

Student Fees Advisory Committee

REPORT FY 2015 (2014-2015)

Compiled by Taylor Vigil, Chair of the Activities Funding Board

Question # 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 purpose of the AFB shall be to administer the 1% mandatory Student Service Fee allocation under SFAC bylaws. The AFB allocates funding to registered student organization for the purposes of maximizing programming at University of Houston (UH).

Activities Funding Board described in simplest terms is the agency that gives every student the opportunity to direct events on campus, and to represent us at conferences regionally and internationally.

Here at AFB, we strive to allocate our portion of the student service fee into the hands of registered student organizations that have shown proper planning, innovative ideas, and a desire to benefit the University of Houston campus. We want to see organization success not only for the general populace but any and all sub-divisions according to major, interests, and cultures. Our vision is to better campus life, and to encourage human investment in the University by promotion of our vast student organizations.

In order to give all parts of the University a fair chance at funding, we vigorously market ourselves in mediums visible to registered student organizations and students at large. Aside from giving presentations at RSO meetings, we encourage all student organizations to contact us personally and advertise workshops detailing the funding process along with sessions that model the characteristics of a successful and beneficial RSO event.

A clear distinction we make is that our funding is not for the benefit of an organizations general budget, but instead for the support of general on campus programming or the attendance at RSO related conferences. In addition, we fund under SFAC guidelines along with other constraints as depicted in our bylaws, to ensure that the money is utilized to benefit the student body and campus.

AFB's funding process is optimized to be as smooth and quick as possible, with safeguards installed to ensure the campus benefits from all expenditures. By supporting extra and co-curricular events we spur the growth of all communities within the college. In addition we approve conference attendance so that our students can receive leadership development from their regional and state chapters. Each RSO on campus can request a maximum of \$2,500 per academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer). \$1,000 of this maximum can be used on attending conferences, and is taken out of the maximum allocation (ex. If 1,000 is used for conferences, then the RSO still has 1,500 for programs). It is important to note that RSO's do not automatically receive 2,500, but it is the maximum amount they can ask for and the maximum amount we can allocate for them. When requesting funds, the said program must take place during that semester. There is a \$400 cap for advertising (Daily Cougar ads, flyers, banners, etc.) included within the total \$2500 that may be approved.

Maximizing the amount of funds given to RSOs requires the student chairs to manage the AFB website, which contains all of our contact information, a concise but detailed account of the funding process, downloadable copies of the necessary forms, along with scheduled hearings and workshops. To inform people of our services and to direct them to our website, AFB utilizes several sources of advertisement; the *Daily Cougar*, the Center for Student Involvement listserv, and Organization Registration Orientations , as well as attending Frontier Fiesta Connection meetings and Homecoming Informational Meetings to promote AFB and its purposes. Both AFB student chairs are ready to provide one-on-one assistance to student leaders in order to move them through the reimbursement process without delays. Additional information about the funding process and our contact information can be obtained from our website at www.uh.edu/afb

AFB prioritizes and structures our workshops and hearings to meet the needs of organizations at the beginning of the semester. We schedule our hearings on Wednesdays for the first five weeks of the academic semester, then as the flow of requests slow down mid semester, hearings are held every other week. At these hearings are used to review and evaluate the allocation requests made by the RSOs. One of the top three officers of the RSO must attend to represent their organization and make a presentation to us. The AFB board in attendance consists of three SGA-appointed committee members and both the Chair and Vice Chair. After the presentation the committee members vote whether to approve or deny, it is only when committee members are absent that AFB chairs can step in to vote. This is to uphold separation of powers between branches. During the hearings the AFB members consider cost, overall impact on the UH community, target audience, event preparation, the organization's past programming success, scope of the event, timing, ability to carry out the program, and mission of the organization. In order to be eligible for funding from AFB, a student organization's program must be open to all UH students, staff and faculty and must benefit the UH community as a whole. The registered student organizations provide a program outline to detail the general event or conference information, such as who, what, when and where the event will be.

Summed up in one sentence, AFB uses its funds to **make stuff happen**. More and more organizations are taking advantage of our available funds and directing events on campus which draw in our student population, encouraging interaction, the diffusion of knowledge and culture and most of all Cougar Pride.

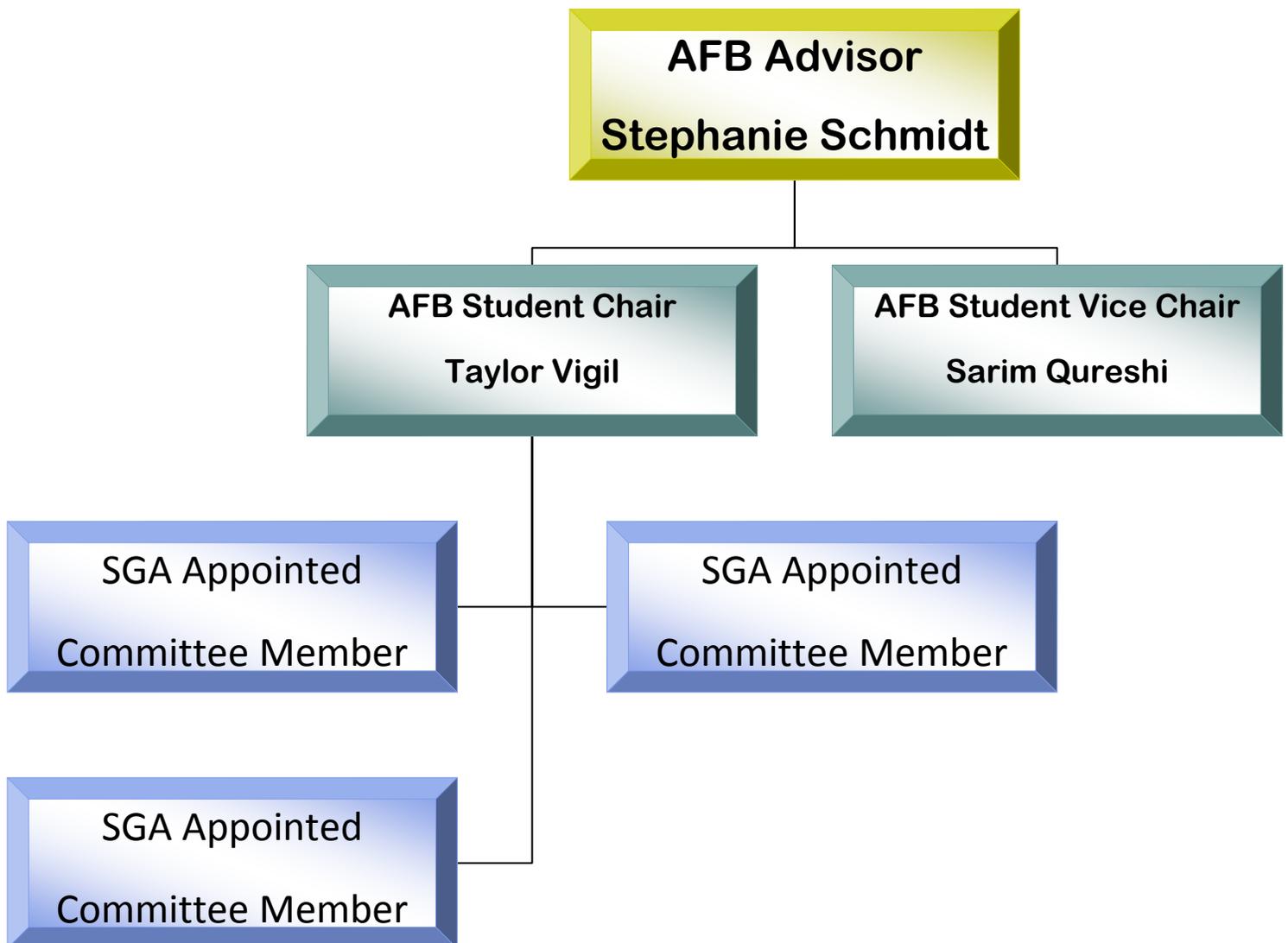
With an increase in the amount of students living on campus, on campus programming is a necessity to keep students invested. AFB makes that happen.

Question # 2

Provide an organization chart of 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.

I. AFB Structure

Our organization layout, staff roles and their responsibilities.



Roles

AFB Advisor

Rommel Abad – Assistant Director at the Center of Student Involvement

Stephanie Schmidt (Interim advisor)- Associate Director at the Center for Student Involvement

Paid Position

Major Areas of Responsibility:

- Approving and signing allocation requests expenditure requests.
- Ensure compliance of University Financial Guidelines
- Provide support with AFB budgets and ledgers.
- Assisting the chairs with preparing the SFAC reports.
- Supervising the work of the chairs.
- Advising all AFB policies and procedures.
- Advising both chairs.
- Attending board hearings.

AFB Student Chair

Taylor Vigil

Paid Position

Major Areas of Responsibility :

- Maintain and update all AFB budget request forms
- Prepare and photocopy all materials for AFB meetings
- Type Award Notices for Student Organizations
- Prepare reimbursement documents
- Assist with any questions or problems that may occur about funding
- Prepare monthly financial reports for AFB
- Maintain database of all programs or conferences approved for funding
- Maintain record and files for funded student organizations
- Assist groups in finding other sources of funding, if unable to help through AFB
- Update and manage AFB website.
- Recommend policy and procedure changes

- Meet weekly with AFB Advisor
- Run Allocations workshops
- Supervise marketing operations.

AFB Student Vice Chair

Sarim Qureshi

Paid Position

- Assist with the management of budget request forms.
- Communicate funding status to RSOs.
- Transcribe meeting minutes.
- Assist any questions or concerns RSOs have about the process.
- Assist with AFB database procedures.
- Update records and files in accordance with procedure.
- Meet weekly with AFB advisor.
- Run marketing for AFB.
- Assist with SFAC report.

AFB Committee Members

SGA Appointed

Unpaid Position

- Attend all hearings.
- Be informed of funding criteria and general funding constraints.
- Make judicial decisions in a committee vote after every hearing.

Question # 3

List the objectives that you provided with your 2012-2013 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.

Strategic Initiative # 1 Improve officer transition with both Chair and Vice-Chair

DSA2.2 Execute an effective operating plan of existing fiscal, human, technological and facility resources in support of student success.

Goal 1: Create a training manual for Vice-Chair

- A. Work in coordination with the current vice-chair to create a comprehensive training manual.
 - *Status: Completed/ Ongoing*
- B. Split tasks from Chair to Vice-Chair to improve efficiency.
 - *Status: Completed/ Ongoing*
- C. Continue to encourage each fee-funded group to appoint an AFB member and backup board member to ensure that each AFB hearing has quorum.
 - *Status: Changed due to Student Government Association appointed members*
 - Through recommendations of the AFB Task Force, AFB members were appointed through Student government association.

Goal 2: Improve the training manual for the Chair

- A. Add duties and provide file information to provide more concrete information.
 - *Status: Completed/ Ongoing*
- B. Make sure everything is completely up to date in regards to the most current forms and funding policies and procedures.
 - *Status: Completed/ Ongoing*

Goal 3: Setup workshops to transition both chairs at the same time to increase communication

- A. Make suggestions on funding policies and procedures from the year's information.

- *Status: Completed*
- B. Help plan out the tasks needing to take place through the summer as it is significantly less busy.
- *Status: Completed*
- C. Help provide a calendar and timetable to have certain tasks done.
- *Status: Completed/ Ongoing and found on AFB website*

Strategic Initiative # 2 Marketing

DSA 4.2 Establish and implement a series of reporting procedures for the purpose of demonstrating measurable outcomes and data to demonstrate a collective contribution to student success.

Goal 1: Send out emails through the individual college and activities listserv

- A. At least 2 times per semester prepare an email to send out through listservs.
- *Status: Completed*
 - AFB information was sent through the RSO leadership listserv
- B. Advertise through use of the new coog newsletter emailed out to students.
- *Status: Completed*
 - AFB information was advertised in the University newsletter once for Fall 2013
- C. Advertise successful programs at organization registrations.
- *Status: Changed due to organization registration structure*
 - Organization Registration meetings were run through CSI and we had to condense our information down

Goal 2: Improve marketing for all “funded” AFB programs

- A. Ensure that registered student organizations are properly displaying the AFB logo on their marketing media such as flyers, facebook, posters, etc
- *Status: Ongoing*
- B. Determine different avenues for the programs being funded by AFB are highlighted to the entire UH community

- *Status: Ongoing*
- Worked with various student organizations on different on-campus locations to accommodate more student organizations

Goal 3: Continue to improve AFB Website

- A. Make the website as efficient as possible to explain a step by step process to receiving funding.
- *Status: Completed/ Ongoing*
 - The website is constantly undergoing change to make information more concise and now includes information on how to obtain a tax identification number and how to open a bank account
- B. Make funding guidelines more visible to avoid conflict.
- *Status: Completed/ Ongoing*
 - Bylaws are included on the AFB website and also on the AFB collegiate link page

Strategic Initiative # 3 More accessibility to AFB forms.

DSA 2.2 Execute an effective operating plan of existing fiscal, human, technological and facility resources in support of student success.

Goal 1: Allocation forms submitted through the use of get involved.

- A. Continue to develop the Allocation form to be filled out and submitted online.
- *Status: Completed*
 - Online application is available on collegiate link
- B. Work with general counsel office to allow for online authentication of the top 3 officer.
- *Status: Changed*
 - General counsel office was unable to assist in this initiative

Goal 2: Direct people through the AFB website to get involved.

- A. Add a link to the online application to avoid office visits.
- *Status: Completed/ Ongoing with online form*
 - Online forms is launched through collegiate link and submitted online

Question # 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, the satisfaction level of those served, and/or any other assessment measures evaluated. Please provide the method for collecting this data.

Funding for AFB is one of the best investments on campus because we guarantee student lead activity on campus, with the addition of new students and the efforts of our chairs we create large avenues of growth for quality on-campus programming. For instance, in FY 12 we:

- Reimbursed **\$37,470** on **40 on-campus programs**, on average **\$933.50**
 - Landmark Events: **\$22,466** on Frontier Fiesta. **\$3,802** on GrillFest.
- Reimbursed **\$43,844.06** on **51 on travel-related conferences**

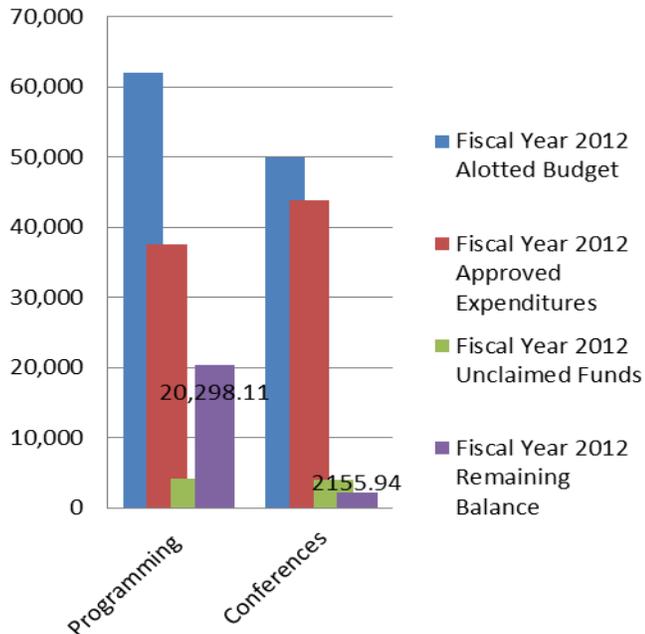
With new strategies implemented the next year by the AFB board and task force in FY 13 we:

- Reimbursed **\$50,488** on **50 on-campus programs**, on average **\$1009.76**
 - Land Mark Events: **\$25,650** on Frontier Fiesta. **\$4,000** on GrillFest.
- Reimbursed **\$39,634.60** on **45 travel-related conferences**

We get our data from of processed RSO folders, where the allocated and awarded monies are listed. In addition to this, we have begun implementing an online survey through Get Involved that is sent to these registered student organizations after they get their reimbursement. This survey measures several aspects of the success of AFB, including how RSOs felt about the funding process, what their event attendance was, and how they thought AFB contributed to the success of their event.

The next page contains detailed funding information from 2012 to 2013. Through our policies and new operations you can easily see the growth in funding on campus.

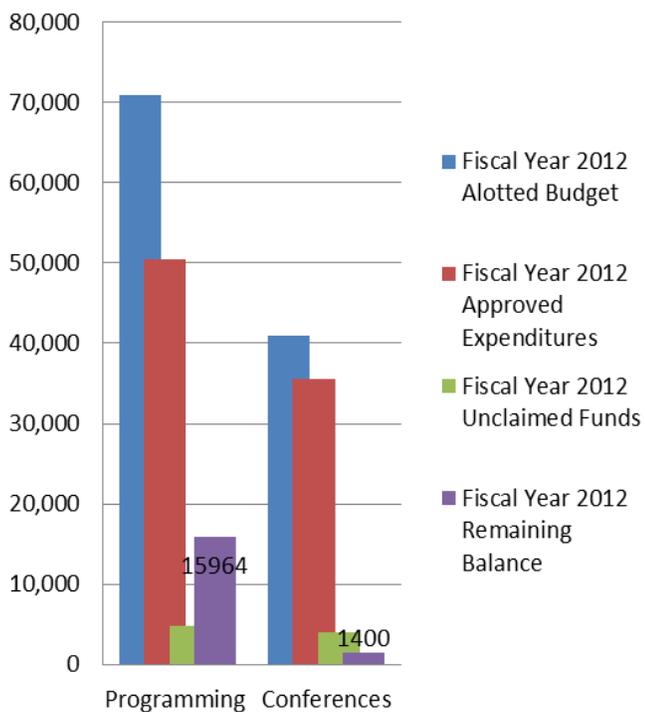
Fiscal Year 2012



Operating on 1 percent of the student fee, coming out to around \$147,000 AFB was able to reimburse student organizations roughly \$37,000 – leaving \$20,298 unused. However our conference budget of \$50,000 was spent to near completion.

Taking in account our main objective, we **shifted our next year's operations to marketing**, making sure more RSOs took advantage of funding for on campus programming. In addition we **reduced the conference budget** on account of recommendations from the AFB task force.

Fiscal Year 2013



Operating with the same one percent and \$147,000 budget as FY 12, AFB improved on its reimbursements. We reappropriated to make the programming budget larger and also increased marketing operations. These strategies lead to a **35% increase in programming funding**, leaving a smaller remaining balance of \$15,964. Conference funding as normal was almost fully utilized, hovering around 87%, a tiny drop from last year. **Fiscal year 2013 was successful in bringing growth to our funding and campus programming.**

Question # 5

Please discuss any budget changes experienced since your last (FY2013) 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 FY2013 with a Ledger 3 Fund Equity balance, please describe the conditions which caused the fund balance.

There have been no changes in the expected FY2014 budget.

AFB ended FY13 with a remaining balance of \$24,261. The main cause of this fund equity from fiscal year 13 is due to the requirement of organizations having to have a bank account and being a registered vendor with the University. This requirement also forces the student organization into having a bank account in the organization's name. In addition, the student organization is supposed to fax in the correct forms to the vendor setup department and if there is any incorrect information, the forms are returned via fax. This process halted the reimbursement process in multiple instances especially if the RSOs bank account was frozen for some reason.

AFB has taken on the burden of setting up most of these organizations through vendor setup and faxing in the correct forms. This process alone caused some organizations to not be eligible for funding as they were unable to setup a bank account through regulations from their national organizations. AFB decided that problems through the reimbursement process should not fall completely on the student organization as the AFB process is rather time consuming so we are reconciling missed reimbursements that happened at the end of the year due to the two weeks needed through the accounts payable process and the vendor setup.

Another cause of the fund equity is organizations being allocated funds beyond the receipts that they turned into the AFB office

The major change that will affect the AFB budget for fiscal year 14 is the 25% cap that will be enforced through recommendations by the AFB task force as a majority of the budget in past years was used on travel opposed to programming which does not conform to the mission of AFB.

As of August 31st, 2013 AFB fund equity balance in their SFAC Ledger 3 Cost Center was \$74,731.

Question # 6

Please list your 2014-2015 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they relate. Larger units may wish to group responses by subprogram. Under each strategic initiative, please state the specific action steps (programs, activities, services, policies/procedures, etc.) that you intend to implement to accomplish your stated initiative.

Strategic Initiative 1: Increased efficiency in AFB processes

DSA 4.2 Establish and implement a series of reporting procedures for the purpose of demonstrating measurable outcomes and data to demonstrate a collective contribution to student success.)

- Process mapping the complete AFB process for workflow
- Work closely with university departments to cut down on time taken to reimbursement and smoother reimbursement processes
- Move application process
- Survey student organizations on how to make the AFB process more accessible upon completion of reimbursement

Strategic initiative 2: Improve marketing

DSA 5.3 Develop a comprehensive and integrated communications plan to increase awareness and understanding among the Division, the campus community and the surrounding environments about who we are, what we do, and who we serve.

- Host additional workshops on how to use our funding with more example programs that were funded in the previous
- Gather additional data on the effectiveness of current marketing strategies (
- Disperse promotional items at the beginning of the fiscal year through on campus programs to entice more student organizations to apply for funding

Strategic Initiative 3: Increased AFB student participation

DSA 1.1 Develop a comprehensive First and Second Year Experience program inclusive of sequential, intentional, and structured co-curricular involvement opportunities.

- Increase organization in AFB to allow more student participation in the RSO programming
- Assist in RSO programming to bring attention to all future RSO programming
- Increase communication to add transparency to the current process and available funds

Question # 7

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

- The Activities Funding Board is a committee of the Student Fee Advisory Committee. One percent of all SFAC funds are dedicated to the Activities Funding Board each fiscal year. AFB does not have any other possible funding sources available.

Question # 8

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

Two additional funding sources are currently available to student organizations: Student Program Board (SPB) and Council of Ethnic Organizations (CEO). SPB limits its funding to programs that are sponsored by one of its committees or co-sponsored with another organization. CEO allocates funds for co-sponsorship of programs that are culturally diverse.

