

Student Fees Advisory Committee (SFAC)

## PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FY22



## Urban Experience Program



## **Question 1: Executive Summary**

### **Urban Experience Program**

**Mission Statement:** The Mission of the Urban Experience Program (UEP) is to empower students with academic, personal, and professional development resources that propels student success.

The Urban Experience Program achieves its mission by providing each participant with seamless, personalized support through an integrated approach, from admissions to graduation. This integrated approach bridges students' academic and financial realities, and focuses on retention, graduation in four years, and post-graduation success.

Program components include the following high impact activities:

- Summer Bridge;
- Faculty and peer mentoring;
- First-year experience course;
- Opportunities for student leadership roles, on-campus student employment, internships, community engagement, and outdoor adventure experiences;
- Graduation preparation seminar;
- Advising and Consultations
- Student Success Workshops

The Urban Experience Program supports the University of Houston initiative to propel student success through the use of structured, individualized educational plans for each student based on the student's unique characteristics including career aspirations, non-academic commitments, expected academic engagement, and financial need.

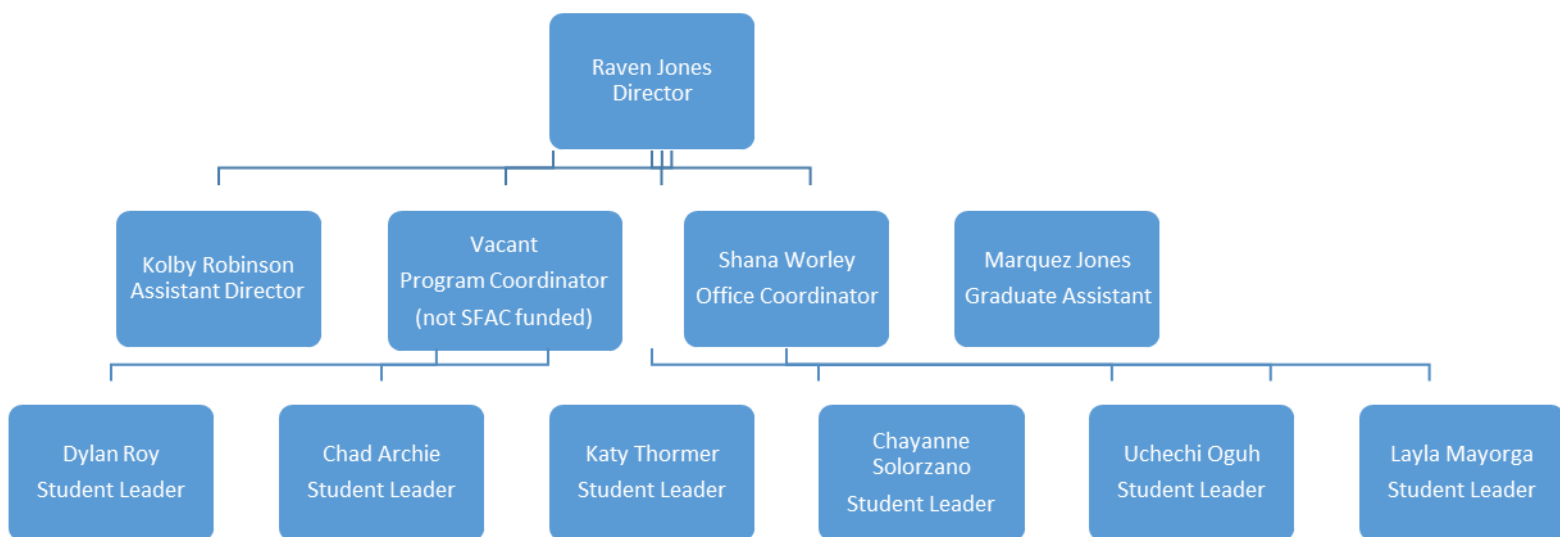
Urban Experience Program is an integral part of the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services and seeks to "champion exceptional opportunities and services to support all UH students," (DSAES Strategic Initiative Student Success) and "forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community (DSAES Strategic Initiative Partnerships). To keep pace with the growth of our student population, we are requesting some additional FY22 one-time funds to continue to improve and create programs and services that will assist in "create and foster a cohesive division identity, culture, and community" (DSAES Strategic Initiative Division Cohesion).

UEP would like to thank SFAC for its continued support of our department and our students. UEP serves as the primary UH point of contact for many underserved student groups including: minority students, first generation students, DACA/undocumented, and foster care/homeless. In addition, UEP gives referrals to those who seek services not provided by UH (SNAP, food deficiency, homeless, etc.). UEP assists students in having the ability to compete at the same

level as others in a professional environment while ensuring that each of the many voices that make up our UH community finds its way into our global community.

### Question #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.**



### Question #3

List your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2019-2020 academic year and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs 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.

**UEP Strategic Initiative #1:** Program Enrollment/Membership - Identify, recruit, and retain students in UEP. (DSAES: Empowerment)

**Objective #1:** Emphasize the importance of community by creating opportunities wherein UEP active members as well as general members have an opportunity to grow with each other and the greater UH community.

**Status:** *Accomplished*

#### **Action Steps 2019-2020**

1. Continued Chew & Chat discussion groups for students on major topics of identity and concern, (racial identity, first generation, DACA).

**Objective #2:** Increase student involvement in Urban Experience Program

**Status:** *Accomplished*

#### **Action Steps 2019-2020**

1. UEP has implemented surveys that are sent after each event to attendees and the data gathered has led to more student input and student involvement.
2. UEP touched base with each member at least twice per month to ensure students' active participation and monitoring for success.
3. UEP created an online system for students to make appointments with office staff.

**UH Goal:** *Student Success*

**DSAES Strategic Initiative 1:** *Create New Opportunities for student success through learning, engagement and discovery.*

#### **UEP Strategic Initiative 1 Major Accomplishments:**

1. In the beginning of the academic year, the number of students on probation, warning, and suspension have decreased since implementing higher levels of engagement and outreach.
2. *UEP increased Student Success Workshops* (these transitioned to online/virtual due to the health crisis) that are led by Student Leaders that address issues related to member's holistic development.

3. UEP created Student Action Plans to help guide the conversation when advising students on areas they should focus on to ensure their successful retention at the University.

**UEP Strategic Initiative 2: Special Populations** - Implement a variety of protocol and initiatives that support the development of a comprehensive academic, social, civic, and financial assistance program for undocumented/DACA students and foster care/orphan/homeless/transitional students. (DSAES: Diversity, Empowerment)

**Objective #1:** Establish effective policies and programs for student assistance of undocumented/DACA students that align with UEP mission and enrich academic achievement.

**Status: Accomplished**

**Action Steps 2019-2020**

1. In the beginning of the academic year, UEP enhanced marketing efforts by creating a comprehensive webpage as part of UEP's website and a one-pager that contains important information on scholarships and resources on campus.
2. In the beginning of the academic year, UEP continued outreach efforts to off campus strategic partners and community stakeholders through tablings, conferences, and mentorship programs.

**Objective #2:** Establish effective policies and programs for student assistance of foster care students/transitional/homeless students that align with UEP mission and enrich academic achievement.

**Status: Accomplished**

**Action Steps 2019-2020**

1. Welcomed first cohort of DFS scholars-Planned and implemented Diamond Family Scholars program-UEP enhanced outreach efforts to on campus students who have aged out of foster care with strategic partners and community stakeholders.
2. UEP enhanced outreach efforts to off campus students with strategic partners and community stakeholders.
3. UEP collaborated with other on-campus organizations to coordinate support for foster care students.
4. *UEP expanded Fostering Success Day with the addition of UH Clearlake Foster Care liaison.*

**UEP Strategic Initiative 2 Major Accomplishments:**

1. UEP created the Diamond Family Scholars Program – In response to a generous idea and philanthropic support brought forward by Andy and Andrea Diamond, the University of Houston created the Diamond Family Scholars Program in 2018 to address the needs of our students who have aged out of the foster care system. The Diamond Family Scholars Program comprehensive initiative will focus on retention, academic success, and transition to career after college. Specifically, the Diamond

Family Scholars Program will include recruitment and outreach to prospective Diamond Family Scholars, dedicated advising and degree planning, UH mentors, programming that focuses on building life skills, and financial support to defray the full cost of attendance, while maintaining strong connections to community and social services.

2. *UEP enhanced the Dreamer Support Series*—enhanced the peer to peer mentor pairing of Dreamer students with other Dreamer students to enhance collaboration and foster fellowship with others in the same major.

**UEP Strategic Initiative 3:** Communication and Marketing - Enhance marketing strategies and produce materials according to the UH branding standards to create a UEP brand image that aligns with mission of UEP. (DSAES: Innovation, Transparency)

**Objective #1:** Execute effective marketing strategies for enrollment and membership.

**Status: Accomplished**

**Action Steps 2019-2020**

1. UEP increased all social media users—increased Facebook and Twitter followers (see matrix chart below).

Marketing Metrics	FY 14*	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
Number of UEP website views	8,464	8,225	8,989	21,541	6,292	34,674 Pageviews 26,797 Unique Pageviews	21,426
Facebook “likes”	32	44	75	125	138	169	182
Twitter “followers”	89	219	401	593	718	760	769
Instagram “followers”	50	80	103	195	264	372	460

2. Increased on and off campus outreach with enhanced Student Ambassador /Student Leader Program.

**UEP Strategic Initiative 3 Major Accomplishments:**

1. To enhance visibility on campus, UEP has increased marketing and visibility to the general UH campus. UEP has completed more outreach, a website overhaul, more marketing of pillar programs, which has increased student involvement--a major source of excitement for us.

**UEP Strategic Initiative 4: Collaborations and Partnerships** – Establish relationships with new on and off campus organizations to serve as a liaison between underrepresented populations on campus and the campus administration (DSAES: Collaboration, Diversity)

***Status: Accomplished***

**Action Steps 2019-2020**

1. UEP held Dream.US scholarship recipients as well as the UEP DACA population informational sessions for students to have a safe space for discussion and fellowship (these transitioned to online/virtual due to the health crisis).
2. UEP revitalized and strengthened K12 partnerships, including Baton Rouge Youth Coalition, IDEA Charter Schools and Harmony Charter Schools
3. UEP revitalized and strengthened community engagement opportunities.

***UH Goal: Student Success***

***DSAES Strategic Initiative 1: Create New Opportunities for student success through learning, engagement and discovery.***

**UEP Strategic Initiative Major Accomplishments:**

1. Award \$15,000 for Las Comadres College Mentoring Program – The Las Comadres College Mentoring Program just got a big boost to help reach its goal of helping first-generation Latina students connect and develop relationships with Latina faculty and staff at the University of Houston. The Latin Women’s Initiative, a Houston-based organization that focuses on helping Latin women and children through financial and volunteer support for local nonprofits, has awarded the mentoring program a \$15,000 grant that will help expand programming to a growing population of Latina students.
2. Enhanced and Extended G-Force Mentoring program with State Work Study funds- The primary goal of the program is to improve student access, success, and completion of higher education to underserved populations.
3. The Mayor's Office, the Urban Experience Program, and Career Services have collaborated to present an internship to current UH Students. Awarded are 17 students whose majors vary from management information systems to political science, and all are using their multidisciplinary strengths to bring the best that UH can offer to City Hall!

#### Question #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.

The success of Urban Experience Program is evaluated through:

- Student retention rates
- Campus contacts and utilization
- Program, training, and workshop evaluations

**UEP by The Numbers (Utilizations)** – Moving Forward UEP has kept daily and ongoing tracking of visitors served in and through the office. An event analysis and debriefing is conducted after each social function, program and tabling event.

	FY 13-14*	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
<i>Registered Students (Enrollment)</i>	113	309	388	322 (decrease due to large # of cohort graduates)	449	691	627
<i>UEP Pillar Programs</i>							
(Frontier Fiesta , Financial Seminar, Academic Workshops, Civic/Leadership, Freshman Programming, Fall Open House, Gobble Goodies)	102	576	798	929	1001	419	141
<i>Outreach and Events</i>							
Workshops/Trainings	102	492	254	363	437	185	130
Tabling/Informational & Events	Not available	634	559	1123	1033	158	145



<i>Walk-In/Advising/Contacts</i>							
Walk Ins/Appointments	Not available	581	675	832	3101	1318	623
Contacts	2307	2100	2454	3189	2941	4100	2361
<b>Total Touch Points</b>	<b>2624</b>	<b>4692</b>	<b>4740</b>	<b>6441</b>	<b>8527</b>	<b>6180</b>	<b>4027</b>

### **Assessment Projects (listed by project)**

Title or area assessed Diamond Family Scholars Program

#### **Major results/findings: Student Satisfaction**

At the conclusion of the Spring 2020 semester, all students in Cohort 1 completed an interview to discuss their experience in the program and any recommendations for improvements for future students and program success. The common themes for continuance that came from the interviews were as follows: excellent bonding experience, benefits of living together for 1st year, holistic support, financial assistance and exposure to campus network. Common themes for areas of improvement included consistency with dates and times of events, more service opportunities and more diversity. A new cohort of students are incoming for Fall 2020 and areas of enhancement will be implemented and areas of continuance will remain.

#### **Planned actions based on assessment results/findings:**

From the recommendations for the 2019-2020 year, DFSP staff have implemented the Student Guide Book for all students in the program. DFSP staff also implemented the use of a peer mentor; the peer mentor is a member of the program and will work to create more opportunities for bonding and relationship building. The implementation of community service will include 2 service projects a semester to allow students more than 1 opportunity. Students will also be incorporated into outreach for the program by attending Cougar Preview Days and local initiatives where they can interact with middle school and high school students.

**Actions based on assessment results/findings:** Based on the data collected from the registration form for students, we were able to develop programming themes for roundtables, create and utilize social media platforms, determine mentor pairs and mitigate financial and academic issues. Responses collected and analyzed from the retreat and end of semester surveys drove our decision to change our recruitment process for both mentor and mentees,

add additional programming, move our program dates to accommodate feedback and created new pathways for inclusion of graduate students.

#### **Question #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.**

#### ***Organizational Changes***

**Coca Cola Scholarship Exhausted:** The partnership with Coca Cola foundation was put on hold and the scholarship was suspended due to exhaustion of funds. The partnership has ended coupled with the estimated \$20,000 program support is keenly felt in our office and service delivery.

#### ***Student Population***

**Growing DACA/Undocumented Population:** UEP was designated in the Fall of 2018 as the best department to administer the scholarship fund Dream.US, this scholarship has grown to serve more than 250 students on campus. We are thankful to SFAC for supporting the outreach and programming needed for the scholarship. We hope that SFAC will continue to support this initiative in the future.

**Unfunded State Mandate Foster Care Program:** FY 16 UEP created a new student success initiative for students who formerly were foster care and/or adopted. In FY 17 UEP enhanced those efforts, and expanded support and programming for foster care, and now homeless students at UH. There is a TX House Bill 3748 and SB 294 states UH needs to identify a department that serves as a campus liaison and Dr. Walker named UEP. *This program provides a campus-wide network of support to assist students who grew up in the foster care system achieve educational success by focusing on recruitment, retention, and graduation.* The outreach and programming needed for the scholarship was not funded.

**UH Student Success: Summer Bridge-HISD College Readiness:** With the University of Houston serving roughly 50% first generation; DSAES Vice President designated UEP as a primary office for serving this student group. To this end, a new partnership with the Urban Experience Program at the University of Houston also serves 125 first generation UH freshman entering, who attended a four-day, overnight, summer-bridge program on the UH campus. *During this*

*program, students formed relationships with peer mentors, attended classes, and met professors, as well as connected with student-support offices to ensure they are equipped to navigate the UH system.*

**Question #6**

**If you unit concluded FY2020 with a Fund 3 addition to the 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.).**

Urban Experience Program had fund equity in the amount of \$16,466 due to lapsed M/O and travel due to Covid 19 (also programs delivered in virtual/online instead of face to face).

#### **Question #7**

**Please list your 2021-2022 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs 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.**

**UEP Strategic Initiative #1: Facilitate student development and learning through student success workshops, and new outreach efforts to targeted student populations (first generation minority students).**

- **Action Step 1:** Continue to deliver intentional programming to targeted populations using theory driven asset based modeling.
- **Action Step 2:** Evaluate and refine the BEST program to create partnerships and advocates among Academic Affairs.
- **Action Step 3:** Continue to expand Student Assistance Network, to provide resources and build relationships for emergency aid and other student aid programs.
- **Action Step 4:** Continue to track and utilize data from programming to enhance student retention.

**UH Goal:** Student Success

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

**UEP Strategic Initiative #2: Create a living learning community for former foster care and transitional students**

- **Action Step 1:** Develop stakeholder involvement in former foster care (alumni, campus departments, etc.) through regular meetings, mentor program, or other social activities.
- **Action Step 2:** Create a partnerships to facilitate the creation and support of a living learning community that supports former foster care students attending UH.

**UH Goal:** Student Success

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

***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.

**UEP Strategic Initiative #3: Create a greater variety of student involvement opportunities through enhanced services first generation, DACA/undocumented, foster care, low income).**

- **Action Step 1:** Continue to develop UEP student leaders as peer mentors, peer facilitators, and ambassadors.
- **Action Step 2:** Continue to customize educational experiences for students.

***UH Goal: Student Success***

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

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

### **Question #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 approved FY2022 base Student Service Fee budget and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.**

At UEP, we are committed to outreach and service that extend our human talent and technological capacity to serve the people in our diverse communities-first generation, minorities, DACA/undocumented, and foster care/homeless students. Providing for these underserved populations will be central to the decisions on how UEP will respond and adapt to reduced funding support. Below are the strategies that UEP will use to guide the development of budget reduction plans of 5%.

#### **5% Reduction of UEP SFAC budget \$188,277 = \$9,413.85**

- Reduce Room Rental  
Reduction: \$3,000
- Reduce Office Supplies  
Reduction: \$6,000
- Limit out-of-state travel; limit conference attendance; limit professional development spending.  
Reduction: \$400

*Total: \$9,400 (5% reduction)*

### **Question #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.**

Currently, the Urban Experience Program receives its funding from the Student Fee Advisory Committee from student service fee dollars.

Urban Experience Program is working with the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services to identify development funding sources to support foster care and transitional students. The Diamond Family Scholars program housed in UEP has been graciously funded by the Diamond family.

### **Question #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.**

UEP is currently one of six student success departments on campus, but the only one in the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services. Academic Achievers (Center for Mexican American Studies), Challenger Program (Exploratory Studies), Scholars Enrichment Program (College of Mathematics and Natural Sciences), PROMES (College of Engineering), ELASP (Bauer) are all housed in Academic Affairs for students of those specific majors. While there is some overlap between the services that the UEP offers to first generation students; there are no other departments on campus that offer programs and services for all students regardless of major, foster care/homeless students programming, scholarships for DACA/undocumented students.

UEP has and will actively continue to collaborate with such units as Student Housing and Residential Life, Dean of Students Office, Center for Diversity & Inclusion, LAUNCH, and many academic departments and student organizations. This past year, UEP has expanded partnerships with several new offices, including: several academic departments (HONORS, Graduate Studies, and African American Studies). Outside of our work with other student success programs, UEP does collaborate with multiple units within the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services and across the entire university. The message of holistic students' success should be pervasive throughout campus, and we realize that our campus partners are critical to that our endeavors.