



Request for 2024 Funding Services and Activities Fee Committee

BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name: University Academic Advising

Create Date: 02/01/2024

Due Date: 02/07/2024

Submitter Name: Jennifer Mitchell

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Department Head Approval:

Department Head: Bonnie Becker

Requested Amount: **\$36,150**

Departmental Information

STUDENT UTILIZATION

We are requesting \$30,000 (plus benefits) in funding to make this high-impact, low-cost program whole in paying the salaries of the Student Advising Mentors (SAMs). We receive partial funding through SAFC and hope to continue to ensure the program remains a success. With the funding crises we are currently experiencing and the minimum wage continuously increasing, we find ourselves requesting an increase of funds to make sure the program is fully funded and that drop-in hours remain available to students. In an effort to reduce costs, we have combined our SAMs with our Office Assistant position and the students are doing both positions with a smaller overall staff headcount. These students serve not only as SAMs, but also are the first face that visitors see coming into the suite when they come to meet with any one of the five departments currently housed within- University Academic Advising, Office of Global Affairs, Office of Undergraduate Education, Legal Pathways, and, right now, the Professional Development Center (Career Development will be joining the suite in the Fall of 2024). As for the SAM side of it, there is a multi-pronged benefit to students - 1) There is leadership development, professional experience, and connection to the university for the SAMs; 2) support to students related to registration, advising, and resources; 3) assistance for advisors who are capacity constrained. All of these things together help UAA to bring the best service to the students that we can.

CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

Student Advising Mentors work in direct support of the retention of students, delivering support in a cost-efficient and pedagogically-sound way that is integral to the success of UW Tacoma's Strategic Plan and can be successfully linked to each goal, specifically:

Students

Student Advising Mentors allow greater flexibility in the range and depth of UAA's support for students and the quality of experiences available to them outside the classroom by enabling us increase students' accessibility to services. As frontline support, they're able to help "remove institutional barriers to student progress" and be a part of the infrastructure by being available on a drop-in basis to provide information on campus resources and make appropriate referrals to support services as necessary. Additionally, they provide our department with the capacity to participate in pathway programs for K-12 schools and community colleges, with minimal impact on advising services for current students. They are a key part of ensuring that "every student has opportunities to engage in high impact practices." Finally, they are often the front door desk that people come to for help.

Vitality

Employing Student Advising Mentors permits UAA to meet anticipated enrollment growth, continue high-impact outreach and programming efforts, and to maximize advising support beyond the physical location of the department while maintaining recommended advisor caseloads. Additionally, by Student Advising Mentors absorbing some of the general advising workload, advisors are better equipped to focus on intentional outreach and institutional retention efforts. This is especially important for advisors, as they, by far, have the greatest caseloads on campus (366:1 for UAA, average of 155:1 across all majors).

Equity

SAMs reflect the diverse student population not universally reflected across campus faculty and staff, allowing us to embrace the changing demographics of higher education. Connecting with peers in a mentorship capacity that models themselves helps foster students' connection to campus and improve the satisfaction of traditionally underrepresented students, especially racial/ethnic minority students, with the UW Tacoma experience. The SAMs connect and have "conversations (that) enhance a culture of inclusive excellence, mutual respect, and social justice."

SAF-FUNDED PROGRAM OR SERVICES GOALS AND OUTCOMES

The work UAA does across campus to increase student success is complex and cannot be done in isolation. Student Advising Mentors represent the department at campus-wide events - Admitted Student Day, Student Involvement Fair, Orientation, Freshman Preview Day, and various resource fairs. Not only are the SAMs gaining valuable professional experience, but they also contribute by serving on interview committees (internal and external to UAA), student panels (e.g. Transfer Advisor Workshop), campus workshops (e.g. Orientation), and student success survey outreach. They are valuable members of the Husky Success Team and help to plan the events put on and are visible members of the team during the occasions. The students are an integral part of the New Student Advising and Registration (NSAR) events that are hosted each year by UAA. They help to plan the events, present, and work directly with students during the day of the events. This planning begins during the winter quarter of each year and continues throughout the summer quarter. With the number of students that attend, the advisors on staff would be unable to serve all of them without the triaging and learned knowledge that the SAMs provide. It is an event that we truly could not hold without the support of our SAMs.

Additionally, the SAMs are our front desk office workers. They are the first people that students see when they come into the office. In this office, UAA shares a space with four other departments and the students handle the front office duties for all of them. They work to understand the basic functions and reasons for which people may come in to visit any of them. In doing so, the SAMs have learned to make connections with these departments and that has translated across campus. They are able to easier understand how to work with others and to form relationships that have benefited both parties when it comes to creating student events or referring students to the proper locations.

STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)

The Student Advising Mentors (SAMs) in University Academic Advising (UAA) provide the full-range of drop-in hours for pre-major students, the group least likely to persist. As is common on most campuses, pre-major students have the lowest retention rate of any "major" on campus. Supporting pre-majors through Academic Advising is a key strategy to help them to persist through major declaration and beyond. The student to advisor ratio in University Academic Advising (UAA), the professional advisors who support pre-majors students, is by far the highest on campus (366:1 for UAA, average of 155:1 across all majors). We have enough funding to keep this program going at a severely reduced level. With the additional funding, we can maintain the high level of service that SAMs provide. Student staff work limited hours, so by having a complete team, they can provide a range of hours in aggregate to accommodate our students' diverse schedules. With fewer hours, we will limit the availability of drop-in hours and other "just-in-time" services. This is especially helpful during the registration periods on campus. Advisors often have a minimum of a two week wait. With the SAMs, students are able to help get students situated to easily get registered for classes and can assist in making sure they are ready to have their TACADV hold lifted in a timely manner. In addition, SAMs work with new students at New Student Advising and Registration, the summer preorientation event to get new students registered before classes fall. This event is crucial for converting confirmed students into registered students. At this event, SAMs served 402 students during this last academic year.

All of this is in addition to the need to have our front desk staffed during open hours. As stated before, we combined our SAM positions with our student office assistant positions in an effort to reduce costs. With ever increasing wages and a requirement to cut department funding, we find ourselves lacking the ability to have it staffed. This front desk serves all of the students of the university, as not only do we work with undergraduate students, we frequently have visits from A) prospective students, B) students who are major-ready or already in their major, and C) those who are simply lost, as our office is in a visible, centrally-located area of campus. We frequently are the first place that students visit when looking for a specific office on campus. It is important to have someone staffed at the front desk to help with the walk-ins and assisting students who are not sure where to go. With this, our demographics are very similar to those on campus, being 61% students of color and more than 50% being a first generation student.

COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS

With our department currently in flux, we are in an evaluation period of how UAA might best be utilized on campus to connect with students, beyond what we currently are doing with regular students appointments and our SAM drop-ins. In general, our department utilizes Microsoft Outlook and Bookings to track which students benefit from our scheduled and drop-in services. We also have utilized a tracking table for our SAMs to input data on the number of students they are interacting with and from where, including phone calls, walk-ins in-person and virtually in the department and drop-ins across campus, and the department chat available on our department webpage. We use these numbers to understand where we can best assist students and the best way our SAMs can be utilized to meet students where they are at.

SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

The SAM program will continue to expand its high level of service to pre-major students. For example, in the past academic year, they served 402 students through New Student Advising and Registration events (76% of freshmen), and 430 unique student interactions during just the Autumn 2023 quarter. SAMs have met students where they are through drop-in advising and campus events. There is a higher need for SAMs to be available on campus, in the office for students to drop in during advertised hours. Additionally there has been an increase of foot traffic into the office, so there is a high need to make sure that the front desk is continually staffed. With five departments in the suite they serve, having the front desk staffed is critical to the vitality of the suite and the students that come in. This is especially important with the move of Career Services into the suite during this coming academic year. That would make this suite applicable to students from before they start their college career until after. They work with UAA to be able to get registered for classes as they enter. During their time here, students will work with the Office of Undergraduate Education for their core classes and testing needs. They may work with the Office of Global Affairs if they are an international student or if they are interested in studying abroad. They may work with Legal Pathways to discover their best path to studying law. And as students approach the end of their college journey (and often along the way!), they will likely work with Career Development on figuring out their next moves and how to best enter into the work force. Having the suite open and staffed by our student workers is critical to ensuring that our visitors can connect with these departments and get the answers for which they are searching.

Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Student Staff ³	Total of \$65,000 is needed- Funding has been requested from other sources to make up the difference. \$30k = \$16.74/hr * ~34 hrs/week	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$30,000
	Fringe @ 20.5%:	\$6,150
	PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$36,150

Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
	SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$0

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$36,150
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$0
COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:	\$36,150

Supplemental Documents