

UNIVERSITY of  
**HOUSTON**  
COUGARS IN RECOVERY

**SFAC2022 Questionnaire**

Prepared by

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&

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- 1. Executive Summary:** *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.*

**Cougars in Recovery's Mission Statement, revised in Fall 2019:** Providing a continuum of support that bolsters success in recovery, academics, and professional pursuits that prepare students to confidently enter into the workforce.

**Cougars in Recovery's Vision Statement, revised in Fall 2019:** To create an environment where recovering students can experience a reclamation of agency in the areas of education, self-efficacy, leadership, and professional opportunities.

**Cougars in Recovery Values, revised in Fall 2019:** Community, connection, support, engagement, stewardship, empowerment, integrity, accountability and respect.

CIR fulfills its mission by providing community members support and opportunities in the areas of academics, recovery, social activities, community engagement, and professional and leadership development.

- a. Academic support is offered through referring students to on-campus academic resources and through offering individualized coaching and academic guidance from CIR staff. In addition, CIR scholarships are offered to alleviate the financial burden of our community members.
- b. Recovery support is provided through on campus recovery housing, recovery coaching, twelve step meetings, daily peer lead Community Check-In's and referrals to mental health resources both on and off campus.
- c. Social activities are promoted by recovery tailgating, an outdoor adventure learning experience each semester, monthly community gatherings, twenty-four-hour access to the CIR GroupMe, and the CIR lounge, a safe substance-free space, where students can gather and socialize.
- d. Professional development is fostered through Career Ready Coogs, which focuses on developing skills in the areas of resume building, interviewing, professionalism and networking.
- e. Leadership development is promoted through the Source of Strength (SOS) Leadership Program. SOS is a mentorship initiative that pairs incoming freshmen and transfer students with an existing leader in the CIR community. Mentees gain confidence, interpersonal effectiveness, life skills, and exploration of career paths through their participation. Similarly, mentors gain interpersonal effectiveness, life skills, confidence in their ability to lead a team, and application of the Four Agreements tenants to their role as a mentor.

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- 2. Organizational Chart of the Cougars in Recovery Department:** *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, advisor, etc.), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.*

**Dr. Suzanne Harrington, DNP, RN, MCHES**

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**Mr. John Shiflet, MSW**

Program Director - Cougars in Recovery

**Ms. Leah Singer, M.Ed., LPC, RYT-200**

Program Manager - Cougars in Recovery

- 3. Cougars in Recovery Strategic Initiatives and Action Steps for 2019-2020:** *List your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2019-2020 academic year and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services (DSAES) Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they relate (links below). 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.*

**a. Fundraising**

Cougars in Recovery will develop new strategies to diversify its funding resources in order to generate more revenue income for program sustainability by August 31, 2020.

**Related DSAES Strategic Initiative: Resources:** Evaluate, actively pursue, and leverage resources to enhance the UH experience.

**Related UH Goal: Competitive Resources:** UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

- i. Fundraising Initiative Update:* CIR was able to raise \$21,000 in individual donations from 42 private donations. Three endowments were received this fiscal year totaling to \$80,000. These endowments include the Upchurch Family Endowment of \$30,000 for CIR Recovery Housing Scholarships, Davis Family Scholarship of \$25,000 and the Richards Family scholarship of \$25,000 for academic scholarships. CIR received \$25,000 from the Hildebrand Foundation. In total CIR raised \$126,000 for the fiscal year.

**b. Partnerships**

Cougars in Recovery will develop strategic partnerships, both on and off campus, to create pathways for underrepresented diverse young adults to pursue higher education

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and University of Houston students struggling with substance use disorders by August 2020.

**Related DSAES Strategic Initiative: Division Cohesion:** Create and foster a cohesive division identity, culture, and community.

**Related UH Goal: Community Advancement:** UH will commit to fulfilling regional and state workforce needs while becoming the primary engine of social, economic, and intellectual development.

- i. **Partnership Initiative Description and Update:** Cougars in Recovery will have achieved this goal by developing and implementing a mentorship program that includes Cougars in Recovery community members mentoring high school aged students in recovery from Teen and Family Services and Fortis Academy. The program areas of focus will include self-discovery, interpersonal success, and self-efficacy. CIR Completed the development of the mentorship program and was going to collaborate with Fortis Academy in Spring 2020 to implement the program at the recovery high school, but due to the unexpected wave of COVID-19 the program was cancelled until next spring.
  - ii. **Partnership Initiative Description and Update:** A partnership will develop with Urban Experience Program on campus to provide wraparound services to incoming students from underrepresented, diverse backgrounds, for support in the areas of financial aid, housing, nutrition, mental health, and recovery. There was no progress made towards partnering with Urban Experience Program on creating wraparound services for incoming students, mostly because there were no students who CIR identified that would benefit from services both programs offer.
  - iii. **Partnership Initiative Description and Update:** Cougars in Recovery will develop and incorporate a student ambassador program in conjunction with psychiatrists at the UH Health Center. This partnership will create a warm hand-off between psychiatric patients that have expressed an interest in changing their behavior around substances to a community member of CIR. Some progress was made on this goal. CIR staff met with a UH Health Center psychiatrist to discuss the possibility of creating something that offers support to psychiatric patients who also meet criteria for becoming a CIR member. This is a partnership that CIR staff would like to continue to have discussions about with the Health Center psychiatrist.
- c. **Staff Support:**
- Cougars in Recovery will expand their team by adding one to two college work study students. In addition, through a partnership with the Lovett Center, graduate student members will join the team by earning their practicum counseling hours as Cougars in

Recovery as their field placement by August 2020. This goal will be achieved by the successful hiring of one to two college work study students and the on-boarding of graduate student counseling interns.

**Related DSAES Strategic Initiative: Student Success:** Champion exceptional opportunities and service to support all UH students.

**Related UH Goal: Student Success:** UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.

- i. Staff Support Initiative Update:* CIR did hire one college work study student to support CIR staff. What we learned is that we only need one college work study student to support CIR staff with filing, data entry, planning and supporting staff.

**d. Student Programming**

Cougars in Recovery will develop a Recovery Ally Training, an Alumni Association, and a newsletter and modify the existing Recovery Housing and Outdoor Adventure Learning Experience programs by August 2020. Cougars in Recovery will have achieved the goal of student program development and modification when the Recovery Ally Training has been developed and implemented, two additional suites are secured in Recovery Housing, the Outdoor Adventure Learning Experience has been planned, structures are in place for an Alumni Association to be developed, and for a newsletter to be published three times a year.

**Related DSAES Strategic Initiatives: Student Success and Partnerships:**

- i. Student Success:** Champion exceptional opportunities and services to support all UH students.
- ii. Partnerships:** Forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community.

**Related UH Goal: Student Success:** UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.

- iii. Student Programming Initiative Update:* The Recovery Ally Training has been developed and CIR staff have presented to faculty, staff, and students on six different occasions. CIR has trained 130 Recovery Ally's over the FY20 fiscal year.
- iv. Student Programming Initiative Update:* Recovery Housing relocated to a Bayou Oaks townhouse this fall. It has the capacity to house 13 students in recovery with five members currently residing in the space.

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- v. *Student Programming Initiative Update:* The Spring 2020 Outdoor Adventure Learning Experience trip to Grand Canyon National Park was cancelled due to COVID-19 quarantine orders.
- vi. *Student Programming Initiative Update:* No progress has been made towards the development of a CIR Alumni Association or the CIR Newsletter. These initiatives will be put on hold for the time being.

**e. Student Success**

Cougars in Recovery will provide academic and recovery support services for students to create pathways of retention, fulfill educational goals, and flourish in their recovery. Cougars in Recovery will have achieved this goal by the number of students who graduated in FY20, the number of returning members from each semester, the number of students who do not experience a re-occurrence of symptoms, and community semester and yearly average GPA's at or above a 3.0.

**Related DSAES Strategic Initiative: Student Success:** Champion exceptional opportunities and services to support all UH students.

**Related UH Goal: Student Success:** UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.

- i. FY20 GPA: 3.275
- ii. Recovery rate for FY20: 92%
- iii. Returning members for FY20: 73%
- iv. Return rate from FY19 to FY20 Graduating members for FY20: 22

**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.***

***Below, there are three charts depicting the success, growth, and utilization of the Cougars in Recovery program.*** Figure #1, titled *CIR Program Utilization Numbers*, depicts the number of CIR members that have participated in CIR programming over the last six years. Figure #2, labeled *CIR Community Check-In – Individual Touchpoints*, reflects the number of students that have attended the weekly peer-to-peer lead process group. Figure #3, titled *Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 Student Survey Data* include responses to the CIR Community Survey in which members rate how helpful different aspects of the program are to them. Please advise that all data collected in Spring 2020 was during the COVID-19 quarantine and stay at home order. All CIR programming transitioned to virtual during this time to continue to provide recovery support services.

**CIR Program Utilization Numbers Chart Evaluation**

Currently, CIR staff collects utilization numbers for *Recovery Tailgates*, the *Outdoor Adventure Learning Experience*, *Career Ready Coogs*, and *Source of Strength Leadership Program* through headcounts. The CIR lounge space is also a service frequently used by community members that is not reflected in the chart below. Due to CIR staff being unable to collect approximate lounge space attendance, investing in a card reader would yield a precise count of how often each student utilizes the lounge space. Similarly, a card reader would accurately capture attendance for the above-mentioned programs.

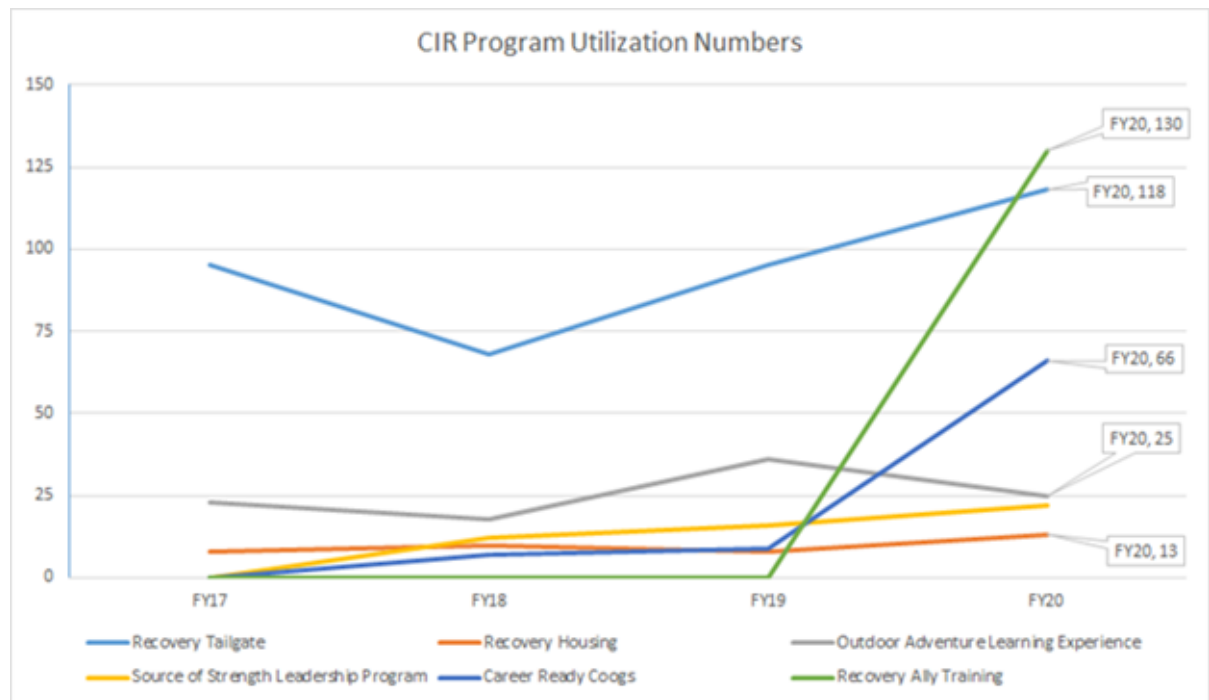


Figure 1, CIR Program Utilization Numbers

**CIR Community Check-In – Individual Touchpoints Chart Evaluation**

The table below reflects the individual touchpoints for the community check-in service from FY16 to FY20. CIR offers more than five community check-in's a week for students to choose from, in which they remain in that check for the entirety of the semester. Due to COVID-19 quarantine and stay at home orders and by request of the community, CIR made the decision to continue its community check-ins throughout the summer to ensure students were supported during these challenging times. Historically, CIR has not offered summer community check-in's due to lack of interest.

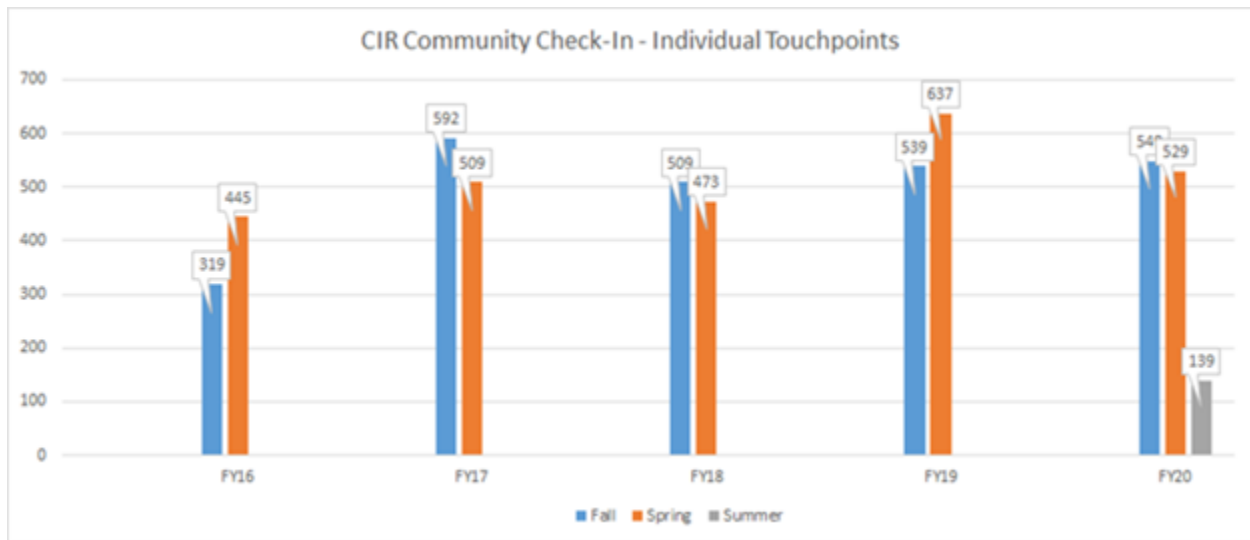
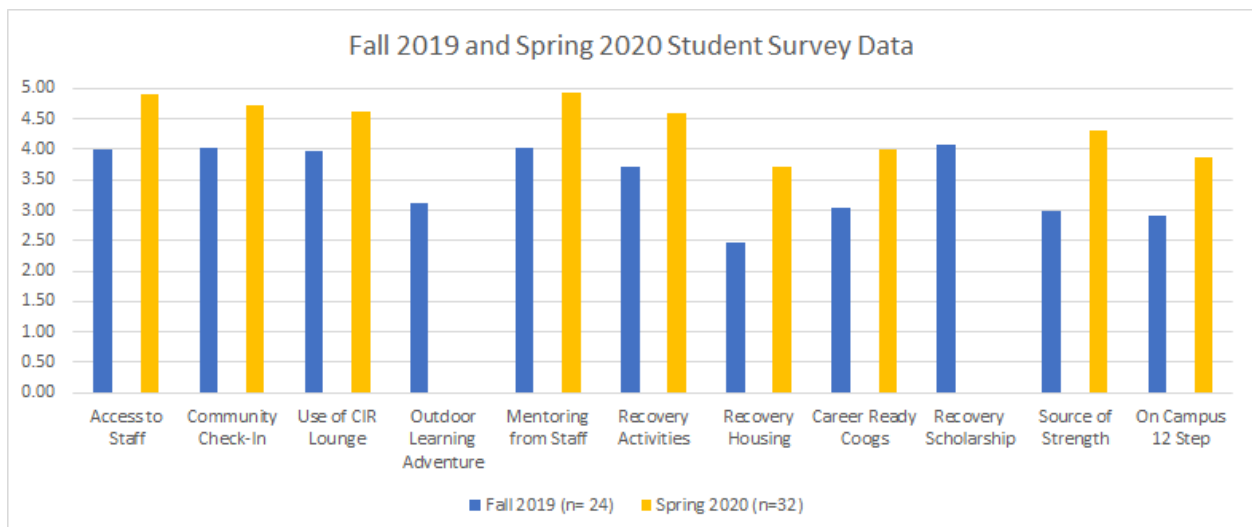


Figure 2, *CIR Community Check-In – Individual Touchpoints*



**Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 Student Survey Data Chart Evaluation**

The data reflected in the table below was collected via anonymous student survey responses. Following a Likert scale of 1-5, (1 being very unhelpful to 5 being very helpful) CIR community members rank how helpful to how unhelpful CIR services are to them. CIR Staff has found that using surveys to collect data about program impact is more effective than other assessment means because of its accessibility and the length of time it takes the community members to complete the form. An anonymous survey is given to each community member while they are in their Community Check-In at the end of each semester. Once the survey is completed, the data is entered into an excel sheet by a student worker in order to maintain anonymity of responses. In Spring 2020, the student survey responses were collected via Google Forms. Due to Corona Virus “Stay Home, Work Safe” orders, CIR was unable to travel for its annual Outdoor Adventure Learning Experience and no data was collected in the spring. In addition, there were no academic recovery scholarships offered due to lack of funding. The average approval rating for all services in Fall 19 was 3.49 out of 5 and the average rating of all services in Spring 20 was 4.44 out of 5.



*Figure 3, Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 Student Survey Data*

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- 5. Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last (FY2021) 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. SFAC Q, p.2.**

In FY 20, CIR experienced both a budget and an organizational change. In October of 2019, the Program Coordinator received a promotion to Program Manager which included a job title change and a salary increase of \$10,880. By promoting the Program Coordinator to Program Manager, CIR was able to retain this valuable staff member.

Historically, CIR SFAC funds have been provided solely for the Program Director's salary and benefits. Whereas the Program Manager's salary and benefits are funded through foundation grant dollars and private donations. A significant source of fundraising is the annual Graduation Celebration, where all graduating members are honored for the academic year. In Fall 2019, \$16,000 in private donations was raised at the annual celebration. Because of the coronavirus epidemic, foundation dollars and private donations have the potential to not be received for FY22 due to financial uncertainty that donors may be facing.

In summary, CIR raises \$100,000 annually through foundation grant dollars and private donations in a normal, non-coronavirus year. CIR hopes to raise \$38,600 for FY2022, although this is uncertain. This significant deficit places the CIR Program Manager's salary, benefits, and position at risk.

- 6. If your unit concluded FY2020 with a Fund 3 addition to Fund Equity in excess of \$5,000, please describe the conditions which caused the addition and provide a line item identification of the budgetary source(s) of the addition (i.e. lapsed salary, conference travel, etc.).**

*This is not applicable to CIR.*

7. *Please list your 2021-2022 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services Values and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they relate. Larger units may wish to group responses by subprogram. Under each strategic initiative, please state the specific action steps (programs, activities, services, policies/procedures, etc.) that you intend to implement to accomplish your stated initiative.*

- a. **CIR Strategic Initiative #1: Student Success** Provide quality recovery programming and support services to UH students and CIR members that helps students flourish in their academics and recovery.

**Action Steps to Accomplish Initiative:** Cougars in Recovery will have achieved this goal by calculating the number of students who graduated in FY20, the number of returning members from each semester, the number of students who do not experience a re-occurrence of symptoms, and community semester and yearly average GPA's at or above a 3.0.

**Related DSAES Strategic Initiative: Student Success:** Champion exceptional opportunities and services to support all UH students.

**Related UH Strategic Goal: Student Success:** UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.

- b. **CIR Strategic Goal #2: Resources** Cougars in Recovery will continue to work towards establishing an external advisory board; that's sole purpose is to raise funding and bring in additional donors for program sustainability.

**Action Steps to Accomplish Initiative:** This initiative will be measured by the external advisory board being operational and its ability to assist in raising \$25,000 at CIR's annual graduation celebration.

**Related DSAES Strategic Initiative: Resources:** Evaluate, actively pursue, and leverage resources to enhance the UH experience.

**Related UH Strategic Goal: Competitive Resources:** UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

- c. **CIR Strategic Initiative #3: Partnerships** Continue to strengthen partnerships with Fortis Academy and Archway Academy (Recovery High Schools), Teen and Family Services, Palmer Drug Abuse Program and Cornerstone Recovery (Alternative Peer Groups) in order to create a path for emerging adults to join the CIR Community by Dec. 2020.

**Action Steps to Accomplish Initiative:** This initiative will be accomplished by increased interactions and collaborations that occur with the abovementioned organizations.

**DSAES Value – Partnerships:** Forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community.

**Related UH Strategic Goal** - Competitive Resources UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

- d. **CIR Strategic Initiative #4: Health and Well-Being** Continue to serve on the Health and Wellbeing Activators-Influencers committee and create a sense of direction and execution within the Health and Well-Being portfolio.

**Action Steps to Accomplish Initiative:** This initiative will be measured by regularly attending Health and Well-Being Influencer committee meetings and fully participating.

**DSAES Value – Partnerships:** Forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community.

**Related UH Strategic Goal - Competitive Resources:** UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

- e. **CIR Strategic Initiative #5: Division Cohesion:** Create new relationships with three departments within DSAES in order to expand resources and provide support for those departments. Maintain current relationships with Residential Life and Student Housing, Career Services, Center for Students, with disABILITIES, CAPS, and Center for Student Involvement.

**Action Steps to Accomplish Initiative:** This initiative will be measured by CIR regularly communicating with these departments, collaborating on events and/or projects together and providing and receiving referrals from one another.

**DSAES Value – Partnerships:** Forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community.

**Related UH Strategic Goal - Competitive Resources:** UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

**8. Recognizing that the potential to generate additional Student Service Fee income for FY2022 base funding is extremely limited and recognizing that it is likely that some units will not be allocated the new base budget and/or one-time funds requested. Please provide a narrative of how your unit would accommodate a reduction of 5% in your total FY2022 base Student Service Fee budget request and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.**

Currently, SFAC funds the salary and benefits of the program director. This position is essential to the day to day operations of the program. If this positions salary and benefits were cut by 5% it would put this position in jeopardy of being vacant and it would be very difficult to fill due to the uniqueness of the qualification of the position. All other funding is self-generated through advancement and development of relationships with potential private donors.

**9. 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.)? If you receive funds from other sources, please briefly describe the source, purpose, and duration of the funding and report the amounts received in the appropriate rows/columns on the SFAC Spreadsheet.**

Two proposals totaling \$75,000 have been awarded. The John P. McGovern Foundation, an organization that contributes to local health charities, supported CIR with a gift of \$50,000 for the sixth consecutive year. The Hildebrand Foundation supports faith-based organizations serving the poor and needy in Houston. This generous organization gifted \$25,000 to CIR, for the fourth consecutive year. In Fall 2019, a \$30,000 endowed scholarship was generously provided to the CIR program by the family of a CIR alumni specifically designated for recovery housing. In the Spring of 2020, CIR received two additional endowments. Both are for \$25,000 to go towards awarding students' academic scholarships.

**10. Please describe any services that are similar to yours and/or any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.**

Cougars in Recovery is currently one of six interconnected departments within the Health and Well-Being portfolio of the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services. These departments include Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), University Health Services, Campus Recreation, UH Wellness, the Center for Students with DisABILITIES, and Cougars in Recovery. CIR is the first and only collegiate recovery community in the Houston area; and as such, is setting the standard for collegiate recovery in Houston. This program is open to all students in recovery from alcohol and other addictions who are enrolled throughout the University of Houston System. The services CIR offers to students at the University of Houston are unique and the first of its kind, as such, facets of CIR do not overlap with any existing departments or services on campus. The CIR program offers many resources and activities to community members. Utilizing recovery housing provides students with the opportunity to fully experience college life while living on campus in an environment where their peers have committed to live substance free. Students are offered five opportunities to attend twelve-step meetings each week to maintain stability and accountability in recovery while participating in campus life as a student. The CIR lounge is available to students 24 hours a day to study, relax, watch television, play games, and socialize with others in recovery between classes and in the evenings. Accountability is achieved primarily

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through the weekly Community Check-In meeting where students receive peer feedback after sharing their feelings, successes, struggles, recovery program status, gratitude, and affirmations. Students learn skills for facing their struggles and receive referrals to helpful resources, with the reassurance that others are on this journey with them. Camaraderie and community service are integral components of the program.