

Program Overview	
Program	Financial Aid <input type="text" value="s24"/>
Does this program have a CTE component?	Yes
Academic Year	2019/2020
Review Period	6 Year <input type="text" value="65"/>
Service Areas	

**A. Program Description and Goals**

*This section addresses the big picture. Prompts should help you describe your program and goals and the relationship to the institutional mission, vision and goals, and how the program is funded.*

**1. Describe the program and/or service area under review and how the program supports the mission of Santa Monica College.**

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office oversees 18 different aid programs funded by a variety of sources; federal, state, institutional and private. These funded by the Federal Government include the Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Work Study, Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford Loans, and Federal Direct Parent Loan programs. Those funded by the State of California include the Cal Grant B, Cal Grant C, California College Promise Grant (CCPG) A, B, C-*formerly named the Board of Governor Fee Waiver Program*, Chafee Grant, Student Success Completion Grant (SSCG) and CalWORKs Work Study programs. Those funded by Santa Monica College include the SMC Emergency Loan, SMC Book Loan, Student-Help Employment and SMC Foundation Scholarship programs. The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office also administers outside scholarships and a limited number of private loans.

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office provides on average over \$50,000,000 annually to eligible students. However, it should be noted that our operation extends beyond the awarding and disbursing aid which is our primary focus. The true goal of the office is helping students succeed in their academic endeavors. Furthermore, Financial Aid and Scholarships supports the mission of Santa Monica College by assisting students with their educational expenses - which include fees, books, supplies, transportation, food and housing.

The Department is comprised of a team of professionals that are dedicated to providing financial assistance and increasing eligibility awareness to students as they pursue their educational objectives. We are committed to removing the barriers that prevent students from receiving the resources they need to be successful. Our goal is to facilitate equal access to any and all students that utilize our services and should be able to navigate the financial aid and scholarship process comfortably and efficiently.

**2. Identify the overarching goal(s) or charge/responsibilities of the program or service area. If appropriate, include ensuring/monitoring compliance with state, federal or other mandates.**

A) Provide federal, state, and institutional financial assistance in a timely manner that helps students pay for their education expenses. Timely disbursement of aid is critical to helping students start each term financially prepared to succeed. Academic success for high-need students is tied to their ability at the beginning of the term to purchase books/supplies, transportation, and money for food and other living expenses.

B) Maintain compliance with federal and state processing requirements and adherence to Federal and State law.

C) Manage the accounting requirements for both federal and state aid programs and regularly reconcile the Pell Grant, Cal Grant, and Direct Loan programs. Federal financial aid and Cal Grant programs need to be reconciled on both a monthly and annual basis.

D) Complete the annual Federal - Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP), which addresses the use of Federal funds in the previous academic year.

E) Work with Information Technology (IT) to complete the college's annual submission of Federal and State MIS information to the State of California.

F) Complete the annual Board Financial Aid Program (BFAP) report to the Chancellor's Office. The BFAP report addresses and use of State funding for staff, technology, training and outreach materials.

G) Manage the substantial transfer of data between the U.S. Department of Education and Santa Monica College. This includes the downloading of FAFSA applications and corrections, the reporting of Pell originations and disbursements, and the submission of Federal Direct Loan certification and other processing files.

H) Manage the assessment of Return of Title IV calculation and Federal Aid Overpayments, the notification to students of overpayment status, the return to Federal Aid Programs of overpayments, and the reporting of overpayment data to the U.S. Department of Education.

I) Manage the online scholarship process from application submissions, committee reviews, selection and awarding scholarships to eligible recipients.

**3. If applicable, describe how the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), Supporting Goals, and/or Strategic Initiatives of the institution are integrated into the goals of the program or service area.**

The Financial Aid and Scholarship operation provides comprehensive support services to students, which is one of Santa Monica College's Supporting Goals.

**4. If your program receives operating funding from any source other than District funds identify the funding source. If applicable, note the start and end dates of the funding**

**(generally a grant), the percentage of the program budget supported by non-District funding, and list any staff positions funded wholly or in part by non-District funds. Do not include awards for non-operational items such as equipment (ex. VTEA) or value added activities (ex Margin of Excellence).**

Outside Funding

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office receives annual funding from the State of California for various financial aid related expenses. The funding, which comes from the Board Financial Aid Program (BFAP), is allocated to California Community Colleges for only four purposes: 1) financial aid office staffing, 2) technology expenses that help in the processing and awarding of federal and state financial aid, 3) training for financial aid staff, 4) outreach materials.

BFAP funding began when the Board of Governors Enrollment Fee Waiver Program was created in 1984-85. The funding for California Community Colleges, though, was substantially increased ten years ago - as the BFAP allocation went from \$134,000 in 2003-04 to \$776,770 in 2004-05. In recent years, Santa Monica College has received over \$800,000 annually - which is used, primarily, for financial aid staffing and technology expenses. The actual amount of BFAP funding is tied to both FTE and the number of California Promise Grant Enrollment Fee Waivers awarded to students in the prior year.

The BFAP funding pays for 40+% of the Financial Aid Office's annual staffing expenses. BFAP funds pay for the salaries and benefits of four full time Student Services Clerks, two full time Financial Aid and Scholarship Specialists, one Financial Aid Systems Specialist, and the contracts of two part time academic counselors. In addition, BFAP funding also pays the maintenance charges for our Banner Financial Aid Software.

**B. Populations Served**

*In this section you will provide information that describes who your program or service area serves. When comparing data from different periods, use a consistent time frame (ex. Compare one fall term to another fall term)*

**Saved Information For Populations Served**

**Area/Discipline Information Pertains To**

*Financial Aid*

**1. Describe the students your program serves in terms of ethnicity, race, gender, age, residency status, citizenship, educational goal, enrollment status, and full/part-time status. Note any changes in student or enrollment data since the last program review.**

Financial Aid and Scholarship Office reviewed the ethnicity and gender demographics for the Pell Grant and California College Promise Grant (CCPG) from the past six years. The following data was taken from the CCCC Data Mart.

Students who identify themselves as Hispanics continue to be the largest population and recipients of financial aid. Since the last review cycle the category of Multi-Ethnicity has continuously grown over each year.

**Pell Grant Recipients – All Students**

	<b>13/14</b>	<b>14/15</b>	<b>15/16</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>17/18</b>	<b>18/19</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
African- American	1231	1377	1218	1167	1094	1053
American Indian	19	17	17	18	13	10
Asian	719	739	629	563	544	470
Filipino	131	148	131	120	121	11
Hispanic	4767	5137	4639	4349	4462	4174
Multi-Ethnicity	302	326	294	317	354	372
Pacific Islander	17	17	9	18	13	5
White Non-Hispanic	1604	86	62	46	62	79
Unknown	87	1685	1530	1438	1454	1332
<b>Total</b>	<b>8877</b>	<b>9532</b>	<b>8529</b>	<b>8036</b>	<b>8117</b>	<b>7605</b>

**California College Promise Grant – All Students**

	<b>13/14</b>	<b>14/15</b>	<b>15/16</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>17/18</b>	<b>18/19</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
African- American	3116	3111	3139	2719	2537	2332
American Indian	62	60	104	49	48	16
Asian	1849	1790	1709	1592	1446	1289
Filipino	380	391	371	318	324	309
Hispanic	10851	11298	11211	11047	10516	9943
Multi-Ethnicity	869	850	815	830	884	885
Pacific Islander	60	58	50	49	43	28
White Non-Hispanic	4178	4094	3970	3779	3601	3342
Unknown	262	224	192	166	189	230
<b>Total</b>	<b>21567</b>	<b>21876</b>	<b>21561</b>	<b>20549</b>	<b>19588</b>	<b>18404</b>

**2. Compare your student population with the college demographic. Are the students in your program different from the college population? Reflect on whether your program is serving the targeted student population.**

The college "at large" population continues to see an increase in Hispanic students, and fluctuation among the African American, Asian and White Non-Hispanic students. This general trend is consistent with the demographics in both the Pell and CCPG programs.

The Financial Aid Office continues to serve the targeted population.

	Gender and Ethnicity Demographics for College-At-Large					
	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
<b>Headcount</b>	44190	45215	45474	45072	44245	42703
Female	24072	24777	25112	25116	25488	23856
Male	20118	20438	20362	19956	19425	18334
Unknown					<b>232</b>	<b>513</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
African- American	3855	3958	3982	3781	3637	3387
American Indian	99	93	79	76	78	80
Asian	5561	5885	6189	6123	5686	4693
Filipino	776	723	702	674	651	617
Hispanic	14727	15514	15814	16011	15788	15023
Multi-Ethnicity	1605	1695	1661	1741	1865	1900
Pacific Islander	145	112	116	111	99	83
White Non-Hispanic	14606	14389	14624	14494	14019	13259
Unknown	3356	2846	2307	2016	2190	3148

**3. Discuss any significant change(s) in the population(s) served since the last full program review and the possible reasons for the change(s).**

The Financial Aid is one area which tends to be consistent over time. Whether enrollment increases or decreases the percentage of students in a particular ethnicity tends to remain the same. The Hispanic students tend to receive 50 - 53% of available aid, the African American students receive 7 to 12% of the aid available.

The Financial Aid population also increased as a result of the California Dream Act Application (CADAA), which provides the opportunity of State aid including the CCPG and Cal Grant award for undocumented AB540 students.

In the last six years we have seen gradual increase in our State grant program - California Grant B and C.

**CAL Grant Program: 2013-14 through 2018-19**

**Academic Year    Number of Students Receiving CAL Grants    Amount Paid**

2013 – 2014	1197	\$1,345,136
2014 – 2015	1634	\$2,155,908
2015 – 2016	1892	\$2,322,022
2016 – 2017	2129	\$2,599,826
2017 – 2018	2306	\$2,979,237
2018 – 2019	2374	\$3,223,166

From 2013 -14 through 2018 - 19, the Cal Grant recipients increased in average by 140 students with a status of AB 540.

### C. Program Evaluation

*In this section programs/units are to identify how, using what tools, and when program evaluation takes place. Evaluation must include outcomes assessment as well as any other measures used by the program. Please use Section D to address program responses to the findings described in this section.*

**Programs/units with multiple disciplines or functions may choose to answer the following questions for each area. If this is your preferred method of responding, begin by selecting a discipline/function from the drop down, answer the set of questions and click "Save", your answers will be added to the bottom of page. Do this for each discipline/function. If you would like to answer the questions once, choose "Answer Once" from the drop down.**

**How would you like to answer these questions?**

#### Saved Information For Program Evaluation

##### Area/Discipline Information Pertains To

Financial Aid

**1. List your student or instructional support service SLOs or UOs.**

*SLOs are specific, measurable statements of what a student should know, be able to do, or value when they complete a program/course or sequence of activities. An SLO focuses on specific knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors that students will demonstrate or possess as a result of instruction or program activity.*

*UO statements focus on service or operational outcomes such as:*

- *Volume of unit activity*
- *Efficiency (responsiveness, timeliness, number of requests processed, etc.)*
- *Effectiveness of service in accomplishing intended outcomes (accuracy, completeness, etc.)*
- *Compliance with external standards/regulations*
- *Client/customer satisfaction with services*

The Unit Outcomes documented in the last six year review were the following:

- A) Student will be awarded their financial aid package earlier.
- B) Students will have their financial aid applications processed faster.

**2. Describe when and how the program assesses these SLOs and UOs and uses the results to inform program planning including:**

- **how outcomes are assessed and how often**
- **the assessment tool(s) used**
- **the sample (who gets assessed)**
- **how and when the program reviews the results and who is engaged in the process**

As a result of the implementation of BANNER and a link for financial aid being added to the Corsair Connect site, the office has been able to meet the Unit Outcomes on a consistent basis.

The Financial Aid Management system, BANNER has allowed the office to communicate with students regarding the status of their application, awarding and disbursement of their funds through the financial aid portal. This has allowed students to be proactive in submitting required documentation.

Staff has been able to process completed applications at a much quicker turn-around consistently for the last six years. By looking at the number of grant checks (and the dollar amounts) disbursed by Week 1 of the primary terms, we are able to conclude we are meeting the Unit Outcomes.

A comparison between Fall 2012 and 2018 show that we have been consistent in processing and meeting our targets.

**Fall Check Disbursement Comparison Fall Semester 2012 and 2018**  
Fall 2012 5348 checks \$3,637,358 Fall 2018 5600 checks \$3,895,622

The data above has been consistent over the last 6 years with slight fluctuation, however the benchmark for first disbursements has been on

average 5100 checks disbursed, by the first day of classes totaling \$3,766,490.

In addition to the processing of financial aid, students have also increased their participation in the scholarship process. In 2015-16, the office also instituted an electronic scholarship application powered by Academicworks.

The application volume increased from 540 applications to 1038 applications completed online. The number of students applying for scholarships has continuously increased since the initial implementation; in 2016 -17 1136 students applied, in 2017-18 1298, and 2018 -19 1724 students applied and 704 scholarships were awarded compared to the 426 in 2013 - 14 school year.

**3. What other evaluation measures does your student or instructional support service use to inform planning? (For example, surveys, longitudinal data, support service use etc.) Note trends, differences in performance by group (ethnicity, gender, age), and any unusual patterns in student success and retention.**

Financial Aid and Scholarships annually reviews federal, state and institutional regulatory changes and office procedures. In late Winter early Spring, the Associate Dean, Supervisor and Financial Aid Systems Specialist meet to discuss system changes and updates before the kick-off of the new processing year. Such changes are discussed and incorporated into the office policies and procedures.

Prior to October 1st, the Office and the SMC Foundation meet before deploying the online scholarship application. During such meeting, the focus is on how to increase the number of applications. Outside of the total numbers of applicants applying, there is a need for more data to be collected. For instance, the reason why students do not apply needs to be examined. Such information will be incorporated in the department targeted goals.

**D1: Past year's Objectives**

As part of the planning process, programs are expected to establish annual objectives that support the program's goals. Please document the status of the program/function's previous year's objectives. Add comments if you feel further explanation is needed.

**D1. Objectives**

Objective:



<p>Continue the implementation of the Banner Financial Aid Software Module.</p> <p><u>Status:</u> Completed</p> <p><u>Comments:</u>          In 2012-2013, Financial Aid implemented the Banner Financial Aid software module, a major undertaking that required close collaboration with the Information Technology team. The Financial Aid staff have become very proficient on Banner. The students have mastered the ability to access their financial aid application process from the application to awarding and disbursement of funds.</p> <p>Through the SMC Financial Aid portal on Corsair Connect. Financial Aid has been able to provide better, relevant information to students thus processing financial aid applications faster and improved communication with students updates, awards, disbursements and Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).</p> <p>In 2013-2014, the department secured two positions, Financial Aid Systems Specialist to provide internal support of the Banner system for staff and to serve as liaisons with the IT department.</p>	
<p><u>Objective:</u>          Maintain the general amount of assistance to SMC students with the Pell Grants and California Promise Grant formerly named the BOG Waivers Programs</p> <p><u>Status:</u> Completed</p> <p><u>Comments:</u>          This goal continues to be met throughout the years since the last program review cycle. Over the last 6 years, the financial aid programs have been consistent, an average of 48% of the total population at SMC has received some type of assistance. The total amount of aid disbursed annually has been at least \$50 million, with the exception of the 2016-17 academic year when the total was \$49,873, 147, a less than 1% decrease compared to the time span reviewed.</p>	
<p><u>Objective:</u>          Keep Stafford Loan Cohort Default Rates Low.</p> <p><u>Status:</u> Completed</p> <p><u>Comments:</u>          The Department of Education ties Stafford Loan Cohort Default Rates (CDR) to participation in Federal Financial Aid Programs. The threshold for sanctions or loss of federal aid programs has been 25% for</p>	

the “2 Year CDRs. Financial Aid has been addressing the loan default rates for several years with borrower education, annual entrance and exit meetings. Financial Aid also integrates a financial literacy exercise into the loan request process.

In 2013, the Department of Education released the first "Official" 3 Year CDRs the sanctioned threshold for the three year rates are 30%. Overall this change had great impacts on colleges, however SMC has maintained a cohort default rate well below the average Community College rate of 20.6%. The SMC rates have ranged from 10.3% in 2014, 13.1% in 2015, and currently our CDR is 9.7% for 2016,

## D1. Looking Back

*In this section, please document what you did last year as a result of what you described in Section C.*

### **1. Describe any accomplishments, achievements, activities, initiatives undertaken, and any other positives the program wishes to note and document.**

As stated in a prior section of this review, the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office has experienced increased student demands, decline in staffing levels, major changes in leadership, and two office moves in the last three years. However, it should be noted that the remaining staff members have come together when it comes to meeting our primary goal and mission – providing aid and resources to students as expeditiously as possible.

Our regulatory and compliance processes have been consistently outstanding such as, the annual Cohort Default Rate for the federal loan programs continues to decline, our internal audits have resulted in no findings, and the processing of the California Dream Act application has been running smoothly and providing aid to a much needed and deserving population the AB540 students.

The Office first moved in Spring 2016 to the bottom level of Drescher Hall. In this location, we were afforded the much needed space. The space allowed us to serve many students seeking and maintaining financial aid. This past June 2019, we moved again to what is now our permanent location in the “new” Student Services Center (SSC). In the SSC we are not only serving our students we are collaborating with other offices within the Enrollment and Student Services divisions. We are now a part of the “one-stop” experience for students.

### **2. Summarize how the program or service area addressed the recommendations for program strengthening from the executive summary of the previous six-year program review.**

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office for many years have operated as two separate entities. As a result of the move to Drescher the two offices officially merged as one. Initially the staff and procedures operated separately, but now are gradually integrating the scholarship processes into the financial aid workflow. For example, the Student Services Specialist has been reclassified as Financial Aid and Scholarship Specialist.

The staff handbook continues to be a work in progress. In light of recent reclassifications and change in staffing has resulted in the shifting of responsibilities and priorities. At the time of this review Senior Staff are currently recruiting for an Associate Dean, which will have the responsibility of completing and maintain an office Policy and Procedure manual.

Lastly, the VP of Enrollment Development has approved the recruitment of a Banner consultant, which will aid in the Cal Grant/Webgrant issues along with training staff on higher levels of the Banner system.

**3. Describe any changes or activities your program or service area has made that are not addressed in the objectives, identify the factors (e.g., licensure requirements, state or federal requirements, CCCO mandates, regulations, etc.) that triggered the changes, and indicate the expected or anticipated outcomes.**

None to note.

**4. If your program received one time funding of any kind indicate the source, how the funds were spent and the impact on the program (benefits or challenges).**

In 2018, the office received one-time funding for technology enhancements. As a result, the office has procured CampusLogic which will aid the office in becoming paperless. All documents will be submit online which will streamline the workflow.

## **D2. Moving Forward**

**Discuss and summarize conclusions drawn from data, assessments (SLO, UO) or other evaluation measures identified in Section C and indicate responses or programmatic changes planned for the coming year(s) including:**

- **how the assessment results are informing program goals and objectives, program planning, and decision-making**
- **specific changes planned or made to the program based on the assessment results**

This review has highlighted the fact that as an office we are serving our students well and meeting our primary goal and targets.

However, there is always room for growth:

- 1) Conduct more In-reach activities to increase student awareness of financial aid and satisfactory academic progress. Students need to be informed on how their academic performance affects their financial aid eligibility. For instance, continue developing our working relationships with Academic Counselors.
- 2) Create a comprehensive financial aid orientation - an interactive tool and/or the option of an in-person orientation. Increase the financial aid visibility among students and special programs.

3) Address the need to educate the entire campus (i.e. Staff and Faculty) on the financial aid process. The campus understands that financial aid plays a key role in success, but there are misunderstandings and limitations in regards to office policies, procedures and regulations.

## D2: Coming year's Objectives (Moving Forward)

Objective #1

**Objective:**

Maintain and increase the general amount of assistance to SMC students with the Pell Grants and California Promise Grant (formerly named the BOG Waivers Programs). Continue the application of technology in the delivery of financial aid and scholarship programs and services.

**Area/ Discipline/ Function Responsible:** Financial Aid

**Assessment Data and Other Observations:**

UO Assessment Data

**External Factors:**

**Timeline and activities to accomplish the objective:** This will be an ongoing objective.

Maintain and improve on the usage of the Banner system. Work with a Banner consultant prior to the beginning of the next financial aid cycle to review system enhancements and possibilities available to the staff.

Implement a paperless process as a result of procuring the software CampusLogic, students will be able to complete and submit required documentation online. File processing time will be streamlined and lead to a quicker turn-a-round process.

**Describe how objective will be assessed/measured:** Students will be able to navigate the financial aid and document submission process with greater ease and efficiency.

By the number of total awards and payments - and by the amount of money/checks delivered early in the Fall and Spring semesters.

**Comments:** Through technology enhancements we are able to teach our students who utilize our services, to be more self-reliant and confident in their abilities to manage and oversee their enrollment and financial aid processes, a skill which they can use beyond their time here at SMC.

Objective #2

**Objective:**

Formally evaluate the Financial Aid and Scholarship process - is the department meeting the needs of the students we are servicing.

**Area/ Discipline/ Function Responsible:** Financial Aid

**Assessment Data and Other Observations:**

UO Assessment Data

**External Factors:**

**Timeline and activities to accomplish the objective:** By the next Annual Program Review cycle the following objective will be assessed.

Research and implement appropriate evaluation

- Develop tools and methods of evaluation and make them an ongoing process
- Build service area outcomes
- Integrate evaluation, service area outcomes with the department and have this clearly reflected in annual and long range goals.

**Describe how objective will be assessed/measured:** The department will work with SMC Institutional Research (IR), in developing and administering a Financial Aid survey. The survey will ask questions about our services and how we execute them, are we meeting their individual needs, and their overall experience with the office and staff.

**Comments:** Evaluation of the Financial Aid program tends to be performance driven. Every year a multitude of FAFSA applications are completed; students are contacted, processed, awarded or denied. Internal institutional audits are conducted and external State and Federal Program Reviews monitor compliance, but there are not systems evaluating how services are delivered from the student or other constituents perspective.

As a result of the Program Review process, the realization that internal accountability is necessary and the best way to determine if we are meeting the needs of the students we serve is by asking them directly.

Objective #3

**Objective:** Continue work on Policy and Procedure Manual

**Area/ Discipline/ Function Responsible:** All

**Assessment Data and Other Observations:**

**External Factors:**

**Timeline and activities to accomplish the objective:**

**Describe how objective will be assessed/measured:**

**Comments:**

Objective #4

**Objective:** Create a Cal Grant -Webgrant Software Solution

**Area/ Discipline/ Function Responsible:** All

**Assessment Data and Other Observations:**

**External Factors:**

**Timeline and activities to accomplish the objective:**

**Describe how objective will be assessed/measured:**

**Comments:**

Objective #5

**Objective:** Continue work on Policy and Procedure

**Area/ Discipline/ Function Responsible:** All

**Assessment Data and Other Observations:**

**External Factors:**

**Timeline and activities to accomplish the objective:**

**Describe how objective will be assessed/measured:**

**Comments:**

**F. Community Engagement**

*In the prompts that follow, please delineate the partnerships you have with the rest of the SMC community as well as those you have with external organizations.*

**1. If applicable, describe how your department staff members engage in institutional efforts such as committees and presentations, and departmental activities.**

Committees

Stacy Neal: DPAC HR Committee; EOPS Advisory Committee; Basic Needs Workgroup; Onboarding

Taryn De La Rosa: Guided Pathways (Redesign) Program Mapping & Program Mapping Rubric Workgroups

Maria Belen Vaccaro: Equity Steering Committee

Campus In-reach Workshops (i.e Nursing Orientation, Counseling 20 presentations)

Stacy Neal  
Maria Belen Vaccaro  
Jennifer Reza  
Maria Ong  
Nilofar Ghasami  
Taryn De La Rosa  
Damon McLeod  
Cesar Casillas  
Carolyn Dammer

College Wide Events

Stacy Neal: VIP Welcome Day; Adelante/Black Collegians Workshop; High School Counselor Seminar

**2. If applicable, discuss the engagement of program members with the local community, industry, professional groups, etc.)**

Various staff members attended financial aid conferences and workshops. Most of these events were sponsored by either the California Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (CASFAA) or the California Community College Student Financial Aid Administrator Association (CCCSFAAA).

CASFAA Annual Conference

Stacy Neal  
William Bloom  
Maria Belen Vaccaro  
Jennifer Reza  
Maria Ong  
Nilofar Ghasami

CCCCO All Directors Conference

Stacy Neal  
William Bloom

CCCSFAAA Annual Conference

Stacy Neal  
Diana Lui Fujita  
Torrance Williams  
Kim Clark

Ellucian (Banner) Conference (2015-2017)

Cristobal Bohorquez

Ironbridge Resources/CASFAA Annual Tax Training for Financial Aid Professionals

Maria Ong

Jennifer Reza  
Taryn De La Rosa

Cal Grant Regional Training (Sylmar, July 2019)  
Taryn De La Rosa

Classified & Faculty Equity Summer Institute (July/August 2019)  
Taryn De La Rosa

**3. Discuss the relationship among program faculty and staff, between program faculty, staff and students, and the involvement of program faculty and staff with other programs or areas.**

Financial Aid and Scholarships works closely with all student services /support units. Financial Aid and Admissions address many student related issues—especially with non-residents. Financial Aid and Outreach also collaborate with the funding of non-resident and some resident students. Financial Aid communicates regularly with Auxiliary Services/Cashiers Office regarding financial aid check handling matters. Financial Aid also communicates with Fiscal Services regularly regarding disbursement, reconciliation, reimbursement, and check cancellation issues. Financial Aid and Information Management collaborate very closely on a host of daily systems, aid processing, and disbursement issues. In addition, Financial Aid and EOPS have a close working relationship regarding student eligibility for Guardian Scholars, the Dream Program and CARE.

As far as interacting with faculty, it should be noted that both Student Employment and Scholarships actually works with the academic side most frequently.

**G1. Current Planning and Recommendations**

*The following items are intended to help programs identify, track, and document unit planning and actions and to assist the institution in broad planning efforts.*

**1. Identify any issues or needs impacting program effectiveness or efficiency for which institutional support or resources will be requested in the coming year. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request support or resources through established channels and processes].**

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office has been challenged over the last three years with increased student demands, decline in staffing levels, unstable and short-term leadership.

In the last three to five years, the department has lost an Administrative Assistant, a Student Services Clerk, a Financial Aid Specialist and the Scholarship Specialist, and within the last year the Associate Dean without filling any of the positions on a permanent basis. The Associate Dean position is currently going through the recruitment process.

The office has experienced an increase in the workload but the technological resources such as; Banner and Academicworks (an electronic Scholarship application), has assisted in meeting the office demands. However, technology does not replace the need that has evolved since the last the Program Review cycle. For instance, with the implementation of CampusLogic (which will



allow us to be a paperless office) the way students will submit documentation will change significantly, thereby the need to submit paper documents to the office will no longer be required. Currently, the Student Services Clerks spend a majority of their time receiving and processing paperwork. CampusLogic will allow the Clerks workload to be re-established and directed toward higher functioning task.

The office would benefit from an internal evaluation of the current positions, to determine if staff are classified appropriately based upon the demands of the job as they exist today. The result may conclude that the need is not quantity but higher levels of classifications (i.e. some of the Clerk positions reclassified as Assistants, and 2 Financial Aid and Scholarship Specialist positions to be elevated to a Senior Specialist).

**2. If applicable, list additional capital resources (facilities, technology, equipment) that are needed to support the program as it currently exists. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request resources through established channels and processes].**

The Enrollment Development Vice President has secured funds for the procurement of CampusLogic. In addition, the management is exploring the possibility of hiring a consultant to assist with our current Financial Aid Management system, and a establishing an office workflow.

**3. If applicable, list additional human resources (staffing, professional development, staff training) needed to support the program as it currently exists. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request resources through established channels and processes].**

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office could benefit from the current Student Services Clerks to go through the cyclical review process, and possibly be reclassified as Assistants.

Since 2017, the office has been plagued with unstable leadership, the incumbent FA Supervisor has been the single lead intermittently over this period of time. One remedy would be an evaluation of our current organizational chart, with consideration of adding 2 Senior Specialist to the office staffing plan. Such a model will mirror the Admissions and Records Office and provide much needed support for leadership. In addition, such a idea would build morale and opportunity for upward mobility.

**4. List all current positions assigned to the program.**

Associate Dean of Financial Aid & Scholarships - (*Vacant*)  
Financial Aid Supervisor  
Financial Aid Systems Specialist  
Financial Aid and Scholarship Specialist - Cal Grant/Student Employment  
Financial Aid and Scholarship Specialist - Loans  
Financial Aid and Scholarship Specialist - Scholarship - Vacant  
Financial Aid and Scholarship Specialist - Verification (5) - 1-Vacancy  
Administrative Assistant - (*Vacant*)  
Student Services Clerks - (5) - 1- *Vacancy*  
Academic Counselors (2) Part-Time Permanent

**Note:** The Student Service Specialist position went through a cyclical review cycle conducted by the Personnel Commission (PC), and as a result the positions were reclassified as Financial Aid and Scholarship Specialist (*effective October 2019*).

## **G2. Future Planning and Recommendations**

*The following items are intended to help programs identify, track, and document unit planning and actions and to assist the institution in broad planning efforts.*

### **1. Projecting toward the future, what trends could potentially impact the program? What changes does the program anticipate in 5 years; 10 years? Where does the program want to be? How is the program planning for these changes?**

For Financial Aid, the future will likely be similar to the past five very busy years. The number of Federal Aid applications will likely remain high--and the number of AB540 California Dream Act Applications will almost certainly increase. Substantial Federal and State regulatory changes will also likely continue.

From an operational perspective, the Financial Aid and Scholarship operation is in a good position to deal with the challenges ahead--because of our Banner (and Academic Works) technology. To use Banner Financial Aid optimally, however, SMC will need to also implement Banner Student and Banner Finance modules. These Banner modules would provide student accounts--which would allow SMC to apply financial aid and scholarships to student charges. Remaining amounts, after charges are paid, could be transferred to a student's bank account or debit card. This would eliminate lost checks and stale dated warrants.

CampusLogic will allow the office to engage in a more qualitative manner and paperless environment.

The SSC will continue to allow the office to build and collaborate with other departments, which will ultimately enhance the student experience here at SMC.

### **2. If applicable, list additional capital resources (facilities, technology, equipment) that will be needed to support proposed changes. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request resources through established channels and processes].**

For the immediate changes we are not seeking financial support at this point in time.

### **3. If applicable, list additional human resources (staffing, professional development, staff training) that will be needed to support proposed changes. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request resources through established channels and processes].**

Staffing the office at its optimal level based upon the current organizational chart will provide the necessary support needed. For instance filling the position of Associate Dean and promoting current staff into roles of leadership.

### **4. If applicable, note particular challenges the program faces including those relating to categorical funding, budget, and staffing.**

None.

The Financial Aid Office funds a good portion of its operating expenses with BFAP funding from the State of California. Support of BFAP funding for community college financial aid offices remains high in the California Senate, Assembly, and with the Governor.

**5. Summarize any conclusions and long term recommendations for the program resulting from the self evaluation process.**

The Financial Aid and Scholarship programs are strong. As a result of this review and the data, support this fact and conclusion. The investments in technology has made and continue to be a vital component of the office success and ability to execute our mission.

The staff is the true lifeline of who we are not what we do. They are a group of hard-working, compassionate and professional individuals.

**6. Please use this field to share any information the program feels is not covered under any other questions.**

N/A

**Evaluation of Process**

**Please comment on the effectiveness of the Program Review process in focusing program planning.**

This process was eye-opening and challenging at the same time. The experience of looking and evaluating a program that I have been a part for so many years, really allowed me to stop and assess what we do and the impact it has on students. I also reflected on far we have come and opportunities for growth.

However, if possible the process needs to be re-evaluated some questions appeared to be redundant. The spell check does not work in Curricunet. Lastly, I experienced loss work on a number of occasions even after I thought I hit save.

My frustration is not with the exercise it is truly valuable, but my concern is with the current format.

In addition, can the program be retitled to Financial Aid and Scholarship Office

**Executive Summary**

*These fields to be filled out by the Program Review committee. Reports will be sent to the program and will be available on-line to populate relevant fields in the annual report and the next 6 year report.*

**Narrative**

**Program Evaluation**

**Commendations**

**Recommendations for Program Strengthening**

**Recommendations for Institutional Support**

**Attached File Upload**

**Attached Files**