

★ FRONTIER ★  
**Fiesta**  
STUDENT-LED ★ STUDENT-RUN  
— EST. 1939 —

Chair: Bianca Ibarra

Vice-Chair: Maggust Bui

**FRONTIER FIESTA ASSOCIATION SFAC FY2022**

### *SFAC Questionnaire*

**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.**

Frontier Fiesta is a student led spring tradition that was established in 1939. It began as a festival to promote the University of Houston when the University first moved from downtown Houston to its present location. Frontier Fiesta has grown into a diverse showcase of the talents of the University of Houston's student body. Each year, students from various student organizations volunteer and assist the Frontier Fiesta Association in transforming a piece of our campus into a fully functional town called "Fiesta City." This event is a major production that takes the cooperation of the student, staff, faculty and community of the University of Houston.

#### **Our Mission:**

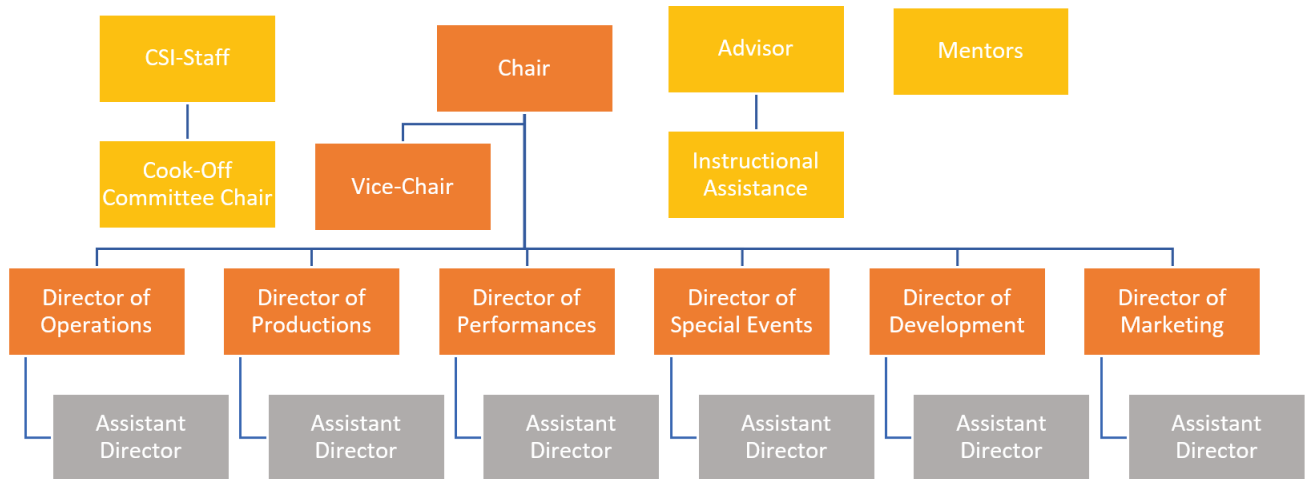
Frontier Fiesta Association (FFA) creates and executes the University of Houston's oldest and longest standing programming tradition. Our mission is to unite the student body, faculty, staff, alumni, and Houston community for a three-day western themed event. We strive to provide a low-to-no-cost event to attendees that embraces our diversity, strives for inclusivity, and provides a place where everyone can come together and feel like they belong.

Frontier Fiesta is comprised of a Board of Directors; eight student leaders who, over the course of 10 months (with the assistance of advisors, mentors, alumni, faculty and staff), plan, program, and execute the largest fee-funded event at the University of Houston. Aside from the Board of Directors, FFA collaborates with an incredibly broad range of campus partners such as the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services (DSAES), our fellow university sponsored organizations and other registered student organizations.

At Frontier Fiesta, we provide our stakeholders, all 20,000+ attendees, and patrons a place where everyone can feel like they belong. Without funding from SFAC, the size and scope of Frontier Fiesta would be significantly diminished. To help the longest standing and oldest programming tradition here at the University evolve to meet the needs and expectations of our students, we need your help.

The University of Houston partakes in a unique experience where students and community members are given the opportunity to enjoy carnival rides, concerts, programmed events and carnival booths all on campus grounds. Through this distinctive event, FFA continues collaborations with various campus entities, thus introducing students to more registered student organizations, University of Houston departments, and Alumni than any other student programmed event on-campus. Furthermore, Frontier Fiesta is filled with school spirit, pride, and history. From appearances by President Khator and Dr. Walker, performances by the Spirit of Houston (which includes our cheerleaders, mascots, and bands), Cultural Showcases and Live at 5 programs, variety shows by student organizations, and carnival booths run by RSOs and Greek life represent great examples of what the University of Houston community may experience throughout the three days.

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, advisor, etc.), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.



| Name            | Title                      |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Bianca Ibarra   | Chair                      |
| Maggust Bui     | Vice Chair                 |
| Betsy Acosta    | Director of Development    |
| Derek Layne     | Director of Marketing      |
| Nick Schmutz    | Director of Operations     |
| Viviana Zermeno | Director of Performances   |
| Victoria Lopez  | Director of Productions    |
| Tobechi Dimkpa  | Director of Special Events |
| Larissa Jimenez | Instructional Assistant    |
| Michael Crook   | Advisor                    |

**3) List your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2018-2019 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.**

**DSAES Plan ([http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/about/strategic\\_plan.html](http://www.uh.edu/dsaes/about/strategic_plan.html))**

**UH Goals (<http://www.uh.edu/about/mission/>)**

***FFA Strategic Initiative 1: Work towards being a more inclusive event by expanding our outreach, increasing cultural activities and partnerships, and engaging with more campus partners.***

**Action Step 1:** Collaborate with the Center for Student Involvement (CSI), Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI), and Registered Student Organizations to provide more ways to get students involved and engaged with Frontier Fiesta events and activities.

*Status: Ongoing*

FFA has continued to work with CSI, CDI, USOs and RSOs to provide more engagement opportunities for the UH and local communities at the Frontier Fiesta event. In 2020, FFA would have continued (if not for COVID-19) with popular theme night ideas and traditional popular events (Cultural Fiesta, Live at 5, UH Drag Show), while introducing innovative programming ideas (date night, painting with the coogs, and airbrush shirts). This year we had 17 RSOs participating in the event, 7 of which who had never participated before.

**Action Step 2:** Assess students and Registered Student Organizations through surveys and at tabling sessions to determine what students and organizations want to see and participate in at Frontier Fiesta.

*Status: Achieved-Ongoing*

Frontier Fiesta sent out surveys to participants throughout the year at various events to gauge feedback from students and organizations to understand how to better develop events at Fiesta to engage the entire community. The surveys have shown that students have enjoyed and wanted to see more amusement rides and attractions. Through this information, Fiesta has been able implement an additional carnival ride into Fiesta 2019 and 2020 and two smaller rides for the same price as previous boards paid for two.

**Action Step 3:** Assess event participants after the event to determine in what ways Frontier Fiesta was successful and how Frontier Fiesta could continue to develop and grow to better represent and engage with members of the UH and Houston communities.

*Status: Achieved-Ongoing*

Due to the cancellation of FFA, we were unable to ask for feedback from event participants and or provide feedback for FFA 2020-2021.

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

**UH Strategic Goal 2 - 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.

***FFA Strategic Initiative 2: Increase the amount of programming and activities in Fiesta City while continuing to provide low to no cost for the patrons of Frontier Fiesta.***

**Action Step 1:** Work with vendors to contract programming attractions for the Frontier Fiesta event, such as amusement rides and Family Fun Day activities. Consider alternative contract terms and funding agreements to provide low to no cost participation in these attractions.

*Status: Ongoing*

FFA has worked with several vendors to provide various entertainment activities throughout the Frontier Fiesta event such as arcade games, roller rink, bar trivia, caricature artists, novelties, and much more. Board of Directors considered alternative contract terms and remained budget-conscious throughout the planning process. We also attempted additional fundraising efforts (group raise meals, increasing sponsorships, improved user-friendliness of the giving page). FFA planned to bring such events to 2020, but led to the cancellation.

**Action Step 2:** Provide RSOs opportunities to attain and utilize space at Frontier Fiesta to engage with attendees by providing low to no cost activities and attractions.

*Status: Ongoing*

With adjustments in approved one-time requests FFA shifted from contracting vendors for Carnival Booths and focused on engaging with RSOs. FFA increased involvement, support, and participation of RSOs shown by having the second most carnival booths in the past 10 year: thus, leading to the increase of revenue by 39% by collecting \$848 in 2019 as compared to the \$612 in 2018.

Number of carnival booth through the years: FY18- 2, FY19 - 10, FY20-15

**Action Step 3:** Provide Alumni organizations a means of getting involved and attaining funds through varying forms of low to no cost programming.

*Status: Achieved-Ongoing*

FFA reached out to several alumni organizations for participation and received interest from UH Alumni Association and Frontier Fiesta Alumni Association. We invited alumni to come and perform at Fiesta. The UHAA scholarship committee helped judge applications for the Frontier Fiesta Scholarship. We further developed the mentorship program with Frontier Fiesta alumni where the current Board of Director can learn and grow under the mentors' guidance and resulted in additional offers to donate to the organization.

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

**UH Strategic Goal 5:** UH will be known for its accomplishments locally and nationally.

***FFA Strategic Initiative 3: Continually update development plan that enables Frontier Fiesta to identify and utilize more sponsorships and build tighter relationships with outside entities.***

**Action Step 1:** Maintain or renew existing sponsorship contracts

*Status: Achieved-Ongoing*

FFA was able to renew 3 sponsorships agreements in FY20, while engaging new contacts and securing 5 new corporate sponsors.

**List of Corporate Sponsors and Amount of Sponsorship**

1. Silver Eagle Distributors - \$40,000
2. Cullen Oaks - \$3,000
3. HBO - \$3,000
4. Live Nation - \$2,000
5. Urban Decay - \$1,400
6. Trojan Fragrances- \$1,000
7. Amazon Prime - \$1,000
8. Follett - \$1,000

**Action Step 2:** Develop targeted and personable approaches in searching for potential sponsors

*Status: Achieved-Ongoing*

FFA updated the master list of contacts and reached out to more potential sponsors and donors than in the past 4 years to help create personalized interactions focusing on the mutual benefit of engaging with the Frontier Fiesta event.

**Action Step 3:** Utilize University of Houston and Frontier Fiesta alumni to assist in obtaining contacts that could potentially become donors or sponsors.

*Status: Ongoing*

FFA met monthly with the Frontier Fiesta Alumni Association and Frontier Fiesta Mentors and worked alongside the DSAES development officer and Office of Advancement to ensure the that FFA has most updated contacts for potential supporters.

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

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

**UH Strategic Goal 6 – Resource Competitiveness:** UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

***FFA Strategic Initiative 4: Revise, update, and implement training procedures, standard operating procedures, and how-to guides to help develop future Boards of Directors and to build relationships with organizations that have never participated in Frontier Fiesta.***

**Action Step 1:** Work with FFA Advisors and Mentors to revise and update the scope of training necessary for each position on the FFA Board. Using this information, revise and update training manuals to go along with our transition documentation.

Status: Achieved-Ongoing

FFA adjusted and updated existing documentation to provide better training to the incoming FFA Board, including transition documents and task trackers. Additionally, more on-boarding processes occurred in the summer, helping ease the transition into the fall semester.

**Action Step 2:** Update task tracker dates and action items, include the revised task tracker with all transition documentation.

Status: Achieved-Ongoing

FFA provided task trackers and actionable items in the transitional documents provided to the incoming board. FFA also updated task trackers, via debrief meetings, and provided them to all incoming board members to expedite processes.

**Action Step 3:** Revise and update the list of vendors contacted and vendors used to throughout the year to be provided in transition documentation

Status: Achieved

Throughout the years, Frontier Fiesta has utilized various vendors for the event and made notes of the vendors within their transition documents for the upcoming board. This has successfully assisted a smooth transition between Fiesta board directors by giving them quick insight on previously built relationships with community partners and a sense of which ones did not work well.

**Action Step 4:** Create and publish how-to guides on how to build fronts, write scripts, direct performances, and apply for additional resources like funding through AFB or usage of the Frontier Fiesta pre-made fronts.

Status: In Progress and changed

Last year FFA Board members updated guides/transition documents to help with onboarding new Board members. They also used SharePoint as the central storage for written materials that Fiesta worked on throughout past year. This organization effort has tremendous effort with easing the Director with learning their routine task and reverse engineer how to perform more complicated projects.

Fiesta identified quality scripts from past variety shows and provided them to the teams. They also edited and improved the guides (Red Book and Operations Manual to improved clarity of instructions. Fiesta Board was not able to create how to guides for building fronts because the person hired into the position was just learning himself. Although we did not create a guide for how to direct performances, we did provide 1:1

coaching and advice to the variety show chairs during rehearsals through the months leading up to Fiesta.

**UH Strategic Goal 2 - 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.



**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 and/or unique students 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. If available, please provide program benchmarking data from comparable institutions.**

FFA distributes surveys before the event to the student population and assess their engagement level and general knowledge of Frontier Fiesta. Based on the results collected, the Board of Directors make informed decision on how we want to plan the next Fiesta and refine our marketing efforts.

### **Student Surveys**

In 2019-2020, FFA incentivized survey participation by giving out free shirts at Weeks of Welcome events and other promotional items at tabling sessions throughout the fall semester - including items such as tumblers, sunglasses, and coasters. FFA focused on engaging with the entire UH student population, as well as University of Houston Alumni and staff. This survey pertained to what style of music genre and artist students would like to see at Frontier Fiesta, what they enjoyed about the event in the past, and how the event could be improved.

In a recent survey, student respondents indicated that the activities they wanted to see most at Frontier Fiesta were 1) amusement rides and attractions 2) concerts and 3) carnival booths. Because these are the most popular features at Fiesta, they are what the Board prioritizes when we plan the event.

### **Attendance**

Not applicable for 2020 due to Covid-19 event cancellation.

### **Benchmarking**

FFA sought out comparable events and activities across the United States and found only a few three-day festivals that were funded by universities and that were led by student organizations. Schools that have similar events include Carnegie Mellon University Spring Carnival, Middlebury Winter Carnival, and Thurtene Carnival hosted by Washington University in St. Louis. Although similar, there are no comparable events located in the southern region of the United States and none of these institutions have yet responded to requests for figures, structures, and planning information.

### **Debrief Meetings**

Following the event, FFA conducted debrief meetings with key stakeholders, multiple organizations and departments that participated in Frontier Fiesta. The groups include, but are not limited to, Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life, Fiesta Mentors, Safety and Security, Chartwells, Center for Student Involvement and UH Alumni Association. Continual implementation of this process has provided FFA with constructive feedback detailing what went well and where improvements could occur for future events and activities.

**5) Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last (FY2020) 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.**

Each year FFA puts out a state-wide bid to find the best provider for operational and production expenses. As a result, FFA encountered a significant increase in the costs of operational and productions cost due to the limited bids submitted for Fiesta. The quoted costs were roughly \$45,000 higher than invoiced amounts the year before.

The new location required additional fencing, entrances and security in order to maintain smooth and safe operations. Additionally, the hourly wage of security services increased resulting in an increase of about \$4,000. Their increased rates and number of officers required at the additional entrances and driving gates impacted our overall budget,

Due to COVID-19 last year's SFAC approved one-time requests in the amount of 319,402 for FY21 was cut in half. We also experienced a 7.5% budget cut for FY20.

**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.).**

SFAC provided \$420,735 in Base and One-Time Requests for FY20. Frontier Fiesta is returning \$290,734.00 due to event cancellation. \$269,562 of that is maintenance and operations fund and \$21,172 as unspent student wages.

The unspent wages is significant because two board members already had on-campus employment with different UH departments at the time of hiring. Policy does not allow students to have more than one job on campus so they volunteered their time as a board member. This led to extra salary money returned to SFAC.

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 Strategic Initiatives 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.

***FFA Strategic Initiative 1: Encourage sustainable leadership qualities and develop personal growth throughout the Frontier Fiesta Board and members.***

**Action Step 1:** Intentionally promote on campus professional development opportunities such as SOLAR and LeadUH programs to members and board officials.

**Action Step 2:** Improve on-boarding training and transition of assistant directors to develop into potential directors. This includes implementing a 360 evaluation for all board members to discuss strengths and weaknesses with the advisor present.

**Action Step 3:** Engage students past their assigned positions to ensure that they gain knowledge of the different ways leadership can be applied.

**DSAES Strategic Initiative – Student Success:** Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

**UH Strategic Goal 2 - 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.

***FFA Strategic Initiative 2: Maintaining a collaborative culture to continue expanding diversity and inclusivity throughout the event while maximizing our resources and budget.***

**Action Step 1:** Contact RSOs, at their earliest convenience, to raise awareness of their potential participation (through variety shows or carnival booths) giving them enough knowledge and time to plan, implement, fundraise, and/or reach out to other possible resources that can help support them monetarily like AFB and CCA.

**Action Step 2:** Engage with different college departments, alumni, and committeemen to further discuss future programming ideas that to increase involvement we can assist on bringing to fruition to provide their organizations a means of getting involved and attaining funds through varying forms of low to no cost programming.

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

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

**UH Strategic Goal 6:** UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

***FFA Strategic Initiative 3: Increase target marketing and retention of participants at Frontier Fiesta to promote and focus on first time attendees.***

**Action Step 1:** Focus on developing more targeted and personable approaches while implementing a detailed and effective marketing plan to attract students, faculty and staff, alumni, and the Houston community.

**Action Step 2:** Provide pre and post event assessments to provide FFA a consensus of what to work on and provide at Frontier Fiesta throughout the years to come.

**Action Step 3:** Provide new additional programs and activities that cater to all students giving them a sense of belonging in Fiesta thus urging them to stay for the duration of the event all three days.

**DSAES Strategic Initiative – Student Success:** Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

**DSAES Strategic Initiative – Student Success:** Enhance assessment of student success by defining measures at the departmental and divisional level with focus on the impact of our programs and services.

**UH Strategic Goal 5 – Local and National Recognition:** UH will be known for its accomplishments locally and nationally.

**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.**

If a 5% reduction is to occur, \$9,452.85 of already issued base funds, Frontier Fiesta would be cutting funds to Marketing, Productions, and Operations. Specific cuts would negative impact event size, affecting attendance and physical fronts. This will reduce our ability to accommodate performances, and engagement opportunities with the UH community as well as local partners. For marketing, this cut means lower quantity of giveaway shirts, signage, newspapers, and would risk generally lower event attendance.

**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.**

Frontier Fiesta funding is unique in its size and scope compared to other student-fee based organizations. Being such a large event on campus, FFA is not able to operate without the support of a wide variety of funding sources. As a result, the organization annually reaches out to multiple sources of external funding. These sources of funding include alumni donations through our Committeemen Program, partial recuperation of costs from variety shows, amusement rides, cook-off, and corporate sponsorships.

As a part of our efforts to engage the Houston community and enhance our programming efforts, the Frontier Fiesta Association seeks out corporate sponsorships. Our event attracts upwards of 20,000+ attendees in a three-day period which offers the opportunity for corporations to receive significant publicity at the event. Opportunities for corporate sponsor logo placement at Frontier Fiesta includes event t-shirt, advertising in our official Gazette newspaper, as well as banners placed on the entrance of the event. Specific benefits of sponsorship are tiered, based on the cash value of donations or in-kind gifts provided.

In addition to corporate sponsorships, FFA has the Frontier Fiesta Alumni Association that continues to strengthen ties with past Frontier Fiesta members and the current Frontier Fiesta team. The Frontier Fiesta Committeeman program consists of Frontier Fiesta alumni and friends. The program, in years past, has consisted of yearly and lifetime committeemen. Alumni provide donations throughout the year and participate in Frontier Fiesta activities.

Frontier Fiesta also collects site fees from Variety Shows to provide partial recuperation of costs (tents, stages, A/V, tables, chairs, etc.).

**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.**

Frontier Fiesta is uniquely placed to plan and implement a three-day western themed festival for the University of Houston community, therefore there are currently no overlap within Frontier Fiesta and other units.