Twenty – Ninth COGS Budget Committee Report

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Introduction

In this proposal, the Budget Committee of the Congress of Graduate Students is presenting the Assembly with a budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. The intention of the Budget Committee is to support the mission of COGS, which is to both defend the interests of all post-baccalaureate students in graduate student life, services, and academics while also managing the funds within our purview in a fiscally responsible manner. To do so, the Committee has worked to balance increased funding for successful academic and professional programs with a desire to trim wasteful expenditures and unspent money.

COGS funds are derived from the Actives & Student Life fee. A total of $12.87 is assessed per credit hour to fund Student Government on campus. A proportional amount equal to the number of post-bachelorette student credit hours is allocated to COGS prior to the start of the fiscal year. These funds are used to craft the COGS budget.

Funding projects are increased for the current fiscal year. The Budget is $29,000 more than the previous year’s budget, an increase of 5 percent. Due to the decrease in the number of organizations requesting money, the budget committee was able to increase overall funding for the majority of the requesting organizations. The committee took into account the fact that more organizations may be requesting funds through the Unallocated account in the upcoming fiscal year and made sure to leave an adequate amount of funds to supply that account. The committee also was aware of the increase in the minimum wage in the middle of the upcoming fiscal year as well as annual cost of living wages.

Due to the recent COIVD pandemic, the committee was understanding of the previous year’s fiscal spending and made sure to account for any losses that may affect the upcoming fiscal year. The committee decided to fund requests under the assumption that events would be held under normal regulations therefore not to require any organizations to seek additional funding for any changes.

The Committee would like to recognize and thank the assistance of several people who helped make these deliberations possible. Interim Director of Student Affairs, Doctor Brandon Bowden, COGS Advisor, Jacalyn Butts, and SGA Business Manager, Laurel McKinney, for their input and assistance throughout the budget process. Speaker Christopher Hagemeyer was also present to help the committee, and
provided additional input. Additionally, the Committee wishes to thank Ben Young and SGA Publications for the help in producing the COGS Budget Handbook.

The Committee was unanimous during final deliberations; discussion was enthusiastic and rigorous as this budget reflects a balanced allocation of COGS funds. The budget was approved on a vote of 8-0-0 with representatives Blake-Hedges, Collins, Creigh, Hirsch, Ilesanmi, Sizemore, Sangokunle, and Mendez voting in favor of the proposed budget. The proposed budget will now move on to the full Congress for deliberations and debate. It is in the opinion of the majority of the committee that representatives should vote in favor of the proposed distribution of funds.

**Organizational Support**

Many previously budgeted RSOs, as well as two new RSOs, requested funding during the budget committee this year. The committee is pleased to see newly formed RSOs, as well as continued support for previously budgeted RSOs, financing growing events to aid the post-baccalaureate student body on campus. The following organizations requesting funds are: Anthropology Graduate Student Association, Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA), The Cell and Molecular Biology Student Association (TCGA), Department of Urban & Regional Planning Student Association, The Diversity and Inclusion in Research and Teaching Organization (DIRECTO), Graduate Researchers of Geography (GRG), Graduate Women in Science (GWIS), Hispanic Graduate Student Association (HIGSA), History Graduate Student Association (HGSA), Master of Science Finance Student Association, Neuroscience Graduate Student Association (NGSA), Organization of Religion Graduate Students, Philosophy Graduate Student Association (PGSA), Physics Graduate Student Association (PGSA), Political Science Graduate Student Association (PSGSA), and Society for Musicology.

Broadly, funding in Organizational Support consists of three event types: 1) Identity based student organizations requesting support for cultural events. 2) Graduate student organizations requesting support for student lead conferences and lecture series. 3) Graduate student organizations requesting support for maintaining meetings and events throughout the fiscal year.
The committee this year focused on funding events that were capable of engaging the multiple levels and groups of the post-baccalaureate population on campus throughout the upcoming fiscal year.

**Anthropology Graduate Student Association**

The Anthropology Graduate Student Association was funded $400 in food. This is the first time that this RSO has requested funding through the COGS budgeting process, but they have received funding during Assembly meetings for many years. The Committee is happy to see the Anthropology Graduate Student Association requesting funding during the annual budget process for the first time. The RSO was seeking funding for 3 events, the Hale G. Smith Pig Roast, the Robert C. Daily Fish Fry, and the Graduate Student Research Showcase, as well as funding for students to travel to the South Eastern Archeological Conference. The committee agreed that funding the food for their meetings and speakers was an appropriate use of funding that will help the RSO grow and assist in the development of the students. However, some of the requested funds were for prohibited items per the Financial Manual, such as raw meat. The committee decided to fund the RSO for the other food items that were acceptable purchases. The committee felt that the travel expenses were not appropriate use of COGS funds due to our restrictions on group travel for the purpose of tabling or promoting the organization. The Committee encourage the RSO to apply for funding through the COGS travel grants as they would receive a similar funding amount through that process.

**Black Graduate Student Association**

The BGSA was funded at $3430; $1,400 in contractual services, $1100 in expense, $500 in food, and $430 in clothing and awards. This represents a 149.11 percent increase in total allocation from the previous fiscal year. BGSA was seeking funding for several events throughout the upcoming fiscal year including Melanin Mondays, their Spring Retreat, and their Fall and Spring Seminars. BGSA also sought funds for promotional items, t-shirts, and awards for their invited speakers and members. The committee is interested in promoting diversity in the post-baccalaureate environment and BGSA provides many excellent events on campus every year. However, awards for speakers does not seem like an appropriate use of funding, so the committee decided that it would be best to cut this item from their
proposed budget. The committee was happy to fund the remainder of the proposed request from BGSA.

The Cell and Molecular Biology Graduate Student Association

TCGA was funded $2,110 in food. This represents a 66.79 percent increase in total allocation from the previous year. The RSO was seeking funding for food at weekly coffee hours and seminars, as well as several outreach events and a social event. The request for funding their social event could not be funded as it was a prohibited purchase per the financial manual. The committee also felt that there were not enough details regarding their request for expense funds for their outreach events and decided that it would not be reasonable to fund. The RSO is welcome to submit a proposal for additional funding to the COGS Assembly during the fiscal year.

Department of Urban & Regional Planning Student Association

DURPSA was funded at $280; $260 in expense and $20 in food. The Committee is happy to see DURPSA requesting funding during the annual budget process for the first time. DURPSA was seeking funding for supplies for their Spring Paint the Pavement Event. The committee felt that this event would help promote involvement between the University and the community, while supporting the students’ studies. The committee was happy to fully fund this event.

The Diversity and Inclusion in Research and Teaching Organization

DIRECTO was funded $2500 in food. This represents an 85.71 percent increase from the previous fiscal year allocation. DIRECTO was seeking funds for their two of their major events throughout the year, their annual Fall Symposium and their conversation series. The committee fully supports the RSO’s mission but agreed that the outside funding they receive could adequately support their events. The committee decided to fund their food request as it was harder to fund food from other sources. The RSO is welcome to submit a proposal for additional funding to the COGS Assembly during the fiscal year.

Graduate Researchers of Geography

GRG was funded at $1,900; $700 in contractual services, and $1,200 in food. This represents a 50 percent increase from the previous fiscal year allocation. GRG was seeking funds for food and honorariums for several events including this monthly
general body meetings, monthly presentation group, Welcome Social, End of the Year Social, “Graduate Student’s Choice” Invited Speaker, and Professional Development Workshops. The committee felt that these events were well planned and would support a broad number of students and was happy to fully fund their request.

**Graduate Women in Science**

GWIS was funded at $2,000; $600 in expense, $500 in food, and $900 in clothing and awards. GWIS did not receive any funding through the budgeting process in the previous fiscal year as they incorrectly submitted their request, but they have received funding in the past through the budgeting process and at regular assembly meetings. GWIS was seeking funds for their Meet and Great Social, Galentine’s Day Dinner, Art in STEM competition, as well as for t-shirts and conference travel for students. The committee agreed that the RSO’s events would reach a broad audience and help support students’ growth and interaction. However, the travel expenses were not appropriate use of COGS funds due to our restrictions on group travel for the purpose of tabling or promoting the organization. The Committee encourage the RSO to apply for funding through the COGS travel grants as they would receive a similar funding amount through that process.

**Hispanic Graduate Student Association**

HIGSA was funded at $5,100: $2,500 in contractual services, $1,100 in expense, $1,450 in food, and $50 in clothing and awards. This represents a 9.23 percent increase from the previous fiscal year. HIGSA was seeking funds for several events including their Fall and Spring Meet and Greets, Cinehassee, International Bazaar, HIGSA Talks, and HIGSA Awards Gala. The committee is interested in promoting diversity in the post- baccalaureate environment. HIGSA is a model organization funded by COGS working diligently since its founding to make a large impact on campus. The committee was happy to fully fund these events.

**History Graduate Student Association**

HGSA was funded at $2,200 dollars: $1,400 in contractual services, $200 in expense, and $600 in food. This represents a 2.3 percent increase from the previous fiscal year. HGSA was seeking these funds to support their annual graduate student lead conference. This conference attracts research from across the country and
promotes FSU student research to a regional audience. The committee is happy to continue to support this organization.

**Master of Science Finance Student Association**

Master of Science Finance Student Association was funded at $400 in food. The committee is happy to see the Master of Science Finance Student Association requesting funding during the annual budget process for the first time. They were seeking these funds for a catered event for the students, as well as pens and polos for their students and professors in the Department. The committee agreed that the request for the polos were too expensive according to the Financial Manual, and that the pens would also be a prohibited purchase for personal use items. The committee felt that the request for a catered event for the students would be a good event to support this RSO. The committee appreciates the work and thought the RSO put into submitting a request and encourages them to submit a proposal for additional funding to the COGS Assembly during the fiscal year for any future ideas.

**Neuroscience Graduate Student Association**

NGSA was funded at $2,500 in food. This represents a 22.22 percent increase from the previous fiscal year. NGSA was seeking food funds for several lecture series and food and t-shirts for an outreach event. The Neuroscience Graduate Student Association has received COGS funding in the past for these events and we are happy to continue funding them. However, the committee agreed that the t-shirts for the outreach event were not necessary, and the RSO agreed that they would rather cut the budget from the t-shirts over their food request. The committee also agreed that fund is not necessary for these events to be successful, and therefore agreed to support a portion of the events.

**Organization of Religion Graduate Students**

ORGS was funded at $5000: $3,500 in contractual services and $1,500 in food. This represents a 22.22 percent increase from the previous fiscal year. ORGS was seeking funding for honorariums, food, and travel grants for their Annual Graduate Student Symposium. The request for travel grants for students outside of the University to travel to the conference is a prohibited purchase and therefore could not be funded. While the committee agreed that the conference is highly beneficial to
the university and the students, we felt that the honorariums were expensive and could be cut down. The committee is happy to continue to support this organization.

**Philosophy Graduate Student Association**

PGSA was funded at $2,740: $2,500 in contractual services, and $240 in food. This represents a 0.36 percent decrease from the prior fiscal year. The RSO uses these funds to host their annual conference in philosophy which has received wide recognition within their discipline. The committee was happy to fully support the request for the organization to hold this event.

**Physics Graduate Student Association**

PGSA was funded at $1,500 in food. This represents a 44.9 percent increase from the prior fiscal year. The RSO was seeking funding for food for several events, including Meet and Greets, a panel, practice talks, and coffee hours. The committee agreed that the food budget was rather large, and some of these events could be held successfully without food. The committee is happy to continue to support this organization.

**Political Science Graduate Student Association**

PSGSA was funded at $4,380: $3,500 in contractual services, and $880 in food. This represents a 21.77 percent increase in the total allocation from the previous fiscal year. PSGSA was seeking funds for honorariums and food to provide a weeklong statistical methods workshop. A portion of the honorarium was mistakenly requested in the expense category, and the committee decided to increase the contractual service request while depleting the expense request. The committee is happy to continue to support this organization.

**Society for Musicology**

The Society for Musicology was funded $4,000 in contractual services. This represents a 4.88 decrease from the prior fiscal year. The RSO has hosted their annual Musicology conference on campus for over a decade. The conference is well organized and well attended. The request was similar to previous allocations by COGS and was fully funded.
Departmental & Affiliated Projects

FSU Childcare

FSU Childcare was funded at $77,843 dollars in OPS wages, representing a 17.98 percent increase from the prior fiscal year. The committee is happy to continue to support the Childcare center on campus, as it supports a large number of students through its services, as well as offering students’ multiple employment positions to further their career development. COGS would like to thank SGA for their commitment to affordable childcare on campus. The committee decided to fully fund their request.

Graduate School

The Graduate School was funded at $17,000 in food. This represents a 34.48 percent increase from the previous fiscal year. The committee wishes funds were available to fund all events proposed by the graduate school. The committee was happy to support events that benefit a large number of students and hopes to continue to work with the Graduate School to increase awareness of COGS and the support it offers to graduate students.

Funding Boards

Law School Council

The LSC was funded at $44,000: $35,400 in expenses, $6,600 in food, and $2,000 in clothing and awards. The committee was impressed by the increased communication and collaboration between COGS and LSC. The RSOs at the Law School are growing, as well as the number of requests for group travel. The committee hopes to help support LSC in funding these requests through an increase in funding.

Medical School Council

MSC was funded at $44,000; $2,050 in contractual services, $35,350 in expenses, $6,600 in food, and $100 in clothing and awards. The committee was impressed by the increased communication and collaboration between COGS and MSC. The RSOs at the Medical School are growing, and the funding from the previous
fiscal year is not sufficient to fund the number of requests they receive. The committee hopes to help support MSC in funding these requests through an increase in funding.

**COGS GRANT PROGRAMS**

COGS currently funds four grant lines: the Presentation Grants, the Academic & Professional Conference Attendance Grants, the Dissertation Research Grant, and the Organizational Support Grant. Due to the popularity and impact of the grant programs the committee voted to maintain funding for the four grant line items.

**Presentation Grants**

Many members of the Budget Committee believe that the Presentation Grants program is the most important program that COGS funds. It is certainly the most well-known COGS program on campus, and thousands of grants have been given to graduate students over the years. If funding permitted, COGS would be on track to process over 600 Presentation grants this year. Funding was recommended at $160,000 for the fiscal year.

**Academic & Professional Support Attendance Grants**

The committee recommends funding the Academic & Professional Support Attendance Grants at $17,000 for the upcoming fiscal year. Both travel grant programs have received flat funding for the upcoming fiscal year.

**Dissertation Research Grants**

The committee recommends that Dissertation Research Grant funding be funded at $10,000 dollars for the next fiscal year. Members on the committee felt that the Dissertation Research Grants provide a vital means of research support on campus. This is the second fiscal year in a row that the Committee has been able to fully fund the grant program.

**Organizational Support Grants**

The committee recommends funding Organizational Support Grants at $3,000 dollars. This account is used to fun one-time allocations under $1,000 for the
fiscal year to new RSOs on campus. This allocation represents flat funding from the previous fiscal year.

**COGS ADMINISTRATION**

The COGS Administrative account is composed of all the direct allocations which are not line items or funding boards. All of the line items were approved en bloc by the committee.

**Salary and Insurance**

Salary and Insurance are a mandatory expense. $135,200 were allocated for salary in the next fiscal year. An additional $5,200 was funded to cover insurance. Projections were compiled by the SA&O office. This represents a 3.77 percent increase from the prior fiscal year.

**COGS Officers**

COGS Officers were recommended funding at $14,700. These funds are used to compensate the work of members of the executive board in COGS. The funds are based off of contracted hourly rates developed by FSU payroll. This allocation represents flat funding from the previous fiscal year.

**OPS Office Staff**

OPS Office Staff was recommended funding at $5,000. It is used to fund one hourly SGA/COGS accounting office staff. This represents a 22.22 percent increase from the prior fiscal year.

**Food**

Food was recommended funding at $1,500 dollars. The line allocates funding for food during COGS meetings. The food is available to all students who attend the meeting. This allocation represents flat funding from the previous fiscal year.

**Office Supplies**

Office Supplies was recommended funding at $500 dollars. This allocation represents flat funding from the previous fiscal year. The line is used to fund necessary office supplies for the COGS office and affiliates.
Telephone

Telephone was recommended funding at $1,500 dollars. This allocation represents flat funding from the previous fiscal year. Funds go towards paying for computer maintenance, internet connections, and phone lines for the COGS office and COGS support staff.

Maintenance & Repair

Maintenance & Repair was recommended funding at $500 dollars. These funds are reserved for unexpected repair requests for COGS materials (e.g. office supplies damaged from flooding).

Speaker's Request

Speaker’s Request was recommended funding at $4,000 dollars. The speakers request is used as a means of funding COGS graduate student orientation events. This allocation represents flat funding from the previous fiscal year. The money is expected to be used to fund the Township new graduate student social and ice cream for the COGS tabling at orientation.

COGS UNALLOCATED

The remaining funds that have not been dispersed will be held in the COGS unallocated account. These are the funds the COGS Congress will use to allocate to RSOs in FY19. Presently, the account is allocated $27,617. This represents a 25.68 percent increase in the Unallocated account form the current fiscal year. The increase can be attributed to both the increase in the overall budget and the decrease in the number of RSOs seeking funding for the next fiscal year. Funding Boards are also encouraged to seek additional funding from the Unallocated Account if they need additional financial support throughout the next fiscal year. The funds left in the Unallocated account will allow the General Body to support funding post-bachelorette students on campus for the entire upcoming fiscal year and direct funding to the groups and organizations with the greatest fiscal needs.