United Nations Student Association (#339)

January 21, 2014

Student Services Fee Request for the 2014 - 2015 Academic Year

214 Social Sciences Building, 267 19th Avenue S. Minneapolis, MN 55455

Address

612.624.9007  612.626.2242  unsa@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.”

Shelby Miner       Amy Namur
Preparer’s Name    Co-Preparer’s Name
miner085@umn.edu   namur002@umn.edu
Preparer’s Email   Co-Preparer’s Email

Is your organization an IRS 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit?  Yes _________  No ______ X (Campus Life Program)
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  $13,640.00
- Total Annual Organization Budget  $320.70
- Total Program Budget (apart from General Operating)  $16,940.00
Section 1: Narrative

History: The United Nations Student Association - Model United Nations (#339) was started more than a decade ago by students who wanted to understand and promote culture and diversity through experiences and learning related to the United Nations. The organization began attending the American Model United Nations conference (AMUN) annually, which is held in Chicago, with the help of the Institute for Global Studies in the College of Liberal Arts. Ever since the first conference, members have had a unique experience in learning and participating in cultural and political issues that are pressing global topics. Over the years, the organization has transformed and grown into its current state. Two years ago marked a growth period for the organization when members attended a prestigious spring conference in New York City through the National Model United Nations. Unfortunately, due to funding constraints, we were unable to attend the same conference the next year. With the influx of SSF money last year, we were not only able to attend the conference in New York City, but also one in San Francisco. This year, with the SSF funding and through fundraising and grants, we were once again able to attend three conferences, two of which we had never before experienced: the American Model United Nations conference in Chicago, the National Collegiate Security Conference in Washington D.C., and the Chicago Model United Nations Conference. We’re also hosting the second annual MinneMUN conference this year, a conference on campus for University of Minnesota students for free so that they also learn about international relations, public speaking, negotiation, and diplomacy.

We also have an informative website, which can be visited at z.umn.edu/unsa. We developed the website ourselves, and it is hosted for free on University servers. This has greatly increased our visibility, and over 30% of our members found the United Nations Student Association through this tool. The website has also been a great way for us to communicate with interested students and also help register student groups for our on-campus conference.

Next year, we plan to again attend three conferences and bring more students than ever before. We also hope to make our on-campus conference even larger!

Mission: To promote knowledge and awareness of the United Nations and the international system by representing the University of Minnesota at national and international assemblies, conferences, and simulations; and to provide a diverse atmosphere for learning and understanding the process of developing foreign policy. To develop student leaders through preparation and conference experiences and prepare them for building consensus in real life. To represent and honor the University of Minnesota’s reputation nationally.

Model United Nations: We educate students about the United Nations and many important issues in the world today. At conferences, each student represents a particular country, giving him/her the opportunity to explore the cultural, political and economic issues pertinent to that country. Students from all parts of the nation and the world attend these conferences, giving members the chance to interact and make connections with others of both similar and dissimilar backgrounds. As they make these connections, members develop a stronger awareness of the role of the United Nations in political and social issues worldwide. They also learn diplomacy and important leadership skills.
Students often work in pairs to represent a country and its policies in committees consisting of 14 to 190+ other delegations. Delegates are given ample opportunities to speak and debate in front of 200+ person crowds as well as collaborate in the writing of complex resolutions on major international topics within their committees. This allows for the fulfillment of the supplementing the education on campus. To ensure the experience is of high educational value, we only attend conferences hosted by other universities or non-profit institutions formally recognized as NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) with the United Nations Department of Public Information. All of these experiences teach important leadership skills.

Model United Nations conferences advance understanding of diversity and the working and function of the United Nations and explore contemporary international issues. They positively affect the lives of participants and prepare them to be better global citizens through quality educational experiences that emphasize collaboration and cooperative resolution of conflict. We envision a world comprised of civically engaged citizens who strive for peaceful, multi-lateral conflict resolution and equitable, sustainable human development. Cooperative, hands-on learning allows students to confront a range of topics with the perspective of their assigned country or organization. Through these experiences—during preparation, in committee sessions, and even in hallway caucuses—students develop an appreciation of differing viewpoints, the frustration of negotiation, the rewards of cooperation and a broader view of the human side of international relations and diplomacy.

Attendance at Model United Nations events has had community impact and is open to all students. It is our belief that these conferences offer an educational development opportunity in diversity and politics unrivaled by most conventions, conferences, or classes. The experience alone is extremely unique, something that cannot be simply taught in a classroom or modeled by our own small group of student delegates at the University or on campus, though we are preparing a conference for students on campus that will bring a smaller and shorter, but very engaging experience to students on campus.

Active participation by students leads to a better understanding of the international system of governance and the perspectives and ideologies surrounding important global issues. Past conferences have been large international gatherings of over 5,000 students from at least 50 countries. When all 5,000+ students are assembled together and debating important issues, a true meeting of the minds takes place. There is a freely flowing river of ideas about international policies. Participants must think extremely critically to analyze challenges they are faced with, and they are forced to challenge their own ideas and viewpoints. They must adapt to new information. Ideas explored at the conference eventually trickle their way back to Minnesota when students return from the conference. The students share their experiences with other University of Minnesota students and use what they learn at the conference to become better leaders themselves. The unique perspective that our participants have inspires others to think on a grander scale as well. This, in turn, excites students to think more globally and consider current topics of international politics and governance: topics the world needs answers to and those that University students could discover.

**Student Development and Campus Community:** Conferences help promote the University’s mission of “discovery.” Attendance at conferences is a powerful way for the University to get its name out to international students. By increasing its presence in international affairs and at major conferences, the University can also effectively help accomplish its goal of being one of the top three public-education institutions in the US.
This conference is also a great development opportunity for student leaders. They learn how to apply the knowledge they learn in class to real-world issues. After the conference, these students share their learning with the student population at the University of Minnesota. In this way, the AMUN conference has positive direct and indirect effects on our campus community, learning, Minnesota, and the University.

Conferences also help fulfill student development outcomes. Students must research and prepare for their committee sessions as well as educate themselves about proper diplomatic procedures (responsibility and accountability). They must speak in front of hundreds of other delegates at the conference and work as an independent entity in negotiations and discussion, working with others to come to cooperative resolutions (independence and interdependence). Each member must utilize their skills and knowledge to have a significant impact at the conference and must set goals for themselves in terms of what they would like to accomplish (goal orientation). Students must always remain diplomatically courteous and adapt to new problems brought up by other student delegates (self awareness). They must go outside their comfort zone and work with student delegates from cultures they have never encountered. Additionally, they must respect the values others bring to discussions (appreciation of differences). Students must also demonstrate the ability to react responsibly and reflectively to sudden complications that may arise during the UN simulation (tolerance of ambiguity).

Most importantly, participants at the conference must solve complex problems with help from other students from around the world. Students must be able to find information quickly and reliably when debating with other delegations. They require a master’s ability to ask questions and find truths. Students have to understand both the philosophies and cultures of the country they are representing as well as those of other countries. At the foundation of all of these tasks, students must have the skill to communicate effectively with peoples from different backgrounds and be creative in finding solutions to international problems and conflicts. Their involvement in the AMUN conference will help them understand the importance of these qualities and encourage life-long learning and teach effective leadership skills.

**Merit:** No other organization on campus can boast the comprehensive development nature of the conferences our members attend. We believe that because of this, our organization is of vital importance to the University and its students because we develop diverse student leaders. Furthermore, we meet the criteria for funding, under Regents policy and the guidelines for viewpoint neutral decision-making. We do this by supplementing the academic curriculum in a unique way, providing a service to the student body as well as the Minnesota community at large by developing leaders of tomorrow, and helping to foster a sense of community on campus through our proposed on-campus conference event. We have great financial need that can only be provided for with fees, along with pursuing alternative sources of funding, and a plan to fundraise extensively.

**Section 2: Organizational Chart**

We have grown significantly as a group in the past few years, and we found this year that we needed to expand the leadership positions available within the United Nations Student Association. Thus, we have added several specialized roles to help get more students involved in the leadership of the club and to delegate the growing workload. These additions have contributed to a greater degree of efficiency within both the operational and programing sectors.
Below, we have included a Venn diagram illustrating the thematic areas to our programming and group operations. Our goal is to provide student members, and subsequently the student body through our members' continuing leadership, with a combination of important team building and factual information about international relations, diplomatic experiences and learning accomplished at conferences, and a resulting global citizenship focus. We believe and know our members go on to do big things, and we are confident our team helps prepare our future leaders for facing ambiguity, tough situations, complex problems, and constantly changing political arenas.
We believe the combination of these programming themes help prepare students to be the leaders of tomorrow. Our members excel after being a part of our organization.
Section 3: Performance Report

We believe it is very difficult to quantitatively measure our team's impact on campus, but we hope the following statistics and notable achievements demonstrate our impact:

Average Meeting Attendance

Average meeting attendance has increased with fees funding the last few years (due to marketing materials, the ability to pay for more participants, and our expanded reach through conference attendance).

Yearly Conference Attendance

Yearly conference attendance has increased with fees funding since we are able to send more student leaders to more conferences.
Some qualitative measures:

- We were recently very honored and proud of two of our delegates who received "Outstanding Delegation" awards at the American Model United Nations Conference in Fall 2013 in the General Assembly Plenary. This marks the third year in a row we have brought this award back to the University of Minnesota.
- For the past three consecutive years, our team has been awarded a "Delegation Distinction" award for our efforts and organization at the AMUN conference in Chicago.
- Our past members go on to be leaders in other organizations and even get involved internationally.
- Past members have secured jobs with the United Nations, and one of our past members won the United Nations Citizen Ambassador contest in 2012 (she was first place in the world) and will hold the title until 2014. Other past alumni have gone on to advanced studies in economics, politics, advocacy, and law.
- Our MinneMUN conference, which will occur on March 1, 2014, had over 130 students registered last year for two committees and is expanding even further this year with four committees being offered to participants. This conference helps us bring University of Minnesota students a Model UN experience at home similar to those we attend nationally.

Section 4: Reserve Accounts

We have created at $200.00 reserve account line item in order to help with operational expenses relating to marketing that we need late in the summer.
Section 5: Fees Request
We are requesting a small increase in fees for the next year. See the table below for more information:

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<td>Representing an increase of:</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>(raw fees amount increase)</td>
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<td>In exchange for the following:</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>(in average meeting attendance)</td>
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<td>20.68%</td>
<td>(in yearly conference attendance)</td>
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<td>16.67%</td>
<td>(in minimum campus impact)</td>
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This demonstrates that the benefits of funding this increase will outweigh the proportional cost of the increase. In addition, this money will help improve the University’s presence nationally and allow us to meet the following guidelines for decision-making better.

Guidelines for Decision-making:
We believe our group fulfills several guidelines for decision-making. Please see the below explanations:

| 1a | Our group, as will be clear from the below answers in addition to this one, provides an indirect service to the student body. Primarily, the service we provide is leadership development. When students attend our conferences and participate in our weekly meetings, they learn valuable leadership skills such as appreciating diversity, solving complex problems, building consensus, working with people of sometimes opposing viewpoints, and more. Because of this, our programming can be likened to leadership development, and indeed many of our students go on to lead other student organizations on campus and make differences in their own communities. |

<p>| 1b | Our group substantially supplements the academic curriculum in two notable ways. First, by bringing up, discussing, and debating current international events, members of the group become better informed about important international issues humanity faces. Second, through preparation for and participation at national and on-campus conferences, our members learn valuable skills in diplomacy such as public speaking, teamwork, consensus-building, negotiating, and even critical reading and writing. Students truly learn how to advocate for issues, form arguments, and think critically. They also learn how to work with people who have opposing views. All of these skills and experiences greatly supplement academic curriculum and force students to apply their knowledge and learning. |</p>
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<td><strong>1c</strong></td>
<td>UNSA is a community, itself, at the University of Minnesota. With over 30 active members and a large base of students who attend meetings sporadically, UNSA is a large community. It is a community of students who enjoy discussing international issues and learning about other countries and cultures. It is a group of students from many backgrounds themselves who come to share their traditions and knowledge. It is a place for friendship and bonding both on campus and at conferences. Further, by hosting a on-campus conference, we promote diversity in our overall campus community by challenging student leaders to work together and build new relationships.</td>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Our programming and meeting are of high quality and offered to a reasonable quantity of students each semester. We also take great strides to involve as many students as possible in our conferences, both on and off campus. In addition, we feel the development we provide students with performs a service to the student body since it develops student leaders, who improve the University in many different ways. In this way, our programs are consistent with our and the University’s mission.</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>As shown by our attendance and conference participation figures, there is a sizeable population of students who are interested in our programming. In addition, we receive, on average, over five emails a month from students interested in joining UNSA and attending one of our many conferences. Lastly, if these facts are not proof enough, the 130+ registrations we have for our on-campus conference demonstrate that the student body, at large, is very interested in our programming.</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>We do not discriminate against students interested in participating in our programming. In fact, we encourage diversity of background and study because the United Nations is successful due to its diversity. If we model the United Nations correctly, then, diversity will help us as well, and it has. UNSA members come from many different academic disciplines ranging from business, to philosophy, to global studies, to economics, to anthropology, and more! Our on-campus conference also impacts students from many different backgrounds in both the arts and sciences.</td>
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<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>We have attempted to be as fiscally wise as possible. We always stretch our funds as far as they can go, sometimes even asking our members to share five to six students per hotel room instead of the typical four. We also have relied on ourselves to create our materials and have used free resources at our disposal to conduct marketing efforts and aid in conference preparation. In this way, we have ensured that we can target our programs to the largest number of students as possible. To help students who are in greater financial need, we have proposed a new travel grants program, which you can read more about in our program breakdowns.</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Our programs provide impact to the student body primarily by developing diverse student leaders. In this way, UNSA indirectly benefits students and the University in implicit ways. Our members go on to lead other student groups and have impact on campus in many different forms. Some choose to advocate for students in student government using the advocacy skills they learned with UNSA or lead cultural groups using the public speaking and planning skills they learned from attending our conferences. In this way, we provide far-reaching benefits felt by many students.</td>
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As shown on the first page of this application, over 35% of our funding comes from outside sources such as fundraising, grants, donations, and sponsorships. We have tried our best to diversify our income and reduce reliance on fees. However, due to constraints and a lack of funding from some of these sources over the years, we still require fees to maintain reasonable growth and provide as much benefit to the student body as possible. You can find more information about our other sources of income in our budget sheets.

As the above answer indicates, we have demonstrated financial need that we have not been able to fulfill completely with alternative sources of funding. We do actively pursue new opportunities each year, but our efforts have only brought us to the level we are at today. We have no expectation that, in today’s economic situation, alternative sources of income will be easy to come by next year.

We will be 0% operational in the summer.

**Section 6: External Funding**

Our organization has strived to find external funding through sponsors, university support and fundraising. By working with IGS, we have been given a grant of $1,500, which helps us supplement our checks from Student Service Fee’s. We also apply for grants and receive on average one to two a year adding up to around $1,000-$2,000 of additional income. Unfortunately, this year we were unsuccessful in obtaining grants, but we plan to be successful in the future. In addition to this, our organization actively fundraises, supplementing our income and covering almost all of our operational expenses. Recently we have been approaching outside companies and businesses looking for sponsors.

While these outside factors add up to around $3,500 of extra income a year, it is not enough to sustain our annual budget of around $15,000. Our club relies on Student Service Fee’s funding in order to function. Not only does it cover the cost of day to day operations, but also allows us to attend conference’s which not only enhance the Universities reputation abroad, but also allows us to bring back valuable experience to enrich University of Minnesota students on campus.