1. UEP Overview
The Urban Experience Program (UEP) was created to expand opportunities for educationally and economically underserved students of UH. UEP develops programs that directly impact the needs of participants of the program including academic enhancement advising, a financial empowerment series, and the newly developing “Life after Graduation” program. UEP strives to create academic opportunities for participants in the program in concert with community and corporate networking and support. The multifaceted components of the program promote scholarship, community service, and personal and professional development; through mentorship and internship as a conduit for the development of well-trained professionals.

UEP also serves as the primary UH point of contact for many student including: minority students, first generation students, DACA/undocumented, and foster care homeless. In addition, UEP gives referrals to those who seek services not provided by UH. UEP assists students in having the ability to compete at the same level as others in a professional corporate America environment. UEP strives to help make sure that each of the many voices that make up our community finds its way into our corporate offices. The leadership of our human services community and the upper rankings of civic life are all vital aspects to our student’s future success. UEP wants nothing less from our students, but to infuse our educational resources, which are drawn from the diversity of values, cultures, and experiences.

2. UEP Mission
We empower students with academic, personal and professional development resources that propels student’s success.

The department serves an advocate and referrel service to students for on and off campus resources. As a one stop shop student success office, UEP provides information about a range of campus and community
resources/services that holistically address a range of areas of improvement for a student. The mission of the Urban Experience Program (UEP) is to provide exceptional support and services to students who are potentially encumbered by a multiplicity of factors, such as, but not limited to unmet financial need, minority status, and/or limited parental/familial support. UEP is also open to students without FASFA support, but who seek the community created through the program. UEP represents a dynamic mix of abilities, academic preparation, social, ethnic, national origin, regional, age and gender diversity. Our UEP culture is to work hard, work smart and work together.

3. UEP FY17 Goals

Goal 1: Program Enrollment/Membership - Identify, recruit, and retain students in UEP. (DSAES: 1.a, 1.b, 1.d, 1.e, 1.f)

Objective #1: Emphasize the importance of community by creating opportunities wherein UEP active members as well as general members have an opportunity to grow with each other and the greater UH community.

Status: Accomplished
1. By creating a student leader pipeline for student leadership; we have increased our student leader pipeline and strengthened professional development opportunities.
2. Measurable increase in social event offerings have led to increase in student camaraderie within UEP and increase in volunteer hours for participates to the local community—many volunteered at events with their high school of origin. Additionally, UEP collaborated one event a month with partners and UEP sponsored one pillar program a month.
3. Diversity related program offerings saw a significant increase this year which lead to increase in student engagement, for example collaborating for the first time in the University’s Chinese New Year celebration.

Objective #2: Increase student involvement in Urban Experience Program

Status: Accomplished
1. Quick surveys are sent after each event to students; the data gathered as led to more student input and student involvement.
2. UEP is touching base with each member at least twice per month to ensure students’ active participation and monitoring for success.
3. Our peer network program has increased the level of touchpoints and student initiated contact with our office.

Goal 1 Major Accomplishments:
1. UEP established a Student Ambassador program. Members applied and 6 were selected based on their leadership, passion for the program, and desire to help others.
2. UEP created a Peer Network Program – a database that members select to participate in and volunteer to be a resource for other members based on academic, career, personal, and leadership interests.
3. UEP held its inaugural End of Year Banquet, recognizing scholarship recipients, graduates, and the program’s accomplishments throughout the year.
4. UEP created a weekly newsletter for members to keep them informed on opportunities to get involved.
5. Number of students on probation, warning, and suspension have decreased since implementing higher levels of engagement and outreach.
Goal 2: Special Populations - Implement a variety of protocol and initiatives that support the development of a comprehensive academic, social, civic, and financial assistance program for undocumented/DACA students and foster care/orphan/homeless/transitional students. (DSAES: 2.a., 2.b, 2.c, 4.a, 4.c, 6.a)

Objective #1: Establish effective policies and programs for student assistance of undocumented/DACA students that align with UEP mission and enrich academic achievement.
Status: Accomplished

1. Established hard and soft deadline for students to turn in applications and supporting materials for DACA renewal and TASFA funding.
2. Enhanced marketing efforts by creating a comprehensive webpage as part of UEP’s website and a one-pager that contains important information on scholarships and resources on campus.

Objective #2: Establish effective policies and programs for student assistance of foster care students/transitional/homeless students that align with UEP mission and enrich academic achievement.
Status: Accomplished

4. Performed a snapshot review of programs and services on campus.
5. Created the UEP Advisory Consultation Team.
6. Began outreach efforts to off campus students with strategic partners and community stakeholders.

Goal 2 Major Accomplishments
1. UEP held an Inaugural Foster Care Day on June 5, 2017 with off-campus partners from Child Advocates of Fort Bend, Child Advocates of Montgomery County, and the HAY Center. Students and partners participated in a campus tour and information session on UEP and the University’s resources, student panel, and lunch.

Goal 3: Communication and Marketing - Enhance marketing strategies and produce materials according to the UH branding standards to create a UEP brand image that aligns with mission of UEP. (DSAES: 5.a, 5.b, 5.c)

Objective #1: Execute effective marketing strategies for enrollment and membership.
Status: Accomplished
1. Increased the marketing of UEP services to target market.
2. Increased face-to-face marketing strategies and tabling’s.
3. Maintained a consistent brand image for the Urban Experience Program, and ensure that the UEP logo/statement is included in all marketing materials.
4. Designed innovative and eye-catching promotional items with the UEP symbol.

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5. Increase all social media users—increased Facebook and Twitter followers.

**Goal 3: Major Accomplishments**
1. **UEP established and selected the inaugural class of the Student Ambassador program** with the purpose of students helping with marketing efforts, including representing UEP around campus and tabling.
2. **UEP participated in marketing at New Student Orientation** by having a table at the weekly Resource Fairs and leading a session on the program.

**Goal 4: Collaborations and Partnerships** – Establish relationships with new on and off campus organizations to serve as a liaison between underrepresented populations on campus and the campus administration (DSAES: 5.a, 5.b, 5.c)

**Status: Accomplished**
1. Dream.US scholarship recipients as well as the UEP DACA population in conjunction with Center for Diversity and Inclusion, held an open forum and informational for students to have a safe space for discussion and fellowship.
2. Increased K12 partnerships.
3. Increased community engagement opportunities.

4. **Utilizations Reports**
   **Frequency** – Moving UEP has kept daily and ongoing tracking of visitors served in and through the office. An event analysis and debriefing is conducted after each social function, program and tabling event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 13-14*</th>
<th>FY 15</th>
<th>FY 16</th>
<th>FY 17</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrolled Students</strong></td>
<td>113</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>322 (decrease due to large # of cohort graduates)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UEP Pillar Programs</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Frontier Fiesta, Financial Seminar, Academic Workshops, Civic/Leadership, Freshman Programming, Fall Open House, Gobble Goodies)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>929</td>
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<td>492</td>
<td>254*</td>
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<td>Tabling/Informational &amp; Events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Touch Points</td>
<td>2624</td>
<td>4692</td>
<td>4740</td>
<td>6441</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trends** – There was a significant increase active participation and enrollment from previous semesters; this may be contributed to the new marketing/communication plan, increased campus outreach, and new student leader street team. The number of pillar programs increased from this time last year. UEP has also established a foundational data of utilization reporting, office protocols, and other reporting; this will facilitate analysis of programs and data collection.

5. **Assessment Projects**

**Title or area assessed:** Customer Satisfaction  
**Major results/findings:** Assessment Ongoing  
**Planned actions based on assessment results/findings:** Results will be used for continual improvement in programming and in outreach.

**Title or area assessed:** Marketing  
**Major results/findings:** Assessment Ongoing  
**Planned actions based on assessment results/findings:** Results will be used to identify areas of improvement in marketing UEP.

**Title or area assessed:** Summer Bridge Follow Up  
**Major results/findings:** This assessment is ongoing.  
**Planned actions based on assessment results/findings:** Results will be used to gain insight into the student summer bridge experience one semester after first program.

6. **Areas for Continuous Improvement**

**Growth and opportunities**

a. **Marketing**—For the last three years SFAC recommendations have tasked UEP with increasing marketing and visibility to the general UH campus. This past year UEP has made a concerted effort to increase marketing of programs and services on campus. We have increased our incoming freshman engagement with our summer bridge programs and K12 partnerships.

b. **Staffing**—The addition of two new program coordinators and one additional graduate assistant to the UEP staff has enhanced operations significantly. Additionally, more outreach, a website overhaul, more marketing of pillar programs, and increased student involvement have been a major source of excitement.

c. **Campus Collaboration**—Additionally, UEP hopes to increase and improve campus collaborations by connecting with various offices such as Career Services, Bauer, SHRL, CSI, CDI, LGBT Resource Center, WG Resource Center, CSM and LSS to enhance existing/new programming opportunities for UEP participants. Additionally, UEP hopes to continue and enhance assessment
practices and be able to provide additional foundational data to describe trends and to describe the impact of programming and services on student success of UEP participants.

d. *External Review*—UEP staff will use the department external review to make strategic goals and initiatives.

**Critical Challenges**

a. *Marketing and Visibility:* The visibility and knowledge of UEP on campus is still a challenge to the growth of services and programs.

b. *Vulnerable Populations:* UEP was charged with being the foster care liaison. This role has proved challenging in addressing the many areas of concern for student success.

c. *Funding:* Funding remains a concern at UEP for development and growth of the department. With the massive growth in student population served, and staff, there was no considerable change in funding from any sources.

**7. Budget/Fundraising/Grants**

UEP completed a successful SFAC proposal in the fall 2016. UEP worked with the Corporate Relations department on identifying specific programs and services which could be possibly underwritten by a gift or corporate partner. UEP submitted an extensive proposal for grant funding, but was not awarded.

a. *TDECU*—received $5,000 again from TDECU to enhance financial literacy efforts to underserved populations.

b. *Issues and challenges with budgets*—As the outreach efforts to additional populations of UH students to serve like foster care and undocumented coupled with increasing numbers of first generation students needing support, UEP needs additional funding for programming. UEP will need to seek increased base funding in the future for programming and possibly new staff to ensure the department’s longevity.

**8. Marketing Highlights**

**Established:**

UEP updated the program website in fall 2016 to market the diverse student membership and its academic and cultural engaging programs. The key stakeholders of the Urban Experience Program include enrolled students, key campus departments and off campus partners, University of Houston, HISD, One Goal, Yes Prep and KIPP.

**Initiated:** More signage was posted in spring 2017.

**Major Accomplishments:**

i. *New Website Update*—The homepage layout of the website was changed. More importantly, the website navigation was updated to make the site user friendly and the program information readily available for students to access. For example, a short biography, picture, and contact information of UEP student leaders were added to the website for students to receive information and enroll in the program’s peer to peer student mentoring program.

ii. Tabling events and on/off campus outreach have been more successful with social media campaigns and promotional materials.
9. **Staff Highlights**

**Personnel Updates/Achievements**

i. Staff Departed-Office Coordinator-DeAndria Bluiett in September 2016. Jamesia King joined the professional staff as the UEP Program Coordinator in September 2016 and departed in May 2017.

ii. New Program Coordinator- Sharlene Laud joined the professional staff as the Teach Forward Houston/UEP Program Coordinator in December 2016.

iii. New Graduate Assistant-Rachel Hassell joined in August/September 2016. Ricky Greer joined in June 2017. New Graduate Assistant-Jinjing Liu joined in August/September 2016 and graduated in May 2016-she continues to volunteer with UEP.

**Presentations, Involvement/Oversight and/or Awards and Recognition**

i. Staff involvement in Campus committees and/or National, Regional, Local and Campus Recognition and Leadership

Dr. Raven Jones-Served as member of KIPP advisory-College Readiness

**Intentional Staff engagement with students outside of their job duties**

iv. Dr. Raven Jones-Served as the advisor to a student organization.

v. Served as evaluator for the Fraternal Excellence Program through the Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life

vi. UEP director provides incoming freshman from external partners support services from helping admissions, housing, and financial aid help.

vii. Served as co-advisor for Las Comadres.

10. **Student and Faculty Shared Governance**

a. Dr. Raven Jones

i. Member of Provost’s Beyond Financial Aid Committee

ii. Member of the Diversity Education Consortium

iii. Member of the DSAES Assessment Committee

iv. Member of the Teach Forward Houston Committee

v. Member of the UH Dream Scholars Dreamzone committee

b. Sharlene Laud

i. Member of the Marketing Committee

11. **Collaborations/Partnerships (in support of DSAES Strategic Initiative 6)**

Internal to the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services

i. Dean of Students—collaborated on UEP consultation team and with students in need of emergency loan funds.
ii. Center for Diversity and Inclusion- collaborated on diversity and inclusion initiatives for DACA/undocumented students.
iii. DSAES IT Services – assistance with major website overhaul and updates.
iv. Business Services – assistance with payroll, financial reporting, budgeting and other essential business functions.

External to the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services
v. KIPP– member of KIPP College Readiness Advisory
vi. OneGoal – increasing college access to underrepresented students-college readiness.

vii. GenesysWorks– job training and corporate internships for economic and underserved high school students.

viii. YEA – Youth Empowerment Alliance- helping undocumented/DACA students with on and off campus resources.
ix. Teach Forward Houston– UH College of Education – major collaboration with teacher preparation program and UEP.
x. UH Office of Corporate Relation and Foundation – helps coordinate grant applications and oversees grant administration/finance.
xi. LAUNCH, Writing Center, Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, TDECU Bank, Dearborn & Creggs – participated in workshops as part of Summer Bridge, offering students additional information on their resources and areas of expertise as they relate to student success

12. Department Points of Excellence

Summer Bridge Summer Bridge- UEP hosted 3 summer bridge programs bringing in 175 first generation student to campus. The Urban Experience Program (UEP) collaborates with YMCA, OneGoal and Genesys Works to offer a summer bridge program for recent high school graduates in the Houston area. With the University of Houston’s efforts to expand educational opportunities for the Houston community and improve university retention rates, UEP has chosen to serve and support first-generation students’ transition from high school to college. Through a summer bridge program, UEP is reaching out to students that will thrive with additional support from higher education professionals and University of Houston student leaders.

Outreach/Programming- UEP is excited about our outreach/programming numbers—we feel that this trend of increasing visibility and outreach will only help our utilization numbers.

Staff-The addition of two new program coordinator to the UEP staff has enhanced operations significantly. Additionally, more outreach, a website overhaul, more marketing of pillar programs, and increased student involvement have been a major source of excitement.

Scholarships
i. UEP issued over $47,000 in Empowerment scholarships to 40 students.
ii. UEP issued $248,748.00 in Dream.Us DACA student scholarships.