

# Student Panel & Discussion

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# UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES

FY 25-26



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.

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### **Executive Summary**

One of the most important and vital services afforded to University of Houston students and alumni is offered by University Career Services (UCS). The Career Services office provides comprehensive programs, events and services to assist students, alumni and community members to prepare for finding suitable employment by developing professional documents, interviewing skills, job search strategies, and a deeper understanding of the fit between their career-ready competencies and the world of work. UCS promotes and encourages personal responsibility in the exploration and achievement of both career and employment goals.

**Mission Statement:** University Career Services (UCS) provides customized resources to our constituencies through intentional programming and collaborative relationships founded on integrity. Our constituencies include students, faculty, staff, alumni, and employers. We are dedicated to advancing student career readiness and take a leadership role in uniting the entire campus career ecosystem to support comprehensive student career development. UCS is committed to expanding student support systems beyond individual needs, fulfilling our leadership role in scaling student success. source: UCS 3<sup>rd</sup> Strategic Plan, 2024-2028

**Our Vision:** University Career Services will be the premier career services provider at the University of Houston, dedicated to student career readiness and leading the entire campus career ecosystem in support of all students' career development. University Career Services' mission is accomplished by first assessing individual students' needs and by providing the appropriate resources to foster self- understanding, self- marketing and goal-clarification. (source: UCS 3<sup>rd</sup> Strategic Plan, 2024-2028)

UCS actively develops relationships with campus, employers, alumni and community entities that will ultimately help to ensure the success of UH job candidates during and after their college careers at the University of Houston. Corporate entities are advised as to the most effective ways to target and hire UH job candidates. The unit's mission is advanced by maintaining a highly qualified staff of career services professionals and leaders and by providing opportunities

for staff/professional development. The unit strives to be abreast of, and apply, the latest technologies in making career services accessible to students of a major research university.

**Justification.** The benefits of a robust and vital career services unit on a university campus are multifold. The literature strongly suggests that a student with a career goal, even a tentative career goal, is more likely to persist and achieve their educational objectives than a student without a career goal. University Career Services exemplary work with Exploratory Studies, CITE (Cougars Initiative to Engage), Industry Prep, Major Explorationweek, and career course curricula help advance students' persistence and increase graduation rates as well help student articulate their marketable skills to secure favorable internships and jobs with select employers. Students who are successful and satisfied in their pursuit of a career are more likely to become satisfied alumni, many of whom may be able to assist the university in annual giving, stronger partnerships with diverse employers, recruitment of qualified students, and legislative relations.

In addition, students benefit when the career center builds bridges between the university and the larger community including research studies/data to measure students' career intentions and student success initiatives. Public and corporate support, while intangibles, are extremely important to a public university and they often lead to tangible benefits to be enjoyed by current students, alumni, faculty, and staff. University Career Services is grateful for the continuing support from the Student Fees Advisory Committee.

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.

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UCS utilizes Qualtrics to assess data to make informed decisions to better serve our students and employers.

### **Strategic Initiative 1: Launch Career Cluster Model**

#### **Description:**

Drawing from the ONET career clusters, UCS aims to utilize the career cluster approach to providing services thus enabling students to think beyond their major. The 5 main clusters we will use are: 1. Gov't & Public Admin; Law (Pre-Law) 2. Arts, Design, Media & Communications 3. Education, Health Science (Pre-Health) & Human Services 4. STEM & Health Science (Pre-Health track) 5. Business Management, Logistics and Hospitality In addition to this we will

have services focused on Health Science (Students enrolled in health professional programs)

**Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Student Success

**University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success, Strategy 2

**Action Step:**

By the end of FY25 UCS will:

1. Have a landing page for providing career exploration, job/internship search, and career development specialist recommended resources available for our students to use. [Career Resources - University of Houston \(uh.edu\)](https://uh.edu)
2. Develop and use marketing collaterals to promote the career cluster model.

**Goal Status:** Accomplished

**Strategic Initiative 2: Promote Experiential Learning opportunities with employers**

**Description:**

Help students explore careers through a "Career Day" with employers attending from specific career clusters for panels, info session or speed networking. Promote engagement events with employers such as mock interview days, resume reviews, pitch sessions, speed networking to help students prepare for job/internship search

**Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Student Success

**University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success, Strategy 3

**Action Step:**

Host at least one experiential learning opportunity in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semester.

**Goal Status:** Accomplished. Held 10 meet and greets during the fall and industry panels during STEM career week in the spring semester.

**Strategic Initiative 3: Provide Career Education Opportunities**

**Description:**

Provide targeted career decision-making workshops or programs for women, non-traditional or "second career" students, and first generation students. Educate employers apart of Employer Summit on benefits of hiring students with diverse abilities, more inclusive hiring practices, and ways to support individuals once onboard. Implement a career counseling group to promote career exploration for students.

**Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Student Success

**University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success

**Action Step:**

Provided over 90 Career Education Opportunities throughout FY24.

**Goal Status:** Accomplished.

**Strategic Initiative 5: Develop innovative, niche opportunities for student career success**

**Description:**

Collaborate with campus partners, college-based career centers and our instructional sites (UH @ Sugar Land and UH @ Katy) on programs and events

Develop strategic marketing plans and initiatives to promote Career Fairs and events such as townhalls, promotional items and text message campaigns

Expand job promotion initiatives to increase student activity (job applications and resume submission) in Cougar Pathway

Develop a website for employers to report hiring efforts throughout the year and to aid in JLD reporting and tracking employment outcomes [\[live website\]](#)

**Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Partnerships

**University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success

**Action Step:**

Host career mixer with college-based career centers such as HDFS Career Mixer with the College of Education in November 2023 and Communication and Marketing Mixer March 2024 and Health and

**Goal Status:** Accomplished

**Strategic Initiative 6: Become the go to spot for on-campus Student Employment at the University of Houston**

**Description:**

Develop an On-campus Student Employee Training to benefit both supervisors and students. Revamp the student employment website and develop workflows and guidelines for participation. Advance Faculty & Staff engagement in Cougar Pathway through an intentional campaign and newsletters. Create CWS / NCWS Supervisor online training module

**Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Student Success

**University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success

**Action Step:**

Developed online training for employee supervisors to streamline the mandatory and hiring process Which can be accessed through Tap Online training via AccessUH.

**Goal Status:** Accomplished

3. Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last (FY2025) 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.

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The current state of affairs at University Career Services (UCS) is as follows:

Last year, UCS faced significant challenges in building a new team during the Great Resignation while advocating for competitive salaries comparable to those offered by our college-based career center colleagues for similar roles. Despite the Executive Director's proactive efforts, including initial salary recommendations for 12 of the 13 team members (made at the request of the Interim VP and Director of Business Services following the HR Compensation Study in December 2023) and the submission of two job questionnaire analyses (JAQs), these recommendations were not accepted. However, upon review of the recommendation proposal, two positions were identified for review as they had not been assessed in over eight years. These positions have yet to see any salary adjustments.

Recently, leadership agreed to review these two positions for a potential title change and promotion: the Executive Director and the Assistant Director for Alumni Career Services. Both are currently in the review process. The JAQ for the Executive Director position has been under review since July 2024, and the JAQ for the Assistant Director position was submitted in October 2024. At present, UCS has successfully filled three of the four positions that were vacant last year. Fortunately, our versatile and dedicated staff members have been cross-trained in multiple areas, allowing them to step in and bridge gaps as needed, demonstrating their commitment to our mission.

We have been working diligently to prioritize key responsibilities and requests to ensure that we continue serving our students, employers, faculty, and staff. While these operational adjustments have enabled us to manage our current workload, we recognize the importance of implementing long-term solutions to maintain our service quality and expand our reach.

With a new team in place, UCS is now embarking on the execution of its third strategic plan for 2024-2028, highlights of which will be shared during the SFAC presentation.

We appreciate your ongoing support and understanding as we navigate these challenges. Please rest assured that we remain dedicated to finding effective and sustainable solutions to help UCS stay competitive in the talent market while enhancing the satisfaction and retention of our valued team members.

Thank you for your continued trust in our team and funding support!

4. 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.

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University Career Services would accommodate an initial reduction of **5% (\$ 57,943.55)** by eliminating line items such as M&O for career programs and additional career fairs. However, eliminating career programs would not completely accommodate a 5% reduction. In addition to eliminating career programs, UCS would have to eliminate a full-time employee (FTE), which decreases the human capital needed to help serve students with their career development and job search.

5. 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.**

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Sources of funding available to UCS include employer development donations. This year we received \$75 for a one-time donation from a donor.