

anagha & winston ²⁰²⁰ POLICY WHAT IT TAKES. ²⁰²⁰ PAPER

Written by: Anagha & Winston 2020 Policy Team

Engagement: Student Government Success Fund

Summary

We will establish a **scholarship fund** within Student Government (SG) to promote **academic and professional development** beyond undergraduate education. Students can apply for grants to fund graduate school exam preparatory classes or resources (text books, online materials, etc), application fees, test fees, and other related expenses.

Background

The GRE, MCAT, LSAT, and other graduate school entrance exams represent a financial burden for many students as they consider post-undergraduate education. For example, applying to medical school typically costs \$170 for the first school and \$40 for each additional school, in addition to a \$320 MCAT exam fee.¹ Test prep materials can range from \$200 for self-study textbooks to \$2,000 for in-person courses.²

The Student Services Budget Committee has allotted \$112,820 to Student Government for the past three years.^{3,4} Of this, the combined SG social and banquet budget for 2018-2019 amounted to \$3,800.⁵

¹ <https://students-residents.aamc.org/financial-aid/article/the-cost-of-applying-to-medical-school/>

² https://www.dartmouth.edu/prehealth/applying/mcat_prep.html

³ <https://thetexasatorator.com/2019/04/03/student-government-is-an-expensive-investment-firm/>

⁴ <https://utexas.app.box.com/s/49w2mbv2s2sxx94817zfnuetbxbmuttx>

⁵ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sfJ0Pw4tOO3zCzvWnAlb1zaDd49mEu_2/view

Recommendation

We want to repurpose the social/banquet budget to start our Success Fund. SG's social budget is just one example of discretionary funds that could be put to better use, especially since most of this money goes towards providing food for SG internal events. We also aim to expand on this starter fund through repurposing other extraneous aspects of the SG budget and streamlining discretionary spending.

Feasibility

Creating a scholarship is not something new to Student Government. Our partner organization, the Senate of College Councils, uses its discretionary funds to provide several different scholarship opportunities.⁶ It is well within the scope of Student Government to create a scholarship for professional development. This is, additionally, one way SG can be more accessible and transparent to the student body. Other universities, such as Vanderbilt University and Pennsylvania State University, have created similar funds as a way to reduce financial barriers to receiving a post-graduate education.^{7,8}

⁶ <http://utsenate.org/>

⁷ <https://news.vanderbilt.edu/2020/01/15/apply-for-adriel-bineza-graduate-school-equity-fund-by-jan-26/>

⁸ https://www.collegian.psu.edu/news/campus/article_935c5306-178d-11e8-bee0-5b7f0d8e6082.html

anagha & winston **NO** POLICY **WHAT IT TAKES. NO PAPER**

Written by: Anagha & Winston 2020 Policy Team

Engagement: Student Government Email Updates

Summary

We propose sending out **biweekly emails to the entire student body** to increase transparency and keep students informed about opportunities and updates within Student Government (SG). Through this, we hope to draw in diverse student voices who may never have engaged with SG before.

Background

The majority of UT students do not feel represented within SG, and therefore many remain disconnected from SG programming and broader initiatives. These biweekly emails are part of the larger culture shift towards inclusivity within SG that Anagha and Winston want to prioritize. Emails to the entire student body will increase transparency, promote accountability, and provide broader visibility for SG initiatives.

Recommendation

The emails will include details on all SG activities, such as information on current legislation that SG is proposing or considering, upcoming events and initiatives within SG Agencies, progress towards executive alliance goals, and opportunities to get involved with the SG space. We also want to create a feedback form for students to comment on legislation, executive priorities, or other issues.

Feasibility

This will just require a list-serve of all UT student emails, which SG already has access to. Students will not have to opt-in, but may choose to opt-out. Members of SG will send the emails out every other week.