

Governors State University
 Student Affairs and Enrollment Management: Reaching Vision 2020

Focus Area: Financial Aid and Literacy

Leader(s): Dr. John Perry, Director of Financial Aid and Matt Zarris, Assistant Director of Financial Aid

Implementation Year: Results and Analysis for 2016 – 2017 Objectives

Goal 1: Develop a comprehensive plan of internal and external review to ensure financial aid is responsibly awarded and disbursed.

Objective 1:	<p>Implement a new file verification process to ensure accuracy.</p> <p>In the past two years we have had audit findings on our verification process. While these findings are small in scale and have little to no impact on students or federal aid, they are still findings that must be addressed. Because of this, a new process is needed. The new process will consist of the FA Advisors submitting all verification files to the Assistant Director of Financial Aid for review before corrections are made.</p> <p>This change should prevent future audit findings in the area of file verification.</p>
Action Items	Develop process and train staff
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	No audit finding for verification.
Achieved Outcomes and Results	The new file verification system is working extremely well. However, some of the 15-16 files had already been completed under the old system. While we still received an audit finding for FY16, we just received word that our FY17 audit was “spotless” and not finding will be issued.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY17 Objectives.)	The new file verification system has greatly increased the accuracy of the financial aid advisors and has the added component of administrative oversight. As mentioned above, there was no audit finding for verification in FY17. We anticipate this to be the new trend.

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Objective 2:	Continue to closely monitor students' PELL Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU) and Federal Loan aggregate limits, to both warn students when they have reached or are nearing their limits, and ensure that we don't award these students over their limits.
Action Items	Create new policy that students must come and meet with an FA Advisor when they have either reached or are approaching the maximum amount of Pell or Loans. Also, assist students who have exceeded loan borrowing limits in the reaffirmation process so that they might still be eligible for other types of Title IV funding.
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Advise students on financial aid options to assist with degree completion.
Achieved Outcomes and Results	Achieved outcomes and results include a new communication management code entered into the system that requires a student to come in and meet with a financial aid advisor to discuss their financial aid status and options. These meetings may also be done by telephone. We are also providing Pell LEU and Loan Aggregate numbers in the new FA Self Service module.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY17 Objectives.)	While some students get upset at the idea of having a conversation about their potential loss of aid eligibility, it has overall been a success. Students are informed by their advisor of where they are with Pell and loan usage. The advisor is also able to go over options with the student help make sure they use remaining eligibility wisely so they can graduate.

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Objective 3:	<p>Revise policy and process for students who have bankruptcy flags on their FAFSA.</p> <p>Currently, our process for students who are in (or have been in) bankruptcy requires a great deal of paperwork and time for the student and the FA Advisor. The process needs to be reviewed and made easier.</p>
Action Items	Review the regulations and develop a new process, policy, and forms.
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Streamline process so that it is faster for an FA Advisor to process and easier for the student to comply.
Achieved Outcomes and Results	We have significantly reduced the amount of paperwork that we are requiring from student within this category while maintaining compliance with federal regulations
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY17 Objectives.)	By doing a small amount of review of student loans that were potentially affected by bankruptcy, we were able to spare students of unnecessary form completion. This was based on information obtained by NSLDS and the FSA Handbook regarding loan bankruptcy codes and financial aid eligibility.