



**2017-2018  
Annual Department Review**

**Financial Aid**

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# Section 1: Department Planning:

## Internal Analysis

In June 2016, as the result of the recommendations of the District Financial Aid Process Improvement Team, the District Financial Aid Office was dissolved and the financial aid classified staff were sent back to their respective financial aid offices at CCC, GWC and OCC. The Coastline Financial Aid Office (FAO) had to scramble to pick up all of the operational and processing responsibilities being let go by the District FAO, whose closing was announced only a few weeks before operations were transferred to the college offices. While the decision to decentralize was a very good one, the FAO's were not given enough time to reassign staff duties and absorb all of the additional responsibilities.

At the same time the decentralization was happening, a major systems conversion for the financial aid offices had just begun. From April 2016 to the present, virtually every process in the office and every task has been, or is in process of being, re-designed and relearned. The FAO's at Coastline, GWC, and OCC have been converting from PowerFAIDS—a powerful, versatile, and user friendly financial aid software developed by The College Board—to Banner's version of financial aid processing. Banner is less intuitive, and requires more complicated processing steps to use.

These two events have put a significant strain on both staff and students who have been trying to make the adjustment to both decentralization and systems conversion over the past 15 months. While more recently, the stresses of decentralization are no longer an issue, the system conversion has been very difficult and is not complete. The system conversion has neither been smooth, nor has it been on schedule, putting the processing of financial aid for 2017-18 far behind where it would have been without the conversion. For example, verification of 2017-18 files should have begun in March 2017; however, because the Banner Financial Aid set up was not ready, staff were not able to begin verifying any files until July 7! It is now October 2<sup>nd</sup>, and there are still significant set up issues with the Banner Financial Aid system. The impact on students is apparent. Many students who would have been awarded and had their financial aid disbursed the first week of the Fall 17 semester, only received some of their aid recently, or are still waiting. The FAO estimates that if it had been allowed to continue to use PowerFAIDS while the Banner Financial Aid system was being built and tested, then at least 700 of those files selected for verification would have been reviewed by July 7<sup>th</sup> of 2017 compared to "0" with Banner. By the time the first fall cash disbursements were made on Sept 1, only **671** students received a Pell Grant disbursement. This compares with the estimated **1,400** who would have received a disbursement on Sept 1 if PowerFAIDS were used (last year's figures used to estimate).

The decision to go ahead and begin processing financial aid with Banner—even though all of the components of the system were not yet built, the system was not adequately tested, and the staff had not yet received adequate training—is having further negative consequences. Financial Aid staff are not able to answer all of the questions students have about their financial aid files, because the system is not yet fully functional, and the District has not provided staff with adequate training to know how to use all of the Banner Financial Aid screens and processes. Though fixes are made on a weekly basis, there have continued to be problems with the system not working as intended. Since the beginning of the semester, many students have missed having their aid disbursed in a timely manner, or have had some other issue that has interfered with having their applications properly reviewed and packaged in a timely manner.

Progress on the software continues, but new issues seem to arise as fixes are made and workarounds are implemented.

Finally, the federal program review conducted two years ago when much of the financial aid processing was being handled at the District, is still not fully concluded. Effective practices were put in place at the campuses upon decentralization that remedied the compliance issues, but some of these were undone (at least temporarily) when PowerFAIDS was replaced with Banner before Banner was set up to handle those items that had been taken care of with PowerFAIDS. R2T4 audit findings concerning the District processing of R2T4s made it clear that one FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist per campus would not be enough to handle these, if that individual same individual was also going to be responsible for processing disbursements on a weekly basis. Aware of this potential deficiency, the Financial Aid Office began training one FA Specialist to help the single FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist at Coastline. By the time an out-of-class assignment was set up, the existing Accounting/Fiscal Specialist was buried in R2T4 processing and needed someone else to handle disbursements. It has been one year since the FA Specialist began working in the out-of-class assignment to assist the Accounting/Fiscal Specialist, and is still needed to do so.

### ***Utilization of Services***

Of 1,168 respondents, 38.2% indicated that they currently **utilize** or have utilized **financial aid services**. Respondents who said they have utilized in financial aid services were asked to indicate the change in their knowledge on each of the following statements in Table 1 as a result of their interaction with the CCC Financial Aid Office and their web-based information.

Table 1.1. *Change in Knowledge from Interaction with Financial Aid Office*

Answer Options	Better	The Same	Worse	Respondents
My ability to identify financial aid resources.	70.8%	26.4%	2.8%	428
My understanding of the importance of applying early, submitting forms, and meeting deadlines to successfully apply for financial aid.	74.7%	21.9%	3.5%	430
My understanding of the importance of meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards to maintain financial aid eligibility.	72.8%	23.0%	4.2%	430
My understanding of various available financial aid programs, including on- and off-campus resources.	67.8%	27.6%	4.7%	428
My understanding of the requirements, rights and responsibilities, and repayment obligations associated with acquiring a federal student loan.	66.8%	29.0%	4.2%	428

Of those respondents, 70.8% indicated that their ability to identify financial aid resources is **better**, and 74.7% said their understanding of the importance of applying early, submitting forms, and meeting deadlines to successfully apply for financial aid is **better**. Additionally, 72.8% of respondents said their understanding of the importance of meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress standards to maintain financial aid eligibility is **better**, and 67.8% said that their understanding of various available financial aid programs, including on- and off-campus resources is **better**. Lastly, of 428 respondents, 66.8% indicated that their understanding of the requirements, rights and responsibilities, and repayment obligations associated with acquiring a federal student loan is **better**.

## Service Area Outcome(s)

Table 1.2 SAOs

SAO	Measures/Targets
Through outreach efforts, Financial Aid students will demonstrate understanding of the importance of applying early, submitting forms, and meeting deadlines in order to successfully apply for financial aid.	In 2016-17, the Financial Aid Office began a subscription to Financial Aid TV (FATV). This service makes more than one hundred informational financial aid videos available to students through our website, covering almost every financial aid subject. Students can select and watch these videos from our website at any time and from anywhere. The information in all of these videos is more comprehensive than can be delivered in a one-on-one conversation with an FAO employee or a one-hour presentation. The service has contributed to the positive responses found in the survey. In 2016-17, the Financial Aid staff also presented to various interested groups, both on campus and off. The 2016-17 Financial Aid Outreach event to get students ready for 2017-18, was held at the Newport Beach Center and was attended by more than 300 students.
Students will be satisfied with the services of the Financial Aid department.	This SAO was not directly measured. The many challenges the department was dealing with in 2016-17 as mentioned earlier meant the FAO staff did not have time to develop and administer a satisfaction survey. However, the markedly noticeable fewer number of complaints being escalated to the Financial Aid Director in 2016-17 over those in 2015-16 and 2014-15, likely indicates that students were served better once financial aid services were decentralized. This allowed students to communicate directly with those in our office who were actually handling their files. The measures of student understanding presented in Table 1 may also point to this probability, because greater understanding helps to reduce dissatisfaction.
The Financial Aid Office will take specific steps to lower Coastline's Federal Direct Loan default rate	The Federal Direct Loan cohort default rate is forecast to rise into the mid-20% range for 2015 and the mid-to-high 20% range for 2016. The largest contributing factor to this high rate is borrower fraud—stolen identities used to file for financial aid, as well as fraud rings in which groups of individuals use their real identities but pretend to be students in order to receive aid. This primarily occurs with online courses. The Financial Aid Office is now requiring positive picture identification from all online students who request a loan. In addition, more information is requested of those students who appear to be linked to one another through suspicious similarities. While this does not eliminate the occurrence of fraud, it has

	<p>resulted in many of these “students” disengaging from the FAO before loans are given to them.</p> <p>There are a smaller percentage of loan defaults that come from past, genuine students who later find that paying their loans off is more difficult than they had anticipated. To help these students, in 2016-17 the FAO contracted with a third party servicer (ECMC) who will call each individual who has become delinquent in repayment on their loan(s), and offer assistance with loan consolidation and deferrals before the loan goes into default. This contract will continue through 2017-18.</p>
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## Progress on Initiative(s)

Table 1.3 *Progress on Forward Strategy initiatives*

Initiative(s)	Status	Progress Status Description	Outcome(s)
Ensure quality and safety to student information and decrease fraudulent activity.	In Process	<p>A full-time position was added to focus on fraud in June 2016.</p> <p>Stricter identification requirements have been added for online students submitting loan requests; even though these are not required by the Dept of Ed.</p>	<p>This individual has been trained with what we have been able to learn about identifying fraud and investigating. The FAO continues to identify potential fraud and requires additional information from those students suspected of fraud. Additional strategies are being developed to identify those who may be engaging in financial aid fraud. Cases continue to be reported to the OIG. However, the number of incidents does not appear to be diminishing at this time.</p> <p>We will not be able to measure the effect that this is having until the 2017 or 2018 cohort default rate comes out. However, we will at least have a greater measure of assurance that the online students we are processing loans for match the identities being used.</p>
Reorganize and increase the CFAO staffing to accommodate the increased demand on student	In Process	The College received approval to add a Financial Aid Manager position. This	We now have someone looking into many of our Banner technical issues as

financial aid services, to handle the decentralization of District financial aid processing, and to comply with the federal and state laws and regulations governing student financial aid.		was filled by the existing coordinator, so there has been no increase to the staff. In addition, one of the existing FA Specialists was reclassified into a FA Systems Specialist position, which matches new tasks, but also did not result in an increase in staffing. It is hoped that we can add a needed FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist position that will increase our staffing by 1.	they arise. This is needed, as no one else in our office can devote their time to running Banner systems and to working with IT to fix Banner problems.  We continue to have to pay one of our FA Specialists out-of-class in order to complete our Accounting/Fiscal Specialist processes—this cannot continue as the out-of-class assignment has already lasted 12 months.
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## Response to Program/Department Committee Recommendation(s)

Table 1.4 Progress on Recommendations

Recommendation(s)	Status	Response Summary
Review the SAOs for the upcoming year and make modifications which would best gauge operational performance assessment.	In Process	Due to the shift in operations with the decentralization of financial aid, and moving the processing of financial aid to the individual colleges, as well as going through the massive Banner conversion process, it is expected that changes to the SAOs will need to occur. However; the current degree of flux makes it difficult to determine what these modifications and/or additions should be. Right now the FAO is in basic survival mode and just trying to provide basic services adequately. Nevertheless, the SAO concerning the reduction of the cohort default rate is still one to retain and the FAO will continue to try to reduce fraud with borrowers, as well as advise the College about exiting the Federal Direct Loan program—at least long enough to mitigate the fraud problem.
Review the human capital capacity of the department to ensure that students are effectively served and external compliance/threats (e.g., fraud) are addressed.	In Process	This review has taken place and the recommended solutions are contained in this review. A full-time position was added to the CFAO in June 2016 to focus on dealing with the fraud issues the department is currently experiencing.  With regard to compliance, the department still needs to hire a second

		<p>FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist.</p> <p>Another staffing issue: The Financial Aid Office has been using hourly personnel almost exclusively at the front counter for many years, because the permanent positions are specialized and needed to perform a variety of critical duties. A request has been made to replace the 5-6 hourly positions with two permanent full-time Financial Aid Assistants to handle front counter duties.</p>
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## Department Planning and Communication Strategies

The director asks for feedback from FAO staff when conducting the department review. FAO staff meetings are scheduled every week to discuss operations, news, training, etc. The FAO director and manager participate on the Student Services Wing Planning Council and update the Council on current issues, progress, and needs. The Financial Aid Directors at the three colleges meet several times per year to discuss standardization of practices, the implementation of new programs and processes, and to plan for the next academic year.

The Financial Aid Director consults with all FA staff with regard to the processes they are responsible for, how those processes are working, and how improvements can be made. Suggestions for improvements are routinely discussed in staff meetings.

## Section 2: Human Capital Planning

### Staffing

Table 2.1 Staffing Plan

Year	Administrator	Management	F/T Faculty	P/T Faculty	Classified	Hourly
Previous year 2016-17	1 VPSS	1 Director			5 FA Specialist 1 Acct/Fiscal Specialist	5 Temp Clerical
Current year 2017-18	1 VPSS	1 Director 1 Manager			4 FA Specialist 2 Acct/Fiscal Specialist 1 FA Systems Specialist	5 Temp Clerical
1 year 2018-19	1 VPSS	1 Director 1 Manager			4 FA Specialist 2 Acct/Fiscal Specialist 1 FA Systems Specialist 2 FA Assistant II	1 Temp Clerical
2 years 2019-2020	1 VPSS	1 Director 1 Manager			4 FA Specialist 2 Acct/Fiscal Specialist 1 FA Systems Specialist 2 FA Assistant II	1 Temp Clerical
3 years 2020-2021	1 VPSS	1 Director 1 Manager			4 FA Specialist 2 Acct/Fiscal Specialist 1 FA Systems Specialist 2 FA Assistant II	1 Temp Clerical

Provide a description of the staffing for the program. Include a description of the previous, current, and year of staffing estimates. Support the projection with evidence and specify how position growth or reduction relates to College plans. Additionally, for full-time positions, include a Coast District approved job description.

When the Process Improvement Team recommended the decentralization of financial aid services and the return of financial aid processing to each of the three colleges, it was also recommended that each Financial Aid Office have a Financial Aid Manager, a Financial Aid Systems Specialist, and two Financial Aid Accounting/Fiscal Specialists. The Coastline FAO had one Financial Aid Specialist reclassify into the Systems Specialist Position. The Coastline Financial Aid Coordinator applied for and became the Financial Aid Manager. So two new positions were filled without increasing the total number of Financial Aid Office staff. This helped the FAO with the additional duties that these positions are responsible for, but it did so by changing staff duties and not adding more staff to help with the volume of work. The office still needs to add one FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist so that there are two of these rather than the one currently employed. As mentioned previously, a Financial Aid Specialist is temporarily working out-of-class to assist the current FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist with the high volume of work required by the processing of R2T4s and weekly aid disbursements from several federal and state aid programs. This means the department is currently down one FA Specialist during the time of the temporary assignment.

As previously mentioned, the Coastline FAO has been using hourly staffing to work the front counter for many years. When the current Financial Aid Director was hired, he inquired as to why hourlies were being used. He was told that a plan was in motion to create new full-time positions to carry out the work that the temporary hourly staff were doing at the time. Since then, there have been two leadership changes in the VPSS position, and these full-time FA Assistant positions have not been created to replace the use of hourly staff. This is not a good situation as these positions are critical. The use of other full-time Financial Aid staff with specialized duties to cover the front counter and general phone inquiries would handicap processing and further reduce the processing output of the office—further slowing the delivery of aid to students. This will essentially harm students and make it more difficult for them to stay enrolled. For those who need financial aid (approximately two-thirds to three quarters of Coastline's students) this is often a make-or-break service that severely impacts them when complications arise.

## Professional Development

Provide a description of the program's staff professional development participation over the past year. Include evidence that supports program constituents participating in new opportunities to meet the professional development needs of the program.

Table 2.2 *Professional Development*

Name (Title)	Professional Development	Outcome
Kathie Tran – Financial Aid Manager	CASFAA financial aid conference CSAC Conference on Cal Grant	Training on Cal Grant and a variety of other financial Aid programs, practices and regulations.
Charlene (Nhi) Ho – Financial Aid Specialist	CASFAA financial aid conference Webinar on the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver CSAC Conference on Cal Grant	Training on Cal Grant, BOGFW, and a variety of other financial Aid programs, practices and regulations.
Janette Moulton - Financial Aid Systems Specialist	Argos/SQL training	Training on creating reports in Argos using data extracted from Banner.
Quan Xa - Financial Aid Specialist	CASFAA financial aid conference	Training on a variety of financial aid programs, practices, and regulations.
Jenny Vu – Financial Aid Accounting/Fiscal Specialist	CASFAA financial aid conference	Training on a variety of financial aid programs, practices, and regulations
Ly Le – Financial Aid Specialist	CASFAA financial aid conference	Training on a variety of financial aid programs, practices, and regulations
Cecilia (Phuong) Ngo – Financial Aid Specialist	CASFAA financial aid conference	Training on a variety of financial aid programs, practices, and regulations
Steve Woodyard – Financial Aid Director	CASFAA financial aid conference CCCCO Financial Aid Director Training	Training regarding a variety of financial aid and financial aid management topics

The Financial Aid Directors at OCC, Coastline, and GWC developed and presented 24 hours of training to all financial aid staff with regard to how to use basic screens in Banner and Campus Logic. While a consulting service hired by the District has provided training to our Accounting/Fiscal Specialists, very

little training has been given to the rest of the staff on how to use Banner to process financial aid. Even with the training provided by the FA Directors, there is much that the FA staff do not know or understand about Banner. Even the FA Directors are overwhelmed with the changes and challenges. The workarounds created to get around the way single-term Banner has been set up to run using alien multi-terms further complicates this issue.

## Section 3: Facilities Planning

### Facility Assessment

The Financial Aid Office needs to add a second FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist and two full-time FA Assistants. The FA Assistants would work at the front counter and replace five of our temporary clerical positions. Since these two positions would work the front counter, additional personal cubicles for them are not essential (although it would be nice for them to have their own personal work space to use during slow periods). While the current lack of office space is not a problem for the FA Assistant positions, there is no permanent office space for the second FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist when hired. This position would need to work out of a temporary office which the hourly staff currently share. Ultimately, the permanent solution should come with the College Center remodel or new building (whichever project is chosen). The issue for more offices/workstations will be addressed with either choice.

An additional need, of equal importance, is for the Financial Aid Office to have its own separate, enclosed, and lockable department space that is not shared with non-Financial Aid employees. The department is required to have a work area that is not accessible to others without permission to enter. FERPA and the HEA limit access to the highly confidential data contained in the FAFSA (the primary document used by the FAO to process financial aid applications). It is possible that this data may be seen or accessed by non-Financial Aid personnel who enter the area without the staff's knowledge or without warning. Currently, the Financial Aid Office is not self-contained and certain other college employees—even students visiting other services—are able to walk unannounced into financial aid cubicles where applications are being reviewed. This is especially concerning when the Financial Aid Office is closed and non-Financial Aid personnel who work in the shared work space are still present.

## Section 4: Technology Planning

### Technology Assessment

The Coastline Financial Aid Office is almost paperless. The department uses electronic processes and forms as well as imaging systems to work with and keep all data and documentation digital. Nevertheless, some students submit their documentation on paper and through faxes, even though it is possible for them to submit everything electronically. Hard copies are converted to digital images, while the paper forms are filed and locked away until shredded. The FAO has just begun to use a third-party system (CampusLogic) that presents federal verification forms as interactive online forms. These forms are completed online, submitted online, and accessed by the FAO online through one common site. Students acquire access to these forms through one sign on by logging into their MyCCC account. Because the forms are interactive, when students omit required information they are stopped by the system and prompted to enter the required data to continue. This cuts down on the time it takes to

process a file by ensuring that all data is provided so that staff do not need to contact students to ask them to provide the missing information.

The office computers are about 4 years old and still function at an acceptable level. Each of our 9 cubicles has a computer and printer. We also have 8 scanners. At this time the technological needs of the department are met with the current equipment and software. However, because all of the computers are identical and purchased at the same time, at the point that they become insufficient due to age or deficient hardware capacity, they will all need to be replaced at the same time.

When the second FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist is hired, the department will purchase a computer and printer for the position with categorical funds.

## Section 5: New Initiatives

**Initiative:** Increase operational effectiveness through the reorganization of the department including permanent staffing of the front counter.

**Describe how the initiative supports the college mission:**

Many students do not have sufficient funds to attend college. For those who are working, many cannot work as much as they need to and still do well in their studies. To provide access to these students and to support their success in attaining educational outcomes, financial assistance is needed. When the means for that assistance is insufficient, student access and success are hindered. Financially strapped students will drop some or all of their courses; or they will have a harder time succeeding in those courses due to adding more working hours to obtain the finances they need. This Department Review has attempted to show that three things have made it necessary to create new Financial Aid positions and add more full-time staff: 1) the recent decentralization of services, 2) the new operational requirements of using Banner to review/process financial aid, and 3) the importance of compliance with federal and state regulations. This review has briefly summarized the current challenges facing the department and how Coastline students are being adversely affected. For student access and success goals to be met, it is essential that the reorganization of the Financial Aid Office be completed by the hiring of one more Financial Aid Accounting/Fiscal Specialist and the hiring of two full-time FA Assistants to carry out critical duties currently accomplished with temporary staff.

**What college goal does the initiative support?** Select all that apply

- Student Success, Completion, and Achievement
- Instructional and Programmatic Excellence
- Access and Student Support
- Student Retention and Persistence
- Culture of Evidence, Planning, Innovation, and Change
- Partnerships and Community Engagement
- Fiscal Stewardship, Scalability, and Sustainability

**What Educational Master Plan objective does the initiative support?** Select all that apply

- Increase student success, retention, and persistence across all instructional delivery modalities with emphasis in distance education.
- Provide universal access to student service and support programs.
- Strengthen post-Coastline outcomes (e.g., transfer, job placement).

- Explore and enter new fields of study (e.g., new programs, bachelor's degrees).
- Foster and sustain industry connections and expand external funding sources (e.g., grants, contracts, and business development opportunities) to facilitate programmatic advancement.
- Strengthen community engagement (e.g., student life, alumni relations, industry and academic alliances).
- Maintain the College's Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) designation and pursue becoming a designated Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

**What evidence supports this initiative?** Select all that apply

- Service Outcome (SAO) assessment
- Internal Research (Student achievement, program performance)
- External Research (Academic literature, market assessment, audit findings, compliance mandates)

**Describe how the evidence supports this initiative.**

Internal research has shown that financial aid fraud at Coastline continues to be a significant issue requiring the diversion of staff time. It has helped that the department has been able to hire an FA Specialist to focus on monitoring, curtailing, investigating, and reporting fraud.

Internal evidence has also shown that financial aid services to students have been, and continue to be, severely hindered due to the process of implementing Banner (note statistics and observations in *Internal Analysis*), and that changes to the staffing structure were and are required because of the conversion to Banner and decentralization of financial aid processing. (Bringing processing back to the colleges is a very good thing for students and customer service, but requires resources and an appropriate structure.) Internal evidence also supports the need for permanent FA Assistant positions to replace the reliance upon temporary positions. By definition alone, these are not positions intended to be temporary.

External research in the form of audit findings has shown that the R2T4 process and the attention given to disbursements requires more staff time than one person working 40 hours/week can provide. Furthermore, the potential financial and restrictive ramifications of these audit findings are evidence of the importance of compliance with all federal and state regulations.

**Recommended resource(s) needed for initiative achievement:**

The Financial Aid Department has \$87,780 in categorical funds that it can contribute towards the hiring of two permanent FA Assistants (the amount currently spent on temp hourly staff). Another \$60,000 in general or ancillary funds is still needed to make these positions possible.

For the FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist position, recouped funds from the now vacant FA Coordinator can be used.

**What is the anticipated outcome of completing the initiative?**

The Coastline Financial Aid Office will be staffed similarly to the GWC and OCC offices (in structure not number). Though Banner will continue to be a challenge, the FAO should be in a good position staffing wise to serve students adequately and in compliance with federal and state requirements, provided our technical processes do what they are supposed to do.

**Provide a timeline and timeframe from initiative inception to completion.**

The reorganization began in March of 2017. Hopefully the hiring of a second FA Accounting/Fiscal Specialist will occur by February of 2018. (This position has not yet been posted). The hiring of two FA Assistants (if approved) should be completed by June 2018.

## Section 6: Prioritization

List and prioritize resource requests which emerge from initiatives

Initiative	Resource(s)	Est. Cost	Funding Type	Health, Safety Compliance	Evidence	College Goal	To be Completed by	Priority

List and prioritize staffing requests. For full-time positions, include a Coast District approved job description.

Initiative	Resource(s)	Est. Cost	Funding Type	Health, Safety Compliance	Evidence	College Goal	To be Completed by	Priority
Reorganize the department including permanent staffing for the front counter	FA Funds recouped from the vacant Financial Aid Coordinator position and the 5-6 hourly positions	Additional cost beyond using recouped FA funds = \$60,000	Categorical and General funds, possibly ancillary as well	Compliance with Title IV	PIT Team research, audit findings, and the current need to have one staff work out-of-class to get this work done.	Access & Student Support and Student Retention & Persistence	FA Director and VPSS	1.

### Prioritization Glossary

Initiative:	Provide a short description of the plan
Resource(s):	Describe the resource(s) needed to support the completion of the initiative
Est. Cost:	Estimated financial cost of the resource(s)
Funding Type:	Specify if the resource request is one-time or ongoing
Health, Safety Compliance:	Specify if the request relates to health or safety compliance issue(s)
Evidence:	Specify what data type(s) supported the initiative (Internal research, external research, or service outcomes)
College Goal:	Specify what College goal the initiative aligns with
To be completed by:	Specify year of anticipated completion
Priority:	Specify a numerical rank to the initiative



## JOB SPECIFICATION

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ACCOUNTING/FISCAL SPECIALIST	Range:	E-52
	Spec ID:	94015
	Class:	Technical
	Date:	04/2007

### DEFINITION:

Under the direction of the Financial Aid Director, to perform a variety of fiscal/accounting activities related to student financial aid programs; oversee and maintain the financial functions of student financial aid programs within a broad framework of applicable Federal, State and District requirements to insure budget and related fiscal reporting integrity for the college.

### DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:

The *Student Financial Aid Accounting/Fiscal Specialist* is an alternate class within the student financial aid series requiring excellent communication, time management, organization, and problem solving skills as well as specialized training and subject matter expertise in the area of student financial aid program budgeting, accounting, and fiscal reporting. Knowledge of specialized program reporting requirements and fiscal problem solving is applied to the general oversight of the student financial aid programs utilizing a variety of widely used principles and concepts.

### EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:

Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Plan, organize and coordinate the operation and maintenance of accounting/fiscal and budgetary functions of the student financial aid department.
- b. Plan and develop procedures for preparing fiscal reports and for maintaining and storing specialized or centralized control of accounting and financial records.
- c. Assist in the development of procedures for accounting and budgeting systems and recommend improvements.
- d. May serve as lead to coordinate and direct the work of staff in assigned area; oversee the processing of accounting transactions, auditing, and accounting/fiscal reports.
- e. Advise and assist student financial aid staff and District with reports, financial database systems, and department operations.
- f. Participate and oversee the gathering, classifying, and summarizing of student financial data; research and analyze budget and financial discrepancies and recommend a course of action to resolve problems.
- g. Prepare, review, and revise accounting/fiscal procedures and responsibilities according to applicable Federal, State, and District requirements.
- h. Participate in budget development; prepare various accounting reports, schedules, charts, and tables as needed or required.
- i. Oversee and participate in the compilation of data, statistical studies, and analyses of student financial data; prepare preliminary and final financial documents and reports as assigned.
- j. Assist with the annual student financial aid audit.
- k. Coordinate operations and activities of the student financial aid department to assure timely and accurate processing and reporting.
- l. Confer with and provide technical accounting and fiscal procedural assistance to others as requested.
- m. Serve as resource to and liaison between Federal and State agencies, service providers, and other staff.
- n. Collect, receive, review, verify, research, and/or correct student financial aid data; prepare schedules, reports, documents and/or entries as needed.

## STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ACCOUNTING/FISCAL SPECIALIST

### EXAMPLES OF DUTIES: (Continued)

- o. Prepare and process journal and budget entries.
- p. Perform financial analysis and balancing, report corrections, and year-end procedures including applicable reports.
- q. Prepare and/or participate in the development of spreadsheets, journals, purchase orders, supply orders, and budgets.
- r. Use computerized accounting, budgeting, and database systems.
- s. Interpret codes, rules, regulations, and/or instructions; thoroughly review financial reports, documents, records, and other related data; research and resolve identified problems.
- t. Assist supervisor with special projects as required.
- u. Use a computer and related software for data entry, word processing, reporting, and messaging.
- v. Perform a full range of high-level clerical work in support of assigned projects such as independently prepare reports, correspondence, and other related duties.
- w. Maintain accurate records for student financial aid programs, accounts and functions.
- x. Perform other related job duties as assigned.

### MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

#### Knowledge of:

- 1. General principles and procedures of accounting, auditing, budgeting, bookkeeping, and fiscal record keeping related to student financial aid reporting.
- 2. Audit requirements for the segregation of duties within the student financial aid program.
- 3. Financial and statistical analysis as related to student financial aid programs.
- 4. Appropriate laws, codes, standards, and fiscal reporting requirements applicable to student financial aid.
- 5. Budget development, monitoring, and analysis for student financial aid programs and services, including other related categorical programs.
- 6. Standard office practices, procedures and equipment, including use of computers for word processing, spreadsheet and other financial software, and data base applications.
- 7. Technical aspects and guidelines of student financial aid programs.

#### Ability to:

- 8. Perform a variety of complex accounting, monitoring, and fiscal analysis related to student financial aid.
- 9. Gather, organize, analyze, prepare and present varied finance data and statistical analysis.
- 10. Provide accurate information and reports to District and other reporting agencies.
- 11. Prepare, audit, and analyze a variety of student financial aid data and reports.
- 12. Analyze, interpret, and apply pertinent codes, laws, policies, and regulations related to student financial aid accounting and reporting.
- 13. Understand and apply internal fiscal controls in the performance of work assignments.
- 14. Operate a computer, applicable software and other office equipment.
- 15. Make complex arithmetic computations with speed and accuracy; correct errors in arithmetical calculations made by others.
- 16. Adjust to new technology.
- 17. Effectively utilize automated accounting information systems and related software applications.
- 18. Analyze situations quickly and objectively to determine proper course of action.
- 19. Develop and prepare procedures, instructions, and standards for a variety of student financial aid accounting processes.
- 20. Direct or lead the work of others.
- 21. Plan and organize work to meet schedules and time lines.
- 22. Handle multiple project assignments.
- 23. Provide high-level customer service, in person and over the telephone.
- 24. Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- 25. Establish and maintain effective relationships with those contacted in the course of work.



## JOB SPECIFICATION

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**STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ASSISTANT II**

Range: E-44  
Spec ID: 94011  
Class: Clerical  
Date: 04/2007

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**DEFINITION:** Under the general supervision of the Financial Aid Director, to assist in the daily operations of the Financial Aid Office; including intake, scanning, and posting of student financial aid documents; provide general student financial aid information to students and the community; perform annual review of student financial aid records to include satisfactory academic progress and enrollment verification; perform other duties as assigned as related to student financial aid.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

The *Student Financial Aid Assistant II* is assigned to the day to day technical duties in addition to general clerical work related to the assignment. Positions assigned to this classification have a general knowledge of financial aid programs and procedures to independently assist students, staff, and community members at the front counter, over the phone, and through written and electronic correspondence.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:** Duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Disseminate student financial aid information to students, parents, and staff members in orientation sessions or one-on-one; by telephone and email, and at outreach events as needed.
- b. Answer telephone, email, and written inquiries; perform general reception and clerical assistance for the office. Schedule appointments for students with the Financial Aid Technicians, Financial Aid Specialists, for orientations, and other sessions as necessary.
- c. Assist other department staff with the coordination of student financial aid to include Title IV programs and all state aid programs; enter and retrieve data in the federal and state database systems.
- d. Interpret, explain, process, and input Board of Governors Fee Waiver – BOGFW – Program applications online and in paper forms. Assist with the input of Board of Governors Fee Waiver Applications during DSPS and EOPS registration cycles.
- e. Review and process incoming student documents for accuracy and completion.
- f. Enter data in computer system; scan documents; create and maintain student files in electronic or paper form; retrieve and execute standard computer reports from the student database system and the student financial aid database system; assist with the input of CSAC requirements into WebGrants; assist with the input of Federal Work Study time cards.
- g. Assist in the review and screening of student financial aid applicants to include assistance with online and paper application processes for federal and state programs.
- h. Monitor satisfactory academic progress and enrollment of student financial aid recipients; input the results into the student financial aid system.
- i. Assist in the intake and scanning of confidential data for state and federal reports, including student and parent confidential tax and income information.
- j. Assist in the validation of student financial aid application accuracy for state and federal programs.
- k. Receive training when needed to remain current on Federal and State student financial aid regulations.
- l. Adapt to changes in procedures and methodologies as required by changes in Federal and State financial aid programs and laws.
- m. Act as the lead for hourly and student assistant counter personnel in the student financial aid office.
- n. Assist with the training of hourly and student assistant counter personnel in the student financial aid office.

## **STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ASSISTANT II**

### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES: Continued**

- o. Maintain the college's administrative requirements for student financial aid and separation of duties compliance requirements for state and federal student financial aid.
- p. Perform other related job duties as assigned.

### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **Knowledge of:**

- 1. Student financial aid District, college, state and federal practices, policies, regulations and procedures.
- 2. Student financial aid record-keeping techniques as related to student and parent information.
- 3. Applicable sections of State Education Code, federal and state guidelines for student financial aid and other applicable laws.
- 4. District organization, policies and procedures, and objectives of the student financial aid program.
- 5. Complex computerized systems and applications as related to student financial aid, to include federal and state reporting database systems.
- 6. Applicable student financial aid terminology.
- 7. Standard office practices, procedures and equipment, including use of computers, applicable software, and document scanners.

#### **Ability to:**

- 8. Interpret and apply applicable sections of State Education Code, District and college policies and procedures, federal and state regulations and other applicable laws as related to student financial aid.
- 9. Maintain confidentiality of student and parent records in accordance with FERPA, state, District and college guidelines, policies and procedures.
- 10. Perform a variety of complex reviews and maintenance procedures regarding student financial aid applications and documents.
- 11. Assist college staff with reports, and general support with District, federal and state financial application methods as related to student financial aid.
- 12. Operate various computer database systems, applicable software, and other standard office equipment.
- 13. Work independently and effectively with minimal supervision.
- 14. Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- 15. Understand and follow work directions verbally and in writing.
- 16. Plan and organize work to meet schedules and time lines.
- 17. Adapt to and learn new technology.
- 18. Provide work direction and guidance to hourly and student assistants.
- 19. Demonstrate understanding of, sensitivity to, and respect for the diverse academic, socio-economic, ethnic, cultural, disability, religious background and sexual orientation of community college students, faculty, and staff.
- 20. Establish and maintain cooperative and effective working relationships with others.

#### **Education and Experience:**

- 21. Education equivalent to one year of college course work in business administration, accounting or other related field.
- 22. One year of experience in monitoring and maintaining computerized student financial aid records including one year of general clerical experience in a related educational or student financial aid environment.
- 23. Or, any combination of education and experience that would provide the required equivalent qualifications.