

UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

# **SFAC Report**

## **Learning & Assessment Services**



2010-2011

**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.**

The mission of *Learning and Assessment Services (LAS)* is to foster a conducive, stimulating and supportive learning environment to promote the success of UH students, the university, and the greater Houston community. LAS identifies needs, provides assessment and evaluative services, promotes healthy choices via outreach activities, and facilitates student learning.

The range of services and the number of students served and impacted by LAS is extensive. Learning and Assessment Services primary services are in the field of assessment, learning support and outreach activities. In the area of assessment we consulted, developed, and administered surveys for the department of Campus Activities, Residential Life and Housing, and the Campus Environment Survey to name a few. Due to our expertise in administering web based surveys the University of Houston Victoria campus requested us to administer a survey for their campus too. In support of our Institutional assessment activities, LAS recruited and facilitated the administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) to evaluate general education outcomes. We continue to support the academic departments in their outcome assessment activities through the administration and reporting of the Major Fields Test as well as course evaluations.

LAS is routinely requested to research and in collaborating with academic departments requested to recommend and propose appropriate test for use for placement and the awarding of course credit. Currently we are working on identifying assessments that can be used for the many languages that are offered at our university. We continue to process course credit for Advance Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Entrance Program (CLEP), departmental and other course credit programs. For the reporting period May 08 to April 09, LAS evaluated course credit for 1,097 students.

During the Fall 09 semester, LAS administered the faculty/course evaluation online for the UH Law Center, College of Architecture, Department of Hispanic Studies, Distance Education, and selected other courses from several departments. We continue to assist departments in designing customized reports as per college/departmental specifications. LAS also ensures copies of the evaluation reports are made available in the Library. The Measurement and Evaluation Center scanned more than 400,000 forms in FY09.

University Testing Services (UTS) a unit of Learning and Assessment Services provides opportunities for students to take make-up exams as approved by their faculty. In addition students who take a correspondence exam from another institution can have their exams proctored at UTS. We also facilitate the administration of one of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) tests at remote overseas and out of state facilities for our new incoming international and domestic students. More than 26,000 tests have been administered by UTS in FY 10.

In the area of learning support, LAS IT staff continues to develop applications that improve the efficiency of service delivery and evaluation of services. The IT staff has developed applications that enable students enrolled in selected Spanish Courses to register online for their preferred conversational table time. A customized feedback application was developed for students to provide them an opportunity to evaluate services. This IT application assisted staff in obtaining information to assess the effectiveness of the program. Our Challenger program, a federally funded program to support student success, has submitted a five year renewal grant to the U.S. Department of Education. The one year retention rate for this program is 87%. Learning Support Services, the Challenger Program and Urban Experience Program and under the umbrella of LAS, continue to support student success with a high degree of effectiveness (See page 7-8).

In support of the student training needs LAS offers opportunities for students to be interns, practicum trainees, and graduate and research assistants.

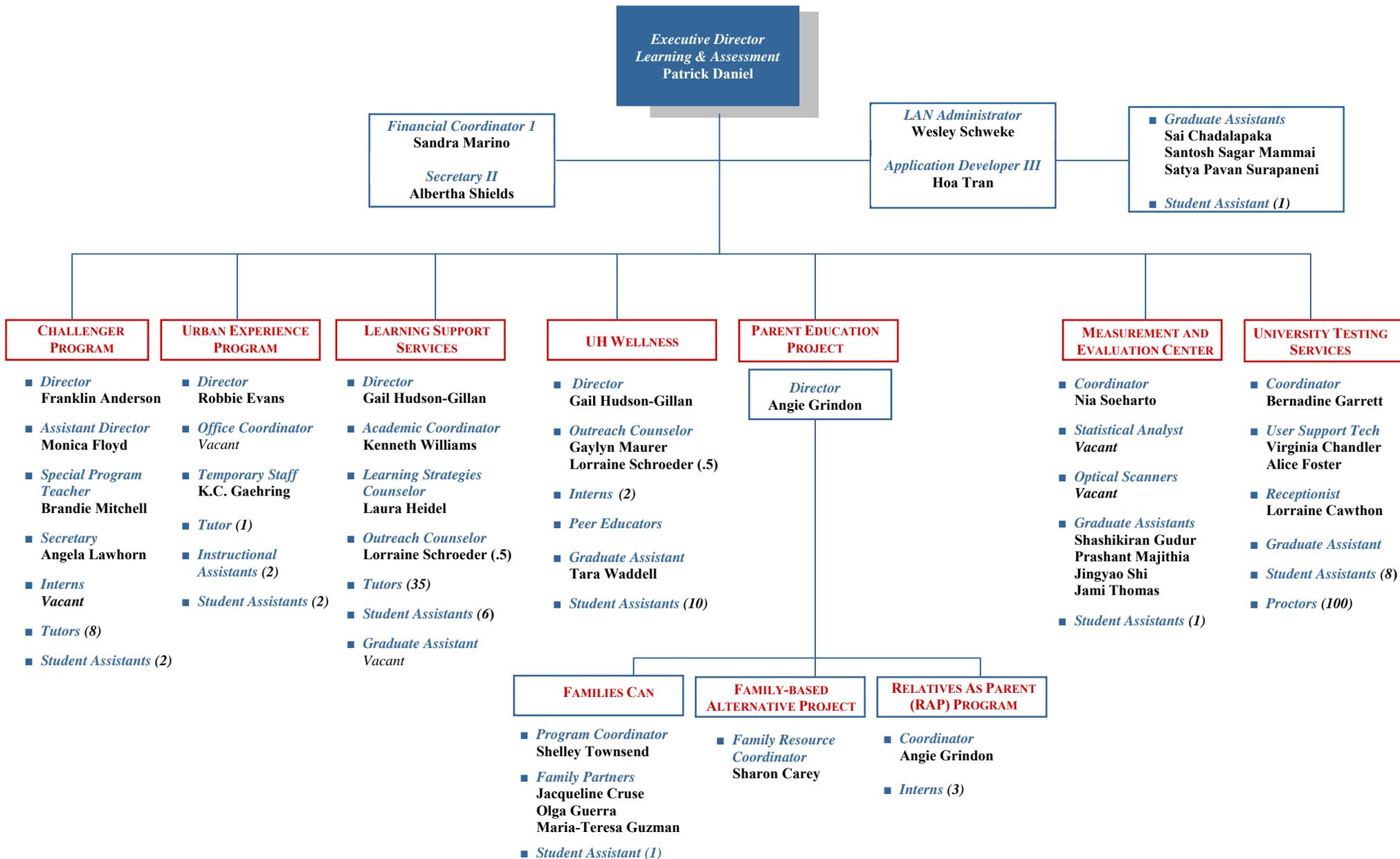
We continue to offer quality outreach activities as evidenced by the fact that LAS currently has more than half a million dollars in grant funded projects this fiscal year.

- 2. Provide an organization chart for 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.**

See attached Organizational Chart.

# Learning & Assessment Services

2009



- 3. List the objectives that you provided with your 2009-2010 SFAC request. Please comment on your success in achieving those objectives. If an objective changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new objective, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these objectives.**

**LAS Objectives:**

In addition to continuing LAS objectives (listed below: #1-4), we wish to report LAS is responding to an increase in demand for accountability and outcome assessments from both the University and individual departments and units. LAS has become central in the development of accountability measures for several UH departments and within Student Affairs. We are also experiencing an increase in demand from the UH community for LAS expertise in the areas of outcome assessment and program evaluation.

Lastly LAS is receiving an increase in grants. This is accompanied by each funding source increasing its requirements for measurable outcomes, financial and program accountability. Further, these requirements are different for each grant and often change year to year.

*1. To facilitate student learning*

Learning assistance programs are composed of tutoring services, learning strategies counseling, wellness and parenting education, cultural enrichment activities, computer-aided instructional resources, and workshops on academic learning strategies and personal development. LAS also offers three academic courses in social health and learning strategies.

LAS supports graduate and professional education with research services and consultation for data collection, survey design, coordination of focus groups, introduction to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), learning strategies counseling, and workshops on topics such as American Psychological Association writing style, scholarly writing, presentations, learning styles, and time management.

*2. To promote a supportive learning environment*

All 7 LAS Units promote a supportive learning environment in multiple ways. Examples of this include Learning Support Services : Learning styles and strategies assessment, workshops, learning Strategies Counseling, tutoring, library and resource materials including books, computer software, and videos on learning and other topics; Challenger Program: Counseling, tutoring, academic, career, and personal counseling; Reading, Writing, and Study Skills credit courses; Financial Aid Advising and Assistance; Social support and cultural enrichment; Urban Experience Program: Internships, tutoring, community service, mentoring, cultural enrichment activities, career and personal development activities.

*3. To provide comprehensive assessment services*

Learning and Assessment Services provides comprehensive assessment services to the UH community and local public and private organizations. Assessment services include program evaluation via focus groups, faculty-course evaluation, and institutional research, including administration of staff needs assessment, student satisfaction, and student needs assessment.

Additional assessment activities include administration of psychological and vocational batteries, course placement tests, credit by examination, college admission tests, licensure/certification examinations, and scoring of departmental and course examinations. LAS also provides consultation for outcome assessment.

The surveys administered to the UH community include Campus Activities Survey, Campus Environment Surveys, Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), Families CAN Surveys, Fraud Risk Survey, LSS Workshop Survey, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Residential Life & Housing (RLH) Survey, Transfer Student Surveys, College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences (CLASS) Exit Surveys – Undergraduate and Graduate, Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders (COMD) Surveys, Department of Biology and Biochemistry Undergraduate Survey, College of Technology Graduating Students Survey, and Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) Exit Survey.

The elections administered include Student Government, Association, Staff Council, University Center 2010 Referendum, and CoogTube Voting.

4. *To provide prevention and education outreach activities*

LAS offers a variety of workshops on personal development, healthy choices and decision making, academic success, and parenting support groups. UH Wellness offers outreach and educational programs for the campus and community and provides referral information and resources on a wide range of health related topics including stress management, alcohol, drugs, and sexual health. The department co-sponsors large-scale prevention campaigns including Alcohol Awareness Month, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Domestic Violence/Rape Prevention (Clothesline Project), Safer Sex Awareness Week, Eating Disorders Awareness Day, Great American Smoke Out, National Collegiate Health and Wellness Week, Take Back the Night, and the Safe Spring Break Campaign. The department also involves student peer educators in the development and implementation of service learning projects. Community based programs include the Relatives As Parents Program, Services for Families with Children with Disabilities. Success: Very substantive data exists to verify LAS' success in achieving these objectives. For this, please see #4.

4. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving your 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 levels of those served. Please provide the method for collective these data.

Please find below tabulation of our usage data for selected services offered.

**Learning Support Services (LSS)**

Tutoring Sessions	7,408
Learning Strategies Counseling	618
Learning Strategies Workshops	9,460
Outreach/ Information Fairs	2,720
Computer Use	929
Tutoring retention/graduation rate (1 year)	83.11%
Tutored students in good academic standing	85.73 %

**Challenger Program (CP)**

Participants served	225
<i>(* maximum number the funding source allowed is 215, which must be low income and first generation college student)</i>	
Retention Rate	87%
Good Academic Standing	89%
Graduation Rate (based on 5 year cohort group)	49%
Total Graduates	31
Total Dean's List Honors	49

**Urban Experience Program (UEP)**

Students/Participants <i>(Jan 2008-Jan 2009):</i>	89
Percent of UEP students with GPA (3-4)	33.7%

**University Testing Services (UTS)**

Institutional Tests	9,578
Credit By Exams	1,019
Placement Tests	598
Community Tests	23
Distance Education/Correspondence Tests	639
National Tests	7,556
Computer Based Tests	6,918

***Total Tests Administered*** **26,331**

**Measurement & Evaluation Center (MEC)**

Academic:	
Class Exam Scoring	245,589
Institutional Testing	2,512
In-House Developed Tests	12
Faculty/Course Evaluation	149,755
Research	35,420
Psychological/Vocational Testing	234
Special Project	220

**UH Wellness (UHW)**

Outreach Programming	
- Workshops/Classroom Training	14,848
- Informational Services	25,346
Special Programs	2,652
Walk In/Consultations	10,598
<b>Total Contacts for UH Wellness</b>	<b>53,444</b>

**Parent Education Program (PEP)****Families CAN Program (Serves Families of Children with Disabilities)**

Ongoing Case Management Services	740 (unique) served on an ongoing basis
Children with disabilities	296 (unique)
Parents of children with disabilities	444 (unique)
Parent Groups	
Parents of children with disabilities served	45 (Unique) individuals
Information & Referral Services	
Parents of children with disabilities served	340 (unique) individuals
Outreach Service Contacts	
Parents of children with disabilities served	200 (unique) individuals

**GRAND Total served by Families CAN: 1,325**

**Relatives As Parents Program (Serves Grandparents & Other Relatives Raising Kin Children)**

-Relative Parents served	180 (unique) individuals
-Kin Children served (directly)	40 (unique) individuals
-RAP Support Group Leaders served	10 (unique) individuals
-Technical Assistance to other Professionals	20 (unique) individuals
-Collaborations with other Organizations	15 organizations

**GRAND Total served by RAPP 265**

**Family Based Alternatives Project/EveryChild, Inc. (Specialized Program for Children with Disabilities)**

Total clients served (unique)	162
Total community agency/collaborators/partners	53
 GRAND Total clients served by EveryChild	 162(unique) individuals
<b>Total (unique) Individuals Served by PEP</b>	<b>1,752</b>

5. Please discuss any budget changes from your last (FY 2010) 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 FY 2009 with a Ledger 3 Fund Equity balance, please describe the conditions which cause the fund balance.

LAS would like to request the same level of base funding, but has two additional one time requests for the following items:

1) Upgrade of computers used for testing	\$ 20,400.00
2) Electronic system for the conference room.	\$ 8,730.00
Administrative Charge	\$ 1,486.00
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<b>Total Request</b>	<b>\$ 30,616.00</b>

6. Please list your 2010-2011 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.

**LAS Objectives:**

1. To facilitate student learning
  - Learning Support Services
  - Challenger Program
  - Urban Experience Program
2. To promote a supportive learning environment
  - LAS overall and all 7 Units
3. To provide comprehensive assessment services
  - Measurement & Evaluation Services
  - University Testing Services
4. To provide prevention and education outreach activities
  - Wellness Program
  - Parent Education Project

**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.)?**

Due to the diversity of services LAS provides, it generates funding from many different sources: the Provost's Office, UH Central Administration, in Grants & Contracts, Gifts, Designated Fees and SFAC. LAS serves every constituency in the UH community (students, faculty, staff and departments) as well as providing services to the Greater Houston community. Thus, LAS requires, pursues and obtains many different types of funding from a variety of funding sources.

Grants and Contracts:

Challenger Program	\$ 286,897.00
Families Can (PEP)	\$ 148,029.00
Early Child (PEP)	\$ 67,500.00
Simmons (PEP)	\$ 10,000.00
NASADAD Exemplary (UH Wellness)	\$ 1,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 513,926.00</b>

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

LAS (Learning & Assessment Services) is unique in what it provides the University community, and thus there is no overlap with other units. In addition it is the philosophy of LAS to promote a supportive learning environment based upon a guiding principle of collaboration and support for the various entities on campus.

Three units and LAS, in part, are funded through student service fees (Learning Support Services, Urban Experience Program and UH Wellness), which provide direct services to students. Wellness has also been awarded additional grant funds which enhance its Program. Two units are primarily grant-funded, one of which (Challenger Program) again provides direct service to students including the provision of counseling, academic tutoring and learning strategies support to students in a high risk group for retention. These services are supported primarily through grant dollars and supported through designated fees.

Two other units within LAS (University Testing Services and the Measurement and Evaluation Center) are funded through self generated and designated fees. These units also provide support for students. University Testing Services provides academic placement tests (i.e., Language Placement) for minimal fees and administers the credit by exam program (Advance Placement, International Baccalaureate (IB), CLEP, etc.) for the University. Currently the credit is processed for students at no charge. Since Spring '08, University Testing Services has taken on the additional task of reviewing student requests for providing a Foreign Language required waiver.

The Measurement and Evaluation Center (MEC), which also does not receive any student service fees, provides services to support students. Graduate and professional students can utilize the expertise of MEC staff for data collection. The data forms or answer sheets used for data collection are scanned at no cost to these students to support their research. SFAC funded units must meet institutional effectiveness and other program evaluation needs, and the MEC staff provide support for these units when requested. In addition, this unit supports students through many of its other services (e.g. exam grading, faculty evaluations, and research support). Please see page 7 for statistics. MEC also administers the online Student Government and Staff Council elections for a minimal fee.

Finally, LAS central staff provide major support for SFAC units within LAS (Learning Support Services, Urban Experience Program, UH Wellness) including financial management, budgeting, personnel, technology (computer support, web design, programming) and data analysis. Non-SFAC LAS units also support LAS SFAC units through provision of materials, furniture, equipment, computers, and even student staff when those units could not otherwise afford these necessary support services.

As a result of the administrative structures, Learning and Assessment Services has been able to offer many services to the University community at minimal cost. This in turn allows for many units on campus not to initiate new or increase current fees. In addition, the University, and its diverse units, increasingly call upon LAS for its expertise in accountability measures, outcome assessment, surveys and focus groups.