

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
Student Life



UNIVERSITY CENTERS

Weeks of Welcome (WOW)

Student Fees Advisory Committee (SFAC)

One Time Allocation Request FY 2012-2013

Base Augmentation Request FY 2013-2014

UH WEEKS OF WELCOME



UNIVERSITY CENTERS ONE-TIME FUNDING REQUEST FY 2013

UNIVERSITY CENTERS BASE AUGMENTATION REQUEST FY 2014

Marketing and Advertising for Weeks of Welcome (WOW)

Throughout universities across the nation, the first one to two weeks of class are marked by “Weeks of Welcome” activities. These events range from formal convocations and academic poster sessions to student organization fairs and welcome back parties and barbeques. Benchmarking at peer institutions revealed three high-level goals that permeate the majority of weeks of welcome throughout the nation:

- Introducing students to current campus life, culture, and traditions
- Connecting students with university resources and departments, student organizations, and fellow students
- Entertaining and educating the student body

As mentioned above, hundreds of campuses offer major “Weeks of Welcome” activities. From a wide and diverse array of schools to choose from, four universities were specifically selected as benchmark schools due to strength of programming as well as similarities to the University of Houston:

- The University of Texas at Dallas (an urban university with a diverse student body and a 21% live-on-campus rate) (event name: “*Welcome Week*”)
- University of Cincinnati (an urban university with a 20% live-on-campus rate and 31,134 students total) (event name: “*Welcome Week*”)
- Boise State University (an urban university with a strong commuter population) (event name: “*Bronco Welcome*”)
- Indiana University (a more traditional campus of a comparable size to the University of Houston) (event name: “*Welcome Week*”)

The University of Houston has always had a diverse array of activities during the first two weeks of school, and has advertised many of these events through its annual “Cat’s Back” event. Before this summer there wasn’t any formal organization of division-wide or university-wide “Week of Welcome” activities. One of the key aspects of the DSA Strategic Plan (1.d.) is to “create a greater variety of student involvement initiatives that focus on the development of a vibrant campus life.” By coordinating and promoting the wide variety of events during the first two weeks of school, the University Centers are able to truly draw attention to how vibrant and engaging UH campus life truly is.

The University Centers (UC) is presenting this FY 13 One-Time Funding and FY 14 Base Augmentation Request to the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC) to provide financial assistance for the UH Weeks of Welcome (WOW), which was introduced this fall and held for

the first two weeks of the semester. The “UH Weeks of Welcome” provided information and connected new and returning UH students to student organizations, departments, and resources, through the promotion of events and programs on a centralized web-calendar. WOW highlighted on-campus events that took place from Thursday, August 23, 2012 through Saturday, September 8, 2012.

WOW 2012 Highlights:

- 68 events and programs were posted on the UH Weeks of Welcome website, including the Cat’s Back Event, which had a student attendance count of over 5,000.
- Other events included, Cougar First Impressions, career workshops, movie nights, game nights featuring Playfair, concerts, pep rallies, sporting events and much more.
- Numbers showed that close to 10% of the UH student population used the UH Weeks of Welcome Website
 - The Google Analytics stats reported nearly 8,000 visits, 9,333 page views and a 19.5% return visitor rate.
- The Weeks of Welcome website was marketed using ads, emails, banners, electronic signage, yard signs etc.

As UH Weeks of Welcome continues to grow and expand as a new “Back to School” tradition, we have identified future areas of need and improvement.

- Establish a budget to assist with promotion of UH Weeks of Welcome. Working with different departments around campus, WOW was cross promoted with move-in, Cat’s Back, University Centers marketing, UH Relations, several student organizations, and the Division of Student Affairs. This collaboration with departments will continue but will need some budgetary support going forward.
- Enhance advance publicity, which includes creating awareness to incoming freshmen during orientation or other events
- Increase attendance and awareness of all campus events highlighted on the Weeks of Welcome Website.

The University Centers is requesting the following for FY 14:

Marketing and Advertising - Campus Advertising and Signage (i.e. Banners, Posters, Yard Signs, Daily Cougar ads etc.) - **\$4000.00**

WOW Sponsored Promotional Activity: Support and host a WOW booth during the first 3-days of Cougar Move-In, which would reinforce the promotional efforts for the upcoming weeks of activities (e.g. Move-In Refreshments for all 3-days) - **\$3000.00**

Mobil App. Support via Guidebook: Using a smartphone or tablet, this application would provide all UH students with unlimited access to the Weeks of Welcome Calendar of Events,

along with maps, and real time updates to event information. This application would also allow for users to be directed to assessments related to the use of the Guidebook App. and track attendance at all events. This would serve as an alternative to printing a full calendar of events - **\$5000.00**

WOW Promotional Items: Provide a commemorative promotional item for 3500 students (i.e. water bottles, or key chains) - **\$4000.00**

UH Administrative Charge – 6%: **\$960**

Administrative Charges (Division of Student Affairs) – 1.5%: **\$240**

OT for FY2013 Grand Total: **\$17,200.00**

BA for FY2014 Grand Total: **\$17,200.00**

In order to enhance the level of service that this initiative can provide, the University Centers is asking that the Student Fee Advisory Committee provide financial support for the above listed expenses. Each of these items accounts for a base cost which will remain relatively static from year to year (with any differential in the upcoming year being easily covered by possible department contributions). Having SFAC cover as many of these costs as is financially tenable only serves to help better establish and support a tier one welcome week program at the University of Houston—and for many students, the first real taste of what life at the University of Houston is all about.