BILL # 190108

2019 FALL SESSION

Legislative Action:
Introduced by: Grants Committee

1st Reading: Naguru Nikhileswara Reddy

2nd Reading: LSC Committee on Sep 16

Committee Action: Approved

3rd Reading: Council

Council Action: 

Executive Action:

Approved Vetoed

GPSA President __________________ date ____________

Unsigned by the President on this ___ day of ______ 20XX. Bill automatically becomes law.

Legislative Response:
Veto override vote taken: __________________ Council Action: __________________

Be it enacted by the Graduate and Professional Student Association at the University of New Mexico that the following be amended in (Article X) of the GPSA Constitution/Bylaw:
The GPSA Student Research Grant funds the development and dissemination of research and original work, including travel for research-related purposes.

A. Activities Funded

a. Acceptable Student Research Grant costs include:

i. Software purchased for academic use.

ii. Airfare, registration, hotel, shuttle fees, transportation, presentation materials, and per diem in accordance with UNM policy. Travel must be outside of Albuquerque. Current policy and mileage rates can be found in the University Business Policies and Procedures Manual, Policy 4030.

iii. Supplies, consumables, fees associated with professional publication, and printing costs necessary for development and dissemination of research.

b. Unacceptable Student Research Grant costs include:

i. Salaries, tuition, binding, organization fees, or membership fees

ii. Organization fees, travel, room or board for any activity for which the purpose is not the development or dissemination of student research (e.g. Study Abroad programs).

B. Funding

a. GPSA Student Research Grants can fund up to $500 per student per year. Per year means per Summer-Fall-Spring funding cycle (June 1st of the current year – May 31st of following year).

b. The event or activity for which the funds are sought must occur within the next, current or previous funding cycle.

   i. The Fall funding period is from August 15th to December 31st.

   ii. The Spring funding period is from January 1st to May 31st.

   iii. The Summer funding period is from June 1st to August 14th.

c. An applicant is only eligible for the remaining amount of funding for GPSA Student Research Grant if the applicant has not yet been awarded the full amount of GPSA Student Research Grant funding per year.

d. Funds not claimed with the thirty (30) day limit will be carried over to the next funding period.

C. Application Requirements

a. A complete GPSA Student Research Grant application includes:

i. The completed HTML fields of the online GPSA Student Research Grant application.

ii. An activity proposal that does not exceed seven hundred fifty (750) words (the word limit does not include words in parenthesis and section headings) be submitted through the online system. The activity proposal should be typed using the Times New Roman Font, Size 12, double spaced and must have 1.5 inch margins and should contain the following sections:

   1. Background

   a. Applicant’s academic/professional interests and stage in degree program must be clearly stated.

   b. Activity described in detail – what exactly will the applicant do, when and where the activity is occurring.
Activity’s relation to the applicant academic interests must be described precisely.

Activity must be put into the context of the applicant’s academic field.

2. Benefits
   a. Activity’s benefits must be clearly stated and linked to applicant’s professional interests.
   b. Benefits of the applicant’s work to the academic community must be described in detail.

iii. An activity budget template provided by the Grants Committee Chair for each funding cycle be filled out correctly and submitted through the online system. Any mention of the Budget details in the activity proposal shall not be considered for review.

b. No other materials other than those listed above shall be accepted.

c. Applications must be the original work of an applicant. Should the applicant use words that were quoted by another person, they must be enclosed in quotation marks.

D. Application scoring
   a. Applications will be read and scored by three (3) readers:
      i. One reader shall be from the same perspective as the applicant but shall be from a different department.
      ii. One reader shall be from any other perspective other than the one that the applicant has identified with.
      iii. One reader shall be assigned at random and shall belong to a perspective that is different from the other readers assigned to the application.
   b. The scoring criteria for the GPSA Student Research Grant is as follows:
      i. Background (25 points)
         1. Applicant’s academic/professional interests and stage in degree program are clearly stated. (0 to 10 points)
         2. Activity is described in detail – what exactly will the applicant do, when and where the activity is occurring and the activity’s relation to the applicant’s academic interests are described (0 to 10 points)
         3. Activity is put into the context of the applicant’s academic field. (0 to 5 points)
      ii. Benefits (30 points)
         1. Activity’s benefits are clearly stated and linked to applicant’s professional interests. (0 to 15 points)
         2. Benefits of the applicant’s work to the academic community are clearly stated (0 to 15 points)
      iii. Composition (15 points)
         1. Proposal flows logically and writing style is action oriented. (0 to 5 points)
         2. Technical terms are defined, and the proposal is suitable for a general audience. (0 to 5 points)
         3. Proposal shows evidence of proof reading. (0 to 5 points)
      iv. Budget (30 points)
         1. Applicant used the GPSA budget template provided. (0 OR 5 points)
         2. Applicant pursued other sources of funding within the University or the academic community (0 OR 10 points)
3. Budget appears well researched and complete for the scope of the activity. Choices appear to be economical or are otherwise explained. (0 to 15 points)
c. Raw scores provided by the readers will be normalized. The procedure for normalization is as follows:
   i. Raw scores will be multiplied with the average of scores for Student Research Grant.
   ii. The product obtained above will be divided by the average of the scores from individual readers to obtain three (3) normalized scores per application.
   iii. The normalized scores obtained above are averaged to get a final score.
d. When the difference between the high and low final scores for an application exceeds twenty-five (25) points of the total possible score (100 points), two (2) additional readers (one reader from the same perspective and one reader from a perspective that is different than the one that the applicant identified with) will evaluate the application. From these five (5) normalized scores, the highest and lowest will be dropped and the three (3) remaining scores will be accepted, regardless of the spread between them.

E. Disqualification Criteria
   a. Applications exceeding the seven hundred and fifty (750) word limit.
   b. Applications that were submitted after the deadline.
   c. Incomplete applications – failure to complete a section of the proposal.
   d. Applications where the budget was not completed using the GPSA budget template provided to the applicants.
   e. Applications whose proposal does not follow the format (follows a different format) as described in [Section9.4.C].
   f. Applicants requesting for funds for an event that does not qualify for the Student Research Grant as mentioned in [Section9.4.A].
   g. Applicant has already received the maximum allowed funds for the GPSA Student Research Grant [Section9.4.B].
Context for this bill:
The text, other than those highlighted in blue, are already a part of the current Grants Code. However, the Grants committee decided that the organization of the bylaws within the Grant Code is not reader friendly. Hence, I request that all bylaws be passed and have each section of the Grants Code as a bill. The fourth bill pertains to bylaws for Student Research Grant. The current version of the bylaws require that students must claim the funds awarded to them within 90 days. Upon recommendation from members of the Grant Committee, I request the limit to be reduced to 30 days. This is to enable speedy request for funds to be awarded to student’s Bursars account.

With regards to changes in the application requirements, we request that the proposal follow the uniform format to enable the reading process easier, especially for first-time readers. A budget template specific to each funding cycle will ensure that applicants submit the correct budget for that cycle and avoid any confusion for readers. There have been cases in the past where students have explained their budget as part of the application proposal, despite being provided an additional 300 words within the budget template. This is especially confusing to readers as they aren’t sure whether to consider it within the 750 word proposal limit and if so, there aren’t any points for it specifically. While disqualification criteria exist in the current version of the bylaws, they aren’t specific for each of the grant and scholarships that GPSA offers.