

Assessment Cycle 2019-2020

Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships

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The Student Experience Mission Statement

The Student Experience provides the University community with programs and services to support the academic mission of creating, disseminating and acquiring knowledge through teaching, research and service while empowering a diverse student population to achieve their highest educational potential. The Student Experience creates a stimulating and inclusive educational environment that is conducive to holistic personal growth. The commitment to students initiates prior to entrance, sustains throughout the college experience and continues beyond graduation. Enrollment Services provides equal access to education for potential students throughout the state and region and promotes economic stability and financial access to citizens. Student Affairs enhances student development and broadens intellectual, social, cultural, ethical, and occupational growth. The Student Experience works closely with faculty, staff, students, and the community to ensure graduates have the capability to promote economic development and improvements in the region.

Enrollment Management:

The Office of Enrollment Management is a student-centered division that is future focused providing educational access to students in our region to improve the lives of our citizens. High School Relations, Financial Aid and Scholarships, and Admissions work collaboratively with University faculty and staff to provide services and programming that are innovative and surpasses state and federal guidelines. Enrollment Management fulfills the university's mission and commitment to academic quality, diversity, equity, and inclusion

Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships Mission:

Our mission is to find the best possible aid package for a diverse student body to enable each of our students the financial ability to achieve their educational goal. Our office offers a wide variety of programs that are available from federal, state, and institutional funds under the general headings of loans, grants, third party funds and work opportunities. The Office of Financial Aid will keep students informed of all current federal regulations and changes in those regulations. We are dedicated in providing all students and their families with counseling and the services necessary to gain access to educational funds by promoting financial aid awareness, ensuring compliance with federal, state and institutional regulations and guidelines, while committing to honesty, fairness, equality and integrity in all aid awarded to all students of our university. We will be a leader among our campus community for high quality and innovative student

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services, which includes a more effective use of technology for both our processing and communication with students.

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

(1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative, and qualitative) are collected and returned to the director.

(2) The director will analyze the data to determine whether the applicable outcomes are met:

(3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the appropriate staff.

(4) Individual meetings will be held with staff as required (show cause).

(5) The director, in consultation with the staff, will determine and propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes.

Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships Effectiveness
Service Outcomes:

Service Outcomes:

SO 1. *Achieve 100% satisfaction rate with students for services provided.*

Measure 1.1.

Our office strives to, not only accomplish our duties accurately and efficiently, but to achieve complete satisfaction with each student that we assist. A student survey was used to determine a base satisfaction rate, so that we can determine what areas of service in need of improvement. We will give the students a chance to provide feedback on ways they feel our office could improve. This data will help us to strengthen areas of weakness within our procedures, so that we may better serve each one of our students and improve our satisfaction rate beyond just an acceptable rate of 75%, until we meet our target of 100% satisfaction.

Finding: Target was not met

Analysis: In 2018-2019 was not met. However, the satisfaction rate increased by 9.64% to 89.7% with 824 surveys completed. In 2019-2020 we offered satisfaction surveys during all in person campus events and provided links in staff emails to students. As a result, we received a total of 553 Survey completions and an overall satisfaction rate of 83%. This is a decrease in the total number of surveys completed and our satisfaction rate decreased by 6.7% from the 2018-2019 year.

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Decision – Decision or Recommendation: Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships will use the information received on the survey to continue to improve on customer satisfaction within office interactions with potential and incoming students, current and transferring students, and parents. Satisfaction surveys will be included in all emails to students by staff within the Office of Student Financial Aid as well as all Financial Aid events. We will create a survey box to allow surveys to be completed within our office. We will use data from the surveys for additional staff trainings to help increase our overall satisfaction rates.

Measure 1.2.

To better assist students and help them understand the rules and regulations of what is required of our office, we aim to improve job performance of all of our financial aid administrators. To accomplish this, our office administrators will receive continued training and education through the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Credentialing. Currently, eight (8) out of the fifteen (15) employees in the Financial Aid Office have two or more credentials through the NASFAA Credentialing Service. Our target is to have 100% of Financial Aid Administrators credentialed in all areas of financial aid services. This will increase the satisfaction rate by ensuring that our employees are able to offer the most current and accurate information to students and parents.

Finding: Target was not met

Analysis: In 2018-2019 the target was not met. The target was to complete 15 credentialing certificates. We were unable to pursue credentialing opportunities due to lack of funding for the 2018-2019 award year. Based on the analysis of the 2018-2019 results in 2019-2020 another budget enhancement request was submitted. As a result, we were approved funding through the Budget Enhancement Process and seven employees received a total of 10 credentials.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020 the target was not met. As a result, in 2020-2021 we will complete the Budget Enhancement Proposal Request for the 2020-2021 award year to allow our Financial Aid Administrators to continue to with Credentialing opportunities. There are nine Financial Aid administrators who will pursue a total of 17 separate credential titles each for a total of 153 credentials in the Financial Aid Office. These credentialing tests consist of attending National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators classes and completing the credential test for each topic. At the end of the end of the 2019-2020 year we have nine employees that have completed 37 credentials. Our office will focus on completing additional credentialing courses through online trainings.

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SO 2. *Increase Financial Aid Requirements Awareness to students by increasing workshops, presentations, and notifications.*

Measure 2.1.

Increase the number of students receiving Financial Aid information to a broader populace of the student body. Present and host informational opportunities for students to inform them of the financial aid process. The target is to conduct six sessions, three per semester.

Finding: Target was not met

Analysis: In 2018-2019 the target was to conduct 6 financial aid informational sessions but only 5 sessions were completed by attending NSide View, Grad Fest, Alumni Receptions, Empowerment Session and Race to Register. In the 2019-2020 year, we only conducted 4 sessions. The Financial Aid office attended NSide View, Grad Fest, Alumni Receptions, Freshman Connection and the LOSFA Fly Tour to allow students opportunities to get information on the Financial Aid process and to ask questions. Campus restrictions due to the novel Coronavirus pandemic multiple on campus events were cancelled, keeping us from meeting our goal.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020 the target of 6 sessions to increase informational opportunities giving students every possibility to learn the importance of the financial aid requirements and responsibilities was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results, during the 2020-2021 academic year we will be reaching out to all departments campus wide to allow us to present financial aid materials to students. If we are unable to complete in person events, we will utilize online presentations that will be available to both campus wide programs and individual student populace.

Measure 2.2

Create a more tangible awareness of the Financial Aid Requirements, Federal Regulations and School policy to the student body through presentations, workshops and student notifications. Our target is to increase presentations, workshops and student notifications each year, until we reach a minimum of 75% of student organizations and athletic groups.

Finding: Target was not met

Analysis: In 2018-2019 the target was to increase our presentation to reach a minimum of 75% of students. Although we presented to 20 orientation classes, athletic student programming, housing events First Year Experience students, Louisiana Gear Up, Student Support Services and High school events we did not reach the 75% target.

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During the 2019-2020 year, our office provided Financial Aid requirements and polices to 20 orientation classes, including Shreveport and Leesville campuses. In addition, information was also provided during athletic student programing, Housing events, First Year Experience students and High schools events throughout Natchitoches parish.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020 the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2019-2020 results we will implement the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive improvement with our outreach. We will not only work within our Enrollment Management team we will also expand our outreach to our Academic departments to help increase student involvement with financial aid activities. We will also begin utilizing electronic means through a student’s MyNSU account to created notices regarding important Financial Aid topics.

Measure 2.3

A Financial Aid knowledge questionnaire for students to complete each academic year to use the data, from year to year, to track the improvement of Financial Aid knowledge and awareness. We can also use the information to determine what areas we need to focus on in the presentations and workshops mentioned in Measure 2.1 Our target is to have students score 85% or higher on accurate responses received through the questionnaire.

Finding: Target was not met

Analysis: In 2018-2019 the target was to determine areas of focus to help students understand the complexity of the financial aid process. Our FAFSA Bingo event allowed our office to provide detailed information to students regarding all aspects of financial aid requirements. The financial aid knowledge questionnaire was not provided to students during the event. Due to the novel Coronavirus and the disruption of campus services during 2019-2020, our FAFSA bingo event was cancelled, and the financial aid knowledge questionnaire was not made available to students.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: In 2018-2019 the target was to reach our goal of 85% accurate response rate for financial aid knowledge questionnaire. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results we will implement the following changes for 2020-2021 to achieve a greater student response, our office will provide the knowledge questionnaire during future financial aid sponsored events. This will allow students the ability to complete in person knowledge surveys and have financial aid administrators available to help answer questions that students may have. We will also collaborate with University 1000 courses to complete financial aid knowledge survey during our presentations regarding policies and federal regulations.

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SO 3. *Decrease Cohort Default Rate*

Measure 3.1.

Increase contact and notifications with students who have either graduated or ceased half-time enrollment. Our goal is to increase the number of completed exit counseling sessions to a minimum of 75% completion. We will do this by reaching out to all students who have graduated or ceased half-time enrollment and have not completed the exit counseling.

Finding: Target was not met

Analysis: In 2018-2019 the target was to reach a minimum of 75% completion rate for exit counseling. For the 2018-2019 award year students were notified through electronic means and only 337 of the 1594 (21%) students who have an exit counseling requirement completed this requirement. This 11% fell below the 75% completion rate. Based on the analysis of the 2018-2019 results we implemented during 2019-2020 reaching out to these students in person by attending Grad Fest to let students know of the exit requirement. We also emailed 1043 graduating seniors detailed information regarding Exit requirements and repayment options for their student loan debt. We also reached out to these students, by attending Grad Fest, to let students know in person of the final exit requirement. As a result, only 172 students out of the 1513 students required to complete Exit requirements have completed the process. This 11% completion rate is 10% lower than the prior year completion rate and falls below the 75% completion rate.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: In 2019-2020 the target was to reach a minimum of 75% completion rate for exit counseling. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results we will notify students at the time it is determined a student needs to complete exit requirements by sending individualized emails as opposed to computer generated notices. We will notify students of the exit counseling requirements at the time the student has ceased enrollment or enrolled in less than half time. Exit reports and notification will be completed daily to identify students in a timely manner. Students will be notified every 21 days until they have completed Exit requirements.

Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results: Based on the analysis of 2018-2019 results the following represents evidence of improvement based on those results in 2019-2020.

- Based on the comparison from the 2018-2019 customer service survey, Financial Aid revealed an overall 83% for the 2019-2020 satisfaction rate. Although this is a decrease, our office strived to make each financial aid experience positive for our students. We will work to help students understand that satisfaction surveys are needed to help with individual experiences and not regarding the policies that

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are implemented.

- The Financial aid office secured funding for seven financial aid administrators to complete a total of 10 NASFAA Credentials. The funding allowed each aid administrator to receive various credentialing topics that will help assist students understand the rules and regulations of what is required of our office. We will complete Budget Enhancement Request to secure additional funds to allow for additional credentialing opportunities.
- The Financial Aid Office conducted five informational sessions during the fall and spring terms. Campus restrictions due to the novel Coronavirus pandemic multiple on campus events were cancelled, keeping us from meeting our goal. If social distancing requirements are still in effect for the 2020-2021-year, virtual events will be planned to allow students to receive pertinent financial aid information.
- Individual email notices were sent to 1043 graduating students regarding loan repayment and exit counseling requirements. Students are notified of exit counseling requirements at the time the student has ceased enrollment and will be notified every 21 days until they completed the Exit requirements.

Plan of action of action: The Office of Student Financial Aid will work to find ways to encourage students to complete survey data and participation in events that is needed to increase our satisfaction rate. We will request funding through the Budget Enhancement Proposal Request as funding is available to continue with credentialing opportunities. We will begin offering in person financial aid knowledge surveys during all Financial Aid events to allow our staff to answer any questions a student might have. Departments throughout campus will be contacted to determine all events that the Office of Financial Aid could provide Financial Aid information for students. New reports will be created to help determine students who have fallen below less than half-time enrollment and have unsatisfied exit counseling requirements daily to help reach students in a timelier manner.