



UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

Student Government Association

2009-2010

Student Fee Advisory Request

1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses. This summary should include, in brief terms: your unit's mission, how you accomplish your unit's mission, and a justification of your unit's student fee allocation in terms of benefits for students.

Mission:

The Student Government Association exist to provide an official voice through which student opinion may be expressed, in the overall policy and decision making processes of the university community. The Student Government Association also represents the needs and interest of student body at the University of Houston, by serving as a liaison between the students and the University; advocating on their behalf and raising pertinent issues aimed at improving and enhancing the quality of the student experience.

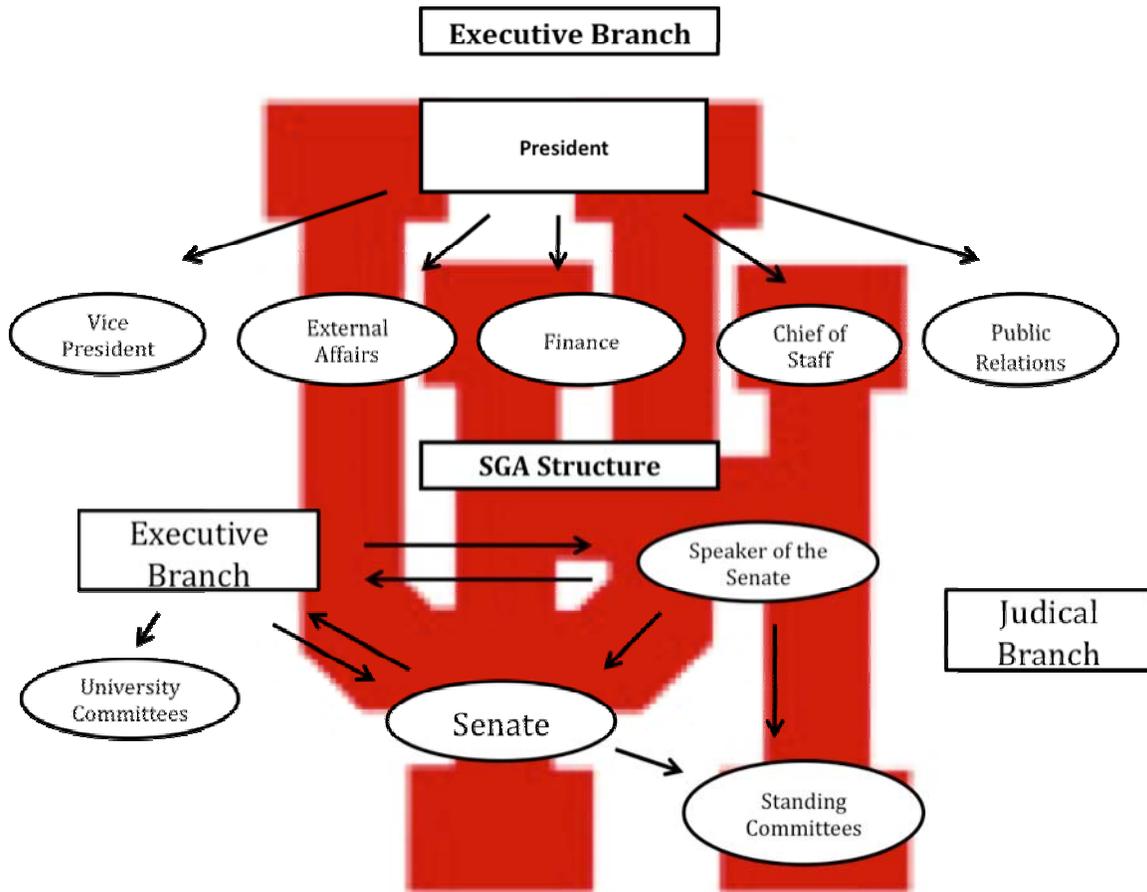
How our Mission is accomplished

The Student Government Association continuously makes efforts to meet the needs and demands of every student on campus. Every month Senators conduct town halls in their respective colleges where they interact directly with their constituents. Inputs from these conversations are often developed into Legislation or Resolutions, which have the potential to benefit the student. Twice a month the Student Government Association holds their formal Senate Meetings. At these meetings the entire Legislature comes together to vote on any new Bills or to address pressing student issues. All Senate meetings are open to the public and allow for students to address their Senate. A major role of the Student Government Association is to make student appointments to over 50 different University Committees. Through the committee appointments the students are able to change specific sectors of the University Policy and University Life. Finally by meeting with policy makers and University Administrators, the Student Government Association is able to present the student's view in totality to those who otherwise would not be made aware of it.

Justification

The Student Government Association serves a unique role. We are the official representatives of the University of Houston Student Body; representing the needs and interest of those we serve, and advocating on behalf of the rights and welfare of our fellow students. Whether it is by fighting unnecessary tuition increases or finding ways to save or fellow students' money, the Student Government Association is here to ensure that the voice of the students is heard. SGA not only serves as the voice of the student body, but we are also a reliable source of student leaders who can be counted on to make a positive impact on campus and in our community.

2. Provide an organization chart of your unit. Large units may need to have an overview chart and then more specific charts for each program. Where you have multiple staff in the same position (e.g. counselor, custodian, etc), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.



3. List the objectives that you provided with your 2008-2009 SFAC request. Please comment on your success in achieving these objectives. If an objective changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new objectives, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these objectives.

Objective 1: **Student Savings and Discount Initiatives**

Status: Accomplished/Ongoing

Description

1. **Raise Money for Scholarships:** SGA is currently working with the University Division of Advancement to raise money for scholarships in the university fundraising campaign.
2. **Containment of Student Fees:** SGA will soon be working with the Tuition and Fee Committee to contain the fees, by encouraging university departments to save and reallocate resources where and when we can, and encourage departments to seek other sources of funding as well.
3. **Making Textbooks More Affordable:** SGA is currently working with the Bookstore Advisory Committee and the UH Bookstore to make textbooks more affordable by continuing the information campaign to the faculty and administration on practices that will make textbooks more affordable to students.

Groups Involved: SGA, Tuition and Fee Committee, Bookstore Advisory Committee, UH Bookstore, UH Division of Advancement.

Groups Impacted/Benefited: All UH students.

Objective 2: **Student Life Initiatives**

Status: Accomplished/Ongoing

Description

1. **University Center Renovations:** SGA successfully supported and actively participated in the referendum process to renovate the University Center and Satellite and enhance the quality of student activity space and accessibility of student service units.
2. **Campus Beautification:** SGA worked with student groups to initiate projects to make our campus a more beautiful place through Rock The Block, a Homecoming Service Project.
3. **Student Health:** SGA will lead an initiative to focus on student health in February by hosting a series of events in collaboration with the Health Center, Wellness Center and other groups on campus.
4. **Student Safety:** SGA continues to work with the UH Department of Public Safety to promote policies and programs, such as Walk in the Dark, to raise awareness of campus safety issues.
5. **Environmental Initiatives:** SGA led a successful effort to create a University Sustainability Task Force that focuses on efforts to protect

- our environment and reduce our carbon footprint. The task force has developed a recycling policy and will be engaging in other initiatives.
6. **School Spirit Initiatives:** SGA participated in a number of spirit and tradition based events by participating in homecoming, co-sponsoring pep rallies, and developing plans to sustain traditions on campus.
 7. **Non-Mandatory Meal Plans:** SGA did not succeed in making meal plans on campus non-mandatory, however, succeeded in persuading administration and dining services to develop a comprehensive dining plan to address the concerns and needs of the students, present and future, to begin implementation in Fall 2009.

Groups Involved: SGA, UC 2010 Committee, The University Center and Associated Facilities, UH Division of Administration and Finance, UH Health Center, UH Department of Recreation, UH CAPS, UH Sustainability Task Force, Homecoming, Student Program Board, UH Department of Public Safety, UH Dining Services.

Groups Impacted/Benefited: All UH students.

Objective 3: **Academic Initiatives**

Status: Accomplished/Ongoing

Description:

1. **Student Academic Bill of Rights:** SGA created the Student Academic Bill of Rights to define student's rights and responsibilities in the classroom. The policy awaits implementation for Fall 2009.
2. **Enforce Fair Practices Bill:** SGA continues to address individual issues rising from unethical practices by professors.
3. **College Councils:** SGA will continue to work towards the creation of student councils in the individual colleges.
4. **Course Flexibility:** SGA, along with the Division of Academic Affairs, will continue to design flexible courses to offer to students such as the Winter Mini-Mester and the Summer Jump Program extension.
5. **Streamline Graduate Application Process:** SGA is examining proposals to streamline the graduate application process for current UH students applying to graduate school.

Groups Involved: SGA, UH Faculty Senate, Undergraduate Council, Academic Colleges and Deans, Division of Academic Affairs.

Groups Impacted/Benefited: All UH students.

Objective 4: **Student Advocacy Initiatives**

Status: Accomplished/Ongoing

Description:

1. **Legislative Advocacy:** SGA has built relationships with several legislators including State Senator Rodney Ellis, and has worked with

student leaders across the state to create a legislative agenda for students.

2. **Texas Student Association:** SGA re-founded the Texas Students Association, bringing over 20 different student governments from universities state-wide, to work towards common goals.
3. **Voter Registration Campaign:** SGA led a three-tiered voter registration campaign, focusing on registration, education, and mobilization. SGA held several voter registration drives, voter education event “UHave a Voice” and organized shuttles to early voting sites.

Groups Involved: SGA, UH students, Division of Administration and Finance, student governments from across the state, Center for Public Policy, and the office of State Senator Rodney Ellis.

Groups Impacted/Benefited: All UH students.

Objective 5: **SGA Outreach Initiatives**

Status: Accomplished/Ongoing

Description

1. **SGA Multi-Dimensional:** SGA further expanded its scope through various engagements and partnerships with the campus community.
2. **Student Organizational Tour& Town-halls:** SGA increased its town-hall and constituency engagement hosting numerous academic town halls and special topic events throughout the semester.
3. **Co-Sponsorship of Events:** SGA dramatically increased co-sponsorships by hosting 15 events including: Cat’s Back, UH Hurricane Ike Relief Efforts, “U Have a Voice”, Early Voting Shuttles, The Great Pumpkin Event, Fall 2008 Finals Mania, Rock the Block, MEAD group, UC 2010 Pep Rally, Recyclemania, Green Commuter Town-hall, Health Week, Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration, Dr. Khator Luncheons, and Spring 2009 Finals Mania.

Groups Involved: SGA, Division of Administration and Finance, UH Libraries, UH Department of Recreation, UH Health Center, the office of the Chancellor/President, UH Dining Services, MVP, Homecoming Board, UH Academic Colleges, University Center and Associated Facilities, Center for Public Policy, METRO, VPSI Van Pool, and the Sustainability Task Force.

Groups Impacted/Benefited: All UH students.

Objective 6: **Student Government Improvement Initiatives**

Status: Accomplished/Ongoing

Description

1. **Revise the Accountability Act:** SGA revised the Accountability Act to further hold ourselves accountable.
2. **Creation of Director of External Affairs:** SGA successfully created the Department of External Affairs, which helped increase our

relationships with student governments state-wide and community engagement efforts.

3. **New Member Retreat and Orientation:** SGA successfully created an orientation for new members and incorporated an intern program to develop future leaders in SGA.

Groups Involved: SGA.

Groups Impacted/Benefited: All UH students.

4. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the aforementioned objectives and their importance as compared to other objectives that you might pursue. Where data exist, discuss the number of persons served by each of your programs and the satisfaction level of those served. Please provide the method for collecting these data.

The Student Government Association measures success by the role SGA plays in improving the student experience on campus; for example, when SGA advocates on behalf of a student group to represent their needs to the administration. The Student Government Association doesn't necessarily measure success by the amount of task that we complete or the amount of legislation we pass but by the amount of people we affect with our involvement in such task or issue; such as fighting to lower textbook prices to save all of our students money or opposing massive tuition increases. Student Government also measures success by our ability to empower our fellow students to make an impact; we accomplish this by holding town halls with our student constituents and appointing them to represent fellow students by serving on University Committees. Basically success is measured through our involvement in moving the campus toward a more effective student university experience. The way in which we measure the effectiveness of this year is to look back and see if the strategic moves made by the SGA were looking out for the betterment and future of the students at the University of Houston; to make the University of Houston a more student responsive environment. Furthermore, we gauge the perception of SGA by the willingness of the administration to discuss concerns with the Student Government Association and to solicit our advice before making decisions affecting the university. Concerning students, we monitor levels of responsiveness by the influx of committee applications, SGA website traffic, town hall meetings, and Senate meetings.

5. Please discuss any budget changes from your last (FY2009) SFAC request, their impact on your programs, and your reason for implementing them. SFAC recognizes that some programs did not receive the funds that they requested, that some programs were impacted by additional expenses after the conclusion of the budget cycle, and that some programs may be ahead of or behind their self-generated income projections. In addition, if your unit concluded FY2008 with a Ledger 3 Fund Equity balance, please describe the conditions which caused the fund balance.

SGA successfully implemented and is continuing to monitor all of its goal initiatives from last year. The organization's budget ended the year with a fund equity total of \$657.05, which mostly remained from controllable budget accounts such as printing, supplies, etc. The recent increase in administrative and VPSA charges will alter SGA's current budget. Because SGA efficiently used last year's budget, compensating for the increase in charges will be an obstacle. Therefore, SGA is requesting a base augmentation of \$3,391 to account for the increases in administrative and VPSA charges, as well as longevity, salary, and overtime for our secretary, Shirley Johnson. Attached to this SFAC report is a base augmentation request for the amount mentioned above.

6. Please list your 2009-2010 objectives in priority order. Larger units may wish to group your response by subprogram. Under each objective, state the specific programs, activities, and/or services that you plan to implement to meet your objectives.

Objective 1: **Campus Infrastructure Initiatives**

Plan of Action

1. **Transportation and Parking:** SGA will create an initiative concerning a comprehensive parking and transportation plan.
2. **Campus Sustainability:** SGA will initiate and support initiatives to sustain an eco-friendly campus environment.
3. **Student Housing:** SGA will work to resolve issues with housing as the campus continues to grow in the future.

Objective 2: **Student Life Initiatives**

1. **Student Safety:** SGA will expand and promote safety resources to students through safety awareness programs and events.
2. **Student Health:** SGA will initiate a new focus on student health to promote wellness education.
3. **Student Dining:** SGA will play an active role in the implementation of dining revision planning.

Objective 3: **SGA Improvement Initiatives**

1. **University Committees-** SGA will improve communications with standing university committees.
2. **Internship Program-** SGA will actively expand the internship program to continue developing future leaders within the organization.
3. **Accountability-** SGA will continue to improve accountability to the student body.

Objective 4: **Outreach**

1. **Texas Students Association:** SGA will continue efforts to sustain the Texas Students Association.
2. **SGA Multidimensional Campaign:** SGA will continue its campaign to be multidimensional by expanding its scope of influence through co-sponsorships, increase town-halls, organizational tours, and through playing an active role in the Texas Students Association.

7. What are the other possible sources of funding available to your unit and what efforts are being made to access them (e.g. grants, donations, etc.)?

There are no external funding sources for the Student Government Association. The primary source of funding is generated through the Student Service Fee.

8. Please describe any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.

There is no overlap.