

Financial Aid Department Assessment Report Fall 2019

6b. Measurement Tool and Timeline

Our first outcome, related to financial aid advising, relies on survey results from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The most recent data is from 2017.

The outcome associated with tracking FAFSA applicants is monitored weekly by a report generated internally. Our annual results are available in the COCC Fact Book. For students not eligible to complete the FAFSA, the Oregon alternative known as the ORSAA is available. The ORSAA became available for the 2016-17 award year so historical data is not yet available.

Another outcome, related to the student's ability to articulate our policies, looks to the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE). Unfortunately, for the purposes of this report, the College decided to discontinue participation in the SENSE. The most recent data from this survey is from 2015.

Section 7: Data

In looking at the most recent data provided by CCSSE, we see that in regards to student satisfaction with financial aid advising, the number of students "Not at all" satisfied continued to decline to a rate of 6.9% for full-time students and 5.3% for part-time. The results from 2011, at the peak of our enrollment increase, showed a dissatisfaction rate of 16.1% for full-time and 14.5% part-time. Interestingly, the rate of "Very" satisfied students also declined from 2011 to 2017 with part-time students falling from 24.3% to 17.6%. The full-time student response was less dramatic with a smaller decline of 28.2% to 26.1%. In addition, the rate of those who answered "Not applicable" to this question rose dramatically from 2011. The rate increased from 24.8% in 2011 for full-time students to 42.8% in 2017. The part-time rate went from 34.7% to 52.4%.

Regarding financial aid application data, the most recent COCC data reveals that 63.6% of our certificate-degree seeking students submitted the FAFSA to be considered for financial aid in 2018-19. This down slightly from the 2017-18 award year and a continued decline since the 2013-14 award year.

With the decision to not participate in the most recent SENSE survey, we do not have data to review for students' ability to articulate their knowledge of our policies. This outcome will be postponed until other data resources to assess this outcome can be identified.

Section 8: Summary and Analysis

In establishing our outcomes, our goal was to make incremental progress toward improving our services for our students. Based on an initial review of the data, it appears our department is headed in the right direction. No dramatic changes in strategy will be proposed but a continued focus will be placed on improving existing methods and resources. Examples of progress in this area include:

- Calling students registered for a BAR session who need to complete a FAFSA or ORSAA
- Presenting financial aid information in every College Success course
- Participating in Latino nights

The CCSSE data related to our financial aid advising services demonstrate a less negative student perspective. With that said, there was also a drop in very positive feelings about this service. We can speculate as to why students are developing a more neutral view of financial aid advising. There may be a link to the data indicating a decline in usage. Approximately half of the students surveyed had no feedback to offer either because they did not utilize financial aid advising, or the interaction was not worthy of comment. It seems that fewer students are utilizing financial aid advising. This could be considered a positive indication if students are not using the service because their needs are being met through other resources. At this time, we will not propose any dramatic changes in strategy to improve this outcome. The Financial Aid Director will continue to work with the Financial Aid Advisor to identify efficiencies to better utilize her time to meet this need. Future direction will continue to focus on a greater presence both on and off campus as well as improving financial aid documents and resources.

Relating to the outcome seeking to increase student aid applications, the data shows a decline in the percentage of our certificate-degree students applying for aid. This is not entirely unexpected considering the improving economic climate over the past few years, which may be contributing to the decline in applicants and the fact that students are borrowing student loans less frequently. Despite these recent trends, it is the goal of this department to get as many students to apply as possible. We can be somewhat encouraged by our applicant rate as compared to the year prior to the economic recession of 2008. The applicant rate for 2006-07 was just over half (51%) which is significantly less than the nearly two-thirds rate (63.6%) of 2018-19.