

U N I V E R S I T Y of  
**HOUSTON**

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**BUSINESS SERVICES**

**FY22 SFAC QUESTIONNAIRE**

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## MISSION

Business Services provides the administrative, financial, auditing, and human resource/payroll support for all departments within the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services in accordance with state and institutional policies.

## VISION

Business Services is committed to providing the highest quality and most efficient services to our partners through dedicated teamwork, collaboration, and on-going stewardship.

## CORE VALUES

Our principles set a standard for engaging our customers with an ethic of care in a manner that demonstrates courtesy, attentiveness, active listening, proactive problem-solving and patience. We encourage our staff to possess a cultural sensitivity and awareness of our diverse customers. Our core values guide our daily decision making and communications with our University partners and the greater community:

- **Accountability** – The Business Services’ team takes responsibility for their decisions and actions with honesty and openness.
- **Integrity** – Business Services adheres to high ethical principles...doing the right thing at the right time for the right reason.
- **Customer Service** – Business Services understands our partners’ needs and consistently delivers on our promises. We self-evaluate as well as survey our partners to continually improve our service.
- **Respect** – The Business Services’ team endeavors to treat all with dignity and courtesy.
- **Excellence** – Business Services commits to providing quality and efficiency in our services, reporting, and support.
- **Collaboration** – Business Services builds strong, robust relationships with honesty and transparency.
- **Innovation** – Business Services embraces and invests in opportunities while promoting a culture of continuous improvement.

## HOW BUSINESS SERVICES ACCOMPLISHES OUR MISSION:

Business Services processes all financial and human resource/payroll transactions for each department/program. Business Services’ Senior Management is centralized, while separate teams provide direct support to the DSAES departments. Most teams are housed with the specific program areas in order to actively support their assigned departments. These Business Services’ teams also serve on various program-specific committees and volunteer for events when possible.

Centralization of Senior Management and some shared services allows the individual teams to focus on day-to-day operations, thus improving efficiency and overall service. These shared services include contract processing, financial reporting, and cost center reconciliations. Use of these shared service teams positively impacts efficiency, compliance, and transparency. Each area has subject matter experts to address the needs of the division, as well as providing for segregation of duties and reconciliation which provides for transparency.

## HOW BUSINESS SERVICES BENEFITS UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON STUDENTS:

Through employment with Business Services, student workers and interns receive professional development and job skill training aligned with ACPA and NASPA competencies, including but not limited to human resources, finance, leadership, and ethical foundations.

Full-time staff are afforded opportunities to obtain advanced degrees through University of Houston academic programs and encouraged to take advantage of staff scholarships offered by the University. This year one staff member from the SHRL/AVP team earned her M.S. in Hospitality Management. Last year, two staff members earned their masters' degree and two earned their bachelors' degree.

Business Services' team members are also extremely active and engaged with students around campus in various ways. Team members are active on student committees, serve as mentors for student registered organizations, serve as facilitators and speakers at student retreats, meetings, and student-led discussion groups, as well as volunteer many hours at more than ten student-centric events per year.



## LEADERSHIP TEAM



**Devi Bala**  
Asst VP, Business Services

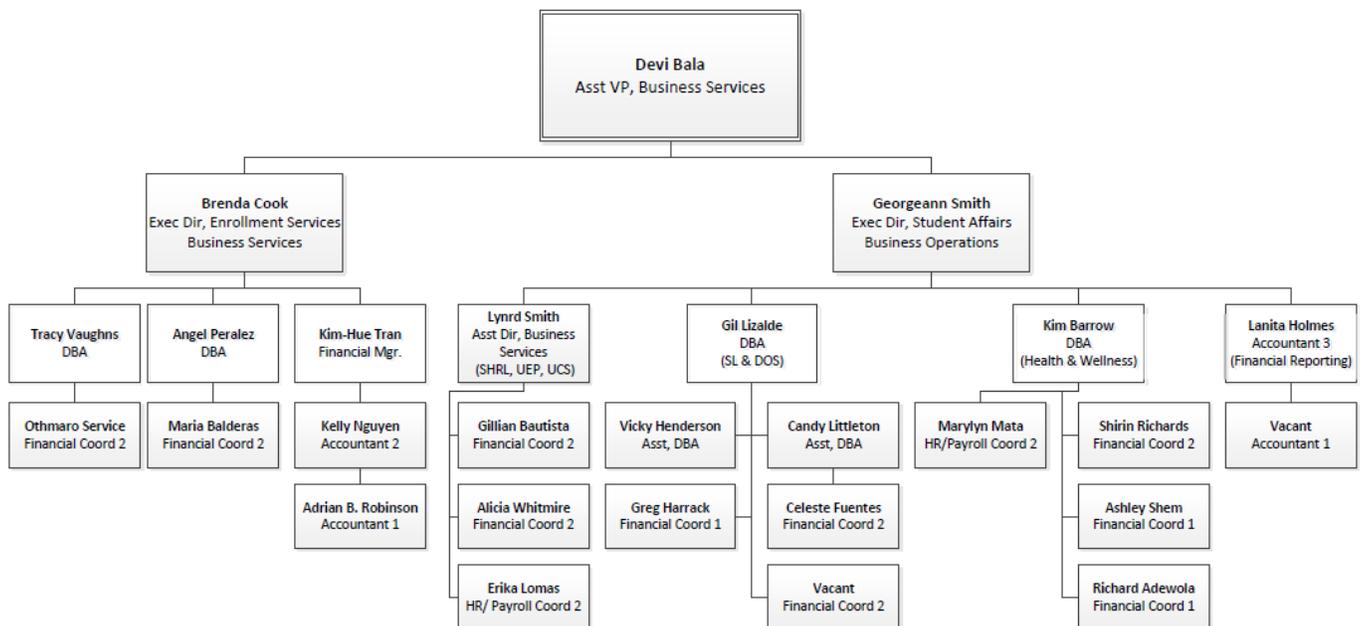


**Brenda Cook**  
Dir, Enrollment Services



**Georgeann Smith**  
Dir, Division Business Operations

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Business Services Strategic Initiatives were developed to support the broader University and DSAES Initiatives. We set our priorities in terms of strengthening our processes in order to provide Tier One support to our partners. The Business Services' team provides active support to programs that directly provide services to students.

<b><i>Strategic Initiative: Cohesion - Create and foster a cohesive identity, culture, and community.</i></b> <b><i>Action Step: Implement staff communication strategies that promotes a mutual understanding of who we are and what we do.</i></b>	
<b>BUSINESS SERVICES INITIATIVE</b>	<b>PLAN AND STATUS</b>
Develop service standards to provide excellent customer service through teamwork.	<p><b>Purpose of Assessment Activity:</b> Complete implementation and practices for analysis to ensure continuous improvement.</p> <p><b>Method of assessment:</b> Business Services staff will meet with DSAES department to discuss results from assessment metrics and secure feedback to ensure continuous improvement.</p> <p><b>Frequency / Timeline of Assessment Activity:</b> Data and feedback should be reviewed quarterly.</p> <p><b>Results:</b> During FY20, the new standards were approved by the Assistant VP, Business Services and applied by the Business Services' staff. The outcomes have been met.</p> <p><b>Projected outcomes:</b> Reasonable expectations will become part of the Business Services' customer service culture.</p>

<b><i>Strategic Initiative: Resources - Evaluate, actively pursue, and leverage resources to enhance the UH experience.</i></b> <b><i>Action Step: Evaluate resources to identify opportunities for efficiency, improvement, and transformation.</i></b>	
<b>BUSINESS SERVICES INITIATIVE</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>
Develop and implement a schedule of daily/weekly/monthly/annual tasks/checklists for department business administrators to ensure compliance and timely processing.	<p><b>Purpose of Assessment Activity:</b> To ensure continuous reduction of compliance exceptions.</p> <p><b>Method of assessment:</b> Checklist provides for regular self-assessment by the department business administrators. A monthly verification is submitted to Business Services' Directors for approval.</p> <p><b>Frequency / Timeline of Assessment Activity:</b> Directors will analyze data monthly with quarterly reporting to Assistant VP, Business Services.</p> <p><b>Results:</b> Department business administrators are following the established checklists and instances of missed deadlines and non-compliance issues have been greatly reduced.</p> <p><b>Outcomes:</b> This activity has provided disciplined oversight for Business Services' operations. Customer Service and compliance has improved.</p>

# 4 ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

Business Services is committed to providing the highest quality and efficient service to our partners through dedicated teamwork, collaboration and on-going stewardship. With last year's assessment, Business Services sought to assess and reduce procurement and travel card common violations/non-compliances. Due to procurement freeze from March through August 2020, the assessment will continue through FY2021.

## **Objectives:**

- Identify common violations.
- Analyze individual violations to determine the cause of non-compliance.
- Develop strategies for reducing violations by increased awareness and training.

## **Purpose & Measured Outcome:**

- The purpose of this initiative is to reduce measurable non-compliance trends reflected in data collected from FY 2016 to FY 2021.
- The second purpose is to reduce and/or eliminate non-compliance issues, through training and providing documentation as a reference for both card holders and support staff.

## **Method:**

- Data from UH Finance/Travel for 5 years (FY2016 – FY2021) has been utilized for analysis and for trends.
- Individual issues including email communication, receipts and any other data/documentation to be considered relevant for the activity.
- Analysis from FY2021 data will be used to assess effectiveness of training and documentation strategies.

## **Outcomes:**

- Decision was made to extend analysis period due to relaxed requirements and decrease in overall activity during procurement pause from March through August 2020.



Two Business Services' teams serve the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services. One team is dedicated to serving Enrollment Services, which encompasses Scholarship & Financial Aid, Admissions, Enrollment Services, Office of the Registrar, Campus Solutions, and Student Communications & Marketing. This team led by Brenda Cook is funded by tuition-restricted funds.

A second team is dedicated to Student Life, Student Housing and Residential Life, AVP for Student Affairs, Health & Wellness, and the Dean of Students. The team led by Georgeann Smith has two multiple funding sources. Housing is funded by auxiliary funds earned through campus housing activities, while the rest of the DSAES Business Services' team is funded by SFAC funds.

### Staffing Changes

**Gregory Harrack:** Joined the DSAES Business Services team in February 2020 in the role of Financial Coordinator 1. Gregg processes and coordinates the income and financial transactions for the 14 departments within the Student Life and Dean of Students areas. After receiving his Bachelor of Science in Management from St. George's University in 2015, Gregg worked in various customer service oriented roles in New York before joining the UH Cougar Family.

**Jacqueline Burkes:** In April this year, Ms. Burkes retired after 18 years of service with the University.

## 6

## EXCESS FUNDS

Business Services returned \$134,726. Roughly, \$56k corresponds to lapsed salary/fringes savings during FY2020. The savings correspond with the wages, fringes and applicable administrative fee for two vacant positions that could not be filled due to the COVID-19 hiring freeze.

The remainder of savings returned relates to regular operational, travel expenses and administrative fees. A portion had been set aside for staff training and a retreat targeting professional development. Fees were not charged when the training was converted to on-line due to social distancing and the retreat was cancelled due campus closure requiring staff to work from home.

<b>Expense Category</b>	<b>Returned Savings</b>
Staff Salaries	40,162
Fringe Benefits	12,532
M&O & Travel	77,933
Admin Charge (6% of Total Expense)	4,099
<b>Total</b>	<b>134,726</b>

# 7 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2021-2022

Throughout FY2021 and into FY2022, the Business Services team shall seek to perform their daily operations with greater accuracy, accountability, and efficiency. We shall strive to set a standard of unequivocal transparency with absolute accountability. Business Services shall approach the initiatives set by Dr. Khator and Dr. Walker with this vision in mind.

<b><i>Strategic Initiative: Division Cohesion - Create and foster a cohesive division identity, culture, and community.</i></b>		
<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Assessment Metrics/Outcomes</b>
Invest in staff success through professional development, recognition, and opportunities for broader participation throughout the division.	Develop and implement a business staff handbook stressing compliance and ethical behavior	Continuous reduction of compliance exceptions and process improvement
Foster collaborative divisional processes focused on common goals.	Establish annual assessment of needs for cross training of business staff.	Elimination of single points of failure, committing to excellent service, integrity & accountability

# 8

# REDUCTION PLANNING

A reduction of five percent (\$43,953) in Business Services funding could only be accomplished by a reduction in essential staff. Loss of critical staff would affect our ability to keep the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services in compliance with Federal, State, and University rules, regulations and policies; therefore, we would be forced to eliminate two student worker positions as well as staff training and seasonal temporary labor.

Expense Category	Amount
Temporary Labor	\$10,000
Staff Training	21,306
Student Worker Wages (NCWS)	10,000
Fringe Benefits	100
Admin Charge (6% of Total Expense)	2,488
Total	\$43,953

# 9

# FUNDING

Funding from student fees is directed to maintaining the business support staff that serve the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services' departments and programs that receive SFAC funds. The Business Services' team serving Student Housing is funded by Student Housing & Residential Life activities. In addition, the University administration also supplies funds from tuition dollars to support the Business Services' team supporting Enrollment Services.



# 10

## OVERLAPPING SERVICES

Business activity and leadership for the division was centralized in FY2012. There are no similar services provided within the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services.