

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Roger Colombik, Chair, University Lectures
RE: 2017-18 Funding Results

Senate: For the 2017-18 funding cycle we received 17 proposals. This is the lowest number of applicants in the last few cycles and partially reflects the committee's interests to restructure the program as outlined below. Of the 17 proposals, we selected 12 to receive funding. Of those 12, the top tier ranked proposals received 100% of their requested budgets. The next four (2nd tier) received 80% of their requested budgets. The final three proposals to receive support (3rd tier) were allocated in the range of 55% of their requested budget. Five proposals were not funded. Please note that of those five, four of the areas (Art & Design, Mathematics, Philosophy and Business) received funding for other proposals submitted from their program areas. We feel that all the academic areas that participated have been well served in the process.

Of the \$24,000 available for this cycle, we awarded \$21,382.82 leaving a surplus of \$2,617.18. This surplus will be applied to Fall 2017 University Lectures Supplemental Award Cycle (for quick turn-around funding of presentations). With the addition of funds not used due to cancellations during this cycle there should be around \$5,000 available for the fall supplemental cycle.

The committee had a constructive discussion regarding the program as it operates currently. Specifically, as to what procedures can be realigned to become a much more efficient program that is capable of being more responsive to opportunities in a timely manner. Scheduling one year out for lectures can be problematic for several reasons. Not all professionals in all areas can facilitate setting the calendar one year in advance. It was also noted that the quick turn-around process of the fall cycle would possibly enable more new faculty to present proposals to support their new initiatives and curriculum. We also believe that there would be fewer problems with cancellations. More emphasis on a quick turn around process allows for great flexibility to coordinate with regional programs that also have excellent visiting scholars. For example, bringing in scholars who are visiting Rice, UT-Austin, etc. that can be brought to campus for a small fee as they are in the area.

In the fall of 2015 when we initiated the Supplemental Cycle (for the quick turn-around of proposals) the process was quite efficient and enabled a few programs to bring excellent guests to campus with little planning and without the troublesome issues of travel and scheduling. The committee feels that we need to operate more in this manner. There was also a suggestion to push the Spring Proposal Cycle later into the spring, bringing the selections closer to the fall schedule.

The Fall 2015 Supplemental Cycle for University Lectures was conducted entirely through email. We will continue to operate in this manner for the Fall 2017 semester.

Also, we would like to know the policy regarding students serving as non-voting members. We feel that the process was well served this year by Boddie Fry's participation and I personally feel that he (and future students) should be included in the voting. His rankings nearly perfectly aligned with the committee's results. In the past, representatives from the library were voting members. This year, Stephanie Towery from the library was not a voting member. We need to clarify these policies for the next round. Also, we well understand that our consistent requests for more funding are not likely to find support at this time given the low numbers of proposals.

I look forward to discussing these issues with the Senate.

Sincerely,

Roger Colombik
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