Twenty – Eighth COGS Budget Committee Report

Michael Morgan, Chair

Robert Creigh

Chris Hagemeyer

Blake Mathesie

**Introduction**

In this proposal, the Budget Committee of the Congress of Graduate Students is presenting the Assembly with a budget for the 2020-2021 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 cred hours is allocated to COGS six months 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 $17,600 more than the previous year’s budget. An increase of 3 percent. However, due to increases in staff salary and the number of organizations requesting money, the budget committee had to engage in moderate cuts for the organizations requesting funding for the upcoming fiscal year. These cuts were taken into account with the fact that these organizations can request additional funding from the COGS unallocated account throughout the upcoming fiscal year.

The Committee would like to recognize and thank the assistance of several people who helped make these deliberations possible. Director of Student Affairs, Danielle Morgan Acosta, Assistant Director and COGS Advisor, Jacalyn Butts, for their input and assistance throughout the budget process. Speaker Jacqueline LaBayne, was present to help the committee, and provided additional input as well as diligent note taking. 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 4-0 with representatives Creigh, Hagemeyer, Morgan, and Mathesie 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**

A number of new RSOs requested funding during the budget committee this year. The committee is pleased to see newly formed RSOs financing growing events to aid the post-baccalaureate student body on campus. The following organizations requesting funds are: Applied Sport Psychology (ASP), Art Therapy Association (ATA), Association for Chemical and Biomedical Engineering Graduate Students (CBEGS), Association for Women in Mathematics (AWMFSU), Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA), The Cell and Molecular Biology Student Association (TCGA), Cheminoles Graduate Student Association (CGSA), College of Nursing Student Leadership Council (CON SLC), 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), Indian Students Association of Tallahassee (INSAT), League of Graduate Student Artists (LGA), National Art Education Association (NAEA), Neuroscience Graduate Student Association NGSA), Philosophy Graduate Student Association (PGSA), Physics Graduate Student Association (PGSA), Political Science Graduate Student Association (PSGSA), Public Health Student Association, Student Association for Religious Studies (SARS), 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. With an increase in organizations requesting funding through – the budget committee had to make tough decisions on how to provide opportunities while also allowing the organizations room to apply for more funding throughout the year if need be.

**Applied Sports Psychology**

APS was funded at $400 dollars in food. This represents an 89.5 percent decrease in total allocation from the previous fiscal year. APS has not spent any of their funding from the previous year due to an increase in the speaker’s fee but did not provide adequate plans to use their funding. The committee agreed that the RSO should provide proof of use of their funds before we could fund them for a future event. The committee decided to fund them enough money to provide food for their meetings. The RSO is welcome to submit a proposal for additional funding to the COGS Assembly during the fiscal year.

**Art Therapy Association**

ATA was funded at $2,790 dollars: $2,000 in contractual services, $150 in expense, and $640 in food. The Committee is happy to see ATA requesting funding during the annual budget process for the first time. The organization is requesting funds to help with their annual workshop that helps recruit new graduate students to the program. It is the only art therapy program in Florida and the only accredited program in the Southeast. The committee was happy to provide funding for this workshop. The committee decided not to fund their request for travel to the national art therapy conference. While the committee agreed that this travel would help promote the program and university, we agreed that we will not be able to fund this travel with our current budget.

**The Association for Chemical and Biomedical Engineering Graduate Students**

CBEGS was funded $1,800 dollars: $1,000 in contractual services and $800 in food. The committee is happy to see this RSO requesting funding during the annual budget process for the first time. The RSO was seeking funding for their organization meetings, honorarium for speakers for their departmental seminars, and travel expenses for their students to attend conferences. 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, 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.

**The Association for Women in Mathematics**

AWMFSU was zero funded in the budget process. While the committee agrees that the RSO’s goals and purpose are in line with COGS mission, the organization is composed of a majority of undergraduate students. The committee encourages the RSO to request funding through the undergraduate SGA system.

**Black Graduate Student Association**

The BGSA was funded at $500 dollars in expense. This represents an 87.5 percent decrease in total allocation from the previous fiscal year. The committee is interested in promoting diversity in the post-baccalaureate environment. BGSA provides many excellent events on campus every year. However, the RSO did not submit a budget request nor did they attend a hearing. The committee felt that they did not have enough information to accurately fund the RSO, but they have received funds from the COGS budget for many years. The organization has also not spent a majority of their funds allocated from the previous fiscal year. Therefore, the committee decided to give them enough money for 1-2 events, and the RSO may submit a funding request to the Assembly in the new fiscal year to request funds to hold events.

**The Cell and Molecular Biology Graduate Student Association**

TCGA was funded $1,053.50 dollars in food. This represents a 19 percent decrease in total allocation from the previous year. The RSO was seeking funding for food at weekly coffee hours and colloquia. The RSO has not spent any of their money from the previous fiscal year, but this was due to the fact that they were not made aware of the money from previous leadership. The RSO has made plans to spend their current budget, and the committee did not want to punish them from past leadership’s mistake. The committee did not wish to fund their outreach events, due to a lack of details on what the funds would be spent on. The committee agreed to fund the RSO for half of their colloquia and half of their weekly coffee hours, with the option to submit a funding request to the Assembly in the new fiscal year to request funds for future events.

**Cheminoles Graduate Student Association**

CGSA was funded $3,050 dollars: $1,000 in contractual services, $50 in expense, and $2,000 in food. The Committee was happy to see the RSO seek funding from COGS in the annual budget again. The RSO was requesting funding for a large number of events which the committee felt could not be fully funded. The committee decided to allocate them funds for their events of highest priority, which included their Undergraduate Research event, Stemsgiving, and partial funding for the Spring Luncheon. The committee felt these events would help promote the RSO, reach a large number of students, and facilitate involvement between graduate students and undergraduates. The RSO is welcome to submit a proposal for additional funding to the COGS Assembly during the fiscal year.

**College of Nursing Student Leadership Council**

CON SLC was zero funded in the budget process. While the committee agrees that the RSO’s goals and purpose are in line with COGS mission, the organization is composed of only undergraduate students. The committee encourages the RSO to request funding through the undergraduate SGA system.

**The Diversity and Inclusion in Research and Teaching Organization**

DIRECTO was funded $1000 dollars in food. This represents flat funding from the previous fiscal year allocation. The committee fully supports the RSO’s mission but agreed that the outside funding they receive could adequately support their events. 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 $1,140 dollars; $120 in expense, $700 in food, and $320 in clothing and awards. The committee was happy to see this newly formed RSO requests funds through the annual budget process. The committee agreed to fund the RSO for a majority of their events but did not fund the fees for students to attend social events or the food for social events as the RSO already holds a large number of monthly events. The committee also agreed to help pay for t-shirts to advertise their new RSO.

**Graduate Women in Science**

GWIS was zero funded in the budget process. The RSO submitted a funding request for the Spring of 2020, which is outside of the fiscal year for this budgeting process. The Committee encouraged the RSO to submit a funding request to the Assembly for their requests this fiscal year as soon as possible and submit a funding request to the Assembly in the new fiscal year to request funds for future events.

**Hispanic Graduate Student Association**

HIGSA was funded at $4,650 dollars: $2,500 in contractual services, $1,100 in expense, $1000 in food, and $50 in clothing and awards. This represents a 5.68 percent decrease from the previous fiscal year. 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. HIGSA requested an increase in funding to increase their food at their events, including the Cinehassee Film Festival, to increase attendance. While the committee supports the events the RSO holds, we agreed that a decrease in funding for food would still allow the events to be successful. The RSO also receives a large amount of funding for these events and would try to find funding elsewhere if need be. The committee appreciates the RSO’s continual due diligence in their budget requests and is happy to support their events.

**History Graduate Student Association**

HGSA was funded at $2,150 dollars: $1,300 in contractual services, $250 in expense, and $600 in food. HGSA uses 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.

**Indian Students Association of Tallahassee**

INSAT was funded $2,250 dollars: $250 in expense and $2000 in food. The committee is interested in promoting diversity in the post- baccalaureate environment. 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 RSO is requesting funding for their two main cultural events, plus two new events to help grow their organization. The committee is happy to continue to support this organization.

**League of Graduate Student Artists**

LGA was funded at $1,435 dollars: $1,115 in in expense and $320 in food. This represents a 41.38 percent increase in the total allocation from the previous fiscal year. The RSO requested funds to maintain their gallery space and promote graduate student artwork at exhibitions in the upcoming year. The increase in their request was due to purchasing new lights for their gallery space, which the committee felt was an adequate use of funds. The committee decided not to fund the RSO’s request for paint, as they have other means of receiving these supplies.

**National Art Education Association**

NAES was funded at $1,500 dollars in expense. The RSO has for a number of years used COGS funding to produce a graduate student lead art education workshop in June each year. The committee is happy to fully fund their request and continue to support this organization.

**Neuroscience Graduate Student Association**

The Neuroscience Graduate Student Association was funded at $2,000 dollars in food. The RSO was requesting funds to provide food at their events such as bringing in speakers and outreach events. The Neuroscience Graduate Student Association has received COGS funding in the past for these events and we are happy to continue funding them. However, their budget was not clear, and we could not fully fund the amount they were requesting due to the large amount of organizations asking for funding. The committee also agreed that fund is not necessary for these events to be successful, and the amount they were requesting for some events was excessive. Therefore, the committee decided to fund them to cover the majority of their food for their Rushton Lecture Series, which was one of the high priority events.

**Philosophy Graduate Student Association**

PGSA was funded at $2,750 dollars: $2,500 in contractual services, and $250 in food. This represents flat funding 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 $950 dollars in food. The RSO was seeking funding for food for their events. The committee agreed that a majority of these events could be held successfully without food. The committee decided to fund food for their highest priority events, which included the monthly coffee hours, the Physics BBQ, the Graduate Student Panel, and the Career Planning and Resources event

**Political Science Graduate Student Association**

PSGSA was funded at $3,520 dollars: $3,000 in contractual services, and $520 in food. This represents a 7.37 percent decrease in the total allocation from the previous fiscal year. The RSO uses these funds to provide a weeklong statistical methods workshop with two speakers. The committee feels that the speakers are an excellent use of COGS funds yet feels that a meaning full event can still be maintained with a small reduction in the food line item.

**Public Health Student Association**

The Public Health Student Association was funded $630.32 dollars: $50 in expense and $580.32 in food. The committee was happy to see this RSO requesting funds through the annual budget process for the first time. The committee decided to fund their food request for their meetings but cut the cost of their expense as student publications offers free printing services when paper is provided. The committee also decided not to fund their t-shirts, as the price per shirt was well over the $8/shirt guideline and deemed excessive.

**Student Association for Religious Studies**

SARS was funded $4,000 dollars: $3,000 in contractual services and $1000 in food. SARS is asking for funding to hold their 18th annual Religion Department Graduate Student Symposium. The event is attended be a large number of universities and is a big recruiting opportunity for the Department. The conference is well organized and well attended. The committee was happy to fully fund this request.

**Society for Musicology**

The Society for Musicology was funded $4,200 dollars: $4,000 in contractual services and $200 in food. This represents flat funding 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 $65,000 dollars in OPS wages. 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 on a small increase of 0.55 percent from the previous fiscal year as the organization stated they would be able to manage with flat funding.

**Graduate School**

The Graduate School was funded at $12,000 in food. This represents a $2000 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; $32,000 in expenses, and $12,000 in food. 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; $29,480 in expenses, and $14,520 in food. 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. 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. $130,000 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.

**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 $3,500. It is used to fund one hourly SGA/COGS accounting office staff. The funding is a flat increase from the prior fiscal year. This represents a $500 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 $21,331.18. This represents a 14.95 percent decrease in the Unallocated account form the current fiscal year. The decrease can be attributed to both the increase in administrative overhead and the increase 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. However, funding will likely be tight at the end of the next fiscal year.