

UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

Learning and Assessment Services

SFAC Report

Fiscal Year 2012 - 2013

- 1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses. This summary should include, in brief terms: your unit's mission, how you accomplish your unit's mission, and a justification of your unit's student fee allocation in terms of benefits for students.**

The mission of *Learning and Assessment Services (LAS)* is to foster a conducive, stimulating and supportive learning environment to promote the success of UH students, the university, and the greater Houston community. LAS identifies needs, provides assessment and evaluative services, provides student success initiatives that facilitate student learning.

The range of services and the number of students served and impacted by LAS is extensive. Learning and Assessment Services primary services are in the field of assessment, evaluation, learning support and community engagement. In the area of assessment, we consult, develop, and administer surveys for the Division of Research, Residential Life and Housing, Staff Council, Registration and Academic Records, and Transfers Advising Program to name a few. The Student Satisfaction Survey, funded by SFAC, will be administered in the Spring 2012 semester. In support of our Institutional assessment activities, LAS recruits and facilitates the administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) to evaluate general education outcomes. We continue to support the academic departments in their outcome assessment activities through the administration and reporting of the Major Fields Tests.

LAS routinely researches and in collaboration with academic departments recommends and proposes appropriate tests for use for placement and the awarding of course credit. Currently we are working on identifying assessments that can be used for the many languages that are offered at our university. We continue to process course credit for Advance Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Entrance Program (CLEP), departmental and other course credit programs. For the reporting period June 10th to May 31st, 2011, LAS evaluated course credit for 1,405 students and awarded 11,455 course credit hours.

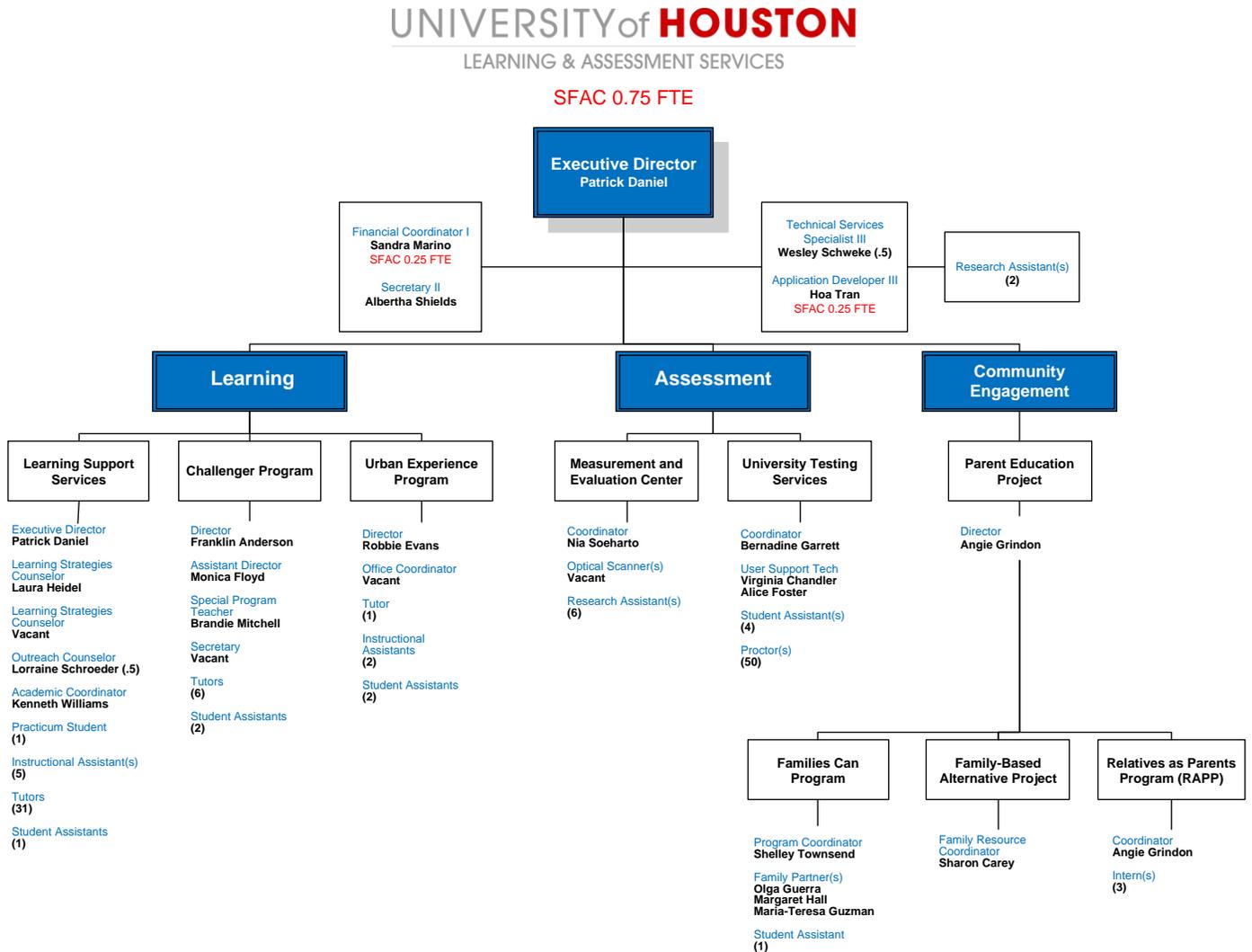
Since the Fall 10 semester, LAS has administered the faculty/course evaluation online for the UH Law Center, College of Architecture, College of Technology, Department of Hispanic Studies, Distance Education, and selected other courses from several departments. We continue to assist departments in designing customized reports as per college/ departmental specifications. LAS also ensures copies of the student faculty/course evaluation reports are made available in the Library. We continue to work on increasing the utility of the course evaluation reports for students, faculty and administrators. The Measurement and Evaluation Center scanned more than 393,278 bubble forms in FY11.

University Testing Services (UTS), a unit of Learning and Assessment Services, provides opportunities for students to take make-up exams as approved by their faculty. During the reporting period for FY 11, 179 faculty make-up exams were administered for UH students. This service provided an opportunity for students who may have had an emergency to take an exam as approved by the Instructor. In addition, students who take a correspondence exam from another institution can have their exams proctored at UTS. We also facilitate the administration of one of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) tests at remote overseas and out of state facilities for our new incoming international and domestic students. More than 22,000 tests have been administered by UTS in FY 11.

In the area of learning support, LAS IT staff continues to develop applications that improve the efficiency of service delivery as well as evaluation tools for Learning Support Services Programs. Some of the IT applications include a sign-in system for the Spanish tables at LSS, email follow up survey for program participants and effective monitoring of tutoring sessions. In addition, our LAS IT staff have developed applications to provide department contacts with easy access to online faculty/course [evaluations' response rates](#), [web based reports](#) and [other tools for online course evaluation administration](#). Our Challenger program, a federally funded program to support student success, has been awarded a five year grant by the U.S. Department of Education totaling more than 1.5 million. The one year retention rate for this program is 87%. Learning Support Services, the Challenger Program and Urban Experience Program, all under the umbrella of LAS, continue to support student success with a high degree of effectiveness (See page 6-7).

In support of student training needs, LAS offers opportunities for students to be interns, practicum trainees, and graduate and research assistants.

2. Provide an organization chart for 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, custodian, etc.), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.



- 3. List the objectives that you provided with your 2010-2011 SFAC request. Please comment on your success in achieving those objectives. If an objective changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new objective, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these objectives.**

LAS Objectives:

In addition to continuing LAS objectives (listed below: #1-4), we wish to report that LAS is responding to an increase in demand for accountability and outcome assessments from both the University and individual departments and units. LAS has become central in the development of accountability measures for several UH departments and the University at large. We are also experiencing an increase in demand from the UH community for LAS expertise in the areas of outcome assessment, especially survey design, student evaluation of faculty/course evaluations, as well as other program evaluation activities.

There also has been an increase in the need to identify appropriate placement and Credit By Exam options for students especially in the Foreign Languages. As the curriculum in high school changes, an new Advance Placement courses are introduced, we want to be in a position to assist departments in the review and recommend awarding of course credit on behalf of students.

We are also pleased to report that students can request faculty to utilize our Testing facilities for students to take a make-up exam.

LAS continues to seek and receive grant funding. This is accompanied by each funding source increasing its requirements for measurable outcomes, financial and program accountability. Further, these requirements are different for each grant and often change year to year. In addition to providing services to the clients, students in selected disciplines are able to obtain direct clinical experience as part of their internship or practicum requirements for course credit by participating as an intern or Practicum student.

1. To facilitate student learning

Learning assistance programs are composed of tutoring services, learning strategies counseling, parenting education, cultural enrichment activities, computer-aided instructional resources, and workshops on academic learning strategies and personal development. LAS supports graduate and professional education with research services and consultation for data collection, survey design, coordination of focus groups, introduction to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), learning strategies counseling, and workshops on topics such as American Psychological Association writing style, scholarly writing, presentations, learning styles, and time management.

UH students are invited and encouraged to evaluate all of their academic courses. LAS provides these course evaluations for many academic departments through its Measurement and Evaluation Center, a unit of Learning and Assessment Services. The data is analyzed and the results are provided to the faculty member, academic department, and are also filed in the Library for ready access by students. Faculty members are encouraged to use this student feedback. LAS continues to work with individual academic departments, and provide customized reports for department chairs and deans to increase the utility of the course evaluations in support of student learning.

2. To promote a supportive learning environment

The administration of surveys assists the university in identifying areas that are meeting the needs of the clientele as well as to identify areas for improvement that will contribute to the overall student

success at the University. The Student Satisfaction Survey is one of the major survey reports that are used by several stake holders on campus to improve the level of student satisfaction. We Moreover, the administration of faculty course evaluations by LAS provides feedback by students to faculty on their assessment of teaching. We continue to work with individual departments to increase the utility of the Faculty/Course evaluations in support of student learning.

University Testing Services (UTS) a unit of LAS, supports student academic success through a wide variety of testing. Following are three examples of Testing services that benefit students:

- a) Credit by Exam: Students are able to gain academic credit hours by testing out of several courses in which they prove to already be competent. This provides students with the opportunity to complete their UH education sooner and thus at a lower expense. It also allows them to move on to higher level courses without having to repeat the lower level courses. LAS works with departments on an ongoing basis to expand the number of courses for which credit by exam is offered.
- b) Testing for Foreign Language Requirements: UTS also provides students with the opportunity to test out of the requirement to take a Foreign Language if they prove proficient in a Foreign Language that is not taught at UH. UTS continues to explore assessments that may be used for this purpose.
- c) Make-Up Exam: Students that have extenuating situations may approach their Instructors to have the make-up test administered at UTS.

All six LAS units promote a supportive learning environment in multiple ways. Examples of this include **Learning Support Services**: Learning styles and strategies assessment, workshops, learning strategies counseling, tutoring, library and resource materials including books, and computer software **Challenger Program**: Counseling, tutoring, academic, career, and personal counseling; Reading, Writing, and Study Skills credit courses; Financial Aid Advising and Assistance; Social support and cultural enrichment; **Urban Experience Program**: Internships, tutoring, community service, mentoring, cultural enrichment activities, career and personal development activities.

3. *To provide comprehensive assessment services*

Learning and Assessment Services provides comprehensive assessment services to the UH community and local public and private organizations. These assessment activities range from student admission, placement testing, to development of test items for departmental course credit. Assessment services also include program evaluation via focus groups and institutional research, including administration of staff survey, student satisfaction, and student needs assessment.

Additional assessment activities include administration of psychological and vocational batteries, course placement tests, credit by examination, college admission tests, licensure/certification examinations, scoring of departmental and course examinations, and consultation for outcome assessment.

Surveys which LAS administers to the UH community include Student Enrollment Preferences Survey, Division of Research Survey, Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), Fraud Risk Survey, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Residential Life & Housing (RLH) Survey, Transfer Advising Program Student Survey, Staff Survey, College of Technology Graduating Students Survey, and Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) Exit Survey.

The Student Satisfaction Survey: LAS conducts the Student Satisfaction Survey, analyzes the responses and provides a comprehensive report to the UH community. This survey elicits student feedback on a

wide range of university wide items from academic to student service areas to include sections on:

Advising

Courses (availability, quality, type of access e.g. online, etc)

Computer Services

Auxiliary Services (parking, classroom quality, food, campus safety, bookstore, etc)

Residential Life and Housing

Library

Student Service Funded units (Counseling and Psychological Services, Campus Recreation, etc)

UH overall

Results are shared with faculty, staff, student organizations and the administration who review these for program strengths and weaknesses and to improve services for UH students.

In addition, the online elections for the Student Government Association, Staff Council, and a few chairs were administered via the LAS online voting system.

4. *To promote community engagement opportunities in the Greater Houston area.*

Community based programs include the Relatives As Parents Program, and Services for Families of Children with Disabilities. These granted projects, in addition to providing direct service to the clientele, offer an opportunity for students to obtain an internship or practicum experience for course credit.

4. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving your aforementioned objectives and their importance as compared to other objectives that you might pursue. Where data exist, discuss the number of persons served by each of your programs and the satisfaction levels of those served. Please provide the method for collective these data.

Please find below tabulation of our usage data for selected services offered.

Learning Support Services (LSS)

Tutoring Sessions	8,255
Spanish Table Tutoring	683
Learning Strategies Counseling	726
Learning Strategies Workshops	3,647
Computer Use	569
Fliers/Brochures	2,088
Tutoring retention/graduation rate (1 year)	80%
Tutored students in good academic standing	87%

Challenger Program (CP)

Participants served	194
Retention Rate (one-year)	87%
Good Academic Standing	87%
Graduation Rate (based on 2005 Cohort)	43%
Total Graduates	26
Total Dean's List Honors	56

University Testing Services (UTS)

Institutional Tests	9,013
Credit By Exam Tests	1,405
Placement Tests	512
Community Tests	25
Distance Education/Correspondence Tests	591
Faculty Course Make-Up Exam	179
National Tests	5,528
Computer Based Tests	5,618

Measurement & Evaluation Center (MEC)

Academic:

Class Exam Scoring	237,293
Institutional Testing	2,906
Faculty/Course Evaluation	165,717
Exit Survey	2,618
Survey Research/Outcome Assessment	20,356
Academic Support	20,563
Psychological/Vocational Testing	201

Parent Education Program (PEP)*Families CAN Program (Serves Families of Children with Disabilities)*

Ongoing Case Management Services	770 (unique) served on an ongoing basis
<i>Children with disabilities</i>	308 (unique)
<i>Parents of children with disabilities</i>	462(unique)
Parent Groups	
Parents of children with disabilities served	30 (Unique) individuals
Information & Referral Services	
Parents of children with disabilities served	189 (unique) individuals
Outreach Service Contacts	
Parents of children with disabilities served	205 (unique) individuals

GRAND Total served by Families CAN: 1,194

Relatives As Parents Program (Serves Grandparents & Other Relatives Raising Kin Children)

- Relative Parents served	120 (unique) individuals
- Kin Children served (directly)	45 (unique) individuals
- RAP Support Group Leaders served	2 (unique) individuals
- Technical Assistance to other Professionals	15 (unique) individuals
- Collaborations with other Organizations	15 organizations

GRAND Total served by RAPP 197

Family Based Alternatives Project/EveryChild, Inc. (Specialized Program for Children with Disabilities)

Total clients served (unique)	146
Total community agency/collaborators/partners	49
Number of individuals contacted of these organizations	66
 GRAND Total clients served by EveryChild	 146 (unique) individuals

Total (unique) Individuals Served by PEP 1,537

- 5. Please discuss any budget changes from your last (FY 2011) 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. In addition, if your unit concluded FY 2010 with a Ledger 3 Fund Equity balance, please describe the conditions which cause the fund balance.**

LAS would like to request the following items:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 1) One time FY 12 request of | \$14,556 |
| 2) Base Augmentation Request FY 13 of | \$14,556 |

- 6. Please list your 2012-2013 objectives in priority order. Larger units may wish to group your response by subprogram. Under each objective, state the specific programs, activities, and/or services that you plan to implement to meet your objectives.**

LAS recently undertook a Strategic Planning Process in which its mission was confirmed and objectives strengthened. Core values to guide its work were identified and a new vision statement adopted:

Learning & Assessment Services (LAS) strives to achieve national recognition through exemplary programs.

LAS Objectives:

1. To facilitate student learning

Learning and Assessment Services will continue to provide its expertise and resources to students and the UH community in facilitating student learning.

- Learning Support Services: Continue to identify assessment tools and design intervention projects that promote student learning.
- Challenger Program: A TRIO Department of Education funded Program for first generation, low-income and or student with a Disability. Continue to provide administrative oversight and support. The Program can recruit and provide support for up to 215 UH students.

Continue to provide training opportunities in applied research projects, survey design, counseling practicum and application development activities.

2. To promote a supportive learning environment

- LAS overall and all six Units
- The student Satisfaction Survey reports have been used by several departments and programs to improve services for students on campus. Many additional and customized reports have been generated for several constituents on campus to include Residential Life and Housing, Auxiliary Services, Academic Advising and several other groups.
- LAS will support departments and programs in assessing the needs of students to identify areas that are of importance to students.

3. To advance comprehensive assessment services via two of its units:

- Measurement & Evaluation Services
- University Testing Services

Ensure that additional opportunities are provided for students to claim test course credit via Advance Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and College Level Entrance (CLEP) Programs, and other Credit By Exam opportunities.

Identify appropriate alternatives in collaboration with academic departments to administer programs to assist students meet degree requirements especially in the area of Foreign Language Requirements.

In collaboration with academic departments develop placement tests using the Information Technology expertise that is available at LAS.

Make-up Exams: Continue to support students and faculty by providing support in administering make up exams on behalf of faculty for students.

Provide expertise in the design and development of faculty/course instruments where appropriate

Provide support in the administration of faculty/course evaluations.

Increase the utility of the course evaluation information by generating customized reports for faculty, students and college needs.

Recruit students for participation in outcome assessments on behalf of colleges and the University. University Testing Services administers tests to assist departments when needed to collect comparison data for benchmarking with national norms. This information is utilized for accreditation purposes and benefits students to be competitive with other programs nationally.

Assist departments to include Graduate students in the design of survey instruments.

Facilitate the administration of benchmarking studies like the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), Student Satisfaction Survey and other like studies.

4. To Foster Community Engagement:

➤ Parent Education Project (Grant Funded Project)

Continue to provide and improve services that enhance the lives of special populations in the area of children and family services in the Greater Houston area.

Continue to seek and acquire funding to provide these services.

7) 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.)?

Due to the diversity of services LAS provides, it generates funding from many different sources: the Provost's Office, UH Central Administration, in Grants & Contracts, Gifts, Designated Fees and SFAC. LAS serves every constituency in the UH community (students, faculty, staff and departments) as well as providing services to the Greater Houston community. Thus, LAS requires, pursues and obtains many different types of funding from a variety of funding sources.

Grants and Contracts:

<i>Grants</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Funding</i>
Parent Education Project		
Families CAN	09/01/11 - 08/31/12	\$ 130,000.00
Family Based Alternatives - Every Child	09/01/10 - 08/31/11	\$ 77,158.00
Challenger Program	09/01/11 - 08/31/12	\$ 311,018.00
Measurement and Evaluation STAAR Study (THECB)	9/01/11 - 3/31/12	\$ 12,000.00
Total		\$ 530,176.00

8) Please describe any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.

LAS (Learning & Assessment Services) is unique in what it provides to the University community, and thus there is no overlap with other units. In addition, it is the philosophy of LAS to promote a supportive learning environment based upon a guiding principle of collaboration and support for the various entities on campus.

Two units of LAS that provide direct services to students – Learning Support Services and the Urban Experience Program, – are funded primarily through student service fees. Two other units Challenger and the Parent Education Project are primarily grant-funded. The Challenger Program provides direct service to students including the provision of counseling, academic tutoring, and learning strategies support to students in a high risk group for retention.

University Testing Services and the Measurement and Evaluation Center, two other units within LAS, are funded through self-generated and designated fees. These units also provide support for students. University Testing Services provides academic placement tests (i.e., Language Placement) for minimal fees and administers the credit by exam program (Advance Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Entrance Program (CLEP), etc.) for the University. Since spring 2008, University Testing Services has taken on the additional task of reviewing student requests for providing a Foreign Language Requirement waiver.

The Measurement and Evaluation Center (MEC), which also does not receive any student service fees, provides services to support students. Graduate and professional students can utilize the expertise of MEC staff for data collection. The data forms or answer sheets used for data collection are scanned at no cost to these students to support their research. SFAC funded units must meet institutional effectiveness and other program evaluation needs, and the MEC staff provides support for these units when requested. In addition, this unit supports students through many of its other services, such as exam grading, faculty evaluations, and research support. Please see page 6 for statistics. MEC also administers the online Student Government and Staff Council elections for a minimal fee.

Finally, LAS central staff provides major support for SFAC units within LAS (Learning Support Services, Urban Experience Program) including financial management, budgeting, personnel, technology (computer support, web design, programming) and data analysis. Non-SFAC LAS units also support LAS SFAC units through provision of materials, furniture, equipment, computers, and even student staff when those units could not otherwise afford these necessary support services.

As a result of the administrative structures, Learning and Assessment Services has been able to offer many services to the University community at minimal cost. This in turn allows for many units on campus not to initiate new or increase current fees. In addition, the University and its diverse units, increasingly call upon LAS for its expertise in accountability measures, outcome assessment, surveys and focus groups.