Dear UNI Faculty,

The Intercollegiate Academics Fund (IAF) is a yearly allocation of Student Activity Fee monies that exists to promote and support intercollegiate academic experiences for University of Northern Iowa students. Specifically, the IAF supports students in two ways: 1) through a travel fund for students who participate in intercollegiate academic competitions and presentations at professional conferences; and 2) through a research and creative activity fund which supports student research and creative activities. This fund is administered by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President.

The number of applications for use of these funds during Academic Years 2013-2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 increased significantly. During 2013-2014, the committee had allocated all monies by March. Because of this, funding procedures for 2014-2015 were changed to allow for two granting periods. Though this process helped, the committee had allocated all monies by March again, so in 2015-2016, the committee decided to have three granting periods. In 2015-2016, monies were all allocated by February. This significantly disadvantages students whose disciplines hold their conferences in March, April and May.

As a result of this, NISG officers and I decided that we needed to call together a group of faculty and students to discuss procedures. The committee was comprised of Paul Andersen, outgoing Vice President of NISG, Abigail Shew, NISG outgoing Director of Administration and Finance, Parker Bennet, NISG outgoing Speaker of the Senate, Dr. Helen Harton, faculty member in CSBS, Dr. Greg Bourassa, faculty member in COE, Dr. Danny Galyen, faculty member in CHAS, Dr. Jeff Funderburk, Associate Dean in CHAS, and Dr. Laura Terlip, Faculty Senate Representative on the IAF committee for the last several years. Changes in the process have been made that this ad hoc committee hopes will make opportunities for all UNI students equitable.

The good news is that the IAF fund will have $150,000 in 2016-2017 to allocate. This is $25,000 more than in 2015-2016, so that in itself will alleviate some of the pressure. The committee decided, at the end of the 2015-2016 academic year, to again use three granting periods during 2016-2017. However, based on a recommendation by the committee, above, the amounts allotted to the granting periods reflect an analysis of the last three years of funding requests. By aligning allocations with past use, the committee should have funding available for the third period requests.

Funds for Academic Year 2016-2017 will be divided and awarded according to three grant periods and will be allocated in the following ways:

July 1-October 31 $30,000

November 1-February 28 $50,000

March 1-June 30 $70,000
Any unused funds will roll into the next period, and should there be funds left at the end of the year, they will be rolled into the following academic year.

Applications should be submitted no earlier than 90 days prior to the conference or activity. Funding will be awarded according to the dates of the conference or research/creative activity. [This reflects a change from the prior two years when applications were considered on a first-come, first-served basis.]

Finally, another change that we have made to the process is that requests for reimbursements will be required to be submitted within 21 days (instead of 14) of the activity. Because we are giving this extra week, the committee will hold fast to the statement in the procedures that states: “After 21 days, the award is cancelled and funds are released for future applicants.”

Please review the application fund guidelines at: http://wwwdev.uni.edu/provost/IAF/travel-fund-guidelines-and-application. The link to the application forms are embedded in this informational website.

Points to remember:

- The IAF is NOT general fund money and is not funded by the provost's office. The allocation comes from Student Fees and is allocated by the Student Services Fee Committee; the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President assists only in the administration of the fees since the activities are academic.
- Decisions about a particular year of funding are made approximately 15 months prior to the start of that particular year. For example, after the Student Services Fee Committee met in Spring 2016, entities received an email about funding for FY 18, which was still 15 months out.

The IAF is a terrific way to involve your students in research and creative activity. I encourage as many of you as possible to enable students in taking advantage of this opportunity.

Nancy Cobb

IAF Committee Chairperson
Associate Provost for Faculty