



FINANCIAL AID OFFICE 2014-2015 ASSESSMENT REPORT

MISSION

The Financial Aid Office provides opportunities for students to participate in higher education by assisting students to find, apply for, and maintain eligibility for financial aid. The Financial Aid Office also works with campus and community resources by providing financial aid training and forming partnerships to assist students to seamlessly enter school and successfully progress toward graduation and eventual employment. The office ensures timely and accurate processing of financial aid applications, while striving to be in compliance with institutional, system-wide, state and federal regulations.

GOALS

- Decrease processing time from point of application to financial aid award through making processing more efficient.
- Increase off campus service learning work study opportunities.
- Increase opportunities for students to be exposed to financial literacy information.
- Increase collaboration with Academic Advising to ensure students are aware of requirements for academic progress and program completion, and to assist those that are in jeopardy of progressing towards program completion.

DEPARTMENTAL DASHBOARD

- In 2008-09, the unduplicated headcount reported on the annual FISAP was 1424 students. For the 2013-14 year, the number increased to 2975.
- In 2008-09, the total number of student receiving financial aid was 505 (35% of the unduplicated headcount). For 2013-14, the number increased to 1508 (51% of unduplicated headcount).
- In 2008-09 the total amount of Federal financial aid disbursed to students was \$2,617,112 of which \$774,536 was in Grant aid and \$1,842,576 was in Loans. For 2013-14 the total amount of Federal financial aid disbursed to students was \$8,713,219 of which \$3,400,510 was in Grant aid and \$5,312,709 was in Loans.
- The Three Year Cohort Default rate for the past three completed years is 13.6% (2009), 8.3% (2010), and 6.6% (2011).



ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES 2013-2014

Student Learning Outcome 1

Increase competence of Service Learning students trained in the FAFSA. After training in the FAFSA, 100% of the Service Learning students will score 90% or above on the post-test measuring their understanding of basic financial aid concepts. Training is necessary to ensure that Service Learning students are competent in financial aid in order to assist high school students and parents in FAFSA Nights.

Methods and Measures

In Spring 2014 semester, all Service Learning students in the Financial Aids office will participate in a workshop led by an experienced UHWO financial aid officer. A pre-test of their knowledge of financial aid will be administered. After training a post-test will be administered. Pre-tests and post-tests will be scored.

Findings

In October 2013, 20 Service Learning students went through training by the Financial Aid Office. A draft test was created to pre-test and post-test the students. The average pre-test score was 8.8 and the average post-test score was 9.6.

In January 2014, 34 Service Learning students went through training. All took the pre-test, however only 18 took the post test because of logistical problems in one of the sessions. The average pre-test score for those that took both was 6.6 and the average post test score was 8.8.

Status

Because of the high pre-test scores of the students, it was determined that the initial draft of the test was not accurately testing for competencies learned through training. The test will be reworked and administered again for the Spring 2014 training. We would want to see a pre-test score of about 70% and a post-test score of 90% or better.

The test was revised for Spring 2014 and the pre and post test results scores came closer to what the desired expectations was to be.

Conclusions

Some changes are being discussed for the new year training as the FAFSA becomes more complicated. There is discussion of making students do the FAFSA for themselves first just so that everyone has a common starting point from which to move forward to get into more advanced situations. Pre and post tests will still be conducted and assessing this activity will continue for another year.



Program Objective 1

Work with Student Advising to meet with financial aid recipients identified as not making Satisfactory Academic Progress at the end of the semester beginning Spring 2014. Those students who receive intervention will have a higher retention (or persistence) rate than those students who do not.

Methods and Measures

Financial Aid Office will identify financial aid recipients who are not making Satisfactory Academic Progress at the end of the Spring 2014 semester and will contact these students and encourage them to meet with a Student Advisor for advising. Identify those who meet with an advisor and file an appeal for continued financial aid eligibility. Determine whether these students eventually get back in good standing and enroll in the following semester. Compare their return rate with those students who did not meet with an adviser.

Findings

In discussion with Student Advising, it was determined that a sample test of the process would happen at the end of Fall 2013. It was decided that the limited group to work with were the new students which included First time/first year freshmen, and first time transfer students. Initial estimate was run and 476 students were identified in the “new” category prior to final grades being rolled.

Grades were rolled on December 18, 2013 and 489 student were identified as “new”. Of this number, 77 (about 16%) were not making academic progress and the list was sent to Advising as well as a letter sent to the students directing them to meet with an Advisor to appeal this decision.

In comparison with continuing students, of a total of 855 students identified as continuing (not “new”) and 94 (about 11%) were not making academic progress. Of this group, 46 (20.7%) students were previously approved and appeal and did not meet the terms of their appeal.

At the end of Spring 2014, it was decided that the Advisors would see all students that were not making Satisfactory Academic Progress. Of the 1233 total students receiving financial aid for Spring 2014, 229 (18.6%) were not making progress. Of this group, 44 (19.2%) students were previously approved and appeal and did not meet the terms of their appeal. Of the remaining 185 students, 53 (28.7%) met with an advisor to appeal.

Status

Work is currently in progress; however four groups will be tracked to see if students managed to persist in school and if they were able to get into good standing in the following semester. The four groups are:

New students that met with an Advisor

New students that did not meet with an Advisor

Continuing students that filed an appeal with the Financial Aid Office

Continuing students that did not file an appeal with the Financial Aid Office



Conclusions

It is still unclear as to the effectiveness of having Advisors meet with students to assist in filing an appeal for financial aid eligibility. It appears that a small percentage actually take advantage of this option and the first group did not show a significant difference between those that met with a advisors and those that did not. More analysis need to be done in this area and so this assessment activity will continue into 2014-15.

Program Objective 2

In Fall 2014 semester, determine whether incoming Freshmen who are awarded financial aid by May 1, 2014 commit to attending UHWO at a higher rate than those students who were awarded financial aid after May 1, 2014.

Methods and Measures

Identify the first time first year Fall 2014 freshmen financial aid applicants who were awarded financial aid by May 1 as well as the same category of Freshmen who were awarded after May 1. Compare the commitment rate of the two groups.

Findings

When making awards, incoming Freshmen were categorized by those that were awarded prior to May 1, 2014 and those that were awarded after May 1, 2014 up until August 22, 2014.

Of the group that were awarded prior to May 1, 2014, 177 students were awarded financial aid, 85 actually enrolled (48%), and 92 did not enroll (52%).

Of those that were awarded after May 1, 2014, 88 students were awarded financial aid, 74 actually enrolled (84%), and 14 did not enroll (16%).

Conclusions/Status

The results seem to contradict the expectation that an early financial aid award equates to student deciding to commit to attending UHWO. It is possible that the premise of an early award offer does not play a major part in a student's decision to attend UHWO and other reasons why need to be studied in order to find some pattern. The significantly higher rate of students registering for school after receiving financial aid award offers after May 1, 2014 could be that these students filed their financial aid applications after deciding to commit to UHWO.

Clearly, this issue of why a student decides to attend UHWO need to be examined further, as the idea of early financial aid awards equals early commitment to school does not seem to be valid.



UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII®
WEST O'AHU

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES 2014-2015

At this point in time, assessment activities initiated in 2013-2014 will continue as stands.

The Student Learning Outcome 1, while pre and post tests are where we want them to be, students still need more knowledge in assisting families fill out the FAFSA. Changes for 2014-2015 will be a requirement that students come in to training having done the FAFSA for themselves so that more advanced topics could be covered. In addition, a one year commitment will be asked of the Accounting students just so there will be a mixture of new and experienced students at each event.

Program Objective 1 requires long term tracking to judge effectiveness of intervention. One idea to be looked at would be to identify all students (whether receiving financial aid or not) that are not making academic progress according to the more stringent Financial Aid definition and inviting them to meet with an advisor. Another thing to consider is to try to identify students earlier in the semester to try to assist them so they do not fail at the end of the term.

Program Objective 2 needs to be followed for another year only because there may be other factors not considered and to try to formulate a theory as to what is really going on.