



"Success occurs when opportunity meets preparation"
by Zig Ziglar

Executive Summary

One of the most important and vital services afforded to University of Houston students and alumni is offered by University Career Services (UCS). The Career Services office provides comprehensive programs, events and services to assist students, alumni and community members to prepare for finding suitable employment by developing professional documents, interviewing skills, job-search strategies, and a deeper understanding of the fit between their career-ready competencies and the world of work. UCS promotes and encourages personal responsibility in the exploration and achievement of both career and employment goals.

University Career Services Vision Statement. University Career Services will be the premier career services provider at the University of Houston. (among the hybrid career services model- see circle graphic below)

University Career Services Mission Statement. University Career Services provides customized resources to our constituencies through intentional programming and collaborative relationships built on a foundation of integrity. UCS constituencies include students, faculty, staff, alumni and employers.

University Career Services' mission is accomplished by first assessing individual students' needs and by providing the appropriate resources to foster self- understanding, self- marketing and goal-clarification. Depending on students' interests and level of career development, additional resources are often utilized, including career assessments, resume-writing assistance, interview skill development, part-time, on campus, college work-study, assistance in securing an internship, a referral to a career counselor, and/or suggested sources for additional reading and research. University Career Services offers a wide range of programs and services that will help reach the student's goals both while at UH and long after. UCS advances student success by encouraging the student to do the following:

Explore different majors and careers using assessments and research; early major identification is essential for students to begin taking classes toward

their major and will allow for a greater understanding of career fields and have more career options as the student progresses with their college education.

Engage with UCS career counselors through one-on-one counseling and skills workshops ranging from mock interviews, resume critiques, to job hunting.

Empower. Students and alumni are **empowered** to investigate their pathways and network with employers to find the right industry for them.

Employ. Our goal is to work with companies and organizations to **employ** our students during career fairs and on-campus recruitment.

UCS actively develops relationships with campus, employers, alumni and community entities that will ultimately help to ensure the success of UH job candidates during and after their college careers at the University of Houston. In addition, the unit accomplishes its mission by embracing the principles of quality customer service in its relations with the campus and corporate communities.

Corporate entities are advised as to the most effective ways to target and hire UH job candidates. The unit's mission is advanced by maintaining a highly qualified staff of career counselors and managers and by providing opportunities for staff/professional development. The unit strives to be abreast of, and apply, the latest technologies in making career services accessible to students of a major research university.

The benefits of a robust and vital career services unit on a university campus are multifold. The literature strongly suggests that a student with a career goal, even a tentative career goal, is more likely to persist and achieve their educational objectives than a student without a career goal. University Career Services exemplary work with Exploratory Studies, CITE (Cougars Initiative to Engage), Industry Prep, Major Exploration week, and career course curricula help advance students' persistence and increase graduation rates as well help student articulate their marketable skills to secure favorable internships and jobs with select employers. Students who are successful and satisfied in their pursuit of a career are more likely to become satisfied alumni, many of whom may be able to assist the university in annual giving, stronger partnerships with diverse employers, recruitment of qualified students, and legislative relations. In addition, students benefit when the career center builds bridges between

the university and the larger community including research studies/data to measure students' career intentions and student success initiatives. Public and corporate support, while intangibles, are extremely important to a public university and they often lead to tangible benefits to be enjoyed by current students, alumni, faculty, and staff. University Career Services is grateful for the continuing support of the Student Fees Advisory Committee.

2. University Career Services Organization Chart



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.

Strategic Initiative 1: Launch Career Cluster Model

Description:

Drawing from the ONET career clusters, UCS aims to utilize the career cluster approach to providing services thus enabling students to think beyond their major. The 5 main clusters we will use are : 1. Gov't & Public Admin; Law (Pre-Law) 2. Arts, Design, Media & Communications 3. Education, Health Science (Pre-Health) & Human Services 4. STEM & Health Science (Pre-Health track) 5. Business Management, Logistics and Hospitality In addition to this we will have services focused on Health Science (Students enrolled in health professional programs)

Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives: Student Success

University of Houston Strategic Goals: Student Success, Strategy 2

Action Step:

By the end of FY 23 UCS will:

1. Have a landing page for providing career exploration, job/internship search, and career development specialist recommended resources available for our students to use
2. Develop and use marketing collaterals to promote the career cluster model

Goal Status: Accomplished

Strategic Initiative 2: Promote Experiential Learning opportunities with employers

Description:

Help students explore careers through a "Career Day" with employers attending from specific career clusters for panels, info session or speed networking. Promote engagement events with employers such as mock interview days, resume reviews, pitch sessions, speed networking to help students prepare for job/internship search

Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives: Student Success

University of Houston Strategic Goals: Student Success, Strategy 3

Action Step:

Host at least one experiential learning opportunity in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 semester

Goal Status: Accomplished

Strategic Initiative 3: Provide Inclusive Career Education Opportunities

Description:

Provide targeted career decision-making workshops or programs for women, non-traditional or “second career” students, and first generation students. Educate employers apart of EmployerU on benefits of hiring students with diverse abilities, more inclusive hiring practices, and ways to support individuals once onboard. Implement a career counseling group to promote career exploration for targeted students populations including those that identify as first-year students and LatinX.

Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives: Student Success

University of Houston Strategic Goals: Student Success

Action Step:

Provide at least 2 Inclusive Career Education Opportunities throughout FY 23 including Employer Resource Group mixer in collaboration with LGBTQ Resource Center and UH Advancement.

Goal Status: Accomplished. This goal will be modified as needed to stay in compliance with SB 17 “Responsibility of Governing Boards Regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives.”

Strategic Initiative 4: Develop national and regional recognition as a top, core recruiting school

Description:

Create customized recruitment and engagement plans for employers to engage with UH students and alumni in new and innovative ways Identify new companies through Cougar 100, student feedback and local chambers. Develop UCS branding and marketing materials, to showcase student diversity, recruitment structure and engagement opportunities. Launch employer sponsorship packages aimed at aiding student professional development and employer diversity hiring needs. Establish an employer advisory board to gain connection to industry and employer feedback regarding post pandemic recruiting.

Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives: Student Success

University of Houston Strategic Goals: Student Success

Action Steps:

1. Create customized recruitment and engagement plans for employers to engage with UH students and alumni in new and innovative ways
2. Identify new companies through Cougar 100, student feedback and local chambers
3. Develop UCS branding and marketing materials, to showcase student diversity, recruitment structure and engagement opportunities

4. Launch employer sponsorship packages aimed at aiding student professional development and employer diversity hiring needs
5. Establish an employer advisory board to gain connection to industry and employer feedback regarding post pandemic recruiting

Goal Status: Partially accomplished. In progress

Strategic Initiative 5: Develop innovative, niche opportunities for student career success

Description:

Collaborate with campus partners, college-based career centers and our instructional sites (UH @ Sugar Land and UH @ Katy) on programs and events Develop strategic marketing plans and initiatives to promote Career Fairs and events such as townhalls, promotional items and text message campaigns Expand job promotion initiatives to increase student activity (job applications and resume submission) in Cougar Pathway Develop a website for employers to report hiring efforts throughout the year and to aid in JLD reporting and tracking employment outcomes [\[live website\]](#)

Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives: Partnerships

University of Houston Strategic Goals: Student Success

Action Step:

Host career mixer with college-based career centers such as Communication Mixer and Health and HDFS Career Mixer.

Goal Status: Accomplished

Strategic Initiative 6: Become the go to spot for on-campus Student Employment at the University of Houston

Description:

Develop an On-campus Student Employee Training to benefit both supervisors and students. Revamp the student employment website and develop workflows and guidelines for participation. Advance Faculty & Staff engagement in Cougar Pathway through an intentional campaign and newsletters. Create CWS / NCWS Supervisor online training module

Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives: Student Success

University of Houston Strategic Goals: Student Success

Action Step:

Developed online training for employee supervisors to streamline the mandatory and hiring process.

Goal Status: Accomplished

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.

The Strategic priorities for University Career Services (UCS) are as follows:

- **Promote Experiential Learning opportunities with employers to students**
 - Promote and help students explore careers opportunities through employer engagement through various events such as panels, info session or speed networking, mock interview days, resume reviews, pitch sessions, speed networking.
 - **Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Student Success
 - **University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success, Strategy 3

- **Develop national and regional recognition as a top, core recruiting school**
 - Create customized recruitment and engagement plans for employers to engage with UH students and alumni in new and innovative ways. Identify new companies through Cougar 100, student feedback and local chambers. Develop UCS branding and marketing materials, to showcase student diversity, recruitment structure and engagement opportunities. Launch employer sponsorship packages aimed at aiding student professional development and diverse needs of employers for hiring. Establish an employer advisory board to gain connection to industry and employer feedback regarding best practices in recruiting.
 - **Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Student Success
 - **University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success

- **Develop innovative, niche opportunities for student career success**
 - Collaborate with campus partners, college-based career centers and our instructional sites (UH @ Sugar Land and UH @ Katy) on programs and events. Develop strategic marketing plans and initiatives to promote Career Fairs and events such as townhalls, promotional items and text message campaigns. Expand job promotion initiatives to increase student activity (job applications and resume submission) in Cougar Pathway. Develop a website for

employers to report hiring efforts throughout the year and to aid in JLD reporting and tracking employment outcomes [\[live website\]](#)

- **Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Partnerships
- **University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success

- **Become the go to spot for on-campus Student Employment at the University of Houston**

- Develop an On-campus Student Employee Training to benefit both supervisors and students. Revamp the student employment website and develop workflows and guidelines for participation. Advance Faculty & Staff engagement in Cougar Pathway through an intentional campaign and newsletters. Create CWS / NCWS Supervisor online training module.
- **Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives:** Student Success
- **University of Houston Strategic Goals:** Student Success

i. Articulate how KPIs are tracked and how/when your unit utilizes them to measure progress towards your goals. Are there any deficiencies in your ability to measure your KPIs? If so, explain why.

The metrics that UCS will be tracking to measure progress towards these initiatives are as follows:

- Helping student employees **connect on-campus employment to co-curricular learning**
 - UCS will participate in JobCITE program
- Increase student **attendance at career fairs**
- Increase the number of students **attending UCS Career Workshop**
- Increase the number of **freshman students utilizing career counseling appointments**
- Increase **response rate for survey** capturing post-graduation plans for graduating students

UH Strategic Plan Metrics:

- UH Strategic Plan Goal 1: Student Success
 - Number of hours of career related experiences by student employees

DSA Specific Metrics:

- Number of unique students served by departments
- Percentage of total addressable population served by division
- External ratings of student employees' competencies
- Average GPA of students engaged in UCS programs/services
- Average completed student credit hours of students engaged in UCS programs/services

ii. Identify the milestones laid out on the path to achieving the long-term goals you have laid out. How do these milestones contribute to your unit's ability to hold itself accountable to the long-term goals?

- Streamline campuswide post-graduation employment and internship data collection
- Create a dashboard to integrate campus wide post graduate employment data into
- Streamline student employment process on campus
- Through participation in JobCITE provide training to student employees on connecting campus employment with co-curricular learning

UCS will share with the Director of Assessment and Planning in the Vice President's office the ID numbers for students involved with different programs/services from those departments. Those codes will be connected to the university's student information system (PeopleSoft) which will allow the Director to report the GPA, retention rate, and student credit hours for each department. As these metrics directly relate to the priorities of the DSA, each department will know if they are improving outcomes or not and will be able to adjust programs/services to better achieve the priorities of the division and the university.

iii. In your response, identify who (besides the department director) is responsible for each milestone in the plan and for measuring each KPI you have identified. See answer above. UCS leadership Dr. Thompson and Cynthia Olmedo will work with IR to collect and share post-graduation employment data.

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:

- i. Tickets sold/number of attendees recorded
- ii. Merchandise
- ii. Concessions sold/distributed
- iii. Revenue generated from these sales

University Career Services (UCS) generated revenue from career fairs of \$57,021.50 for the Academic Year of 2022-2023. Expenses were approximately \$20,296.66 which included: room reservation, parking, and food. Overall, UCS brought in a net profit of \$36,724.34.

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.).

University Career Services had fund equity in the amount of \$79,674 and returned \$418,584 to SFAC with salary savings and benefit for vacant positions.

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.

University Career Services would accommodate an initial reduction of **5% (\$57,943.55)** by eliminating career programs and additional career fairs. However, eliminating career programs would not completely accommodate a 5% reduction. In addition to the eliminating career programs, UCS would have to eliminate a full time employee (FTE), which decreases the human capital needed to help serve students with their career development and job search.

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 current state of affairs at the University Career Services (UCS) department are as follows:

Over the past few months, we have been grappling with the ramifications of a staff shortage, which has had a significant impact on our ability to provide the level of service, appointment availability, and overall operational efficiency that we aspire to deliver. The shortage of staff can be attributed, in part, to the competitive landscape for talent in our industry. Many of our counterparts in college-based career offices are offering higher salaries, making it challenging for us to attract and retain the skilled professionals we need, particularly as we work to rebuild our team in the wake of the "Great Resignation."

Our Executive Director at UCS has taken proactive steps to address this issue by reclassifying existing and vacant positions, resulting in higher salary offerings.

However, it has become apparent that offering salaries below the market midpoint is insufficient to remain competitive in the current job market. Presently, UCS has four vacant positions, including two on the counseling side, one on the employer engagement side, and an assistant director role at both UH Sugar Land and UH Katy. Fortunately, our versatile and dedicated staff members have been cross-trained in multiple areas, allowing them to step in and bridge the gaps, demonstrating their commitment to our mission.

We have also been working diligently to prioritize our key responsibilities and requests to ensure we continue to serve our students, employers, faculty, and staff. While these operational adjustments have allowed us to manage our current workload, we understand that long-term solutions are essential for maintaining our service quality and expanding our reach.

Another challenge we have faced is the impact of the Compensation Study, which reviewed several UCS positions but did not result in competitive salary adjustments for our team members. We recognize the urgency of addressing this issue, particularly with regard to salary compression resulting from Phases 2 and 3 of the study, which have affected all UCS positions. This issue not only hampers our ability to attract top talent but also threatens the satisfaction and retention of our existing team members.

To address these challenges, we are committed to working closely with our Executive Director of Business Services and other relevant stakeholders to rectify the situation and ensure that our team's compensation is both competitive and reflective of their skills and dedication.

In addition to resolving our staff shortage and compensation concerns, UCS remains focused on our core mission of preparing students for internships, full-time job opportunities, and graduate school. We are also continuing to host up to 12 career fairs throughout the year to maximize opportunities for students to engage with employers.

We appreciate your ongoing support and understanding as we navigate these challenges. Rest assured that we are dedicated to finding effective and sustainable solutions that will help UCS maintain a competitive edge in the talent market and enhance the satisfaction and retention of our valued team members.

Thank you for your continued trust in UCS.

This past year UCS secured \$2,500 through employer sponsorship opportunity. Additionally, in collaboration with University Advancement's Corporate and Foundation Relations teams, UCS

continues to explore new ways develop corporate relationships for UCS sponsorship opportunities.

Words of Appreciation

For the last five years, SFAC has provided one-time requests to cover VMOCK. UCS is appreciative of the support to continue to serve students virtually through VMOCK (online resume critique platform) which allows for immediate resume feedback for students to use and immediately apply for jobs in Cougar Pathway.

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.

Sources of funding available to UCS include employer development donations earmarked for the UCS Career Closet. This year we received \$5,000 for the career closet. The UCS Career Closet is a service offered by UH University Career Services, where students can rent business professional clothing. Business professional suits come in either pantsuits or skirt suits and are available in multiple sizes. Students are able to select an appropriate size based on the available suits and pay \$10 via credit or debit card, to rent the suit for 2 days. The \$10 covers the dry-cleaning services for each suit. Scholarships for suit rental are available upon request. Learn more about the UCS Career Closet [here](#) (scroll down to professional dress resources section).

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.
 - ii. Provide line-item data for each revenue stream.
 - 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.
- University Career Services generated xx last year and this information has been shared in response to question 5.

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.
 - 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.
 2. An analysis of your sponsorship activities. Include a breakdown of total sponsorship dollars and identify your top twenty-five (25) sponsorship deals.
 - 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.

University Career Services received \$5,000 in donations.

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.

At University of Houston, we have a decentralized hybrid model of career services. Typically, business, engineering and law career centers are separated out among universities with a centralized model across the nation. However, on this campus, business, global hospitality leadership, law, NSM and graduate college of social work have their own career centers, while the other seven+ colleges do not. Having multiple resources for career preparation can benefit students and UCS serves **all** students of all majors, every student or alumni have access to UCS for assistance.

Since the Career Services Campus Consortium was created by Dr. Daniel Maxwell, Interim Vice Chancellor/Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, which is now overseen by the executive director of UCS, there are more collegial and collaborative events hosted jointly by career services campus colleagues. We gather to discuss strategic employer partnerships to streamline the recruiting process, share best practices including communication about employer scams, training on new technology such as Handshake and Baseline and professional development luncheons, employer meet and greets. In some instances, we collaborate to share cost to host career events and provide services for employers and students. We recognize our common goal and seek ways for college-based career services units and UCS to collectively deliver career services on University of Houston's campus.

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

University Career Services utilize approximately **10% of M&O (\$473.627)** to allocate to marketing. This includes, media and print advertisements, promotional items; giveaways for employers, students and handouts for prospective students.

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?

The Career Services Office plays a pivotal role in contributing to campus culture and enhancing the overall student experience and ultimately turning students into Coogs for life. Here's how we make these contributions and measure their effectiveness:

Workshops and Seminars: We regularly organize career-related workshops, seminars, and informational sessions that not only educate students about career paths and job search strategies but also promote a culture of continuous learning and personal development. We measure the effectiveness of these events through attendance numbers, post-event surveys, and feedback from students and faculty.

Career Fairs and Networking Events: Hosting career fairs and networking events connects students with potential employers, fostering a culture of professional growth and networking. We track the success of these events by monitoring the number of student-employer connections made and the subsequent job placements.

Internship and Job Placement: Our unit actively assists students in securing internships and jobs, helping them transition from academics to the professional world. We measure the impact by tracking placement rates and surveying alumni to gather insights into their career progression and satisfaction.

Alumni Engagement: Engaging alumni as mentors and guest speakers in various career-related programs enriches the campus culture. We measure this contribution by tracking the number of alumni participants and seeking feedback from students.

Assessment and Feedback: Regular surveys and feedback collection help us understand how our services are perceived by students and faculty. These assessments provide valuable insights into our effectiveness in contributing to the student experience.

To continue improving our contributions to the student experience, we can:
Enhance Outreach: Reach out to more student groups, including those traditionally underserved or underrepresented, first generation students to ensure that all students benefit from our services.

Expand Digital Resources: Develop and offer more online resources, such as webinars, e-learning modules on Teams or Canvas, and virtual meet and greets, to meet the evolving needs of students.

Integration with Academic Programs: Collaborate with academic departments to create seamless connections between coursework and career development, helping students see the practical applications of their education.

Data-Driven Decision Making: Continuously gather and analyze data to identify trends and areas where our contributions can be fine-tuned.

Mentorship Programs: Establish structured mentorship programs that pair students with alumni and industry professionals for ongoing guidance and support.

Professional Development for Staff: Ensure our staff is up-to-date with the latest trends and developments in the job market and career services by investing in their professional development.

Promote Student Success Stories: Share the success stories of our students who have benefited from our services. This not only motivates others but also showcases the impact of our unit.

In summary, University Career Services is dedicated to contributing to campus culture and the student experience, essentially contributing to the full life cycle beginning with the students and then converting to a lifelong Coog. We measure our effectiveness through various metrics and feedback channels. By embracing digital innovation, collaborating with academic partners, and continually improving our services, we aim to further enhance our contribution and better prepare students for their future careers.