2012-2013 USAC Budget Review Committee Transparency Report

Introduction
The intent of this report is to shed some light on Student Organizations Operational Fund (SOOF) and Undergraduate Students Association/Board of Directors (BOD) funding at UCLA. Transparency leads to stronger institutional performance, and should be empowering for students. Further questions may be directed to usabudgetreview@gmail.com.

Statistics
SOOF
This fund serves to supplant the operational costs of student organizations, paying for items like t-shirts, retreats, pens, and paper.

| Total Applicants: | 272 |
| Total Requested: | $548,328.54 |
| Initial Fund Balance: | $142,033.06 |
| Average Allocation: | $524.11 |
| Allocation Standard Dev: | $110.45 |

BOD
This fund aids student groups in hosting large events, which is a reason why allocations are skewed right.

| Total Applicants: | 144 |
| Total Requested: | $1,276,781.57 |
| Initial Fund Balance: | $369,649.43 |
| Average Allocation: | $2567.00 |
| Allocation Standard Dev: | $2481.80 |
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Scoring
All groups are scored based on a rubric which includes quantitative and qualitative metrics as well as required questions stated in the USAC bylaws. A minimum of three students evaluate every organization’s hearing.

SOOF
Average Score: 78.1%
Score S.D.: 10.0%

BOD
Average Score: 78.9%
Score S.D.: 11.6%

Evaluation Data
SOOF
Spending Breakdowns by Category1:

Supplies: 24.7%
Advertising: 15.4%
Retreats: 20.0%
Other/Not reported: 39.9%

% that went on a retreat: 39.7%
Average membership growth: 54.2%

Student evaluations are viewable here.

BOD

Student evaluations are viewable here.

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1 Based on incomplete, self-reported data.
Moving Forward
Based on the above data, and private complaints shared with the BRC, a list of proposals/solutions is included below.

1. Scoring: The efficacy of scoring--especially for SOOF--is far too low. The time put into compiling scores is barely worth it because so many groups receive a similar score. Therefore, an overhaul of the scoring system is needed based on both quantitative and qualitative factors.

2. T-shirts: The arbitrary 30% cap on spending towards T-shirts hinders many groups from spending their full SOOF allocation. Furthermore, with an average allocation of 524.11, 30% is just $157.23 -- not nearly enough to order enough T-shirts for the average group membership. Therefore the Budget Review Committee recommends eradicating the 30% cap.
   
   Update: This change was passed by council on 5/07/2013.

3. Transparency: This report is not enough! Many groups have complained that the relevant information and guidelines for both funds are difficult to find and antiquated. The guidelines desperately need to be overhauled completely to accommodate modern demands (i.e. the inclusion of suggested funding items like USB drives and domain names under SOOF expenditure options).

4. Center for Student Programming: CSP advisors are integral to the process of reviewing funding applications, however, this office needs to do a better job educating CSP advisors so that they provide a consistency in evaluating and giving advice to students filling out applications.

5. Timing: The Main SOOF round was during 0 week this year--way too early for all but the most organized student orgs, marginalizing newer groups and not conducive to students arriving to UCLA somewhat late.

6. Encouraging groups to register new signatories quickly, and making sure they do not miss signatory approval (which happens often). One solution to this problem is moving back the due date for SOOF.