

BREKELEY CITY COLLEGE

STUDENT SERVICES ANNUAL PROGRAM UPDATE

PROGRAM X 2014-2015 Program Review

Unit/Area: Financial Aid Office

Executive Summary

Students are Very Important People (VIPs). Berkeley City College Student Financial Services (FAO) conducts business with the philosophy that every student who comes through our front door is a VIP. In theory, the process of applying for Federal and State financial assistance should be fairly easy for college students. However, the process is perceived as confusing and complicated by many Berkeley City College (BCC) students. FAO students may come from a disadvantaged background; some are not familiar with compiling important information for the Financial Aid application process. For example, students are not aware of filing income tax returns or simply submitting additional paperwork to complete their financial aid file on time may impact their eligibilities.

Success Stories

During 2014-15, the process of delivering Financial Aid converted from a mainframe environment to Oracle's PeopleSoft (PS) financial aid system, interfacing with PS student Academic information.

The system automatically packages and disburses aid to non-verification students; eliminating student needs to visit the front counter unless other services are required.

The automatic process dramatically decreased the influx of students visiting the front counter, providing other recipients a faster, efficient visit. The quality of service received from the front counter and FAO specialists for selected students has greatly improved. Financial Aid is disbursed to students prior to the start of the semester.

Students are able to view financial aid awards and disbursements on their passport account; accept or decline financial aid awards; able to view financial aid status and any additional documents required. Financial aid paperwork can be completed and submitted to the FAO for processing.

There is an increased request for presentations and workshops for adult school, high schools and 4-year institutions.

There is an increase in the number of Pell grant awards and recipients each academic year. For example: In 2014-15 as of 3-2-15, we have 2,000 processed students compared to last school year 2013-14 of 1,634.

Our three year cohort default rate decreased from 15.5% in 2011 to 11.2% in 2012.

Program Needs: (Personnel, facilities, technology, funding, equipment, etc)

Human Resource/Personnel:

Convert the part-time, 30 hours, 11 months Clerical Assistant II position to a full-time 12 months 40 hours position.

A Long-term part-time hourly staff for 180 days employment time.

A full-time Placement Assistant position.

Dedicate a FAO Programmer in the District Information Technology (IT) Department to maintain and enhance the functionality of the Financial Aid PeopleSoft module.

Facilities/Infrastructure:

As FAO services expand the department needs more space. Financial Aid moved to a new office in order to incorporate the processing staff in one area, however, we still need additional space. The front counter is located away from the main office, requiring staff to leave the counter to access student files, talk to specialists or student workers.

Minimally the Financial Aid department requires a storage area; a quality filing system; the FA front counter to be located outside the main FA office; a computer room to conduct the Financial Aid workshops. Additionally, the FAO needs a viable solution to the ongoing line issue. Present conditions are cumbersome, with limitations on entrance and exit lines.

Technology:

In order to serve students more efficiently, it is imperative that the full financial aid component in Passport with imaging systems be implemented for the 2015/2016 academic year. This is a much requisite time-saver, and will reduce the need for students to make multiple visits to the front counter.

Electronic Imaging: Computers and/or specialized hardware/software to capture (copy), store, process, manipulate, and distribute flat information' documents, (transcripts, Student Educational Plan (SEP), and educational supporting documentation) through digitization.

New system: New financial aid system that enables students to submit their FA paperwork via online and able to view their students' accounts on Passport with accuracy information. Automatic phone messages remind students about important financial aid updates.

Mission/History and Description of Service Provided *Brief, one paragraph.*

Students are Very Important People (VIPs). Berkeley City College Student Financial Services conducts its business with the philosophy that every student who comes through our front door is a VIP. The mission of the Financial Aid Office is to create access to education and completion of educational goals for economically challenged students. Needed assistance is provided in a timely, efficient and professional manner to students who meet Federal, State, and institutional requirements. By playing a vital role in students' retention and completion, we support their transformation toward become productive, valuable, contributing members of our rich, thriving, multi-cultural community.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

(or Service Area Outcomes-SAOs, or Program Learning Outcomes-PLOs)

Goal	How is The Goal Measured (Indicators)	What Are Expected Outcomes
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Increase the number of financial aid awards	Total number of students awarded over all financial aid applicants	Increase in ratio of financial aid recipients over applicants
Provide a timely and efficient service	Student files are processed within four to six weeks	Greater customer satisfaction
Educate students on financial aid matters	Total number of student attending workshops	Increased student proficiency and a decrease in mistakes when filling out the FAFSA and Direct Loan packet

SLO/SAO/PLO

Mapping to Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

We understand the importance of serving the community and the diversity of our student body by taking the time to communicate with our students should they have any questions regarding the financial aid process. The Financial Aid Office recognizes that many of our students would not be able to afford college without our services. Therefore, we take personal responsibility for each and every student and maintain the highest ethical standards to minimize institutional and student liability. Please refer to SLO Outcome table below.

**Financial Aid
Service Area Outcomes Survey Results 2014**

Total Response: 30 students

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Disagree (3)	Strongly Disagree (2)	Not Applicable (1)	No Response
After visiting the financial aid office I understand the process that is necessary to complete my financial aid file.	17	9	1	1	1	1
	57%	30%	3%	3%	3%	3%
After visiting the financial aid office, I have a better understanding of which paperwork I have to submit and why it is requested.	18	8	2	1	0	1
	60%	27%	7%	3%	0%	3%
I understand how long it would take to get my file reviewed and processed	14	9	3	1	0	3
	47%	30%	10%	3%	0%	10%
I understand how my financial aid eligibility is calculated.	12	11	4	0	0	3
	40%	37%	13%	0%	0%	10%
I understand my responsibilities as a financial aid recipient.	14	12	0	0	0	0
	47%	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%
I understand my rights as a financial aid recipient.	13	14	1	0	0	0
	43%	47%	3%	0%	0%	0%
The facilitator answered my questions or concerns in a professional manner	17	11	0	0	0	0
	57%	37%	0%	0%	0%	0%

II. ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND PLANNING

Quantitative Assessments

Include service area data such as number of students served by your unit/area. Include data and recommendations from program review. Include data used to assess your SLO/SAO/PLOs.

Compared to the 2011-12 academic year, the total number of Pell grant recipients and the total Pell awarded amount increased in the 2012-13 academic year (Appendix-1).

Appendix-1

Pell Grant only	2011-2012 year	2012-2013 year	2013-2014 year	Fall 2014-Spring 2015, Unduplicated Counts (as of March 02, 2015)
Number of students processed	1,571	1,576	1,634	2,000
Total Aid Amount	\$5,067,424.19	\$5,134,996.39	\$5,666,977.2	\$4,751,938.40

For the 2013-2014 academic year, we had a total of 1,634 processed students; so far we have 2,000 processed students. This suggests that by the end of the current semester we will have more processed students because we are continuously working on disbursing student awards.

Qualitative Assessments

Present evidence of community need based on advisory committee input, student surveys, focus groups, etc. Include data used to assess your SLO/SAO/PLOs.

We would like to develop surveys and data collection methods to ensure that we are accurately measuring our SLO's.

Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Limitations

Strengths

What are the STRENGTHS of your unit/area?

The strength of the Financial Aid Department exists within the separate, behind-the-scene space devoted to processing paperwork and handling intricate details in order to obtain funds from Federal and State agencies. We are able to meet reporting requirements to these same funding sources. Focusing on paperwork and data entry operations without student distractions has enabled Financial Aid operations to become efficient and less prone to errors; we are better able to serve our VIP students.

Weaknesses

What are the current WEAKNESSES of your unit/area?

We are working with a new financial aid system which has actually required a longer processing time for verification files because there are extra steps involved. The system is not fully implemented and we have encountered inconsistency and multiple interface issues. Even with a fully operational system, we would still be required to manually print documents, with hands-on review of each student file.

The lack of an automated phone system and electronic imaging system impacts both staff and students, slowing down the process. We need bigger office space; supplies and file storage; a computer room for

FA workshops and a better front counter area.

Opportunities

What are the OPPORTUNITIES in your unit/area?

The district has entered escrow to purchase the building located on the northwest corner of Milvia Street for Berkeley City College. This new building will help the college to provide more classes and services to students. BCC campus is located in the heart of the city of Berkeley; easily accessible by public transportation. BCC location affords all students ease of access to access classes and services. This is a great convenience to students with disabilities.

Limitations

What are the current LIMITATIONS of your unit/area?

Limitations are in the areas of space. The current physical front desk set-up does not address the issue of students standing in line. During peak enrollment, we experience a “bottleneck” phenomenon due to close proximity with the Cashiers Office and Admissions & Records Office. Students have no room to line up for services; the lines become enmeshed. Staff must continually manage the lines to ensure that students do not get tangled or create a fire hazard. There must be access for wheelchairs. Front counter set up is another area that limits efficiency. There is too much distance from the financial aid counter to the main financial aid office. Staff spends more time going back and forth to locate students’ financial aid files and to discuss financial aid issues with specialists. Additionally the FAO needs more temporary staff at the front counter, especially during peak enrollment periods.

Action Plan for Continuous Improvement

Please describe your plan for the continuous improvement of your unit/area.

- Process fall financial aid awards early; prior to the first day of fall classes, incentive for students to attend BCC.
- Provide more off-campus presentations and workshops for adult school, high schools and 4-year institutions.
- New FAO PeopleSoft system and the financial aid webpage provide access for students to navigate financial aid resources.

A. The future goals and methods of assessment of the program, including student learning outcomes:

- Decrease the number of adverse audit findings thru implementation of Peralta District policies and procedures for processing student financial aid files.
- Continue to provide in-reach and outreach programs offering financial aid workshops. Increase applicant financial aid eligibility awareness. Increase the number of recipients of BOG Fee Waivers; Federal and State grants.
- Distribute SLO surveys during October, November, December, and January. Information obtained from SLO surveys will be used to improve future FAO services.
- Staffing increase; specifically a full-time Placement Assistant. Ultimately, FAO requires one part-time Clerical Assistant II position to increase from 30 hours a week to 40 hours a week. Extend number of working days for 65-day temporary staff.

- Implement a financial aid appointment system; facilitate faster completion of student files; rapid disbursements for students.
- Increase financial aid recipients.

B. The strategies and actions to be taken by the unit over the next six years to strengthen the program and meet the strategic goals.

- Increase staff
- Increase financial aid recipients.
- Online loan and Financial Aid processing.

C. Support needed by the unit in order to address issues identified in the self-study.

- Institutional Effective Coordinator to develop surveys and compile results.
- IT department to develop and publish online student survey.
- College administrative support.
- Financial support.

Additional Planned Educational Activities Towards FTES, Student Success, Persistence, and Completion Describe your unit/area’s plan to meet district FTES target and address student success, persistence, and completion, especially for unprepared, underrepresented, and underserved students. (see Student Success Scorecard-<http://scorecard.cccco.edu/scorecard.aspx>)

Meet District FTES Target for AY2014-2015 of 19,355

Increase Student Success

Berkeley City College
Success Outcome Measures
Financial Aid- Fall 2010 (Course status: Credit)

	All Enr	Success	Success
Total enrollments	15,095	9,520	63.1%
Non Fin. Aid	7,934	4,962	62.5%
Fin. Aid	7,161*	4,558	63.7%

Increase Persistence

Percentage of degree and/or transfer-seeking students who enroll in the first three consecutive terms. This metric is considered a milestone or momentum point, research shows that students with sustained enrollment are more likely to succeed..

**Berkeley City College
Persistence Outcome Measures
Financial Aid**

Note: Persistence Rate is defined as the percentage of students enrolled in at least one class at the college at fall census of the cohort year who were then enrolled in at least one class on the following fall opening day in District.

Source: Berkeley City College Instructional Review. Retrieved October 15, 2012. <http://web.peralta.edu/indev/research-data/documents/> Students who received financial aid persistence rate

FALL 2009	fall 09	fall 10	Persistence rate
	2,628	1,461	55.6%
FALL 2010	fall 10	fall 11	Persistence rate
	3,233	1,700	52.6%
FALL 2011	fall 11	fall 12	Persistence rate
	3,318	1,809	54.5%

Increase College Completion

Percentage of degree and/or transfer-seeking students who complete a degree, certificate or transfer related outcomes.

We do not have any current data that correlates students who receive financial aid and their completion of a degree, certificate, or transferring.

RESOURCE NEEDS

Even though we have managed to improve service in order reach our goals, we need:

- Sophisticated electronic imaging equipment which will eliminate lost paperwork and enhance staff efficiency.
- Increased staffing to help process paperwork, assist students, and enable the FAO to interact with other BCC departments. Provide informational workshops.
- Increase program funding from such sources as the Student Financial Aid Assistance -Board Financial Assistance Program (SFAA-BFAP). This will enable hiring additional full time and hourly staff.
- Bigger office space; convenient front counter accessible station.

Human Resource/Personnel

Please describe any human resource/personnel needs for your unit/area.

We currently have:

1 FTE permanent full-time classified Clerical Assistant II,
.75 FTE permanent part-time (11 month, 30 hours) classified Clerical Assistant II,
3.0 FTE Specialists, and
1.0 FTE full-time Supervisor.

Equipment

Currently on hand:

2 tablets
18 monitors
8 PC computers,
4 laptops
2 scanners
6 printers and
1 copier machine/fax machine
Filing equipment consists of filing cabinets.

Narrative:

Describe the current staffing level in relation to the relative need for effective delivery of your unit/area's programs and

services.

Discuss any current position vacancies, the need for additional personnel, the need for permanent faculty/staff instead of adjunct/hourly personnel, etc.

Describe implications of the current staffing level in your unit/area to overall service delivery

The FAO has made great strides in staffing operations. Currently, there are 5.75 regular classified staff members. This is an increase from 4.5. FAO has three full-time Specialists, one full-time Supervisor, one full-time Clerical Assistant II, and one part-time 11 month/30 hour Clerical Assistant II. In order to serve students more efficiently, the FAO needs to increase staff.

Converting the part-time Clerical Assistant II to full-time is necessary for adequate front counter coverage. Creating a new position for a full-time Placement Assistant will increase productivity. There are five student workers who assist with scanning, filing, shredding obsolete material, and label making. Staffing is supplemented by hourly employees who are limited to 65 days annually, thus creating a significant amount of turnover in personnel.

Each time a new 65 day hourly employee is hired training is required. Providing accurate information to students is critical, and we are severely limited by the amount of time spent toward training new, part-time staff. Well trained staff is critical for good customer service, and limits financial liability to the institution. Mistakes in the administration of federal and state funding may require the college and District to pay financial penalties. Staff stability is critical to the continued success of FAO. Constant use of temporary staff creates additional training demands on limited permanent staff and takes time away from serving our students.

Program Needs:

Human Resource/Personnel Requests

List your human resource/, personnel requests in prioritized/ranked order.

Human resource/personnel requests will go through the established. College and District planning

Convert the part-time, 30 hours, 11 months Clerical Assistant II position to a full-time 12 months 40 hours position.

Long-term part-time hourly staff-180 day employment time.

A full-time Placement Assistant position.

Dedicated FAO Programmer in the District Information Technology (IT) Department to maintain and enhance the functionality of the Financial Aid PeopleSoft module.

Facilities/Infrastructure

Please describe any facilities/infrastructure needs for your unit/area.

Narrative:

Describe the current facilities/infrastructure of your unit/area in relation to the relative need for effective delivery of programs and services.

Describe implications of the current state of facilities/infrastructure in your unit/area to overall service delivery.

As FAO services expand the department needs more space. Financial Aid moved to a new office in order to incorporate the processing staff in one area, however, we still need additional space. The front counter is located away from the main office, requiring staff to leave the counter to access student files, talk to specialists or student workers.

Facilities/Infrastructure Requests

List your facilities requests in prioritized/ranked order.

Facilities requests will go through the established College and District planning and budgeting process

A storage area, a quality filing system, the FA front counter to be located outside the FA office, a computer room to conduct the Financial Aid workshops. In addition, we need a viable solution to the ongoing line issue. The present conditions are awkward and present ingress and egress issues.

Technology

Please describe any technology needs for your unit/area.

Narrative:

Describe the technology needs of your unit/area in relation to the relative need for effective delivery of programs and services. Describe implications of the current state of technology in your unit/area to overall service delivery.

In order to serve students more efficiently, it is imperative that the financial aid component of Passport and the imaging systems to be implemented for the 2015/2016 academic year. This will save our time and reduce the need for students to make multiple visits to our front counter in order to complete their files.

Technology requests:

List your technology requests in prioritized/ranked order.

Technology requests will go through the established College and District planning and budgeting process

Electronic Imaging: computers and/or specialized hardware/software to capture (copy), store, process, manipulate, and distribute flat information' documents, (transcripts, Student Educational Plan (SEP), and educational supporting documentation) through digitization.

New system: New financial aid system that enables students to submit their FA paperwork via online and able to view their students' accounts on Passport with accuracy information. Automatic phone messages remind students about important financial aid updates.

OTHER

Please feel free to provide any additional information about your unit/area below