Student Fees Advisory Committee (SFAC)
PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FY24

Center for Student Empowerment

Question 1: Executive Summary

Center for Student Empowerment

Mission Statement: The Mission of the Center for Student Empowerment (CSE) is to empower students with academic, personal, and professional development resources that propels student success.

The Center for Student Empowerment 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 Center for Student Empowerment 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.
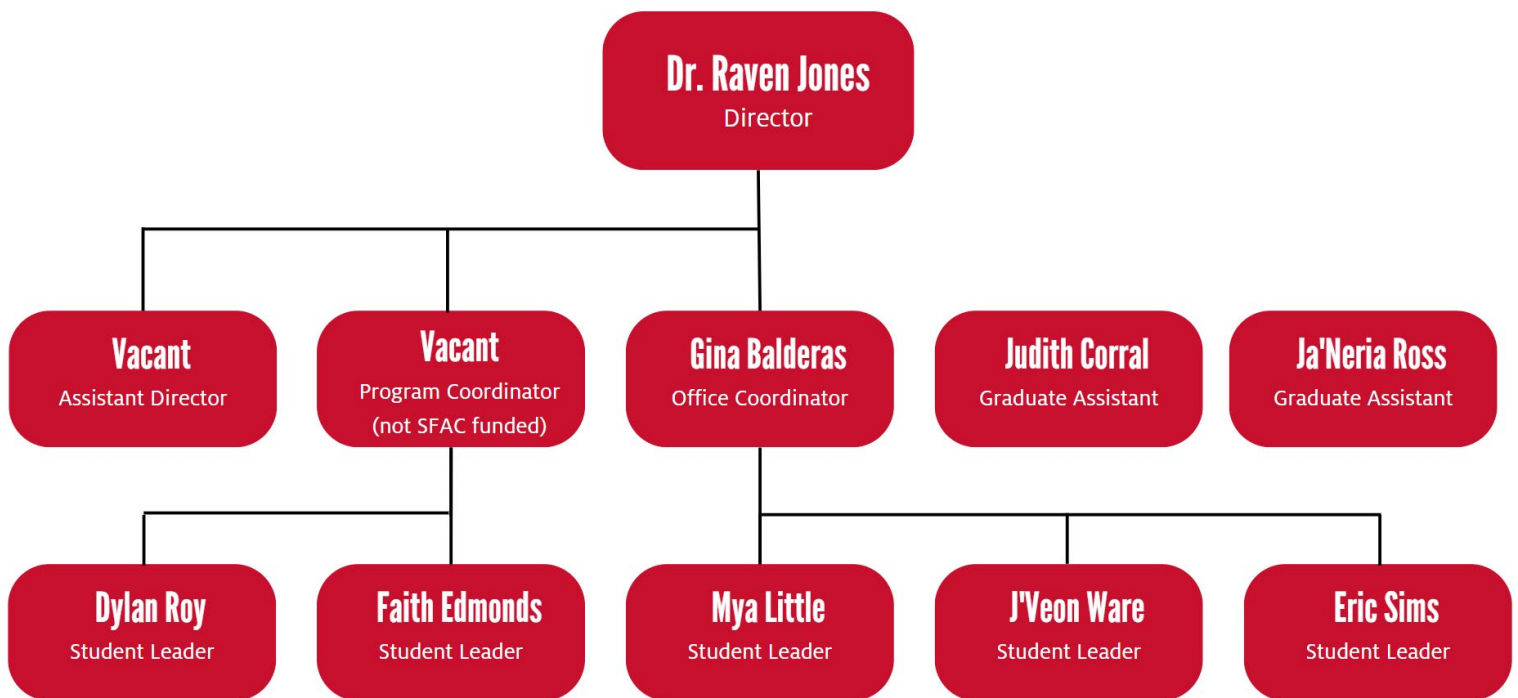
Center for Student Empowerment is an integral part of the Division of Student Affairs seeks to "champion exceptional opportunities and services to support all UH students," (DSA Strategic Initiative Student Success) and "forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community (DSA Strategic Initiative Partnerships). To keep pace with the growth of our student population, we are requesting some additional FY24 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" (DSA Strategic Initiative Division Cohesion).

CSE would like to thank SFAC for its continued support of our department and our students. CSE 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, CSE gives referrals to those who seek services not provided by UH (SNAP, food deficiency, homeless, etc.). CSE 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.

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                        Dr. Raven Jones
                           Director

   Vacant        Vacant          Gina Balderas    Judith Corral    Ja'Neria Ross
Assistant      Program          Office           Graduate         Graduate
Director       Coordinator      Coordinator      Assistant        Assistant
               (not SFAC
               funded)

Dylan Roy      Faith Edmonds    Mya Little       J'Veon Ware      Eric Sims
Student Leader Student Leader   Student Leader   Student Leader   Student Leader
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Question #3
List your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2020-2021 academic year and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs (DSA) 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.

CSE Strategic Initiative #1: Facilitate student development and learning through student success workshops, and new outreach efforts to targeted student populations (first generation, DACA/undocumented, foster care, low income).

Status: Completed
- **Action Step 1:** Conducted First Generation Freshman/Transfer Orientation Session
- **Action Step 2:** Hosted Dreamers Orientation- August.
- **Action Step 3:** Hosted Fostering Success Day- July
- **Action Step 4:** Continue to track and utilize data from programming to enhance student retention (Orientation First Generation Session, Parent Receptions, Summer Tabling).
- **Action Step 5:** Our Las Comadres Mentoring Program helped students who identify as first generation Latina students acclimate to college, gain community/cultural support and learn about campus resources.

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

CSE Strategic Initiative #2: Create a greater variety of student involvement opportunities through enhanced services first generation, DACA/undocumented, foster care, low income).

Status: Completed
- **Action Step 1:** DREAMERS + Speak Series-Dream Mixer, Lunch and Chat
- **Action Step 2:** DreamZone Ally Training

***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.*
CSE Strategic Initiative #3: Create a living learning community for former

foster care and transitional students

Status: Completed
- **Action Step 1:** Diamond Family Scholars participated in off campus Career Day- HAY Center and on campus Fostering Success Day.

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.
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CSE Strategic Initiative # 4: <u>Collaborations and Partnerships</u> – 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: Completed
- **Action Step 1:** Partnership with the HAY Center and Child Advocates of FortBend to host student and case managers on campus.
- **Action Step 2:** Revitalized and strengthened K12 partnerships-YesPrep and KIPP Senior signing Day participation.

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.

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 Center for Student Empowerment is evaluated through:
- Student retention rates
- Campus contacts and utilization
- Program, training, and workshop evaluations

CSE by The Numbers (Utilizations) – Moving Forward CSE 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	FY 21	FY 22
Registered Students (Enrollment)	*113*	*309*	*388*	*322*	*449*	*691*	*627*	*564**	*602*
CSE Pillar Programs									
	102	576	798	929	1001	419	141	130	323
Outreach and Events									
Workshops/Trainings	102	492	254	363	437	185	130	35	124
Tabling/Informational & Events	Not available	634	559	1123	1033	158	145	21	121
Walk-In/Advising/Contacts									
Walk Ins/Appointments	Not available	581	675	832	3101	1318	623	564	1321
Contacts	2307	2100	2454	3189	2941	4100	2361	867	1162
Total Touch Points	**2624**	**4692**	**4740**	**6441**	**8527**	**6180**	**4027**	**2181**	**3051**

*(decrease due to large # of cohort graduates)

Outreach Efforts:

Marketing Metrics	FY 14*	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY22
Number of CSE website views	8,464	8,225	8,989	21,541	6,292	34,674	21,426	22,611	17,977
Facebook "likes"	32	44	75	125	138	169	182	213	NA*
Twitter "followers"	89	219	401	593	718	760	769	741	738
Instagram "followers"	50	80	103	195	264	372	460	509	670

Assessment Activities/Actions/Results

Diamond Scholars- Focus group was conducted to address loss of the Assistant Director position and to ascertain student needs and concerns—data was used to change programming for Summer 2022 and Fall 2022.

Question #5
Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last (FY2023)
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

Staff Shortage: In the October 2021 and throughout Spring 2022 CSE had 2 positions vacant.-
Program Coordinator and Assistant Director. The professional expertise as coupled with the loss
of program and student support was keenly felt in our office and service delivery throughout
the Spring 2022. The positions were filled during the summer of 2022.

**Student population increase: <u>CSE received over 600+ applications to Join CSE from Spring
2023 & Summer 2023.</u>** Due to the increase in supporting students with mental health and
trauma concerns as well as providing support, and the growth once the name changed in Spring
2022, it is vital that CSE continue to expand program offerings.

Student Population
Growing DACA/Undocumented Population: CSE 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 450 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: 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 CSE. CSE was
designated as the foster care liaison office in FY 16 CSE and in turn CSE created a new student
success initiative for students who formerly were foster care and/or adopted. In FY 17 CSE
enhanced those efforts, and expanded support and programming for foster care, and now
homeless students at UH. 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. Students who identify as orphan, ward of the state, former
foster youth, unaccompanied minor, and/or experienced homelessness has increased to over 225
students as of Spring 2022.

Question #6
If you unit concluded FY2022 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.).

Center for Student Empowerment had fund equity in the amount of $5000 due to lapsed salary.

Question #7

Please list your 2023-2024 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.

CSE Strategic Initiative #1: Increase Social Events to provide student support for minority, first generation students.

- **Action Step 1:** Center of Student Empowerment will host more events at various times throughout the semester to targeted groups.

CSE Strategic Initiative #2: Increase Social Media Presence and Followers

- **Action Step 1:** Center of Student Empowerment will host more events at various times throughout the semester to targeted groups.
- **Action Step 2:** With the name change in March 2022, CSE will grow its digital visibility.

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

CSE Strategic Initiative #3: Provide student support and be a campus resource hub for minority first generation students.

- **Action Step 1:** Implement a Road show program to enhance the awareness and visibility of the Center of Student Empowerment to faculty and staff.
- **Action Step 2:** Implement at least three new strategies that assist students in connecting with each other in the Center Student Empowerment.
- **Action Step 3:** Hold an Former Foster Youth Mixer in the Center for Student Empowerment.

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

CSE Strategic Initiative #4: Create statewide initiatives to promote post secondary educational opportunities for foster youth in conjunction with statewide PAL program.

- **Action Step 1:** Host the Texas Statewide Pal College Conference

- **Action Step 2:** Develop stakeholder involvement in former foster care (alumni, campus departments, etc.) through regular meetings, mentor program, or other social activities.

UH Goal: Student Success
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DSA Strategic Initiative Resources: Evaluate, actively pursue, and leverage resources to enhance the UH experience.
DSA Strategic Initiative Partnerships: Forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community.

CSE Strategic Initiative #5: Enhance leadership opportunities for first generation, DACA/undocumented, foster care, low income).

- **Action Step 1:** Link the student leader and affinity group students to learning outcomes to Scarlet Seals of Excellence competencies.

- **Action Step 2:** Promote Learning Abroad opportunities to underserved populations.

UH Goal: Student Success
DSA Strategic Initiative Student Success: Champion exceptional opportunities and services to support all UH students.
DSA 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 FY2024 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 3.5, 5 or 7.5% in your total approved FY2024 base Student Service Fee budget and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.

At CSE, 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 CSE will respond and adapt to reduced funding support. Below are the strategies that CSE will use to guide the development of budget reduction plans of 3.5, 5, 7.5%.

3.5% Reduction of CSE SFAC budget $311,296 = $10,895.36
- Reduce Room Rental
  Reduction: $6,000

- Reduce Office Supplies
  Reduction: $4,000

- Limit out-of-state travel; limit conference attendance; limit professional development spending.
  Reduction: $895

  Total: **$10,895.36 (3.5% reduction)**

5% Reduction of CSE SFAC budget $311,296 = $15, 564.80
- Reduce Room Rental
  Reduction: $6,000

- Reduce Office Supplies
  Reduction: $5,000

- Limit out-of-state travel; limit conference attendance; limit professional development spending.
  Reduction: $4600

  Total: **$15, 564.80 (5% reduction)**

7.5% Reduction of CSE SFAC budget $311,296 = $23,347.20
- Reduce Room Rental
  Reduction: $6,000

- Reduce Office Supplies
  Reduction: $5,000

- Limit out-of-state travel; limit conference attendance; limit professional development spending.
  Reduction: $4600

- Staff Reduction
  Reduction: $8,000

***Total*: $23,347.20 (7.5% 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 Center for Student Empowerment receives its funding from the Student Fee Advisory Committee from student service fee dollars.

Center for Student Empowerment is working with the Division of Student Affairs and University Advancement to identify development funding sources to support diversity, first generation and foster care and transitional students.

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.

CSE is currently one of six student success departments on campus, but the only one in the Division of Student Affairs. 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 CSE offers to first generation students; there are no other departments on campus that offer programs and services for all students regardless of major, summer programming for underrepresented students, foster care/homeless students programming, scholarships for DACA/undocumented students.

CSE 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, CSE 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, CSE does collaborate with multiple units within the Division of Student Affairs 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 our endeavors.

Center for Student Empowerment
Division of Student Affairs