

DSA IT Services

Providing Reliable Support & Innovative
Technology Solutions



**Program Questionnaire
FY 27**

STUDENT FEES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SFAC)
FY2027 PROGRAM QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the questions below. The totality of your responses should give the members of the Committee a comprehensive understanding of the role and function of your unit(s).

Questionnaire completed by:

Lawrence Daniel, Director, DSA IT and Student Media
Irdanie2@cougarnet.uh.edu
832-842-4845

- 1. Please provide in brief terms: your unit's mission, goals that support your mission, and a justification of your unit's student fee allocation in terms of student benefits.**

DSA IT Services

Mission:

DSA IT Services is committed to delivering reliable support and innovative technology solutions for departmental services, programs, and resources that foster an environment focused on student success.

Vision:

Through collaboration and proactive management, DSA IT Services aims to maintain a seamless, efficient IT environment that ensures tier-one customer service, enhances staff productivity, and elevates the quality of divisional programs and services.

Goals Supporting the Mission:

- Streamline daily operations through innovative practices in file storage management, departmental computer inventory, and IT request handling to increase operational efficiency across the Division.
- Provide comprehensive IT support to 23 departments, 7 university-sponsored organizations, and 3 University Affiliated organizations, including the management of 10 department-specific applications and databases, 26 servers, 57 websites, and 875 computers (with 847 in active use).
- Strengthen student experiential learning by employing and training student staff and work-study students in IT support functions, including troubleshooting, application support, desktop services, remote system restarts, system rebuilds, and inventory management.
- Maintain high service standards by ensuring that technical systems and computers are consistently updated, secure, and reliable, contributing to uninterrupted services for staff and students.

Justification of Student Fee Allocation:

DSA IT Services operates with direct funding from the Student Fees Advisory Committee (SFAC) to provide critical IT infrastructure, support, and expertise that enable the Division of Student Affairs and University and Affiliated Student Organizations serve students effectively. By maintaining reliable systems, websites, and applications, the department ensures that student-facing programs, services, and resources remain accessible, functional, and secure.

Student fee funding directly supports the staffing, infrastructure, and service delivery necessary to keep the division's technology ecosystem running at a high level. This includes providing hands-on

employment and training opportunities for student technicians, who gain valuable real-world IT experience that leads to competitive job placements both locally and nationally.

Ultimately, this investment enhances the student experience at multiple levels—by supporting the staff and programs that serve students daily, by ensuring that digital platforms are stable and efficient, and by developing the next generation of IT professionals through on-campus experiential learning.

2. Please discuss the means you are utilizing to evaluate your success in achieving the DSA strategic initiatives and action steps in contributing to the retention of students. Where data exists, discuss any assessment measures and/or learning outcomes used to evaluate program success. Please provide the method for collecting this data.

As of August 2025, the division supports **853 computers**, with **828 actively in use**. The computer replacement plan remains on a 4-year cycle for staff devices and a 5-year cycle for kiosks, computer labs, and special-use machines.

Utilization Reports:

Support Stats

- 11 University Sponsored and Affiliated Student Organizations
- 10 Department Specific Applications & Databases
- 26 DSA Departments
- 33 Servers
- 57 Website
- 853 Computers (828 active)

Numbers - Customer Service Stats

Desktop Support Requests

- 1,035 Support Requests from Sept. 2024 - Aug. 2025
- 630 Support Requests from Sept. 2023 - Aug. 2024
- 1,334 Support Requests from Sept. 2022 - Aug. 2023
- 1,424 Support Requests from Sept. 2021 - Aug. 2022
- 1,266 Support Requests from Sept. 2020 - Aug. 2021
- 1,134 Support Requests from Sept. 2019 -Aug. 2020
- 1,853 Support Requests from Sept. 2018 -Aug. 2019
- 1,628 Support Requests from Sept. 2017 – Aug. 2018
- 1,657 Support Requests from Sept. 2016 – Aug. 2017
- *1,731 Support Requests from Sept. 2015 – Aug. 2016

*- First year using online ticket system data

Website Support Requests

- 1,324 Support Requests from Sept. 2024 - Aug. 2025
- 1,809 Support Requests from Sept. 2023 - Aug. 2024
- 1,764 Support Requests from Sept. 2022 - Aug. 2023
- 1,967 Support Requests from Sept. 2021 - Aug. 2022
- 1,567 Support Requests from Sept. 2020 - Aug. 2021
- 1,688 Requests from Sept. 2019 - Aug. 2020
- 1,463 Requests from Sept. 2018 -Aug. 2019
- 1,565 Requests from Sept. 2017 – Aug. 2018
- *1,733 Requests from Sept. 2016 – Aug. 2017

*- First year using online ticket system data

These metrics reflect the department's high level of service activity and responsiveness.

DSA IT Services will continue focusing on:

- Strengthening data security and server infrastructure
- Enhancing customer service tools, dashboards, and ticket tracking
- Exploring opportunities for cloud-based service expansion and disaster recovery readiness

Through its strategic initiatives and student-focused approach, the department remains committed to **empowering staff and student leaders** with the technology and tools necessary to support success in a top-tier higher education environment.

Assessment Plan and Outcomes

DSA IT Services evaluates its success in achieving DSA strategic initiatives and supporting student retention through a combination of qualitative and quantitative measures focused on student employee engagement, academic performance, and job performance outcomes. These methods assess both the effectiveness of departmental initiatives and the impact of student employment experiences on student success.

Alignment with DSA Strategic Initiatives

The department's assessment strategy supports DSA priorities to enhance student engagement, promote learning and career readiness, and contribute to student retention through meaningful on-campus employment. Key strategic focus areas include:

- Tracking participation in professional development opportunities for student employees (e.g., workshops, certifications).
- Gathering feedback from supervisors and managers regarding student employee engagement, teamwork, and contributions.
- Measuring the academic performance of FTIC (First Time in College) student employees in DSA IT against the broader FTIC population to evaluate the impact of employment on retention and success.

Assessment Measures and Methods

1. Focus Groups (Qualitative Insights)

DSA IT conducts focus groups with student employees to better understand their experiences, challenges, and growth. Discussions explore daily responsibilities, engagement drivers, and suggestions for improvement.

- **Key Findings:**
 - Students understand their core responsibilities but desire clearer expectations for new projects.
 - Balancing work and academics and limited cross-training were identified as key challenges.
 - Peer collaboration, recognition, and opportunities to learn new technical skills were primary engagement drivers.
 - Students recommended structured onboarding, mentorship pairings, and flexible scheduling during peak academic periods.

These insights inform action steps to strengthen student development and engagement structures.

2. Job Performance Metrics

A framework of performance indicators was developed to assess the relationship between engagement and job performance. Metrics include:

- Task Completion Rates (percentage of tickets/projects completed on time)
- Customer Service Ratings (staff/student feedback)
- Learning Progression (supervisor evaluations of skill development)
- Attendance & Reliability
- **Key Findings:**
 - Student employees averaged 92% on-time task completion.
 - Customer service ratings averaged 4.5/5, reflecting strong communication and problem-solving skills.
 - Skill development was highest among students who also reported higher engagement levels, indicating a clear link between engagement and professional growth.

3. Academic Performance and Retention Indicators

To assess the academic impact of student employment, DSA IT identifies FTIC student employees and collects anonymized GPA and credit hour data from PeopleSoft. These are compared with university-wide FTIC averages using t-tests and ANOVA.

- Credit Hours:
 - DSA IT FTIC student employees averaged 14.6 credit hours per semester, compared to 14.3 for the overall FTIC population.
- GPA:
 - DSA IT FTIC employees reported an average GPA of 3.29, which is higher, compared to the broader FTIC cohort at the university.

Interpretation:

Student employees perform on par with or above their peers academically, indicating that on-campus employment within DSA IT supports—does not detract from—student success. This may be attributed to structured responsibilities, time management skills, supportive work environments, and engagement in meaningful roles.

Conclusions and Action Steps

Positive Outcomes:

- DSA IT student employees exhibit comparable or higher GPA and credit hour completion than their FTIC peers.
- Engagement correlates with performance and skill development, highlighting the value of professional development and structured support.
- Student employees contribute meaningfully to departmental operations while gaining transferable IT and professional skills.

Next Steps:

- Continue longitudinal tracking of GPA and credit hour trends to assess impact over multiple cohorts.
- Implement mentorship and enhanced onboarding based on focus group feedback.
- Explore regression modeling to further examine how engagement predicts job performance and academic outcomes.
- Expand professional development offerings to deepen learning outcomes and retention benefits.

3. Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last (FY2026) 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.

Budget and Organizational Changes (2024–2025)

Since the last SFAC request (FY2026), DSA IT Services adjusted and made some organizational and operational changes that have strengthened web services capacity and advanced major strategic infrastructure projects. These changes reflect intentional investments in personnel and technology to support the Division is evolving needs and enhance service delivery across all departments.

CMS Migration Project:

One of the most significant accomplishments during this period was the successful migration of all 57 DSA websites to the University's upgraded content management system (CMS). This large-scale initiative was executed through a multi-phase process that began with individualized consultations with each DSA department. During these consultations, the IT team assessed existing site functionality, identified areas for improvement, and created migration timelines tailored to departmental needs.

The migration improved site performance, security, and user experience, while standardizing technical operations across the division. This effort represents a major infrastructure milestone and positions DSA IT to better support departmental communications, accessibility compliance, and content strategy moving forward.

Personnel Updates:

In March 2025, Ian McLeod joined the DSA IT Services team, bringing additional technical expertise and capacity to support ongoing web and application development initiatives. His addition has strengthened the team's ability to maintain and enhance divisional IT infrastructure, particularly in the post-migration phase where continuous improvement and support are critical.

Additionally, Andrew Nguyen was hired in a temporary capacity as a Web Developer I from June 1 through August 31, 2025, specifically to support the CMS migration. His focused contribution ensured that project timelines were met and that departmental sites were transitioned efficiently with minimal disruption to services.

Budget Considerations and Impact:

These changes were implemented within existing budget parameters, requiring strategic resource allocation to support temporary staffing while maintaining regular IT operations. Although DSA IT did not receive additional base funding, careful planning allowed the department to complete a major infrastructure initiative without affecting day-to-day support services. The addition of permanent and temporary staff during this critical period was essential for meeting aggressive migration deadlines and ensuring a smooth transition for all DSA departments.