

Assessment Cycle 2021-2022

Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships

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Date:

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 2019-2020 results the customer satisfaction survey was enhanced to better capture areas needing improvement after the target was not met with an 83% satisfaction rate and 553 survey completions. In 2020-2021 we received a total of 380 surveys and an overall satisfaction rate of 77.89%. In 2021-2022 we received a total of 388 surveys and an overall satisfaction rate of 87%. This is an increase in the total number of surveys completed and our satisfaction rate increased by 10% from the 2020-2021 year.

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Decision – Decision or Recommendation: Based on the analysis of the 2021-2022 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, incoming, current and transferring students, as well as parents. An in-office survey box is utilized to allow surveys to be completed within our office. During 2022-2023 survey request will be provided during all in-person events, through email & electronic communication as we continue to strive to reach our goal of 100% satisfaction rate. Data will be used to determine areas of customer service interactions that may need additional training for staff members through various in-service programs throughout Enrollment Management areas.

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 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, six (6) 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 2020-2021 no credentials were pursued due to lack of funding. During 2021-2022 no credentials were achieved still due to the lack of funding.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: In 2021-2022 the target was not met due to lack of funding. Due to budget restraints proposed for the 2022–2023-year, financial aid administrators will begin utilizing free trainings for all financial aid services available through Federal Student Aid (FSA), Southwest Association of Financial Aid Administrators (SWASFAA), Louisiana Office of Student Financial Aid Administrators (LASFAA) and NASFAA.

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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 met

Analysis: In 2019-2020 we conducted 4 informational sessions. In 2020-2021 only one in-person session was conducted due to the novel Coronavirus and the disruption of in-person campus events. During 2021-2022 we were able to improve our financial aid awareness by conducting our six sessions.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: Based on the analysis of the 2021-2022 results we hope to maintain our target by conducting our six sessions of events (3 per semester) and increasing informational opportunities resulting in giving students every possibility to learn the importance of the financial aid requirements and responsibilities. For the 2022-2023 academic year we will continue to reach out to all departments campus wide to allow us to present financial aid materials to students both in-person and virtually.

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 met

Analysis: In 2019-2020 year, our office provided Financial Aid requirements and policies to 20 orientation classes, including Shreveport and Leesville campuses. In addition, information was also provided during athletic student programming, Housing events, First Year Experience students and High schools events throughout Natchitoches parish. In 2020-2021 in-person presentations were limited due to the novel Coronavirus. During 2021-2022 we were able to improve by conducting in-person Financial Aid presentations to LA Gear Up Initiative, Freshman Connectors, Graduate Student Classes, Student Support Services (TRIO), Spring N-Side View, South Louisiana Community College transfer students, NSU Career Center Teacher Job Fair,

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and the Winter Bridge Program. Our presentations were also created in a virtual format and published not only on our website, but also through email to students and parents. To date, the virtual Financial Aid Overview has increased by 462 views. All presentations collectively allowed us to meet our 75% target of student organizations and athletic groups.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: In 2021-2022 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-2022 results we implement presentation measures in 2022-2023 to increase our improvement with outreach. We will provide our virtual presentation to all students via email as well as resume our in-person events through areas of: NSU Event Calendar, FAFSA Awareness, Freshman Orientation Class, NSU Housing, Student Athletic Programming, Creative and Performing Arts Departments and local high school & community events.

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 2019-2020 due to the novel Coronavirus and the disruption of campus services our FAFSA bingo event was cancelled, and the financial aid knowledge questionnaire was not made available to students. In 2020-2021 we provided a survey to all students requesting feedback on items of interest that could be used to provide additional processes that could help students understand the financial aid processes. The survey only resulted in 203 responses from students. In 2021-2022 we provided the same survey to students requesting feedback on items of interest that could be used to provide additional processes that could help students understand the financial aid processes. Unfortunately, the survey only resulted in 100 responses from students.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: Based on the analysis of the 2021-2022 results in 2022-2023 we anticipate adding additional workshop opportunities to reflect positively on the next financial aid knowledge survey, as we strive to reach and exceed our goal of 85% accurate response rate. To achieve a greater student response, we will provide virtual sessions on topics of interest that were received from the survey, which will include FAFSA completion, Types of Federal Aid, Cost of Attendance, Summer Aid eligibility, Satisfactory Academic Progress, Return to Title IV and the Verification process. Each mini session will be provided to students via email, social media and

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housed on our website for access. Financial Aid knowledge questionnaires will continue to be provided within the office and at all in person events.

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: For 2019-2020 only 172 students out of the 1513 students required to complete Exit requirements completed the process. This 11% completion rate is 10% lower than the prior year completion rate and falls below the 75% completion rate. For 2020-2021 only 286 students of the 1728 students required to complete EXIT requirements completed the process. This 16% completion rate is a 5% increase to the prior year, it still falls well below our 75% targeted completion rate. For 2021-2022 students were provided exit counseling requirements through Grad Fest to 600 students individually. We also emailed directly to 1087 graduating seniors detailed information regarding Exit requirements and repayment options for their student loan debt. Students are also notified through our automated email process every 21 days until requested items are satisfied. As a result, only 214 students out of 1618 students required to complete EXIT requirements have completed the process. This 13% completion rate is a 3% decrease to the prior year as it still falls well below our 75% targeted completion rate.

Decision – Decision or Recommendation: Based on the analysis of the 2021-2022 results in 2022-2023 contingent upon approval of University Information Technology Department our office will continue to attempt to remove the exit-counseling requirements from the generic “unsatisfied requirement” email and create an “action required” specific email regarding the completion of the exit counseling. We will attach a follow up email every 21 days for student who do not complete the requirement after the first notification.

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Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results: Based on the analysis of 2020-2021 results the following represents evidence of improvement based on those results in 2021-2022.

- Based on the comparison from the 2020-2021 customer service survey, Financial Aid revealed in 2021-2022 a 10% increase in our satisfaction rate as we will continue to strive for a total of 100% satisfaction rate.
- Although funding was not made available during 2021-2022 for credentialing opportunities, the Financial Aid office staff was able to attend NASFAA Spring 2022 virtual conference on topics such as Professional Judgement, Navigating the top with TOPs, Eliminating Bias in Financial Aid, Demonstrating Empathy, Cybersecurity, and HEERF Roundtable Part II.
- Based on the comparison from the 2020-2021 Assessment Cycle in 2021-2022 we were able to successfully meet our target goal by conducting our six session (3 per semester) of Financial Aid Awareness events.
- Based on the comparison from the 2020-2021 Assessment Cycle in 2021-2022 we were able to successfully meet our target goal by reaching our target of 75% of tangible awareness of the Financial Aid Requirements, Federal Regulations and School policy to the student body through presentations, workshops and student notification.
- Based on comparison from the 2020-2021 Assessment Cycle we did not meet our 85% response rate on Financial Aid Knowledge and Awareness in 2021-2022. Financial Aid knowledge questionnaires will continue to be provided within the office and at all in person events.
- Individual email notices were sent to 1087 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: The Office of Student Financial Aid will work to find ways to encourage students to complete survey data and will participate in events that is needed to increase our satisfaction rate. We will begin utilizing free trainings provided by FSA, NASFAA, SWASFAA and LASFAA. 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. The Financial Aid office will remove the exit-counseling requirements from the generic “unsatisfied requirement” email and create an “action required” specific email regarding the completion of the exit counseling. We will attach a follow up email every 21 days for student who do not complete the requirement after the first notification.