

1. Assessment Plan - Four Column



PIE - Student Services: Financial Aid Unit

Where We Are Now: Analysis and Summary

2018-19

Contact Person: Chau Dao

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Program Planning Dialog: Support students educational goals through financial aid, scholarship, and Veterans programming assistance through compliant, equitable, and efficient processing.

External Conditions, Trends, or Impacts (Student Services): Implemented online verification process for financial aid including submission of electronic documents. Instituted paperless files for Veterans case management. Increased staffing to support Student Centered Funding Formula. Implemented all federal and state regulatory changes on-time and efficiently. Continued standard to document every protocol and process for compliance, training, and transparency.

Internal Conditions, Trends, or Impacts (Student Services): We have strategies in place to close the loop, and to continue to close the loop such as quarterly meetings with units in financial aid, scholarships, and Veterans to gauge progress. Instituted a standard of all staff training; two full-day trainings to ensure all staff are informed and kept abreast of goals. And provide continuous updates through weekly staff meetings. Managers participate in committees and meetings to ensure to be appraised of latest regulatory changes, etc. that may impact department goals that in turn impact college goals.

Critical Decisions Made by Unit: Managers and staff participate in committees, meetings, and training to be appraised of latest regulatory changes and monitor conditions and trends.

Notable Achievements for Theme A: To Advance Academic Excellence and Student Achievement: Managers and staff participate in committees, meetings, and training to be appraised of latest regulatory changes and monitor conditions and trends.

Notable Achievements for Theme B: To Support Student Access and Success: Managers and coordinators participate in program planning and report program results on a quarterly or annual basis.

Notable Achievements for Theme C: Secure Human, Technological, & Financial Resources: Managers along with staff identify critical decision points based on conditions and trends. Will conduct research, analysis and reporting to ensure all stakeholders are included in each decision points. Created processing calendar to identify critical decision points to assist all staff to understand how planning and processing go hand-in-hand.

Notable Achievements for Theme D: To Foster an Atmosphere of Cooperation and Collaboration: Managers and coordinators participate in program planning and report program results on a quarterly or annual basis. We also continuous report out within our department and division of our ongoing unit goals.

Contributors to the Report: N/A

2018-19

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External Conditions, Trends, or Impacts (Student Services): 1. New Policies/legislative changes: Direct Loans SULA , Veterans, Education Plans, Year Round Pell Grant, BOG Loss, BOG Name Change (College Promise Grant) Federal Campus-Based Programs, Consolidation of Full-time Student Success and Completion Grant, Homeless Youth, and new funding formula.

2. Increased number of requests for FA presentations from within the campus as well as outside community. Continued usage of Request for FA/Scholarship Presentation protocol; created a point of contact in FA office to gather needs of school/agency to identify appropriate topic expert from department to conduct presentation. Logged all presentation commitments to avoid scheduling conflicts. As the cost of college increase, more and more families will need assistance with options to pay for school.
3. Reliance on technology: FA is dependent on technology due to the need to implement multiple rules and regulations; need tool to allow for automation of download and upload files with the Department of Education: explore available technologies to streamline document in-take process to eliminate human errors.
4. Programming need to increase student's knowledge about financial literacy/wellness; how students can utilize financial aid package and how to begin to build wealth.
5. Participated in the Online Education Initiative (OEI); planning and implementation committee.

Internal Conditions, Trends, or Impacts (Student Services): 1. Fraudulent activity from departmental staff was discovered; review of all current conflict of interest protocols and established policies to prevent fraud, as well as additional training on ethics and enhancements to protocols and practices have taken place to address issue.

2. Due to fraudulent activity managers have had to re-prioritize workload for 2017-2018 to provide college administration with comprehensive report of impact. Recognize the need for more stringent internal controls to ensure quality control and mitigate any possibility of future fraud.
3. Implemented corrective action plan after fraud investigation with impacted student cases for 2017-2018.
4. Due to fraud case, continuous work with investigators and auditors to meet corrective action plan and ensure clean review in future audits.
5. Needed changes at the institutional level to accommodate student, staff, and campus community needs.
6. Increase in student volume, therefore increase in Financial Aid applications; 3 different applications (FAFSA, Dream Act, BOG)
7. Increase in student Veterans usage of the Veterans Resource Center and request for VA Benefits; increase engagement. (Successfully On-going)
8. Increase in our Foster Youth population; no formal process to identify and communicate. (Continue to collaborate with A&R and IT to streamline Foster Youth Identification)
9. On-going training needed to ensure staff is maintaining federal requirements and guidelines in performing federal verification and exercising Professional Judgment.
10. Additional resources needed to uphold federal requirements of reviewing each subsequent ISIR transaction and performing Quality Control of federal financial aid files.
11. Increased number of requests for FA presentations from within the campus as well as outside community. As the cost of college increase, more and more families will need assistance with options to pay for school.
12. Purchases of equipment and software to enhance processing as well as comply with regulations.
13. Limited resources due to staff out of extended medical leaves and chronic illnesses.
14. Continue to monitor and address concerns of conflicting of interest within the office to maintain processing integrity and prevent any audit findings; due to fraud case, conflict of interest policy was enhanced for all staff to provide written notice to management of any conflict of interest for each aid year. Enhancement to policy was reviewed and approved by auditors.

Critical Decisions Made by Unit: 1. Business process flows: analyzed student population needs and staff workload, analyzed available technology options to determine best fit business flow for each project. Continued monitoring of compliance adherence as well as staff work performance as related to financial aid processing, for example with federal verification, we evaluated and concluded that we need to apply a more robust system to maintain the level of productivity and efficiency to deliver financial aid funds to students on a timely manner.

2. Implementation of Completion Grant and Dreamer Emergency Funding: staff training, created communication business protocol and student communications.
3. Implementation of the transition for summer term to become a trailer term for financial aid purposes. 2017-2018 was our pivot year where summer 2017 and summer 2018 were both in aid year 2017-2018, in order for summer 2019 to be the trailer term in aid year 2018-2019. This took planning and coordination with FA, IT, and Fiscal staff.
4. Integrated Veterans files into OnBase; coordinated with IT staff to create business process flow to scan and store documents in OnBase.
5. Implement TD Client FTP process to increase productivity/efficiency and reduce the turn around time in receiving processed FA applications, ISIR corrections, federal origination/disbursement files and all other Title IV related files. (Successfully completed 3/29/2018!)
6. Evaluate systems to support intake of financial aid documents and verification monitoring. (Continue to explore and research for the compatible product to support this process).

Notable Achievements for Theme B: To Support Student Access and Success: 1. Implementation of Financial Literacy Initiative, continued for last five years.

2. Conducted annual Cash for College; we helped 401 students (family members not included in count) in 2017-2018. Out of the 401 attendees, 67% indicated they will

attend Mt. SAC, 9% indicated they are Dreamers, and 22% requested workshops conducted in Spanish.

3. Streamlined Verification process through committee process: pulled together experts in verification; committee members were systems analysts and financial aid specialists. The committee studied prior year data to assess the impact of our verification selection. Did we do a good job of identifying common errors families make on the FAFSA and did verification help the right students get the right financial aid? The committee also review all financial aid forms - edit to make it more clear for students.
4. Implemented TD Client FTP process to inbound/outbound federal, state files to increase productivity and efficiency; reduced manual staffing hours by 30 hours per week.
5. Provided over a 100's FA/Scholarship/Veterans workshops on and off campus constituents; outcome from this effort is our consistent increase in the rate of applications received, year after year for FAFSA's, CA Dream Act, BOG fee waivers, scholarship applications, and Veterans benefit requests - average increase is 10% annually.
6. Streamlined Front Counter In-take process while maintaining quality of customer service.
7. Improved FA cycle - loaded and processed applications earlier; sent real-time student communications. Created a master calendar for FA processing, internal tool for all FA staff to reference and track. The earlier we begin a new aid year, the likelihood of capturing returning students attention to re-apply for FA is high because they are still on campus for the Spring term; for example, we started processing FAFSA/CA Dream Act applications for 2015-2016 in April/May 2015. We also applied this concept to student communication - when a financial aid status is run, a communication is sent out to impacted students so that they will be able to connect communication message with the change in status.
8. Enhanced process of Pell Grant Recalculation at Census to determine and inform students of overpayment in real time.
9. Enhanced Direct Loan processing: multi-year MPN, and disbursement notification. We enhanced the Banner loan processing to be able to download MPN for students; it is now recorded as a document in student's file - improved customer service for staff to provide to loan students. We also identified a need to provide an immediate and systematic disbursement notification to student as soon as the loan is disbursed; in prior years, this was a manual process.
10. Provided real-time, customized Satisfactory Academic Progress communication to students.
11. Integrated new technologies with existing systems to allow for more user friendly scholarship application process; such as integrated scholarship files with OnBase system.
12. Provided more training for student workers on Financial Aid and Scholarships; utilized student's language skills to increase assistance for students.
13. Increase participation of departments (DSPS, Counseling, VSOC, FA) during Veterans Week and Veterans Recognition Night.
14. Streamlined Appeal Intake process; provided thorough training to all staff, including student workers.
15. Transition of REACH, foster youth support program to Student Equity; hired additional program special to support REACH.
16. Collaborated with Counseling to have additional counseling support for Veterans in the VRC due to increase student Veteran engagement and programming needed. Also, collaborated with Student Equity to provide resources to ensure, assistance with educational supplies, tutoring, and expansion of partnership with Vet Success on Campus (VSOC) program with Veterans Affairs.

Notable Achievements for Theme C: Secure Human, Technological, & Financial Resources: 1. Participated in extensive Veterans training: VPAC, WAVES, Veterans Summit, etc.

2. Constantly explored and search for robust technology to maintain financial aid system efficiency and transparency; looking into automation of verification and electronic document in-take, including electronic signature meeting Department of Education standards.
3. Consistent mandatory training for all departmental staff twice yearly - full day, on all things financial aid, scholarships, and Veterans. Also, put into standard practice of weekly staff meetings for program updates and continuous training, it is also a space for staff to ask clarifying questions and make requests for future training topics.

Notable Achievements for Theme D: To Foster an Atmosphere of Cooperation and Collaboration: 1. Staff actively participated in year round training: tax workshop, CASFAA conference, FSA conference, CCCSFAAA Conference, Ellucian Live, VAWA, Active Shooter, Sexual Harassment, etc.

2. Monthly meetings with specialized groups: Clerical Specialists, FA Specialist, Veterans team, Sch team to better address unique issues and enhancements.
3. Instituted student referral protocol to help with service efficiency and maintain quality customer service.
4. Integrated more in-depth scholarship training for Financial Aid and Veterans staff.
5. Established custom Orientation program for Veterans, collaborating with Counseling department.
6. Conducted Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) workshops.
7. Conducted training on Complete Grant requirements with Ed Advisors, Counselors, and SS team.

8. FA Specialists and manager engaged and completed NASFAA intense 4-week federal verification credentialed training with the opportunity to be certified.
9. Incorporated BOG Loss guidelines and appeal process in Ed Advisor's workshops for students on continued probation status.
10. Continuously evaluated and simplified the document in-take process and protocols to minimize processing errors.
11. Implemented the Completion Grant to provide additional \$\$ to Cal Grant recipients.
12. Implemented the Dreamers Emergency Fund to provide immediate assistance to Dreamers as funded from the CO.

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<i>Unit Goals</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Where We Make an Impact: Closing the Loop on Goals and Plans</i>
<p>Increase Applications - Increase number of Financial Aid/Veterans applications from completion of FAFSA, CA Dream Act, BOG Fee Waiver, and Veterans Benefits (VA). Status: Active Goal Year(s): 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 Goal Entered: 06/21/2017</p>	<p>Report directly on Goal</p>	<p>Reporting Year: 2018-19 % Completed: 50 We have a increased FAFSA applications from 40,000 to 55,000 Continuous effort to increase application to 100% (03/27/2019)</p> <hr/> <p>Reporting Year: 2018-19 % Completed: 0 The upcoming funding formula proposed from the Chancellor's Office integrates completion of FAFSA/CA</p>

<i>Unit Goals</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Where We Make an Impact: Closing the Loop on Goals and Plans</i>
	<p>Report directly on Goal</p> <hr/> <p>Request - Full Funding Requested - Physical space, furniture and technology equipment: computers/tablets, etc. Describe Plans & Activities Supported (Justification of Need): Computer Lab to provide hands-on, one-to-one financial aid assistance Lead: Chau Dao What would success look like and how would you measure it?: Increase in number of applications and reduction in the number of phone calls and students waiting in line. The idea is to teach students how to navigate the financial aid and student portal to be self sufficient. Type of Request: FACILITIES: This section includes minor building improvement projects and alterations to specific rooms or operational areas. Planning Unit Priority: High One-Time Funding Requested (if applicable): 25000 On-Going Funding Requested (if applicable): 5000</p>	<p>Dream Act applications as a key factor; financial aid will need support to advocate for all students to submit FAFSA or CA Dream Act to ensure most funding as possible. There will be less emphasis on processing the manual BOG fee waiver application. (05/30/2018)</p> <hr/>
<p>Inreach/Outreach - Continue inreach/outreach efforts with other departments to reach out to students on campus and in surrounding community. Status: Active Goal Year(s): 2016-17, 2017-18,</p>	<p>Request - Full Funding Requested - Student Services Program Specialist, Financial Literacy Describe Plans & Activities Supported (Justification of Need): Prior year piece meal approach to Financial Literacy surveys tell us that</p>	<p>Reporting Year: 2018-19 % Completed: 50 This item continues to be part of the New Resource Allocation process. (05/30/2018) Related Documents: financial_aid_systems_technician_proposal.docx</p>

<i>Unit Goals</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Where We Make an Impact: Closing the Loop on Goals and Plans</i>
<p>2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 Goal Entered: 06/21/2017</p>	<p>students find these financial literacy workshops to be very useful and needed. Research also shows that financial wellness is not a too common topic among low SES communities, especially those who are on financial aid.</p> <p>Lead: Chau Dao</p> <p>What would success look like and how would you measure it?: Success will include evidence of 1000 students PLUS students participating in our bi-annual Financial Literacy hands-on events. Success will also be measured with minimal students traffic in the FA office inquiring about emergency funds.</p> <p>Type of Request: STAFFING: Requests for permanent employee positions or temporary/hourly employees.</p> <p>Planning Unit Priority: High</p> <p>Documentation Attached?: No</p> <p>One-Time Funding Requested (if applicable): 60000</p> <p>Request - Full Funding Requested - Describe Plans & Activities Supported (Justification of Need): Prior year piece meal approach to Financial Literacy surveys tell us that students find these financial literacy workshops to be very useful and needed. Research also shows that financial wellness is not a too common topic among low SES communities, especially those who are on financial aid.</p> <p>Lead: Chau Dao</p> <p>What would success look like and how would you measure it?: Student</p>	<p>Reporting Year: 2016-17 % Completed: 0</p> <p>With continuous federal and state regulatory changes, FA is mandated to ensure all students are aware of budgeting and financial literate. Having a full-time program specialist overseeing this area will get Mt.SAC on track and in compliance. (03/22/2018)</p> <p>Reporting Year: 2016-17 % Completed: 25</p> <p>This item has been funded by Student Equity; would like to request district funding for more permanency. Item has been part of New Resource Allocation in the past. (08/25/2017)</p>

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Survey; development of formal courses on financial wellness
Type of Request: OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES AND SERVICES: Requests for contracted, legal/ audit, personal/ consultant, rent/ leases, repairs/ maintenance, and other misc. services. May also include request for travel and conference that does not require the assistance of POD.
Planning Unit Priority: High
Documentation Attached?: No
One-Time Funding Requested (if applicable): 40000

<p>Compliance/Efficiency - Maintain efficiency and service to financial aid/Veterans recipients with adherence to Federal, State, and District regulations and policies. Status: Active Goal Year(s): 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19 Goal Entered: 06/21/2017</p>	<p>Request - Full Funding Requested - Transfer Cash for College Budget from BFAP to Student Equity/District Funding Describe Plans & Activities Supported (Justification of Need): Required hands-on financial aid assistance for families through BFAP funding. Due to increase COLA and salary increases, BFAP is completely used to cover salaries and benefits; the District needs to ensure that Cash for College operational costs are cover in order to ensure compliance with CO's BFAP categorical funding. Lead: Chau Dao Type of Request: OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES AND SERVICES: Requests for contracted, legal/ audit, personal/ consultant, rent/ leases, repairs/ maintenance, and other misc. services. May also include request for travel and conference that does not require the assistance of POD.</p>	<p>Reporting Year: 2016-17 % Completed: 100 Funds were provided by Student Equity; due to change in FAFSA timeline, we are now required to conduct 2 Cash for College events; each event costs around \$25,000 due to need to cover overtime pay for staff. If Student Equity funding needs shift, then this funding needs to be supported by BFAP and District. (08/25/2017) Related Documents: Lauren Stanley.docx</p>
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Unit Goals

Resources Needed

Where We Make an Impact: Closing the Loop on Goals and Plans

Planning Unit Priority: High
Documentation Attached?: No
One-Time Funding Requested (if applicable): 50000

Request - Full Funding Requested -
Financial Aid Systems Technician

Describe Plans & Activities Supported (Justification of Need):
Financial Aid work is very technical in nature being very dependent on systems; a systems technician assigned specifically in financial aid can ensure upkeep of systems setup and adhoc reporting for compliance and efficiency.

Reporting Year: 2018-19
% Completed: 0

This item continues to be requested as part of the New Resource Allocation. It is slated to be part of the July 2018 phase. (05/30/2018)

Lead: Chau Dao
What would success look like and how would you measure it?: Hiring of a qualified staff member who can assist with systems needs of the financial aid office.

Type of Request: STAFFING: Requests for permanent employee positions or temporary/hourly employees.

Planning Unit Priority: High
Documentation Attached?: Yes
One-Time Funding Requested (if applicable): 90000

Request - No Funding Requested -
Funding has already been secured with the Chancellor's Office for Program Coordinator, Veterans position. Added notation here to ensure documentation for archive purposes.

Describe Plans & Activities Supported (Justification of Need):
Programming - academic/social support for student Veterans on

Unit Goals

Resources Needed

Where We Make an Impact: Closing the Loop on Goals and Plans

campus
Continuous rapport with campus community and Veterans Resource Center
Assistance with VA certifications to reduce wait time
Lead: Chau Dao, Director, Financial Aid, Scholarships, and Veterans
What would success look like and how would you measure it?: Increase programming for student Veterans with increased engagement from Veterans community on campus. Also, assistance with VA certifications so that student Veterans do not experience any wait time to receive notification of their benefits; more timely reporting of all things VA.
Planning Unit Priority: High
Request - Full Funding Requested - Salary and benefits difference to change current Manager, Financial Aid and Special Programs to Director, Scholarships and Veterans
Describe Plans & Activities Supported (Justification of Need): Growth of both programs, scholarships and Veterans, requires an upgrade of current management position overseeing these two programs. Both programs have distinct rules and regulations that are tied to federal, state and district policies.
Lead: Chau Dao
What would success look like and how would you measure it?: Increase oversight in the Veterans Resource Center with Director office located in VRC. Increase engagement of both

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programs in terms of programming, applications, and center usage.
Type of Request: STAFFING: Requests for permanent employee positions or temporary/hourly employees.
Planning Unit Priority: High
On-Going Funding Requested (if applicable): 30000

<p>Informed Staff - Ensure Financial Aid, Scholarship, and Veterans staff members are trained and informed of continued and new rules and processes. Status: Active Goal Year(s): 2015-16, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 Goal Entered: 06/21/2017</p>	<p>Report directly on Goal</p>	<p>Reporting Year: 2018-19 % Completed: 100 This will be an ongoing goal and mandatory requirement as part of Mt. SAC agreement to participate in Title IV federal aid funding. (05/30/2018)</p> <hr/> <p>Reporting Year: 2017-18 % Completed: 25 Enhance training to staff for more focused and tailored results. With the needs to respond to federal and state regulatory changes, this is set in place to be on track. (03/22/2018) Related Documents: Lauren Stanley.docx</p>
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<p>Mitigate fraud - Enhance and tighten policy and procedures to mitigate fraud - internally and externally. Status: Active Goal Year(s): 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 Goal Entered: 06/05/2018</p>	<p>Request - Partial Funding Requested - Support from administration with ethics training for department staff; support with changes to policy and procedures in processing of financial aid applications. Also support from IT to enhance security to ensure tighter control. Describe Plans & Activities Supported (Justification of Need): Ethics training for all financial aid staff and other department who work closely with financial aid such as Student Services departments and Athletics. Institute this type of training on an annual basis. Continue to review and enhance</p>	
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<i>Unit Goals</i>	<i>Resources Needed</i>	<i>Where We Make an Impact: Closing the Loop on Goals and Plans</i>
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policy and procedures to mitigate potential fraud.
 Institute a quality control review process where percentage of staff work are checked for accuracy.
 Institute a policy that all FA staff must provide all possible conflict of interest in writing for each aid year.
Lead: Chau Dao
Type of Request: PROFESSIONAL & ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT (POD): Requests that provide professional learning opportunities for Mt. SAC employees.
Planning Unit Priority: High
One-Time Funding Requested (if applicable): 10000