

**ACTIVITIES FUNDING BOARD STUDENT FEE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT FY 2017
(2016-2017)**



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 Activities Funding Board (AFB) shall be to administer the 1% mandatory Student Service Fee allocation under SFAC bylaws. The AFB allocates funding to registered student organizations (RSO) for the purposes of maximizing programming at the University of Houston (UH). Activities Funding Board essentially is an agency of SFAC that gives every student organization the opportunity to direct events on campus, as well as represent the University of Houston at regional, state, and national conferences.

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 subdivisions 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.

A clear distinction we make is that our funding is not for the benefit of an organization's 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 stipulations as depicted in our bylaws, to ensure that the money is utilized to benefit the student body and campus. However, one of our biggest problems is that RSOs lack available funds to hold events that are not for their core benefit but are for engagement for the student body, and that is why we propose a funding grant process for quality events that is detailed further in this report.

AFB's new 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 to utilize for Programming). It is important to note that RSO's do not automatically receive \$2,500, but it is the maximum amount they can request and the maximum amount we can allocate to 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.) and a \$500 cap on food purchases. These amounts are included within the maximum \$2500 that may be approved.

Maximizing the amount of funds given to RSOs requires the top officers to navigate through 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.

Summed up in one sentence, AFB uses its funds so that student organizations can better engage students through campus programming. 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, culture and most of all Cougar Pride.

Question 2: 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.

Below you will find the organizational chart for the Activities Funding Board.



AFB Advisor – Donielle Miller

The AFB Advisor is responsible for;

- a) Approving Notice of Awards and Expenditure Requests with a signature
- b) Assisting with purchasing decisions and operations
- c) Consulting on day-to-day operations
- d) Mediating RSO complaints
- e) Working with the Chair on budget plans and budget management
- f) Providing oversight and advice at AFB hearings
- g) Ensuring that AFB operates within bylaws and follows SFAC recommendations

AFB Chair – Student Stipend Position - Sarim Qureshi

The Chair is responsible for:

- a) Consulting with RSO about AFB policies, procedures, and processes
- b) Be the presiding officer of the hearing committee meetings and coordinate the hearing committee dates
- c) Train the hearing committee members
- d) Maintain and update AFB committee training manual
- e) Maintain and update AFB Chair training manual
- f) Provide explanation of reimbursement procedures
- g) Compile paperwork to complete expenditure request forms to turn into Student Life Business Office.
- h) Maintain financial records along with case file management for all allocation requests
- i) Collaborate with the CSI Financial Coordinator and student life business office to effectively reimburse the RSOs
- j) Assist RSOs with financial documents
- k) Stay up-to-date with most current finance policies and procedures
- l) Represent AFB and report to SFAC committee
- m) Maintain financial records and data for SFAC presentation and questionnaire
- n) Answer and respond to correspondence from RSOs
- o) Provide customer service and problem resolution for RSOs with reimbursement process and or payment of on campus entities through AFB
- p) Work with financial entities from on-campus departments
- q) Effectively condense allocation and reimbursement information into one ledger, assuring that all money is spent according to the SFAC guidelines

Vice Chair – Student Stipend Position – Rajia Sandhu

The Vice Chair is responsible for:

- a) Answer and respond to correspondence from RSOs
- b) Assist in coordinating workshops for RSOs to learn and answer general questions about policies and procedures.
- c) Coordinate a campus-wide marketing campaign along with the Chair to further spread the knowledge of AFB services
- d) Update the AFB forms and content on the AFB website
- e) Attend and present at organizational fairs to market AFB to the RSO representatives
- f) Plan, execute, and manage the marketing plan for the current school year
- g) Organize an internal volunteer structure to help with operations

Communications Chair – Mary Wandera

The Communications Chair is responsible for:

- a) Create new files for incoming applications
- b) Email organizations and board members on hearing confirmations
- c) Manage the volunteer roster and sending out news
- d) Update our social media pages
- e) Contact marketing resources
- f) Organize and archive operational receipts
- g) Compile survey results and workshop RSVPs
- h) Compile measurement data from post-event surveys

Committee Members – SGA Appointed: Marcel Joffe, Stephen Cunningham,

- a) Attend AFB hearings and hear funding request presentations from RSOs
- b) Address questions to RSOs at the hearing to understand the program/conference's benefit
- c) Deliberate after discussion with the Chair, Vice Chair, Communications Chair and Advisor
- d) Lead and train AFB Volunteer Operations

Question 3: List your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2014-2015 academic year and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services (DSAES) Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they relate (links below). Please comment on your success in achieving these strategic initiatives/action steps. If a strategic initiative/action step changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new strategic initiatives/action steps, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these items.

Objective 1: Increased Efficiency in AFB Processes

- Create streamlined workflows as process standard for all integral AFB tasks; (DSAES Strategic Initiative 2b: Execute an effective operating plan of existing fiscal, human, technological and facility resources in support of student success.)
 - **COMPLETED** – Created new workflow for AFB chair and vice chair through calendaring system which increased efficiency by reducing duplication of work.
- Continue working with University departments & organizations to cut down on reimbursement time and achieve smoother reimbursement processes; (DSAES Strategic Initiative 5d: Expand the opportunities for staff involvement in division-wide initiatives, programs, and services.)
 - **IN PROGRESS** – Advisor Donielle Miller, CSI Director Tina Powellson, and VP Keith Kowalka have met with business services to discuss improvements on the AFB process.

- Establish a communications timeline to have a proactive approach for pertinent information for each organization.

(DSAES 4b Determine how/when to optimize human interaction between Division staff, students and University partners while employing technology to enable the timely retrieval and use of accurate information to address routine inquiries.)

- **COMPLETED** – Enhanced folder tracking system to include communication timeline, ended the paper allocation request forms, implemented the use of Get Involved to hold Allocation Requests, gather information and as a point of first contact from RSOs.
- Create a comprehensive event rubric to reduce subjectivity in AFB decisions
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 2b: Execute an effective operating plan of existing fiscal, human, technological and facility resources in support of human success.)
 - **IN PROGRESS** – Editing Rubric to include new processes such as Grants, also incorporating an AFB event review score which will factor into future requests from that organization.
- Implement AFB post-process and event evaluation measures through volunteers and RSO feedback.
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 4c: 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.)
 - **IN PROGRESS** – Survey extended to Student Organizations who complete AFB process. Began committee development to create Event Liaisons who attend funded events.
Summary: Of the responses collected results returned:
 - AFB allocation process was not difficult but the reimbursement process after event completion was confusing.
 - Organizations were not satisfied with the amount of time it took to receive reimbursements.
 - Organizations reported increased issues with AFB Communication.**Responses:**
 - AFB has been working with our advisor to address reimbursement issues
 - With only two positions AFB was not able to effectively manage over 100 cases and maintain optimum customer service the addition of the AFB Communications Chair will address the issues with AFB Communication.

Objective 2: Improve AFB Marketing

- Utilize the board and volunteer structure to ensure AFB representation and marketing at every large University sanctioned event.
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 5c: 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.)
 - **IN PROGRESS** – AFB’s New Marketing Campaign includes 4 new promotional items: Tumbler, Portable Charger, Notebooks, Pens. Increase funding seminars to 3 per semester. Flyer distribution for information sessions along with Yard Signs/Information Displays. AFB also attended Cat’s Back and passed out flyers

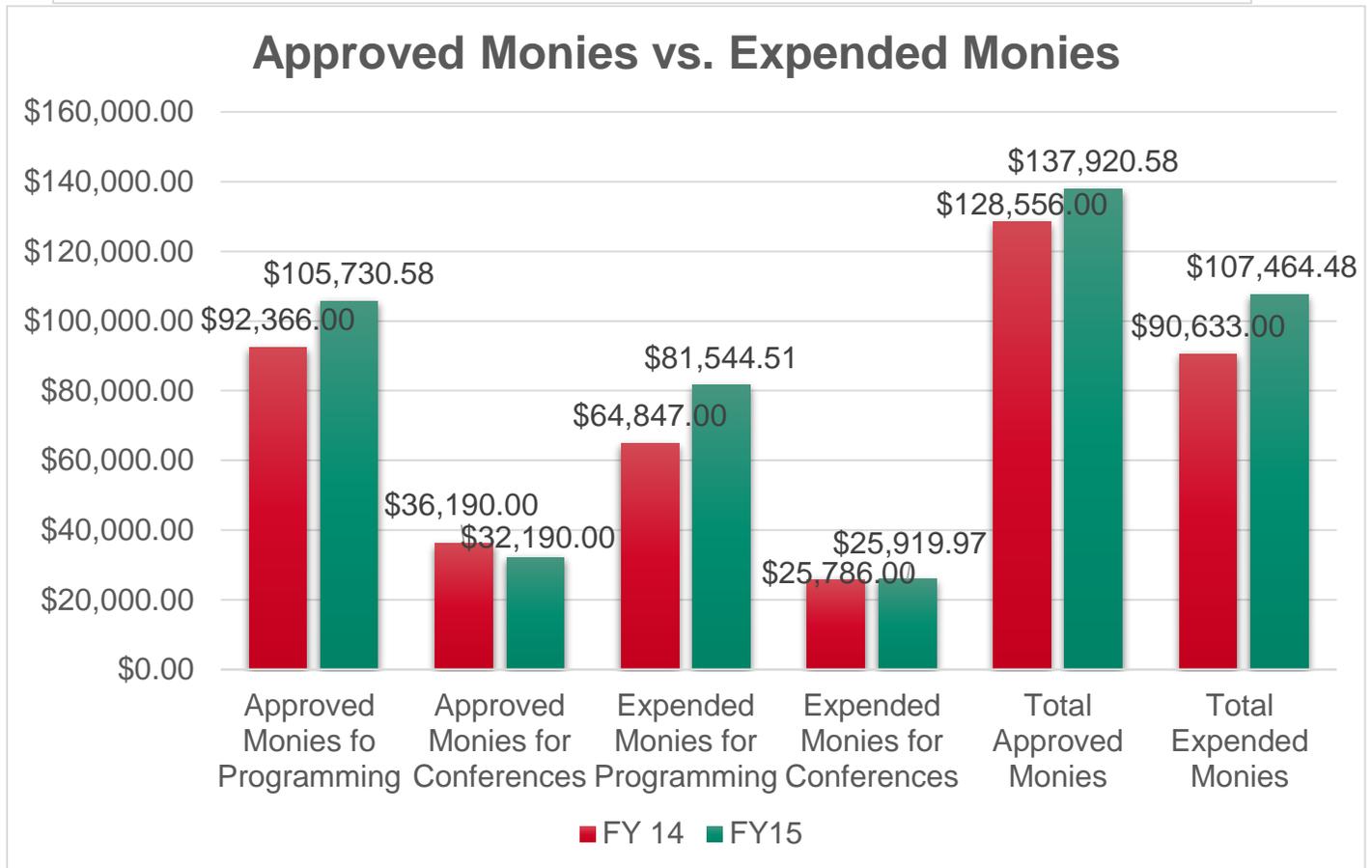
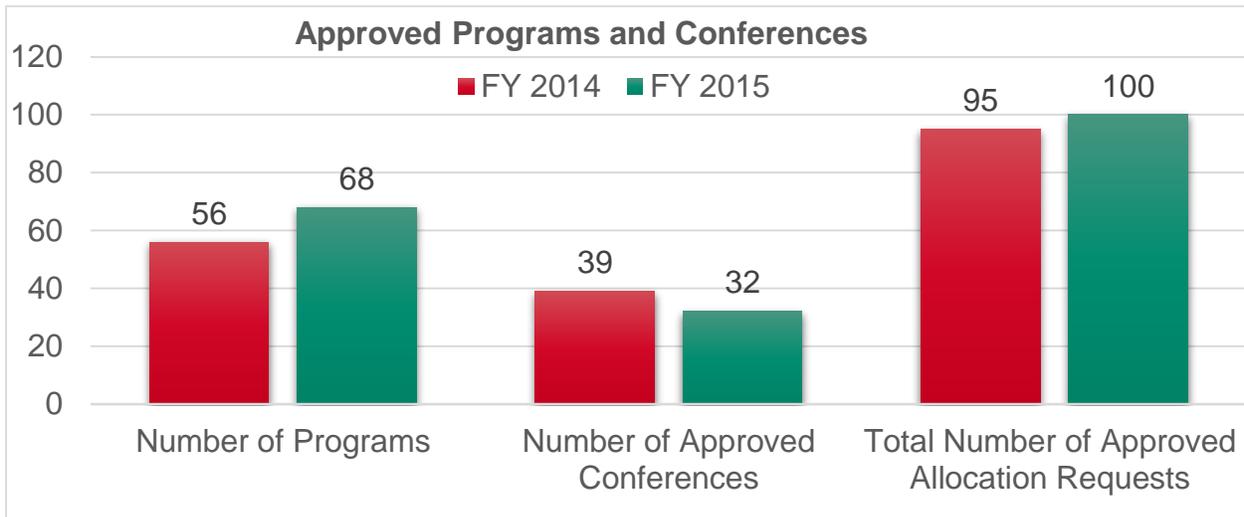
- Research and produce a promotional timeline that best sources and disburses AFB promotional items to achieve the greatest contact with students.
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 5c: Develop a comprehensive and integrated communications plan to increase awareness and understanding among the Division, the campus community and the surrounding environments about who we are, what we do, and who we serve.)
 - **COMPLETED** – AFB purchased and distributed promotional materials to student leaders in order to garner brand awareness from the Registered Student Organization community.
- Increase the number of AFB funding workshops and event planning seminars.
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 1d: Create a greater variety of student involvement activities that focus on the development of a vibrant campus life, including expanded evening and weekend programs.)
 - **COMPLETED** – Increased Funding Seminars
 - AFB held 50% more funding seminars (Previously on held two per academic year increased to four). Attendance of funding seminars increased from average of 6 students to an average of 17 students.
- Survey the effectiveness of marketing measures with participating RSOs.
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 4c: 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.)
 - **IN PROGRESS** – Marketing outreach will be included on Post-Process survey.

Objective 3: Increased AFB Support

- Create the grant process, where AFB pays for event invoices before the event, as an alternative to the reimbursement process.
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 1d: Create a greater variety of student involvement activities that focus on the development of a vibrant campus life, including expanded evening and weekend programs.)
 - **IN PROGRESS** – Reached agreement with Business Services for process for funding event grants – all that is left is SFACs approval.
- Provide RSOs with complimentary event planning and marketing guides to increase planned campus vibrancy.
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 1d: Create a greater variety of student involvement activities that focus on the development of a vibrant campus life, including expanded evening and weekend programs.)
 - **IN PROGRESS** – Information sessions now include event planning and marketing guides with information obtained from other Fee-Funded organizations such as SPB, CEO, and FF.
- Expand on the consultative funding process to encourage collaboration with multiple student groups and the hosting of larger events.
(DSAES Strategic Initiative 1d: Create a greater variety of student involvement activities that focus on the development of a vibrant campus life, including expanded evening and weekend programs.)
 - **COMPLETED** – Created educational materials that encouraged collaboration between student organizations.

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.

Activities Funding Board has done its job to complete satisfaction, when the entirety of our budget for programming and conferences has been approved and expended to student organizations, which are planning and holding events that are recognized as quality by AFB's deliberation. To measure our current performance in relation to complete satisfaction, we look at the amount of programs and conferences that were approved, the money that was approved to them, and the amount that was expended. This in combination with AFB Liaisons will give us an idea how much money from the Student Service Fee, is going to what amount of quality programming at our campus. The aforementioned statistics for FY 14 and FY 15 are listed below.



Performance Statements

AFB has been working with organizations to plan and encourage larger events which take advantage of the other categories that AFB can approve; the most used categories would be food and advertising, this past year we saw success in creating collaboration with the College of Engineering/Technology Grillfest – where the total approval amounted to \$12,500 from 5 different RSOs. One major discrepancy between the amount of approved funds and the actual amount expended to student organization remains, which is unused approved funding:

Unused approved funding is a standard funding gap that has existed every year, for the following reasons:

- Organizations are approved for funds in slight excess, to provide cushion in case there are unexpected increases in the price of programming operations.
- AFB continues to have issues with student organizations turning in valid receipts and spending the entire allotted award. Since then AFB has improved the clarity of receipt requirements when giving the organizations information after their approval.

AFB has not been impacted by any budget changes in the last two years. The main cause of the fund equity for fiscal year 15 is unused (but approved funding) Unused approved funding is normal and has existed every year, FY 15 unused approved funding is broken down below.

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| FY 15 Unused Funding (The difference of Approved & Expended Monies) | \$42,131.76 |
| - Student Organization failed to host event / no submission of any receipts: | \$12,247.02 |
| - Funding Cushion + Missing Receipts + Program Limitations: | \$14,341.92 |
| - Late Payments: | \$10,046.50 |
| - Unused Salary + Unused Operation Funding: | \$5,496.32 |

- o Funding Cushion: Funding approval given in excess of adequate to address unexpected costs in various programming categories.
- o Missing Receipts: Receipts for approved categories that were not turned in.
- o Program Limitations: Program was approved for a larger amount in additional categories but use was not attempted due to the organizations lack of time, connections or monetary resources.
- o Late Payments: Business Office unable to complete payments during FY15

Question 6: *Please list your 2016-2017 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services 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*

The Activities Funding Board outlines it 2016-2017 goals below

- Continue working with University departments & organizations to cut down on reimbursement time and achieve smoother reimbursement processes.
 - o (DSAES Strategic Initiative 5d: Expand the opportunities for staff involvement in division-wide initiatives, programs, and services.)
 - o Action Steps:
 - Implement Grant Funding Process
 - Develop new process for Student Organization Vendor ID set-up
 - Streamline communication with Business Office and Student Organizations

- Create a comprehensive event rubric to reduce subjectivity in AFB decisions
 - (DSAES Strategic Initiative 2a: Execute an effective operating plan of existing fiscal, human, technological and facility resources in support of human success.)
 - Action Steps
 - Research and determine appropriate measures to evaluate program effectiveness by attending funded events
 - Educate AFB committee members on measures
- Implement AFB post-process and event evaluation measures through volunteers and RSO feedback.
 - (DSAES Strategic Initiative 4c: 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.)
 - Action Steps:
 - Edit current post process survey
 - Recruit and Train volunteers to evaluate approved events
- Utilize the board and volunteer structure to ensure AFB representation and marketing at every large University sanctioned event.
 - (DSAES Strategic Initiative 5c: 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.)
 - Action Steps:
 - Ensure AFB is present at large events by mandating attendance my chairs
 - Recruit and train volunteers to help chairs
- Survey the effectiveness of marketing measures with participating RSOs.
 - (DSAES Strategic Initiative 4c: 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.)
 - Action Steps
 - Add marketing questions to post-process survey

Question 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.)?*

The Activities Funding Board is an agency 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 services that are similar to yours and/or any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap*

Three 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. Additionally the Center for Diversity and Inclusion offers a programming grant to Registered Student Organizations. The Center for Diversity and Inclusion's program grant are limited to events and programs that highlight cultural competency or diversity awareness.