

2005-2006 :: Financial Aid

1. Mission Statement:

The mission of the Financial Aid Office is to provide our students with the federal, state, and institutional financial assistance they are eligible to receive in a timely and efficient manner as they pursue their educational goals at The University of Texas at Dallas

2. Objectives:

2.1 Expedite the delivery of Parent Loan funds:

Decrease application timeframe by streamlining and expediting the acceptance and delivery of Parent Loan funds to students whose parent choose this type of financial aid program.

2.1.1 Related Strategic Plan Item(s): II-3 Investment in People

2.1.2 Related Institutional Priority Item(s): SP-8 Reduce Costs

2.2 Improve scholarship application review process:

Establish secure, scanning protocol of scholarship applications and supplemental documents enabling scholarship committee membership electronic access to applicant data.

2.2.1 Related Strategic Plan Item(s): II-3 Investment in People

2.2.2 Related Institutional Priority Item(s): SP-8 Reduce Costs

2.3 Streamline financial aid document review:

Facilitate electronic access to supplemental financial aid documents by financial aid evaluators to streamline the review aid award process with a secure, electronic system.

2.3.1 Related Strategic Plan Item(s): II-3 Investment in People

2.3.2 Related Institutional Priority Item(s): SP-8 Reduce Costs

3. Measures & Findings:

3.1 PLUS Loan Process Analysis:

Track, review and analyze the PLUS loan application process from the parents' acceptance of the loan through the delivery of approved funds.

3.1.1 Success Criteria: Reduce turnaround of application information to 72 hours or less.

3.1.2 Related Objective(s): Expedite the delivery of Parent Loan funds

3.1.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:

Comparison of manual application process vs electronic application process demonstrated a reduction of no less than 10 working days in having the application data available to parents borrowing through the PLUS program. A 72-hour turnaround time was achieved with the implementation of the electronic application process.

3.1.4 Achievement Level: Met

3.1.5 Further Action: Yes

3.2 Financial Aid document review process analysis:

Track, review and analyze the process of distributing financial aid documents to reviewers.

3.2.1 Success Criteria:

Reduce time from 5 working days to 24 hours in the distribution of financial aid files to appropriate financial aid personnel for review and final awarding of aid.

3.2.2 Related Objective(s): Streamline financial aid document review

3.2.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:

Manual distribution of financial aid documents to reviewers was taking approximately 5 working days, and documents were sometimes mis-filed and distributed to the wrong reviewer.

3.2.4 Achievement Level: Not Met

3.2.5 Further Action: Yes

3.3 Scholarship application review process analysis:

Track, review and analyze time and effort to prepare and distribute scholarship applications to committee reviewers.

3.3.1 Success Criteria:

Eliminate need to make and route multiple copies of applications and provide immediate access to the documents in a secure, electronic format.

3.3.2 Related Objective(s): Improve scholarship application review process

3.3.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:

Manual process was time-consuming. Multiple copies were being distributed in hard copy format, which added to the time it took to get them ready for review. Documents included student information that needed to be protected under FERPA. The need to make and route multiple copies of the scholarship applications was eliminated when the Financial Aid Office began scanning the applications into an electronic format. The electronic versions of these documents were placed in a password-protected folder on a secure server to which scholarship committee members were given access.

3.3.4 Achievement Level: Partially Met**3.3.5 Further Action:** Yes**5. Closing the Loop:****5.1 Initiate electronic transmission of PLUS data:**

Analyze and initiate programming to electronically transmit and retrieve PLUS application and approval data for updating internal student system and integrate with external guarantor's Loans by Web system.

5.1.1 Related Objective(s): Expedite the delivery of Parent Loan funds**5.1.2 Related Measure(s):** PLUS Loan Process Analysis**5.1.3 Responsible Person:** James Hubener/ University Management**5.1.4 Target Date:** Spring 2006**5.1.5 Priority:** High Priority**5.2 Implement electronic recommendation letters:**

Implement protocol for faculty to complete and submit scholarship letters of recommendation through electronic imaging system.

5.2.1 Related Objective(s): Improve scholarship application review process**5.2.2 Related Measure(s):** Scholarship application review process analysis**5.2.3 Responsible Person:** Beverly Wilson, Paula Craig and University Management personnel**5.2.4 Target Date:** Spring 2007**5.2.5 Priority:** Medium Priority**5.3 Implement electronic document imaging and workflow:** Implement electronic document imaging solution and corresponding workflow of financial aid documents to facilitate the secure, electronic distribution of documents to appropriate financial aid staff.**5.3.1 Related Objective(s):** Streamline financial aid document review**5.3.2 Related Measure(s):** Financial Aid document review process analysis**5.3.3 Responsible Person:** Beverly Wilson, Kim Bomnskie, University Management staff, Matrix vendor consultant**5.3.4 Target Date:** Spring 2007**5.3.5 Priority:** High Priority**6. Analysis:****6.1 Program/Unit Strengths:****6.1.1 Objectives/Outcomes Exceeded or Met:**

Migrating from manual and paper systems to electronic transmission of PLUS application data and retrieval of acceptance data reduced time from 10 working days to 72 hours or less. The implementation of the electronic imaging system that includes electronic workflow has not only improved efficiency but has also provided a more secure way to store, distribute and retrieve official documents.

6.2 Program / Unit Weaknesses:**6.2.1 Objectives / Outcomes Partially or Not Met:**

Analysis demonstrated the need to monitor scheduling of nightly computer batch jobs to assure continuous electronic communication of applicant and approval data.

7. Report:**7.1 Executive Summary:**

The Financial Aid Office continues to fulfill its mission by replacing cumbersome manual systems with the implementation of streamlined, efficient, electronic systems that maximize the timely delivery of financial aid services and financial aid funds to students pursuing their educational goals at The University of Texas at Dallas.

7.2 Top 3 Program/Unit Accomplishments:

Eliminating inefficient manual processes for electronic ones increased the functionality of financial aid services to students and expedited the delivery of financial aid funds to students. Implementation of the electronic PLUS application process provided an efficient, streamlined, cost effective, system for parents to apply and accept this type of financial aid program.

7.3 Research Activities or Publications: No activity to report.**7.4 Instructional/Training Activities (presented or received):** No activity to report.**7.5 Public Service:**

The financial aid office is involved with the local high schools. On several occasions our office has been invited by local high schools to come out and do a presentation about financial aid to high school students and their parents. Our office also hosts on a yearly basis a Region X High School Counselor's Workshop. This in turn provides financial aid training to high school counselors in our region.

7.6 Other External Activities: No activity to report.**7.7 Contributions to UTD:**

Implementation of the electronic PLUS system provided funds to the institution in an efficient, streamlined fashion while simultaneously eliminating time consuming manual processing.

Implementation of the basic imaging solution for scholarship applications and supporting documents provided a streamlined, efficient, electronic, and decentralized solution for the scholarship faculty committee membership to retrieve documents for reviewing in the convenience of their offices.

7.8 Top 3 Program / Unit Challenges:

Full implementation of a robust document imaging system with corresponding workflow implementation for electronic distribution of required documents to appropriate financial aid processing evaluators is the next challenge for the Financial Aid.