University Lectures Committee Annual Report for 2018-2019

Statement of Committee Function
The University Lectures Committee considers requests for lectures of general interest that are not primarily supplementary to or extensions of programs of instruction provided by colleges, schools, or departments, recommends annually to the chancellor a budget for its activities, and exercises such control over the announcement of lectures as it deems necessary and desirable. It supports departments, academic programs and student organizations that bring distinguished lecturers to the UW-Madison campus. These university-wide lectures are intended to enrich the general intellectual and cultural life of the university community. The committee itself does not initiate lecture arrangements. Rather, it receives and acts on requests from eligible university groups that are interested in inviting outstanding speakers to the campus.

Past Years’ Activities
During the 2018-2019 academic year the committee received a total of 54 applications for lecture support, 50 of which were supported and occurred and three that were supported and cancelled. The attached report presents information for each supported lecture; lectures are listed chronologically by the lecture’s date.

In 2018-2019, the 53 supported lectures that occurred drew a combined reported attendance of 4,439 persons, an increase in attendance by 306 from 2017-18, and an average of 94 attendees per supported application. Lectures were sponsored by a total of 39 different campus units. Lectures had 153 co-sponsoring units, in addition to the primary sponsor.

The committee’s total expenditures for the 2018-2019 year were $43,086.72.

Fitch Funds: Five lectures were approved for Fitch Funds in 2018-2019, four of which followed up. The total amount of Fitch Funds spent was $2,175.2

The table below compares committee activity from the most recent five years. A similar number of applications were received and supported during the past three years. The total expenditures increased and then stayed consistent over the past four years, as the committee made significant efforts to follow up with units regarding attendance reports and transferring of lecture funds after the event. Sponsors have also been limited to supporting only one lecture for each spring and fall semester during recent years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications received</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications supported</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average reported lecture attendance</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of different sponsors</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of co-sponsors</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average lecture cost</td>
<td>$1,087</td>
<td>$1,006</td>
<td>$1,007</td>
<td>$1,070</td>
<td>$1,066</td>
<td>$704</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current Issues or Concerns
There has been a common theme of low monetary co-sponsorship in applications. To help make it clearer to applicants, the committee will add a request to the application portal for justification if co-sponsorship/match is less than half or on the lower end. The committee will also add clarification that “sponsorship” letters are less meaningful than financial contribution as there seems to be some confusion around that language.
The William Fitch Scholarship Fund was created with the specific goal of bringing to Madison experts, especially businesspeople, to give lectures on the American free-enterprise system. The committee would also like to add a note to the SOF website about some flexibility with Fitch Funds that we do not have with other types of funds. The committee received five Fitch Funds applications last year for relatively low costs and could have approved more financial contribution.

**Summary/Recommendations**

We gratefully acknowledge sources of financial support for university-wide lectures: The Anonymous Fund, Kemper K. Knapp Bequest, and the Chancellor's Office (General University Fund).

**2018-19 Committee Membership**

Eve Emshwiller, Botany
William Karpus, Academic Dean Representative
Ashtin Massie, Student
Antje Petty, Max Kade Institute
Jordan Rosenblum, Center for Jewish Studies & Religious Studies Program
Timothy Smeeding, Lafollette School of Public Affairs (Chair)
(Partial term: Cary Forest, Physics)