

**STUDENT FEES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FY 2014**

THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON FORENSIC SOCIETY

*“CONTINUING TO ELEVATE NATIONAL RECOGNITION
OF OUR UNIVERSITY WITH
COMMUNITY INTERACTION,
ON-CAMPUS AMBASSADORSHIP,
AND COMPETITION
THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES”*

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1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses.

MISSION:

The mission of the University of Houston Forensic Society (UHFS) is to create opportunities for all students to apply their public speaking skills in ways that benefit local communities and bring recognition to the University of Houston.

HOW WE ACCOMPLISH OUR MISSION:

The UHFS recognizes that public speaking represents one of the world's greatest fears. Therefore, membership is open to all students – regardless of levels of experience or ability – and encourages participation in community service as well as national competition with other universities. While a majority of other collegiate forensic programs focus solely on national awards and rankings, the UHFS realizes that it is uniquely positioned to reach out and provide opportunities to both UH students and individuals in the Greater Houston community. Some of the programs planned for FY2013 include:

Competing:

- Local contests in Texas for members, regardless of experience
- Regional competitions for students achieving local success
- National contests for members capable of bringing recognition to UH

Volunteering:

- Judging at Greater Houston K-12 schools
- Volunteering to perform at orphanages, homeless shelters, & hospitals (e.g. Shriners' Hospital in Houston)
- Coaching students at schools with limited faculty/financial resources

Hosting:

- Invitational forensic contests for elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and colleges/universities
- Hosting events that appeal to different races/ethnicities represented in \ K-12 schools, e/g/ speech/theatre contests in Spanish)
- Low-cost forensic workshops for inner-city and Greater Houston students
- Instructional seminars for inexperienced forensic coaches
- District, state, and national forensic championship contests
- Offering/directing summer camps for students

JUSTIFICATION OF THIS ORGANIZATION'S FEE ALLOCATION:

The UHFS was re-established in July 2002 under the dual umbrella of the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Honors College. **Beginning with no students or identifiable events at all, the UHFS is now the most active collegiate host of on-campus events and educational programs in Texas, if not the U.S.!** Under the direction of volunteer Director of Forensics Dr. Michael L. Fain, **the 2010-2011 UHFS has involved 200+ students in on-campus activities** – with more than 8,000+ students/faculty attending all events which are hosted or judged by UHFS members.

2. Provide an organization chart of your unit.

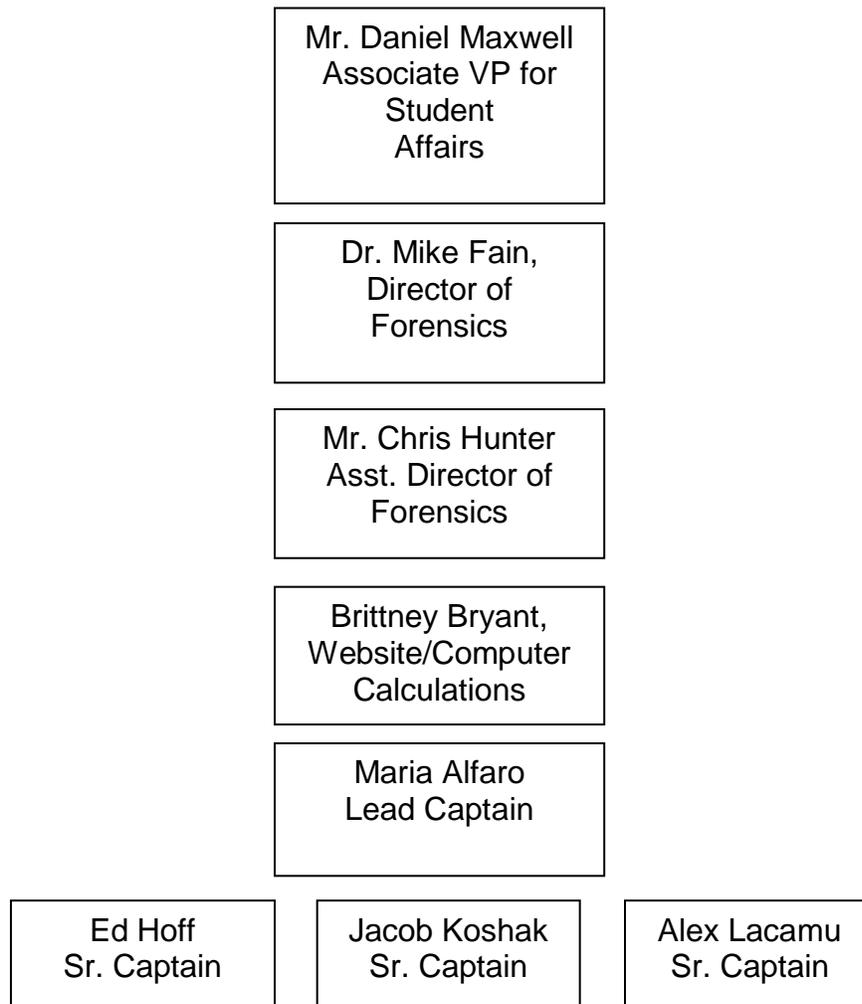
The current administration of all on-campus events, community service activities, and Team competitions has been shared between Director of Forensics Dr. Michael L. Fain, Assistant Director Forensics Mr. Chris Hunter, Lead Captain Maria Alfaro and Senior Captains Ed Hoff, Jacob Koshak, and Alex Lacamu.

Dr. Fain’s direction of both the UHFS and the Speech & Debate Team is guided by Mr. Daniel Maxwell, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs. Support for financial management is provided by Ms. Kim Barrow (DBA) with financial/computing on a part-time basis by Ms. Brittney Bryant.

Ms. Brittney Bryant also performs all of the website work and tournament calculations for each of the 16 on-campus events held by the UH Forensic Society.

Please see the organizational chart for the University of Houston Forensic Society:

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON FORENSIC SOCIETY



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3. List the objectives that you provided with your 2011-2012 SFAC request. Please comment on your success in achieving these objectives. If an objective changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new objectives, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these objectives.

Objectives Provided in Our 2011-2012 Request

After reinstating a competitive speech and debate program for the University of Houston during the 2002-2003 year, the three basic objectives that were maintained/pursued during the FY2012 were as follows:

- To attract a diverse group of students into a forensic organization
- To initiate a series of community service opportunities for Team members
- To host a series of contests and workshops for middle school, high school, & university students

Because of the UHFS' strong momentum at the end of FY2005 - the Forensic Society has had success in achieving these objectives – but our success cannot be guaranteed without an increase in our base funding for (1) a Director of Forensics and (2) the increase in base funding equal to the amount given as an one-time SFAC allocation during the FY12.

Two additional objectives were communicated with our FY12 SFAC request. These two objectives are as follows:

- Development of Open Houses for At-Risk High School Students
- Expansion of Debate Offerings and Competition in Collegiate Debate Events

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Success in Achieving Original FY12 Objectives

Achievement of the Three Base Objectives

The UHFS has had great success in achieving its original three objectives. Achievement of success in these three areas has been enabled due to the initiation/hiring of a full-time Director of Forensics in September 2008. Highlights of the organization during FY12 include

- Recruitment of more than 225 undergraduate and graduate students as judges for on-campus contests hosted for elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and colleges/universities – for a total of 150+ UHFS judges
- Participation in five community service projects at the Depelchin Children's Orphanages and the Star of Hope Mission
- Hosting ten forensic contests for collegiate and K-12 school students, featuring more than 3,000 students from 100+ schools
- Representation of UH in 24 national-level speech/debate contests
- Provision of forensic judges and academic directors for eight U.I.L. District Meet(s) and TFA/HUDL contests throughout Greater Houston
- Receiving nine National finalist awards – including (1) a ranking of No. 5 in the U.S. at the Novice National Championships and (2) a ranking of No. 10 in the U.S. at the Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament.

Achievement of the Additional FY12 Objectives

- *Additional Objective - Development of Open Houses for At-Risk High School Students*

Three day-long open house sessions were hosted/taught by UHFS members for 90+ students from Jones H.S., Sharpstown H.S., and Worthing H.S. Over 80% of the students attending each of these schools live beneath the poverty level – and do not know how to apply for financial aid for college attendance.

The overwhelming success of these open houses inspire the UHFS to host additional open house sessions FY13.

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- *Additional Objective - Expansion of Debate Offerings and Competition in Collegiate Debate Events*

The UHFS has been very successful in adding additional debate offerings for students who represent UH in National completion.

In FY12, students from the UHFS competed in Lincoln-Douglas Debate – and earned two berths in the National Forensic National Championships in this form of debate.

Similarly, a team of students from the UHFS competed in Public Forum Debate at the Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament in March 2012– and was awarded 2nd Place in the U.S. at this National Championship.

Finally, the UHFS entered International Parliamentary Debate Association for the first time in FY13 – and won 1st Place at a regional debate tournament.

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4. 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 and the satisfaction level of those served. Please provide the method for collecting these data.

Achievement of FY2013 Objectives and Their Relative Importance

For this tenth full year of our organization, the three original objectives are undoubtedly the most important ones we determined to pursue as our year began.

We are extremely pleased with our success in achieving our initial objectives. Because the current Forensic Society celebrated its tenth anniversary this past June – we are amazed at the extreme diversity of student involvement and the number of individuals served both on-campus as well as throughout Texas. More than 8,000 individuals benefit each year from our on-campus programs or elsewhere in the Houston community.

The diversity and level of involvement is explained by the following recap of our FY13 activities and objectives:

Objective – To attract a diverse group of students into a forensic organization.

Without question, the UHFS is one of the most diverse academic organizations on the UH Main Campus. Its members are well-represented by students from all academic backgrounds and disciplines.

The UHFS members who represent the University in competition have the following % breakdown:

Anglo American	-	30%
African American	-	30%
Middle Eastern	-	15%
Hispanic American	-	10%
Asian American	-	15%

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Objective – To initiate a series of community service opportunities for Team members.

Events held FY12 include:

- August 26-27, 2011 - Star of Hope Mission
Members served lunch to 175+ mothers and children at this shelter
- September 2-3, 2011 - Clear Springs H.S.
UHFS members served as judges at this debate tournament..
- November 16, 2011 - Jones H.S.
UHFS members presented hands-on experiences in financial aid and college applicaions
- November 25, 2011 - Depelchin Orphanage
10+ UHFS members performed improvisations for audiences.
- December 3, 2011 - Sharpstown H.S.
UHFS members served as judges at this speech/academic tournament.
- December 27, 2011 - Depelchin Orphanage
10+ UHFS members performed improvisations for audiences.
- January 27-28, 2012 - Pasadena Memorial H.S.
UHFS members served as judges at this speech/debate tournament.
- January 27-28, 2012 - Star of Hope Mission
Members served lunch to 175+ mothers and children at this shelter
- February 6-7, 2012 - Clements H.S.
UHFS members served as judges at this debate tournament.
- February 18, 2012 - Houston Urban Debate League
UHFS members served as judges at this City of Houston championship contest.
- March 23-24, 2012 - Fort Bend ISD U.I.L. Spring Meet
15+ UHFS members served as judges at this speech/debate tournament of the Houston I.S.D.
- April 11, 2012 - South Texas N.F.L. District
10+ UHFS members served as judges at this national-qualifying Congress tournament.
- April 22, 2012 - Star of Hope Mission
Members served lunch to 150+ mothers and children at this shelter.

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Objective – To host a series of contests and workshops for students in K-12 schools, and universities.

With maintenance of the following calendar of events, the UH Main Campus is now the most active collegiate sponsor of speech/debate/theatre contests in Texas:

September 9-11 , 2011 – The UH Main Campus and LSU @ Baton Rouge co-sponsored The Ninth Annual UH/LSU National Invitation Tournament, featuring 140+ contestants who represented 15 universities from throughout the U.S.

October 13, 2011 – The Third Annual UH Fall Speech & Interpretation Contest for Elementary Schools was held on the UH Main Campus. Roughly 60+ students and faculty from 8 Texas schools participated.

January 13, 2012– Business Etiquette Presentation for UH Career Services on the UH Main Campus

February 17-19, 2012 – The UH Main Campus hosted The David A. Thomas Cougar Classic Natl. College Tournament. Roughly 150 students and faculty from 20+ universities participate.

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March 7, 2012 – The Third Annual Black History Speech/Interpretation Contest for Elementary Schools was held on the UH Main Campus – bringing an estimated 60 students and faculty to the UH Campus.

April 11, 2012 – The South Texas Natl. Forensic League Congress Tournament was held on the UH Main Campus. Approximately 300+ students and faculty from 25+ Texas high schools competed for berths in the National championship.

April 13-14, 2012 – The UH Middle School Forensic Tournament was held, bringing 300 + faculty, staff, and students to the UH Main Campus.

May 16, 2012 – The UHFS hosted The Seventh Annual UH Speech and Elementary School Speech & Interpretation Contest, bringing 50+ students, faculty, and parents to the UH Main Campus.

June & July 2012 – Six week-long speech/theatre camps were held for elementary and middle schools, bringing 230+ students (grades 3-8) to the UH Main Campus.

Status of Other FY12 Objectives

PLEASE SEE THE ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTIONS INCLUDED IN ANSWER 3 FOR THE STATUS/SUCCESSES IN THE OTHER FY12 OBJECTIVES OF THE UH FORENSIC SOCIETY.

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5. Please discuss any budget changes from your last (FY2012) request, their impact on your programs, and your reason for implementing them.

With 200 undergraduate and graduate students already hosting this year's on-campus contests, participating in community service activities, and competing in national contests, the SFAC funds allocated for FY2012 have been vital to the organization's growth and maintenance.

The FY07 base augmentation for student office workers has truly helped growth of the organization. The ability of the UHFS to maintain a student office staff has provided a level of continuity not available during FY05. Likewise, the SFAC Base Allocation has enabled an Assistant Director of Forensics (i.e. Director of Community Outreach) to be hired on a permanent basis, offering additional direction of on-campus events and coaching/management of UHFS members

Reduction in FY13 SFAC Funds and the Significant Decrease in Contests for the UHFS

THE FY13 FUNDS IN TOTAL – FROM BASE AMOUNTS AND ONE TIME ALLOCATION – HAVE DECREASED BY \$63,731. A DECREASE OF THIS MAGNITUDE HAS CAUSED A 35% REDUCTION OF THE NO. OF CONTESTS THE UHFS CAN ENTER IN 2012-2013. SUCH A REDUCTION WILL MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE THE NATIONAL RANKING (TOP TWENTY TEAMS) EARNED BY THE UH IN THE LAST THREE YEARS.

The one-time allocations for each of the two preceding years have enabled UH to achieve National rankings of Top Twenty in the U.S.:

One Time Allocation FY11: \$ 90,287

One Time Allocation FY12: \$136,828

The specific contests/locations that UH cannot attend because of current funding – which includes no one time allocation FY13 - include the following:

Seton Hall University (NJ)

Cal. State University of Northridge (CA)

Cameron University (OK)

University of Utah (UT)

Natl. Forensic Assn. Nationals (OH)

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6. Please list your 2013-2014 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order. Larger units may wish to group your response by subprogram. Under each objective, state the specific action steps (programs, activities, services, policies/procedures, etc.) you implemented to accomplish your stated initiative.

IT IS GIVEN THAT THE ORIGINAL THREE UHFS OBJECTIVES (DISCUSSED IN THE RESPONSE TO QUESTION 4) WILL REMAIN CORNERSTONES OF OUR ORGANIZATION. THEREFORE, THE FOLLOWING REFLECTS OUR ANNUAL EVENTS AND INITIATIVES FOCUSED ON TWO STRATEGIES OF THE DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS :

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

In order to create new opportunities each year for UH students, new speeches/performances must be created each year – with opportunities to compete with these new performances throughout the U.S. Such performances always create new opportunities to learn, engage, and discover various philosophies of academicians throughout the U.S. With this initiative in mind, plans are made for UHFS members to participate in the following contests:

- San Francisco State University (September 2012)
- Lone Star College @ Kingwood (October 2012)
- Colorado College (October 2012)
- West Chester University (January 2013)
- Prairie View A & M University (February 2013)
- Novice National Championships (March 2013)
- Pi Kappa Delta National Tournament (March 2013)

The UHFS wishes to add more opportunities to maintain its Top Twenty National rankings awarded FY12, but cannot attend more contests with current levels of funding.

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Strategic Initiative 3 – Foster the creation of a global learning community that actualizes and embraces inclusion while preparing students to become active citizens.

Volunteer and/or Judging Events

Roughly 20 events/efforts of the UHFS focus on this initiative. In FY13, there are three events scheduled at the Star of Hope Mission located seven minutes from the UH Main Campus. In each of these events, UHFS members transport, cook, and serve lunches to 175+ homeless mothers and children.

Two other performances/events are planned for the Depelchin Orphanage. In each of these performances, UHFS members perform for and with teenagers – who will likely not be adopted due to their ages.

Finally, 15+ other events are ones where UHFS members visit, teach, and/or judge speech/debate contests for K-12 schools in the Greater Houston community. The current organization is filled with extremely talented students, but the lack of a two full-time directors prevents successful recruitment efforts of academically-qualified high school students. More importantly, the UH Forensic Society can only attend one contest on a given weekend **and** must pay huge judging fees due to there not being more than one qualified faculty judge.

Approximately 15 UHFS members participates in each of these 20+ events/efforts.

Hosting Events

Without question, the UHFS' members host educational and/or competitive events that enable UH students to become active citizens while they attend our institution.

20 annual events are hosted by the UHFS. In each case, UHFS members must provide 100% of the organization, logistics, teaching, and/or judging of the individual participating each year including two National invitation collegiate events, a National qualifying event for Greater Houston high school students, and three open house events for at-risk high school students. The total number of participants averages app. 2,000+ people of all ages.

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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.)?

Other possible sources of funding include the following:

- Proceeds from intercollegiate forensic contests
- Proceeds from on-campus contests for secondary schools
- Revenues from summer institutes and workshops
- Donations raised in an annual alumni fund drive
- Grants supporting bi-lingual (Spanish) opportunities for children

Since the UHFS was re-established, the above sources of funding have raised roughly \$44,000 to date. This represents an annual increase of 84%+ over amounts raised in FY2004. Specific efforts to utilize these sources have generated the following amounts and/or plans:

- On September 7-9, the UHFS co-hosted The Tenth Annual UH/LSU Swing Natl. Invitation Tournaments on the UH Main Campus. Roughly 120 students and faculty members from 12 colleges/universities participated.
- On Friday-Sunday, February 15-17, The Annual David A. Thomas Cougar Classic National Invitation Tournament will be co-hosted with Rice University (Houston). This event is expected to bring over 150 students/faculty to the UH Main Campus.
- On Friday-Saturday, April 13 & 14, The Eighth Annual UH Forensic Tournament for Middle Schools will be held. This event is expected to bring over 400 students/faculty to the UH Main Campus.

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Other Efforts to Locate/Obtain Funds

In addition to on-campus contests, other plans/efforts to obtain funds include the following:

- The Sixth Annual University of Houston Summer Forensic Institute was held in June and July. More than 230+ elementary/middle school students attending our sixth summer institute in the Summer of 2012, generating app. \$11k in revenue.
- Ongoing efforts are planned to pursue grants and endowments for events on the UH Main Campus. We have set a FY14 goal of raising \$1,000 in alumni donations.

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

There are no other units or organizations on the University of Houston Main Campus that provide the services and opportunities offered by the UHFS.

Specifically, this organization is unique in its focus on providing opportunities which enable development and application of speech/debate/teaching skills in all of the following areas:

Competing

- Preparing/coaching competitors to represent UH in 20+ regional contests
- Representing the UH in national collegiate competition throughout the U.S.

Volunteering

- Performing community services in homeless shelters & orphanages
- Mentoring and coaching inner-city schools
- Providing judges for high school and middle school contests
- Assisting/coaching other UH student organizations for public speeches
- Making recruiting presentations about UHFS to Greater Houston high schools

Hosting

- Hosting seven on-campus contests for Texas K-12 school students
- Offering six low-cost summer programs for elementary/middle school students
- Hosting national championship contests for collegiate forensic competitors
- Making recruiting presentations about UHFS to Greater Houston high schools
- Hosting four open house sessions for at-risk high school students – with emphasis on college attendance and financial aid opportunities.