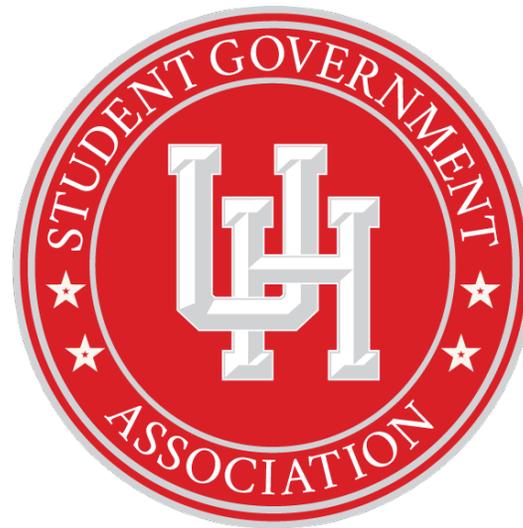# Student Fees Advisory Committee
# Questionnaire & Report for Fiscal Year '18

**Student Government Association**
**53rd Administration**

Prepared by:
Shane Smith, Student Body President
Robert Comer, Chief of Staff
Nikhil Thampy, Director of Finance

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

## Mission Statement

The Student Government Association exists to serve as the official voice through which student opinion may be expressed and empowered in the overall policy, decision making process, and services offered at the University of Houston. As such, the Student Government Association is committed to understanding the needs of students and advocating on their behalf. Through continuous interaction and collaboration with students, faculty, staff, administration, and the community the organization works to improve and enhance the quality of the student experience.

## Core Values

- ✓ Data-Driven
- ✓ Improvement
- ✓ Humility
- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Accessibility
- ✓ Creativity

## Executive Summary

Student Government Association, in its role as the liaison between the student body and the administration, performs its mission by connecting SGA members and students through an accessible and relevant interface. The power of the organization lies in its student senators, representing and speaking on behalf of the fellow member of their colleges, to develop policy and legislation at the bi-weekly meetings of the senate and its committees. The executive branch then collaborates with the stakeholders and programs on campus to help develop and execute those policies. Further, the multitude of university committees and workgroups with SGA delegates serve to represent students on important policy and decision-making processes in nearly all facets of the university's operation.
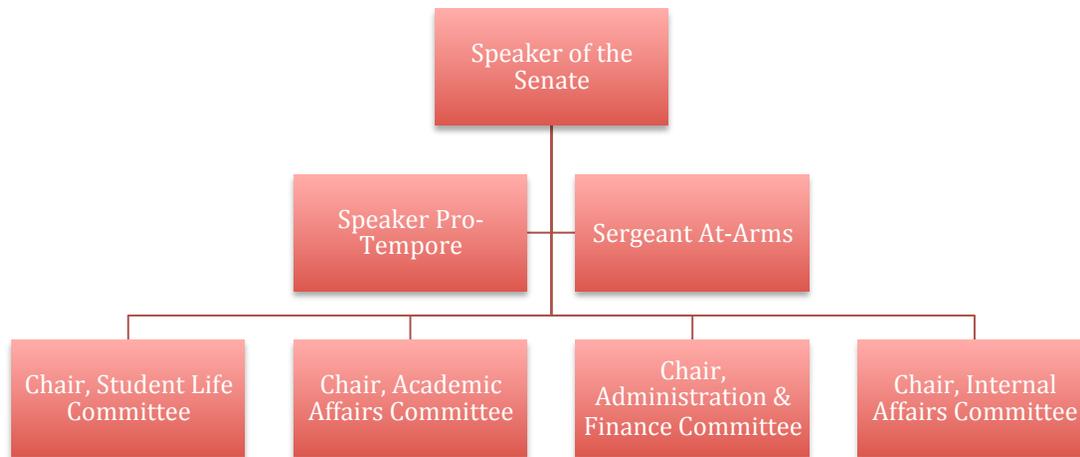
2. *Provide an organization chart of your unit. Large units may need to have an overview chart and then more specific charts for each program. Where you have multiple staff in the same position, note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.*

## Organizational Chart

Student Government Association is divided into three branches: Legislative, Judicial, and Executive.
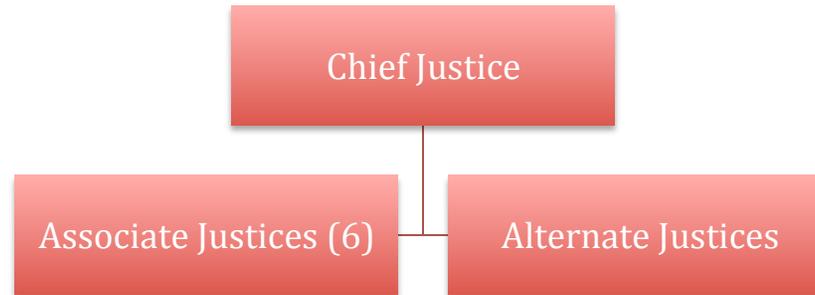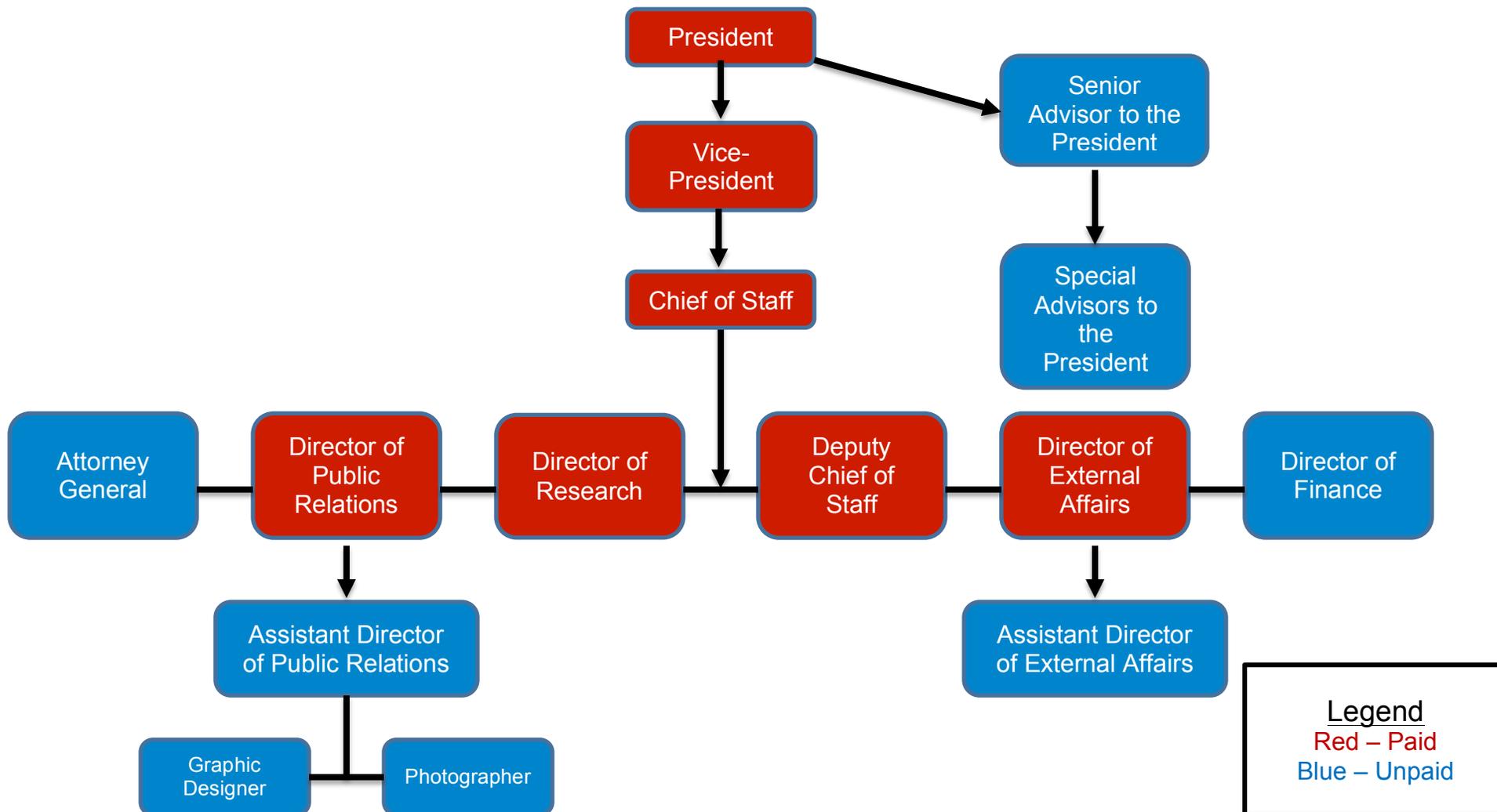
## The Legislative Branch

Speaker of the Senate

Speaker Pro-Tempore

Sergeant At-Arms

Chair, Student Life Committee

Chair, Academic Affairs Committee

Chair, Administration & Finance Committee

Chair, Internal Affairs Committee

Senators
Undergraduate At-Large (4)
Graduate At-Large (2)
College of Architecture (1)
College of Business (4)
College of Education (2)
College of Engineering (3)
Honors College (1)
College of Hotel & Restaurant Management (1)
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (8)
College of Natural Sciences & Mathematics (4)
College of Technology (4)
Law Center (1)
College of Optometry (1)
College of Pharmacy (1)
Graduate College of Social Work (1)
College of Nursing (1)

# The Judicial Branch

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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │  Chief Justice  │
                    └────────┬────────┘
                             │
        ┌────────────────────┼────────────────────┐
┌───────────────────────┐    ┌───────────────────────┐
│ Associate Justices (6)│    │  Alternate Justices   │
└───────────────────────┘    └───────────────────────┘
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# The Executive Branch



**President** →
- **Vice-President** → **Chief of Staff**
- **Senior Advisor to the President** → **Special Advisors to the President**

**Attorney General** — **Director of Public Relations** — **Director of Research** — **Deputy Chief of Staff** — **Director of External Affairs** — **Director of Finance**

**Director of Public Relations** → **Assistant Director of Public Relations** → **Graphic Designer** / **Photographer**

**Director of External Affairs** → **Assistant Director of External Affairs**

**Legend**
Red – Paid
Blue – Unpaid

3. *List your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2015-2016 academic year and cite the specific DSAES Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they relate. Please comment on your success in achieving these strategic initiatives/action steps. If a strategic initiative/action step changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new strategic initiatives/action steps, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these items. Provide an organization chart of your unity Large units may need to have an overview chart and then more specific charts for reach program. Where you have multiple staff in the same position, note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.*

## Strategic Initiatives

The administrations of the Student Government Association begin on April 1st and ends on March 31st of the following year. The 52st Administration ended on March 31st, 2016 and the 53nd Administration took office on April 1st, 2016.

Below is a discussion of the priorities and initiatives of the 52st Administration and 53nd Administration during the 2015-16 academic year; it is further related to the overall University goals and the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services strategic initiatives. For reference, those goals and strategic initiatives are:

## 52nd Administration Agenda/Initiatives

**Health and Wellness** – University Goals III & V – DSAES I, III & V
- Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention
  - Proposed: The administration will utilize its reach and voice to pursue enduring cultural and institutional change towards improving the state of Sexual Assault in higher education. In utilizing a nationally profiled initiative, backed by the White House, SGA will leverage the "It's On Us" campaign to further legitimize its message to the campus community. Further, it will collaborate with existing Health and Wellness departments on campus to integrate existing and developing resources into the overall campaign. These resources include: Coogs Get Consent, the Circle of 6 mobile app, mandatory sexual assault awareness training, self-defense training programs and more.

- o Actual: SGA partnered with It's On Us to bring their campaign to the University. SGA raised awareness through this campaign and also distributed marketing material that helped publicize the campaign. Also, SGA held a competition for organizations called Walk A Mile In Her Shoes, and had 6-7 fraternities have their members come out and walk a mile in heels. This program helped inform male students about the issues with being a woman on campus.
- Mental Health Awareness and Support
  - o Proposed: SGA will similarly tackle the persistent issue of generating awareness and proliferating resources and services available to those who are affected by mental health issues. The administration will help promote resources on campus that foster a culture of wellness as a focus for student life and success.
  - o Actual: SGA promoted CAPS through our social media in order to raise awareness for mental health resources on campus. SGA also launched a task force designed to assess the issues CAPS is facing to see how the University could better their services.
- Healthcare Access & Affordability
  - o Proposed: The University provides a great deal of existing and proposed health care options on campus that will increase the access and affordability of medical care to students. SGA and the administration will work with the administration in finding effective ways to market and target the student body's needs in these areas.
  - o Actual: SGA did not focus on this item during the course of last year.
- Smoke-Free Campus
  - o Proposed: The University has provided provisional smoking areas in the past. This administration has worked to push for the designation of a smoke-free campus when this specific policy line item is renewed in the coming year. SGA will work with administration to develop an implementation plan that is realistic and enforceable.
  - o Actual: SGA served on a committee to support a smoke free environment on campus. Because of this committee that SGA served on, smoking zones on campus were removed, and the University was deemed a smoke free campus.

**SGA Accessibility and Relevance** – University Goals I, IV & V – DSAES I & II
- Organization & Programming Partnerships
  - o Proposed: SGA will seek out and collaborate on programming and events throughout the year to increase the surface area by which students have access and connection with student representatives.
  - o Actual: Participated in many events on campus that were created by other organizations. SGA participated in resource fairs, Homecoming and Frontier Fiesta.

- Student Media Talks
  - o Proposed: This administration will partner with the Center for Student Media to produce student-life programming that keeps students informed of what is happening in SGA and in the University administration. SGA will develop a hardline that distributes information distributed or decided on in committees and meetings to the student body at large. Examples will include programs such as fireside chats and talk shows that put SGA members in front of the camera and microphone delivering information directly to student audiences.
  - o Actual: SGA did not start this, and directed our focus elsewhere for this administration.
- ImproveUH
  - o Proposed: SGA will continue to support the town hall platform as it transitions from MindMixer to mySidewalk.
  - o Actual: SGA decided to allow the ImproveUH platform to become irrelevant. It is no longer used.
- Senate Town halls
  - o Proposed: According to the SGA Bylaws, two large town halls will be held each year to accommodate an avenue for students to speak to their representatives.
  - o Actual: SGA held 5 town halls during the course of the year in order to solicit student feedback. These town halls had great attendance and one had as many as 250 students come to voice complaints and express their opinions.

**Student Life Enrichment** – University Goals I, II, V & VI – DSAES I, II, III & V
- Athletics Partnership & Programming
  - o Proposed: This administration will capitalize on any opportunity available to better promote the competitiveness and experience of student athletics at the university. Programming and outreach will be targeted towards increasing student attendance and in incentivizing school and athletics pride. Examples of such programs include Cage Rage, Tailgate programming, the improvement of facilities, and the adherence of the university to the Memorandum of Understanding as agreed on between the student body and the University.
  - o Actual: SGA held several tailgates and also volunteered with Athletics to help distribute t-shirts and other marketing apparel. SGA also collected research on how football teams across the nation impact their universities.

- <u>Dining Initiatives</u>
  - Proposed: As a perennial topic of discussion, SGA will continue to ensure the improvement of vital student services on campus. Dining options, quality, and access are priorities in this regard and will always require that the university review its policies and procedures to assure they are matching the demand and changing demographics of the university. Issues that will be of particular focus will be providing dining options that matches the diversity of our student body (Halal, Kosher, Vegetarian/Vegan, Gluten Free, etc.), the extension of dining hours and meal plan options.
  - Actual: SGA worked with Dining Services to establish Halal and Vegetarian stations within Fresh Food Company. This happened because SGA was aware that the needs of vegetarians and other selective eaters were not being met by the dining hall.

- <u>Transportation & Parking</u>
  - Proposed: The administration will continue its efforts in improving the parking and transportation climate on campus by supporting policies that reduce the need for students to bring their vehicles on campus. Priorities include an increased presence and access for METRO service to and from the university in addition to expanding bike services and alternative transportation/ride share options. SGA will remain a vital component of conversations occurring within the administration regarding new capital construction and the allocation of parking as the campus grows.
  - Actual: SGA worked with METRO to launch a program called COAST. COAST is an incentive program for individuals who carpool or utilize alternative and sustainable options, such as METRO, walking, biking, etc. to get to campus.

- <u>Sustainability</u>
  - Proposed: Sustainability remains a high priority for the university and the campus. SGA will continue to be involved in committees and decision-making processes that offer the ability for sustainable solutions to be proposed and implemented. Policies and programs that cater to this initiative include STARS report assistance, Sustainability Committee participation, Earth Day and Sustainability Fest participation, and policy changes.
  - Actual: SGA participated in Earth Day, Sustainability fest, and worked on the Sustainability Committee.

- Student Employment
    - Proposed: The administration will pursue the creation and expansion of student employment opportunities on campus by working with existing departments and vendors on campus to identify creative ways to add students to their workforce. SGA will also work with UCS to facilitate streamlining of student employment applications/job postings such that students need only look in one place to find potential jobs.
    - Actual: SGA worked with Aramark and offices on campus to have a centralized database as a job bank for students. SGA also encouraged UCS to coordinate an On-Campus job fair.
- Cultural Diversity
    - Proposed: The University prides itself on being one of the most culturally diverse institutions of higher education in our country. Therefore, the administration will work with student groups and University administration to pursue initiatives aimed at promoting a more robust sense of inclusion targeting our international peers.
    - Actual: SGA helped organize and plan International Mother Language day, a daylong session of events. International Mother Language day was done in partnership with 6 other organizations on campus. SGA also helped ISO throughout the year with their programming and objectives.

**Student Success** – University Goals I, II, V & VI – DSAES I, II, III & V
- Academic Advising
    - Proposed: The administration will continue to pursue advising reform changes proposed in the 51st administration and will reevaluate policies and programs already in place to ensure the advising resources on campus are commensurate with the demand.
    - Actual: SGA did not start this, and directed our focus elsewhere for this administration.
- Grade Replacement
    - Proposed: The administration has pushed over the summer for the development and implementation of a Grade Replacement policy that allows for students to take a course and have a former grade attempt removed from GPA calculation. SGA will continue to carry this policy until its implemented.
    - Actual: SGA worked with Faculty throughout the year to create a form of Grade Replacement that would be mutually agreeable. This policy is currently waiting to be approved by the University Committee, and SGA has played a large part in getting it to that position.

- College Affordability
    - Proposed: SGA will carry on and participate in local, state, and national level discussions regarding the increasing cost of college and the prevalence of student loan debt. It will join with partners in the development of policies and programs that might help curb the cost of pursuing higher education. Programs include FAFSA simplification, loan restructuring, and the fiscal oversight of our university's tuition and fees.
    - Actual: SGA did not start this, and directed our focus elsewhere for this administration.
- Emerging Leaders
    - Proposed: In an effort to continue to the training of future members of SGA, the administration will recruit individuals into an Emerging Leaders program that pairs new members of SGA with existing to help them understand the role of student governance at UH.
    - Actual: SGA had 3 Emerging Leaders in this program. It was executed with very little cost, and resulted in one of the members taking on a leadership role as the Chair of the Administration and Finance committee for the 53 Administration.
- Learning Abroad
    - Proposed: SGA will continue its efforts in facilitating the expansion and access of Learning Abroad opportunities to students.
    - Actual: SGA promoted getting your passport and learning abroad workshops.

**Safety & Security** – University Goals III, V & VI – DSAES II
- Safe Rides Promotion
    - Proposed: SGA will continue to offer guidance and assistance in expanding this service to more students.
    - Actual: SGA gave feedback to UHPD on their safe ride program and how it services students.
- Walk in the Dark
    - Proposed: SGA will partner to bring an event during the National Night Out week in which students, staff and faculty all participate in a walk around the campus at night to identify potential problem areas that need to be addressed to increase security.
    - Actual:  SGA planned and facilitated this program for the University. SGA members came out and walked the campus to help UHPD identify some of the poorly lit sections of campus.

- Campus Carry
  - o Proposed: The administration will ensure that a fair and documented process is pursued in the development of a policy that regulates the carrying of licensed concealed handguns on campus, as prescribed by state law. SGA will ensure that students will have the opportunity to provide input into the process and that all shared governance entities have a role in the approval of the policy.
  - o Actual: SGA promoted the bill that had been passed, and assisted with town halls and forums that were being put on to publicize the ramifications of the bill, and gather student feedback on it.

**Community Outreach and Involvement** – University Goals III & V – DSAES I, III & V
- "Big Event" Days of Service
  - o Proposed: SGA will play an active role in all university-wide "Big Event" type days of service. Events planned already include the Weeks of Welcome and MLK Day of Service as well as Back to School Fest.
  - o Actual: SGA served on the Weeks Of Welcome Committee and the Black History Month Committee. SGA also helped host the Back to School Fest. SGA helped tremendously with the Republican Debate in February. SGA student representatives served the University in many different areas when this event was on campus.
- Collaboration with Volunteer Organizations
  - o Proposed: SGA will reach out to and partner with organizations specializing in providing volunteer opportunities to students in order to create joint volunteer ventures with their organization and ours. Some programming plans include a week combatting hunger and homelessness in addition a week of service in service to local women and children's coalitions.
  - o Actual: SGA served by bringing our members to the Houston Food Bank. A Senate meeting was spent volunteering with MVP.

**Civic Engagement** – University Goals III & V – DSAES I, III & V
- Voter Registration/Elections
  - o Proposed: SGA will attract deputy voter registrar training to the campus to build a team of deputy voter registrars. The administration will initiate a campus campaign to increase student voter registration in order to create a more engaged and involved young electorate. A voting location on campus will also be invited to be located on campus to facilitate the student's ability to exercise their civic right.
  - o Actual: Voter registration drives were put on throughout the year. Had the most students vote in our previous election as we made a successful switch to online voting. Held a presidential debate to have students come out and hear the candidates speak.

- <u>Texas Student Association</u>
  - o Proposed: The student governments of Texas will aspire to convene on a semi-annual basis to discuss issues pertaining to higher education in the state. SGA at UH will play a strong role with SGA at UHD to help facilitate this organization's sustainability into the future.
  - o Actual: SGA is in the process of working with other Texas universities to launch this program.
- <u>UH PAC – Young Professionals</u>
  - o Proposed: SGA will continue its relationship with the UH Political Action Committee by providing an avenue for UH PAC members to communicate with current student leaders on issues that are current and relevant to students.
  - o Actual: This initiative was deferred and not completed due to unexpected priorities that arose.
- <u>President Advisory Council</u>
  - o Proposed: SGA will pursue the creation of a president's advisory council that calls for the meeting of all student organization presidents or their delegates to a meeting on a semester basis in the spirit of providing a forum for a demographic that represents some of the most active students on campus.
  - o Actual: This initiative was deferred and not completed due to unexpected priorities that arose.
- <u>National Campus Leadership Council</u>
  - o Proposed: The executive leadership will continue its membership in the national organization for campus leadership based in Washington DC that is aimed at providing a platform for student body presidents across the nation to communicate on issues that all universities tackle. The resources developed here will provide a greater context and more powerful message on issues at a local level.
  - o Actual: SGA is still active within the National Campus Leadership Council. Former President Theriot-Smith and President Smith attended the NCLC Presidential Leadership Summit, where President Smith presented to other SGA leaders from around the country about the cost of meal plans and their detrimental nature to students.

4. *Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the aforementioned strategic initiatives and/or action steps and their importance as compared to others that you might pursue. Where data exist, discuss the number of persons served by each of your programs and any assessment measures and/or learning outcomes used to evaluate program success. Please provide the method for collecting these data.*

## Data and Assessment

**Assessment**

Where programs exist that serve a group of students, such as Emerging Leaders, the number of individuals participating and completing that program is recorded and indicated. Often Student Government Association is featured as a collaborator or participant in an event, but often SGA-specific attendance data is not collected due to the nature of the event (often a resource fair or tabling event). We hold ourselves accountable through regular update meetings and progress checks, as well as through public statements about our progress.

**Social Media**

Our social media platforms boost our ability to communicate and connect with students. Our networks have continued to become more active as the year has progressed.

| | Facebook | Instagram | Twitter |
|---|---|---|---|
| Followers/Likes October 2015 | 2,771 | 670 | 1,904 |
| Followers/Likes October 2016 | 3,441 | 1,069 | 2,584 |
| **Percentage Change from 2015** | +24% | +60% | +35.7% |
| Followers/Likes October 2017 *Projected* | 4,200 | 1,500 | 3,500 |

5. *Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last SFAC request, their impact on your programs, and your eason 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 their self-generated income projections. In addition, if your unit concluded FY2016 with a Fund 3 addition to Fund Equity, please describe the conditions which caused the addition.*

## Budget and Organizational Changes for FY18

The Student Government Association holds its elections in the Spring and a new executive team assumes office in April 1st. Each administration is responsible for its budget proposal given the SFAC approved funding in their respective fiscal year. This creates some level of ambiguity in the budget, as it is impossible to know precisely what the next administration will choose to allocate their budget to, but there have not been any drastic changes.

SGA added two new Executive Cabinet positions this year. The Director of Research provides quantitative and qualitative analysis of initiatives and requests in a manner that improves the quality of SGA's work. The Deputy Chief of Staff (a previously existing but underutilized position) provides additional flexibility for SGA to work on initiatives that directly benefit the students. These roles were created to decrease the amount of personnel hours spent on non-student-focused initiatives and have greatly increased our productivity and feasible workload. The added positions were paid for by eliminating a paid position, reducing the stipend of another position, and moving $1,196 from our controllable budget into non-controllable.

6. *Please list your 2017 – 2018 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they relate. Larger units may wish to group responses by sub program. Under each strategic initiative, please state the specific action steps that you intend to implement to accomplish your stated initiative. Provide an organization chart of your unity Large units may need to have an overview chart and then more specific charts for reach program. Where you have multiple staff in the same position, note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.*

## 53ⁿᵈ Administration Agenda/Initiatives

Primary initiatives will be a focus of the majority of Presidential Cabinet members. Significant time and financial resources will be devoted to advertising the initiatives, soliciting student feedback, and advocating for improvements. Secondary initiatives will be a focus of individuals or small groups. Additional projects may be added as necessary throughout the year. The SGA leadership changes on April 1st of every year, thus the 2017-18 initiatives are dependent on the 54th Administration. These are the strategies of the 53ⁿᵈ Administration for 2016-17.

| Primary Initiatives | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Initiative** | **Goals** | **Lead** | **Partners** |
| **Dining Program Reform** *University ~ II & VI* *DSAES ~ IV* | • Adjust meal plans to improve fairness and usefulness for students<br>• Investigate alternative dining models to fit needs of student body<br>• Design long-term dining plans to encourage University growth | Student Body President | o Auxiliary Services<br>o Aramark<br>o Student Housing and Residential Life |
| **Undergraduate Recruitment & Admissions Process Evaluation** *University ~ I & V* *DSAES ~ II* | • Evaluate recruitment targets and methods<br>• Implement the Common App as an accepted form of application<br>• Engage students between their acceptance and enrollment decision | Student Body President | o Enrollment Services |
| **International Student Support** *University ~ II* *DSAES ~ I* | • Increase accessibility to campus housing during academic breaks<br>• Assess support provided for cultural transition to U.S.<br>• Consider steps to ease transportation for commute to campus | Student Body Vice President | o Office of International Student and Scholar Services<br>o Student Housing and Residential Life |
| **Parking & Transportation Services Improvement** *University ~ VI* *DSAES ~ II* | • Raise revenue through creation of new advertising methods<br>• Implement counters that track and display the number of vacancies<br>• Participate in development of long-term parking plan | Chief of Staff | o Parking and Transportation Services<br>o University Marketing |

## Secondary Initiatives

| Initiative | Description | Lead | Partners |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Wi-Fi & Cellular Signal Expansion** *University ~ VI* *DSAES ~ II* | • Locate areas of campus with high population and low coverage <br>• Collect data on problem areas and compile reports <br>• Work with IT to increase coverage to problem areas | Deputy Chief of Staff | o University Information Technology |
| **Grade Replacement** *University ~ II* *DSAES ~ I* | • Assess status and observe result of current proposal <br>• Prepare to implement current proposal if approved <br>• Develop new proposal if current proposal is not implemented | Student Body President | o Faculty Senate <br>o Office of the Provost |
| **SGA Outreach** *University ~II* *DSAES ~ III* | • Revise existing SGA outreach methods to engage students <br>• Increase accessibility of SGA members to students <br>• Encourage students to voice opinions about SGA decisions | Director of Public Relations | o UH Community |
| **School Spirit** *University ~ IV & V* *DSAES ~ V* | • Encourage strategic marketing to increase yield of students reached <br>• Form Spirit Committee to obtain perspectives across campus <br>• Develop new and support existing spirit activities and traditions | Special Advisor for Student Engagement | o Athletics <br>o Student Affairs |
| **Community Involvement** *University ~ III & V* *DSAES ~V* | • Support President Khator's commitment to Third Ward residents <br>• Advocate on behalf of UH to members of the Texas Legislature <br>• Participate in service to improve the lives of Houstonians | Director of External Affairs | o Governmental Affairs <br>o Elected Officials <br>o Metropolitan Volunteer Program |
| **Greek Life Expansion** *University ~ II* *DSAES ~VI* | • Work to accomplish existing goals of increasing Greek membership <br>• Increase opportunities for cultural and service-based chapters <br>• Prepare for long-term growth of Greek life and additional chapters | Student Body Vice President | o Student Affairs |
| **Student Well-being** *University ~ II* *DSAES ~II* | • Raise sexual assault awareness and promote campus resources <br>• Educate students on campus security and suggest improvements <br>• Encourage students to be responsible when drinking alcohol | Deputy Chief of Staff | o UH Police Department <br>o Health and Wellness |

7. *What are the other possible sources of funding available to your unit and what efforts are being made to access them?*

## Other Sources of Funding

Student Government Association does not receive any additional funding from other sources. At this time, there does not appear to be other manners in which SGA could receive funding, but we are prepared to pursue such avenues if they become accessible.

8. *Please describe any services that are similar to yours and or any overlap between your unit and any other units providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.*

## Overlap with other units

The Student Government Association is unique in that it serves as the main advocacy body for the students at this university. As referenced by state law, it fills the statutory role of an elected student representation. There is very little overlap, if any, with other fee-funded units. The Dean of Students office does provide student advocacy services, but is fundamentally different in its role on campus and not an elected body.