

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: 2017 - 2018

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

Objective 1:	<p style="color: red;">Continue with updated 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	Continue to develop process and update/train staff
Indicators and Data Needed (Measures that will appraise progress towards the strategic objective)	The Assistant Director will be able to view the progress of each FA Advisor, offer advice and training, and catch any possible errors
Responsible Person and/or Unit (Data collection, analysis reporting)	Matthew Zarris
Milestones (Identify Timelines)	FY17 external audit review
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	No audit finding for verification.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY18 Objectives.)	Matt has done an outstanding job of keeping up on the changing regulations and making sure that we are verifying files with 100% accuracy. We had no repeat audit finding for FY17 and don't expect a finding for FY18.

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Objective 2:	Begin the implementation of a new policy and process where financial aid awards only cover courses that count toward the academic program.
Action Items	Work with ITS on connecting Degree Audit to the Title IV credits in AIDE, writing rules for exceptions, etc. Work with Advising to ensure accuracy of data for each program
Indicators and Data Needed (Measures that will appraise progress towards the strategic objective)	Setup system in a test environment and begin running students through the process
Responsible Person and/or Unit (Data collection, analysis reporting)	John Perry; Sylvia Ponce De Leon; Hugo Solano; Emma Ziemis; Lisa Helm; Chris Huang
Milestones (Identify Timelines)	Successful implementation in test environment
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Prevent student from using all of their aid prior to completing a program and maintaining compliance with federal regulation.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY18 Objectives.)	We are waiting on this objective as it will take further discussion and a high degree of technological support. This objective will be repeated next year.

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Objective 3:	Implement new policy that prohibits the adjustment of Title IV aid after the census date.
Action Items	Communicate change to the institution. They system is already setup to accommodate this change.
Indicators and Data Needed (Measures that will appraise progress towards the strategic objective)	Manual adjustments to students' aid will be discontinued and the risk of awarding errors will be greatly reduced.
Responsible Person and/or Unit (Data collection, analysis reporting)	John Perry; Sylvia Ponce De Leon
Milestones (Identify Timelines)	Begin for 17-18 if possible. If not, then 18-19 for sure.
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Maintain compliance with federal regulation and hopefully limit the number of courses added late by students after the census date.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY18 Objectives.)	While we did not implement a new policy, we have had a considerable drop in changes to financial aid after the census date. We have been working with Chris Huang to ensure that after-census changes are kept to a minimum.

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Objective 4:	Implement new policy that confirms attendance in all courses that apply to a students who have Pell Grants.
Action Items	Work with the Registrar, Academics, and Advising on devising a system to confirm attendance by census date.
Indicators and Data Needed (Measures that will appraise progress towards the strategic objective)	Explore areas of Colleague that could be used to report attendance (or non-attendance) in each course for each student.
Responsible Person and/or Unit (Data collection, analysis reporting)	John Perry; Sylvia Ponce De Leon; ITS; Chris Huang; Lisa Helm; Colleen Sexton
Milestones (Identify Timelines)	Begin for 18-19 if possible.
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Maintain compliance with federal regulation.
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY18 Objectives.)	A new committee has been established to review Policy 26. Within that policy, we are adding wording to confirm attendance. This objective will continue next year.

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Objective 5:	Collaborate with other financial aid counterparts within the State to conduct a peer external review of the GSU Office of Financial Aid.
Action Items	Contact financial aid counterparts within the State; setup timeframe and scope of review.
Indicators and Data Needed (Measures that will appraise progress towards the strategic objective)	A variety of information will likely be requested based on policies, process, and office management
Responsible Person and/or Unit (Data collection, analysis reporting)	John Perry; Sylvia Ponce De Leon; other departments as needed
Milestones (Identify Timelines)	Tentatively schedule for late fall 2017 based on availability of reviewers
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	Provide external commentary on the Office of Financial Aid
Analysis of Results (Where outcomes met? Exceeded? Progress towards goal. Implications for AY18 Objectives.)	We had several discussions with other financial aid professionals from around the state and decided the best course of action was to invest in the NASFAA-led peer review. No funding has been appropriated to this need as of yet.