Western Campus

Financial Aid Program Review

Executive Summary

Committee Members: Chuck Bartolotta, Dierdre Fitzpartick, Susan Carney, Mohini Rayfield

Major Conclusions:

- The mission and the desired outcomes of the Western Campus Financial Aid Office are congruent with the mission and desired outcomes of the Division of Student Affairs, Western Campus, and Suffolk County Community College.

- All CAS standards were addressed and appear to be satisfactory given staffing levels.

- Given the complexity of the student aid resources managed by the Financial Aid Office, the staff does an admirable job managing them.

- The committee identified four primary obstacles that should be addressed by the campus and the college: technology, processing delays and backlogs, coordination and community and staffing levels.

Financial Aid Program Review: College-wide Recommendations

1. Evaluate impact of financial aid on student academic success and retention. For example, incorporate the promotion of student learning into mission statement, staff training, employment, exit/entrance loan counseling, etc.

2. Intensify outreach to constituent groups – schools, community agencies and organizations, to promote financial aid awareness.

3. The College should investigate the establishment of a financial aid committee composed of Financial Aid staff, students and related administrative departments (business affairs, admissions, etc...) to meet on a regular basis.

4. The financial aid office should consider preparing a comprehensive report that demonstrates and reinforces the importance of Financial Aid to the college.

5. On-going, in-service training should be provided on changes to federal, state and college policies, procedures and the delivery of financial aid.
6. The federal mandate that requires FAO's to update their technology periodically should be built into the college budget.

7. Create a standardized Financial Aid PowerPoint presentation for prospective students.

8. Develop a strategic plan to address the role of financial aid and scholarships in recruitment and retention.

9. Create a central administrative position responsible for the management and development of technological resources and processes related to financial aid delivery and information access.
FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, AND EQUIPMENT

According to CAS Guidelines: "The financial aid program must have adequate, suitably located facilities, technology, and equipment to support its mission and goals. Facilities and equipment must be in compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial, and local requirements to provide for access, health and safety. The financial aid program should be readily accessible, included on campus maps, and have highly visible signage. The program should have facilities or have access to: private office or space for confidential counseling, interviewing, and other meetings; office, reception and storage space and security sufficient to accommodate assigned staff, supplies, equipment, library resources, and machinery; and conference room or meeting space."

SUMMARY:

The commitment of the Financial Aid Office to encourage and create higher education access and opportunity dictates constant changes and upgrades to facilities and equipment. New technology within the industry as well as the growth in student population present additional demands on our current facilities. The following observations should be noted:

- The basement location of the Financial Aid Office presents seasonal problems of dampness, poor air quality, and difficulty in controlling temperature.

- Today's technology provides the opportunity for office staff to provide a prompt and accurate response to student inquiries. All staff members should be using state of the art computers to meet student’s needs.

- The Financial Aid Office Computer Lab is currently used as a conference room for meetings, training sessions, and workshops. This practice precludes student use during these sessions.

- Storage space is currently inadequate. Regulations mandate the maintenance of student financial aid files for five years. The current process of storing those files in the basement of Captree Commons prevents both safe keeping and easy access. In addition, the storage room in Caumsett Hall provides insufficient space to store supplies in an organized manner.

- The Financial Aid Computer Lab currently addresses the needs of our student in all but the busiest months. However, with student demand constantly increasing, it will prove inadequate in the near future.

- Students are required to address their concerns to a staff member at the front desk. This practice compromises a student’s right to privacy.

- The lobby area does not provide sufficient workspace for students to complete paperwork.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a program to monitor air quality to insure compliance with OSHA standards. Contact plant maintenance to resolve the issues of dampness and office temperature to provide a comfortable environment for both students and staff.

2. Requisition additional state of the art computers and printers to equip all staff members with the optimum resources to service students.

3. Request that the administration research utilization of space to provide the office with a conference room. The conference room would be used for meetings, training sessions, student workshops, and a financial aid library.

4. Increased utilization of scanning devices will alleviate file storage problems to some degree. However, it will not provide a solution in the immediate future. Storage space must be found to provide both security and easy access to student files. In addition, the office storage room should be renovated to provide a more efficient use of that space.

5. The Financial Aid Computer Lab will prove inadequate in the future. Plans should be developed to expand this facility to meet the future needs of students who will be dealing with an increasingly web based industry.

6. The front desk should be expanded and designed to provide students with a private space to speak to staff.

7. The lobby area should be reorganized to provide a workspace for student to complete required paperwork.
ETHICS

According to CAS Guidelines: “Students must be provided access to financial aid programs and services on a fair and equitable basis. All persons involved in the delivery of financial aid must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. Programs and services must develop or adopt and implement statements of ethical practice addressing the issues unique to each program and service. Programs and services must publish these statements and insure their periodic review by all concerned.

In the formulation of these standards, ethical standards statements adopted by the profession at large or relevant professional associations may be of assistance and should be considered.

Financial aid staff members must ensure that confidentiality is maintained with respect to all communications and records considered confidential unless exempted by law. Information disclosed in individual counseling sessions must remain confidential, unless written permission to divulge the information is given by the student. However, all staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved. Information contained in students’ educational records must not be disclosed to non-institutional third parties without appropriate consent, unless classified as “Directory” information or when the information is subpoenaed by law. The financial aid program must apply a similar dedication to privacy and confidentiality to research data concerning individuals. All staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution’s human subjects research policy and in other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices.

Financial aid staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflict of interest or appearance thereof in their transactions with students and others. Staff members must strive to insure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they deal. When handling institutional funds, all staff members must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures.

Financial aid staff members must maintain the highest principles of ethical behavior in the use of technology. Financial aid staff members must not participate in any form of harassment that demeans persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus environment.

Staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence. When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

Financial aid staff members must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

Financial aid administrators must insure timely and fair administration of policies regarding financial aid decisions and proper notification.
Publications and written communications should include all financial aid deadlines and information on opportunities for financial aid.

Financial aid must be awarded in compliance with applicable rules and regulations governing financial aid.

When appropriate, the senior financial aid administrator and professional staff members may need to exercise professional judgment in making exceptions to established financial aid policies. These decisions should be made in a fair and objective manner with supporting documentation.

SUMMARY:

The Financial Aid Office is committed to providing access to financial aid programs and services on a fair and equitable basis. This commitment begins with the initial recruitment of a student and continues until graduation. Concern for the student is paramount in the delivery of all programs and services. The following observations should be noted:

- The Financial Aid Office has developed and adopted a Mission Statement. To insure that the goals of this statement are met, a list of objectives has been developed which guide the office policies. While this statement and the accompanying objectives (see appendix) can be accessed internally, neither can be found in any of our publications, and in general the office staff is unaware of either the office mission or objectives.

- Members of the financial aid staff adhere to NASFAA, NYSFAAA, and SUNYFAP ethical standards as they perform their professional duties. However, a written institutional ethical standards statement does not exist.

- To insure that student confidentiality is maintained, staff members comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Institutional policies have also been developed to insure that student privacy is maintained. (see appendix)

- The current institutional process of disposing of confidential records is not dedicated to insuring the confidentiality of student information.

- To insure that students have access to services on a fair and equitable basis the following procedures are in place:
  1. All accepted students receive direct mailing of financial aid information.
  2. The financial aid web site provides information, accepts queries, and responds online to students.
  3. The financial aid office maintains a generous supply of financial aid pamphlets and booklets, which are available for student use.
  4. Walk-in assistance is available during office hours.
  5. Students have access to the Financial Aid Laboratory during office hours for filing forms electronically, loan counseling, and scholarship searches. Assistance in using the lab is there for those who need it.
  6. Phone inquiries are accepted during office hours.
7. Forms workshops are held to assist students who require assistance in completing financial aid applications.
8. Appointments with financial aid professionals are available upon request.
MISSION STATEMENT

1. The Financial Aid Service is committed to encouraging and creating higher education access and opportunity to the residents of our service area. This commitment exists from initial recruitment to final graduation without hesitation or compromise.

2. It is intended to provide full financial aid services to the entire population that needs such assistance. This commitment is in place at all of the campuses of SCCC and is implemented with full endorsement.

3. It is generally recognized that the clientele that SCCC serves is extremely diverse. It includes traditional students and adult students across all socioeconomic categories.

4. It is also understood, however, that there is a particularly large segment of students at SCCC that have limited higher education choices and extremely limited resources which restricts the element of choice for those students. They select the affordable choice; Suffolk County Community College.

5. The target groups are many. They consist of students whose families have been dissolved involuntarily or otherwise. They may be attempting to enroll on their own or with the assistance of a single parent charged with the maintenance of the whole family. In many cases the students are themselves single parents seeking to establish a career. There are those students attempting to achieve academic and/or vocational accomplishments while receiving Public Assistance, Social Security, Vocational Education Services, and other transfer payments. Moreover, this college is still the primary choice of military veterans who enroll while utilizing the benefit programs available to them. Finally, we have the large number of traditional students who come from low to middle income families with multiple siblings of college age. For reasons dictated by affordability, high school preference or economic choice they have chosen SCCC as their institution.
OBJECTIVES

It is, therefore, the recognition of the financial aid services at SCCC that the mainstream of our client population is needy, impatient, anxious and perhaps even desperate or fragile. The financial aid process bestowed upon higher education can be an arduous and lengthy experience. The related statutes and external agencies dictate what this process must be. So the college must comply with all the rules and regulations incorporated with this process, and yet be flexible enough to respond to unique situations. And yet, our mission must also ensure that the students in our college receive all of the gift aid they are entitled and receive it as expeditiously as possible. Therefore, our policies although built on the regulatory requirements we must observe, are designed to expeditiously award and disburse the maximum entitlement funds to each of our students in an expeditious manner. It is a further objective for this college to avail itself of the maximum funds available through external grantors for these purposes.

Our policies, therefore, are promulgated annually with the following objectives:

1) Encourage and monitor all prospective students through the financial aid process. This will be accomplished through the use of our direct mail, in-house service and availability of the financial aid laboratories for electronic transmission.

2) With the advent of technology dominating this profession, the college must take every step to maintain parity with the state of the art technology. To provide these services to our population we must be mindful that many of our students still arrive at SCCC without computer literacy and without home computers. To ensure our students competing fairly with students from other institutions, we must advocate utilization of our financial aid laboratories as a substitute for home computers. As an institution, we must also recognize the eminent arrival of electronic signatures and thus at the same time reduce our dependency on hard copy documentation. Our offices must invest in and utilize new scanning and imaging technology. We must also support the efforts of our Information Services Department to move the college to state of the art technology. As that capability goes, so goes our own capability.

3) In application processing our student body we advocate electronic filing for students and expeditious packaging for our recipients. Such packaging will be driven by our mainframe programs, which are designed to maximize gift aid and loan avoidance for our lowest income population. All students who seek it will receive the opportunity to procure some sort of financial assistance.

4) The processing system also adheres to the regulatory requirements and abides by mandated verification and validation procedures. No student selected for this process by the Department can receive Title IV funds without completing this process at SCCC.
5) Our Packaging Formulae will place student loans as a last resort because many students will be pursuing four-year institutions where student loans will be the primary student financial aid resource. And so at SCCC gift aid is prioritized for low income students and gradually continues on through the middle class. Loans are infrequent for our low income group due to

1) Accruing high indebtedness while pursuing a four year degree
2) To protect those students who might not succeed in college from falling into default without the earning power to manage repayment requirements.
3) Avoiding the excessive repayment obligations the students will encounter after the completion of their education
4) To ensure a lower default rate for the college which will preserve the availability of Title IV funds for the students at SCCC to come in the future.

6) Our packaging systems must also be responsive and flexible enough to entertain those cases and situations that do fit a stereotype mold. In such cases the campus FAO’s are equipped to engage in a professional judgment offering different solutions to applicant. This same sensitivity can also be employed in complex dependency issues and resulting independence override. The college participates in this discretionary function because of the professional competence of its staff and the mission to assist all while protecting the integrity of the college in complying with all statutes and regulations.
Human Resources

Six full time individuals and three part time individuals comprise the Western Campus Financial Aid Office. The full time employees include a Director, a Counselor, a Professional Assistant, and a Principal and two Clerk Typists. The part time staff consists of three college aides.

The Director has an MBA and an MS in Counseling and has 14 years of financial aid experience at SCCC. It is the responsibility of the Director to run the Financial Aid Office and to see that it functions as planned.

The Counselor has an MS in Counseling and has 13 years of financial aid experience at SCCC. The general responsibilities of the financial aid counselor are to:

- Interview, review and decide professional judgement cases-particularly dependency.
- Review cancellations of financial aid, and to review appeals for reinstatement.
- Counsel students and parents regarding the financial aid process and payment options available at SCCC.
- Pre-loan default counseling and intervention by utilizing school default activity reports.
- Coordinate the work-study program.

The Professional Assistant has an MS and 11 years of financial aid experience. The general responsibilities of the Professional Assistant are to:

- Oversee and coordinate electronic processing and data exchange for federal and state financial aid programs.
- Coordinate activities and services of the financial aid computer lab.
- Provide information and assistance to students and parents regarding the financial aid application process.
- Oversee development of student financial assistance information flyers, brochures and workshops.
- Manage the campus student loan program.
- Serve as chief training specialist for the office staff.

The full time staff is comprised of one Principal and two Clerk Typists – they average four years of experience and the general responsibilities are to:

- Provide counter and phone coverage and assistance.
- Review and package students as well as the verification process for selected students.
- Manage the processing flow of data – by scanning, indexing and batching data.
- Type reports and memos.
- Supervise college aides and work study students.
The part time staff is comprised of college aides and work-study students and the general responsibilities of the college aids are to:

- Answer phones and return calls. Provide counter coverage.
- Enter data on FAID screen; help in the preparation of FAT’s.
- Review financial aid folders and follow up on missing items.
- Package student aid folders.
- Accept waivers and emergency loan applications for submission to the Director.
- Scanning indexing and batching data

The general responsibilities of the work-study students are to:

- Open and distribute mail on a timely basis.
- Perform routine office tasks such as copying, filing, faxing transcripts, answering phones etc.
- Make new student folders, pull folders as needed, and locate information requested.
- Lend assistance at the counter during busy periods.

**Recommendations**

1) According to a recent inquiry made of a National Association of Financial Aid Administrators Staffing Model a campus our size should have eight full time employees in the financial aid office. In light of the fact that during the year June 2000 – May 2001 the Western Campus financial aid office received 14,969 visits from students, and that we have six full time employees we recommend that additional full time staffing be made available to the western campus financial aid office.

2) Many government agencies now require electronic submission of data, and we are moving to a paperless society in the financial aid world as well. We recommend the upgrade of all existing financial aid computers to meet current and proposed requirements of various government agencies – and to provide funding for the training of employees to better utilize the areas resources.
FINANCIAL AID GRANT

CAS SELF-ASSESSMENT

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM STANDARDS SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Student support services programs in higher education are dedicated to promoting learning, personal development, and retention for college students. Effective programs and services for students require practitioners who understand the foundations of higher education, the educational value of academic enhanced student affairs programs, and the standards of professional practice; can create and implement environments that are conducive to student learning and development; and are able to provide students with viable systems that encourage and enhance learning and personal development. To be effective, these programs must be well organized and professionally administered.

The CAS Standards and Guidelines describe the basic structure and other essential elements of effective programs. However, they are subject to interpretation within the context of institutional mission and policies and should not be interpreted rigidly. Creative approaches to student learning and development are encouraged.

The CAS Financial Aid Program Standards—the essential requirements for quality programs—are presented in bold-faced type and use the auxiliary verbs "shall" and "must." Guidelines are the statements printed in smaller regular type that follow the standards. Though guidelines are highly desirable elements that program leaders are encouraged to follow, they represent approaches connected with "good practice" and are not "requirements" that a program must meet to be in compliance with the standards. Guidelines explain, amplify, or interpret the meanings of the standards through examples and more detailed explanations. The auxiliary verbs "should" and "may" are used in guidelines. It is not uncommon practice for a self-assessment team to incorporate one or more of the CAS Guidelines into the review and rating process to strengthen and enhance a program beyond expected levels of practice.

For scoring purposes, an INA [Information Not Available] response for which documentation is not available should be scored as a 1; an Exemplary (EX) response should be scored as a 5. All other ratings should be scored as a number 1 through 5.

Recommended procedures and strategies for using the "criterion measure" rating scales for program evaluation purposes are described in detail in the introductory section of this Guide. Creation of a program action plan concludes the self-assessment process and, upon its completion, the worksheet can be used to guide the action plan's development.
CAS
COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF STANDARDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION
CAS 1998 STANDARDS SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE

Rater: Charles Bartolotta Date 12/26/00
Program Reviewed: Financial Aid
Administrative Unit Reviewed: Student Services/Financial Aid Office

Instructions:
The assessment criteria measures in this self-assessment worksheet are based directly on the CAS Standards as boxed in bold print. Use the scale below to rate the program under study against the assessment criterion statements. Place ratings in the space to the right of each criterion statement. Use the Information Not Available (INA) response ONLY when documentation or other information is unavailable to support the observation. Use the Exemplary (EX) response ONLY when documentation indicates that the criterion was met in exceptional fashion.

Part 1: MISSION

The financial aid program must develop, record, disseminate, implement and regularly review its mission and goals. Mission statements must be consistent with the mission and goals of the institution and with the standards in this document.

The financial aid program shall develop, review, and disseminate financial resources to students to assist them in achieving their educational goals from pre-enrollment through graduation. Many aspects of financial aid are mandated by federal and state entities that define the parameters within which institutional programs must operate. In a manner consistent with the goals of the institution, the mission and goals of the financial aid program must address the following.

Students in Transition.
Such students move from secondary to postsecondary education, from one postsecondary institution to another, including undergraduate to graduate school, and return from a period of non-enrollment to formal learning or re-enrollment in the institution.

Awarding Practices.
Such practices establish, promulgate, and implement financial aid criteria that accurately represent the financial needs of the applicant pool, set priorities within this group, and respond with funding to the extent possible.

Financial Counseling.
Such counseling provides high quality services to students for (a) the purpose of providing better understanding of financial aid, (b) financial guidance, (c) individual review of situations that may require special consideration, and (d) guidance in academic and financial matters especially as they relate to satisfactory academic progress.

Goal Integration.
Goals should be consistent with the mission, goals, policies, procedures and characteristics of the institution and be compatible with the ability of the institution to provide adequate resources to meet the needs and educational goals of the students.

Review of Goals.
Institutional goals for financial aid should be developed and reviewed regularly. Such goals should be consistent with statements of good practices articulated by relevant and appropriate professional associations such as the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators and the Canadian Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Criteria</th>
<th>Scale Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 The financial aid program has a written mission statement that is consistent with the stated mission of the institution and the standards in this document</td>
<td>1.1 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 The program has a written set of goals that is consistent with the stated goals and purposes of the institution</td>
<td>1.2 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 The stated mission and goals are used to guide the implementation of program activities</td>
<td>1.3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Program goal statements are reviewed on a regular basis</td>
<td>1.4 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Program goal statements are disseminated on a regular basis</td>
<td>1.5 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Program goals and objectives are consistent with all CAS financial aid standards presented within this document</td>
<td>1.6 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 The program develops and reviews financial resources for students</td>
<td>1.7 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 The program disseminates financial resources to students</td>
<td>1.8 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 Financial resources are available to assist students in achieving their educational goals from pre-enrollment through graduation</td>
<td>1.9 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10 The program functions within parameters established by governmental entities</td>
<td>1.10 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11 Within the context of institutional mission and goals, the program addresses...</td>
<td>1.11 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11a students in transition</td>
<td>1.11a 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11b awarding practices</td>
<td>1.11b 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11c financial counseling</td>
<td>1.11c 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11d goal integration</td>
<td>1.11d 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11e review of goals</td>
<td>1.11e 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sum of Mission Ratings: 67

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

Students in transition, awarding practices, financial counseling, review of goals.

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

Campus/Central mission statements, Central F1 objectives. (Attached)
Campus annual reports.

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

Discrepancies need to be reviewed on an annual basis.

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

Require all professional staff to produce individual goals/objectives on a minimum review on a regular basis.

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:

Regular weekly meetings between director and professional staff.

Require annual goals assessment and review annually.

---

CAS Self-Assessment Guide 3 Financial Aid Program
Part 2: PROGRAM

The formal education of students is purposeful, holistic, and consists of the curriculum and the co-curriculum. Co-curricular programs and services must be (a) intentional, (b) coherent, (c) based on theories and knowledge of learning and human development, (d) reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population, and (e) responsive to special needs of individuals.

The financial aid program must assist students by addressing financial issues that may serve as barriers to the achievement of educational goals.

The financial aid program must promote learning and development in students by encouraging outcomes such as intellectual growth, ability to communicate effectively, realistic self-appraisal, enhanced self-esteem, clarification of values, appropriate career choices, leadership development, physical fitness, meaningful interpersonal relations, ability to work independently and collaboratively, social responsibility, satisfying and productive lifestyles, appreciation of aesthetic and cultural diversity, and achievement of personal goals.

The financial aid program must
- comply with federal and state law, provincial statutes, and institutional policies;
- promote and maintain integrity, accuracy, and timeliness in the delivery of financial aid;
- provide adequate information for students and parents to make informed decisions regarding the financing of their education; and
- promote and provide equal access to eligible students interested in pursuing an education at the institution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>I N A</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Criteria:**

2.1 The financial aid program is purposeful

2.2 The program is holistic, consisting of the curriculum and cocurriculum

2.3 The program is intentional in its...
   - 2.3a implementation
   - 2.3b outcome objectives

2.4 The program is...
   - 2.4a coherent in its approach
   - 2.4b based on relevant theoretical foundations that incorporate knowledge of learning and human development
   - 2.4c reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the students served
   - 2.4d responsive to the special needs of students being served

2.5 The program promotes student learning and development by encouraging...
   - 2.5a intellectual development
   - 2.5b effective communication skills
   - 2.5c realistic self-appraisal
   - 2.5d enhanced self-esteem
   - 2.5e clarification of values
   - 2.5f appropriate career choices
   - 2.5g leadership development
   - 2.5h physical fitness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3a ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3b ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4a ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4b ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4c ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4d ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5a ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5b ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5c ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5d ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5e ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5f ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5g ( \star )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5h ( \star )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5i  the ability to relate meaningfully to others
2.5j  a capacity to work both independently and collaboratively
2.5k  the capacity to function in socially responsible ways
2.5l  a capacity to engage in a personally satisfying
and productive style of living
2.5m  appreciation of cultural differences
2.5n  appreciation of aesthetic differences
2.5o  achievement of personal goals

2.6  The program addresses financial issues that may serve
as barriers to students achieving their educational goals

2.7  The financial aid program . . .
2.7a  complies with federal and state law, provincial statutes,
and institutional policies
2.7b  maintains integrity, accuracy, and timeliness in delivering financial aid
2.7c  provides adequate information for students and parents to use
when making informed decisions regarding educational financing
2.7d  provides equal access to eligible students interested in institutional study

Sum of Program Ratings: 81

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:
   Follow Federal & State regulatory guidelines and requirements; FA Delivery;
   Information to Students/Families; Level of Access.

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:
   Central FA reports/statistics; Breakdowns; FA brochures; worksheets;
   Website; FA workshops/training; FA award procedures; deferment policy.

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:
   Timeliness of delivery (difficult to achieve due to admissions philosophy & deadlines)

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:
   Working with admissions to identify accepted students $ contact them;
   FA form completion information $ FA awareness week to encourage
   cont. students to file early.

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:
   Intensify outreach to high schools & community orgs & agencies /
   work to identify SCCC students (non-fillers) earlier in the
   cycle; better information about FA $ student billing; options for payment
   during instant accept period. Work with counseling & admissions
   & personnel to promote better understanding of FA
   role in the recruitment & retention of students.
Part 3: LEADERSHIP

Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. Institutions must appoint, position and empower leaders within the administrative structure to accomplish stated missions. Leaders at various levels must be selected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal attributes, and other professional credentials. Institutions must determine expectations of accountability for leaders and fairly assess their performance.

Administrators of financial aid programs must exercise authority over resources for which they are responsible to achieve their respective missions. Leaders must articulate a vision for their organization; set goals and objectives; prescribe and practice ethical behavior; recruit, select, supervise, and develop others in the organization; manage, plan, budget, and evaluate; communicate effectively; and marshal cooperative action from colleagues, employees, other institutional constituencies, and persons outside the organization. Leaders must address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that inhibit goal achievement. Leaders must improve programs and services continuously in response to changing needs of students and institutional priorities.

The institution should designate a well-qualified senior administrator with appropriate financial aid experience and training to effectively lead the financial aid program staff.

The senior financial aid administrator must be able to advocate for and to represent the financial needs of students, the operation and staffing of the financial aid program, and the institution.

The senior financial aid administrator must insure the development of . . .
• a set of policies and procedures that includes descriptions of the administrative processes;
• clearly stated criteria used in the decision making process for financial aid and the source of authority for the criteria employed;
• steps for appealing, evaluating, or revising policies and procedures;
• a statement of the institution's mission, goals, and objectives for the financial aid programs;
• an effective system to manage the programs, services, and personnel of the financial aid program;
• an assessment plan for its programs and services;
• means for coordinating the financial aid program with other institutional agencies; and
• criteria for selecting qualified staff and ensuring adequate opportunities for staff development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>IN A</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria:

3.1 A financial aid program leader has been appointed

3.2 The appointed leader is positioned appropriately within the administrative structure to accomplish financial aid program goals and objectives

3.3 Appointed leaders are selected on the basis of . . .
   3.3a formal education and training
   3.3b relevant work experience
   3.3c relevant personal attributes
   3.3d relevant professional credentials

3.4 The institution has established its accountability expectations for the program leader

3.5 The institution fairly assesses the leader's performance

3.6 The leader exercises authority over resources for which he or she is responsible

3.7 The program leader . . .
   3.7a articulates a vision for the organization
   3.7b sets appropriate goals and objectives

Financial Aid Program 6 CAS Self-Assessment Guide
3.7c prescribes and practices ethical behavior
3.7d recruits and selects well qualified staff members for positions in the organization
3.7e supervises and otherwise promotes the development of staff members in the organization
3.7f manages everyday operations of the program
3.7g leads planning efforts for the program and service
3.7h plans and manages the program budget
3.7i assures that program evaluation processes and procedures are in place and operational
3.7j communicates effectively with program subordinates and superiors
3.7k promotes cooperation and collaboration with professional colleagues, staff members, and other institutional constituencies
3.7l promotes cooperation with persons outside the institution
3.8 The leader addresses behavior of individuals who inhibit program goal achievement
3.9 The leader addresses organizational conditions that inhibit program goal achievement
3.10 The leader addresses environmental conditions that inhibit program goal achievement
3.11 The leader improves program services continuously in response to changing needs of students
3.12 The senior financial aid administrator advocates for the...
  3.12a financial needs of students
  3.12b operation and staffing of the financial aid program
  3.12c institution
3.13 The senior financial aid administrator represents the...
  3.13a financial needs of students
  3.13b operation and staffing of the financial aid program
  3.13c institution
3.14 The senior financial aid administrator ensures the development of...
  3.14a policies and procedures describing administrative processes
  3.14b clearly stated criteria used in financial aid decision making processes
  3.14c steps for appealing, evaluating, or revising policies and procedures
  3.14d a statement of the financial aid program’s mission, goals, and objectives
  3.14e an effective system to manage programs, services, and personnel
  3.14f a program assessment plan
  3.14g means for coordinating the program with other institutional agencies
  3.14h criteria to select qualified staff
  3.14i opportunities for staff development

Sum of Leadership Ratings: 153
A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:
   - Staff selection, evaluation, training & development, Policies & procedures that advocate for the needs of students, the FAO & the campus.
   - Minutes from monthly directors' meetings, administrative evaluations, input into central LEA policies.

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:
   - Minutes from monthly directors' meetings, administrative evaluations, input into central LEA policies.

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:
   - A clear set of goals & objectives needs to be developed for the campus office.

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:
   - Policies & procedures handbook.
   - Systematic & regular training of staff by office personnel.
   - Central FAO.

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:
   - PTP handbook: hard copy; eventually put on web.
   - Develop work flow strategy during high volume periods.
   - Establish regular connection to other offices that impact FA operation & delivery, i.e., cashier, adm., counseling.
   - Explore forming a task force committee that focuses on mutual issues of student financing.
Part 4: ORGANIZATION and MANAGEMENT

The financial aid program must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals. Evidence of appropriate structure must include current and accessible policies and procedures, written performance expectations for all employees, functional work-flow graphics or organizational charts, and service delivery expectations. Evidence of effective management must include clear sources and channels of authority, effective communication practices, decision-making and conflict resolution procedures, responsiveness to changing conditions, accountability systems, and recognition and reward processes.

The financial aid program must provide channels within its organization for regular review of administrative policies and procedures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>INA</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info, Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Scale Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 The program is structured purposefully to achieve its stated goals</td>
<td>4.1 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 The program is managed effectively to achieve its stated goals</td>
<td>4.2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Policies and procedures are current and accessible</td>
<td>4.3 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Accurate written performance expectations are in place for all employees' functional work assignments</td>
<td>4.4 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 An accurate organizational chart shows functional work responsibilities and reporting relationships within and beyond the program</td>
<td>4.5 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Service delivery expectations are available to guide staff performance</td>
<td>4.6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 The program organization exhibits effective management through inclusion of . . .</td>
<td>4.7 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7a clear sources and channels of authority</td>
<td>4.7a 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7b effective communication practices</td>
<td>4.7b 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7c systematic decision-making procedures</td>
<td>4.7c 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7d conflict resolution procedures</td>
<td>4.7d 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7e responsiveness to changing institutional and environmental conditions</td>
<td>4.7e 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7f appropriate and well monitored accountability systems</td>
<td>4.7f 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7g appropriate staff recognition and reward processes</td>
<td>4.7g 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7h channels for regular review of administrative policies and procedures</td>
<td>4.7h 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sum of Organization and Management Ratings: 47

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

Campus & College policies & procedures for the awarding of aid, dependency overrides/ pro- judgment . . . Position descriptions . .

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

Policies & procedures documents; written position or job descriptions; employee evaluations . . .

CAS Self-Assessment Guide 9 Financial Aid Program
C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

Updated job descriptions/more clearly described

job responsibilities for all staff; develop accountability
standards & regular evaluations for all staff.

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

Written job descriptions -
Regular evaluations
Clearly state employee roles
Establish accountability standards

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:

Monthly support staff meetings conducted by principal
clerk and professional assistant;

Monthly professional staff meetings;

Annual goals & objectives for professional & full-time
support staff;

develop policies and procedures manual for all staff
(update & revise on a regular basis)
Part 5: HUMAN RESOURCES

The financial aid program must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. The program must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision, and provide appropriate professional development opportunities.

Continued training is essential for all financial aid staff. It is imperative to be alert to change within the field and to be able to integrate changes into daily practice.

Every financial aid staff members should be
- familiar with federal, state/provincial, and institutional regulations, policies, and practices regarding the awarding of financial aid funds;
- willing to seek out and implement new ideas;
- able to translate new ideas into practical methods for improving the overall operation of the financial aid program;
- respectful of the confidential nature of the profession;
- willing to seek out and use new conceptual frameworks and equipment that bring information to students more clearly and effectively; and
- aware of relevant developments in higher education and be able to incorporate these developments.

Job descriptions with the duties and responsibilities for each staff member should be developed. Financial aid staff members should have knowledge and understanding of the mission, programs, and services of the institution. Institutional training should be provided for all staff members to include
- a thorough tour of the campus;
- familiarization with publications, academic programs, admission policies, and services of the institution; and
- rights and responsibilities as an employee of the institution.

Professional staff members must hold an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the position description or must possess an appropriate combination of education and experience.

Suggested formal training in preparation for professional financial aid employment includes such fields as business administration, computer sciences, information systems, college student personnel, higher education administration, counseling and other human behavior disciplines. Course work may include computer literacy, research and statistical methods, counseling, legal issues of higher education, and leadership and management.

Professional staff should be competent to provide assistance to students that may include but not be limited to:
- careful and concerned analysis of each student's need;
- knowledgeable guidance and counseling on all financial aid issues and concern;
- explanation of federal and state, and, if appropriate, provincial statues of Canada; and
- interpretation of institutional policies and procedures.

Graduate students, interns, and others in training must be instructed and supervised adequately by professional staff members.

Student employees and volunteers must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated. When their knowledge and skills are not adequate for particular situations, they must refer students or others in need of assistance to qualified professional staff members.

Student employees and volunteers should be trained in public relations, referral techniques, peer counseling, and dissemination of information. They should be knowledgeable in their individual job assignments and understand the confidential nature of their positions.

The financial aid program must have secretarial and technical staff adequate to accomplish its mission. Such staff must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform activities including reception duties, office equipment operation, records maintenance, and mail handling.

Support staff members should be skilled in interpersonal communications, public relations, referral techniques and dissemination of information. Professional and support staff members with higher technical responsibilities should possess the academic background and experience for effective performance. Support staff members should understand the confidential nature of their job.

Appropriate salary levels and fringe benefits for all staff members must be commensurate with those for comparable positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.
To reflect the diversity of the student population, to ensure the existence of readily identifiable role models for students and to enrich the campus community, institutions must intentionally employ a diverse staff.

Affirmative action must occur in hiring and promotion practices as required to ensure diverse staffing profiles.

Degree or credential seeking interns or others in training must be qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and relevant experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>I N A</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Criteria:**

5.1 The program is staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals

5.2 The program has established procedures for...
   5.2a staff selection
   5.2b staff training
   5.2c staff evaluation

5.3 The program has set expectations for staff supervision

5.4 The program provides and encourages appropriate professional staff development opportunities

5.5 Individual professional staff members hold either an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the position held or possess an appropriate combination of education and experience

5.6 Interns and others in program-sponsored training are qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and relevant experience

5.7 Interns and others in training receive effective training and supervision from professional staff members

5.8 Student employees and volunteers are...
   5.8a carefully selected
   5.8b trained and supervised by professional staff members
   5.8c evaluated in their work

5.9 When the knowledge and skills of student employees and volunteers are not adequate for particular situations, they refer students and others to qualified professional staff members for assistance

5.10 The program has secretarial and technical staff adequate to accomplish its mission

5.11 Staff members are technologically proficient to accomplish assigned tasks

5.12 Clerical staff members are qualified to perform...
   5.12a reception duties
   5.12b office equipment operations
   5.12c records maintenance
   5.12d mail handling

**Scale Score**

5.1 4
5.2a 4
5.2b 4
5.2c 3
5.3 3
5.4 5
5.5 5
5.6 1 (INA)
5.7 1 (INA)
5.8a 5
5.8b 5
5.8c 3
5.9 5
5.10 4
5.11 4
5.12a 5
5.12b 5
5.12c 5
5.12d 5
5.13 Salary levels and fringe benefits for all staff members are commensurate with those for comparable positions in .
   5.13a the institution  5.13a 5
   5.13b in similar institutions  5.13b 5
   5.13c in the local geographic area  5.13c 5

5.14 The program employs staff members from diverse cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds  5.14 5

5.15 Program hiring and promotion practices reflect affirmative action patterns as required to ensure diverse staffing profiles  5.15 5

5.16 The program is alert to changes within the field and integrates them into daily practice  5.16 5

Sum of Human Resource Ratings: 106

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:
   Experience & education of staff members; Ethnic background of employees;
   Staff selection process; Staffing adequacy; Professional Development opportunities.

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:
   Professional development & training activities through HESCo & Fed. Gov't;
   College & civil service hiring procedures; NASFAA Staffing guidelines;
   Written job descriptions for employees.

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:
   The office should consider graduate
   interns from local graduate programs (i.e., Hofstra, TOST, etc.)

---
CAS Self-Assessment Guide 13 Financial Aid Program
Part 6: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The financial aid program must have adequate funding to accomplish its mission and goals. Priorities, whether set periodically or as a result of extraordinary conditions, must be determined within the context of the stated mission, goals, and resources.

Funding for the financial aid program should cover staff salaries; purchases and maintenance of office furnishings and equipment, including state of the art technology; purchases of supplies and materials; telephone, fax, electronic communication and postage costs; printing and media costs; institutional membership in appropriate professional organizations; relevant subscriptions and necessary library resources; attendance at professional association meetings, conferences, workshops and other professional development activities. In addition to institutional commitment of general funds, other funding sources may be considered including state appropriations, federal resources, student fees, fines, donations and contributions.

The financial aid program budget must be properly prepared, clearly detailed and defined, continually monitored and adequately funded for full program support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Criteria</th>
<th>Scale Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Funding is adequate to carry out the program's mission and goals</td>
<td>6.1 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Priorities are set within the context of the program's stated mission and goals</td>
<td>6.2 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Priorities are set within the program's available fiscal resources</td>
<td>6.3 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 The program budget is...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4a properly prepared</td>
<td>6.4a 4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4b clearly detailed and defined</td>
<td>6.4b 3/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4c continually monitored</td>
<td>6.4c 3/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sum of Financial Resources Ratings: 21

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

   Office budget for 2001-02: budget & purchasing procedures

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

   Budget adequate to meet needs; purchasing easier under new guidelines; flexibility exists within the system to enhance

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

   Augment FAS budget as necessary

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:

   Financial Aid Program 14 CAS Self-Assessment Guide
Part 7: FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, and EQUIPMENT

The financial aid program must have adequate, suitably located facilities, technology, and equipment to support its mission and goals. Facilities and equipment must be in compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial, and local requirements to provide for access, health and safety.

The financial aid program should be readily accessible, included on campus maps, and have highly visible signage. The program should have facilities or have access to:
- private office or space for confidential counseling, interviewing, and other meetings;
- office, reception, and storage space and security sufficient to accommodate assigned staff, supplies, equipment, library resources, and machinery; and
- conference room or meeting space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria:

7.1 The financial aid program has adequate facilities to support its mission and goals
7.2 The program has adequate technology to support its mission and goals
7.3 The program has adequate equipment to support its mission and goals
7.4 Program facilities are suitably located to support its mission and goals
7.5 Program technology is suitably located to support its mission and goals
7.6 Program equipment is suitably located to support its mission and goals
7.7 The program's facilities are in compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial, and/or local requirements to provide appropriate access, health, and safety
7.8 The program's technology is in compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial and/or local requirements to provide appropriate access, health, and safety
7.9 The program's equipment is in compliance with relevant federal, state/provincial and/or local requirements to provide appropriate access, health, and safety

Scale Score

| 7.1 | 4 |
| 7.2 | 4 |
| 7.3 | 4 |
| 7.4 | 4 |
| 7.5 | 4 |
| 7.6 | 4 |
| 7.7 | 4 |
| 7.8 | 4 |
| 7.9 | 4 |

Sum of Facilities, Technology, and Equipment Ratings: 36

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY & EQUIPMENT

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

Campus technology plan, campus facilities plan, special projects list (plant maintenance)

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

Due to its basement location, EAO should be reviewed for air quality periodically.

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

Create a central office (facilities) to test office air quality.

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:

Computer lab with space will prove to be inadequate in the near future as more students utilize on-line filing. Lobby space should be re-configured to allow for a second counter to accommodate workshops on dealing with angry students; workshops during peak periods.
Part 8: LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial aid program staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to law and regulations that relate to their respective program or service. Sources for legal obligations and limitations are constitutional, federal, statutory, regulatory, and case law; mandatory laws and orders emanating from federal, state/provincial and local governments; and the institution through its policies.

Financial aid staff members must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. Staff members must be informed about institutional policies regarding personal liability and related insurance coverage options.

The institution must provide access to legal advice for staff members as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

The institution must inform staff and students, in a timely and systematic fashion, about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.

Financial aid staff members must be aware of the legal and ethical limits and standards relevant to their roles and perform any counseling or guidance functions accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>INA</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria:

| 8.1 | Staff members are knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations relevant to respective programs and services | 8.1 | 4 |
| 8.2 | Staff members exhibit practice that is reasonable and informed and that limits the institution and its officers, employees, and agents to liability exposure | 8.2 | 4 |
| 8.3 | Staff members are informed about institutional policies regarding personal liability and related insurance coverage options | 8.3 | 3 | (INA) |
| 8.4 | Staff members are provided access to legal advice as needed to implement assigned responsibilities | 8.4 | 5 |
| 8.5 | Staff members and students are informed in a timely and systematic fashion about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities | 8.5 | 4 |
| 8.6 | Staff members are aware of the legal and ethical limits and standards relevant to their roles and perform counseling and guidance functions accordingly | 8.6 | 3 |

Sum of Legal Responsibilities Ratings: 21

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

knowledge of applicable federal, state, and local laws/regulations

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

College catalog, FERPA guidelines, federal and state FA regulations

Financial Aid Program 16 CAS Self-Assessment Guide
C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:
   More information & training, particularly in FERPA guidelines, would be helpful to staff members.

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:
   Include FERPA guidelines in Policies & Procedures

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:
Part 9: EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, ACCESS, and AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Financial aid staff members must ensure that services and programs are provided on a fair and equitable basis. Each program and service must be accessible. Hours of operation must be responsive to the needs of all students. Each program and service must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws.

The program should ensure that its programs, services, and facilities are accessible to and provide hours of operation that respond to the needs of special populations, including traditionally under-represented, evening, part-time and commuter students.

The financial aid program must not be discriminatory on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religious creed, sexual orientation, and/or veteran status. Exceptions are appropriate only where provided by relevant law and institutional policy.

Consistent with its mission and goals, the financial aid program must take affirmative action to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns in keeping with court mandated, institutional, local, state/provincial, and federal laws.

Institutional and financial aid publications must reflect relevant federal and state law, Provincial Statutes, if applicable, and institutional policies and practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>I N A</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria:

9.1 Staff members ensure the provision of financial aid services on a fair and equitable basis

9.2 The program and its services are accessible to all constituents

9.3 Program hours of operation are responsive to the needs of all students, including traditionally under-represented, evening, part-time, and commuter students

9.4 The program adheres to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws

9.5 The program does not discriminate in its policies with regard to age, color, disability, gender, race, national origin, religious creed, sexual orientation, and/or veteran status

9.6 Exceptions to program policy are made only as required by law or institutional policy

9.7 Affirmative action is practiced to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns

9.8 Financial aid publications reflect relevant federal and state law, provincial statutes, and institutional policies and practices

Sum of Equal Opportunity, Access, and Affirmative Action Ratings: 37

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

Equal opportunity/Access to services/adherence to Affirmative Action guidelines

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

Middle States accred. reports/College hiring guidelines

Financial Aid Program 18 CAS Self-Assessment Guide
C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

No discrepancies.

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

Periodic surveys should be conducted to make sure needs of students living off-campus are met. For example, do we have enough hours during the evening? Should we be open more on Saturdays?

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:


Part 10: CAMPUS and COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The financial aid program must establish, maintain, and promote effective relations with relevant campus offices and external agencies.

Institutional functions and constituencies linked to financial aid typically include admissions, registration and records, athletics, business services, academic advising, counseling services, student affirmative action, outreach programs, educational opportunity programs, career planning and placement, institutional development and faculty and alumni affairs.

Financial aid documents must be accurate and their confidentiality maintained by all offices at the institution.

Financial aid and admission decisions should be made independently. However, the financial aid program should have access to appropriate information in the student’s admission file to assure compliance with applicable rules and regulations.

The financial aid program should maintain relationships with interested groups within the community regarding general and institutional financial aid practices. The community may include grant and scholarship agencies, high schools, and other community outreach programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>INA</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria:

10.1 The program has established and maintained effective working relationships with campus offices whose operations are relevant to its mission and goals

10.2 The program promotes effective working relationships with campus offices whose operations are relevant to its mission and goals

10.3 The program has established and maintained effective working relationships with external agencies whose operations are relevant to its mission and goals

10.4 The program promotes effective working relationships with external agencies whose operations are relevant to its mission and goals

10.5 Confidentiality of financial aid documents is maintained throughout the institution

Sum of Campus and Community Ratings: 21

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

   Establishment, maintenance & promotion of effective relations w/ Enrollment Services Meetings; Campus Recruitment Office

   Student Body to all offices and academic areas

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

   Financial Aid Program

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

   NONE

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

   NONE NECESSARY

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:

   Link priority registration efforts w/ Filing of next year’s FAFSA; HAVE FA information available in all enrollment service offices; Provide new FA profile of Financial Aid Program
Part 11: DIVERSITY

Within the context of each institution's unique mission, multi-dimensional diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, programs and services must nurture environments where similarities and differences among people are recognized and honored.

The financial aid program must promote cultural educational experiences that are characterized by open and continuous communication, that deepen understanding of one's own culture and heritage, and that respect and educate about similarities, differences and histories of cultures. The financial aid program must address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.

Financial aid staff members should be particularly sensitive to the needs of traditionally under-represented students and students with special needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>I N A</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria:

11.1 The financial aid program nurtures environments where similarities and differences among people are recognized and honored

11.2 The program promotes cultural educational experiences that...
   11.2a are characterized by open and continuous communication
   11.2b deepen understanding of a student's own culture and heritage
   11.2c respect and educate about similarities among people
   11.2d respect and educate about differences among people
   11.2e respect and educate about the histories of various cultures

11.3 The program, when establishing and implementing policies and procedures, addresses unique characteristics and needs of the diverse population it serves

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:
   Sensitivity to diverse student population

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:
   Multi-cultural office mission statement, catalog/college/museum/juvenile detention agency

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:
   Students of all backgrounds are treated fairly; however, the office
   needs greater understanding of cultural differences between groups.

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:
   General cultural sensitivity training for all staff

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:
   Staff members must become aware of own biases and prejudices; promote positive behaviors when dealing with students; gear learning to guard against stereotyping students.

Sum of Diversity Ratings: 10

Financial Aid Program
Part 12: ETHICS

Students must be provided access to financial aid programs and services on a fair and equitable basis. All persons involved in the delivery of financial aid must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. Programs and services must develop or adopt and implement statements of ethical practice addressing the issues unique to each program and service. Programs and services must publish these statements and insure their periodic review by all concerned.

In the formulation of these standards, ethical standards statements adopted by the profession at large or relevant professional associations may be of assistance and should be considered.

Financial aid staff members must ensure that confidentiality is maintained with respect to all communications and records considered confidential unless exempted by law. Information disclosed in individual counseling sessions must remain confidential, unless written permission to divulge the information is given by the student. However, all staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved. Information contained in students' educational records must not be disclosed to non-institutional third parties without appropriate consent, unless classified as "Directory" information or when the information is subpoenaed by law. The financial aid program must apply a similar dedication to privacy and confidentiality to research data concerning individuals. All staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution's human subjects research policy and in other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices.

Financial aid staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflict of interest or appearance thereof in their transactions with students and others. Staff members must strive to insure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they deal. When handling institutional funds, all staff members must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures.

Financial aid staff members must maintain the highest principles of ethical behavior in the use of technology. Financial aid staff members must not participate in any form of harassment that devalues persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus environment.

Staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence. When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

Financial aid staff members must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

Financial aid administrators must insure timely and fair administration of policies regarding financial aid decisions and proper notification.

Publications and written communications should include a financial aid deadlines and information on opportunities for financial aid.

Financial aid must be awarded in compliance with applicable rules and regulations governing financial aid.

When appropriate, the senior financial aid administrator and professional staff members may need to exercise professional judgment in making exceptions to established financial aid policies. These decisions should be made in a fair and objective manner with supporting documentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>INA</th>
<th>EX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Met</td>
<td>Partially Met</td>
<td>Fully Met</td>
<td>Info. Not Available</td>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Criteria:**

12.1 All staff members adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior

12.2 Staff members have developed and/or adopted a statement of ethical standards for the program and service to use as a guide to professional practice

**Scale Score**

12.1 4

12.2 3
12.3 The adopted ethical standards are available in written form and accessible to staff members
12.4 The adopted ethical standards are reviewed periodically by professional staff
12.5 Appropriate measures are in place to assure the privacy of individuals and confidentiality of information concerning all communications and records considered confidential, unless exempted by law
12.6 Appropriate steps have been taken to insure that information disclosed in individual counseling sessions remains confidential unless written permission to divulge the information is given by the student.
12.7 Program policy provides for disclosure of information judged to be of an emergency nature to appropriate authorities when the safety of the individual or others is involved
12.8 Program policy protects information contained in students' educational records from disclosure to non-institutional third parties without appropriate consent, unless classified as "Directory" information or when the information is lawfully subpoenaed
12.9 The program and service protects the privacy and confidentiality of research data concerning individuals in a fashion similar to that of other confidential information.
12.10 Staff members are informed about and comply with the provisions of the institution's human subjects research policy and other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices
12.11 Staff members recognize and make concerted efforts to avoid personal conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof in their transactions with students and others
12.12 Staff members ensure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they deal
12.13 Staff members function so as to ensure that institutional funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures
12.14 Staff members do not participate in any form of harassment that demeans persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus environment
12.15 Staff members perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise and competence and refer individuals in need of advanced levels of assistance to staff members who possess appropriate qualifications
12.16 Staff members apply suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior
12.17 Staff members maintain high principles of ethical behavior when using technology.
12.18 Students are provided access to services on a fair and equitable basis
12.19 Policies are in place that assure...
12.19a timely financial aid decisions and proper notification
12.19b fair financial aid decisions
12.20 Financial aid is awarded in compliance with applicable rules and regulations

Sum of Ethics Ratings: 82

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

Level of access to information & services: degree of
Conflict interest when dispensing aid: fair & impartial treatment of students: assurance that FA is awarded in compliance with federal regulations.
B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

FERPA guidelines; Federal & State Regulations;
Central office packaging & guidelines & standards.

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

Lack of FERPA mission statement and written ethical code of behavior; FERPA practice guideline should be prominently displayed & known by staff.

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

Develop written mission statement;
Develop code of ethics;
Display & disseminate to all offices.

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:
Part 13: ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION

The Program and service must regularly conduct systematic qualitative and quantitative evaluations of program quality to determine whether and to what degree the stated mission and goals are being met. Although methods of assessment vary, programs and services must employ a sufficient range of measures to insure objectivity and comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students and other affected constituencies. Results of these evaluations must be used in revising and improving programs and services and in recognizing staff performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Met</th>
<th>Partially Met</th>
<th>Fully Met</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I N A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Criteria:

13.1 The financial aid program regularly conducts systematic qualitative program evaluations to determine how well its mission and goals are being met

13.2 The program regularly conducts systematic quantitative program evaluations to determine how well its mission and goals are being met

13.3 The program employs a sufficient range of measures to insure objectivity and comprehensiveness

13.4 Among the data collected are responses elicited directly from students and other affected constituencies

13.5 Assessment and evaluation results are used to revise and improve program services

13.6 Assessment and evaluation results are used to recognize staff performance

Scale Score

Sum of Assessment and Evaluation Ratings: 14

A. Cite CAS Guidelines to be assessed as program criterion measures for the self-study:

Assessment & Evaluation - done on regular basis to

B. Identify, summarize, and cross reference documentation that affects rating decisions:

Student opinion surveys [daily & bi-annual surveys & opinion surveys] level of student complaints, referred by other offices

C. Identify and list discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice:

Regular methods of student & campus feedback: Not happening

D. Identify and list action plans proposed to bring the program into compliance with standards:

Internal surveys / deficit feedback from other offices

E. Identify and list recommended action plans proposed to enhance program quality:

Develop convenient means to obtain student feedback;

Qualitative evaluations of all staff;

Financial Aid Program
# CAS
COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF STANDARDS
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

CAS Financial Aid Program Standards
Criteria Rating Summary Sheet

After completing the worksheet rating process, write the sum of the ratings for each component in the space provided and divide by the Total Possible Rating value immediately to the right. Then write the resulting percentage in the Component Compliance Score space on the right. That Compliance value reflects the difference between the highest possible rating and the self-assessment team’s ratings. The larger the resulting percentage, the greater the component’s compliance with the standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Component</th>
<th>Summary Values</th>
<th>Component Total Rating</th>
<th>Total Possible Rating</th>
<th>Component Compliance Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part 1. MISSION</td>
<td></td>
<td>67</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 2. PROGRAM</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 3. LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 4. ORGANIZATION and MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 5. HUMAN RESOURCES</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 6. FINANCIAL RESOURCES</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 7. FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, and EQUIPMENT</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 8. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 9. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, ACCESS, and AFFIRMATIVE ACTION</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 10. CAMPUS and COMMUNITY RELATIONS</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 11. DIVERSITY</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 12. ETHICS</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 13. ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INTERPRETING THE CRITERIA SUMMARY RATINGS**

A Component Compliance Score less than 50% of the Total Possible Rating value indicates need for action plans to substantially improve the component.

A Component Compliance Score greater than 50% but less than 75% of the Total Possible Rating value indicates need for action plans targeting improvement in that area.

A Component Compliance Score greater than 75% but less than 100% of the Total Possible Rating value indicates the component is functioning in a reasonably adequate way, but action plans should be developed to strengthen the area.

A Component Compliance Score of 100% of the Total Possible Rating value indicates that the component meets all essential standards, although action plans might be considered to increase program effectiveness.