GUSA Finance & Appropriations Committee

**FY18 Budget Summit**

Student Activity Fee Funding Application

(APPLICATION A - Advisory Boards, GPB, the GUSA Executive and the Lecture Fund)

Please email this application and accompanying materials to gusafinanceandappropriations@gmail.com by **Friday, February 17, 2017 at 11:59 pm.**

**PART A.**

Name of Organization: **Student Activities Commission (SAC)**

Mission of Organization:

The Student Activities Commission (SAC) is an advisory board to the Vice President of Student Affairs. SAC provides funding and supervises the overall administration and effectiveness of student organizations, or clubs, and activities under its jurisdiction.

Total Amount of Funding Requested: **$290,000**

**PART B.**

Please provide the following information:

**\*\*Microsoft Excel preferable\*\***

1. FY17 Revenues and Expenditures:
2. Total projected revenue detailed by source
3. Total revenue to date detailed by source
4. Total projected expenditures by group/organization
5. Total expenditures to date by group/organization
6. FY17 Balances:
7. Balance of all organization accounts (operating, reserve, gift, etc.), by type of account to date
8. Projected balance of all organization accounts, by type of account, carried forward to FY17
9. FY18 Budget
10. Total projected revenue detailed by source
11. Total projected expenditures by group
12. Projected balance of all organization accounts carried forward to FY18

**PART C.**

Please answer the following questions individually:

1. How did your organization affect student life? Can this be measured?

Simply put, SAC is inseparable from the concept of student life at Georgetown. Currently supervising over 130 student organizations, SAC provides funding and guidance to more clubs and more students than any other group on Georgetown’s campus. Our organizations focus on a range of things, from cultural heritage to competing in model UN and debate, from political engagement to random acts of kindness. Some of our groups count hundreds, including many of us, among their members, and some only a dozen or two. Even though SAC itself does most of its work behind the scenes, the time and dedication of our 13 commissioners has an immeasurable impact on the extracurricular lives of thousands of undergraduates, and offers opportunities for Hoyas, especially first-year students, to get involved and find their home on the Hilltop.

1. How many clubs/groups compose your organization? Please list them, noting especially any clubs/groups added (or planned to be added) within FY17.

SAC currently oversees 122 organizations. The list of organizations is attached in the Excel spreadsheet. In terms of new organizations, SAC expects to take in between 2-5 of the organizations that CAB has assigned to us.

1. What were significant challenges for your organization over the past year? What were significant successes for your organization over the past year?

Due to chronic underfunding, SAC is forced to impose severe scale cuts on allocations we make tour organizations. With last semester as a notable exception, we are constantly forced to cut organizational budgets in a process that includes several rounds of cuts. We impose strict scales on per capita spending on food, certain events, and travel. For unforeseen costs, space, A/V, and the skyrocketing security costs of our events, we place a 75% scale on all requests, which will probably have to become even lower if our current funding level is perpetuated. For travel events, we fund first and second travel events at a mere 55%, with a 25% contribution for the third travel event, and nothing stipulated for subsequent events. For many of our groups, who travel to compete in highly competitive circuit, these brutal scales result in the punishment of success and the destruction of all incentives to advance in their respective competitions.

While we take fiscal responsibility very seriously and recognize that we must take efforts to make sure our organizations spend funds responsibly and efficiently, SAC’s growth in recent years has not been met with a growth in funding. This has resulted in many students being forced to pay high out-of-pocket costs, in addition, of course, to the student activities fee. Further funding for SAC would help us reward organizations with meaningful, responsible, and effective programming, as well as encourage our competing organizations to perform well and support, rather than punish, their success. Furthermore, increased funding for ad-hoc requests would finally adjust the chronic underfunding of SAC and allow is to properly meet the many unforeseen costs of student organizations, many of which put on events that uphold and advance Georgetown’s name.

1. Do you have any budget concerns for the next 5-10 years?

I, personally, am a staunch defender of funds collected from the student activities fee. As our community furthers its commitment to being Women and Men for Others, I fear that more organizations will be tempted to spend student activities funds on non-Georgetown students at the detriment of programming for fee-paying undergraduates.

Similarly, while I admire, support, and encourage the entrepreneurship and thirst for leadership among our community, I worry that a growing number of student organizations will continue to be created and assigned to SAC, straining our already limited funds even more. On that note, I have serious concerns about the New Club Development process, in which other members of CAB can admit new organizations and assign them to SAC without seeking consent from the commission, as was exemplified this year. This means that even when SAC has a vote in CAB, other members can disregard our informed opinion and forcefully assign clubs to us. While we can decide, after a semester, to remove them from the commission, over that semester they have the potential to significantly strain our resources in terms of manpower and funding. This could become a recurring issue if not properly addressed.

I hope that future commissions will continue my quest for efficiency and truth, and will continue to eliminate or penalize student organizations that spend funds irresponsibly, or whose existence is de facto inseparable from simply a group of friends having fun on everyone else’s dime. While I don’t expect SAC’s financial needs to significantly increase over the next 5-10 years (aside from inflation), this certainly could be the case if the commission and its chair are not vigilant of the issues I have outlined above.

1. What level of financial risk does your organization incur?

I would say that SAC is a safe investment. As a 13-member commission, most of our decisions are consensus based, and all funding decisions are made with the Associate Director of the CSE in the room, providing guidance. While the commission itself cannot directly oversee what our student organizations are spending their funds on, the Center for Student Engagement and their system of receipt reconciliation ensures that no inappropriate charges are made. Furthermore, we coordinate with the CSE through our public budgets system which ensures that organizations are only allowed to spend money on SAC-approved purchases.

1. How could the Budget Summit process be improved this year? How could relations with GUSA be improved?

I will be able to provide more feedback on the Budget Summit after our presentation. We have no complaints about our relationships with the GUSA senate. In my time at SAC, we have enjoyed fantastic liaisons. This year specifically, we have undergone a joint effort of making our liaisons feel more like part of SAC and encouraging interaction with commissioners. I believe it would be positive if every FinApp senator attended at least one SAC meeting, or at least met with the chair before the budget summit.

1. If you are requesting more funding for FY18 than FY17, please explain why.

As I previously stated, due to chronic underfunding, SAC is unable to fully meet funding requests from clubs every single year, even after common-sense cuts are made by the commission. We impose several rounds of cuts during the budgeting process, have strict conditions for the ad-hoc stage in addition to a 75% scale, and fund travel at a mere 55% for the first two events, and 25% for the third. The travel rule specifically punishes groups that advance in competitions and disincentivizes their success.

Further funding for SAC would help us reward organizations with meaningful, responsible, and effective programming, as well as encourage our competing organizations that travel to perform well and support, rather than punish, their success. In addition, increased funding for ad-hoc requests would finally adjust the chronic underfunding of SAC and allow is to properly meet the many unforeseen costs of student organizations, many of which put on events that uphold and advance Georgetown’s name.

**CERTIFICATION:**

By signing below, I hereby certify that the information enclosed is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

**Funding Request Form Submitted By: Ricardo Mondolfi**

**Name of Group Student Chair: Ricardo Mondolfi**

**Signature (type your name): Ricardo Mondolfi**

**Name of Group Advisor: Amanda Carlton**

**Signature (type your name): Amanda Carlton**

**Date: February 17, 2017**

**Contact Email: sac@georgetown.edu**

**Contact Phone Number: 202-790-3992**