A bill to allocate Buffer Fund monies to the ASSU Financial Manager to upgrade the ASSU offices
ASSU-F2013-1

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Submitted for Consideration:
Oct 1, 2013, to the Undergraduate Senate
Oct 2, 2013, to the Graduate Student Council

Action Requested:
2/3 approval of the Undergraduate Senate, where noted
2/3 approval of the Graduate Student Council, where noted

WHEREAS, the main ASSU offices in Old Union are primarily overseen by the ASSU Financial Manager, and are used by the ASSU Senate and Executive, the ASSU accounting staff, ASSU student staff (i.e., CapGroup), and Stanford Student Enterprises; and

WHEREAS, the front area of the ASSU offices are the primary face of the ASSU to the world, including more than 50 visiting student group leaders and members every day; and

WHEREAS, the front office has recently been redesigned to create a true “front desk,” a welcoming lounge space, open ASSU Senate and Executive space (including office resources like a printer), effective conference space, and space for Capital Group’s operations; and

WHEREAS, the costs of the redesign so far have been paid for out of the budget for the ASSU Assistant Financial Manager; and

WHEREAS, though the major elements are in place, a litany of minor problems still exist; further, the ASSU should capitalize upon the redesign to make the offices a truly professional, welcoming, student-focused space; and

WHEREAS, the ASSU does not have funds available to effect any necessary repairs to the space, purchase new furniture, create new branding, or otherwise move past the point we are today because this expense was not foreseen in the FY14 budget; and

A new project for the ASSU offices

WHEREAS, the purpose of this project is to improve the branding, look and feel, safety, professionalism, and utility of the ASSU front offices and conference space; and

WHEREAS, a reasonable expense could effect all of the following minor projects:

1. Purchase (second-hand or reused, if possible) matching chairs for all our spaces that are not disgusting, broken, or otherwise embarrassments to all of civilized society;
2. Remove tripping hazards from heavily trafficked areas;
3. Replace old and haphazardly constructed furniture, such as the Capital Group front desk;
4. Re-key storage cabinets & office spaces, for which keys are lost;
5. Add ASSU branding to the rear wall, around the office, inside the main conference room, and other locations as appropriate;
6. Frame artwork & photographs of student groups, the ASSU, and student initiatives around the main office area to create a “student home” feel;
7. Create collaboration spaces for the ASSU with moveable whiteboards and desks;
8. Purchase non-janky office supply holders, sign holders, shelves for storage & filing, outboxes, and other minor but noticeable details;
9. Improve IT and look & feel by purchasing new monitors, keyboard trays, and peripherals for the front office area, including electronic “information radiators” that display current announcements;
10. Dispose of old furniture, electronics, and the like in an environmentally-friendly manner;
11. Purchase “small touches” like pillows for our lounge spaces, cord covers, and other elements that will make the office look nice and feel welcoming; and

WHEREAS, any of the following major projects (or others) could also be completed with the funds, and will be prioritized in collaboration with the Executive Committee:

1. Re-use of the external office for a meeting space, office for initiatives, or other ASSU/SSE priority, after through fumigation and cleaning;
2. Re-painting the office, or painting the office with “whiteboard wall” paint;
3. Removing furniture from the middle office space to better utilize the space for Capital Group, opening even more space for ASSU offices;
4. Creating “breakout rooms” (small conference rooms) in the office;
5. Implementing a back-office redesign to open up increased space for all ASSU operations & collaboration space
6. Improving the outdoor ASSU patio; and

WHEREAS, the ASSU Assistant Financial Manager will have the primary responsibility for this project, and will negotiate with University officials, outside vendors (e.g. Steelcase, Target Commercial, Ikea Commercial) as necessary to maximize every dollar spent; and

WHEREAS, the Assistant Financial Manager shall make a reasonable portion of these funds available for improvements to the new ASSU space, and hopes that representatives from the Senate and Executive will identify themselves to design their space; and

Project funds

WHEREAS, the total budget for this project is $40,000, broken down as:

- $12,000: minor projects (as detailed)
- $24,000: major project(s) (as will be determined with ASSU representatives);
- $750: to the Assistant Financial Manager’s budget for renovations already completed;
- $3,250: flexible funds and miscellaneous expenses (e.g., extra short-term backups, extra staff time, and a contingency for unexpected expenses)

WHEREAS, the ASSU Overhead and Operating budgets do not contain monies that could be used for this project because it was not envisioned last spring; and
WHEREAS, the ASSU Financial Manager therefore requests the entire $40,000 from the ASSU Buffer Funds; and

WHEREAS, the Buffer Funds are made up, in large part, of unspent ASSU Overhead Budget funds — so using the Buffer Funds to finance an improvement to core infrastructure is a reasonable expense; and

WHEREAS, the ASSU Financial Manager does not believe that this expenditure will adversely impact the Association’s financial position; and

WHEREAS, the costs of this project should be split between the graduate and undergraduate population and should represent the approximate use that the office sees from undergraduate and graduate visitors – roughly 60% undergraduate, 40% graduate; and

Allocation authority

WHEREAS, the Joint Bylaws, Article VI §7.A.17 states: “The Graduate Buffer Fund and Undergraduate Buffer Fund shall be administered by the relevant legislative bodies in a manner specified in their by-laws;” and

WHEREAS, the Joint Bylaws, Article VI §7.A.17 also states: “Funds from the Undergraduate Buffer Fund, Graduate Buffer Fund, and Graduate Special Distribution Buffer Account may not be used for any purpose unrelated to special fees without 2/3 majority approval from both legislative bodies;” and

WHEREAS, this purpose is unrelated to Special Fees under the meaning of the Joint Bylaws, Article VI §7.A.17 — and therefore these expenditures require the consent of both legislative bodies,

THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF THE ASSOCIATION:

THAT the ASSU hereby approves the ASSU Office Upgrade project, and creates a budget of up to $40,000 for the project, allocating funds from the Buffer Funds as described below; and

THAT the funds may only be expended subject to the following constraints:

• The Financial Manager must approve all transactions;
• Any funds expended as compensation must be specifically accounted, and must have a brief written summary of how the compensation furthers the purpose of this project;
• No funds may be expended for the purposes of meeting food, event supplies/operations, equipment rental, event honoraria, facilities rental, or similar categories without prior e-mail notice to both legislative bodies; if any member of a legislative body expresses concern about a transaction, the transaction must be approved by majority vote of that legislative body – otherwise, it is vetoed.

THAT the ASSU Assistant Financial Manager shall report to the Senate and the Graduate Student Council before expending any funds earmarked for Major Projects, and the Senate and Graduate Student Council may each veto any such transactions by majority vote; and
THAT the ASSU Assistant Financial Manager may re-allocate the budget as necessary, subject to the constraint that no “major project” shall be undertaken without a prior report; and

THAT either legislative body may demand a report of all spending from this project at any time, and must receive such a report within seven days.

THAT the ASSU Financial Manager shall be held accountable for the use of all funds approved in this project, and shall budget it appropriately to maximize value to the Association; and

THAT the Executive Committee shall receive regular reports on this project; and

THAT the Undergraduate Senate and Graduate Student Council shall receive a report on this project at least once every two months; and

THAT at the end of FY15, all unexpended funds from the project’s budget shall close proportionally back to the Buffer Funds; and

THAT the ASSU Executive, Senate, and Graduate Student Council shall each appoint between 0 and 2 representatives to work with the Assistant Financial Manager on this project.

AND THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNDERGRADUATE SENATE:

THAT $24,000 shall be allocated from the Undergraduate Buffer Fund to the ASSU Financial Manager to effect this project; and

THAT the Undergraduate Senate approves the associated expenditure from the Graduate Buffer Fund under the meaning of the Joint Bylaws, Article VI §7.A.17;

AND THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED BY THE GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL:

THAT $16,000 shall be allocated from the Graduate Buffer Fund to the ASSU Financial Manager to effect this project; and

THAT the Graduate Student Council approves the associated expenditure from the Undergraduate Buffer Fund under the meaning of the Joint Bylaws, Article VI §7.A.17.