate members of the SSFC

Required Participation

- Old: “Alternates may participate in all discussions…”
- New: “Alternates must participate in discussions, trainings, presentations, committee meetings and deliberations to the same extent as voting members…”
Alternate members of the SSFC

Replacement Procedure

• Old: “Alternates will replace student positions on the committee and subcommittee that become vacant and will become voting members at that time.”

• New: “Alternates will replace student positions on the committee and subcommittee that become vacant through resignation or removal at the discretion of the committee and will become voting members at that time.”
SSF Appeals Committee

Operations and Structure

- SSF Appeals Committee membership should be right-sized and nimble enough to handle organizations submitting an appeal
- Students should be the majority
- SSFRTF recommends keeping a five-member SSF Appeals Committee
SSF Appeals Committee

Acceptability of Appeals

• For late applications – applicant MUST provide “reasonable excuse” for lateness
• Late applicants can only appeal during the “late applications” appeal cycle – they MAY NOT appeal again to the SSF Appeals Committee, but only to the Vice Provost for Student Affairs at the end of the SSF process
SSF Appeals Committee

Acceptability of Appeals

- Old: “If the appeal is based on an alleged violation of University policy or procedures, the relevant policy or procedure should be clearly referenced.”

- New: “If the appeal is based on an alleged violation of University policy or procedures, including viewpoint discrimination, material error of fact, or prejudicial error in the SSF process, the relevant policy or procedure should be clearly referenced.”
Individual SSF Appeals Process

- SSF process should allow for individual appeals
- Individual appeals should be submitted in writing to the Vice Provost for Student Affairs
- Appeal document may be made public, but personal information will remain private

- Vice Provost for Student Affairs evaluates appeals for merit regarding viewpoint discrimination
- Student group information may be revealed in the SSF applications or via the public forums, but individuals who appeal should be offered anonymity
Viewpoint Neutrality

Strengthening and Clarification

- Define and give examples in SSF Handbook
- Distribute Guidelines for Decision-Making to SSF Committee, applicants and University community
- SSF application should be amended to include Guidelines for Decision-Making
- Rationales and funding recommendations should include these criteria
Compensation

Faculty/Staff

- Faculty/Staff should be compensated the same as general student members of the SSFC

SSFC stipend raise

- Stipends for all SSFC positions should be increased by $250

Future stipend raises

- SSF Review Committees shall continue to decide when raises are appropriate
Public Forums

Speaking Policy

• Enrolled University of MN students will be given priority
• Administrative Unit staff can speak
  • Students from A.U. advisory boards are preferred
• University faculty/staff can speak
• Only persons in the above groups can speak
  • Possible override if decided by SSFC vote
  • Non-University advisors of student groups may prepare/coach their students, but may not speak
• Speakers may speak more than once, but no more than one minute per opportunity
RECOMMENDATIONS: FINANCIAL ISSUES

Our proposal for revisions to the processes of the Student Services Fee Committee’s yearly operation
“Penny Fee”

How is money collected?

- Each eligible SSF-paying students pay the same amount
- The enrollment and SSF amount fluctuate from semester to semester

How is money allotted?

- All allotments are variable and based on how many dollars and cents are collected from each student
- All monetary increments given to any organization cannot be less than what amounts to collecting one penny from every student paying the fee

Why not predetermine the SSF dollar amount?

- SSFC should have the flexibility to determine the Fee based on the applications received and the guidelines for decision-making
Other financial issues

Debt payments
- Once we owe money, making bond payments does not need an annual SSFC vote
- Fees Committee should still approve/deny initial debt/bond obligation

Budget disclosure
- Reporting alternative sources of funding is part of the Guidelines for Decision-Making
- “All funds” disclosure should be required of applicants
- Should be uniform among applicants
- What information is needed from the applicant should be defined in the application
Other financial issues

Transparency about SSF process financial support/budget

- Breakdown available upon SSF-paying student’s request
- Annual disclosure to each Fees Committee
- No SSFC vote on how much the process will cost

One-time/Special funding

- Listed separately (line item) on spreadsheet
- Unfulfilled events count against following year’s request
- Applicants or the SSFC can request separation of one-time/special funding from “regular” funding
RECOMMENDATIONS: STUDENT GROUP ISSUES

Our proposal for revisions to the processes of the Student Services Fee Committee’s yearly operation.
Smaller requests

Minimum fees request

• SSFC will review applications requesting more than $3,000 in annual support
• Organizations requesting less than $3,000 will be redirected to alternate on/off campus funding sources

Alternate funding

• Student Unions and Activities should offer operational grants in addition to event grants
• Students may need to pay for additional SUA staff to facilitate the already time-consuming grants process
• MSA and GAPSA will also continue to offer grants
Size of requests

Large request vs. small request

- For Student Group applicants:
  - Threshold of $15,000 (natural divide seems to occur at this dollar amount)
  - There may be different processes for either application process

Fairness

- Cannot apply for both large and small group funding
- Incentives may be given if applicants right-size their requests to reduce financial bloat
Summer fees

Collection

- Should still be collected
- Most fair solution for enrolled summer students

Eligibility

- Groups requesting under $15,000 ineligible to receive summer SSFs
- Groups receiving more than $15,000 need to tell SSF Committee if they will be 0%, 50% or 100% operational in the summer
Audits

Method

- Groups with different budget amounts should be audited differently (“large” vs. “small”)
- New groups automatically audited after first year receiving SSFs
- Future updates to audit process/reporting will be handled by Office for Student Affairs

Frequency

- Audits are expensive for students
- Every other year for “large” SSF-recipients
- Every four years for “small” SSF-recipients
WRAP-UP

Future SSF reviews, questions and answers, where to find more information, how to contact us with further questions
Future SSF Reviews

Frequency

• Every five years or so
• Ad hoc committees can be formed as needed in the interim
• Charge should continue to identify specific issues and provide a well-defined scope to the Committee

Composition

• Should continue to have a student majority
• Should include the SSF advisor, a representative from the Office of General Counsel and a representative from the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Questions and Answers
Contact Information

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