

# University Career Services

**A Report to the:**  
Student Fees Advisory Committee  
University of Houston

November 2, 2012

**UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES  
STUDENT FEES ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
FY2014 PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE**

**I. Executive Summary**

University Career Services (UCS) provides career counseling and job search assistance for currently enrolled students, degree candidates, and alumni of the University of Houston. Assistance is provided through individual counseling sessions, vocational assessments, workshops and seminars, job search services, internship services, campus recruitment services, a career reference library, an interactive website, and an alumni career services component. The unit serves the employment and career development needs of students and alumni while helping to meet the diverse human resource needs of the larger community.

University Career Services' mission is accomplished by first assessing individual students' needs and by providing the appropriate resources to foster self-understanding and goal-clarification. Depending on students' interests and level of career development, additional resources are often utilized, including resume-writing assistance, interview skill development, part-time and summer job search assistance, assistance in securing an internship, a referral to a career advisor/mentor, and/or suggested sources for additional reading and research. In addition, the unit accomplishes its mission by embracing the principles of quality customer service in its relations with the campus and corporate communities. Corporate entities are advised as to the most effective ways to target and hire UH job candidates, depending on the employer's needs and level of commitment. The unit's mission is advanced by maintaining a highly-qualified staff of career counselors and managers 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 largely commuter university. This is accomplished by creating automated systems for job search, interview scheduling, notification of new job opportunities, resume submittal, and employer research.

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 his/her educational objectives than a student without a career goal. Students who are successful and satisfied in their pursuit of a career are more likely to become satisfied alumni, many of whom may be in a position to assist the university in annual giving, recruitment of qualified students, and legislative relations. In addition, students benefit when the career center builds bridges between the university and the larger community. 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.

This Program Questionnaire attempts to present an accurate assessment of University Career Services' accomplishments during the previous year and of its goals and objectives for the ensuing year. The management of the unit feels that through prudent resource allocation significant progress will continue to be made in meeting the career development needs of students as well as the human resource needs of the larger community. University Career Services is grateful for the continuing support of the Student Fees Advisory Committee.

**II. An organizational chart for University Career Services is attached as Appendix 1.**

**III. List the action steps that you provided with your 2012-2013 SFAC request.**

**Action steps and comments are as follows:**

- A. Action Step One. UCS has noted a decline in the quality of student resumes in recent semesters. As a result, UCS will increase quality control in this area. Critiques of submitted resumes will continue, but with greater scrutiny as to grammar, spelling, syntax, and overall organization. Support services will include the employment of a part-time resume proofreader, online feedback, and counselor one-on-one sessions. Resume workshops and handouts will place greater emphasis on the importance of a quality resume. These measures are expected to help ensure that the resumes employers view reflect positively on UH job candidates and the University.

Comment: Completed. The availability of a Resume Proofreader has resulted in greater quality control and has been well-received by users of ResumeBank and other UCS services. A very capable student employee fills this position.

Strategic Initiative 1: Create new opportunities for student success through learning, engagement, and discovery.

- B. Action Step Two. UCS will partner with the UH Forensics Society to develop and present a workshop entitled “Corporate Communications and Etiquette,” in spring semester, 2012. The content will address written and verbal communications, making business presentations, email do’s and don’t’s, making introductions, and business meals.

Comment: Completed. The Corporate Communications and Etiquette workshop was presented in April, 2012, facilitated by UCS and UH Forensics staff. Attendance was low, prompting UCS to consider other avenues to address corporate etiquette content. The topic was incorporated with a UCS “Network Like a Pro” seminar with 100+ students in attendance.

Strategic Initiative 6: Create and engage in strategic partnerships.

- C. Action Step Three. UCS will create a pilot Ambassador Program as a way for students to get involved and support UCS while gaining leadership, event planning, and marketing skills. UCS Ambassadors will assist in outreach, workshop presentations, the creation of marketing materials, assessments, and other duties. A rigorous interview and selection process will be used to select the inaugural group, expected to consist of about five students.

Comment. Completed. Six students were chosen as the initial cohort of Ambassadors following a rigorous selection process. Early indications show that they have proven invaluable in event preparation, handout preparation, promotion of services, and in other UCS activities. A full program assessment will be conducted in spring, 2013.

Strategic Initiative 1: Create new opportunities for student success through learning, engagement, and discovery.

- D. Action Step Four. Distance career services will incorporate the use of Skype to enable UH alumni who live outside of the Greater Houston Area easier access to career counseling sessions, mock interviews, and other services that will be more effective with visual contact.

Comment. Completed. Distance career services now provides alumni with a full range of job search and career decision-making services.

Strategic Initiative 2: Actualize and leverage the fiscal, human, technological, and facility resources that enhance the student (alumni) experience.

- E. Action Step Five. Complete the migration of the University Career Advisory Network (UCAN) to LinkedIn. Promote the service to ensure that a broad spectrum of career fields are represented by the volunteer cohort. Market the service to increase student awareness and utilization.

Comment. Completed. Prior to the integration with LinkedIn, mentors were asked if they wanted to continue as volunteers. Over 250 volunteers migrated over to LinkedIn.

Strategic Initiative 2: Actualize and leverage the fiscal, human, technological, and facility resources that enhance the student (alumni) experience.

- F. Action Step Six. Create mechanisms to deter that practice of some students applying for any and all job postings that appear on the UCS job posting sites. Frequently in these cases, student qualifications do not match with the employers' requirements and it becomes a burden for employers to sort through a large volume of resumes.

Comment. In progress. As IT programming continues, implementation is targeted for spring semester, 2013.

Strategic Initiative 4: Develop a culture of innovation and accountability in the redesign of Division policies, processes, and procedures.

- G. Action Step Seven. UCS will redesign the online Campus Recruitment Workshop to facilitate the completion of the workshop in a timely and efficient manner. This

workshop explains the Campus Recruitment process, and is a requirement for students to participate in campus interviews. We will explore webinar and other technologies that will support the development of a workshop that is concise and user-friendly. The new design will include updated content, layout, screenshots, and agreement options.

Comment. In progress. Implementation slated for summer, 2013.

Strategic Initiative 4: Develop a culture of innovation and accountability in the redesign of Division policies, processes, and procedures.

**IV. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the 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. Please provide the method for collecting these data.**

The means of evaluating departmental objectives include student and employer satisfaction surveys; the use of intake forms to track the number of users by: the type of service requested, student classification, and academic major; client surveys following all counseling sessions; salary and job offer surveys; the Campus Recruitment Survey (employers); informal feedback; University-coordinated surveys; and professional assessments based on observation and anecdotal information. The results of these analyses served the evaluation and planning functions for University Career Services in 2011-2012.

With reference to the importance of the objectives that the unit has pursued, the weight of evidence demonstrates that the objectives outlined above, and those objectives articulated in this document for FY2014, are consonant with the mission and goals of the unit. In particular. The defining and prevailing goals of UCS are: 1) to make job vacancy, resume referral, and job interview services as efficient, effective, and accessible as possible for both job candidates and private sector entities, and 2) to assist UH students and alumni in career assessment and career decision-making. These objectives are relevant and realistic given the unit's resource base.

The following presents an overview of selected critical user indices:

A. There were 18,227 job postings received by JOBank and JobScan in 2011-2012. The majority of job postings are from local employers and most are targeted specifically to UH job candidates. UCS offers links to national and international job posting services as well.

B. The JOBank program automatically forwards an e-mail survey questionnaire to employers one week after their job postings expire. Approximately 50 percent of survey respondents report that they hired a UH student as a result of their posting and 92.5 percent indicate that they will use JOBank again when they have a hiring need.

C. The number of log-ons to the UCS home page in 2011-2012 was 194,243.

D. The number of job search/career development workshops conducted at UCS in 2011-2012 was 129. The majority of these workshops were for resume writing, interview preparation, choosing a major, preparation for campus recruitment, how to work a career fair, and organizing a job search.

E. UCS conducted an additional 53 workshops outside of UCS facilities in 2011-2012 in conjunction with classroom, student organization, community group, and other presentations. Some of these workshops were custom-designed for campus organizations.

F. The number of individuals served in individual counseling sessions in 2011-2012 was 4,149; an additional 2,203 individuals were served in career development workshops; 1,082 completed the on-line workshop module for campus recruitment; 544 UH students attended the Texas Job Fair which is co-sponsored by UCS; 618 students attended Campus Jobs for Coogs; 502 students attended the Summer Jobs Fair; 677 students attended the Internship Career Fair; 116 alumni attended the Alumni Mixer; and 37 students were advised/counseled individually in conjunction with the College Work-Study program.

The grand total of student counseling sessions/workshop attendance/job fair attendance is 9,928. The above represents a major portion of events in which UCS participated.

G. Registration with UCS is categorized as either "Express" or "Full." Express registration enables students and alumni to receive email notice of new job postings related to their interests; Full registration requires the uploading of at least one resume and it makes resumes available to employers who search online. The number of express registrants in 2011-2012 was 10,592; the number of individuals in the full registration category was 3,501. The total number of UCS registrants: 14,093 (approximately one out of every 2.8 students).

H. There were 143 corporate recruitment visits in 2011-2012, resulting in 185 interview schedules and 691 on-campus interviews.

I. There were 96 resume searches and 2,795 resumes retrieved by employers through the on-line resume search service during 2011-2012.

J. There were 1,469 on-campus Work-Study positions and 397 off-campus Work-Study positions posted through UCS in 2011-2012.

K. There were 1,808 internship opportunities posted by 380 employers in 2011-2012.

L. Interfolio.com continues to be a convenient service for graduate students applying for academic jobs, undergraduates applying to graduate school, and teaching candidates applying for teaching jobs. As of October, 2012, there were 190 student/alumni users and 382 letter writers, many of whom are UH faculty. Faculty members set up accounts with

Interfolio.com to electronically upload their letters of recommendation for file holders and to make it easier to reproduce and edit these documents. Interfolio.com streamlines the process of submitting letters of recommendation for candidates and letter writers. Letter writers can track for whom they have written letters and where the letters were sent. Letters may be saved so that those letters can be updated and re-sent in the future for other opportunities, even years down the road.

M. UCS collects satisfaction data from students, alumni, and employers. Student and alumni data are collected via e-mail surveys forwarded to each counseling client one week following the respective counseling session. The survey queries such items as appointment scheduling, how well questions and/or concerns were addressed by the counselor, level of knowledge and friendliness displayed by the counselor, and whether the client would recommend the counselor to others. The results are tabulated by counselor name, client's college or degree, and purpose of visit as determined by completion of an intake form. The combined score for counselors is consistently in the 4.5+ range on a five point Likert scale (five = high). For 2011-2012, the aggregate score was 4.81. Workshop participants gave UCS workshop facilitators a rating of 4.47 on the same scale.

N. Satisfaction data are systematically collected from employers from two primary sources: the Campus Recruitment Survey and the JOBank Survey. The Campus Recruitment Survey is administered to employers who utilize the campus recruitment service. A one-page questionnaire is inserted into employers' information and resume packets and employers are asked to leave the completed questionnaires with UCS at the end of the day. The questionnaire contains questions on services, student preparedness, the UH curriculum (as it relates to the employers' needs), and the job performance of UH alumni. As to UCS services, questionnaire responses are consistently over 97 percent favorable.

O. UCS scores consistently in the 82-to-85 percentile range in student satisfaction in the campus-wide Student Satisfaction Survey. The latest campus-wide survey was conducted in 2010.

P. In a 2011 Universum national survey of 360 colleges and universities, career services at UH was rated "Excellent" or "Very Good" by 46 percent of the respondents. The national metric (67,726 student respondents) was 42 percent for the respective institutions. The majority of the remaining ratings for UH were in the "Good" or "Adequate" ranges.

**V. Question. Please discuss any budget changes from that which you requested from SFAC, their impact on your programs, and your reasons for implementing them.**

The following changes impacted the UCS budget in 2011-2012:

A. UCS continues to seek and receive funding from external sources with the objective of reducing its reliance on Student Service Fees. As documented in its current SFAC

financial report, UCS received during the previous year \$2,500 in corporate gifts; \$76,282 in generated income; and a \$60,000 Federal grant. Despite recessionary conditions in the larger job market, employer job postings and resume searches, both fee-based services, have produced additional revenues. Those sources, along with alumni fees, accounted for a 16.0 percent increase in revenues over the previous year.

C. As noted above, UCS has received \$60,000 for FY 2013 from the US Department of Education for the continued administration of the Job Location and Development (JLD) program. This Federal program allows college and university career centers to use a portion of an institution's Work-Study monies to develop off-campus job opportunities for students. The grant is used, in part, to support salaries and operating expenses for the JOBank and JobScan programs. UCS's participation in the JLD program generated \$2,225,070 in student wages for 2011-2012, the equivalent of \$1,002 per each of the 2,220 students placed through the program.

D. As a means to support UCS career counselors who are in the process of completing the requirements for licensure (Professional Licensed Counselor), the unit expended \$4,413 to help defray costs of supervision and consultation with a certified LPC. State of Texas requirements call for a total of 3000 hours of supervision with 1,500 direct and 1,500 indirect hours. The rate, typically, is for one hour of supervision per work week. UCS will continue its commitment to the professional development of career counselors into FY2014 to ensure that students are served by highly qualified and skilled career counselors.

## **VI. List 2013-2014 action steps in priority order.**

- a. Increase participation by UH faculty and staff in the Campus Contact Network. Seek to reach 200 subscribers (from 174) by Spring, 2013 with continued growth beyond the academic year.

Strategic Initiative 6: Create and engage in strategic partnerships.

- b. Increase from 250 to 300 the number of mentors in the University Career Advisory Network.

Strategic Initiative 1: Create new opportunities for student success through learning, engagement, and discovery.

- c. Maintain and exceed scores of 4.5 (5.0 scale) on career counseling and workshop follow-up surveys.

Strategic Initiative 1: Create new opportunities for student success through learning, engagement, and discovery.

- d. Conduct a program evaluation of the Ambassador Program during spring semester, 2013 to determine the effectiveness and future viability of the program.

Strategic Initiative 1: Create new opportunities for student success through learning, engagement, and discovery.

- e. Incorporate modifications to UCS follow-up surveys to capture counselor, workshop, and campus recruitment assessment data.

Strategic Initiative 4: Develop a culture of innovation and accountability in the redesign of Division policies, processes, and procedures.

- f. Determine if the Corporate Sponsorship Program can be extended and/or enhanced to help defray the costs of career/job fairs, the Career Success Series, and other UCS events and projects, while assisting employer entities in promoting their brands on the UH campus.

Strategic Initiative 6: Create and engage in strategic partnerships.

- g. Redesign the online Campus Recruitment Workshop module to facilitate ease of use.

Strategic Initiative 4: Develop a culture of innovation and accountability in the redesign of Division policies, processes, and procedures.

- h. Continue the design and implementation of a mechanism to deter students from applying for any and all job postings that appear on the UCS job posting sites.

Strategic Initiative 4: Develop a culture of innovation and accountability in the redesign of Division policies, processes, and procedures.

**VII. What are the other possible sources of funding available to your unit and what efforts are being made to access them?**

The current sources of funding for the unit are as follows: SFAC annual allocations; corporate/foundation gifts; government grants; and generated income from user fees. Each of these sources is detailed in the financial section of this report. JOBank postings, resume searches, and alumni career services continue to provide revenue sources, although these sources are affected substantially by general job market and economic conditions. As noted, there was an 16.0 percent increase in generated income during the past year and the unit expects the upward trend to continue into the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

**VIII. Describe any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students.**

Career counseling and advising is, and should be, available at multiple points of student contact, including academic advising sessions, personal counseling sessions, student/faculty conferences, student employment offices, Work-Study offices, career services offices, and other offices where qualified assistance is available. This unit has supported, with personnel and materials, the availability of career advising services in multiple locations on this campus. UCS does not advocate for the needless duplication of campus services, but it does support initiatives where strides can be realized in the accessibility, integration, and reinforcement of career development services.

Concomitantly, if the career development needs of students are to be adequately addressed, it is generally recognized that a strong, collaborative, central career services operation is highly desirable. The centralized model for undergraduate students is embraced by over 88 percent of colleges and universities in the U.S. The administration of career services within one centralized unit enables the institution to capitalize on the synergy between the inter-related services of career decision-making, vocational assessment, internships, co-operative education, student employment, and graduating student/alumni job search services. In such an environment, students can more easily navigate from service-to-service as their goals and objectives achieve clarity. There is no question that a central location helps to increase familiarity and accessibility for students, and that a unifying institutional philosophy of career development (sorely lacking at the University of Houston) helps to ensure continuity at all stages of students' career growth. As for relations with the external community, it is well established that potential employers strongly prefer the "one-stop shop" model in setting up recruitment and interview schedules for the purpose of hiring college-level job candidates.

Within these constructs, the need for close coordination between a centralized career services operation and academic departments and schools cannot be overstated. University Career Services will continue to embrace in philosophy and in practice, a model that incorporates the demonstrated institutional advantages of an efficient, centralized service together with the best features of college-based models.

# APPENDIX 1.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

### UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON FY2013

