



PROGRAM COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

2023-2024

Program Review (S) - Financial Aid

General Information

Please enter your program's purpose statement.

We are dedicated financial aid professionals committed to providing all students with information to secure their necessary financial resources so they can meet their educational goals.

Briefly describe your program and the services that it offers to students.

The Ventura College Financial Aid Office provides student centered services, information, and help identify financing options to students seeking financial assistance. We maintain efforts to minimize the student loan default rate, identify, outreach to, and increase both financial aid participation and student access to locally defined underserved and unrepresented student populations and increase awareness about financial aid on campus and at local high schools.

How does your program support VC's mission?

The Financial Aid Office supports our college mission by "placing students at the center of their learning experience, supporting them in achieving their personal, academic, and career goals in an anti-racist, liberating, and inclusive environment". We do this by participating and providing financial resources so students can focus on their academic success.

SWOT Analysis: What are the strengths of your program?

The Financial Aid department is a small but mighty department. During the past 3 years, we have faced staffing shortages and yet our students continued to receive first class services and delivery of their financial aid in a timely manner. This can only happen because of the dedication and professionalism of the financial aid staff.

SWOT Analysis: What are the weaknesses of your program?

The weaknesses of our program include not being able to provide additional services such as financial literacy workshops, more intrusive loan default management, additional outreach and in-reach sessions to promote financial aid and assist students in applying. Another weakness our department faces is in terms of staffing. Our department consists of a Financial Aid Officer, an Administrative Assistant, 5 Financial Aid Specialists and one Financial Aid Technician. In addition to staffing needs, the current physical location of our department is not adequate for the type of services we provide and the number of students we assist.

SWOT Analysis: What are some opportunities for your program?

Our department has the opportunity to increase the number of Ventura College students who apply for financial aid and increase campus awareness about the various financial aid programs and services we offer.

SWOT Analysis: What are some threats to your program?

The loss or decrease of BFAP or general funds could pose a serious threat to our department. BFAP is a categorical fund, and it is primarily being used to pay for staff salaries and benefits.

Service Usage

How many total student contacts occurred in your program in the previous year?

The financial aid office had 10,801 student contacts (4,670 unduplicated students).

Describe the trend in usage over the past two years?

The data shows a decrease in student contact visits over the past two years. The decrease in student contact visits may be due to the verification flexibility waiver that was in place due to the pandemic. It may also be due to the availability of various options available to submit forms or documentation to our office and the number of students who are taking in person classes versus online or hybrid.

Program Planning

Are there any student gender groups more than 5 points lower than the overall VC student population?

No

Are there any student ethnic groups more than 5 points lower than the overall VC student population?

Yes

Student Ethnic Groups: If yes, please describe.

24% of VC students are white, but only 18% of the students who used our program are white. To help bridge this gap, the Financial Aid Office will develop outreach strategies for this population of students.

Briefly describe what your program has done to close equity gaps in students accessing your program?

The Financial Aid Office has worked on closing equity gaps both on campus and in the community by offering financial aid workshops and hands-on assistance in both English and Spanish, and by offering Saturday and evening workshops. In addition, students can connect with our office via Zoom, phone, email, or in-person. Our webpage is up-to-date and can be translated to Spanish and we have a Chatbot to help answer many questions.

Six Factors Survey

Six Factors Survey: General Observations

Our scores either improved or were equal to last year's survey. Our highest scores were in the areas of students feeling directed and overall satisfaction with our service.

Which of the six factors did your program score the highest on?

Direct

Why do you think your program scored the highest on this factor?

The department makes a great effort to ensure our forms, webpage, email and verbal communication with students is clear and concise. The staff take the time to guide the student through the process they are inquiring about, ensuring they walk away knowing what steps they need to take. If needed, we also set up zoom sessions to guide students.

Which of the six factors did your program score the lowest on?

Connected

Why do you think your program scored the lowest on this factor?

Overall, 97% of respondents felt connected to Ventura College personally, academically, or socially. Coming into the Financial Aid Office can be intimidating and at times seem overwhelming to some students and their families, making it difficult to feel connected.

SUOs

Briefly describe the results of your SUO assessments.

Both of our SUO's targets were met. This SUO was assessed at the end of the Spring 23 semester. The data showed that 96.7% of respondents felt that their experience with the Financial Aid Office helped them personally connect to Ventura College and 99% of students were satisfied with their experience.

Which SUO initiative(s) had the greatest impact on improving outcomes for your program?

Our staff recognized that if students recognized the value of the services we provide, they would in turn be more satisfied with their visit. The Team provides good customer service, thorough, clear directions, and tries to eliminate unnecessary forms or processes so our students can focus on their academic goals.

Course Success Rate - COUN, EAC & EOPS only

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress Outreach Plan

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

The Financial Aid Office will continue to partner with Counseling, FYE, EOPS, EAC, Veterans, CalWORKs and various other departments on campus to further develop a comprehensive support program for students who are not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) or are on warning.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 2: First-Term to Second-Term Persistence, Goal 3: Completion of Transfer-Level English and Math, Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion, Goal 4: Transfer, Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2022

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

Spring 2021, the taskforce created a video which was shared with all students who were on Academic Probation, Dismissal, Financial Warning or Unsatisfactory. The video was posted on the Financial Aid Canvas page. We also held a drive thru student services event. Students were able to receive information from various college student support services, check out a laptop or hotspot and receive groceries and basic essentials.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Many of the taskforce meeting were cancelled and no additional progress was made towards this goal. Students with transportation challenges are unable to attend drive-thru events and those who lack technology are also unable to participate in our online events.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

In partnership with the Basic Needs Center, we hosted a Student Success Drive Thru on January 25, 2022 at both the main campus and VCEC. During this event, many of our student services were present and were able to personally engage with the students and provide them with valuable resource information.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Due to COVID-19, campus closures, and staff changes, we did not hold any task force meetings or host any in-person or virtual workshops for students. The group will be reconvening this Fall semester.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Financial Aid Outreach

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

Create a detailed Financial Aid outreach plan, with a Cash for College element, to sync in with the Ventura College strategic 3-year outreach plan and meet the goals of AB19.

AB 19 calls for the college to partner with one or more local education agency (LEA) to establish an Early Commitment to College Program and to improve the college readiness and reduce remediation of our incoming students as well as to increase the number of financial aid applications and recipients. With this increased expectation, we need additional staff and supplies to support the goals of AB 19 and additional outreach activities.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 2: Increase our community's access to transfer, workforce preparation, and basic skills education, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs, Goal 3: Strengthen local/regional partnerships and community engagement

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

We have a robust outreach schedule and work in close collaboration with college outreach, admissions, FYE, counseling and student connect teams. With campus closures at both the K-12 and Ventura College, we successfully moved all of our outreach events to virtual platforms and provided the same level of service to our college and community. The Zoom breakout rooms we created within our outreach sessions allowed the staff to work privately with students and their parents on sensitive matters.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Due to campus closures, all in person events were cancelled and moved to online events. Many students lack access to technology, were unable to successfully log onto our sessions, or felt uncomfortable utilizing these services.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

The Financial Aid Office continued to host and participate in numerous in person and remote outreach and in-reach events throughout the academic year. We continue to collaborate and work closely with Outreach, Admissions, FYE, Counseling, The Compass Welcome Center, and VCEC. We work closely with the Outreach Team and our K-12 partners to plan our outreach events for the entire academic year to ensure we meet their needs as well continue to meet AB 19 goals.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

We continued to experience campus closures due to COVID, and as a result, we moved some in person events to Zoom or TEAMS. Many families continue to experience lack of access to technology or are uncomfortable utilizing these services.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Strategic Communication/Marketing Plan

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

We will develop a strategic and timely communication/marketing plan, working comprehensively and collaboratively with the whole campus, OC and MC financial aid, and the District Office so as not to duplicate efforts. This may include:

A postcard mailing to include information on late start classes and Cash for College events

Development of Student Services Canvas Page and/or more adequate use of the financial aid canvas page

Continued or further expanded use of the Ocelot Chatbot

Financial Aid newsletter

Social media

Text messaging alternatives (The Six Success Factors survey showed 57% of students ranked Text as their preferred communication method.)

Targeted emails at strategic points/key intervals (45% of students preferred email communication in the Six Success Factors survey.)

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 3: Strengthen local/regional partnerships and community engagement, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment, Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion, Goal 2: First-Term to Second-Term Persistence, Goal 4: Transfer

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

We have worked with the District Office to promote events such as Cash for College and Undocumented Week of Action as a VCCCD event, utilizing one link and a streamlined marketing plan. In addition, students are now receiving a electronic award letter with embedded videos. The college now sends a weekly email to students (The Post) and we are able to include important announcements.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Students are being overwhelmed with the volume of emails they are receiving from both the campus and the District Office. We should explore other ways to communicate important information and/or deadline through other means such as TikTok, Instagram, Facebook text messages with short videos and electronic bulletin boards.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

We continue to work closely with the District Office to promote events such as Cash for College and Undocumented Week of Action as a VCCCD event, utilizing one link and a streamlined marketing plan. In addition, students are now receiving a electronic award letter with embedded videos. The college sends a weekly email to students (The Post) and we are able to include important announcements and staff also receive a copy of the POST or the President's Newsletter (Message in a Bottle). We work closely with the Marketing Team to ensure students receive important announcements or information via their portals, email, social media, webpage, posters, flyers, etc.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

We continue to find that students do not open or read our emails and as such, we need to continue to explore ways to better communicate with our students. Text messaging options that allow for two-way communication should be explored as well as expansion of social media services.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Marketing - Essential Items for Events/Community Outreach

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

We will evaluate and requisition essential items needed for events, community outreach and to promote important dates and/or deadlines.

Financial Aid Handbook & Planner (paper and electronic)

Pens

Brochures

Other promotional items

Social Media campaigns, banners, radio, newspaper and television ads

The Financial Aid Office will work with other key student services areas to avoid duplication of outreach giveaways.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

We met with other student services areas to coordinate purchase of promotional items.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Due to campus closure, we did not have the opportunity to give out any promotional items.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

Due to campus closures and decreased number of outreach events, we did not make any progress on this objective.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Due to campus closures and decreased number of outreach events, we did not make any progress on this objective.

Objective**5 -Year Objective**

Financial Aid Staff Training Plan

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

Develop a comprehensive training plan for all Financial Aid Office staff:

- A targeted training plan may include NASFAA University, conferences, webinars, District training and in-house cross training, etc.
- Development of an electronic/hyperlinked Policy & Procedures manual for staff and student workers

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 4: Enhance institutional effectiveness and accountability to improve innovation and student outcomes

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment, Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion, Goal 2: First-Term to Second-Term Persistence, Goal 4: Transfer

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

Staff attended webinars, conferences such as FSA, CISOA, and CCCSFAAA, and other wellness workshops.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Due to the pandemic, many training events were cancelled or moved to webinars. Webinars brought new challenges such as difficulty in separating daily work from the training, resulting in less focus given to the training.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

The Financial Aid staff attended webinars and virtual conferences such as FSA and CCCSFAAA, as well as other professional development workshops. Staff are also cross trained to do most tasks and work is divided by caseload.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

During the year, we dealt with staff leaves, a retirement, and a resignation. This has set us back in our cross training efforts and balancing our workload.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Financial Literacy

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

Develop a series of in-person and online financial literacy workshops for students. We will explore contracting with a third party to assist us in providing this information for students. This objective will help us increase students knowledge and awareness of financial literacy and at the same time help us with our default management plan.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 3: Strengthen local/regional partnerships and community engagement, Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion, Goal 2: First-Term to Second-Term Persistence, Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

None

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Due to staffing shortages, increased student financial needs due to the pandemic, and increased work volume (CARES Grants, emergency aid, etc.) and expanding modality of services, we were unable to dedicate time and staff to achieving this objective.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

None

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Due to continued staffing shortages, increased student financial needs due to the pandemic, and increased work volume (HEERF Grants, emergency aid, etc.) and expanding modality of services, we were unable to dedicate time and staff to achieving this objective.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Overall Evaluation of Financial Aid Office Policy & Procedures

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

The VCCCD Financial Aid Policy and Procedures is reviewed and evaluated annually in preparation for our audits as rules, regulations and procedures constantly change. We will continuously develop/review/revise financial aid policy and procedures in accordance with federal and state regulations as well as VCCCD practices.

We will also evaluate:

-Staff workloads

-Staff caseloads

-Document intake

-Evaluate the student's experience at check-in, front counter, computer lab, phone , loan processing and appeals

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs, Goal 4: Enhance institutional effectiveness and accountability to improve innovation and student outcomes

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment, Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion, Goal 4: Transfer

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

The VCCCD Financial Aid Policy and Procedures were reviewed and evaluated in preparation for our 20-21 annual audit.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Workloads and caseloads have increased due to multiple factors, including higher administrative burden, new financial aid programs (CARES, HEERF, Emergency Financial Assistance Grant, Dreamer Grants), facilitating laptop lending program, and multiple staffing shortages. Work hours dedicated to staff processing have decreased due to offering services both in-person and online (phone, email, Zoom). This time was dedicate to staff training, processing of aid, and other financial aid functions.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

The VCCCD Financial Aid Policy and Procedures were reviewed and evaluated in preparation for our 21-22 annual audit.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Staff workloads and caseloads have continued to increased due to multiple factors, including higher administrative burden, new financial aid programs (CARES, HEERF, Emergency Financial Assistance Grant, Dreamer Grants, and VC Student Emergency Grants), and multiple staffing shortages. Work hours dedicated to staff processing have decreased due to increased services both in-person and online (phone, email, Zoom). This time was dedicate to staff training, processing of aid, and other financial aid functions.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Establish an Assistant Financial Aid Officer position

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

With the on-going changes in federal and state financial aid regulations and increase in workload, it is imperative the Financial Aid Office staffing structure be reviewed and the recommendation be made to establish an Assistant Officer position. We will look at other financial aid office staff organizational structures, review financial aid office duties, and work with VC Administration, Moorpark College and Oxnard College Financial Aid Officers, Human Resources and the Personnel Commission to assess the need and if possible establish the position.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment, Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion, Goal 4: Transfer

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

A draft of the job classification was presented to HR and to Oxnard and Moorpark College.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

There has been no consensus on the establishment of this position.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

No progress was made on this objective.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Last year this position request did not receive a high enough ranking to move forward. However, financial aid programs, policies, and regulations continue to grow and change and there is a strong need for this position to be created and hired.

Objective**5 -Year Objective**

Student Services Specialist /Scholarships

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

In an effort to better coordinate both on and off campus scholarships and to ensure compliance at both the federal and state level, we are seeking to establish a position within the Financial Aid Office.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 2: Increase our community's access to transfer, workforce preparation, and basic skills education, Goal 3: Strengthen local/regional partnerships and community engagement, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment, Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2017 - 2020

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2020

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

We have worked closely with the VC Foundation to establish a list of representative duties and have shared those with the VC Executive Team.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

There is an existing Scholarship Technician position within VCCCD, however, the position does not meet our needs. Therefore, this potentially require the creation of a new classification.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

The Financial Aid Scholarship position opened to the public (September 2022) and we hope to have a person hired by the end of October.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Due to Human Resource staffing shortages, the position did not open until September of 2022.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Replacement of essential office furniture and supplies needed for staff and students

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

Replace staff chairs and lobby chairs, as chairs pose a safety concern for both students and staff.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

08/01/2021

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

We received approval for \$7475 from the 2020-2021 Program Review and we are currently in the process of ordering 10 chairs for the financial aid staff.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Additional funds are needed to purchase the remaining chairs for the student worker stations, front counter, pager room and the financial aid computer lab. Further deterioration has occurred, posing a safety and health hazard. See pictures attached.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

The staff received new chairs and they are able to work more comfortably and efficiently. The safety concerns we had with the old chairs, have been eliminated.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

We are still in need of chairs for the FA Computer lab and for student worker stations as these stations are heavily used.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Essential Maintenance of Financial Aid Software and FA IT Technical Support

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

VCCCD signed a three-year contract with CampusLogic. This software is used by all three colleges to assist us with document collection, Satisfactory Academic Progress appeals, Professional Judgement appeals as well as financial aid communication to students. The software costs are being absorbed by Financial Aid Technology funds which were issued to every college by the State Chancellors Office. Should Financial Aid Technology funds cease, Ventura College would need to identify a source of funding for this software. We are seeking to hire a Financial Aid Data Specialist at each college to help improve our use of this software as well as support our financial aid technical operations.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment, Goal 4: Transfer, Goal 5: Degree/Certificate Completion, Goal 2: First-Term to Second-Term Persistence

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2023

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

CampusLogic continues to be our primary verification software and appeal platform for student document submission and for communication. During the pandemic this proved to be an asset as students and parents were able to submit financial aid requirements remotely utilizing a laptop, computer or cell phone, 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

The software upkeep and enhancements are often delayed due to lack of District Technology support. Adding additional electronic forms will potentially cost more money. Continued support to pay for this software is needed as overall, it provides a great service for students.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

CampusLogic continues to be our primary verification software and appeal platform for student document submission and for communication. The software continues to be an asset as students and parents are able to submit their financial aid requirements remotely utilizing a laptop, computer or cell phone, 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

The software upkeep and enhancements are often delayed due to lack of District Technology support. There are forms and letters that need to be developed. Our operations are constantly inefficient, not on time, and create extra work for our staff to clean-up errors made at the District level. Tasks are not always being performed in a timely manner and this could be cause for a future audit finding. It is imperative that the Financial Aid Offices at all three schools receive additional IT support at the college level. This will in turn provide additional support for our District Senior Programmer.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Improve Financial Aid Office Lobby/Check-In Areas

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

Restructure of the front lobby and check-in space will facilitate privacy and compliance with FERPA, HEA, Privacy Act and Gramm Leach-Bliley Act and staff safety, and provide a more efficient way to serve students. COVID-19 has furthered the need for lobby improvements. In addition, we now have termite damage on various walls in the lobby area.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

08/31/2021

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

No progress made.

The college has contracted with a firm to develop a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan (FMP) in 2021. This process will include garnering widespread campus input on program goals and facilities needs, as well as assisting in prioritizing projects. Therefore, we are declining to rank these requests and encourage their exploration as part of the FMP development.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

With the return of staff and students back to campus, improvements to the front lobby and check-in space are needed to ensure everyone's safety. The termite damage continues and needs to be addressed.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

No progress was made on this objective.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Student privacy and staff safety the financial aid lobby continues to be a concern for the department. The front counter walls do not go up to the ceiling therefore, allowing private conversations to be overheard throughout the office and lobby space. The current check-in area is not private and the use of microphones allows for student and staff voices and private information to carry and be heard by others.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Improve Financial Aid Office Layout - Overall Restructuring of the Office

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

The Financial Aid Office needs an overall restructuring to facilitate privacy and compliance with FERPA and other financial aid privacy regulations, provide a safe working environment, provide additional and much needed private offices for staff, more efficient workflow and compliance with social distancing regulations.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2020 - 2023

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2022

Year 2: Describe Progress Made Towards Objective

No progress made towards this objective.

*The college has contracted with a firm to develop a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan (FMP) in 2021. This process will include garnering widespread campus input on program goals and facilities needs, as well as assisting in prioritizing projects. Therefore, we are declining to rank these requests and encourage their exploration as part of the FMP development.

Year 2: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective.

Student privacy and staff safety continue to be a concern for the department. There are staff who do not have a dedicated office space to meet privately with students to discuss their financial needs. The front counter walls do not go up to the ceiling therefore, allowing private conversations to be overheard throughout the office and lobby space. With the creation of additional financial aid positions (scholarship specialist and financial aid technician), we do not have any permanent office space.

Year 3: Describe Progress Made Towards This Objective

Due to campus closures and adjustments made to keep staff and students safe, there was no progress made on this objective.

Year 3: Discuss Any Challenges You Encountered in Progressing Towards This Objective

Student privacy and staff safety continue to be a concern for the department. We have staff who do not have a dedicated office space to meet privately with students to discuss their financial needs. The front counter walls do not go up to the ceiling therefore, allowing private conversations to be overheard throughout the office and lobby space. The current check-in area is not private and the use of microphones allows for student and staff voices and private information to carry and be heard by others.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Implementation of FAFSA Simplification

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

We will implement a robust training program for our staff and student peer advisors as well as develop an outreach program to prepare our students, our high school partners, and the community for the implementation of FAFSA Simplification. FAFSA Simplification represents a significant overhaul of federal student aid, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form, need analysis, and many policies and procedures for schools that participate in the Title IV programs.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 3: Strengthen local/regional partnerships and community engagement, Goal 2: Increase our community's access to transfer, workforce preparation, and basic skills education

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2023 - 2027

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2025

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FA2301

Description of Resource Request

Financial Aid Specialist (Bilingual)- Hiring a Financial Aid Specialist (Bilingual) to assist in planning, coordinating, and conducting financial aid outreach activities. The passage of AB 469 which requires all high school seniors to complete a financial aid application as a requirement for graduation, has dramatically increased the demand for outreach services. Also, the continued implementation of AB 19/AB2, the college must continue to increase awareness of financial aid, increase the number of financial aid applications, number of students who receive aid and to help provide the necessary tools and resources to get students to complete their educational goals. This person can serve as our financial aid liaison to our K-12 partners.

Estimated Cost

\$97,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

No.

Type

Staff

New/Replacement

New

Previously Requested in Year(s)

2021-2022, 2020-2021

Priority

01

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Related Documents

[Classified Salary Schedule.pdf](#)

[Financial Aid Specialist.pdf](#)

[Organizational Charts_Financial Aid_Administrative_Assistant.pdf](#)

[California Community College DataMart Data.xls](#)

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Please provide a detailed justification as to why this position is needed.

The Financial Aid Office conducts about 70-80 outreach events each year. With the passage of AB469, requests for financial aid presentations and workshops are increasing and we are not properly staffed to keep up with the demand of our local K-12 and community partners. Staff workloads have increased due to the addition of many new State grants and programs, and they are unable to absorb more tasks. Many times, these events take place in the evenings and off-campus requiring the staff to work 10–12-hour days. Being able to hire a bilingual Financial Aid Specialist would enable us to better serve our campus, K-12 partners, and community needs as they relate to financial aid.

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FIN2302

Description of Resource Request

Funds to cover costs of conferences, training sessions, webinars, etc. to assist in providing staff with on-going training as needed to ensure compliance with all federal and state financial aid regulations, further staff development and maintaining wellness.

Estimated Cost

\$20,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

121-36311-XXXX-646000

Type

Other (Not Prioritized)

New/Replacement

New

Previously Requested in Year(s)

2021-2022, 2019-2020, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2020-2021

Priority

06

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request
Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FIN2304

Description of Resource Request

Request to hire a Financial Aid Technician

Estimated Cost

\$84,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

No

Type

Staff

New/Replacement

Replacement

Previously Requested in Year(s)

2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021

Priority

02

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Related Documents

[Classified Salary Schedule.pdf](#)

[DatMart Data.xls](#)

[Financial Aid Technician.pdf](#)

[Organizational Charts Financial Aid Administrative Assistant.pdf](#)

[FAFSA Simplification Information _ Knowledge Center.pdf](#)

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Please provide a detailed justification as to why this position is needed.

During 2022-2023, over 60% of Ventura College students received some type of financial aid. This aid amounted to over \$26 million dollars. Despite having a limited number of staff, we had over 10,000 contacts with students during this past academic year. Having this additional staff member, would guarantee that our front counter services as well as our financial aid computer lab, are fully staffed and that students would receive the necessary assistance in a timely manner. In addition, as new federal and state regulations come through, the Financial Aid Technician would be able to ensure that we are providing the most up-to-date information and services to our students. We host and participate in over 70 outreach events each year. Many of these workshops take place in the evenings after our staff has worked a full 8-hour day. Having additional support would allow us to serve more students and participate in additional community events and increase enrollment to our college.

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Develop Strategic Communication/Marketing Plan

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

We will develop a strategic and timely communication/marketing plan, working comprehensively and collaboratively with the whole campus, OC and MC financial aid, and the District Office so as not to duplicate efforts. This may include:

- A postcard mailing to include information on late start classes and Cash for College events
- Development of Student Services Canvas Page and/or more adequate use of the financial aid canvas page
- Continued or further expanded use of the Ocelot Chatbot and text messaging features
- Financial Aid or Student Services electronic newsletter
- Social media
- Text messaging alternatives (30% of students preferred text communication in the Six Factors Survey)
- Targeted emails at strategic points/key intervals (44% of students preferred email communication in the Six Success Factors survey)

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 2: Increase our community's access to transfer, workforce preparation, and basic skills education, Goal 3: Strengthen local/regional partnerships and community engagement, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2023 - 2027

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

09/30/2027

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FA1708A

Description of Resource Request

Evaluation of existing software/technology, or purchase of new technology/software to assist us in effectively communicating to students.

Estimated Cost

TBD - Text messaging and email functions are currently carried out at the district level; some software already exists, such as Regroup and Starfish, and may serve our purpose but need evaluation and/or training.

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

Yes, FA Technology Funds n 121 38718-XXXX- 615000 or BFAP 121-36311-XXXX-646000

Type

Other (Not Prioritized)

New/Replacement

New

Previously Requested in Year(s)

2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2020-2021

Priority

07

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Related Documents

[Six Factor Survey.pdf](#)

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Please explain how critical this request is to your program's goals.

This request is critical if we want to increase the number of financial aid applicants and the number of students who complete their financial aid requirements and receive financial aid. The various steps to this process and for many of our students and their families this is the first time they are applying for financial aid. Finding better ways and software to communicate with our students will help us close existing equity gaps.

How many students will be impacted by this request?

At least 60% of VC students receive some form of financial aid. Last year we had 10,801 contacts with students, which equaled 4,670 unique students.

What, if any, ongoing maintenance and licensing costs will your request require?

The District and College have standing contracts with these software companies so it is unknown if additional funds will be needed.

Have you identified funding sources to cover ongoing costs?

Yes, Financial Aid Technology funds or General funds.

How will this resource improve the current learning environment, campus services, or operating conditions on campus?

This resource request will help improve the overall student experience at Ventura College and in particular with Financial Aid.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Financial Aid Student Peer Advisor Training Plan

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

Develop a comprehensive training plan for Financial Aid Student Peer Advisors:

- A targeted training plan may include webinars, conferences, District trainings, and in-house cross training, etc.
- Development of a Policy & Procedures manual
- Team building activities

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2023 - 2027

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2025

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FIN2303

Description of Resource Request

Funds to cover the costs of training sessions, webinars, team building activities and/or retreats for the Financial Aid Peer Advisors. It is imperative that we provide on-going training to ensure our student peer advisors are up to date with all federal and state financial aid regulations and that they receive ongoing customer service training.

Estimated Cost

\$5,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

121-36311-XXXX-646000

Type

Other (Not Prioritized)

New/Replacement

New

Priority

08

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Evaluation of Financial Aid Office Policy & Procedures

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

The VCCCD Financial Aid Policy and Procedures manual is reviewed and evaluated annually in preparation for our audits as rules, regulations and procedures constantly change. We will continuously develop/review/revise financial aid policy and procedures in accordance with federal and state regulations as well as VCCCD practices.

We will also evaluate:

- Staff workloads
- Staff caseloads
- Forms/Documents
- Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy and Appeal Process
- the student's experience at check-in, front counter, computer lab, phone, loan processing and appeals

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 4: Enhance institutional effectiveness and accountability to improve innovation and student outcomes, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2023 - 2027

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

09/30/2027

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FA1712

Description of Resource Request

Ability to schedule on-going staff training and staff retreats to assist us in developing a comprehensive and up-to-date policy and procedures manual. Provide time for the Financial Aid Office staff to review, learn, and train on new financial aid regulations and/or software changes, and review workload and caseloads to improve office efficiencies and provide a balanced workload for all staff.

Estimated Cost

\$2,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

Yes, BFAP funds. 121-36311-XXXX-646000

Type

Other (Not Prioritized)

New/Replacement

New

Previously Requested in Year(s)

2021-2022, 2019-2020, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2022-2023

Priority

09

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Improve Financial Aid Office Lobby/Check-In Area

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

Redesigning the front lobby and check-in space will facilitate privacy and compliance with FERPA, HEA, Privacy Act, and Gramm Leach-Bliley Act and staff safety and provide a more efficient way to serve students.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2023 - 2027

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2025

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FA1704

Description of Resource Request

Improvements to the Financial Aid Office Lobby/Check-In Area to bring us in compliance with FERPA, HEA, Privacy Act and Gramm Leach-Bliley Act.

Estimated Cost

\$65,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

No

Type

Facilities

New/Replacement

New

Previously Requested in Year(s)

2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2015-2016, 2014-2015, 2013-2014, 2011-2012, 2022-2023, 2021-2022, 2012-2013

Priority

03

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request

Pirate's Code

Gibbet

Please explain how critical this request is to your program's goals.

This request is critical as it will help us provide a safer working environment for both staff and students. Students will also gain privacy and we will become more compliant with FERPA, HEA, Privacy Act, and Gramm Leach-Bliley Act.

How many students will be impacted by this request?

At least 60% of VC students receive some form of financial aid. Last year we had 10,801 contacts with students, which equaled 4,670 unique students.

What, if any, ongoing maintenance and licensing costs will your request require?

None

Have you identified funding sources to cover ongoing costs?

Not applicable

How will this resource improve the current learning environment, campus services, or operating conditions on campus?

Restructuring the financial aid lobby/check-in area will improve staff morale, provide students with the privacy they deserve, thus improving our campus services and overall student experience with Ventura College.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Improve Financial Aid Office Layout - Overall Restructuring of the Office

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

The Financial Aid Office needs an overall restructuring to facilitate privacy and compliance with FERPA, HEA, Privacy Act, and Gramm Leach-Bliley Act and other financial aid privacy regulations, provide a safe working environment, provide additional and much needed private offices for staff, and more efficient workflow.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps, Goal 5: Effectively manage campus resources to meet student and community needs

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2023 - 2027

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

11/30/2026

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FA1705

Description of Resource Request

Restructuring the layout of the Financial Aid Office.

Estimated Cost

\$100,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

No

Type

Facilities

New/Replacement

New

Previously Requested in Year(s)

2022-2023, 2021-2022, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2016-2017, 2015-2016, 2013-2014, 2014-2015

Priority

05

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request**Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request****Pirate's Code**

Scoundrel

Please explain how critical this request is to your program's goals.

This request is critical to financial aid operations in that staff do not have the adequate workspace to perform their daily duties in a safe and private environment. We currently have 3 staff members who are sitting in the middle of the general office space in cubicles. They have no privacy and/or safe way to meet with students one-on-one. The information they discuss with students via the phone or in person requires us to maintain and follow FERPA and all other privacy laws. We also have some offices that are not safe or adequately laid out for staff to better perform their day-to-day duties.

How many students will be impacted by this request?

About 60% of VC students receive some form of financial aid. During 2022-2023, we had 10,801 student contacts. This equated to 4,670 unduplicated students served by the staff. Adequately, redesigning this space will have a tremendous impact on our students and staff morale.

What, if any, ongoing maintenance and licensing costs will your request require?

Regular office maintenance.

Have you identified funding sources to cover ongoing costs?

General funds

How will this resource improve the current learning environment, campus services, or operating conditions on campus?

This resource request will first, and foremost help improve staff morale by providing a safe and more efficient working environment. In addition to staff feeling valued and cared for, our students will also be able to receive quality service and privacy when dealing with their financial aid matters.

Objective

5 -Year Objective

Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress Outreach Plan

What specific actions will you take to meet this objective?

The Financial Aid Office will partner with VC Academic Counseling, FYE, EOPS, EAC, Veterans, CalWORKs and various other departments on campus to develop a comprehensive support program for students who are not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) or are on Warning.

Which of the following Educational Master Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Increase the success of our students while closing equity gaps

Which of the following Student Equity Plan Goals does this objective align with?

Goal 1: Access and Successful Enrollment

Review Type

Comprehensive

Program Review Cycle

2023 - 2027

Objective Status

Active

Completion Date

06/30/2026

Resource Requests

Resource Request Status

Active

Request Year

2023- 2024

Resource Request Title (First 3 letters of Program Name+2-digit Year + 2-digit Request Number)

FIN2305

Description of Resource Request

With on-going changes in federal and state financial aid regulations, addition of new grants, and the increase in workload, students who are on Suspension, Warning, or close to exceeding timeframe need additional support services and guidance from our staff. Each appeal requires prep work and manual review at both the SAP appeal committee level and for awarding aid if the appeal is approved. Being able to have the support of an additional team member would ensure that students are being served in a timely manner.

Estimated Cost

\$94,000

Do you have categorical funds available to fund this request? If yes, please enter the FOAP below.

No

Type

Staff

New/Replacement

New

Priority

04

Primary Contact For This Resource Request

Alma Rodriguez

Related Documents

[California Community College DataMart Data.xls](#)

[Classified Salary Schedule.pdf](#)

[Financial Aid Specialist.pdf](#)

[Organizational Charts_Financial Aid_Administrative_Assistant.pdf](#)

Administrator, Faculty, or Staff Request

Please provide a detailed justification as to why this position is needed.

The Financial Aid Office awards over \$26 million dollars in federal and state aid. There are over twelve different programs, with varying regulations and requirements. The department consists of 1 Financial Aid Officer, 1 Administrative Assistant, 5 Financial Aid Specialists, and 1 Financial Aid Technician. During 2022-2023, Over 2750 students were on Financial Aid Suspension, Maximum Timeframe, Probation or Academic Plan and 522 submitted SAP appeals. With the support of an additional Financial Aid Specialist, we would be able to conduct SAP workshops, conduct targeted outreach, and refer students to appropriate campus support programs and services

Equipment, Technology, or Facilities Request