In operational expenses, GAPSA stated that they worked very hard to cut costs as much as possible. However, there were a number of areas with increases in the requested amount. Please elaborate on the following increases:

Increase in supplies under operational expenses: (4000 FY 2013-2014 -- 7200 FY 2014-2015)

Actually this is a REDUCTION of what was budgeted for. In 2013-14 we were approved by the SSFC to spend $8000. We went through a move and joined spaces with MSA. The full repercussions of shared space is not yet realized as we have only been doing so for less than 1 year. A REDUCTION from $8000 to $7200 will set a precedent for cost savings while allowing room for unforeseen expenses until GAPSA can get a handle on shared supplies with MSA.


Actually I believe the category is “telephone and fax” not cable and we are approved to spend $2000 for 2013-2014. This is NOT an increase, but status quo. The projected spending is based on extrapolation of current data and may include some error. Again, we must allow room for uncertainty after joining spaces with MSA.

“Other” under operational expenses: (700 FY 2013-2014 -- 2520 FY 2014-2015)

Again, this is as REDUCTION from the previous budget. $700 is a projection. We are approved to spend $3750 on other expenses. Actually some of this rises from an anomaly that the SSFC should have noticed since it’s obvious they have studied our budgets. The Quickbooks subscription was simply moved to supplies (as it is technically software) and no longer in the “other” category. A REDUCTION from $3750 to $2520 simply allows for uncertainty while CUTTING costs at the same time.

2) Can you further elaborate on the Data Record Services under Operational Expenses (other)?

We keep 5 years of financial records on file, off-site, that are automatically shred as new records are added. This is in accordance with being a recognized non-profit.

3) What is the total cost of VTAP, and how is the expense distributed? What % of VTAP is GAPSA providing?

The amount is half of VTAP’s budget. A budget for that half is attached which was submitted by the VTAP organizer. GAPSA thought it would be easiest for both parties to simply fund the program at the requested amount and let VTAP spend as accordingly.

4) Can you further elaborate on the GAPSA Forum Travel costs?

This is stated in the budget sheet.

5) Can you further elaborate on the Travel expenses for the Public Affairs Event?

This is already included in the budget sheet.
6) What is the Number of Attendance of the President's Reception? Projected and historical.

At the time the proposal was initially being drafted GAPSA did expect around 200 people at the event this year because that's close to what we got last year. However, unfortunately we had only half that number sign up, with some students attending that did not sign up, despite increasing outreach. The previous year we had a much larger attendance number as indicated. Unfortunately, there was an error made, and no projected number was indicated in the budget sheet. GAPSA does expect a much larger attendance number (200) next year, based on historic attendance, and because the Graduate School Dean was thoroughly impressed by the event, and has offered to help promote it next year.

7) Can you further elaborate on the $900 Entertainment cost for the President's Reception?

This is to pay for the jazz trio (Reid Kennedy, a UMN alum), Goldy Gopher appearance, and a photographer.

8) What is the Number of Attendance for the Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation week?

We haven't received this data from the councils, including COGS.

9) Your Budget doesn't reflect a severance with COGS. Can you provide a justification for the consistency in funding request that would have otherwise gone to them?

There has not been successful vote to sever COGS from our Assembly, or a final decision on their independent funding request. GAPSA represents all graduate and professional students as mandated by the University of Minnesota shared governance system. If COGS is no longer part of GAPSA, there are many governance bodies within each college that are now loosely connected with the Graduate School, who have requested that they receive the pass through funding instead of COGS.

10) If all of the affiliate councils were to request money directly from the SSFC, what would GAPSA's significance be on campus / what would their basic service be?

Taken directly from the request “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.”

11) Parking reimbursement goes to whom?

This is, again, explained in the budget sheets.

12) How does pass through funding work? How are allocations decided and paid? Is there any oversight of the funding after allocated?

Historically, as indicated in the budget sheet, there is a flat rate check cut to each council and then a per enrolled student check paid to each council as calculated by data received by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR). The executive board has received feedback from constituent councils to revise this historical mechanism. In light of this, the GAPSA executive board plans on presenting a resolution to the assembly for a per enrolled student amount only so that the amount received is directly proportional to the amount of enrolled students in that council.
13) Why don't constituent councils file their own requests?

When GAPSA was established in 1990, part of the relationship between GAPSA and the councils was to provide administrative work to request pass through allocation on their behalf.

14) What are the OIT fees for?

This is paid to the University of Minnesota Office of Information Technology (OIT) for telephone service in the office (as indicated by the section of the budget sheet).

15) How much and what kind of food is provided at GAPSA Forums and meetings? (total GAPSA forum attendance is projected to be 300, with some of those telecommuting; that would put the food cost over $15/person)

Those telecommuting also receive food. The average cost per person is $8-10. There are exceptions when we meet in certain venues with forced catering choices such as D'Amico Catering. This is often based on ITV access, as in using McNamara for larger meetings.

16) How many GAPSA assembly and GAPSA forum meetings will be held this coming year?

The GAPSA assembly must meet as a body at least 4 times per year. Additionally, GAPSA assembly meetings are tied to GAPSA events, such as the Forum on Sustainability of Higher Education. In these events, graduate and professional students are brought together with stakeholders to discuss issues that overlap with GAPSA initiative. These meetings have included undergraduate student leaders, graduate, professional and administrative unit deans, state legislators and regents. They aren't a traditional meeting in the sense of mechanism, but they are a time for discussion about pertinent issues to all graduate and professional students. There is also no limit to the number of assembly meetings per year. To date, the assembly has convened 5 times, with more meetings planned. The number needs to be flexible to the needs of the Assembly, and issues of discussion needed.

17) Why are the number of GAPSA officers receiving stipends being reduced for next year?

This is based on criticism and input from member councils, as well as the demonstrated effort from the member council representatives receiving stipends this year. Based on internal evaluation, we felt that it was a better use of student fees to limit the stipends to officers who maintain the daily workings of the 501c3 (President/EVP/Grants/Finance) and take off time for Board of Regents and other required/expected administrative meetings each month, and have typically become Chairs of the Student Regents (Reps to Regents), which requires additional coordination and time.

18) How and through what processes are grants awarded? How large is the grants committee?

This was asked and described during the fees presentation. On GAPSA's grant website, the eligibility criteria, application and evaluation processes are outlined for students regarding how to apply for each type of grant. Depending on the grant category, whether it is an individual student or student organization, we have a slightly different process. Individual grants are awarded based on proof that 1) the student has paid the GAPSA membership fee AND 2) registration/documentation to attend a conference/workshop/training OR an event where they will be presenting their research work. Once receipts are turned in via the evaluation form, they can receive their check. Student organizations can apply to academic or social grants and have to
provide details about the event/initiative in their application (how many students are expected to
attend (RSVP list), how many programs it is open to, what other types of grants or funding they
have applied for and received, along with a breakdown of their cost (rent, refreshments, supplies,
etc). We do not award for alcohol or honoraria for any type of grant categories per university
policy.

The grants committee has traditionally been 2-4 student members from various programs and
they each provide a scoring for the criteria which GAPSA values and promotes (mentioned
above). These guidelines are designed to award grants funding fairly to programs such that they
benefit larger numbers of grad. & prof. students and a variety of programs as opposed to just a
specific school/major. Based on the average scoring, the group receives a portion of the funding
for which they applied for. They can always come back and apply for more grant funds until they
receive the maximum amount possible per academic year, provided we do not run out of funding
earlier in the spring.

19) Why does GAPSA need an external auditor and CPA consultant for?

The external auditor conducts an annual external audit and also files GAPSA’s annual tax
return. The CPA consultant is an expert in non-profit accounting practices and hired on an hourly
basis. Present and future meetings are set with VP of finance to provide continuity to GAPSA’s
financials. This is to assure that new finance VP’s are trained on how to properly utilize GAPSA’s
Quickbooks account. The CPA also provides crucial input into reporting and other duties of the
VP of finance. Due to conflict of interest/Accounting ethical practices, the CPA consultant
shouldn’t be the same person doing the audit, which is why GAPSA utilizes two different firms.

20) What is the “other” in open ed co-sponsorship for?

As indicated in the budget sheets, the funds will be used to fund the www.open.umn.edu
review incentives program as a partnership. Also, the “other” funds will help fund training/adoption
educational programs with www.open.umn.edu and Academic Technology Services. These are
important because there are data that show these are the major barriers faculty have in adopting
open educational resources.

21) What % of tedx umn does GAPSA pay for?

We support some of their programming, with the other part of their programming being
covered by MSA, as well as their own ticket sales. We aim to support them to a similar extent to
what MSA supports. Together with MSA, we believe that TEDx help university community
members and anyone with access to the internet to learn about great projects and ideas that are
being shared or developed at the University of Minnesota. We have also asked TEDx to develop
a workshop to help students improve their presentation skills. You should know this based on
ours/MSA’s fee requests. We just asked them to give us an amount to help offset their funding.
They also provide some services that are specific to our population in that budget item, such as
the workshop we provided.

22) For appreciation week - if each council runs its own events, what events does GAPSA run
itself?

We co-sponsor all the events, and ask for initial input/planning by council.
23) Please elaborate on what the funding under “public affairs” will go to - especially the travel cost.

This is already indicated in the budget sheet.

24) What % of cirque de stress is paid by gapsa?

Boynton knows the details of this. They just ask us for a set amount to co-sponsor. Boynton confirmed that GAPSA contributes 21% of the total cost.

25) Could you detail GAPSA’s sponsorship with SUA for the concert series?

GAPSA sponsors the concert series at 60% of performers cost. SUA provide 40% along with donation of the venue.

26) Could you provide some information on this year’s advocacy workshops?

This gets planned in partnership with MSLC, MSA and government affairs. We don’t have details for you yet because they happen closer to Support the U Day.

27) Could you describe how the grad teaching reward is rewarded? Last year, this was co-sponsored with cogs and msa - why isn’t cogs still involved, and how will their removal affect the reward?

MSA said clearly to COGS that they were not co-sponsors on this, but they would share the information about it, as they do for other organizations. MSA is our counterpart, COGS is not the counterpart to MSA. We offered to co-sponsor with COGS in order to facilitate it appropriately, and COGS voted that partnership down. We are seeking independent funds, to incorporate it with our Adviser Award, and support this partnership with MSA.

28) GAPSA budgeted $39k for leadership development workshops for this year; what happened to these workshops?

We held a forum on the Sustainability of Higher Education, which was a half day workshop for leadership development, using Art of Hosting and Design Thinking to think about policy implementation to push the University to be more innovative, cosponsored with University Libraries, Extension, the Center for Integrative Leadership, the Jandris Center for Innovation in Higher Education/CEHD, the Minnesota High Tech Association, and Citizens League. We brought David Wiley and Nicole Allen to speak about Open Educational Resources, cosponsored with Libraries. This Spring, we are hosting an event on the tension between Open Governance and Privacy with one of the top security experts, and Harvard Law Berkman Fellow Bruce Schneier, and may bring David Wiley back to present with our students to the Regents and Congressman Kline, who chairs the US House Education and the Workforce Committee, to educate them on Open Education and how it impacts cost savings for individual students and the University.