Mission/Purpose
The Financial Aid Center offers assistance completing applications and offers counseling on budgets, grants, loans, work-study, and maintaining eligibility for assistance. The staff awards eligible students financial aid based on financial need to the extend that funds are available.

I. Goals and Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Achievement Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

A. Goal: Provide effective administrative services
Provide effective administrative services to support the mission

Revising the "Financial Aid Policies and Procedures Manual" (required by regulations) to provide consistent application of all policies

   A revised Financial Aid Policies and Procedures Manual will be completed and copies will be distributed to all FA staff and VP of Student Services.
   Source of Evidence: Existing data

   1. Achievement Target:
   Financial Aid Policies and Procedures Manual will be revised. An electronic copy will be posted on the Financial Aid shared computer drive and a copy will be forwarded to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

   2. Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
   The Financial Aid Policies and Procedures have been revised and updated. An electronic copy is available to all Financial Aid staff and student workers on the shared computer drive. A copy has been forwarded to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

2. Objective: Office Furniture
Replace obsolete furniture for two (2) FA Staff members

   a. Measure: Update Office Furniture
   Purchase two desks and/or computer work station for FA staff.
   Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

   1. Achievement Target:
   Purchase two desks

   2. Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Met
   Funding for the replacement of two desks was not provided in the UWA budgeting process.
3. **Action Plans:**
   
   **Request funding from the Administration**
   
   The Financial Aid Departmental Budget does not sufficient funding to replace the two obsolete desks. The Administration will have to provide funding.
   
   **Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011  
   **Implementation Status:** On-Hold  
   **Priority:** High  
   **Responsible Person/Group:** President and Vice President  
   **Budget Amount Requested:** $1,600.00

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3. **Objective: Provide training for FA Staff**

   Provide training opportunities either inside or outside the University for Financial Aid Staff. Training will be in person or online. All training will be relevant to providing customer service and compliance with federal, state, and institutional regulations and policies related to the administration of financial aid.

   **a. Measure: Provide professional development opportunities**

   Financial Aid Staff received training through a series of Direct Loan Webinars provided by the U.S. Department of Education. The Staff also participated in telephone consulting and training with a Datatel Consultant. We purchased a Direct Loan Webinar Series from Datatel and made it available to Financial Aid, Business Office, and Information Systems Staff.

   Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

   **1. Achievement Target:**

   FA Staff received training on converting student loan processing from Stafford Loans (through banks and nonprofit lenders) to Direct Loans from the federal government.

   **2. Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met**

   The Director of Financial Aid, the Dean of the Division of Online Programs, and the Sponsored Programs Department applied for and received funding under the College Access Challenge Grant. This is a federal grant administered by the Alabama Department of Education. The College Access Challenge Grant allowed all full-time Financial Aid Staff to attend the annual conference of the Alabama Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (AASFAA) in Guntersville, Alabama. This training included detailed presentations by Mr. David Bartnicki, Training Officer, with the U.S. Department of Education, Region IV, from Atlanta, GA. The University also provided funding for re-training of the entire full-time staff on the setup and operation of the Datatel Computer System. This involved three days of on-campus training and review by a Datatel Consultant and three telephone consultation sessions. The sessions involved a complete review of the setup of the Financial Aid Module and helped ensure that the Financial Aid Staff...
understood the operation of the system and how it interacts with other areas of the University.

3. **Action Plan:**
   - **Provide professional development opportunities for staff**
     Allow director and two FA staff members to attend the Alabama Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (AASFAA) Annual Conference.
     - **Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011
     - **Implementation Status:** Planned
     - **Priority:** High
     - **Implementation Description:** Registration and travel for five FA Staff members to attend AASFAA Conference.
     - **Completion Date:** 05/31/2011
     - **Responsible Person/Group:** Don Rainer
     - **Additional Resources Requested:** Registration and travel expenses (10-00-14501-7390) = $2,525.00
     - **Budget Amount Requested:** $2,525.00

   - **Send staff to Datatel Users Meeting**
     - Send staff to Datatel Users meeting; Datatel computer training
     - **Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011
     - **Implementation Status:** Planned
     - **Priority:** High
     - **Additional Resources Requested:** Travel and other resources = $3,500
     - **Budget Amount Requested:** $3,500.00

4. **Objective: Shred financial aid documents**
   The FA Center has 35 file cabinets full of financial aid files in the Skill Center that need to be destroyed. We would like to hire a company to shred these files and provide us with certification of destruction. These are sensitive documents which include student and parent personal information and tax returns.

   a. **Measure: Destroy sensitive documents**
      - All financial aid files stored in the Skill Center will be securely shredded and the contractor will provide UWA with a certification of destruction.

      **Source of Evidence:** Government standards

   1. **Achievement Target:**
      - Approximately 35 file cabinets stored in the Skills Center will be shredded and the Financial Aid Center will be provided with a certificate of destruction.

   2. **Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Not Met**
      - This objective was not met. Funding was not provided in the University budgeting process. I have spoken to the Vice President of Student Affairs concerning the destruction of these documents. He has brought it up and discussed it at the Presidents Counsel. He will continue to advocate for funding to shred the documents.

   3. **Action Plan:**
      - **Funding to destroy financial aid files was not provided**
        - The UWA Administration has not provided funding to destroy prior years financial aid files.
        - **Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011
        - **Implementation Status:** On-Hold
Priority: High  
Responsible Person/Group: President and Vice Presidents  
Additional Resources Requested: Funding  
Budget Amount Requested: $12,000.00

5. Objective: Participate in College Goal Sunday
Seek active participation in the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrator's (NASFAA) College Goal Sunday Program. This program provides a financial aid workshop on a Sunday in February for students and their parents to come to the UWA campus and get hands on assistance and advice in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

a. Measure: Assist students to complete the FAFSA application
College Goal Sunday program will be held on UWA Campus. Participants will complete evaluation of the program and assistance provided.

Source of Evidence: Evaluations

1. Achievement Target:
A College Goal Sunday event will be held on The University of West Alabama Campus.

2. Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met
On February 19, 2011, a College Goal Sunday Event was held at The University of West Alabama. This event is sponsored by the YMCA nationwide to assist students and their parents in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The Division of Online Programs and the BEST Program helped with the event and provided personnel to direct participants to three computer labs on campus. Many University departments and divisions provided door prizes and refreshments for the high school seniors and their parents in attendance. Although the attendance was light, the National College Goal Sunday representative who was at the event praised the University for our facilities and the way we conducted this event. He indicated that first year attendance was typically light nationwide and encouraged us to participate in the future. On March 19, 2011, a College Access Day, was held at The University of West Alabama. The event was sponsored by the UWA Admissions Department and with funding from the College Access Challenge Grant. High school juniors and seniors, and current UWA students were invited to campus to learn more about UWA and to receive hands-on assistance in electronically filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Patrick George provided an inspirational talk for the students and parents in attendance. UWA organizations, colleges, and departments set up booths in the Pruitt Hall Gymnasium for students to receive information. UWA Ambassadors provided campus tours for all visitors to our campus. Financial Aid Personnel provided hands-on assistance to students and their parents in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid in the Library Computer Lab. A representative of the Alabama Department of Education was in attendance to monitor the event. Her comments were as follows: Good morning UWA, I hope all is well. Just want to commend you all for a great job with the Financial Aid Seminar/Activity. Your staff and students were very committed in assisting all participants. Your motivational speaker was very interesting and encouraging to all. That was a great idea to have him speak to the students, parents, and administrators. I did share that with the other grantees, so they can do the same type activities in planning
their seminars and workshops. I was very impressed with the hospitality and (warm spirit) of faculty, staff and students at UWA. As, I was leaving the library, approaching the door, a polite young man raced by me to get the door. I said “Thank you so much”. That really touched my heart to see the values and morals exhibited/instilled in your students. That type of behavior is what attracts other students to your campus. My experience on your campus was very positive. I have visited many college campuses in Alabama. I want to commend you all for the work you do in preparing the students in Alabama to be successful. The campus tour, college fair, and FAFSA/Financial Aid sessions were very informative. I spoke with two of your students (seniors) and they both spoke very highly of their educational experience at UWA. The student/parent attendance was great. It was a pleasure to meet you and your staff during my visit. I look forward to seeing you all again soon. Please contact me should you need any assistance with CACG grant. Thanks, Willietta Conner, Alabama State Department of Education Coordinator for the Opening Doors College Access Challenge Grant

3. **Action Plan:**
   **College Goal Sunday event completed.**
   A College Goal Sunday event was held on the UWA Campus on February 19, 2011 to assist students and their parents in completing the FAFSA application.
   - **Established in Cycle:** 2010-2011
   - **Implementation Status:** Finished
   - **Priority:** High
   - **Completion Date:** 02/19/2011
   - **Responsible Person/Group:** Financial Aid and Online Programs

B. **Goal: Meet the needs of its various publics through information technologies**
   Meet the needs of its various publics, both internal and external through the comprehensive use of information technologies

1. **Objective: Convert UWA Federal Stafford Loan Program to the Federal Direct Student Loan Program**
   Convert UWA Federal Stafford Loan Program to the Federal Direct Student Loan Program

   a. **Measure: Initiate Federal Direct Loan Program at UWA**
   Federal Direct Loan funds will be posted to student accounts within 3 days of the scheduled date each term. Few complaints concerning Direct Loans will be received by the Director of Financial Aid or by the Vice President of Student Affairs.

   Source of Evidence: Service Quality

   1. **Achievement Target:**
      The Direct Loan Program will be up and running. All students, literature, website information and procedures will be changed to the Direct Loan Program.

   2. **Findings (2010-2011) - Achievement Target: Met**
      The conversion to the Direct Loan Program has been successful. All students were converted from the FFELP Program to the Direct Loan Program. All literature and website information has been changed and updated. Procedures and assignment of responsibility for processing Direct Loans have been put into place. Computer setup and staff training was accomplished with telephone
consults with Datatel. Every aspect of the student loan program has been converted to the Direct Loan Program.

3. Action Plan:
   All student loans converted to the Direct Loan Program
   All federal student loans were successfully converted to the Federal Direct Loan Programs on July 1, 2010.
   Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
   Implementation Status: Finished
   Priority: High
   Implementation Description: Financial Aid Staff were trained on the Federal Direct Loan Program and computer programs were set up and tested prior to implementation.
   Completion Date: 07/01/2010
   Responsible Person/Group: Financial Aid and Information Systems

II. Other Plans for Improvement
   A. Increase compensation for FA staff
      Increase salaries of Financial Aid staff
      Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
      Implementation Status: Planned
      Priority: High
      Implementation Description: Award incentive pay increases to deserving Financial Aid Staff
      Completion Date: 09/30/2011
      Responsible Person/Group: Don Rainer
      Additional Resources Requested: Budget increase (10-00-14501-7010) = $14,500
      Budget Amount Requested: $14,500.00

III. Analysis Answers
   A. What specific strengths did your assessments show? (Strengths)
      The Financial Aid Staff has the flexibility to change processes and learn new procedures with little supervision.

   B. What specific weaknesses or challenges did your assessments show? (Weaknesses)
      A lack of sufficient budgetary funding has impeded the effective operation of the Financial Aid Center. Files from previous years which were scheduled for destruction have not been shredded. This could pose a liability for the institution if a state or federal program reviews and audits identify deficiencies that are investigated. The Financial Aid Center has obsolete furniture that needs to be replaced. It creates a lack of respect and trust when students and their parents sit down with staff who have metal desks that look like they are military surplus.

   C. What plans were implemented?
      Provide training for financial aid staff. All full-time staff attended the annual conference of the Alabama Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators in April. All full-time staff participated in Datatel on-site retraining for the Financial Aid Module and telephone consultations.

   D. What plans were not implemented?
      Funding for the purchase of office furniture and the destruction of student files which are in storage was not accomplished.
E. **How will assessment results be used for continuous improvement?**
   The Financial Aid Center will continue to provide training and professional development for staff. We will continue to impress upon the administration the importance and urgency to destroy the sensitive documents we have in storage. We will also continue to lobby our supervisor to provide funding to update the furniture in the Financial Aid Center.

IV. **Annual Reports**
   A. **Key Achievements**
      1. The Financial Aid Center disbursed the following financial assistance to students enrolled at UWA: Program 2010-2011 Federal Grants $6,676,293.75 State Grants 71,016.00 Federal Student Loans $6,661,616.00 Private Student Loans 294,858.00 Federal Work-Study 265,342.71 Institutional Scholarships 2,724,606.78 Outside Scholarships 246,822.60 Total $64,215,949.06
      2. The Financial Aid Center held two events on our campus to assist students and their parents in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The first event was College Goal Sunday which was held with the support and in conjunction with national events sponsored by the YMCA. The second event was a College Access Day which was partially funded by the Opening Doors College Access Challenge Grant.

   B. **Public/Community Service**
   The U.S. Department of Education requires that a portion of Federal Work-Study Program (FWSP) funds be used to employ students in community service. During the 2010-2011 award year, the FWSP students were employed in following areas: Campus School - 10 students Health Wellness - 1 student Library - 11 students Media Center - 1 student Livingston Elementary and Junior High School (reading tutors) - 5 students Student Support Services - 6 students Trio Programs/Counseling - 1 student The average student employee works 15 hours per week and is paid the federal minimum wage. The University provides 25% of the funding for the Federal Work-Study Program. These students are supervised daily in each of these positions. They are also evaluated once each term by their supervisor.