



SFAC PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE FY2026

Chair: Bailey Payne

Vice Chair: Miyana Gates

SFAC Questionnaire

STUDENT FEES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SFAC)
FY2026 PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: *Please respond to all questions. An electronic copy of your responses in PDF format should be sent to the SFAC Committee via the Dean of Students Office, at dlyoung4@central.uh.edu by 1:00 p.m., Friday, October 18, 2024. It should be noted that only electronic submissions will be considered. Only those requests submitted by 1:00 p.m., October 18, 2024 will be guaranteed full consideration.*

1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses. This summary should include, in brief terms: your unit's mission, goals that support your 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 "Frontier Fiesta City." This event is a major production that takes the cooperation of the students, 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 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 that over the course of 10 months (with the assistance of advisors, mentors, alumni, faculty, and staff) plan, program, and execute the largest student 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 (DSA), our fellow university sponsored organizations and numerous registered student organizations.

At Frontier Fiesta, we provide our stakeholders, all 18,000+ 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's populace 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. Appearances by President Khator and university administrators, performances by the Spirit of Houston (which includes our cheerleaders, mascots, and bands), Cultural Showcases, and Live at

5 programs, variety shows performed by student organizations, and carnival booths run by RSOs and Greek organizations represent great examples of what the University of Houston community may experience throughout the three days.

2. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the DSA strategic initiatives and/or action steps and their importance as compared to others that you might pursue. Where data exists, discuss any assessment measures and/or learning outcomes used to evaluate program success. Please provide the method for collecting this data.

Attendance

Attendance from Frontier Fiesta 2024 showed the continued interest of the student body in this long-standing tradition. Over the course of the three-day event Frontier Fiesta had 18,157 attendees (a 31% increase from the 2023 event) with 4,138 attendees on the first day, 6,537 attendees on the second day, and 7,482 attendees on the final day. The Frontier Fiesta Association plans to work to continue to increase these numbers.

Concessions sold/distributed

Chartwells sells concessions at Frontier Fiesta the profits from those sales go directly to Chartwells who then keep track of the numbers.

Benchmarking

FFA sought out comparable events and activities across the United States and found only a few two to 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, Thurtene Carnival hosted by Washington University in St. Louis, and Spring Fling at the University of Pennsylvania. All of these events have either a carnival ride component or a concert component but not both. Although similar, these institutions are not comparable in size or scope to the University of Houston. An event similar to Frontier Fiesta that takes place at another Big 12 institution is Forty Acres Fest at the University of Texas at Austin. The event has similar elements such as a headlining concert, student performances, and various attractions, however it does not include elements such as the step show, variety shows, or cook-off and only takes place on a single day as opposed to three.

Debrief Meetings

Following the week of events each year, FFA conducts debrief meetings with key stakeholders, multiple organizations and departments that participate in the event. 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.

3. Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last (FY2024) 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.

There was a 5% reduction to all units last year which was projected to impact the number of special events and activities that Fiesta was able to provide for the event attendees. To combat this, FFA moved the event from March to April to cut down on overall event costs with operations expenses due to not contracting a large LED screen for March Madness. The change in

date also allowed us to not compete with UH Men's Basketball and the March Madness tournament, which we believe positively impacted our attendance numbers.

Frontier Fiesta received \$3,192.39 in carry forward funds from FY24 to FY25. These funds were approved to pay for goods and services received in FY24 where expenses were processed in FY25 as outlined below.

Amount	Program Description	Description – Fiesta SFAC
\$475.00	Sky High Rentals	Bungee run for students at Frontier Fiesta
\$422.75	Conrad Hilton Ambassadors	Carnival Booth payout for Frontier Fiesta
\$1,000.00	Delta Sigma Theta	1 st place winners of step show prize money at Frontier Fiesta
\$350.00	Jacob Robles DBA DJ Bles	Payment for DJ performance at Frontier Fiesta
\$226.25	Biomedical Engineering Society	Carnival Booth payout for Frontier Fiesta
\$61.25	Master of Athletic Training Student Organization	Carnival Booth payout for Frontier Fiesta
\$657.14	Best Entertainers	Cat's Back entertainment split among USOs
\$3,192.39		

- Recognizing that the potential to generate additional Student Service Fee income for FY2025 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 5.0% in your total FY2025 base Student Service Fee budget request and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.

If a 5% reduction were to occur, Frontier Fiesta would be cutting \$9,540.10 of base funds. These cuts would directly impact Frontier Fiesta's ability to provide special events and activities offered at Fiesta. It would severely limit our programming abilities and cause us to cut an entire day of special events such as Silent Disco, Photobooth, Mechanical Bull, Airbrush T-shirts, and more. Alternatively, it would lead to FFA cutting the Ferris Wheel which is a crowd favorite at Fiesta.

- 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, and partial recuperation of costs from carnival booths and cook-off. As a part of our efforts to engage the Houston community and enhance our programming efforts, the Frontier Fiesta Association also seeks out corporate sponsorships.

Our traditional event attracts upwards of 18,000+ attendees over 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 include on the event t-shirt, advertising in the 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. Currently Frontier Fiesta has initiated conversations with TXU Energy and is working on a new multi-year agreement with Silver Eagle for our 2025 event.

6. Please use the following file naming conventions when submitting your pdf files to the Dean of Students:

FY26Q_DepartmentName	Questionnaire
FY26AOT25a_DepartmentName	Add'l One time request - change "a" to "b", "c", etc for additional one-time requests
FY26WS_DepartmentName	Excel worksheet
FY26BA_DepartmentName	Base Augmentation request
FY26OTa_DepartmentName	One time request - change "a" to "b", "c", etc for multiple one-time requests
FY25PRES_DepartmentName	Presentation

NOTE: *The totality of your responses to these questions should give the members of the Committee a comprehensive understanding of the role and function of your unit(s). To the extent that your responses do not accomplish this, please revise them accordingly.*

Questionnaire completed by (please include name, title, email, and phone number):

Bailey Payne, Chair
Chair, Frontier Fiesta
ffchair@central.uh.edu