



D. Kahealani Nae'ole
davileig@hawaii.edu

Office Location: Ho'okipa
(808) 984-3519

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE 2015-16 ASSESSMENT REPORT

MISSION

The mission of the UHMC Financial Aid Office is to promote access to higher education and to support student success. The Financial Aid Office is committed to regular assessment of programs and services to ensure continuous contribution to student learning and success, aligned with institutional and system priorities.

GOALS

Overall Outcomes for Student Affairs:

- Enrollment: Target key enrollment sectors that are underserved or have recruitment potential to expand access
- Hawaii Graduation Initiative: Increase the participation and completion rates of students, particularly Native Hawaiian, low-income, and those from underserved regions
- High Performance: Identify and change structures and processes that potentially impede student progress or student success

Department Goals to support outcomes and UHMC Strategic Directions:

- Increase awareness of financial aid programs and services to promote access and student success (*Quality of Learning, 4.d and 4.e, Student Success, 2.a, Hawai'i Papa O Ke Ao, 1.c and 1.d.iii, Community Needs & Workforce Development, 4.b*)
- Promote financial literacy to reduce default rate, develop smarter borrowers, and reduce student loan indebtedness (*Student Success, 1.b and 1.c, 2.a and 3.a, Hawai'i Papa O Ke Ao, 1.c and 1.d.iii*)

DEPARTMENTAL DASHBOARD

- 3781 Enrolled home students
- 4559 FAFSA applications processed
 - 52% of those who filed FAFSA enrolled at UHMC (2386/4559)
- 58% (2176) enrolled students were offered some form of FA (2176/3781)
- 46% (1612) students received Pell grant
 - 31% (505) of Pell grant recipients NH
- 55% (2039) students received some form of FA
 - 32% (661) of FA recipients NH
- Total \$13 million in financial aid disbursed
 - \$7 million in grants and scholarships
 - \$6 million in student loans
- 29.7% Cohort Default Rate (CDR) for FY 2013 cohort, CDR increased by 1.5% from FY 2012 cohort

POINTS OF PRIDE

- Successfully avoided US DOE sanctions in the face of a high default rate. Staff efforts and interventions resulted in enough of a decrease that UHMC's CDR is below 30%.
- Second highest scholarship app submission out of all CC's (next nearest campus was under by 100)
- Despite personnel shortages this past year, FAO has a high participation in both public outreach and campus community events. Our staff contributions go way above and beyond what is expected and we always do it well.

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES 2015-16

Learning Outcome 1: Student Success, 1.b, 1.c, 2.a, 3.a

NSO students will file a FAFSA at a higher rate than enrolled student population

NSO students will be awarded financial aid at a higher rate than enrolled student population

Methods and Measures

Collaboration with FYE Coordinator in working with NSO students:

- Student Assistants provided continuous follow-up with students who attended NSO but did not file FAFSA.
- Student Assistants provided continuous follow-up with students who had missing requirements for awarding.

Findings

80% NSO students filed a FAFSA (280/350)
compared to enrolled student population of 63% - 2386/3781

65% NSO students were awarded financial aid (228/350)
compared to enrolled student population of 58% - 2176/3781

Conclusions/Status

Methods for NSO students have consistently resulted in a higher rate of FAFSA application and awarding compared to general student population. This is largely due to constant and consistent follow-ups carried out by Student Assistants, resulting in positive impacts that include an increase in FAFSA app submissions and completion processes.

Student Assistants are a vital part of the Financial Aid Office. Additional support is necessary, last year 717 referrals were processed by FAO staff. Increasing SA funding will enable FAO staff to work more efficiently on high-level assignments with minimal interruption by allowing us to offer more hours and train SA's on addressing advanced tasks.

Program Objective 1: Student Success, 2.a, 2.c, 3.a; Comm Needs & WF Dev. 4.b, HPOK 1.c, 1.d.iii

Facilitate submission of FAFSAs via hands-on submission workshops.

Methods and Measures

Conducted the following workshop for students:

- Jan - Feb 2016: series of hands on FAFSA workshops at local high schools: Baldwin, Maui High, St. Anthony, King Kekaulike, Seabury Hall, Moloka'i High, KSBE - Maui
- 253 high school students and parents served
- 94 families submitted survey

Findings

- 100% agreed that the workshop was worth their time and effort
- 96% felt they fulfilled their purpose for attending the workshop
- 86% attended the workshop with the intent of completing the FAFSA
- 81% completed and submitted the FAFSA and 19% saved the information for later submission
- 82% reported to be *Very Satisfied* with services received and 17% reported *Satisfied*

Conclusions/Status

Survey results indicate that participants were very satisfied with the workshop. However, many needed additional help at the time of FAFSA completion. Plans are to continue hosting hands-on FAFSA workshops for high school students and continue to expand efforts to current students, first-year students in particular.

Learning Outcome 2: Quality of Learning, 4.d, Student Success, 1.a, 1.b

Students who receive financial literacy services will demonstrate increased knowledge of their borrower responsibilities. Proactive default prevention methods will lead to decrease in default rate.

Methods and Measures

Loan Coordinator facilitated individual appointments and enhanced loan exit counseling sessions to help borrowers with various needs:

- 128 individual borrowers serviced (unduplicated)
 - Contact type
 - 88 Phone calls
 - 36 Walk-Ins
 - 4 Other Contacts
 - 38 students in default; 34% were moved into good standing (13/38)
 - 51 students in delinquency; 66% were placed in good standing (34/51)
 - 39 students received general loan counseling (repayment, deferment, forbearance, etc)
- Enhanced exit loan counseling
 - 92 Spring Graduates, outreach via email and mail
 - 53 enhanced loan exit counseling contacts

Findings

Respondents to our loan exit counseling survey showed:

- 98% of students found the exit counseling session helpful
- 80% of students found the repayment information they received extremely useful
- 78% of students found the loan servicer/lender information they received extremely useful
- 72% of students were very confident about accessing their loan information after the session
- 70% of students felt that they were very knowledgeable about their student loans after the session

Conclusions/Status

Due to a loss of personnel last year and a delay in filling the position, the above is 7 months' worth of targeted efforts to implement default management strategies. Borrowers who took advantage of student loan/financial literacy services demonstrated increased knowledge of their balance, repayment options, and are better informed about their responsibilities. Taking proactive measures to educate students will help develop well-informed borrowers and help reduce default rate in future years. Plans are to continue similar services and utilize qualitative measures. Efforts will not directly impact or reduce Cohort Default Rate (CDR), but will create a culture of awareness and reduce student loan indebtedness. We will be re-evaluating survey methods, questions, and learning outcomes to assess impact of efforts.

Program Objective 2: Quality of Learning, 4.d, Student Success, 1.b, 1.c, 2.a, 3.a

Targeted communication with loan borrowers in student loan cohort will result in decrease of Cohort Default Rate (CDR), currently 29.7%.

If CDR reaches 30%, college will be required to formally establish a default prevention task force. If 30% for two consecutive years, college could lose all Title IV funding.

Methods and Measures

Borrower Connect Data – notifications for grace period, delinquency, default (10/2015-9/2016):

- 3544 letters mailed
- 3117 emails sent
- 785 phone calls

The Student Loan coordinator regularly contacted students entering grace period, in grace period, in delinquency, and in default using NSLDS database and Borrower Connect software.

- 399 students in delinquent status converted to good standing
- 54% (214) of cured students converted to good standing after receiving communication via Borrower Connect activities

Findings

Maximizing reporting functions will provide the ability to communicate with potential defaulters, strategically and intentionally.

Since hiring personnel 7 months ago, significant energies have been placed on default prevention efforts, which are proactive and helpful in raising awareness. However, we need to continue focused efforts on borrowers in CDR cohort, since these efforts will directly impact CDR.

Conclusions/Status

The main goal will be to maximize Borrower Connects communication functions to avert delinquent students. Averting students from default will lead to reduced default rate. Continue with current outreach strategies i.e. phone calls, letters, and emails; however, enhanced letters and emails should be implemented. Increase number of phone calls, particularly to students who are in late stages of delinquency and approaching default status; and expand target group to include 1-30 delinquency in phone call campaign. Reduced default rate is a long term goal that current strategies may not impact for up to 3 years.

Learning Outcome 3: Quality of Learning, 4.d, Student Success, 1.b, 1.c, 2.a, 3.a

50% of students on financial aid probation will successfully meet their academic conditions

Methods and Measures

Students who are suspended from financial aid because of their academic history have the right to an appeal. If an appeal is approved, students can receive financial aid on a probationary basis. Students on probation are required to meet with both an academic counselor and a financial aid before receiving aid.

In the meeting with a financial aid counselor, the following issues are addressed:

- Grades and completion of coursework necessary to continue getting financial aid
- Review of remaining lifetime Pell grant eligibility for planning purposes
- Outstanding loan balance for loan counseling
- Review of STAR for academic planning

Findings

Fall 2015: 124 student appeals were approved and students received aid on probationary basis with set conditions.

- 56% (71) successfully met their academic conditions (GPA and Course Completion Rate)
- 42% (53) did not meet their conditions

Spring 2016: 77 student appeals were approved and students received aid on probationary basis with set conditions.

- 52% (40) successfully met their academic conditions (GPA and Course Completion Rate)
- 48% (37) did not meet their conditions

On average, 54% students on appeal met their academic conditions during their probationary semester

Conclusions/Status

Topics covered in the academic plan meeting with the financial aid counselor are critical for students who are academically deficient, and no changes are planned at this time. This population is more at risk to run out of grant eligibility, not complete their academic program, and default.

PLANS FOR THE COMING YEAR 2016-2017

- Evaluate departmental goals and assessment activities to better align with Strategic Directions (UHMC, UHCC, UH)
- Institutionalize position for a Financial Aid Student Loan Coordinator
- Implement strategies to help reduce student loan indebtedness

A Loan Coordinator position was approved by the campus and a position number has been requested from the UHCC System Office. We hope to hire by early 2017. Our efforts have resulted in enough of a decrease that UHMC's CDR is below 30% at this time. In addition, we have promising data on the number of students who were assisted, resulting in a change of status from delinquency to good standing. However, it still remains a critical area for Title IV compliance.

1. Position essential for program and critical for compliance:
 - UHMC's most recent 3-year Cohort Default Rate (CDR) is 29.7% compared to national average of 18.5% for public 2-year institutions. If CDR is 30% or higher for two consecutive years, UHMC could lose all federal financial aid funding, including Pell grant and student loans.
2. Request is Data driven and the value of institutionalizing position is high compared to cost:
 - We currently have a temporary position, which was previously grant funded. The grant findings show promising results in placing delinquent students into good standing. Averting students from default will lead to decrease in default rate.
 - UHMC received \$5.3 million in federal grants and \$6 million in federal loans during 1516

Financial literacy efforts have not yet impacted our default rate, but we have promising data on the number of students who were counseled from delinquency status to good standing. These efforts, combined with proactive measures to develop well-informed borrowers, will impact our CDR in future years. Grant has expired (October 2016) and so finalizing this position is critical to carrying out our objectives.

ATTACHMENTS