



## IGNITE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Ignite Leadership Program was launched by the Center for Student Involvement in spring 2013 with the purpose of training and mentoring new student leaders and preparing them for future leadership roles on campus and beyond. Participants develop their confidence and leadership potential while developing relationships with other future student leaders and the Ignite Mentors. To date, a total of 110 students have participated in Ignite, including the spring 2014 all-freshmen section of 40.

### Learning Life Skills

Ignite is a semester-long group leadership training program open to students of all majors and academic interests. The program consists of 12–14 weekly meetings, each emphasizing a skill such as conflict management, ethics, and public speaking taught by speakers from across campus. Participants are divided into small groups of five to seven led by an Ignite Mentor, a student who serves as a facilitator, resource and guide. Throughout the program, participants are introduced to campus resources and participate in social and service events. The semester begins with an overnight retreat that emphasizes teambuilding and understanding personality types. For many students, the retreat is a unique experience and the first time they enjoyed a campfire or s'mores. The semester concludes with a graduation brunch that participants invite friends and family to attend.

### Ripple Effect

As the number of Ignite graduates grows, interest in a more advanced second level program increases. The Center for Student Involvement is planning to launch this new Ignite program in spring 2015. The curriculum will build upon the skills developed in the first level, with an increased focus on leadership experiences, teambuilding and group dynamics.

Programs like Ignite increase students' leadership skills and confidence through both teaching and relationship building. Participants become part of a community of peers who want to learn about themselves, and who want to make a positive impact at the University of Houston and in their professional lives. Building the number of trained students who identify as leaders will create a ripple effect that will improve the quality of events and functions for student organizations across campus.

### What the Participants Say

As a part of the evaluation process each semester, Ignite participants are given the chance to comment on the program. Participating gives students a newfound confidence, as evidenced by these quotes:

- “Ignite showed me that your first year or any year of college is not so scary. There are people on campus who want to make a change and grow as a person just like you.”



- “Ignite has made me very confident in my leadership skills and abilities.”
- “I had a wonderful experience – I grew to know more about myself, met new lifelong friends and became a leader.”
- “The most important thing that I learned was a better understanding of who I am as a leader, and that I can make a difference.”
- “The most important thing that I learned is conflict management. I feel like I can use what I learn in real life, and maintain good relationships.”
- “The most important thing I learned was the ethical decision making. It really pushed me and made me rethink and evaluate myself on the previous decisions I was making.”
- “Leadership is not black magic, anyone can become a leader.”

### Expanding the Program

**IGNITE STUDENT DEVELOPMENT FUND**– As Ignite continues to grow and positively affect a larger number of students, the costs associated with the program will also increase. Each semester-long Ignite experience has a substantial cost associated with it. Currently, the Center for Student Involvement is offering three sessions of Ignite each academic year, but it would be optimal, for UH and its students, for that number to increase.

Ignite is a meaningful experience for our students and encourages them to jump into campus life. Ignite graduates can be found in leadership roles in organizations all over campus, including SGA, Frontier Fiesta and Resident Advisors. The lasting effect of Ignite can be seen when students graduate, confident in the talents and leadership skills they will bring to their career. Thank you for considering a gift to the Ignite Student Development Fund.

For more information,  
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