**Unit Goal Revisions**

**2016-2017**

Every two years, during spring semester, programs/departments/service units are asked to develop Unit Strategic Plans. These plans need to be closely aligned with the Institutional Action Priorities, the College’s Long Range Goals, and the College’s five year strategic plan. The Strategic Plans incorporate and reflect the operation of that unit at all campuses and instructional sites. Each unit’s budget needs to reflect the fiscal implications associated with the unit’s identified goals and objectives. Following the first year each unit submits a goal progress report and revises their unit goals for the second year.

# **Name of Program/Department: Financial Aid**

2015-2016 Accomplishments:

* Successful implementation of the phase of financial aid daily process and procedures with the Automic system.
* The unit established a revised position of Associate Director of Financial Aid to replace previous Assistant Director Position left vacant.
* The Director attended the Department of Education’s Federal Student Aid Conference in Las Vegas, NV
* The Director and two staff members attended the Alabama Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators(AASFAA) Conference in Mobile, AL
* The Associate Director attended the Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators(SASFAA) New Aid Officers Workshop in Jacksonville, AL
* The Financial Aid Analyst attended the Elluician Live Conference in Denver, CO
* The Financial Aid Analyst attended the Alabama Banner Users Group (ALBUG) Conference in Florence, AL
* Two staff members attended a Fundamentals of Federal Student Administration Workshop on Return to Title IV training at the Department of Education’s Regional Training Facility in Atlanta, GA
* The Veteran Affairs Coordinator attended the Annual Alabama Veteran Affairs Association(AVAA) Conference in Montgomery, AL
* The Office of Veteran Affairs hosted their Annual Veteran Appreciation Breakfast/Program for Veterans Day in November
* Continuous training is provided to part time staffers and to the St. Clair-Pell City and Chilton-Clanton campuses on the financial aid procedures and federal updates
* A part-time Financial Aid Assistant position was established at the St. Clair- Pell City Campus two days a week and extended days during registration to assist students with financial aid questions
* Updated the Department Policies and Procedures Manual for student and staff reference on College and Federal policies

Revised Unit Goals (plans for the unit for the second year of the two year plan):

1. **Objectives – the activities through which the goal will be achieved. Each Unit Goal should have at least one objective.**
2. **Method of Assessment – how the unit will determine if the objective has been met.**
3. **Additional Funding Requests – provide an estimate of the cost of achieving the objective. Also, include a description of how these funds will be used to accomplish the objective.**

**Revised Unit Goals for 2016-2017**

**Goal 1: Continue to work closely with the IT Department to review various system programs and procedures for our current processing systems that will allow the department to develop procedures that are effective and efficient to assist our student body.**

**Objectives:**

* 1. Collaborate with the IT Department to make sure the department is that we are utilizing all processing systems (i.e. Automic, Xtender, Banner, DegreeWorks, SSB, etc.) to the fullest extent to assist with the influx of student records and files.
  2. Determine what other screens or programs can be utilized to assist with the daily operational functions within the department.
  3. Research peer institutions, best practices, and other agencies for possible improvements with the financial aid department.

**Method of Assessment**

1. The Financial Aid Systems Analyst will monitor such sites as E-Community and BPOST as well as networking with various schools and the Information Technology department on updates needed to ensure we are knowledgeable.
2. The IT department will contact companies such as Ellucian on to conduct a process analysis to assess the current processes and procedures to ensure the department is using all products and systems to the fullest extent or possible changes that could be made to increase productivity effectively.
3. Make contact with other colleges and companies to conduct assessments.

**Additional Funding Requests**

* 1. Estimated funding would be determined by the IT department.
  2. Estimated funding would be determined by the IT department.
  3. There is no additional funding needed outside of the current budget at this time.

**Goal 2: Continue to attend all local, state, federal and national conferences to remain abreast of the ever changing federal student aid and GI Bill regulations.**

**Objectives:**

1. The unit must continue to increase the knowledge of all staff members on the student federal aid (Title IV) process as well as stipulations on the GI BILL educational programs for veterans.
2. The unit will also provide means for staff members to network with fellow peers and build relationships to gain knowledge of various ways to implement policies by the Department of Education and Veteran Affairs.
3. Staff will continue to take part in financial aid workshops and veteran affairs seminars throughout the service area to educate parents and students regarding financial aid guidelines and procedures.

**Methods of Assessment**

* 1. Continue to encourage all staff members to take an active role in state, regional and national organizations.
  2. Continue to send staff members to local, state, regional, and national conferences and workshops.
  3. Tracking list of the number of presentations and high school visits requested and attended by the financial aid staff and VA Coordinator.

**Additional Funding Requests**

1. Funding estimated for Financial Aid Staff to attend state, regional or national conferences: $13,000.00.
2. Funding estimated for memberships in state, regional and national organizations: $5,000.00.
3. Funding estimated at $500.00 to cover mileage expenses to attend local seminars and workshops.

**Goal 3: Monitor the number of students assisted at all campus locations to ensure adequate staffing needs are met.**

**Objective:**

1. Continue to monitor student activity (Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs) at all campus locations; this would include students on Skype, walk-ins and those who make appointments to see counselors to ensure that sufficient personnel is available.

**Method of Assessment**

* 1. Comparison of students coming in to each campus location and the assistance needed. This would be monitored by sign in sheets for each campus.

**Additional Funding Requests**

1. There is no additional funding needed outside of the current budget.

**Goal 4: Ensure that staff has sufficient office equipment to handle day to day operations necessary to meet student processing and awarding needs.**

**Objective:**

1. Staff members will continue to have computers and software updated every two years. Software updates are essential to processing student federal aid and to ensure each financial aid office has scanning, faxing, printing and copying accessibility to be able to assist students in a timely manner.
2. The department would like to purchase a copier/fax/printer for the Shelby Hoover financial aid office. The copier will serve dual roles as a scanner to assist with the transmitting of documents to on and off campus personnel and a printer for all office staff.

**Method of Assessment**

1. The department will compile and maintain a roster of all new computers installed and series/model and serial numbers to be able to keep all guarantee that office equipment is updated and rotated appropriately. Currently, there is a need of four (4) desktop computers to replace three (3) older versions at the Jefferson Campus and one (1) at the Shelby-Hoover campus for Financial Aid Counselors.
2. Continual monitoring of the area during peak times of ways to alleviate congestion and longer wait times.

**Additional Funding Requests**

1. Funding estimated for four (4) Desktop computers and software @$1204.08 per computer.
2. Funding estimated for copier/scanners @2,000.00