

## 2014-2015 Student Services Program Review

Program Name: **Financial Aid & Scholarships**

Program Contact: **Menjivar, Claudia I.**

Academic Year: **2014-2015**

Status: **Submitted for review**

Updated on: **04/07/2015 11:28 AM**

### 1. Description of Program

Provide a brief description of the program and how it supports the college's **College Mission and Diversity Statements, Institutional Priorities, 2013/14-2015/16, 5 in 5 College Strategies, Spring 2011**, and other **Institutional Program Planning** as appropriate.

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office processes federal and state aid applications and provides financial assistance to financially eligible students in the form of grants and loans. Student are encouraged to fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Scholarship applications online.

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office staff also counsel and advise students on financial aid and scholarship policies and procedures through in-reach and out-reach efforts. In addition, the staff conduct classroom presentations and students received one-on-one assistance in filling out their financial aid and scholarship applications. Our goal is to promote awareness of financial aid and scholarships with the outcome for studnets being financial aid literate.

Also, the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office staff work in collaboration with different departments such as EOPS, Counseling, Admission and Records, DSPS, Veterans Resource and Opportunity Center, Testing, Child Development Center, Cosmetology, Athletics, and Campus Clubs, to provide a wide range of resources to students which helps them in their transition to CSM.

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office serve a diverse segment of the CSM student population. Students who qualify for financial aid and scholarships are typically from lower socio-economic backgrounds. CSM students represent a wide variety of ethnic, racial, socioeconomic groups, and many are non-native English speakers. Thus, the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office staff provides bilingual and trilingual services to our students to meet our goal to support students to successfully achieve their educational goal at the College of San Mateo.

Reference to institutional Documents

- Mission Statement-...ensures continuous improvement
- Institutional Priority 3-Promote Relevant, high quality programs and services
- Diversity Statement-a policy of inclusiveness that recognizes, values and reflects the diversity of the community we serve.

### 2. Summary of Student and Program Data

#### A. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

1. Reflect on recent SLO assessment results for the department/unit. Identify trends and discuss areas in need of improvement.

SLO's #1 Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Provide students the opportunity to learn the minimum academic requirements needed to maintain financial aid eligibility.

Assessment Method: Banner and SARS Grid reports

Students were required to schedule an appointment with a financial aid counselor and requested to complete an online Satisfactory Academic Progress workshop.

Students are required to schedule an appointment with a Financial Aid counselor and to complete an online Satisfactory Academic Progress workshop if they failed to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy standards. They are placed on either warning or disqualification status which may prevent them from receiving financial aid.

Results: Our SLO's findings indicate that 681 students were placed on disqualification and warning status during fall 2014. Of the 681 students, 421 students met with financial aid counselors and continued to receive some type of financial aid.

442 students who were in disqualification and warning status took the Satisfactory Academic Progress online workshop. Of the 442 students who took the pretest 112 of them achieved a 100% pass rate. 164 students completed at a 90% pass rate, and 105 achieved a pass rate of 80%.

This outcome demonstrates that these students were knowledgeable of the SAP policy and how to remain eligible for financial aid. A post-test was administered to all 442 students and their completion rate was 100% successful.

Follow up: Continue utilization of pre- and post-tests to assess SLO's at least once a semester and start providing monthly Satisfactory Academic Progress workshops to increase awareness and understanding of the policy to help ensure students remain eligible for financial aid.

SLO's # 2 Students will learn to successfully complete the CSM Scholarship application

Assessment Method: (ARGOS reports-Banner-Scholarship, Academic Works-Scholarship software)

Results: Our SLO's findings indicate that in 2014-2015 we received 439 scholarship applications. Out of 439 applications, 358 were successfully completed. During the 2013-2014 application period there were 368 applications submitted. Out of the 368 applications received, 320 were submitted as complete. There was an increase of 38 completed applications from 13-14 to 14-15. These results indicate an increase in the number of applicants and that students are becoming increasingly knowledgeable of the scholarship application process. In addition there was an increase of 36 total awards from 13-14 to 14-15, resulting in an increase of \$34,477 in the total amount of scholarships awarded.

Follow up: The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office will continue to promote the availability of financial aid to students through outreach events, workshops and its website. In addition, students attending a workshop will complete a pre- and post-scholarship application survey to determine their knowledge of scholarship opportunities at the start and then after participating in a workshop.

2. Describe any additional methods used to assess program SLOs and reflect on the results of those assessments.

N/A

3. Examine the program to GE alignment. Which GE SLOs are supported or reinforced by the department/unit SLOs. What do the assessment results for the department/unit/ SLOs reveal about student attainment of the GE SLOs?

Financial Aid and Scholarship SLO's are linked to the GE SLO's for assessment. Students are learning to identify financial aid resources for which they may qualify and submit an application by the established deadline. Also, students who receive financial aid are demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy for financial aid purposes. These results go hand in hand with GE SLO's contribution towards; communication, critical thinking and ethical responsibilities.

## B. Student Support Indicators

1. Review student program usage and discuss any differences across demographic variables. Refer to SARS, Banner, **Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE)** reports and other data sources as appropriate.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office provided financial aid assistance to over 7,476 students. It is important to recognize that these figures represent only those students who were deemed eligible for financial aid and/or scholarships and does not include those students who did not complete the application process or whom were determined to be ineligible. Please note this data reflects mid-year awards so the actual end of year numbers will be higher.

Below is a breakdown of number of students served and their award amount:

| Program                       | total # of students | Total award amount |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Board of Governors Fee Waiver | 5,231               | \$3,063,761        |
| Federal Work Study            | 68                  | \$100,463          |
| Pell Grants                   | 1,716               | \$5,473,192        |
| Direct Loans                  | 78                  | \$385,095          |
| Scholarship                   | 383                 | \$367,507          |
|                               |                     |                    |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>7,476</b>        | <b>\$9,390,018</b> |

## 2. Discuss any differences in student program usage across modes of service delivery.

Financial Aid and Scholarship students have access to Financial Aid information through a variety of avenues including Financial Aid and Scholarship websites, classroom presentations, high school workshops, community center workshops, in-reach and out-reach events and via electronic event/activities monitors on campus. In addition, workshops were also available online to students and their families.

Below are sample of modes delivery to students:

- 7,476 students received some type of financial aid, scholarship, loans, federal work study and board of governor's fee waiver via electronically.
- Over 2,312 students were targeted during our out-reach/in-reach events to our feeder high school events.
- Over 400 students from our feeder high schools attended our Cash for College event.
- Over 1,211 students visited our table during our Financial Aid Awareness events.
- Financial aid website was updated to provide consumer information to students, parents and the general community. Information includes a Handbook of Policies and Procedures, Gainful Employment, and a Net Price Calculator.

## C. Program Efficiency Indicators. Do we deliver programs efficiently given our resources?

Summarize trends in program efficiency. Discuss no-shows, group vs. individual delivery, etc.

The implementation of new technology has definitely enhanced the financial aid awarding process. The packaging process (awarding of eligible aid) has been drastically streamlined to provide a faster turnaround in providing award notification to students. Below are examples of processes that have been implemented during last couple of years.

**Awarding Process:** 7,476 students were electronically auto packaged and received awards. This process runs daily. This was formerly a manual process that required significant amount of staff time.

**WebSMART Communication:** AppWorks email notification to students regarding their financial aid and scholarship status. This process runs daily.

Financial Aid application: Online application through FAFSA website ([www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)).

Scholarship Application: Online Academic Works scholarship software. Scholarship application was formerly a paper process and required a significant amount of staff time.

Auto-set Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy: Codes are scheduled to run and placed daily to the student's record. Students can readily check their SAP status by logging to WebSmart.

Bar coded documents: All submitted financial aid documents are bar coded to expedite scanning and to assign documents to specific students. This is a greatly enhanced process and significant time saver for both students and staff.

Standardization of forms, policy and procedures, The three colleges have standardized various forms, policies, and procedures which has resulted in far less confusion for students; particularly for those who enroll in more than one college in the district. The standardization had led to a much more student-friendly process.

### 3. Additional Factors

Discuss additional factors that impact the program, including, as applicable, changes in student populations, state-wide initiatives, transfer requirements, advisory committee recommendations, legal mandates, workforce development and employment opportunities, community needs. See **Institutional Research** as needed.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the following federal and State mandates were implemented. While the numerous changes impacted staff workload, several of the outcomes were a significant benefit to students; particularly for Undocumented and Foster Youth. The changes were communicated to students, faculty and staff and also posted on the Financial Aid Website.

- **Direct Loan Eligibility:** The Department of Education has changed the loan limit amount that a student can receive. Students applying for subsidized student loans are expected to complete their program within 150% of the program length of study. If students do not complete their program within this timeframe they lose the federal subsidy associated with their student loan(s). This translates into the student will be paying a higher interest rate on their loan(s). The Financial Aid staff is encouraging students to schedule appointments with a counselor to create an educational plan and to complete an online Entrance Interview workshop. In this workshop students will become informed about loan indebtedness and loan expectations.
- **Verification Group:** The Department of Education has expanded the groups of students for which a verification process must be completed. This means students will have to provide additional documentation to financial aid staff and if they fail to comply with these requirements, their financial aid could be jeopardized. This
- **Verification of Tracking Group V4 or V5:** Beginning with the 2014-15 FAFSA processing year, schools must report results for any student for whom the college received an Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) with a tracking flag V4 or V5 – as selected by Central Processing System (CPS). This information is reported on the FAA Access to CPS Online website. The college reports one of the following options:
  - 1 – Verification completed in person, no issues found
  - 2 – Verification completed using notary, no issues found
  - 3 – Verification attempted, issues found with identity
  - 4 – Verification attempted, issues found with HS completion
  - 5 – No response from applicant or unable to locate

Students designated by CPS for Verification Tracking Groups V4 and V5 are required to provide acceptable documentation of their identity and high school completion status. The basic goal is to ensure that those receiving Title IV Federal Student Aid are indeed legitimate students who are appropriately enrolled at the school determining financial aid eligibility. Reporting of Identity Verification Results is one effort the U.S. Department of Education initiated to reduce potential for fraud.

**Gainful Employment:** The federal government has increased the reporting requirements for many of our financial aid programs. The U.S. Department of Education required institutions that participate in the student financial assistance programs to report certain information about students who enrolled in Title IV-eligible educational programs that lead to gainful employment in a recognized occupation. Those regulations also require institutions to disclose to prospective students certain information about their GE Programs. Finally, the new regulations require an institution to notify the U.S. Secretary of Education if it wishes to add additional GE Programs to its list of Title IV-eligible programs. Staff are working closely with ITS and PRIE, and the other Financial Aid Directors at Canada and Skyline to comply with this requirement.

## 4. Planning

### A. Results of Program Plans and Actions

Describe results, including measurable outcomes, from plans and actions in recent program reviews.

A couple of years ago, a Business Process Analysis was conducted for the district's three Financial Aid and Scholarship Offices. The result of this process was a very significant reduction in procedural steps required for a student to apply and be considered for financial aid. As well, there was also a significant reduction in procedural steps conducted by the financial aid staff. The streamlining that has occurred has resulted in better customer service to students, utilization of technology to expedite financial aid processing, and increased communication with students. With this enlightened business process analysis in mind, additional improvements have been incorporated and are outlined below.

During the 2014-2015 year, the district's colleges along with SMCCCD Foundation decided to convert the Scholarship Management system from STARS to Academic Works. The decision to change was made for several reasons including the poor customer service the three colleges were receiving from the STARS vendor. The response time to receive assistance or get help in answering questions from STARS could take months. In contrast, the turn around time for Academic Works is immediate or no longer than 24 hours. Requesting reports from STARS was a major undertaking but with Academic Works there is much flexibility and expediency in developing and running reports. A major benefit in using Academic Works is the streamlining of the application process for students. When applying through Academic Works students only need to complete a general application. The general application consists of entering basic information and answering questions, submitting a 750 word personal statement, uploading unofficial transcripts, and providing the name and email address of a recommender.

Another change that occurred during the 2014-15 academic year is that the District hired a Financial Aid Reconciliation Specialist who dedicates her time to reconciling financial aid grants and loans, conducting financial aid presentations, helping with in-reach and out-reach events, and processing the Board of Governors Fee Waiver report for the three colleges.

Even though we have positive changes in the financial aid office and scholarship department, we are still in need of a few changes to fully reach our goal of providing enhanced service to students. Those needs are identified in another part of this Program Review.

### B. Program Vision

What is the program's vision for sustaining and improving student learning and success during the *next six years*? Make connections to the

**College Mission and Diversity Statements, Institutional Priorities, 2013/14-2015/16**, and other **Institutional Program Planning** as appropriate. Address trends in the SLO assessment results and student program usage and data noted in Section 2.

[**Note:** Specific plans to be implemented in the *next year* should be entered in Section 4C.]

Financial Aid and Scholarships are vital for many students who want to attend College of San Mateo. Therefore, The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office maintains as its vision serving and meeting the needs of all students who are eligible for State and Federal Financial Aid.

- The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office will continue to broaden utilization of web-based services, such as financial aid forms, scholarship application, Bogg application and information to students on how to apply for financial aid and scholarships.
- Financial Aid Outreach Center located in the Learning Center will continue assisting students with completing financial aid application, forms, registration and helping them to meet their goals.
- The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office will continue in- and out-reach efforts.
- The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office will continue promote availability of student services.
- Continue to instruct students on how to apply online for financial aid including the FAFSA and BOGFW applications.
- Providing bilingual and trilingual services to students.

#### Reference to Institutional Documents

- Mission Statement-ensure continuous improvement.
- Institutional Priority 3-Promote Relevant, high quality programs and services.
- Diversity Statement- a policy of inclusiveness that recognizes,values and reflects the diversity of the community we serve.

1. To guide future faculty and staff development initiatives, describe the professional enrichment activities that would be most effective in carrying out the program's vision to improve student success.

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office staff will continue to participate in workshops and conferences that contribute to their professional development and enhance their professional skills.

Here are some examples of conferences, workshops and trainings attended by FA staff.

- CCCSFAAA Conference. This annual conference addresses federal and state updates for community colleges.
- CASFAA Conference. This annual conference address Federal and State update/changes among CSU, UC and Community Colleges.
- Federal Student Aid (FSA Conference). This conference addresses upcoming financial aid application changes and provides policy updates.
- 3CBG/Ellucian Conference. This conference addresses technical enhancements in processing financial aid.
- DIAG /Diversity in Action Group - Staff have the opportunity to participate in college-wide cultural awareness events and activities.
- Staff members have the opportunity to participate in other campus events and educational programs.

In addition to participating in state and federal conferences, staff members are encouraged to participate in a variety of college committees such as Project Change, Summer Bridge, Umoja, Puente, and MANA.

2. To guide future collaboration across student services, learning support centers, and instructional programs, describe the interactions that would help the program to improve student success.

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office processes federal and state financial aid applications and provides financial aid assistance to financially eligible students in the forms of grants and loans. In order to enhance student success, it is crucial that students familiarize themselves with other campus resources. Therefore, Financial Aid Staff work closely with EOPS, DSPS, Admission and Records, Veterans Resource Opportunity Center, Placement Testing, Counseling, Campus Clubs, Athletics, and Child Development Center to foster a spirit of cooperation between our offices and to provide better services for students.

3. To guide the **Institutional Planning Budget Committee (IPBC)** in long-range planning, identify any major changes in resource needs anticipated during the next three years. Examples: faculty retirements, equipment obsolescence, space allocation.

#### Faculty

Faculty: Due to the high increase of underrepresented students seeking financial aid counseling, a Financial Aid Counselor is requested to help financial aid students with their educational plans and ensure that they are completing their educational goals within the required timeframe.

A previous request for a full-time financial aid counselor was not fulfilled. Financial aid students who failed to meet our satisfactory academic progress policy, are required to schedule an appointment with an academic counselor. Unfortunately, these students are challenged when they schedule appointments with a counselor because they don't always get the same counselor who helped them during the previous semester. Thus, they likely end up repeating the same personal information, educational goal or challenges in life to a different counselor. In many cases, students end up with different SEP's which can be confusing and disheartening. Having a FA counselor dedicated to assisting financial aid students will eliminate these challenges. Students should be able to connect with one counselor who can provide guidance and support that can lead to greater success.

#### Equipment and Technology

Equipment and Technology: In order to increase productivity and efficiency, the Financial Aid and Scholarship office will constantly rely on scanners. Scanning and later indexing files provides a more efficient process to be able to award students. We anticipate a growing need of high speed scanners.

In addition, we are in need of Increase of number of lap top computers for the Outreach Center to provide better services to students. The lap top computers we use to help students are very old and slow. We know that we are lucky to have an extra space to share and provide services to students but since the financial aid population is growing, there will be a need for a larger space in which staff can conduct financial aid and scholarship presentations. As well, the space can provide staff an opportunity to present workshops on a variety of topics including money management, loan default prevention, and satisfactory academic progress.

#### Instructional Materials

N/A

#### Classified Staff

Classified Staff: We anticipate an increase in staff members here at The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office. As Federal and state changes,

increase in financial aid applicants, new positions will become necessary.

**Need of a Financial Aid Counselor for the Financial Aid Department:**

Despite previous requests for a full-time financial aid counselor, it has not been granted. Financial aid students who failed to meet our satisfactory academic progress policy are required to schedule an appointment with an academic counselor. Unfortunately, these students are challenged when they schedule appointments with a counselor because they don't always meet with the same counselor who previously assisted them and which can then lead to repeating the same personal information, educational goal, and or personal challenges to the new counselor. As well, meeting with a different counselor often results with a different educational plan which can be confusing and overwhelming to the student. Having a financial aid counselor dedicated to financial aid students will eliminate these challenges. Student should be able to connect with one person in order to increase the chance of being academically successful.

**Need of Financial Aid Scholarship Staff Position:**

This is another position that has been requested several times but which has not been granted. Currently a financial aid technician manages her financial aid workload which includes packaging awards, in-and out-reach events, answering telephones, front counter coverage, and also coordinating the scholarship program. If granted a position for coordination of the Scholarship Program, the financial aid technician can dedicate the necessary time to awarding financial aid to more students with a more expedient turnaround time. In short, the Scholarship Program can operate more efficiently with a staff member dedicated to the program.

Facilities

**Financial Aid Outreach Center located in the Learning Center, Bldg 10-220:**

Financial Aid student workers used a small area located at the Learning Center to assist students with completing financial aid and scholarship forms and helping them meet their educational goal. Unfortunately the space is too small and a lot of time students have to wait for hours or leave the center and never return for assistance. In addition, the lap top computers used to help students are very old and slow. Staff appreciate the current space but since the financial aid population is growing, there is a need for additional space in which financial aid and scholarship presentations can be conducted. As well space is needed to provide students with a variety of workshops addressing such topics as money management, loan default prevention, academic progress; and to also provide Loan Entrance Interview counseling services.

C. Plans and Actions to Improve Student Success

Prioritize the plans to be carried out next year to sustain and improve student success. Briefly describe each plan and how it supports the **Institutional Priorities, 2013/14-2015/16**. For each plan, list actions and measurable outcomes. (Plans may extend beyond a single year.)

**Plan 1**

|        |                               |
|--------|-------------------------------|
| Title: |                               |
|        | Financial Aid Website Updates |



|  |
|--|
| Description  |
| Incorporate all financial aid documents and related information on the Financial Aid website 1.1.2 |

| Action(s)  | Completion Date              | Measurable Outcome(s)   |
|--|------------------------------|---|
| Financial Aid will continue to redesign and update the Financial Aid and Scholarship website. Linked to Institutional Priority 1 and 3 | Spring 2016                  | Students will become familiar with financial aid requirements and type of aid available |
| Click here to enter action   | Choose Year or Semester/Year | Click here to enter measurable outcome  |
| Click here to enter action   | Choose Year or Semester/Year | Click here to enter measurable outcome  |

**Plan 2**

|  |
|--|
| Title:                                     |
| Professional Development for Staff members |
|  |

|   |
|---|
| Description                                     |
| Staff participation in professional development |

| Action(s)   | Completion Date              | Measurable Outcome(s)   |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| Financial Aid and Scholarship staff will continue participating in workshops and conferences that contribute to their professional development and enhancing their professional skill set. Link to institutional Priority 1 and 4 | Summer 2016                  | More knowledgeable staff that is capable of assisting CSM's diverse students. |
| Click here to enter action  | Choose Year or Semester/Year | Click here to enter measurable outcome  |
| Click here to enter action  | Choose Year or Semester/Year | Click here to enter measurable outcome  |

For additional plans, cut/paste from above and insert here. Or add an additional page. Number your additional plans accordingly.

**5. Resource Requests**

Itemized Resource Requests

List the resources needed for ongoing program operation.

Faculty

**NOTE:** To make a faculty position request, complete **Full-time Faculty Position Request Form** and notify your Dean. This request is separate from the program review.

| Full-time faculty requests  | Number of positions |
|---|---------------------|
| Financial Aid Counselor   | 1                   |
| Financial Aid Counselor will help Financial Aid students with their academic plans and make sure that students are completing their |                     |
|   |                     |
|   |                     |
|   |                     |
|   |                     |

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|--|--|
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|--|--|

Equipment and Technology

| Description   | Cost    |
|---|---------|
|   |         |
| Four new lap top computers to better serve students in the Financial Aid Outreach Center. | \$5,800 |
|   |         |
|   |         |
|   |         |
|   |         |

Instructional Material

| Description | Cost |
|-------------|------|
| N/A         |      |
|             |      |
|             |      |
|             |      |
|             |      |
|             |      |

Classified Staff

| Description                                    | Cost     |
|--|----------|
| Scholarship Program Services Coordinator       | \$57,325 |
| Scholarship PSC will be coordinate the program |          |
|  |          |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Responsibilities will include working with donors, updating website, awarding and disbursing scholarship funds, in- and out-reach planning. |  |
|   |  |
|   |  |
|   |  |

Facilities

**For immediate or routine facilities requests, submit a CSM Facility Project Request Form.**

| Description | Cost |
|-------------|------|
| N/A         |      |
|             |      |
|             |      |
|             |      |
|             |      |
|             |      |

**6. Program Maintenance**

A. Course Outline Updates

Review the **course outline update record**. List the courses that will be updated in the next academic year. For each course that will be updated, provide a faculty contact and the planned submission month. See the **Committee on Instruction website** for **course submission instructions**. Contact your division's **COI representatives** if you have questions about submission deadlines.

| Courses to be updated | Faculty contact | Submission month |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| N/A                   |                 |                  |
|                       |                 |                  |
|                       |                 |                  |

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|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

B. Website Review

Review the program's website(s) annually and update as needed.

| Faculty contact(s) | Date of next review/update |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Karen Chadwick     | as need it                 |
| Eric Utsumi        | as need it                 |
|                    |                            |
|                    |                            |
|                    |                            |
|                    |                            |

C. SLO Assessment Contacts

| Faculty contact(s) | Date of next review/update |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Claudia Menjivar   | 3/2016                     |
|                    |                            |
|                    |                            |
|                    |                            |
|                    |                            |

