



Financial Aid/Scholarships

Financial Aid/Scholarships

Cerro Coso Community College

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Financial Aid/Scholarships

Executive Summary

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office (FA) provides resources necessary to decrease financial barriers to higher education. This is accomplished by assisting a diverse population in the process of applying for and receiving financial aid through federal, state, institutional and private organizations to support student retention and success.

The Cerro Coso Community College (CCCC) Ridgecrest Indian Wells Valley Campus (IWV) FA Office is the official site for the processing and secure maintenance of all student financial aid records. The FA Office administers federal Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Grants (SEOG), California B and C Grants, CCCC Foundation scholarships, Board of Governors Fee Waivers (BOGW) and student employment.

The FA Office works diligently with other departments that award resources to students. In collaboration with the ACCESS Department the FA Office administers CARE and EOPS grants by awarding and disbursing grants to students identified by ACCESS. The CCCC Foundation relies on the assistance of the FA Office to process scholarship applications and awards.

The FA Office collaborates with the faculty in determining the last day of participation for students receiving withdrawals or F grade in classes. The faculty also notify the FA Office of student behavior that could be potential FA fraud. This collaboration has helped clarify and update our processes that provide accurate reporting to the Department of Education.

The two major sources of financial aid to students are the Federal Pell Grant and BOGW. The FA Office assists students with the online federal student aid application (FAFSA), completing required documents for verifying information on their FAFSA, and making changes and updates to that information.

The FA Office has an open door policy for students and staff to meet with a FA technician for assistance. Students have access to FA technicians for assistance by coming into the FA Office or by telephone and email. The access to the FA Office has increased at the sites with the implementation of a "hotline" phone for walk-in students at Bishop, Mammoth Lakes, and Kern River Valley. This hotline is treated as a walk-in priority.

The FA Office is responsible for implementing processes that adhere to Title IV, KCCD Board Policy, and best practices. Many processes are labor intensive as each grant, scholarship, and voucher has a specific set of eligibility requirements. The scholarships and grants are set up each academic year with the specific requirements. In addition to the initial set up, the FA technicians are responsible for ensuring that students maintain eligibility.

The FA Office strengths include extensive knowledge and experience with the awarding of various financial aid along with respectful customer service. Students often have to share personal information to complete their FA requirements. The FA staff are sensitive to the students providing a safe place for the student.



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The FA Office does not have a current "Policy and Procedure Manual." The Technicians have various instructions for their areas of responsibility. The need for a collaborative manual is crucial to provide consistency in processes. This need is identified on the FA unit plan.



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Part 1 - Relevance

1. Department Mission

The FA Office provides resources necessary to decrease financial barriers to higher education. This is accomplished by assisting a diverse population in the process of applying for and receiving aid through Federal, State, institutional and private organizations to ensure student learning. The FA Office is devoted to providing quality customer service, efficiency and accuracy in application processing and the timely delivery of financial aid funds to students in compliance to align with CCCC's commitment to excellence. The FA Office supports eligible students to enable retention and support to the student learning experience. The FA Office programs are essential for students who would not be able to attend college due to a lack of financial resources.

Relationship to College Mission and Strategic Goals:

The FA Office supports student access to higher education, enabling student success and retention.

- 1.) Maximizing student success through sustained continual quality improvement of student services
 - Assist students in the completion of the Federal Financial Aid Application
 - Assist students in completing the online scholarship application
 - Provide students with financial aid workshops, one on one appointments, prompt service
 - Collaborate with other college offices such as Admissions and Records and Counseling to assist students in making the best decisions to accomplish their educational goals
- 2.) Continuing quality improvement for improving institutional effectiveness
 - Elicit student input on services provided with surveys and point of contact evaluations
 - Automate services as applicable to ensure consistency, increase effectiveness and increase time for staff to spend processing student aid and one on one with students
 - Provide tools for students to navigate through the processes necessary to receive financial aid.

2. Department History and Description

The FA Office has been the office to award, process, and maintain financial awards, grants and scholarships for students. In 2006, Cerro Coso Community College discontinued federal subsidized loans due to the college's high default rate that could jeopardize the college's eligibility for federal aid under new regulations.

Beginning in 1987 the financial aid records were kept using the district-wide BANNER database. The district Information Technology (IT) department provides extensive support for the financial aid BANNER functions, working closely with the Financial Aid Directors at all three campuses in the Kern Community College District. The FA Office provides support for all Cerro Coso Community College sites. Mammoth Lakes, Bishop, Kern River Valley, and East Kern have intake staff assigned to help students with general financial aid questions as does the IWV front desk department assistant. The FA technicians lend support for the sites via telephone, on-site workshops/appointments, on-site training, and in-person during peak times such as open house events.



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In 2012, the Financial Aid and Admissions and Records (A&R) Director positions became a shared position. Although these two departments have specific functions, the shared Director has created a cohesive team providing a “one stop” environment between Financial Aid and A&R for the students. FA requirements often involve student academic and personal records that are accessed by the A&R Office.

In fall 2013, the FA Office began an automated process called batch awarding and disbursement. Until this time, every student had a paper file and at least one document to turn in, although the federal education department did not require approximately 70% of students to turn in documents. As part of the FA Office plan to remove barriers to student’s financial aid, only the documents required by the federal government are asked of the student. Students who do not have documents or that are “unverified” are processed and disbursed through a batch process eliminating the time for each student to be unnecessarily reviewed. The resulted in a 23.74% increase in our Federal Pell award during 2013/2014 compared to 2012/2013.

In fall 2014, the FA Office increased efficiency of office work flow by:

- Increasing technicians processing Pell Grants from 2 technicians to 3 technicians
- Transferring task appropriate for a FA technician that was previously the sole responsibility of the FA Director to FA technicians. These task include awarding California Grants, SEOG, CHAFFEE grants, and processing the return of overpayments and Dream Act applications.
- Hotline implemented for walk-in students at Cerro Coso Sites
- Technician of the day process implemented to have a FA Technician available at all times while giving Technicians much needed office time for processing aid

In addition, all students are assigned to one Technician that can assist with their specific situation.

IPads were implemented in the FA Office in spring 2014 to enable students to work on applications in the office with assistance.

Part 2 – Appropriateness

1. Organizational Chart

(See attached)

2. Determination of Student or Service Recipient Needs

The FA Office is represented on numerous advisory groups making decisions that have operational impact. The Director is a member of the Student Services Executive Committee, Enrollment Management Task Force, Student Support and Success Council, and the Administrative Cabinet.

The FA Office took part in the student success focus groups that interpreted student data provided by district institutional research. Gaps in student’s success were identified and used to create goals for the annual planning of the department. One gap identified was the lower completion rate among the students receiving financial aid compared to the non-financial aid students. Another gap was the lower



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completion rate among our Hispanic student population while there was a significant growth in the Hispanic population on financial aid. With new California regulations for non-documented students, the FA office has had an increase in Hispanic students eligible for Cal Grants and BOGWs.

Through the involvement in the student success council, the need for navigational tools became apparent as work groups identified the complexity of following through with the financial aid processes to receive aid. The FA Office has collaborated with the college's implementation of an intake system, "Navigate", designed to lead students through a clear path while maintaining student momentum to completion. Other tools that are being implemented are FA T.V. "Get Answers" that have video tutorials on all aspects of FA, FA T.V. "GET SAP" that explains the requirement of academic achievement to remain eligible for aid, and FA T.V. "PRIORITY ENROLLMENT/BOGW" walking students through the new requirements beginning in 2016 to remain eligible for priority enrollment and BOGW along with the appeal process.

The FA Director is part of the Student Services Executive Council. This council consists of the directors and managers in all student service departments at all CCCC Sites. The input from this group informs the FA Office of specific needs related to all students, staff, and faculty, including specific challenges for individual sites. One support need identified in this meeting was an increase in FA Technician support during peak times including open houses each semester. A FA Technician has attended all open houses and provided additional training as requested for site intake staff. Recent training included the initial review of forms collected from students.

The FA office becomes aware of college needs through participation in the Administrative Cabinet. This cabinet has a broader membership that includes representation of all college department and sites. This is an opportunity for all departments to have a dialogue on department updates and needs to increase efficiency in serving students. These updates and needs are brought back to the FA Office. Often students, staff and faculty go to other departments with concerns that involve the FA Office. Many processes impact several departments. For example, when a student stops attending a class, this could impact student's financial aid eligibility.

A student service survey and graduation survey are alternated each year. The information gathered helps determine the needs of students while measuring the outcomes for the department's planning. In fall 2015, a point of contact survey was implemented to help the FA Office receive immediate input from students concerning specific services received. This information will be used to keep a pulse on how the students are using and understanding the financial aid processes. Data gathered and questions asked will help identify future areas for improvement.

3. Department Function

The FA Office provides financial aid in various forms to approximately 40% of Cerro Coso Students to assist them in financing their education. While general information and assistance is delivered to students at all sites, the major FA awarding, disbursing and data input is referred to the IWV FA Office in Ridgecrest.



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FA technicians are assigned students using a breakdown of the alphabet. Historically, several grants were assigned to the FA Director for awarding which was not consistent with the District practice of Technicians awarding all aid. There was a delay in processing because of this practice and the Directors additional duties assigned. In 2013, specific tasks that were generally a technician's responsibility were given to the technicians. This implementation included training on the grant requirements, training on BANNER processes and close oversight of the Director. As of fall 2015, all tasks have been assigned to FA technicians as appropriate.

The technicians' areas have been set up to accommodate students receiving one on one assistance from their assigned technician. In fall 2014, a Technician of the Day policy was implemented. This provides a technician available each day for the department assistant to refer to as needed. This also helps identify office time for the technicians who are not assigned on any given day. The FA technicians' office is needed to complete awarding processes and data entry on various federal and state online sites. Many of these sites are timed out after a lapse in activity. Having assigned office time provides uninterrupted time to focus on these tasks.

The FA Office does not have a complete written policy and procedures manual. The District IT assigned to FA has provided various written instructions for BANNER processes as has ELLUCIAN. Several policies have been clarified and brought up to date over the past 3 years. One such policy was the return to title IV requirement for students that were overpaid or did not earn aid due to non-participation. This process was caught up for 3 semesters and the FA staff district-wide collaborated in creating the new policy.

4. Department Relationships and Impact

The FA Office coordinates closely with other student service offices and faculty in regards to a number of student and institutional processes to ensure FA students are informed about FA available and remain eligible for aid received. Below are examples of this coordination:

- Coordinating with Faculty on FA definition of active attendance. This coordination resulted in a new process of faculty identifying the last date of active participation when recording drops, withdrawals and grades. The communication with faculty has increased over the last 3 years with faculty now sending emails to the FA Director when there are concerns with a student's participation pattern.
- Coordinating with the A&R Department concerning students who are on the drop list who are expected to receive a BOGW, students that need holds and enrollment statuses placed on their accounts through the return to Title IV process, out of state deferments and identifying AB540 students or students with conflicting personal information.
- Coordinating with the Counseling Department for education plans and assisting with the FA appeal process.
- Coordinating with FA Directors district-wide to implement new regulations and changes in regulations and working with district IT on creating processing in BANNER that meet the regulations.



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- Coordinate with all departments requesting the use of student workers. This coordination involves annual requests, receiving student employment packets, setting up interviews, providing data for district Human Resources Office input and checking student eligibility on a monthly basis.

Communication between departments is essential to maintain best practices and work efficiency. Employees from other offices frequently come in the FA Office to ask questions concerning students' eligibility for financial assistance. Identifying areas to refer to specific departments has improved resulting in a decrease in student complaints of inconsistency of information. As students were calling offices concerning their financial aid, general answers that were given were sometimes not the case for that students which left the student angry and complaining about wrong information. The continued communication and training of all student services staff has increased the efficiency of the student services office to include when and how to refer students to another department as appropriate. FA Technicians having specific task and students has also increased efficiency and gives other departments a "go to" person to contact.

5. Service Recipients

The FA Office grants financial assistance to approximately 40% of all Cerro Coso Community College students. This includes federal and state grants, scholarships, and Board of Governors Waiver (BOGW). Most of our recipients are economically disadvantaged and receive the Pell Grant, Cal Grants and BOGW. Service is also provided by forming partnerships with outside entities like local high schools to provide a comprehensive service for current and potential students.

The target population for CCCC is spread over 18,000 square miles in addition to our distant, online population. There is a need for increased online tutorials to help students prohibited from coming into the office due to distance. This need will be addressed with the implementation of FA T.V. and Navigate programs that will help students by providing additional instructions and a defined path for completing FA applications and documents.

The FA Office receives student awards from other departments such as ACCESS Program's CARE and EOPS awards. The FA Office puts the awards on the student accounts and disburses the awards. The FA Office also provides reports for ACCESS Programs identifying their student recipients and amounts.

The FA Office works closely with the CCCC Foundation, processing applications and participating on the scholarship committee. The FA Office has implemented an online scholarship application to help streamline the awarding of scholarships. The application and references are submitted online. This information is matched with BANNER student information in an online format eliminating the paperwork that was previously turned in at the FA Office. With increased scholarships that do not have a low income requirement, our service recipients have gone beyond the economically disadvantaged. The availability of scholarships to all students needs to be communicated frequently to increase awards.

The FA Office regularly reports awards and student eligibility status to the Department of Education and CA Chancellors office. The FA Office coordinates with the Department of Education and other



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educational institutions identifying students that are overpaid and owe money back to the Department of Education

6. Usage and Satisfaction Data

Usage Data:

The following awards and contacts reflect the usage of the FA Office from award year 2010-2011 through 2014-2015. The chart reflects the unduplicated count of students receiving awards over the past 5 years.

AWARD	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	+/- % Over 5 years
FAFSA Applications	3545	3947	4178	4171	4157	+17%
PELL % of total FAFSAs	1266 (36%)	1462 (37%)	1465 (35%)	1921 (46%)	1950 (47%)	+54% +11%
BOGW	3007	3486	3480	3848	3895	+30%
SEOG	136	144	146	164	176	+30%
CAL GRANTS	99	135	135	156	166	+68%
SCHOLARSHIPS	20	41	37	25	66	+70%
WORK STUDY	49				50	----
STUDENT CONTACTS (SARS)	8537	10,095	11,357	10,308	8,173	
EOPS/CARE GRANTS	182	238	194	201	192	+6%

Analysis of FA Office usage:

Total awards processed by the FA Office have increased over the last 5 years. The FAFSA applications have increased by 17%. The percentage of students that complete the FAFSA and follow through to receive the Pell grant has increased by 11%. There continues to be a large gap of students that



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complete a FAFSA but never receive financial aid. This gap will always reflect students not eligible for financial aid due to being over the income ceiling, not meeting satisfactory progress or exhausting their 6 year limit. The students in the gap that need to be targeted are the students who plan to go to CCC and do not follow through and students who do not complete the required verification documents to receive aid.

Beginning in fall 2013 a process was implemented to send emails to students who had submitted a FAFSA but had not applied to CCC. The 11% increase from 2012/2013 to 2014/2015 in students completing FAFSA and receiving financial aid could have been partially due to these email communications.

The automation of FAFSA for students who do not have verification documents began in 2013/2014. This eliminated collecting extra documentation from students not required by federal or state department of education. With approximately 40% of financial aid students having verification requirements, the FA office has eliminated the manual process and paper files for the remaining 60% of students. This not only increased the number of students receiving awards but also decreased the process time.

The award with the largest student population is the BOGW. This California grant waives the enrollment fee for students who have a certain amount of unmet need. Student that may not qualify for Federal grants could qualify for the fee waiver. At this time the BOGW has no time or satisfactory progress limitations. Beginning fall 2016, the BOGW will have academic progress requirements. This could cause a decrease in students eligible for the BOGW and therefore a decrease in enrollment. Communication to students concerning the new requirements began spring 2015 and will continue each semester.

The EOPS and CARE grant awards are coordinated with the ACCESS department. The awards increased 6% over the last 5 years. The FA office is responsible for awarding and disbursing these grants.

The student contacts steadily increased until 2014/2015. In fall 2014, a new phone system was installed. This system allows the FA Office phone to have general questions answered with the last option of talking to someone in the office. This system and improvements on the webpage have increased information to students and decreased the need to speak to the FA technician. With the implementation of FA T.V. students will have additional information 24/7.

Satisfaction Data:

Student Experience Survey: Student experience surveys were administered to CCC students in spring 2012 and spring 2015. While the survey included questions about student behavior and characteristics, the primary focus was to provide assessment information for student services programs.

Survey method:

The survey method in 2012 differed from the method in 2015 therefore two methods are identified below.



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Method: Spring 2012

A random sample of 1500 students taking on ground classes were selected from all CCCC sites. These 1,500 students were mailed a paper survey with a paid return envelope and a cover letter describing the purpose of the survey. 216 surveys were returned (14.4% response rate) from the on-ground population of students

All 6040 online students registered in the spring 2012 term were emailed the cover letter describing the purpose of the survey and provided a link to take the survey online via Survey Monkey. 474 surveys were returned (7.8%) from the online population of students.

Method Spring 2015

All 9070 students registered in the spring 2015 term were emailed the cover letter describing the purpose of the survey and provided a link to take the survey online via Survey Monkey. 524 surveys were returned, a 5.8% response rate.

Interpretation:

The survey, although taken from a small percentage of students, was helpful in identifying student satisfaction and areas needing improvement. The spring 2012 online and on-ground survey results were combined to compare with the Spring 2015 survey results. Surveys included six questions regarding FA Office's service with N/A options available for students who did not use the service. This option prevented students from randomly answering the questions without regards to services received..

After the 2012 survey, measures of improvement were taken to address the students indicating dissatisfied and very dissatisfied with various areas in the FA Office. The 2012 survey indicated 10% of students dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the assistance of staff and overall quality of service. The FA Office was changed to include room for students to meet with FA Technicians. Another change was implementing the technician of the day to increase the information available to students. The sites were set up with a hotline for walk-in students in 2014. The 2015 survey indicated a decrease in dissatisfied and very dissatisfied students by 5 %. The very satisfied and satisfied did not increase in these areas so it is not known if the decrease was due to the options of N/A for students not receiving services.

Student satisfaction will continue to be measured with the student surveys. The addition of the point of service survey should provide accurate information from students on specific processes.

It is recognized that to get a true representation of the students served, the survey would have to have a larger return.

7. Department Costs

The FA Office runs off of general funds, State allotment and administration allotment. The majority of the state and administration allotments are used for salaries. There is a small portion used for outreach materials and outreach travel.



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The FA operational cost decreased significantly in fall 2012 when the Director position was shared with the Admissions & Records Office. The FA budget is charged 60%-70% of this position which reflects the estimated workload of the Director.

Part 3 – Currency

1. Staffing

The following is the current staffing in the FA Office:

Ridgecrest Campus: 3 FA Technician II, 1 Department Assistant II, Director of Admissions & Records/Financial Aid

Kern River Valley Campus: Department Assistant responsible for FA intake and general FA questions along with other duties

Bishop Campus: Department Assistant II for FA intake and general FA questions along with other duties

Mammoth Lakes Campus: Department Assistant II for FA intake and general FA questions along with other duties

East Kern Campus: Program Manager / Department Assistant II for FA intake and general FA questions along with other duties

Serving the multiple sites continues to be a challenge. With limited intake personnel at the sites, there are times that the front desk service is closed due to breaks or absences. The employees at the sites are not directly under FA supervision but are under the Site Managers. During the closures, the IWW Ridgecrest FA Office is available via telephone or email for students.

At this time there is no data that supports an increase in staff in the FA Office. The student aid is processed within one month of receiving all documents and often within two weeks.

2. Professional Development

The opportunity for professional development has increased over the last 3 years in the FA Office. The Technicians have alternated attendance in the annual federal and state conferences keeping up to date on changes in regulations and best practices. A District-wide annual training was implemented in 2014 for collaboration and consistency across the district with FA processes.

District IT conducted training at CC with FA technicians in spring 2015. This will be an annual training provided for BANNER processes. This training may include the counseling department as needed.

Additional Opportunities for professional development are as follows:

Conferences:

The FA Office attended the CA Community College Student Federal Aid (CCCSFA) annual conference that highlights new annual regulations, eligibility requirements, verification documents and best practices on



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Title IV federal and state aid. This conference provides the opportunity for dialogue among peers and with professionals at the federal and state level.

The FA Director and Technician attend Cal Grant trainings as provided by the state or region. The last training was in summer 2015.

Staff meetings/Trainings:

District trainings were implemented in spring 2014 to provide an annual training to all Technicians on processes identified and new policies. Technicians have collaborated at district meetings to update procedures in two areas and will continue to complete a district manual.

Site Training (Mammoth Lakes, Bishop and KRV)

The FA Office travels to the Cerro Coso Community College sites to train the department assistants per request on FA functions.

Support Services Training:

FA Office staff take part in Student Services all staff meetings with training geared toward common current issues identified by administration and staff. This coordinated series of professional development opportunities focused on equity and diversity.

3. Physical Resources

The FA Office has equipment that falls under Information Technology (IT) and Maintenance Departments. The computers are on a rotating cycle as determined by IT.

Other equipment such as printers, copiers, and fax machines are replaced or upgraded when necessary for improved service. Upgrades have included replacing individual desktop printers with shared department printers saving cost on the purchase of toner vs print cartridges. This is a cost saving for the college since departments use the same type of toners that can be ordered in bulk. The IT department has been prompt in responding to FA Office requests.

Work stations for students that included iPads were provided by IT in spring 2013. These stations allow students to receive hands on assistance with their FA accounts.

The FA Technicians were supplied with a second monitor increasing efficiency as they process awards checking federal and state web sites during the verification process.

The funds from the state allow for purchase of office equipment used to increase student contact. In 2014/2015, these funds were used to purchase updated headphones for the FA staff to help in assisting student on the telephone while looking up information.

The FA Office is currently in a swing space module shared with the Admissions & Records and Business Office during the IWW main building modernization. This creates challenges as there are no walls



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between the offices. The FA Office has increased difficulty discussing sensitive information with students.

The future building modernization is designed to provide a “one stop’ service for students. The FA Office will have a separate office with space for students to meet with the technicians in semi-private office areas. Other essential offices will be close by so students will have ease of access to all student services.

4. Technology

Technology that is up to date, efficient, and adequate for the current processing of student aid is vital for the FA Office operations. The main computer system we use is Banner by Ellucian, which is upgraded as new versions are available. With the upgrades, there is a need for increased and continual training on using all the functions available. Until last year, once you complete the initial Banner training to gain access, there is no further training provided.

The FA Director has attended the Ellucian conference for the last two years. This annual conference provides training and information on new features in the Banner system to meet FA requirements with increased efficiency.

The FA Office works collaboratively with District IT for annual set up of awards, data reporting to the state chancellor’s office, and continual support throughout the year. The District IT Office has a designated IT Technician assigned to FA functions.

CCCC has partnered with the Education Advisory Board (EAB) in the implementation of the software system “Navigate” that will give students a clear pathway to navigate the college system including applying for FA.

The scholarship application process is now online through Academic Works. This program provides online applications that the student completes and submits, has electronic letter of reference submission, matches applications to scholarships according to the scholarship requirements and allows the scholarship committee to review applications online. This process was formerly very time consuming with completed paper applications submitted to the FA and manual processing and review of the applications. The use of this technology has increased the efficiency of the overall scholarship process.

Another important technology being implemented is FA T.V. which consists of three programs: GetAnswers, GetSAP, and Priority Enrollment/BOGW. These programs provide video tutorials that answers questions concerning all areas of financial aid, the requirements of priority enrollment, and the new requirement for maintaining eligibility for the BOGW. The FA T.V. “Get Answers” was put on the FA webpage in fall 2015. All programs will be implemented and used with specific videos in various places throughout the CCCC website as appropriate during spring 2016. This technology will be used as an intervention for students not meeting satisfactory academic progress. The videos can be a required orientation for students on warning. The administrator will be able to pull reports from the FA T.V. program providing data of use for future planning in FA.



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The FA webpage was updated to include policies and procedures meeting federal regulations. The FA T.V. videos will be used to explain the federal and state policies in lieu of descriptions that require manual updates. The FA T.V. videos are updated as regulations change and include text options.

The use of technology has dramatically increased over the last 3 years. Processes that were once manual are now automatic using Banner and other software programs. The use of automatic processes has increased the efficiency of the FA Office. The history of training for the FA technicians has been focused on FA eligibility and verifying information. Increased training for FA staff using the Banner system and other software programs implemented is essential to fully implement all functions in these programs.

5. Marketing

The main marketing tool used by the FA Office is the FA webpage. The webpage has a variety of information on types and requirements of financial aid. The FA webpage hosts programs such as FA T.V., CASHCOURSE, and Academic Works.

The FA Office conducts workshops at orientations and in the local high schools. Every spring the FA Office conducts a workshop on completing the FAFSA and scholarship applications on campus. These workshops include hands-on experience along with printed materials.

Part 4 – Achievement of Administrative Unit Outcomes

1. Achievement of Administrative Unit Outcomes

AUO 1:	Students who receive FA services will report those services helped them attend college.
Target:	85% of student reporting using FA services
Assessment Method:	Student Surveys, Trend data on retention rates
Assessment Date:	Survey 2012, 12/13 Trend data.
Recent Results:	Survey restructured for 2013 and 2015 not using the same question for comparison. Trend data was used in 12/13 retention rate of FA students with the assumption that the FA services received helped the students remain in classes.
AUO 2:	Students who receive FA services will report satisfaction with the timeliness of response for information
Target:	85% of students would report satisfied or very satisfied with timeliness
Assessment Method:	Student experience surveys. To get a percentage of only FA students, the number of students reporting dissatisfaction or very dissatisfied was used for comparison.
Assessment Date:	2012, 2015
Recent Results:	2015 student survey reflected a decrease in dissatisfied students by over 50%. 2012 survey showed 14.8 students dissatisfied with timeliness of services compared to 2015 at 7% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with timeliness of services.
AUO 3:	Increase student access to FA office Technicians for assistance



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Target:	Decrease % of student dissatisfied with assistance of staff
Assessment method:	Student surveys
Assessment Date:	2012 survey, 2015 survey
Recent Results:	2015 survey showed a 4% decrease with 5.81% dissatisfied with assistance compared to 2012 survey of 9.81% dissatisfied.
AUO 4:	Decrease the number of students on warning and suspension from financial aid
Target:	Decrease students on warning and suspension by 10% over 3 years beginning 16/17 using 1415 as base line numbers
Assessment Method:	Trend data, Student financial aid satisfactory progress records
Assessment Date:	Fall 2016, Spring 2017 data
Recent Results:	This is a new AUO on the 1617 unit plan with 1415 used as a baseline for improvement.

		Assessment History Summary					
AUO	Target	Semester	Met?	Semester	Met?	Semester	Met?
AUO 1	85%	Spr 12	Yes	13/14	Yes		
AUO 2	85%	Spr 12	Yes	Spr 15	Yes		
AUO 3	Decrease	2015	Yes				
AUO 4	10% Decrease	N/A New	N/A New				

a. Gaps and Improvements Made

AUO 4- This AUO was not measured and will be a continued AUO with communication and counseling requirements for students not meeting satisfactory progress. The revised AUO will use the 2014/2015 number of students on warning and suspension as a base line for measuring improvement beginning with 2016/2017.

b. Summary of Administrative Unit Outcome Achievement

The last program review in 2007-2008 which did not have AUO and the goals on that program review no longer applies to the financial aid office due to changes in current processes. The AUOs indicated on this review are AUOs created beginning with the 12/13 annual unit plan. In Fall 2012, the FA office was given the unit plans and had opportunities for input for the 13/14 plans. This was a new process for the FA office as they were not familiar with the previous plans.

4. Achievement of Course Student Learning Outcomes

N/A

a. Gaps and Improvements made

N/A



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b. Summary of Student Learning Outcome Achievement

N/A

Part 5 – Action Plans

1. Effectiveness and Efficiency

The FA Office has adopted practices over the last 3 years that have increased efficiency for our students receiving financial aid by removing barriers to receiving aid. The automation of FAFSA for students who do not have verification documents began in 2013/2014. This eliminated collecting extra documentation from students not required by federal or state department of education. With approximately 40% of financial aid students having verification requirements, the FA office has eliminated the manual process and paper files for the remaining 60% of students. This not only increased the number of students receiving awards but also decreased the process time.

The award with the largest student population is the BOGW. This California grant waives the enrollment fee for students who have a certain amount of unmet need. Student that may not qualify for Federal grants could qualify for the fee waiver. At this time the BOGW has no time or satisfactory progress limitations. Beginning fall 2016, the BOGW will have academic progress requirements. This could cause a decrease in students eligible for the BOGW and therefore a decrease in enrollment. Communication to students concerning the new requirements began spring 2015 and will continue each semester.

The FA Office began working with faculty on determining the last day of active participation in classes that students received an “F” or “W.” This collaborative work increased the timeliness of returning money to the department of education and reporting student’s overpayments. The internal district audit in 2014/2015 found no discrepancies in the return process which was a major achievement as the return process had been a finding since the regulation was implemented.

2. Current Strengths

The FA Office strengths include extensive knowledge and experience with the awarding of various financial aid along with respectful customer service. Students often have to share personal information to complete their FA requirements. The FA staff are sensitive to the students, providing a safe place for the student.

The FA Office provides timely service in awarding students with a one to two week processing time once students submit all documents. This is comparable to an average 4-6 weeks district-wide.

The FA Office’s outreach has increased promoting financial aid resources. An FA technician is assigned to work with the counseling department expanding to all area high schools. The first FAFSA workshop at Edwards AFB was provided in February 2016. FA technicians are available at all sites for open house and additional training as needed. One resource that is underutilized is our scholarships.

3. Improvements Needed

There is discussion in the department on how we can better determine student satisfaction each time a student is served. It is planned to integrate a comment opportunity for all students that use FA Services.



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This would be in the form of a comment box at the windows, surveys at each appointment and a couple of questions or follow up email for call in students.

Achieving the Dream data indicated the Hispanic population has increased over the last 3 years. The FA office will need to address the specific needs of this growing population. The FA office plans to acquire student input from the new Latino club on campus. This input will drive future strategies.

There is a need for increased communication to students on important dates and requirements in meeting satisfactory progress. With the potential of becoming ineligible for the Board of Governors fee waiver, it is vital that our students understand the expectation and appeal process.

The FA Office needs a policy and procedures manual that is kept up to date. This will increase consistency in the FA Office procedures.

4. Response to Previous Action Plans

Action Plans on Previous program review:

Note: Previous program review was 2008

Action Plan	Progress
Research/Implement Default Measures	CCCC discontinued participation in the federal loan programs
Coordinate with District IT to redesign the FA award letter to decrease use of multiple copies not required.	The award letter is now on the student account and emailed. We no longer have paper award letters.
Implement evaluation process for all student workers	Evaluation for student workers are in place as of 2013/2014.
Cerro Coso Staff will attend the foster youth success initiatives (FYSI) for networking	CCCC attended FYSI meetings and appointed a liason for foster youth. The liason is no longer an employee and implementation of a new liason is in progress.
Publicize the implementation of student debit card	Student debit cards were publicized and in use. This will no longer be a factor as we will be going back to paper checks as of March 2016 until new federal regulations on banks are in full force.

5. Three-Year Department Goals

❖ Goal: Decrease Number of Students on FA Warning and/or Suspension

This goal connects to the college’s strategic goal #1: Maximizing Student Success. Satisfactory progress for federal financial aid requires students to maintain a 2.0 and complete their program by 90 units.

Action:

- Fully implement FA T.V. “Get SAP” by Fall 2016



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- Require students on FA warning to participate in “Get SAP” workshops
- Require students on FA Warning or appealing for FA depending on federal regulation restrictions to meet with a counselor and create an education plan.
- Implement new BOGW SAP requirements beginning Fall 2016. This will be an opportunity to increase communication with financial aid students on being a successful student with emails, meetings with counselors and information in current workshops

Responsible: FA Director, Technicians

Resources: No Additional resources

Timeline:

- Spring 2016- Increase communication to students on Warning and Suspension
- Fall 2016-“GetSAP” fully implemented
- Fall 2016-BOGW requirements implemented
- Fall 2017- new requirements for students to attend workshops/counseling

❖ **Goal: Increase assistance to Hispanic student population**

This goal connects to the college’s strategic goal #2: Advance Student Equity Measures. Providing help materials/guides in Spanish will help narrow the gaps in access for the under-represented Hispanic students.

Action:

- 80% of in house forms will be translated into Spanish
- Spanish interpreters will be used in workshops upon request and availability
- Input from the new Latino student club will be solicited

Responsible: FA Technicians, FA Director

Resources: Spanish translator service

Timeline:

- Spring 2016 Technicians identify most used documents needing translation
- Summer 2016- FA Director identifies translator or services to use
- Fall 2017- 50% of documents identified translated
- Spring 2017- remaining documents identified translated

❖ **Goal: Increase the number of students applying for scholarships**

This goal connects to the college’s strategic goal #1: Maximizing Student Success. Scholarships provide additional financial assistance to economically disadvantaged students and student that may not be eligible for grants but still have unmet need for college cost.

Action:

- Conduct specific workshops to assist students in applying for scholarships
- FA representative attend orientation for students and/or Counseling C101 class to promote scholarships



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- Progressive marketing on scholarships, updating scholarship application dates and processes
- Additional training on Academic works scholarship program

Responsible: FA Director, Technicians

Resources: No Additional resources

Timeline:

- Summer 2016- Schedule FA technician to attend counseling classes/orientation
- Spring 2016- Scholarship workshop
- Summer 2016- Academic works training schedule for Technicians and Department Assistance

Summer 2016- Annual marketing plan implemented.

6. Six-Year Department Goals

- ❖ **Goal: Programs and Classes matched in BANNER and Degree Works to allow FA payment only for classes that apply to students program**

This goal supports the college's strategic goal #5: Strengthen Organizational Effectiveness. Title IV Federal financial aid regulations require financial aid only for classes approved for the recipients current program. At this time, our BANNER system is not able to match the program with specific classes

Action:

- Fully implement Degree Works and latest BANNER update
- Utilize the FA features in Degree Works
- Communicate with students the class requirements

Resources: No additional resources

Timeline:

- Fall 2016-Degree Works fully implemented
- Summer 2016- FA Director attend Degree Works/Ellucian live for training/information
- TBA- Depending on information and capability of Degree Works/Banner, a timeline of implementation will be developed once the programs have the been installed with the appropriate versions. This feature is currently being worked on by Ellucian.

- ❖ **Goal: Written policies and procedures manual for the FA Office**

This goal supports the college's strategic goal #5: Strengthen Organizational Effectiveness. Written policies and procedures will bring the FA Office into compliance with federal requirements. The information will increase consistency in serving students and a training tool for new employees.

Action:



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- Establish written policies and procedures for office processes and implementation of Title IV and Board Policy
- Have process of keeping manual up to date

Responsible: FA Technicians, FA Director

Resources: No additional resources

Timeline:

- Summer 2016- oversight of manual assigned to one Technician
- Fall 2016- Technician will provide Director with a list of processes to include in manual
- Spring 2017- initial draft of manual
- Fall 2018- Complete manual- ongoing update responsibility to primary Technician assigned to specific process

Fall 2018- manual reviewed each Fall semester for accuracy and updates



Financial Aid/Scholarships

Part 6 – Supporting Documentation

1. **Quantitative Performance Measurements of Unit**
2. **Qualitative Performance Measurement of Unit**
3. **Copy of the Department's Most Recent Unit Plan.**