

SANTIAGO CANYON COLLEGE

FINANCIAL AID DEPARTMENT
PROGRAM REVIEW

FALL SEMESTER, 2009



I. SIGNATURE PAGE

Santiago Canyon College Program Review

Financial Aid Department

_____	_____
Syed Rizvi	Date
Associate Dean, Financial Aid Department	
_____	_____
Printed Name/Title	Date
_____	_____
Dr. John Hernandez	Date
Vice-President, Student Services	
_____	_____
Printed Name	Date

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

**(VISION; MISSION; SERVICES-FUNCTIONS; FUNDING SOURCES
STATEMENT)**

A. MISSION:

The Financial Aid Department at Santiago Canyon College (SCC) will promote awareness of Financial Aid programs through aggressive, year-round outreach efforts. We will utilize and expand technologies to prepare our students for the transfer experience. Our department will emphasize the value of students' developing proficient on-line application filing, follow-up, and correspondence skills. We will provide students with multiple opportunities and appropriate guidance to support enhancement of their skill sets.

B. VISION:

Our staff will offer levels of service designed to meet the specific needs of each individual student and strive to exceed the expectations of our students, staff, and community. Our staff will set the bar for excellent organization and administration of student financial aid in California Community Colleges by attending cutting-edge year-round training and seminars sponsored by regional, state, and national, organizations.

B. PROGRAMS & SERVICES OFFERED:

Currently the SCC FAO offers student assistance with the following programs:

➤ **Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGW)**

- California's Board of Governors Waiver (BOGW) Program waives enrollment fees for qualified residents of California for the entire school year. Students may receive a waiver for any number of units, with no minimum.
- **BOGW CCCApply online application:**
CCCApply is a statewide online application system for community colleges. The student applies online and does not have to re-enter information when applying to another college on the same system. Once the application is submitted, the Financial Aid Department staff review the application and an email is sent to the student with an approval notice or an inquiry requesting further information if necessary. **The SCC Financial Aid Department was the first department in the district to go live on CCCApply on MAY 1st, 2008.**

➤ **Federal Pell Grants (Pell)**

- The Federal Pell Grant is a federally funded program for undergraduates who demonstrate financial need. The amount of the Pell Grant is based on the cost of attendance, the Expected Family Contribution, and the number of units the student is enrolled in. Eligible students receive payments twice each semester. Students may be awarded up to the maximum amount of \$5,350 per year. The maximum amount of Pell to be awarded will increase to \$5,550 at the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year.

- **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)**
 - The FESOG is a federally funded grant available to undergraduates who demonstrate exceptional financial need, meet the priority deadline, and are Pell Grant recipients. Students are required to be enrolled in a minimum of six units.

- **Federal Academic Competitive Grant (ACG)**
 - For first year college students who followed a “rigorous course of study” in high school and completed high school after January 1, 2006 or for second year college students who completed high school after January 1, 2005. Students must be enrolled in college for at least 6 units, U.S. citizens, receiving a federal Pell Grant, and pursuing a program of study leading to a degree or transfer to a university. The maximum award amount freshmen recipients is \$750 and for sophomores recipients, the maximum award amount is \$1300. Less-than-full-time students’ enrollment will be prorated.

- **Federal Work Study (FWS)**
 - Federal Work-Study Program provides funds that are earned by students through part-time employment to assist students in financing the cost of postsecondary education. Students may work up to 20 hours per week, usually at minimum wage or above. The program allows students to work on campus, off campus, or for a non-profit organization.

- **State of California Cal Grant A (Cal Grant A)**
 - The SCC Financial Aid Department, working in concert with the SCC Admissions and Records Department, is responsible for reporting statistical data to the State of California which is used in determining a student’s eligibility for a Cal Grant A. Qualifying students must have minimum 3.0 GPA and are from low-and middle-income families. Students who qualify for a Cal Grant A do not receive funding while attending SCC but can place their Cal Grant A awards on reserve so that those funds are available to them when they transfer. Cal Grant A is used for tuition and fees only at California public and private colleges as well as some private career colleges. At a CSU or UC university, this Cal Grant A covers system-wide fees up to \$4,026 and \$7,788, respectively. If student chooses to attend a private college, it pays up to \$9,708 toward tuition and fees. To get this Cal Grant A, a student needs to be working toward a two-year or four-year degree.

- **State of California Cal Grant B (Cal Grant B)**
 - Cal Grant B is provided to students from low-income families who are first generation college students. The maximum award amount is \$ 1,551 per year to be used towards books and supplies and is prorated for less-than-full-time students. This grant may be used only in California at qualifying community colleges, universities, and career/technical schools. The maximum amount awarded may not exceed four full-time years of college coursework. Cal Grant B students also receive funding for system-wide fees and tuition costs at a CSU or UC university. If student chooses to attend a private college in California, it pays up to \$9,708 toward tuition and fees. This is also true for most career/technical schools in California.

➤ **State of California Cal Grant C (Cal Grant C)**

- Cal Grant C awards help pay for tuition and training costs and be used only in California at qualifying community colleges, universities, and technical schools. The maximum award is \$576 and is for books, tools and equipment necessary to complete the students educational goals. Students may also receive up to an additional \$2,592 for tuition at schools other than a California Community College as long as it they are in the state of California. To qualify, a student must enroll in vocational program that is at least four months long at a California Community College, a private college, or a vocational school. Funding is available for up to two years, depending on the length of a student's program.

➤ **Federal Family Education Loan Programs (FFELP)**

- The Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD) participates in the Stafford Loan Program the Federal Parent Loan Program (PLUS). Stafford Loans can be need based or non-need based. The Stafford Loan Program and Federal Parent Loan Program are student loan programs governed by the FFELP. These loans can be need based or non-need based. Both Stafford and PLUS Loans are borrowed through the bank of the borrower's choice. These programs are all loans which must be repaid by the student or the student's parents.
- All Stafford Loans are either subsidized (the government pays the interest while students are in school) or unsubsidized (the student pays all the interest) while the PLUS loans are unsubsidized. Dependent students may borrow \$3,500 (as freshmen) or \$4,500 (as sophomores) in subsidized/unsubsidized loans plus \$2,000 in additional unsubsidized loans per academic year. Dependent students may not exceed the aggregate loan amount of \$31,000 during the course of completing a four-year degree. Independent students may borrow \$3,500 (as freshmen) or \$4,500 (as sophomores) in subsidized/unsubsidized loans plus \$6,000 in additional unsubsidized loans per academic year. Independent students may not exceed the aggregate loan amount of \$57,500 during the course of completing a four-year degree. Dependent student's parents may borrow the total cost of attendance per academic year on the student's behalf through the PLUS loan program.
- To qualify for these student loans at SCC, a student must: meet all qualifications for federal student aid; meet all Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy requirements; complete a FAFSA Application; turn in a completed Financial Aid packet and all required documents to the Financial Aid Office; receive a Financial Aid Award Letter for the current academic year; complete an SCC Loan Packet ; an Entrance Counseling Workshop; complete the on-line component of the application and entrance/exit counseling; and be enrolled in a minimum of 6 units.
- **Subsidized Stafford Loans**
To receive a subsidized Stafford Loan, a student must be able to demonstrate financial need. About 2/3 of subsidized Stafford loans are awarded to students with family Adjusted Gross Incomes of under \$50,000. These loans do not accrue interest while a student maintains at least half-time enrollment in consecutive semesters and for the six month grace period after they drop below six units. Repayment can be deferred until after the grace period is over.
- **Un-Subsidized Stafford Loans**
To receive an unsubsidized Stafford Loan, a student need not demonstrate financial need. These loans do accrue interest while a student is in school. The

interest rate is determined by the FFELP and may vary from academic year to academic year. Students must maintain at least half-time enrollment in consecutive semesters and for the six month grace period after they drop below six units or they will be required to begin repayment. Repayment can be deferred until after the grace period is over. To reduce the interest owed after the student has dropped below 6 units, a student may opt to pay interest on these loans during the time a student is enrolled in at least 6 units.

- **Federal Parent Loan Programs (PLUS)**

A Parent (PLUS) Loan is only available for dependent students. Parents (PLUS) Loans are borrowed by the student's parent, on the student's behalf, but the student's parent must pass a credit check first. Repayment of these loans begins one month after the disbursement of the loan funds.

FUNDING SOURCES

Currently, the Financial Aid Department receives funding from the General Fund and State Board Financial Aid Programs (BFAP) categorical funds.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

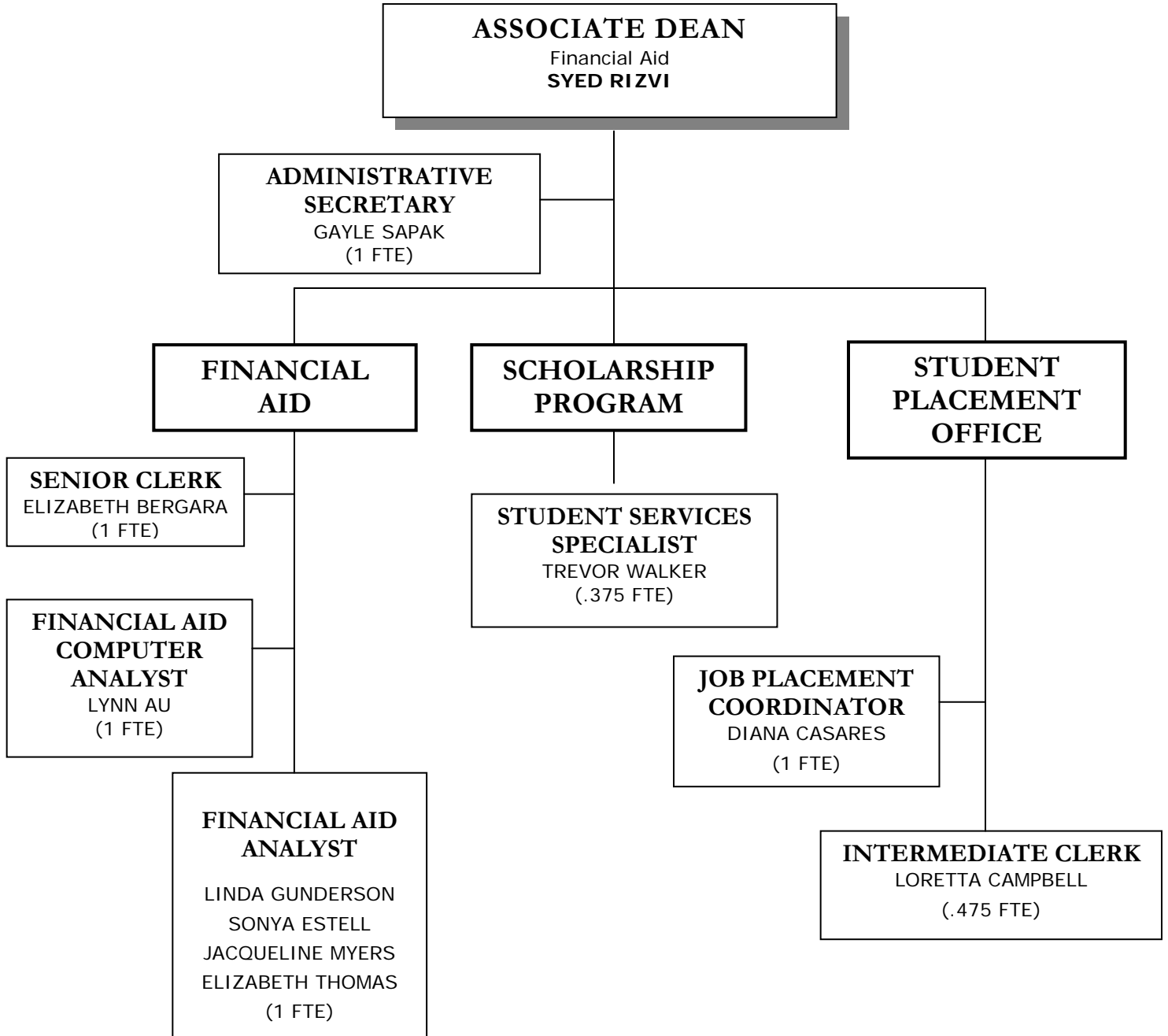
A. CURRENT STAFFING

**Classified Financial Aid Staff
Santiago Canyon College**

Syed Rizvi	Financial Aid Associate Dean
Vacant- Hiring Freeze	Financial Aid Coordinator
Lynn Au	Financial Aid Computer Analyst
Jacque Myers	Financial Aid Analyst
Liz Thomas	Financial Aid Analyst
Linda Gunderson	Financial Aid Analyst
Sonya Estell	Financial Aid Analyst
Elizabeth Ortiz	Financial Aid Senior Clerk
Vacant – Hiring Freeze	Financial Aid Student Services Specialist and Part-time Financial Aid Analyst

B. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

SCC FINANCIAL AID DEPARTMENT



IV. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

**(IDENTIFY OUTCOMES; METHODS, IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT
PROCESSES; RESULTS; DECISIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS)**

SANTIAGO CANYON COLLEGE
STUDENT SERVICES
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT REPORT
2008-2009

Department Name – The Financial Aid Department

Department Mission Statement – The Financial Aid Department at Santiago Canyon College will promote awareness of Financial Aid programs and services through aggressive, year-round in-reach/outreach efforts. We will utilize and expand technologies to prepare our students for the transfer experience. Our department will emphasize the value of students' developing proficient on-line application filing, follow-up, and correspondence skills. We will provide students with multiple opportunities and appropriate guidance to support enhancement of their skill sets.

Student Learning Outcomes - In our present student population, we typically have three types of technical skill sets: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Currently, the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) and Board of Governor Fee Waiver (BOGW) can be completed either online or via paper. The paper applications can take up to six weeks to process, but the online application has a turnaround time of 48 hours. Aside from the advantage of a swifter turnaround time, developing proficient online skills benefits most students who transfer to a four-year institution as, in general, most four-year institutions expect students to possess the necessary skills to complete the FAFSA and other functions online.

The SCC Financial Aid Department promotes the online process as the primary method of application processing. We believe that a financial aid department which makes no effort to inform applicants on how to use the online application processes is performing a disservice to their students in preparing them for the future. For this reason, the Financial Aid Department created the following student learning outcome for 2007-2008 and we have decided to keep the same SLOs for the next three years (2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11):

As a result of utilizing the online resources to apply for financial aid programs and services, students will develop skills to communicate and process web related applications.

Methods - The Financial Aid Department utilized the following tracking mechanisms to monitor student usage of online services:

- Financial Aid Management System (FAMS)
- Department of Education Electronic reports
- CCC Apply website for the California Community Colleges
- Open Net-Sallie Mae reports for electronic loan processing.

Those students who completed the online FAFSA were assessed for the learning outcomes.

Implementation of Assessment Process

- In order to accomplish our SLO, we conducted a staff meeting and established the following methods, tools and resources needed to implement our SLO:

1. Set up computer workstations in the "E" building lobby as a place to apply for the students without at-home online access. Another objective was that students be able to access a Financial Aid Department staff member immediately, if they had questions.
2. Designated a workstation for student use in the Financial Aid Office. The purpose of the "in office" workstation is to provide one-on-one counseling for the low percentage of students whose online skill sets are considered to be at the beginner level and for students who are in need of one-on-one encouragement/coaching.
3. Planned and conducted several in-reach and outreach activities which included:
 - a. Cash for College Workshops – students received hands-on instruction in a computer lab environment to aid them in completing their FAFSA.
 - b. Parent Nights – presented a section-by-section format of the FAFSA to educate parents on the financial aid programs and the application processes.
 - c. Financial Aid Awareness Days – provided students with general information about financial aid programs, the FAFSA application process, online filing assistance, and answered questions.
 - d. Classroom Presentations – presented a general overview of financial aid programs and the application processes in a Q & A format.
4. Initiated online access via the SCC Financial Aid Department website for students to complete the Board of Governor Fee Waiver (BOGW) and provided valuable links to other financial aid programs, services and online application sites.
5. Created/Edited/Provided informative publications regarding financial aid programs and processes which included basic information guides on "How to Apply for Financial Aid Online".

We decided that upon conducting the above activities we would evaluate our SLO via a student survey. In spring of 2009, in consultation with the RSCCD Research and Development Department, we created a student survey. By conducting this survey we hoped to ascertain whether or not steering students to the online financial aid application process enhanced their skills for similar tasks in future.

1. Financial Aid Department staff members dispersed the survey to all students who completed or attempted to complete the FAFSA and BOGW online.
2. The Financial Aid Department submitted this data to the Research and Development Department for a calculated result report and proceeded to analyze the data.

RESULTS

- Generally, respondents were satisfied with the online process:

- Almost all respondents (95%) completed their FAFSA online.
- More than half of respondents reported that completing the worksheet prior to applying with the FAFSA online was very helpful.
- Slightly more than two-thirds of respondents access the Internet daily (68%) and most respondents have, to varying extents, used a similar online application process in the past (89%).
- Most respondents (94%) believe that their experience with the FAFSA application increased their comfort and skill level with this type of online process.

Most respondents are likely to conduct similar business via the Internet in the future, including filing their FAFSA and/or BOGW online next year. Most also believe that their experience with the FAFSA application increased their comfort and skill level with this type of online process.

Decisions and Future Recommendations

- This was the Financial Aid Department's second effort to implement the financial aid SLO. As a department, we have decided to keep the same SLO for at least four years in order to accurately analyze the results so that we may continue to improve on the outcomes, and monitor the effects of this SLO.

We will remain steadfast in our approach to assisting students with obtaining financial aid by demonstrating patience and understanding to our students. We realize that obtaining financial aid, like any other process at the collegiate level, is a learning process. To that end, staff will integrate training techniques to adopt effective communication strategies with our current and prospective students so that we may provide them with effective and exceptional service.

We will utilize and expand technologies to prepare students for post-collegiate life by providing online filing, follow-up, and correspondences. We believe that our SLO is already preparing students for four-year institutions, e-commerce and other financial related processes requiring serious attention to detail, such as: loan applications, mortgage applications, tax filings, etc.

Conclusion

- Our staff will offer levels of service designed to meet the specific needs of each individual student and strive to exceed the expectations of our students, staff, and community. Our staff will set the bar for excellent organization and administration of financial aid programs and services in the California Community College system by attending cutting-edge, year-round training and seminars sponsored by regional, state, and national organizations.

It is the responsibility of the Associate Dean of Financial Aid and the Financial Aid Department staff to review the results of this study and attempt to implement any recommendations that they deem beneficial, desirable, and manageable.

Santiago Canyon College
Results of the Financial Aid SLO Survey
Compiled by RSCCD Research Department
June 2009

Rancho Santiago Community College District



Background

To assess the extent to which the Financial Aid Department's operations contribute to Santiago Canyon College students' learning outcomes, participants were asked to answer questions about the various aspects of the online financial aid application process. During spring 2009, individuals who came into the Financial Aid Office responded to this survey. Feedback about this process will help staff:

1. to determine, directly, how efficient and user-friendly the online loan application process is and identify possible areas needing improvement, and
2. to provide an indication of the levels of our students' transferable skills in technology applications, life skills, and furthermore, to identify possible areas in which we can better prepare our students for their futures.

Summary of Results

Generally, respondents were satisfied with the online process:

- Almost all respondents (95%) completed their FAFSA online.
- More than half of respondents report that completing the worksheet prior to processing the FAFSA online was very helpful.
- Slightly more than two-thirds of respondents access the Internet daily (68%) and most respondents have, to varying extents, used a similar online application process (89%).
- Most respondents (94%) believe that their experience with the FAFSA application increased their comfort and skill level with this type of online process.
- Most respondents are likely to conduct similar business via the Internet in the future, including filing their FAFSA and/or BOGW online next year.

V. DATA

(INCLUDE QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DATA;
SURVEY-EVALUATION RESULTS;
AND OTHER RELEVANT DATA TO ASSESS
PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS)

Detail of Results

	Online	Paper by mail		
1. How was the FAFSA completed?	95%	5%		
2. How was the BOGW application completed?	76%	24%		
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	Yes	No		
3. Did you seek assistance from Financial Aid staff prior to or during the electronic application process?	80%	20%		
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	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not Very Helpful	Not Applicable
4. How helpful was completing the worksheet prior to processing the FAFSA online?	54%	33%	4%	9%
5. If you have communicated with our office via email for financial aid processing, how helpful was the experience?	46%	21%	11%	21%
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	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
6. Before filling out the FAFSA or BOGW, how frequently did you use the Internet?	68%	22%	7%	4%
7. How frequently do you use this type of online application process in other situations, such as applying for a job, opening a bank account, paying bills, etc?	32%	26%	31%	11%
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	Yes	No		
8. Did you read the entire instructions on how to fill out the FAFSA or BOGW before starting the application?	80%	20%		
9. Did you gather all the necessary support information/documentation before you sat down to enter the information asked?	86%	14%		
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10. How many times did you have to return to the application before you submitted it?				
27% None				
67% 1 or 2 times				
7% 3 or more times				
11. Where did you complete this process?				
63% At home				
32% At the college				
3% At the library				
2% Other location (<i>FAFSA Workshop</i>)				
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	Definitely	Most Likely	Not Likely	Definitely Not
12. Do you plan to file your FAFSA or BOGW online next year?	70%	24%	6%	1%
13. How likely are you to complete a different type of application online in the future?	43%	37%	15%	5%
14. Since completing the online FAFSA or BOGW, will you be comfortable completing a renewal FAFSA online?	61%	31%	6%	2%
15. Has utilizing these online processes at SCC been helpful in preparing you to handle future electronic applications?	65%	29%	4%	2%

**Santiago Canyon College
Yearly Comparison on Financial Aid Awards
2006/2007 through 2009/2010 (In Progress)**

Academic Year	# Applied	# of FAFSA's Processed	# of BOGW's Processed	# of Students Disbursed Non-BOGW Aid	Non-BOGW Financial Aid Disbursed or Awarded	BOGW A, B & C Disbursed or Awarded	Total BOGW & Financial Aid Combined
2006-2007	2,153	2,014	3,142	768	\$2,122,596	\$823,314	\$2,945,910
% difference from 06/07 year vs. 07/08 year	23.22%	24.28%	13.46%	32.03%	36.87%	12.86%	30.16%
2007-2008	2,653	2,503	3,565	1,014	\$2,905,255	\$929,188	\$3,834,443
% difference from 07/08 year vs. 08/09 year	27.14%	29.05%	1.54%	32.05%	40.15%	0.45%	30.53%
2008-2009	3,373	3,230	3,620	1,339	\$4,071,837	\$933,324	\$5,005,161
% difference from 08/09 year vs. 09/10 year As of 2/18/2010. These numbers will change significantly by year end.	39.02%	year in progress	4.25%	year in progress	year in progress	60.91%	year in progress
2009-2010 As of 2/18/2010. These numbers will change significantly by year end.	4,689	3,311	3,774	1,047	\$5,937,291	\$1,501,788	\$7,439,079
Total % difference from 06/07 year vs. 09/10 year	117.79%	64.40%	20.11%	36.33%	year in progress	82.41%	year in progress
		1,297 more FAFSA's processed so far in 09/10 than in 06/07				\$678,474 more BOG awarded so far in 09/10 than in 06/07.	

***Year is still in progress**

Still processing aid final dollars figure will vary

CHART DEMONSTRATING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN 2006/2007 VS. 2009/2010

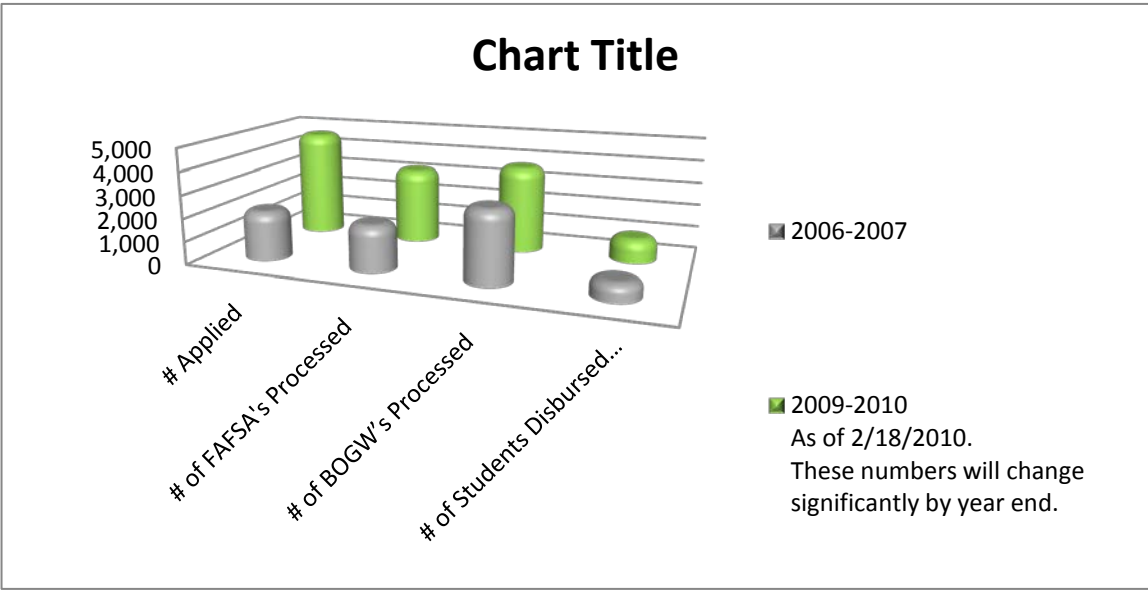
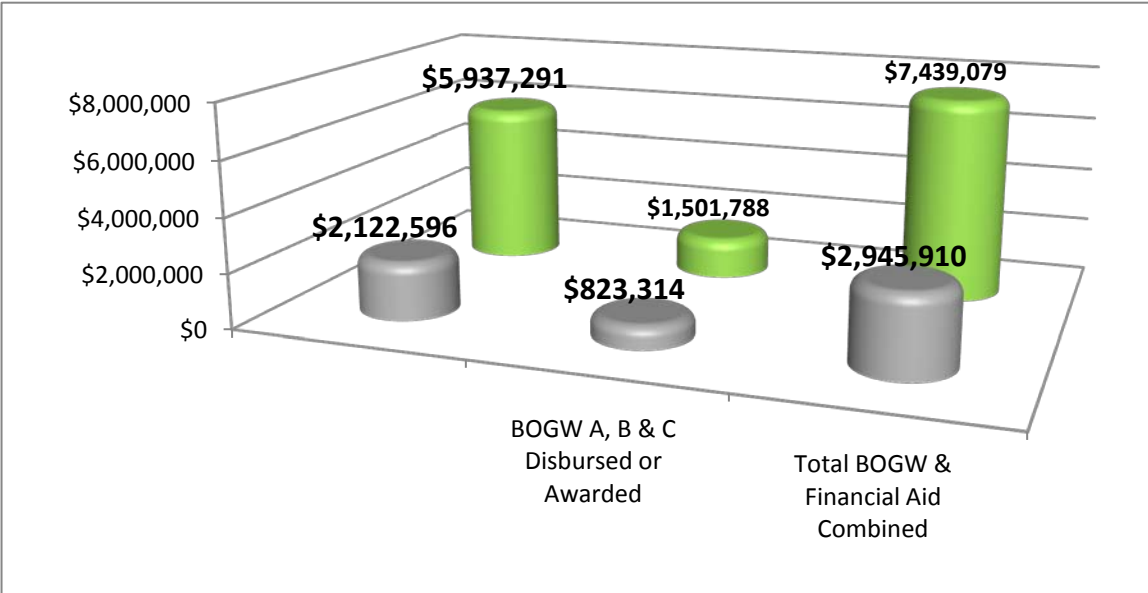


CHART DEMONSTRATING AID AWARDED 2006/2007 VS. 2009/2010



V. ANALYSIS

(EVALUATES THE STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES,
OPPORTUNITIES AND NEEDS OF YOUR PROGRAM:

Strengths and Accomplishments:

In April 2005, the SCC Financial Aid Department received its first Title IV Code (to be used by an independent college campus) from the United States Department of Education (USDE). It had a one-year provisional status with renewal due in June 2006. During the 2005/2006 award year, Syed Rizvi was hired as Director of Financial Aid to help SCC put together the SCC Financial Aid Program and get the program off the ground. The new Director of Financial Aid put together an implementation plan, developed policies and procedures, and applied for SCC's participation in the State Cal Grant programs. This was all done within the short time period of six to eight months.

After a successful system implementation of the PowerFAIDS software program utilized processing student financial aid, the SCC Financial Aid Department processed its first group of students for the spring 2006 term. In June of 2008, starting for the academic year of 2008/2009 and onwards, the SCC Financial Aid Department was granted a non-provisional, **FIVE** year Participation Agreement with the approval from the U.S. Department of Education under the Higher Education Act's Title IV Code. The same year, the State of California granted the SCC Financial Aid Department a similar approval for participation in the California Grant Programs.

The following are some of the significant accomplishments achieved since 2005:

- Presented 100's of student in-reach and outreach activities since 2005.
- Expanded BFAP-funded financial aid programs and services, in collaboration with SCC's college leaders and departments, to increase the number of SCC students who benefit.
- Completed successful migration of mandatory conversions to PowerFAIDS. In addition, accomplished an extremely successful implementation of the Datatel financial aid component (which is more than 60% of the entire Datatel Student module).
- Concurrent to PowerFAIDS migration, formulated plans and procedures for Financial Aid Department staff members to be trained on the new integrated system—Datatel. Implementation of Datatel was scheduled for the processing of 2008-2009 award year.
- Coordinated with the Information Technology Systems Department (ITS) to implement interfaces with the mainframe and Datatel to create new reports. This allowed for the creation and utilization of computer reports that generate certain financial aid functions, which were run on specific dates in order to maintain program compliance.
- Supported the PowerFAIDS software program through the 2008-2009 award year, and facilitated implementation of the Datatel system for processing students' financial aid for the 2009-2010 award year.
- As a part of data analysis, it is pretty apparent that we have double digit increases in every facet of the operation. It is clearly evident, that as a separate institution, we always needed our own Financial Aid Program and the numbers above speaks for themselves.

Challenges:

The Financial Aid Department entered the "Datatel Era" in the summer of 2009, while facing and trying to survive severe budget reductions within the District. The Program Review identifies three major challenges and opportunities:

The SCC Financial Aid Department's short-term staffing is currently funded through the State of California's Board Financial Assistance Program (BFAP). Clearly, these positions need to be made permanent through stable and reliable funding, as without any clerical and technical positions the SCC Financial Aid Department's operations would come to stand still. At the start of the 2009 fall semester, in spite of the additional temporary back fill positions, the SCC Financial Aid Department was operating with minimal staffing. In addition, two positions were lost during the past year and one part-time position was lost the previous year due to the hiring freezes: one full-time Coordinator and one full-time Student Services Specialist, as well as a part-time Loan Specialist. **Our staffing is really stretched very thin.**

1. The greatest challenge to Financial Aid Department in the future will be to find funding to replace lost positions as well as grow new positions in the Financial Aid Department. In order to meet the growing demands of administering financial aid programs and meet the needs of the increasing influx of students with financial need, this staffing is imperative. With future plans for implementation of file imaging systems that work in concert with Datatel, the Financial Aid Department needs to reorganize positions to handle new, complex technical requirements needed to maintain Datatel. We have to meet the growth demand with technological enhancements and additional permanent staffing.
2. The need for space, for record storage, archiving, and easy access to research student information has always been a challenge, but in times of economic duress, it becomes a lower cost priority in the general budget. The challenge going forward is to keep this problem in the forefront of the ITS Department and to continue to fund third party systems related to data storage and access for applications, registration audit trails, archived records, and other documentation within the Financial Aid Department. This need can be addressed by purchasing, implementing and utilizing an imaging system for the Financial Aid Department. An imaging system would allow for the following:
 - Creating and maintaining paperless files and records.
 - Creating and maintain electronic "paper trails" that could be easily accessed and also to secure and protect information, files and records from theft or loss.
 - A faster and more effective means of delivering students their financial aid and also providing a means for more efficiently and accurately compiling reports, audit trails, sorting and archiving essential data.
 - Minimize the need for storage space of extensive files and records for which the Financial Aid Department is required to keep. Space for manpower and storage is always a limited commodity at any college. This is especially true when the district is facing budget cuts and has no means of investing in additional "real estate". An imaging system would make it possible for expanding the uses of this limited resource at a time when it is sorely needed and may actually save the district money.
3. The capacity for change and innovation is a natural consequence when budget cuts occur. The biggest challenge is to ensure timely delivery of financial aid to our students and meet the needs of a program that is in a growth mode. This presents an opportunity for us to maintain performance through redirecting efforts to evaluate processes that now must be accomplished differently. Although it creates a chain reaction of changes, when fully implemented, it will improve the effectiveness of our department. However, there is only so much that can be handled via planning and the implementation of planned changes. At the end of the day, the bottom line resurfaces in the challenge to address the need for sufficient staff to efficiently do the work required to effectively deliver financial aid to our students in need.

VII. FINDINGS & FUTURE DIRECTION

(SUMMARIZE FINDINGS AND INDICATE HOW THE FINDINGS HAVE SHAPED DECISION MAKING; AREAS OF CONCERN ARE ADDRESSED; PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE DIRECTION OF YOUR DEPARTMENT (PROGRAMS & SERVICES) AND ADDRESS APPLICABLE NEEDS (FUNDING FACILITIES, PERSONNEL AND TECHNOLOGY)

Facilities

The Financial Aid Office is currently located in the E building, room E-104. This office space is small. Therefore, as enrollment grows the office space will need to increase accordingly. When the campus decides to build a new student services building, the Financial Aid Department would like to see a designated Financial Aid Office. It is essential that there be there will be sufficient work and storage space, and adequate accommodations for a student waiting area. In addition, the new office should include a counter design which is user-friendly to disabled students; and one that would ensure student privacy during advisor/student consultations.

Staffing

In order for the Financial Aid Office to grow, it is imperative that there is a balance between the processing staff and the support/clerical staff. The SCC Financial Aid Office is well staffed on the processing side but it is understaffed in the support/clerical side. To obtain a healthy balance in staffing, two technician positions will be needed as soon as possible to:

- Prepare the student files for processing.
- Complete the *extensive* manual work for the Datatel system integration.
- Input data to handle the new responsibilities of BOGW compliance requirements for the Management Information Systems (MIS) annual report submission. This function of maintaining compliance with the BOGW program was not previously a part of the Financial Aid Department's day-to-day operation.

Technology

In moving forward with the Datatel system implementation, the goal is to design a system that fosters a service-oriented experience to the students and that emphasizes a student-centered environment for the staff.

To achieve the goal stated above, the automation of communication and delivery of financial processes is necessary. By utilizing the online resources to apply for financial aid, students will develop technological skills to communicate and process tasks via the Internet. Students will be able to:

- Complete and submit the FAFSA online
- Download and print Financial Aid forms
- Submit financial aid forms online
- Submit the BOGW Waiver application online
- Complete and submit the online Entrance and Exit Interviews for The William D. Ford Direct Loan Program (which will replace the FFELP student loan program at the onset of the 2010 fall semester).
- Access other financial aid resources via web (i.e. scholarship and job placement websites)

This will result in:

- Empowering students to utilize technological resources available to them.
- Prepare students for future interactions at four-year institutions where students will receive less "face-time" with the financial aid department staff members.
- Empower students to be more responsible in meeting timelines and adept at independently following instructions.
- Students will develop the necessary skills to understand their own financial circumstances and manage their finances while attending college and beyond.

The processes will include but are not limited to the following:

- Implementation of electronic processing of BOGW forms.

- Implementation of the Web Advisor module of Datatel which enables the students to access the information online 24/7.
- Implementation of Federal Direct Loan Program. (This will mean taking on a whole new reconciliation process of several millions of dollars).
- Implementation of electronic loan processing to ensure compliance with the Title IV William D. Ford Direct Loan program and to promote student loan usage over student/family credit card usage (which will result in reducing the estimated cost of attendance for students).
- Creation of a bridge between the SCC Financial Aid Department and the SCC Bookstore systems, eliminating the current situation experienced by some students who do not have the financial resources to purchase textbooks at the onset of the semester. These less fortunate students have to delay the purchase of their books until they receive the first disbursement of their financial aid. Instead, this bridge would allow these students to purchase their books in a timely manner by charging their purchases against their pending disbursements.