

**ACTIVITIES FUNDING BOARD STUDENT FEE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT FY 2021  
(2020-2021)**



***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 Activities Funding Board (AFB) is an agency of SFAC that administers 1% of the mandatory Student Service Fee allocation under SFAC bylaws. The Activities Funding Board allocates funding to registered student organizations (RSO) for the purposes of maximizing programming as well as helping RSOs represent the University of Houston at regional, state, and national conferences.

AFB strives 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. Our vision is to better campus life, by investing in our vast number of student organizations through their programs and events.

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 attendance at RSO related conferences. In addition, we fund under SFAC guidelines along with other stipulations as depicted in our policies, to ensure that the money is utilized to benefit the student body and campus. By supporting extra and co-curricular events and leadership development from conferences, we spur the growth of all communities within the university.

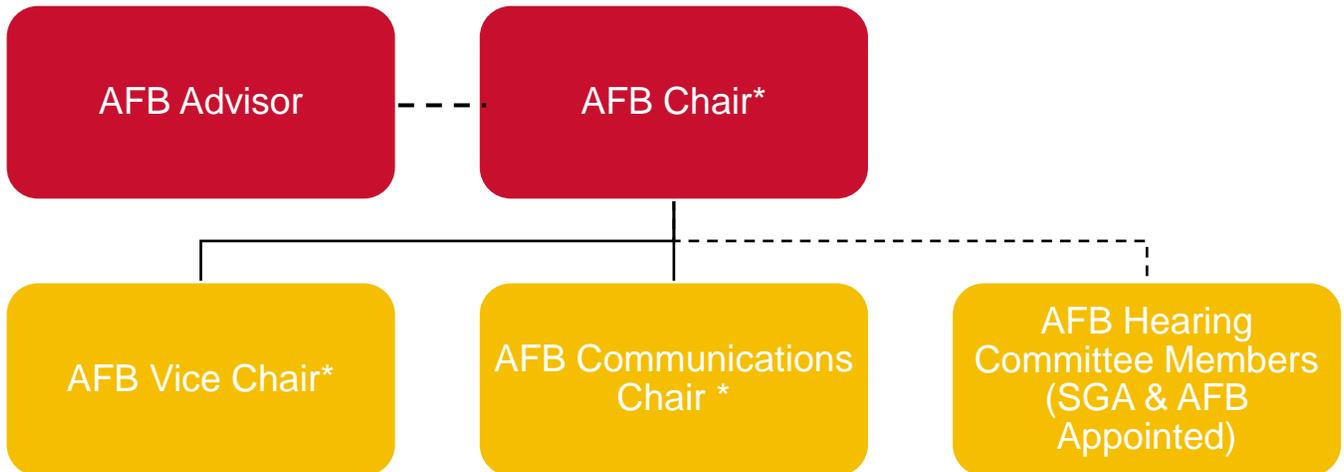
- Each RSO on campus can request a maximum of \$3,000 per academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer). \$1,000 of this maximum can be used on attending conferences and is taken out of the maximum allocation. If \$1,000 is used for conferences, then the RSO still has \$2,000 to utilize for programming. It is important to note that RSOs do not automatically receive \$3,000, but it is the maximum amount they can request and the maximum amount can be allocated to them.

Maximizing the amount of funds given to RSOs requires the top officers to navigate through the AFB website. The website contains the AFB officers' contact information, a concise but detailed account of the funding process, downloadable copies of necessary forms, as well as scheduled hearings and workshops. RSOs must also navigate the Finance tool within Get Involved through their organization's Get Involved page, which contains the application.

More and more organizations are taking advantage of our available funds and hosting events on campus which draw in our student population, encouraging interaction, the diffusion of knowledge, culture and most of all Cougar Pride. To better serve our student body, we have implemented an advance pay and direct pay process for quality events. This allows groups that lack available funds to host events to have a better opportunity to engage with the student body through their organization.

**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, advisor, etc.), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.

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



*\*University Sponsored Organization Leader*

**Question 3:** List your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2018-2019 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. 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.

- Continue working with University departments & organizations to cut down on reimbursement time and achieve smoother reimbursement processes.
  - Action Steps:
    - Create process to check on vendor ID status for each organization to catch errors earlier
      - Status: **In Progress**- AFB is continuously working with the university accounts payable department to attempt to ensure organizations are able to obtain vendor ID numbers. This is an ongoing effort as current policies have changed.
    - Review and Adjust Advance Pay Process
      - Status: **Ongoing**- AFB continues to implement and review the Advance Pay process to ensure that the process is running smoothly and efficiently for registered student organizations. We were able to successfully provide several organizations with advance pay this past year.

DSAES Strategic Initiative R3: Leverage and adapt resources in innovative ways to increase effective utilization.

UH Strategic Goal 2: UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.

- Explore the use of Get Involved for AFB funding requests. Get Involved has a finance feature that is currently not being the utilized. Although it does not have the ability to connect to our campus financial system this feature could be used to improve our process and keep track of requests.
  - Action Steps
    - Contact Engage/CampusLabs (Get Involved Application) to discuss feasibility
      - **Accomplished**- AFB implemented the finance feature that is offered through the Get Involved application in order to streamline the funding request process. This helped make the process easier for both student organizations and the AFB board.
    - Develop a plan to train and educate organizations on the process.
      - **Accomplished**- AFB created a finance manual for organizations to use that shows the step by step process completing the funding request process. Organizations were able to go directly to the AFB website and gain assistance with process.

DSAES Strategic Initiative R2: Pursue and develop resources to address identified gaps and needs.

UH Strategic Goal 5: UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision

- Implement AFB post-process and event evaluation measures through volunteers and RSO feedback.
  - Action Steps:
    - Edit current post process survey
      - Status: **Accomplished-** AFB was able to edit the post process survey to include the survey in the organization's purchase request that is completed in the Get Involved application. This allows for continuous survey results so that AFB may evaluate any consistent concerns.
    - Develop assessment to gain information as to why organizations do not apply for AFB Funding opportunities.
      - Status: **Accomplished/Ongoing-** AFB provided a survey to students to determine their level of knowledge of the Activities Funding Board and their desire/need for funding. We were able to see that students felt that AFB should market its services more and we updated many of our marketing practices to better showcase the organization. We will continue to make new updates to keep up with better marketing practices.

DSAES Strategic Initiative R2: Pursue and develop resources to address identified gaps and needs.

UH Strategic Goal 5: UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision

- Develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan for the growth of the Activities Funding Board
  - Action Steps:
    - Benchmark other funding boards at other institutions
      - Status: **Accomplished-** AFB contacted schools within the Urban 21 to research similar programs to the Activities Funding Board. What was found was that based on the schools contacted, none of them have a similar funding organization or process to the University of Houston, therefore no changes were made to the Activities Funding Board processes based on the benchmarking.
    - Develop long term goals for increasing AFB's footprint with Registered Student organizations.
      - Status: **Accomplished/Ongoing-** AFB established new methods of outreach such as tabling in high traffic areas on campus, social media outreach and informational sessions in order to reach more registered student organizations. This has increased awareness of AFB throughout campus as well as increased our social media following.

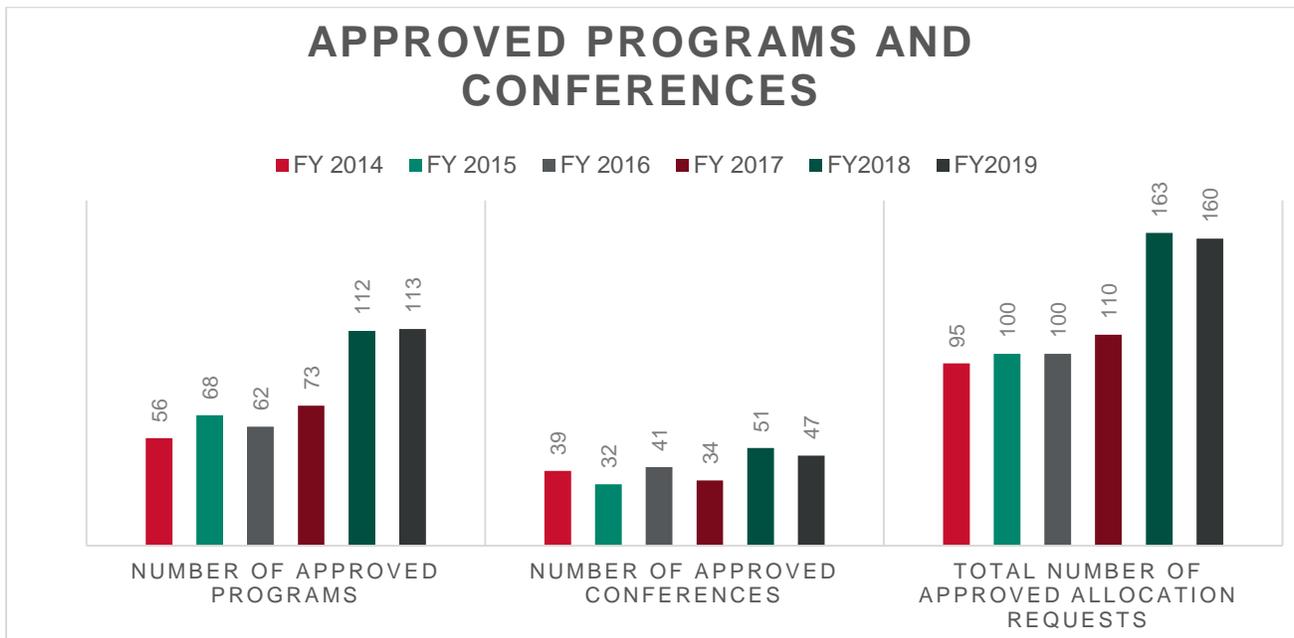
DSAES Strategic Initiative R3: Leverage and adapt resources in innovative ways to increase effective utilization.

UH Strategic Goal 5: UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision

**Question 4:** Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the aforementioned strategic initiatives and/or action steps and their importance as compared to others that you might pursue. Where data exist, discuss the number of persons and/or unique students served by each of your programs and any assessment measures and/or learning outcomes used to evaluate program success. Please provide the method for collecting these data. If available, please provide program benchmarking data from comparable institutions.

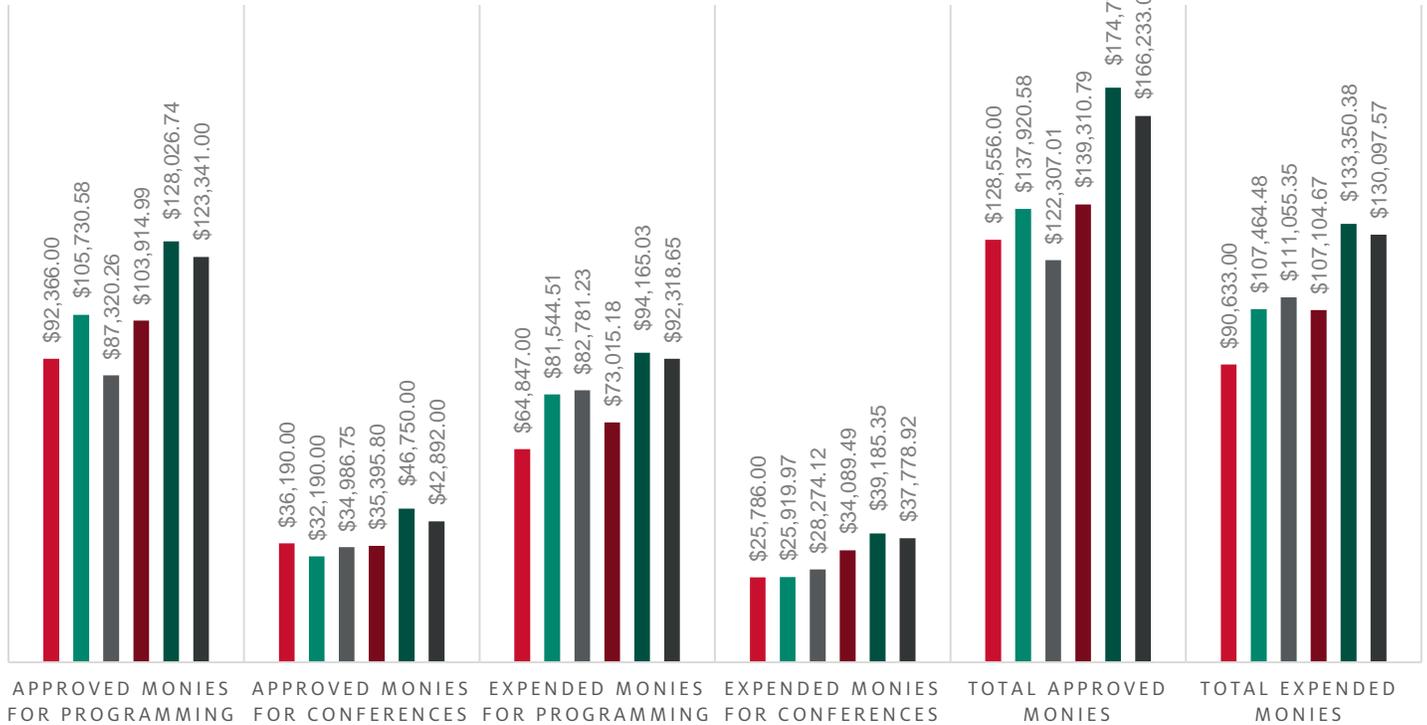
To measure our current performance in relation to complete satisfaction, we look at the amount of programs and conferences that were approved, the money that was allocated for each event, and the amount that was expended. This, in combination with surveys, will give us an idea of how much money from the Student Service Fee is going to what amount of quality programming at our campus. AFB completed benchmarking from other institutions, but found no data relevant to change processes.

The aforementioned statistics for FY 14, FY 15, FY 16, FY 17, FY18 and FY19 are listed below.



# APPROVED MONIES VS. EXPENDED MONIES

■ FY14 ■ FY15 ■ FY16 ■ FY17 ■ FY18 ■ FY19



## 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 by RSOs for events are food and advertising. This past year, we saw success in encouraging RSOs to collaborate to attain more effective events. 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.
- AFB also continues to have issues with student organizations cancelling events entirely and not utilizing any of the funds that were allocated.

**Question 5:** *Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last (FY2020) 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.*

AFB has not been impacted by any budget changes in the last three years.

***Question 6:*** *If your unit concluded FY19 with a Student Service Fee (SSF) Fund 3 addition to the SSF Reserve in excess of \$5,000, please describe the conditions which caused the addition and provide a line-item identification of the budgetary source(s) of the addition (i.e. lapsed salary, conference travel, etc.).*

FY 19 Unused Funding- **\$7,649.48**

- Student Organizations unable to receive direct deposit- **\$2,974.66**
  - o Direct Deposit: Due to changing policies within the university accounts payable department, there were many issues with registered student organizations being able to get vendor identification numbers. In order to be reimbursed by AFB, each organization must have a vendor identification number that is active with accounts payable. As a result, approved funds were returned to AFB.
  
- Funding Cushion + Missing Receipts- **\$2,262.42**
  - o Funding Cushion: Funding approval given in excess of actual needed amount in order to address unexpected costs in various programming categories.
  - o Missing Receipts: Receipts for approved categories that were not turned in.
  
- Unused Salary- **\$2,412.40**
  - o Unused Salary: During the fiscal year, there were times in which AFB did not have a full student board. As a result, AFB had a balance of unused staff salary.

***Question 7:*** Please list your 2020-2021 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 its 2020-2021 goals below**

- Continue working with University departments & organizations to cut down on reimbursement time and achieve smoother reimbursement processes.
  - Action Steps:
    - Create Vendor ID manual to show organizations step by step process on how to obtain a Vendor ID
    - Work with on campus vendors in order to better promote direct payment utilization.
  - DSAES Strategic Initiative DC4: Foster collaborative divisional processes focused on common goals
  - UH Strategic Goal: UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.
- Improve organizational outreach through marketing.
  - Action Steps
    - Implement social media strategies in order to increase connection with registered student organizations.
    - Increase outreach efforts through in-person and digital avenues to engage with the entire UH community.
  - DSAES Strategic Initiative R2: Pursue and develop resources to address identified gaps and needs.
  - UH Strategic Goal: UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.
- Better promote services AFB has to offer to organizations.
  - Action Steps
    - Create and develop intentional and targeted marketing to promote resources offered by AFB to various categories of organizations.
  - DSAES Strategic Initiative P1: Educate and empower campus partners to be our advocates.
  - UH Strategic Goal: UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

**Question 8.** *Recognizing that the potential to generate additional Student Service Fee income for FY2021 base funding is extremely limited and recognizing that it is likely that some units will not be allocated the new base budget and/or one-time funds requested. Please provide a narrative of how your unit would accommodate a reduction of 5% in your total FY2021 base Student Service Fee budget request and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.*

The Activities Funding Board currently receives 1% of the student service fee from the Student Fees Advisory Committee. If a reduction was implemented, AFB would apply the reduction to both conferences and programs to follow our current guidelines and so that the entirety of the reduction would not impact just one area of student organization funding. However, due to the 25% conference funding stipulation in our guidelines, an overall budget reduction would impact student organization conference funding more than program funding. The total reduction would be \$9,056.00 with a \$2,264.00 reduction towards conferences and the remainder of \$6,792.00 reducing the amount of program funding available.

***Question 9.*** 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.)? ***If you receive funds from other sources, please briefly describe the source, purpose, and duration of the funding and report the amounts received in the appropriate rows/columns on the SFAC Spreadsheet.***

Currently, there are no additional sources of income for the Activities Funding Board. All of our resources come from the Student Service Fee.

***Question 10.*** 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.

One additional funding source is currently available to student organizations: The Council for Cultural Activities (CCA). CCA allocates funds for co-sponsorship of programs that are culture or diversity related.