FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lindsay Marshall
University Services Communications Coordinator
832.842.4722
lmarshall@uh.edu

UNIVERSITY DEMONSTRATES FOCUS ON STUDENT SUCCESS

Houston, April 4, 2011 – Student success is a top priority and a new university team brings leaders from departments across the campus to work together to take the University of Houston to the next level. The newly established Student Success Team Administrative Review (S-STAR) will put their heads together to develop a university-wide strategic plan for support services that will work to enhance student success as the University works toward its goal in becoming a residential campus.

UH has found that many universities with the highest student success, meaning high graduation and retention rates, have transitioned to a residential campus. Students living on campus have been shown to become more involved in their school and have a more satisfying college experience. There is a positive correlation demonstrated between student satisfaction and high retention and graduation rates. As part of the student success initiative, the University of Houston has set a goal to grow to an 8,000 bed campus by fall 2013.

“As the university begins the transition to a more residential campus, it’s important that we begin looking at our core services in different ways,” said Emily Messa, Assistant Vice President for University Services. “By having all of the administrative team around the table in support of Academic Affairs, we ensure that as we transition, we are all connected so that our services can align with and support the university’s academic mission.”

S-STAR members include key staff from various service units on campus who will develop a model in support of the university’s student and academic mission of working toward becoming a residential campus. The team has been charged by Dr. Carl Carlucci, Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance, and Dr. John Antel, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, to develop the plan by Sept. 1, 2011 in time to implement for FY 2012/2013. The team will work to define and strategically align core services and work to achieve efficiencies that can lead to reinvestment and service enhancement strategies.

“This is an opportunity to support the Research and Residential model that will allow us to begin to strategically align the support services with the overall academic mission” said Melissa Rockwell, Executive Director of Facilities Management.

S-STAR will look at ways institutions can foster student success by defining a clear mission “lived” by the community and encouraging the administration, faculty and staff to continually strive to improve as outlined in the book Student Success in College written by George Kuh, director of...
the College Student Experiences Questionnaire Research Program and the National Survey on Student Engagement. The team will also scrutinize the university's organizational development, including academic, business and facilities, and also develop an integrated business plan.

By developing the S-STAR committee, the university will coordinate its entire community on reaching the next level of excellence and provide the supportive culture throughout the campus to help our students reach their full potential.

For more information on the S-STAR committee, contact Melissa Rockwell at mrookwel@central.uh.edu or 713-743-8750 or contact Emily Messa at eamessa@uh.edu or 832-842-8184.

About the University of Houston

The University of Houston is a comprehensive national research institution serving the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. UH serves more than 38,500 students in the nation's fourth-largest city, located in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region of the country.