

## Center for Student Advocacy & Community (CSAC)

### SFAC BUDGET REQUEST QUESTIONNAIRE – Budget Cycle FY26

1. **Provide a summary of your unit’s mission/purpose, how you accomplish your unit’s mission or purpose, and a justification of your unit’s student fee allocation in terms of the benefit to students.**

*CSAC’s Mission* is to empower students by providing essential services that meet basic needs, along with resources and education that foster learning, self-advocacy, cultural and community engagement and student success.

#### *CSAC Goals*

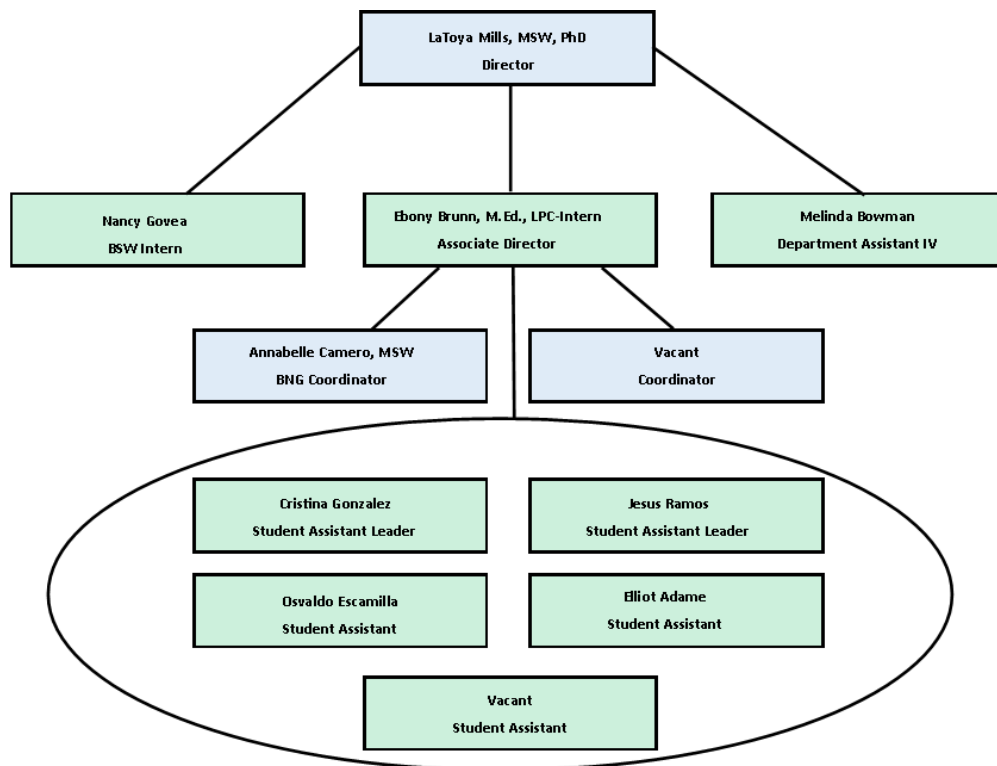
1. Build partnerships across campus, with stakeholders and the community to create a support network for students.
2. Nurture an environment where all students, including first-generation college students, low socio-economic students, and underserved populations have access to basic need resources, advocacy services, personal development and exploratory opportunities.
3. Foster a sense of community and engagement on the UHCL campus through the facilitation of community gatherings, community excursions and community partner collaborations.

CSAC facilitates this mission, through offering direct student programming and resources that are funded via the allocation of student fees. These student fees are directed toward the following *CSAC components* and are available to all active UHCL students:

- *Hawk Pantry & Food Access Programs* – CSAC’s Hawk Pantry provides free food (canned goods and non-perishables), toiletries, hygiene products, in addition to limited household/home essentials and school supplies. Food Access Programs include partnership events with campus departments, local food banks, and assistance applying for aid through community agencies.
- *Basic Needs Persistence Grant* - Addresses insecurities related to food, housing, transportation, mental and physical health, childcare and technology. With existing academic support structures, strategic community partnerships, and direct financial assistance, this grant will promote persistence and degree completion for students experiencing a hardship adversely affecting their basic needs. *This component is not funded via student allocation fees.*
- *Advocacy Workshops* - The Advocacy Workshops Series are in-person and virtual trainings for all UHCL students. The series will be offered throughout the semester on various topics. The Advocacy Workshop Series is designed to provide educational resources that assist in teaching self-advocacy skills, while promoting education and engagement opportunities to students wishing to increase their sense of belonging and community on campus. The skill sets gained from your attendance at these workshops are transferable skills that can be used in the workforce and life.

- *Community Gatherings* – Community Gatherings are a series of programs that explore different cultural traditions and practices. This series can cover topics such as dance, music, cooking, and storytelling, providing an opportunity for students to learn about and engage with different cultural backgrounds.
- *Community Excursions* – Community excursions are facilitated explorative experiences to museums, cultural centers, and other places of interest that celebrate different social communities. These experiences can provide an opportunity for students to explore and learn about different cultural backgrounds while also fostering a sense of community, engagement and belonging.
- *Community Collaborations* – CSAC is committed to fostering a sense of community and welcomes collaborative partnerships with the various communities and stakeholders within the UHCL campus, UH System and the surrounding campus areas
- *First Generation Student Support* – CSAC is dedicated to providing support and resources to help first-generation college students transition, adjust, and negotiate the campus environment, promoting successful academic and social experiences.

2. Provide an organization chart of your unit. Include all professional and student staff positions (with names), as well as vacancies. Make sure it is easily identifiable between professional and student staff on the chart.



3. Present your Budget Worksheet. You are required to show and outline ALL funding sources (i.e. student fees, central funding, grants, gifts, outside sales revenue, auxiliary income, etc.). Use this area to define each funding source, its intended purpose, and how you are utilizing said funds.

\*See attached Budget Worksheet\*

CSAC's base funding source comes from Student Fee Allocations. Student fee allocations fund CSAC salaries, benefits, student wages, programming and operations. All of CSAC's programming and resources are student centered.

Additionally, CSAC offers Basic Needs assistance via the Basic Needs Persistence Grant. The grant funds are utilized with discretion based on grant stipulations by the US Department of Education. Thus, grant funds are not detailed in the Student Fee Allocation Budget Worksheet.

**4. Did you receive any new funding for FY24? If so, please explain how it is being used. If you received any new one-time funding for FY25, please describe your plans to use those funds.**

CSAC received one-time funding for both FY24 & FY25 in the amount of \$18,000 for each fiscal year. Both were for the usage and facilitation of the Hawk Pantry. Hawk Pantry requires a budget of approximately \$28,000-\$30,000/academic year. Of this budget, \$18,000 has come from one-time SFAC funding and the remaining has come from departmental M&O base funding.

**5. How does your unit support the mission of Student Affairs and contribute to the student experience on campus? Consider the utilization and impact of your unit's services.**

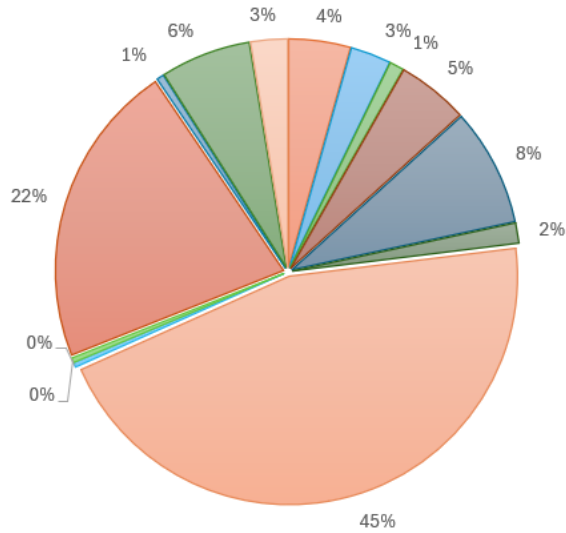
The Center for Student Advocacy & Community supports the Student Affairs mission by offering high impact experiential learning opportunities through purposeful programs, comprehensive support services, and holistic resources. CSAC mirrors DSA's commitment to building an engaged community that cultivates personal development and success for all students. This is evident through CSAC's facilitation of Basic Needs resources, Food Access Programs, Community Gatherings and it's many internal and external partnerships.

**Overall Center Utilization**

CSAC utilizes Navigate to check students into the center. Navigate allows the ability to itemize the student check-in process. From Navigate CSAC was able to determine that 45% of students interfacing CSAC for in-person services are Hawk Pantry customers, 22% are utilizing the space for Lounge and Study and 8% were accessing the center for First-Gen Student Support. These are the top three in-person services offered by CSAC. This tells us that 1. CSAC is a space that is building community because 22% of our contacts are not for a service, but simply to reside in a communal space. 2. This allows us the ability to track what services we can focus on for growth and what is not being utilized.

*The chart below details the services offered by CSAC and what students are identifying at time of check-in to the CSAC suite.*

CSAC Sevices- Navigate



- Basic Needs Assistance
- Board Games
- Computer/Charging Station
- Craft Cabinet
- First-Gen Student Support
- Gowns for Grads
- Hawk Pantry
- Hawk Pantry Pearland
- Houston Food Bank
- Lounge & Study
- Notary Services
- Other
- Programs

**Food Access Utilization**

***Hawk Pantry- FY24***

<b>Total Orders Fall 23 =</b>	611
<b>Lbs. of Food given=</b>	14,053
<b>Total Order Spring 24=</b>	612
<b>Lbs. of food given=</b>	14,076
<b>Total Order Summer 24=</b>	307
<b>Lbs. of food given=</b>	7061
<b><i>FY24 Total Orders</i></b>	<b><i>1530</i></b>
<b><i>FY24 Total lbs. distributed</i></b>	<b><i>35,190</i></b>

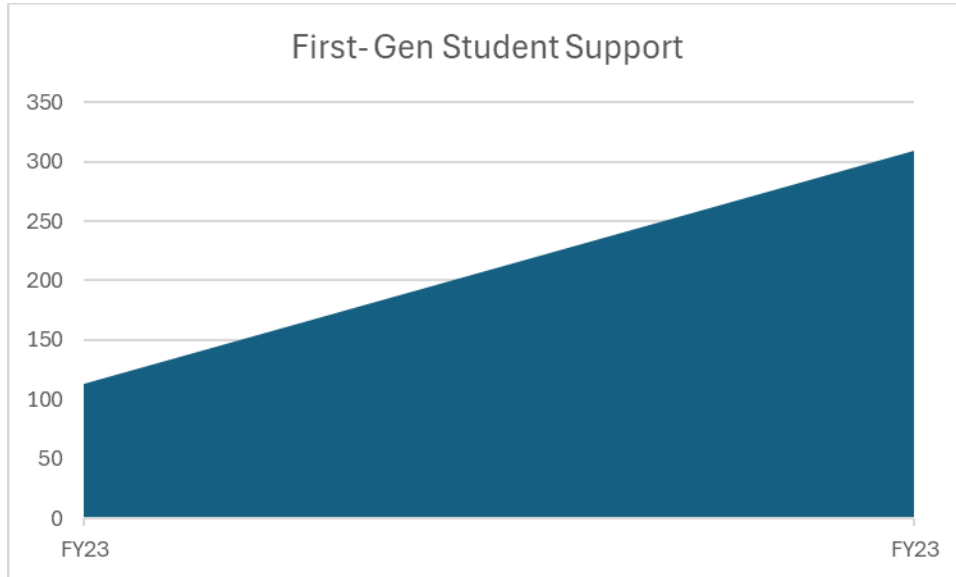
***Houston Food Bank Mobile Food Distribution- FY24***

<b>Fall 23 Semester Total=</b>	465
<b>Lbs. of food given=</b>	27,000
<b>Spring 24 Semester Total=</b>	563

Lbs. of food given=	28,150
<b>FY24 FFC Total Attended Appointments</b>	1028
<b>FY24 Total lbs. distributed</b>	55,150

**First Gen Student Support Utilization**

First-Gen Student Support has grown from 113 in FY23 student contacts to 309 student contacts in FY24. This is a growth of 173.2%.



**Basic Needs Utilization**

CSAC launched the Basic Need Persistence Grant Sept. 1, 2023. Of students who received a BNG voucher during FY24, 91% persisted or graduated.

- Number of requests for BNG: **358** submitted BNG applications
- Number of Approved Applications: **218** BNG applications approved
- Amount of money distributed: **\$95,545.00** awarded
- Most Common Need Requests: Rental/Housing, Groceries, Transportation, Medical, Gas

**CSAC Programming Utilization**

CSAC tracks reservations and program attendance for every program and event facilitated by the department. Incorporating all of CSAC’s component areas, CSAC facilitated over 100 programming events, distributions, pop-up’s or community collaborations. Get Involved allows the department to keep average attendance, average RSVPs, and most RSVP’d event. Community Excursions were a new concept for both CSAC and UHCL; they were also the most RSVP’d event for FY24 as displayed in the chart above. This data allows the department to gain an understanding of what may be impactful programming for future program planning. CSAC also discovered via Get Involved the highest attended event for FY24 was Advocacy Games with 189 unduplicated attendees.

**6. What did you learn in your annual assessment that is impacting your programs and services now?**

From our Annual Report we learned that CSAC is actually providing a sense of belonging and serves as a communal space. As noted in the chart above, 22% of students visiting CSAC utilized the space as a study/lounge area. Additionally, 443 students were surveyed of those surveyed 254 identified as a First-Generation student. Of the 254 student who identified as First-Generation, 236 or 92.91% expressed that they felt a sense of belonging while attending a First-Gen student support program.

**7. Describe any new programs and/or initiatives for the current year.**

The Center for Student Advocacy & Community have several new initiatives for the FY25 academic year.

1. CSAC has partnered with Wellby Financial and is now offering monthly Financial Literacy workshops for all active UHCL students. As a hub for Basic Needs assistance and resources, CSAC found that adding this initiative was valuable as we prepare all UHCL students to become global citizens and be prepared for life after their academic careers. This initiative assists in diminishing financial barriers for our students by creating a more financially responsible individual.
2. As CSAC works to create a more sustainable Hawk Pantry and until we have our own brick and mortar option, CSAC has began the Adopt-A-Shelf campaign. The Adopt-A-Shelf Campaign allows our community partners an opportunity to sponsor one Hawk Pantry item monthly. Partners choose from a list of Pantry items and agree to provide at least 20 pieces of the identified item per month. This assists the department in minimizing purchasing costs and invites the community to assist in meeting the needs of our students.

**8. What challenges or opportunities do you foresee for the current year and next year?**

As Hawk Pantry's engagement continues to grow, there remains a challenge in sustainable funding with Hawk Pantry. Hawk Pantry is still awaiting a true home and with that home would come a partnership with the Houston Food Bank to deliver free food to the UHCL campus. Until then, Hawk Pantry is still dependent on donor funding and one-time SFAC requests. Donor funding has almost ceased to the Hawk Pantry. Currently, Hawk Pantry is being sustained by SFAC funds.

**9. Did you have any Student Fee funds in excess of \$5,000.00 swept at the end of FY24? If so, describe how much and in which areas the funds came from.**

Yes, CSAC has a total of \$246,412 in swept funds. Most of these funds are being swept from vacant positions within department due to the institutional hiring freeze and restructuring. These funds include swept salaries, fringe benefits and longevity pay. Additional swept funds are coming from CSAC's travel line due to vacancies.

**10. Are you requesting any new one-time funding? Present your budget request for next year with appropriate justification. \*Note that only one-time funding requests (no base requests) will be reviewed for FY26.**

The following offers a breakdown of Hawk Pantry Utilization for FY24:

**Fall 23'**: 611 orders; 14,053lbs. of food

**Sp. 24'**: 612 orders; 14,076lbs. of food

**Summer 24'**: 307 orders; 7061lbs. of food

**Annual FY24 Total**: 1530 orders; 35,190lbs. of food

Based on the consistent utilization of Hawk Pantry, it is imperative that CSAC continue to fund its efforts. CSAC is requesting one-time SFAC funding of \$20,000 for the Hawk Pantry for FY26. The pantry is not base funded and donated funds are continuously under threat of exhaustion. All other UH-system pantries are either base funded or have a sizeable space to receive sponsorship from the Houston Food Bank. The Hawk Pantry's small size does not allow for HFB sponsorship and donations are lacking. Funding is needed to support the Hawk Pantry, until it can be relocated to a larger space to receive sponsorship. A lack of funding will result in a significant decrease in grocery items provided, a reduction in opening hours, a reduction in the monthly visits allowed, or closure. Use of the Hawk Pantry helps to defray some of the cost of students' experience because of the rise in tuition and inflation. CSAC currently makes grocery purchases of \$555 per week or \$2,222 per month. This accounts for the rise in grocery prices. The requested \$20,000 funding is for nine Hawk Pantry service months. Funding does not include the months of June, July, and December as these are summer and partial student enrollment months.

**11. Please provide a narrative of how your unit would accommodate a reduction of 5.0% in your total FY2026 budget and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.**

If CSAC had to accommodate a reduction of 5.0%, the department would reduce the M&O line item in the SFAC Budget Worksheet. This would entail ceasing or limiting Community Excursions as a CSAC component area.