

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 3: Provide web based, written, verbal, and electronic information to students maximizing understanding of financial aid programs.

Objective 1:	Continue to produce and maintain financial aid forms that are accurate and articulate, and review/update those forms on a quarterly basis. Additionally, manage our website content to guarantee accuracy, accessibility, and clarity, on an ongoing basis.
Action Items	Continue to update forms during the setup of the new processing year. Keep clean file storage on the shared network drive (U) of previous years so that templates are available for next year.
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Forms and website will be accurate, effective, and easy to understand.
Achieved Outcomes and Results	At the beginning of each processing year, we go through all of the forms that we used for the prior year and make sure everything is still accurate and as easy to understand as possible. We have re-structured our shared network drive to make it easier to find things. We have also provided access to forms and other vital information as well as notifications regarding file completion via the FA Self Service module.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY17 Objectives.)	While it may seem somewhat insignificant, these changes have led to fewer questions by students and less confusion for the financial aid staff. We plan to continue this process each year.

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Objective 2:	Provide informative and engaging presentations at open houses, orientations, and other scheduled events, as well as staff information booths when needed, always prepared to answer any/all financial aid inquiries. Additionally, provide needed workshops (i.e. FAFSA Completion) at crucial times during the academic year.
Action Items	Continually update presentations to better inform prospective, applied, and admitted students as well as their parents. Work with Admissions on needs for external events
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Better inform students and their families of the FA process and bolster enrollment
Achieved Outcomes and Results	We have created several new presentations based on the audience and the time of year. The Assistant Director can then determine what the needs of the audience are at the time of year and cover the necessary material. We have combined with the Office of Financial Services at certain events to provide a more robust financial picture for students. We are also providing opportunities for students to familiarize themselves with the FA Self Service Module.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY17 Objectives.)	The financial aid presentations continue to get better and more succinct. We plan to review our presentations on a regular basis to make sure they have maximum impact.

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Objective 3:	Continue to maintain a standard of communication with our students through comprehensive and timely emails on both a wide scale approach and on the individual/personal level. Implement and manage electronic award letters to facilitate quicker delivery and help introduce students to the option of navigating their financial aid through the myGSU Student Portal.
Action Items	Setup of communication management to accommodate an electronic process instead of a paper process Test emails sent from Colleague to students
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Move away from the paper process for a more sustainable system.
Achieved Outcomes and Results	We continue to make strides forward as it comes to electronic communication with students. With the exception of a few documents, all communication with students is done through the GSU email account of each student. The FA Self Service module will allow us the ability to communicate crucial financial aid information to our students.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY17 Objectives.)	While we have seen significant advance in our process in communicating with students electronically, we still need to work on getting the students to access their information.

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Objective 4:	Implement the Financial Aid Self-Service Module from Colleague. Similar to the module that was added in Financial Services, this would greatly increase the student understanding of the financial aid process, forms to complete, and issues to respond to.
Action Items	Seek approval from Administration for the purchase Implementation of new Colleague add-on by ITS
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Deliver an easier-to-use system for students who can access aid on their smart phones
Achieved Outcomes and Results	The FA Self-Service Module was successfully installed near the end of this year. Several demonstrations were given across campus on its functionality. We are promoting the benefits of this product in financial aid group presentations as well as one-on-one interactions.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY17 Objectives.)	We plan to monitor the new module as we communicate with students and adjust it as needed. This objective will be maintained throughout the next year.

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Objective 5:	Notify all current and prospective students on the Prior/Prior Year FAFSA Changes that are taking place this October.
Action Items	<p>Update the website (the landing page for FA) with this extremely important information</p> <p>Update FA presentations to notify students of this significant change</p> <p>Modify our email notifications/reminders so that students are adequately prepared for this major change to the Financial Aid process</p> <p>Provide timely FAFSA Completion Workshops in conjunction with the October 1st Application date</p>
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	<p>Ensure that all students, prospective students, and parents are aware of the new FAFSA Application date, and that they are filing as early as possible.</p> <p>Also, we are encouraging all students to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool if applicable.</p>
Achieved Outcomes and Results	All action items were completed and a campus-wide marketing strategy was implemented to communicate with our students.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY17 Objectives.)	<p>Students got the message as we saw FAFSA's completed within the appropriate timeframe.</p> <p>There were several issues at the Department of Education that generated some significant hurdles for students including conflicting information and a disable DRT system. While, these issues were out of our control, we have still gone to great lengths to convey the impact to our students.</p>