

FIESTA

STUDENT-LED ★ STUDENT-RUN
— EST. 1939 —

SFAC PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE FY2025

Chair: Bailey Payne

Vice Chair: Jordan Porter

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.

Fiesta is a student led spring tradition that was established in 1939. It began as a festival to promote the University of Houston when the University first moved from downtown Houston to its present location. Fiesta has grown into a diverse showcase of the talents of the University of Houston's student body. Each year, students from various student organizations volunteer and assist the Fiesta Association in transforming a piece of our campus into a fully functional town called "Fiesta City." This event is a major production that takes the cooperation of the students, staff, faculty and community of the University of Houston.

Our Mission:

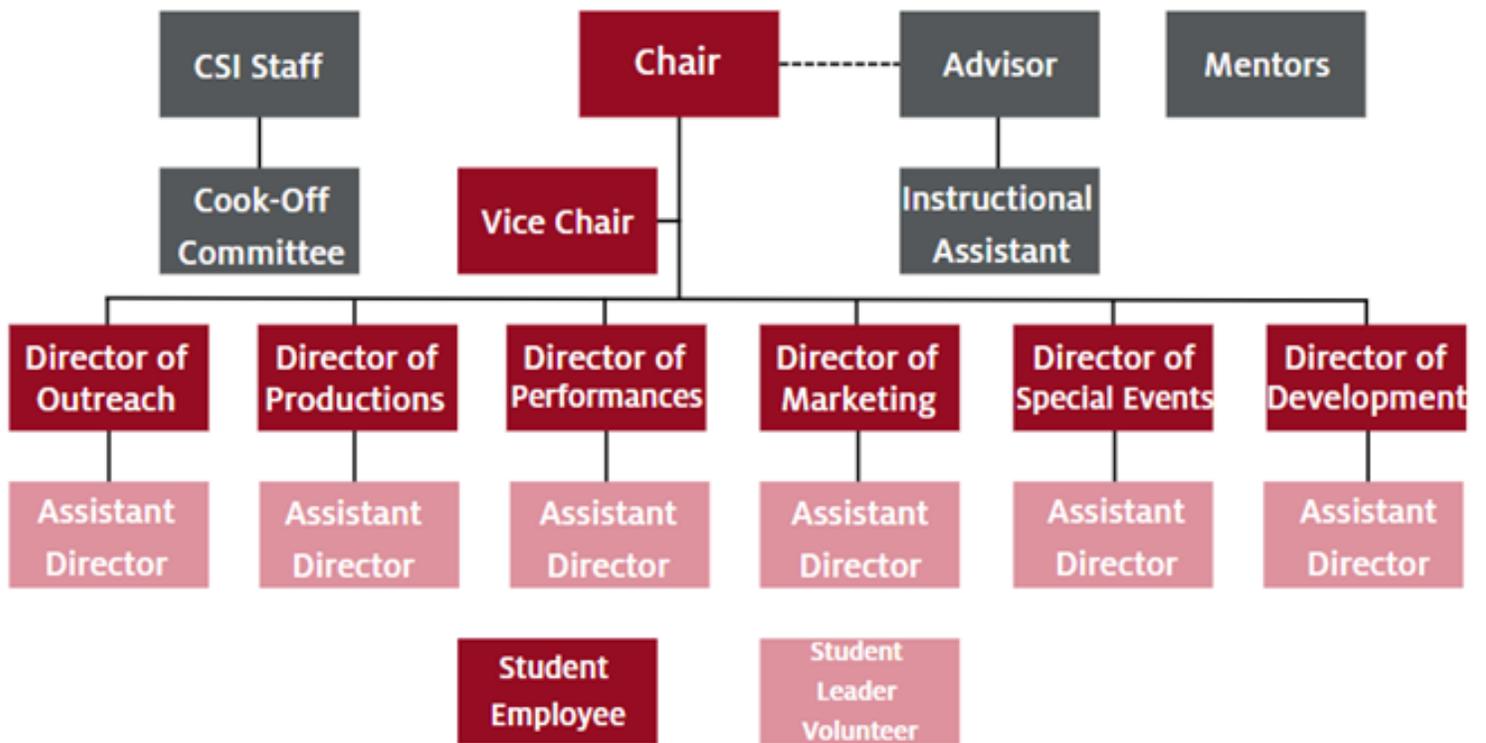
Fiesta Association (FA) creates and executes the University of Houston's oldest and longest standing programming tradition. Our mission is to unite the student body, faculty, staff, alumni, and Houston community for a three-day western themed event. We strive to provide a low to no cost event to attendees that provides a place where everyone can come together and feel like they belong.

Fiesta is comprised of a Board of Directors; eight student leaders that over the course of 10 months (with the assistance of advisors, mentors, alumni, faculty and staff) plan, program, and execute the largest fee-funded event at the University of Houston. Aside from the Board of Directors, FA collaborates with an incredibly broad range of campus partners such as the Division of Student Affairs (DSA), our fellow university sponsored organizations and other registered student organizations.

At Fiesta, we provide our stakeholders, all 15,000+ attendees, and patrons a place where everyone can feel like they belong. Without funding from SFAC, the size and scope of Fiesta would be significantly diminished. To help the longest standing and oldest programming tradition here at the University evolve to meet the needs and expectations of our students, we need your help.

The University of Houston's populace partakes in a unique experience where students and community members are given the opportunity to enjoy carnival rides, concerts, programmed events and carnival booths all on campus grounds. Through this distinctive event, FA continues collaborations with various campus entities, thus introducing students to more registered student organizations, University of Houston departments, and Alumni than any other student programmed event on-campus. Furthermore, Fiesta is filled with school spirit, pride, and history. From appearances by President Khator and university administrators, performances by the Spirit of Houston (which includes our cheerleaders, mascots, and bands), Cultural Showcases and Live at 5 programs, variety shows by student organizations, and carnival booths run by RSOs and Greek life represent great examples of what the University of Houston community may experience throughout the three days.

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.



3. If your unit falls under the Division of Student Affairs, list your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2022 – 2023 academic year and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they can relate (links below). If your unit does not fall under the division of student affairs, explain, in detail, the strategic plan your unit operated under. Please comment on your success in achieving these strategic initiatives/action steps. If a strategic initiative/ action step changes 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.

DSA: uh.edu/dsa/about/strategic-planning/2019-2023/
UH Goals: uh.edu/about/mission

FFA Strategic Initiative 1: Identify ways to increase inclusivity and involvement of various RSOs, campus departments, and community members in programming at Frontier Fiesta.

Action Step 1: Explore ways to enhance current partnerships with various RSOs and departments to increase collaborative programming opportunities at Frontier Fiesta.

Action Step 2: Collaborate with cultural based organizations to provide new programming that fosters diversity and inclusion at the event.

Action Step 3: Partner with the campus departments such as the Center for Diversity & Inclusion and Student Accessibility Center to identify gaps in inclusivity at Frontier Fiesta.

Status: Accomplished

The Fiesta Association hosted events in collaboration with 40 RSOs, USOs, and campus departments. This included 14 carnival booths and 3 groups from the National Pan-Hellenic Council and the Multicultural Greek Council for the stroll off to showcase student culture and tradition. Additionally, we worked in collaboration with the LGBTQ Resource Center who hosted Drag Loteria, and the Center for Diversity & Inclusion who hosted Live @ 5 on Thursday of the Event. Further collaborations included the Student Centers and Student Housing and Residential Life with the Cougar Casino and 13 Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life groups who hosted variety shows. These events had turnouts that filled their respective spaces and engaged with attendees.

DSAES Strategic Initiative – Student Success

DSAES Strategic Initiative – Resources

UH Strategic Goal 2 - Student Success

FFA Strategic Initiative 2: Explore opportunities to enhance community involvement and widespread knowledge of Frontier Fiesta beyond the University of Houston.

Action Step 1: Connect with various community organizations to identify collaboration opportunities to involve members of the Greater Houston area with Frontier Fiesta.

Action Step 2: Review FFA Committeemen program to identify gaps and address ways in increasing involvement from alumni through new programming opportunities at the event.

Status: Adjusted

Fiesta contracted local event vendor Houston Tents and Events which is owned and operated by a former Fiesta alumnus for the event. They hosted a cookoff tent and encouraged community involvement. Due to internal staffing changes within the UH alumni association opportunities to host direct events were not available however, 27 alumni teams participated in cookoff and continued to support the board in mentorship capacities.

DSAES Strategic Initiative – Partnerships: Forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community.

DSAES Strategic Initiative – Resources: Evaluate, actively pursue, and leverage resources to enhance the UH experience.

UH Strategic Goal 6: UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision.

FFA Strategic Initiative 3: Develop plans to enhance engagement with sponsors and event supporters to increase income opportunities for the event.

Action Step 1: Continue to develop and enhance relationships with current and long-standing sponsors through establishing regular communication updates throughout the year leading up to the event.

Action Step 2: Identify new sponsorship areas within Frontier Fiesta to increase income generation.

Status: Achieved

Fiesta held regular check-in meetings with Silver Eagle to communicate sponsorship obligations and deliverables and will see them as a returning sponsor for FY24. Fiesta identified a new sponsorship with the Houston Astros and increased involvement with the Houston Dynamo and Houston Dash. The Astros supplied Fiesta with in-kind donations of an autographed photo and championship rings. Dynamo and Dash supplied Fiesta with in-kind donations of a signed practice ball and four tickets to a game.

DSAES Strategic Initiative – Partnerships: Forge and strengthen partnerships to expand our reach into the university and greater community.

DSAES Strategic Initiative – Resources: Evaluate, actively pursue, and leverage resources to enhance the UH experience.

UH Strategic Goal 6: UH will build a resource base that enables it to accomplish its mission and realize its vision. mission and realize its vision.

4. Please list your 2024-2025 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and if operating under the DSA, cite the specific Division of Student Affairs Values and University of Houston Strategies Goals to which they relate. If your unit does not operate under the DSA, reference the strategic plan your unit operates under. Larger units may wish to group responses by subprograms. 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.

FA Strategic Initiative 1: Maintain the retention of Fiesta Board members through team building and fostering a positive work environment.

Action Step 1: Establish weekly one on one communication between the Fiesta Executive board and board members to allow board members to ask questions, and gain a deeper understanding of their role

Action Step 2: Encourage board members to build relationships with each other through outside of office interaction and retreats in the fall and spring semester.

DSA Value – Empowerment – We create opportunities where everyone can learn, grow, and are able to advocate for their own needs and the needs of others.

UH Value – Resilience

FA Strategic Initiative 2: Identify ways to increase overall engagement and attendance with Fiesta through volunteer involvement of various organizations, campus departments, and community members in Fiesta while reflecting the student body.

Action Step 1: Using segmented outreach, collaborate with other organizations and campus departments to expand the pool of volunteers to enrich the Fiesta experience.

Action Step 2: Use surveys and focus groups to identify gaps in marketing and involvement to further engage the student body to increase attendance.

DSA Value – Collaboration – Our best work is realized through diverse perspectives, knowledge, and resources within the division, across the university, and with community partners.

UH Value - Collaboration

FA Strategic Initiative 3: Collaborate with campus partners that have previously not participated in Fiesta.

Action Step 1: Identify new potential collaborations and establish communication with them to identify areas of Fiesta where these new collaborators would be successful.

Action Step 2: Create a marketing plan to ensure attendees are aware of new events or collaborations happening at Fiesta.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Collaboration – Our best work is realized through diverse perspectives, knowledge, and resources within the division, across the university, and with community partners.

UH Value- Innovation

The Fiesta Association has identified the following KPIs:

- Event attendance
- Number of collaborations at the event
- Number of non-graduating board members retained
- Number of volunteers

The Chair, Vice Chair, and Advisor are responsible for monitoring these KPIs

5. 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 exists, discuss the number of persons 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 this data. If your unit holds events, please provide revenue sources breakdown of each revenue stream including but not limited to the number of:

Attendance

Attendance from Fiesta 2023 showed the continued interest of the student body in this long-standing tradition. Over the course of the three-day event Fiesta had 13,836 attendees with 3,558 attendees on the first day, 4,067 attendees on the second day, and 6,211 attendees on the final day. The Fiesta Association plans to work to continue to increase these numbers through changes to the event such as moving from March to April to avoid competing with UH Basketball and March Madness.

Merchandise

Fiesta has a general store on-site, however, no SFAC dollars are used. These items are instead purchased through event sponsorships and are sold at cost in order to keep costs for students low. Revenue has remained steady at \$1595.00 for FY22 and \$1622.00 in FY23. This money is dedicated to cost recovery.

Concessions sold/distributed

Chartwells sells concessions at Fiesta the profits from those sales go directly to Chartwells who then keep track of the numbers.

Benchmarking

FA sought out comparable events and activities across the United States and found only a few two to three-day festivals that were funded by universities and that were led by student organizations. Schools that have similar events include Carnegie Mellon University Spring Carnival, Middlebury Winter Carnival, Thurtene Carnival hosted by Washington University in St. Louis, and Spring Fling at the University of Pennsylvania. All of these events have either a carnival ride component or a concert component but not both. Although similar, these institutions are not comparable in size or scope to the University of Houston. An event similar to Fiesta that takes place at another Big 12. Institution is Forty Acres Fest at the University of Texas at Austin. The event has similar elements such as a headlining concert, student performances, and various attractions however does not include elements such as the step show, variety shows, or cook-off and only takes place on a single day as opposed to three.

Debrief Meetings

Following the week of events each year, FA conducts debrief meetings with key stakeholders, multiple organizations and departments that participate in the event. Continual implementation of this process has provided FA with constructive feedback detailing what went well and where improvements could occur for future events and activities. Within these debrief meetings the board expressed appreciation for the prefabricated fronts and decreased workload of Fiesta 2023. The board also expressed satisfaction for how the 2023 event ran.

6. If your unit concluded FY2023 with a Fund 3 addition to Fund Equity in excess of \$5,000, please describe the conditions which cause the addition and provide a line-item identification of the budgetary sources(s) of the addition (I.e., lapsed salary, conference travel, etc.).

Fiesta concluded FY2023 with a Student Wages Fund Equity of \$26,650 due to vacancies at times in our Board positions.

Fiesta concluded FY2023 with a Maintenance and Operations Fund Equity of \$51,675
Fund Transfer for Maintenance (\$48,600)
Ending M&O Balance: \$3,075
Administrative Charges: \$4,714

7. Recognizing that the potential to generate additional Student Service Fee income for FY2025 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 5.0% in your total FY2025 base Student Service Fee budget request and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.

If a 5% reduction were to occur, Fiesta would be cutting \$8,980.20 of base funds. These cuts would directly impact Fiesta's marketing efforts. Specific cuts would negatively impact Fiesta's ability to provide giveaway items such as T-shirts, which are used to encourage students to attend the event. This would also negatively impact Fiesta's ability to purchase signage to advertise the event around campus.

8. Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last year (FY2024) 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.

The FA typically works throughout the year to secure a number of event sponsorships in order to enhance the offerings at Fiesta Sponsorships from companies such as Silver Eagle Distributors, TDECU, Avenue 360, Food Town, Riddle and Bloom, and more help to fund additional activities that are not supported by base augmentation and one-time SFAC funds.

In addition to this, we request donations from alumni and event supporters each year to help support the longevity of the event.

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.
 - i. If applicable, what can be done to increase donations, sponsorship sales, and other revenue streams? Please answer each separately.

Fiesta funding is unique in its size and scope compared to other student-fee based organizations. Being such a large event on campus, FA is not able to operate without the support of a wide variety of funding sources. As a result, the organization annually reaches out to multiple sources of external funding. These sources of funding include alumni donations through our Committeemen Program, and partial recuperation of costs from variety shows, carnival booths, and cook-off. As a part of our efforts to engage the Houston community and enhance our programming efforts, the Fiesta Association also seeks out corporate sponsorships. Our traditional event attracts upwards of 15,000+ attendees over a three-day period which offers the opportunity for corporations to receive significant publicity at the event. Opportunities for corporate sponsor logo placement at Fiesta includes event t-shirt, advertising in our official Gazette newspaper, as well as banners placed on the entrance of the event. Specific benefits of sponsorship are tiered, based on the cash value of donations or in-kind gifts provided. In addition to corporate sponsorships, FA has the Fiesta Alumni Association that continues to strengthen ties with past Fiesta members and the current Fiesta team. The Fiesta Committeeman program consists of Fiesta alumni and friends. The program, in years past, has consisted of yearly and lifetime committeemen. Alumni provide donations throughout the year and participate in Fiesta activities.

10. Does your unit generate revenue? (Please do not address donations in this question)
If your unit does not generate revenue, respond “not applicable. If so:

- i. Provide your unit’s P&L statement for the current fiscal year and trailing five-years showing all revenue streams for your unit.
 - a. Not available
- ii. Provide line-item data for each revenue stream.
 - a. Silver Eagle sponsorship: \$40,000
 - b. Cookoff: \$43,750 for tents, power, and cookoff equipment
- iii. For each revenue stream, provide an explanation of the nature of the revenue and briefly articulate the successes and failures for each line item.
 - a. Sponsorships: Fiesta generates between \$40,000 and \$55,000 annually in sponsorships. These sponsorships pay for event entertainment that is not covered by SFAC including carnival rides, novelty events, and some marketing expenses, among others. Fluctuations in sponsorship amounts make it challenging to consistently budget year over year.
 - b. Variety show payments: this revenue is collected from variety show teams and serves as a cost recovery to variety show expenses including: tents, power, staging, audio visual equipment, and labor. The amount collected is meant to complement our One Time Requests to avoid higher requests.
 - c. Fiesta Buck Sales: Revenue collected from Fiesta Buck sales goes back to event collaborators such as Carnival Booths and Chartwells to reimburse these entities for the expenses from their contributions to the event.

11. Does your unit raises money from donors and sponsors? If your unit does not receive donations or sponsorships, respond “not applicable.” If so:

- i. Identify key staff members responsible for development and seeking sponsorships.
 - a. The Director of Development works with the Chair and the Fiesta Advisor to generate and maintain event sponsorships.
- ii. Provide financials for the current fiscal year, as well as the trailing five fiscal years including:
 1. An analysis of your development activities. Include a breakdown of the nominal quantity of donors donating \$20m+, \$10m+, \$5m+, \$1m+, \$500k+, \$100k+, \$50k+, \$25k+, \$10k+, \$5k+, \$1k+, \$100+. Provide this both in terms of lifetime contributions and annual contributions.
 - a. Sponsorship: FY22- \$49k & FY23- \$40k
Fiesta Royalty: FY22- \$10,274 & FY23- \$8,964
Committeemen: FY22- \$2,575 & FY23- \$640.00
 2. An analysis of sponsorship activities. Include a breakdown of total sponsorship dollars and identify your top twenty-five (25) sponsorship deals.
 - a. Silver Eagle, \$40,000
- iii. If applicable, provide a breakdown of each capital project or capital campaign in your unit. Explain how each capital project or campaign aligns with the goals and milestones laid out in your departments strategic plan.
 - a. Fiesta does not undertake capital projects.

12. 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.

Fiesta is uniquely placed to plan and implement a three-day western themed festival for the University of Houston community, therefore there are currently no overlaps between Fiesta and other units.

13. What percentage of department M&O is allocated to marketing?

- i. Please detail your comprehensive marketing strategy towards the student body including metrics used to measure the effectiveness of the marketing strategy.

Fiesta uses multiple marketing strategies including, social media, yard signs, banners, digital screens, flyers, and email communication. Fiesta employed a unified theme across social media and physical marketing and saw increased engagement on social media as well as increased attendance on the first two days of the event.

- i. How much revenue is allocated towards the marketing strategy?

Fiesta does not allocate funds from SFAC M&O for Marketing. Last year, marketing funds came from donations and sponsorships.

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14. If any of your funding from the student service fee goes to your general operating fund, please detail where any student service fees you received went and what they were spent on as well as future intentions if granted. Otherwise please respond “not applicable”.

Not Applicable

15. How does your unit contribute to campus culture and improve the student experience? How is the effectiveness of these contributions measured by your unit if at all? What else can your unit do going forward to continue to improve your contribution to the student experience?
- i. Does your unit contribute to turning students into coogs for life?

Fiesta strives to provide an event for students and alumni to destress during finals and end of school season, as well as an opportunity for student performers to showcase their talents in front of thousands of attendees. Fiesta also gives RSOs an opportunity to fundraise for their organizations for a low cost all three days of the event. We also collaborate with many on-campus departments and organizations to make sure our diverse student population feels represented and included at our event. These successes are measured through our consistent campus and alumni collaborations as well as student feedback collected after the event. Going forward Fiesta will be doing pre-event assessments in addition to the post-event assessments as well as leading focus groups with student collaborators.

Through both the alumni cookoff and committeemen program Fiesta consistently sees engagement from alumni who were a part of the event dating back to the 90s. When decorating Fiesta City for the event Fiesta makes sure to include historical pieces from past alumni so they feel connected to the event. Various alumni also attend Fiesta Build Week every year to help the current board whether it be through volunteer efforts, support, or food donations during build.