

**OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID and SCHOLARSHIPS  
STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Mission**

The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships provides comprehensive financial assistance to eligible students seeking a higher education.

**Vision**

The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships will utilize continued service and technological advances to provide students every opportunity in pursuing and continuing their education while maintaining behaviors and standards of professional values and conduct.

**Values**

“The primary goal of the financial aid professional is to help students achieve their educational goals through financial support and resources. NASFAA members are required to exemplify the highest level of ethical behavior and demonstrate the highest level of professionalism. Financial aid administrators shall:

***Advocate for students***

- Remain aware of issues affecting students and continually advocate for their interests at the institutional, state and federal levels.
- Support federal, state and institutional efforts to encourage students, as early as the elementary grades, to aspire to and plan for education beyond high school.

***Manifest the highest level of integrity***

- Commit to the highest level of ethical behavior and refrain from conflict of interest or the perception thereof.
- Deal with others honestly and fairly, abiding by our commitments and always acting in a manner that merits the trust and confidence others have placed in us.
- Protect the privacy of individual student financial records.
- Promote the free expression of ideas and opinions, and foster respect for diverse viewpoints within the profession.

***Support student access and success***

- Commit to removing financial barriers for those who want to pursue postsecondary learning and support each student admitted to our institution.
- Without charge, assist students in applying for financial aid funds.
- Provide services and apply principles that do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, or economic status.
- Understand the need for financial education and commit to educate students and families on how to responsibly manage expenses and debt.

***Comply with federal and state laws***

- Adhere to all applicable laws and regulations governing federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs.
- Actively participate in ongoing professional development and continuing education programs to ensure ample understanding of statutes, regulations, and best practices governing the financial aid programs.
- Encourage colleagues to participate in the financial aid professional associations available to them at the state, regional, or national level and offer assistance to other aid professionals as needed.

***Strive for transparency and clarity***

- Provide our students and parents with the information they need to make good decisions about attending and paying for college.
- Educate students and families through quality information that is consumer-tested when possible. This includes (but is not limited to) transparency and full disclosure on award notices.
- Ensure equity by applying all need-analysis formulas consistently across the institution’s full population of student financial aid applicants.
- Inform institutions, students, and parents of any changes in financial aid programs that could affect their student aid eligibility.

***Protect the privacy of financial aid applicants***

- Ensure that student and parent private information provided to the financial aid office by financial aid applicants is protected in accordance with all state and federal statutes and regulations, including FERPA and the Higher Education Act, Section 483(a)(3)(E) (20 U.S.C. 1090).
- Protect the information on the FAFSA from inappropriate use by ensuring that this information is only used for the application, award, and administration of aid awarded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act, state aid, or aid awarded by eligible institutions.

## **Strategic Priority 1: *Increase Enrollment and Promote Student Success***

**Outcome:** We will grow and diversify our student population in order to improve higher education participation and supply a well-equipped, educated workforce for the State of Texas.

### **Assessment Method or Task:**

- Continue to conduct various call campaigns in an effort to enhance the student experience.
- Continue to successfully utilize position with the responsibility to review and award TEXAS Grant and TEXAS Be-On-Time to eligible students.
- Continue to conduct outbound call campaigns encouraging TEXAS Grant and Texas B-On-Time students to complete processing requirements.
- Utilize advisors for student specific cohorts such as graduate, study abroad, Executive MBA, second degree, consortium, veterans, etc.
- Conduct financial aid advertising campaigns in an effort to promote early aid application.
- Continue utilizing loan debt tab on student portal which displays all student specific loan indebtedness at Texas Tech University.
- Developed new personalized award notifications.
- Developed online reporting forms for student verification and special circumstances including working forms for advisors to file in student's imaged documents for consistency in audit and processing.
- Contracted with third party verification services for increased customer satisfaction.
- Continue to realign loan processing for ease of student process completion as well as workload process.
- Continue to realign summer financial aid processing for ease of student process completion as well as workload process.
- Continue to address federal loan default rates, borrower concerns and student loan indebtedness.
- Continue loan default aversion services.
- Utilize online cost calculators to assist students in determining estimated financial aid eligibility and direct costs of education.
- Continue to award all incoming student populations with incomplete verification in an effort to recruit and retain students.
- Partner with "Red 2 Black" to provide financial education for specific populations.
- Implementation of FAFSA early application and Prior-Prior Year (PPY) to allow applicants more certainty and understanding of financial aid options when apply for student financial aid.
- Implementation of Dynamic Forms to allow efficient and timely student financial aid form submission.

**Result Type:** Goal Met

**Action Status:** Action Complete

**Strategic Priority 2: *Strengthen Academic Quality and Reputation***

**Outcome:** We will attract and retain the best faculty in the world in order to enhance our teaching excellence and grow our number of nationally recognized programs.

**Assessment Method or Task:**

- Continue to communicate types of services offered for students to strengthen bonds for utilizing services to their fullest potential.

**Result Type:** Goal Met

**Action Status:** Action Complete

**Strategic Priority 3: *Expand and Enhance Research and Creative Scholarship***

**Outcome:** We will significantly increase the amount of public and private research dollars in order to advance knowledge, improve the quality of life in our state and nation, and enhance the state's economy and global competitiveness.

**Assessment Method or Task:**

- The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships will continue to provide comprehensive financial assistance to students seeking a higher education.

**Result Type:** Goal Met

**Action Status:** Action Complete

#### **Strategic Priority 4: *Further Outreach and Engagement***

**Outcome:** We will expand our community outreach, promote higher education, and continue to engage in partnerships in order to improve our communities and enrich their quality of life.

#### **Assessment Method or Task:**

- Conducted outreach in Austin, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, El Paso, McAllen, Corpus Christi, Idalou and Shallowater in conjunction with Admissions—Top Scholar Receptions and Raider Road Shows. We provided financial aid presentations and information for resource tables.
- Provided presentations for Red Raider Orientation sessions for transfer and incoming freshmen students and their parents. Transfer Orientation average 300 students and freshmen 300 students.
- Provided satellite Student Financial Aid and Scholarship Office at each Transfer and Freshman Red Raider Orientation session.
- Provided presentations and resource information for Graduate Student Orientations both fall and spring.
- Provided financial information for incoming Law Students at Law School Orientation.
- Provided information sessions for prospective students and parents at the annual University Day Academic & Student Services Fair. This event averages over 1000 area high school students.
- Provided a resource table for the South Plains Career Expo. Over 2000 area students attend.
- Provided information at the Connect Tech and Techsan Experience resource fairs and presentations for parents and students. Each of these 12 events averaged more than 250 students and parents per event.
- Student Financial Center was open for service the weekend that the dorms opened to allow parents and students to receive assistance from Student Financial Aid and Scholarships and Student Business Services office prior to parents leaving campus.
- Expanded use of social media to encourage financial aid applications.
- Continued to work closely with Admissions to begin a prospective student communication flow, and encourage prospective student interest.
- Shared important dates for scholarship and financial aid applications with Undergraduate Admissions so these could be included on pieces that they send out. We also provided financial aid training to Undergraduate Admissions staff members in Lubbock and in the regional centers. We also designated a liaison with these individuals to assist them with information throughout the year.
- Conducted financial aid workshops for college departments, high school counselors and area high schools to promote college funding accessibility.
- Supported institutionally identified strategic recruitment and retention targets through individual and outreach efforts. These include AVID, Mentor Tech, TTAP, PADR, TRIO and PEGASUS.
- Provided financial aid information to special populations for the following Colleges: Engineering, Agriculture, Human Science, and Education; as well as the Graduate School and Law School.
- Provided resource table for the fall and spring Study Abroad Fairs.
- Presented financial aid information for funding a study abroad program in conjunction with the Study Abroad Office.

**Result Type:** Goal Met

**Action Status:** Action Complete

## **Strategic Priority 5: *Increase and Maximize Resources***

**Outcome:** We will increase funding for scholarships, professorships, and world-class facilities, and maximize those investments through more efficient operations in order to ensure affordability for students and accountability to the State of Texas.

### **Assessment Method or Task:**

- Revise scholarship application deadlines to optimize new FAFSA submission timing and earlier scholarship awarding. Collaboration with campus partners for these revisions will be sought through a survey inviting feedback on the changes and a multifaceted communication campaign.
- Continue to work with system programmers to enhance Scholarship Tracking System (STS) functionality within the re-written STS version.
- Continue annual Scholarship Tracking System (STS) training for campus users to educate users about system efficiencies, changes, and improvements including new application cycles.
- Enhance social media communications and develop regular communications about external scholarships which target specific student populations.
- Return program administration of Helen Devitt Jones Leadership Scholarship, Terry Foundation Scholars Program and SHIELD Scholarship to the Scholarship Office to provide consistent administration, personal student advisement and mentoring opportunities. Addition of the Terry Scholarship Assistant Director position to the Scholarship Office staff will allow smooth transition and adequate support to achieve these priorities.
- National Merit Finalists will have a book voucher from Barnes & Noble Bookstore incorporated into their award package.

**Result Type:** Goal Met

**Action Status:** Action Complete