Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA)

Student Services Fee Request for the 2014 - 2015 Academic Year

Address
612-625-2982
gapsa@umn.edu
Phone
Fax
Email

“We acknowledge that the Fee Committee does not award actual dollars, but rather a penny fee that earns dollars based upon student enrollment levels. Any differences between anticipated and actual income resulting from changes in enrollment are the responsibility of the student organization, not of the Fee Committee.”

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Preparer’s Email

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Co-Preparer’s Email

Is your organization an IRS 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit? Yes X No ___________
If yes, please provide proof of your organization’s 501(c)(3) status.

Funds are being requested for (check all that apply):

General Operating Support: X
Start-Up Costs: Capital:

Project / Program Support: X
Technical Assistance: Other (List):

Budget

- SSF Dollar Amount Requested $392,115.00
- Total Annual Organization Budget $437,115.00
- Total Program Budget (apart from General Operating) $314,295.00

Section 1: Narrative

- Brief summary of organization history, including date of establishment
In 1990, a non-profit confederation of independent college councils was formed with the goal of representing all Graduate and Professional students at the University of Minnesota to the Board of Regents, the President of the University, the University Senate, and the University community at large (including neighboring communities). It was called the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GAPSA). The organization has since grown to represent over 25,000 graduate students, which is about half of the total student population.

- Organization mission / vision statements, inclusive of organizational goals
GAPSA’s mission is the advocacy for and governance of all graduate and professional students. GAPSA shall speak on behalf of all graduate and professional students at the University of Minnesota.

GOALS:

Academic Excellence
The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly is deeply committed to the support and continuation of academic excellence across all disciplines. GAPSA fulfills this goal through academic grants, educational programming, and various recognition initiatives.

Advocacy and Leadership
The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly is the primary advocate for the interests of all Graduate and Professional students. GAPSA fulfills this two-part goal by soliciting the opinions and concerns of graduate and professional students and, in turn, communicating those interests to University administration, elected local and federal officials, and community members. GAPSA also fulfills an internal advocacy role among member Councils by facilitating communication between students from diverse backgrounds and disciplines.

Community
The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly is an indispensable source of interdisciplinary community among its constituents. Graduate and Professional students are traditionally segregated into their respective disciplines both academically and socially. GAPSA fosters a sense of community among all graduate and professional students by hosting various events, which are specifically designed to appeal to their interests.

Services
The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly provide unique services to enhance the Graduate and Professional experience. In addition to grants, events and advocacy, GAPSA intends to continually expand its services and maintain its roles as an essential part of the entire University community.

Describe your organization’s relationship with organizations of like mission
The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly has long-standing positive relationships with various other student organizations, including our member councils, our undergraduate counterpart, the Minnesota Student Association, the Student Senate, the University Senate, the Minnesota Student Legislative Coalition, the University of Minnesota Alumni Association, and individually registered student groups with graduate and professional student members. We have ties with advisers in the Office of Student Affairs and the Center for Integrative Leadership. This year we have worked to strengthen our relationship with Boynton and the Student Conflict Resolution Center to get at systematic problems facing graduate and professional students. We have external ties with the CIC, NAGPS, SAGE and other national partners. We have developed partnerships in programming this year with MNSCU, the Masters in Advocacy and Political Leadership, the Wellstone-Barlow Initiative for Mental Health, Wellstone Action, the Minnesota Council for Nonprofits, and the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless.

GAPSA serves as the overarching umbrella organization for the College Councils. GAPSA’s role is to help coordinate efforts in areas such as Graduate and Professional student advocacy, academic and social coordination, and finances. One of GAPSA’s most crucial roles is securing funding for the councils for each academic year. As the representative for its member councils, GAPSA serves as the primary funding source for virtually all of membership.

GAPSA also works closely with its undergraduate counterpart, the Minnesota Student Association (MSA). GAPSA and MSA leadership have recognized the existence of unique collaborative opportunities that benefit the entire student population. The biannual joint meetings between the GAPSA Assembly and the MSA Forum exemplify this continual collaboration. Finally, GAPSA has also appointed representatives to a number of committees and advisory groups
throughout the campus such as: the student representatives to the Board of Regents, Recreational Sports Advisory Board, the Twin Cities Student Unions Board of Governors, and the Minnesota Student Legislative Coalition.

■ Illustrate the need for your organization within the university community, inclusive of how your organization meets this need
There is no other organization at the University of Minnesota that provides the amount of services that GAPSA provides to graduate and professional students. Most of the programming at the University of Minnesota are geared towards the undergraduate population. GAPSA fills that void by providing critical services focused towards graduate and professional student needs.

■ Detail the student benefit derived from your organization, whether or not students utilize services
Any graduate or professional student who pays the GAPSA fee is a beneficiary of GAPSA’s services. GAPSA plays an integral role in advocating for these students at the University and local, state and federal levels of government. GAPSA funds several grant programs available to all graduate and professional students and funds all of the graduate and professional councils, allowing them to pursue their council-specific initiatives.

■ Describe student involvement within your organization
GAPSA’s Assembly meeting membership is comprised of representation from member College Councils, Graduate and Professional student Senators, University Senate Committee members, and University-wide student development committees (e.g., Twin Cities Student Unions Board of Governors). All GAPSA officers, Assembly members, representatives, and employees are registered students at the University of Minnesota. GAPSA’s budget is subject to approval by the full Assembly, representing every Graduate and Professional College, School, or Department at the University. The Vice President for Finance presents monthly reports of financial transactions in each budgeted category. These are open discussions with appropriate opportunities for student input. Assembly members are the ones who set expenditure category guidelines.
Section 2: Organizational Chart

GAPSA Assembly

Executive Board

- President
- Vice President
- gradSEHD Rep
- CVM Rep
- Dentistry Rep
- Medical School Rep
- Pharmacy School Rep
- School of Public Health Rep
- Law Rep
- MBA Rep
- Nursing Rep
- 2 Reps to the Board of Regents

Constituent Councils

- School Dentistry Student Council
- Graduate Students in Education & Human Development (GradSEHD)
- Law Council
- MBA Association
- Medical School Student Council
- Nursing College Board
- School of Public Health Student Senate
- Pharmacy College Board
- Veterinary Medicine Student Council
Section 3: Performance Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Actual 2012-13</th>
<th>Estimated 2013-14</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at Assembly Meetings</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours GAPSA Office Open</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>1500</td>
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Event Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Actual 2012-13</th>
<th>Estimated 2013-14</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presidents Reception</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy Workshops</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Events</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAPSA Forums</td>
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<td>600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GAPSA Grant Programs

| Dollars Awarded | $126,944.42 | $146,200.00 |

The primary role of GAPSA’s funding is to fund the graduate and professional councils. In order to truly appreciate the impacts of GAPSA’s funding, one must consider the ways in which this funding reaches students. For example, the Medical School Council uses funding to provide dollars for student interest groups on a registration basis, and special training classes. The student interest group funding supplements the curriculum by allowing students to get involved in topics that they are passionate about - this funding allows lectures and workshops to feed curiosity outside the regular curriculum. Student groups throughout the school host events approximately one to two times per week, many of which are funded by MSC. Depending on the event, attendance ranges from 15-150.

MSC also funds a grant program is established for students or groups wishing to fund a community service-based event. The grant program encourages students to engage in the community while doing something related to their medical education, such as planning a benefit or educational event. There are approximately 5-6 grant applications per year, which are funded up to $400 each except in special circumstances. The events the grants have funded in the past, including the AIDS benefit and the Sexual Assault Fundamentals conference, have been attended by approximately 200 students.

Funding is used to host a large social event of the year, the Medical School Winter Ball. Winter Ball offers all students a mid-year reprieve from studying. Third and fourth year students especially appreciate the opportunity to reunite after being separated on rotations. Approximately 720 students attended Winter Ball last year.

The Pharmacy College Board meets every Wednesday to discuss and vote on issues relevant to Pharm. D. students on the Twin Cities and Duluth campuses. There are student representatives to all faculty committees that have the opportunity to give a report every week at meetings. Additionally, faculty and staff members attend College Board meetings to update students on things going on in the college, including classroom redesign and the new curriculum. Usually around 60 people are in attendance.
Additionally, major events such as Duluth Day and Pharmacy Day every year for the enjoyment of all students and staff. Duluth Day is a fall welcoming event that strives to connect students from both campuses and help first year students start making connections with their colleagues and faculty members. Pharmacy Day is a day every spring semester that the College of Pharmacy cancels all classes to promote celebration and social growth amongst students and faculty. College Board is responsible for the programming for the day.

The Veterinary Medical Council’s main event every year is a winter social. This year the premise has changed from a formal dance to a more social atmosphere. We are doing this to increase participation from the CVM faculty and staff; hoping the more informal scene will draw greater numbers. Typically the event brings in around 350 - 400 students and their significant others; that will steadily increase, but being a novel idea, similar numbers as previous years are expected. In addition to the formal event, our council occasionally provides 'pick-me-ups' in the form of bagel breakfasts, afternoon cookies, etc., for all CVM students. These funds are in the same bracket as the 'food' allocation for our social funds.

The Nursing College Board funds “Lunch n Learns” that provide opportunities for nursing students to learn additional information about specific fields outside of the classroom. Getting information about specific areas in the field of nursing is critical for the professional development of our students.

Every year the Nursing College Board hosts a Career Fair provides students with an opportunity to network with potential employers in the area. Exposing our students to potential employers provides them with opportunities to learn about jobs that need to be filled locally.

Philanthropy committee funds events that get students out of the classroom. Hands-on experience is critical for the development of successful graduates. These events allow students to volunteer with patients in the field. This serves both the students and the community at-large.

The MBA Association offers comprehensive programming to MBA students to enrich their experience at the U of M. This includes, but is not limited to, networking events, educational speakers, and cultural diversity events. We also create an efficient avenue for which the students can communicate to the administration to further the development of the MBA program.

The Dental School Council funds a variety of programs aimed at getting our students to engage the community. For example, Give Kids a Smile is a yearly program in which children from all across the Twin Cities receive free dental care due to economic hardships. Dental students, hygiene students, dental therapy students, faculty and staff volunteer their free time to contribute in this philanthropic endeavor.

The Dental School Council also bolsters the academic experience of our students by offering educational programs. For example, Clinical Explorations is a student organization dedicated to bringing purely educational seminars to students regarding various aspects of dentistry during the lunch hour once a month for 10 months of the year. Providing non-biased information to students is an important value to the School of Dentistry Student Council since its purpose is to enhance higher learning in a safe and thought-provoking environment. Also, The Women’s Dental Association is a student organization open to all students of the School of Dentistry. The organization fosters education beyond that of the academic type by bringing speakers to the school who touch upon subjects such as social and economic issues regarding the patient population.
Section 4: Reserve Accounts
GAPSA maintains a reserve total between 10-15% of the total budget in long term Certificates of Deposits. All reserves are maintained in Certificates of Deposit with five-year terms. Due to the length of these terms we are able to collect a higher interest rate. The interest on these CDs is compounded annually and added to the principle of the CDs for the remainder of the term. Therefore, these interest incomes do not have any effect on our income until the CDs mature. Maturation of these CDs is periodic and thus on average one CD can be accessed each year without penalty. CDs withdrawn before their maturation date incur a 3-month interest penalty.

Section 5: Fees Request
GAPSA is requesting $392,115.00 in student service fees this year. This is a 0.00% increase from the 2013-2014 request. The following is rational for specific components of our budget:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operational Expenses</th>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>PROJECTED</th>
<th>REQUEST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries, Wages, and Stipends</td>
<td>$67,844.02</td>
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<td>Consultants / Professional Fees</td>
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<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$2,392.40</td>
<td>$2,509.00</td>
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<td>Supplies</td>
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<td>Printing and Copying</td>
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<td>Telephone and Fax</td>
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<td>Postage</td>
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<td>$150.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other^2</td>
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<td>$2,520.00</td>
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<td>Operational Reserves</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$139,455.75</strong></td>
<td><strong>$119,109.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$122,820.00</strong></td>
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GAPSA has made significant strides towards operational cost savings. We have reduced the need for travel and food in our operational budget. Also, printing and copying costs are less needed due to a move toward electronic forms and data management. GAPSA has limited need for new equipment in 2014-2015. Also, many subscriptions to magazines and service contracts for unused equipment have been eliminated. GAPSA has worked hard in 2013 to share resources
with MSA, which has also led to cost savings. Having a shared space between MSA and GAPSA has led to sharing of resources and has made for a very efficient office space.

Through an ongoing internal evaluation GAPSA has limited its officer stipends to only a few positions. This is because these positions require enormous amounts of time that cannot be distributed to others. The stipends need to reflect the significant responsibilities of administering a nonprofit organization with services provided to the student body in-kind. Services include: administering an ongoing grant program, developing and implementing an effective advocacy program, including grassroots organizing of our constituents, maintaining financial health of the 501c3 through managing payroll, taxes, audits for a nonprofit, etc.

Our finance director has had to prepare two audits this year, for example. Our President and Vice President have put significant hours into a developmental evaluation, which you would typically pay an evaluation consultant thousands of dollars to do (along with their typical duties). The executives are constantly expected to miss work in the middle of the day for obligatory events and meetings for the University, including serving on search committees for University and UMAA executives.

Our executive board is required to provide services that would typically be permanent positions with an annual salary within the University, or for a non-profit. It is not a question that the restriction of the fees committee to encourage and improve stipends to create a competitive incentive for our leadership has been a direct detriment to our organization, and the services we are able to provide to our students.

Almost 75% of GAPSA’s request will fund programming. Due to the fact that the majority of program funding is used to for GAPSA’s grant programs, they will be highlighted here. The various grant funds administered by GAPSA are by far some of the most effective and appreciated programs we engage in. It is through these funds that we are able to have a positive impact on the University experience of almost every graduate and professional student at the University of Minnesota. The programs funded by GAPSA grants enhance the graduate and professional student experience beyond the curriculum offered by allowing networking and professional development experiences. Due to the overall economic stagnation of the United States, funds from external organizations available to students for travel and professional development have become limiting. Not to mention that students from other countries are not usually eligible for grants from United States governmental organizations. Through these tough economic times, GAPSA has been able to consistently offer funding to the graduate and professional student body. This has not only served those students individually, but also bolsters the image of the University of Minnesota as a whole.

For this coming year we are proposing six types of grant funds:

**GAPSA Academic Initiative Grants**
GAPSA Academic Initiative Grants offer funds for the enhancement of the Graduate and Professional student experience at the University of Minnesota. The primary purposes are to provide funding for events, programs, and services that have the direct involvement of and impact on Graduate and Professional students, and to expand and enhance academic programs and research opportunities on campus that contribute to the overall academic development of Graduate and Professional students.

**GAPSA Social Event Funds**
GAPSA Social Event Funds offer funding opportunities in support of social events that will enhance the professional and personal development of Graduate and Professional students. This funding opportunity offers partial funding for event expenses such as honorarium, food and beverages, and location rentals.
Scholarly Travel Grants
GAPSA has implemented this grants program for the last several years. Students have indicated their strong support and appreciation for this program and express great enthusiasm for such a fund. GAPSA Scholarly Travel Grants are intended to help support academic travel for current Graduate and Professional students of the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and Duluth campuses. Eligible travel expenses include airfare, ground transportation, lodging, and conference/meeting registration fees. Ground transportation and lodging within the Twin Cities Metro area and alcohol are not eligible expenses. Due to limited funding, GAPSA Scholarly Travel Grants are only available to students who present their research or similar endeavors at conferences or professional meetings. Scholarly Travel Grants will reimburse a student up to $200 for international travel or up to $165 for travel within North America.

Professional Travel Grants
GAPSA Professional Travel Grants are intended to help support academic travel for current Graduate and Professional students of the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and Duluth campuses. Eligible travel expenses include airfare, ground transportation, lodging, and conference/meeting registration fees. Ground transportation and lodging within the Twin Cities Metro area and alcohol are not eligible expenses.

Small Events Fund
As part of GAPSA’s initiatives for inclusion and engagement, the Small Events Program. It is often demanding for small groups of Graduate and Professional students to organize in registered student organizations and undergo the detailed process of applying for GAPSA general grants if they want to arrange small, one-time events - social, academic, or others. Furthermore, there may be students who are not aware of GAPSA and the opportunities it offers. To encourage Graduate and Professional students to become involved and to work towards the betterment of the U of M community, the Small Events Program will provide these students with simple access to money of up to $50.

GAPSA Council Funds
GAPSA’s councils are, when appropriately funded, the community of their schools. They oversee and fund dozens of student organizations within their Colleges, and put on a number of important programs. They are meant for student development, and serve as a means for advocacy within their own colleges and schools. Their need for more funding stems from demand for activities surrounding advocacy, outreach, programming, and student leadership activities. For examples of activities that are funded by councils see section 3.

GAPSA’s executive board wants to continue to collaborate with programs that are already established on campus. Our remaining programmatic breakdown is focused on limiting GAPSA-only funded events and service and providing more partnerships on campus. This is because if GAPSA combines its program funding with funding from other organizations, there is a larger return on investment. It is for this reason why many of the programs below are in conjunction with MSA, the Center for Integrative Leadership, Boynton, open.umn.edu, etc.

Details about other specific programs can be found on the attached budget sheets. GAPSA carefully chose the programming to reflect the highest quality and most collaborative projects GAPSA has ever produced. The programs that are included in the 2014-15 request are those programs that other units from around the University of Minnesota have supported and commended in the past year. GAPSA looks forward to strategically utilize its student’s funds to effectively further its mission and provide all students at the University of Minnesota with a better student experience.

- For groups requesting more than $15,000 in annual SSF support, indicate if your organization will be either 0%, 50% or 100% operational in the summer of 2015.

GAPSA is 100% operational during the summer. GAPSA’s office manager keeps the office open 15 hours per week during the summer, to pay bills, respond to student correspondence and calls, and administer our grant program. Grants are offered for summer travel to professional conferences and development workshops.
Students who pay the GAPSA fee during the summer are benefitted by both the services offered directly from GAPSA, and also through their representative councils, which are funded on the basis of enrollment during the summer.

**Section 6: External Funding**

Instead of focusing on seeking external funds, which requires a significant amount of time spent on filing applications, GAPSA has focused on collaborating with established programs here at the University of Minnesota. Our collaborations with open.umn.edu, Boynton, and MSA have yielded some of the best results in terms of quality and quantity of programming. Our 2014-2015 request reflects furthering these relationships.