

Annual Program Review: Financial Aid

Review time period: July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

1. Purpose of the Program

a. State the purpose of program, area, or unit.

The Financial Aid program was developed to provide all students in need with access and opportunity to a college education. It is a sharing concept in which funds for students' education are provided by the students, parents, and state, federal and local agencies. The primary goal of the financial aid program is to help the student population and their families bridge the gap between their income and the cost of attending college. There are several types of financial aid to assist with paying for students' education such as grants, scholarships, and the work study program.

The mission of the Financial Aid Department is to provide financial assistance and eligibility awareness to students as they pursue their educational goals. We strive to provide students with excellent individualized customer service. Provide the opportunity for all current and prospective community college students access to financial aid resources. Financial Aid is made available to assist students when family resources are not sufficient to meet college cost.

b. How does the program, area or unit support the College Mission?

The Financial Aid program increases opportunities for student access to and success in Palo Verde College. The program helps students and their families to seek, obtain and make the best use of all financial resources that will provide students to an exemplary learning environment with high quality education, furthermore the Financial Aid program continues to promote student success and lifelong learning to the Palo Verde College diverse community of learners.

2. Population(s) Served

a. Describe the populations served by the program, area, or unit, identifying special populations, if any.

The Palo Verde College Financial Aid Department serves a diverse community of students, both in the main campus and the Needles Site. Additionally, Palo Verde College has students that take advantage of the services provided through the Financial Aid Department that are not local to our two physical locations within the state of California. The Palo Verde College Financial Aid Department also serves a large and diverse population including non-traditional groups including incarcerated, Dream Act, Foster Youth, Veterans, ESL, and Athlete students

b. Describe other populations that should be served by the program, area or unit and identify plans to implement. In addition to the traditional orientation and counseling frameworks the Palo Verde Choice program provides an effective funnel for ensuring that all eligible students are provided financial aid and scholarship services.

3. Accomplishments in Achieving Goals

a. List area related Strategic Planning Goals and program, area, or unit specific goals, and describe progress in achieving each goal, strategy, objective, and appropriate task during the review period.

Department Goals:

- Increase the number of students served.
- Decrease the amount of funds returned to the department of education under Return to Title 4 (Funding the college has to pay back to the DoE on Behalf of students that withdraw completely or receive straight F's).
- Increase the number of students that receive state/regional scholarship awards.
- Serve more of the Foster Youth, Homeless Youth, Dreamers, and Veterans.

b. Explain modifications, if any, of program, area, or unit specific goals for the upcoming year.

The financial aid team is in the process of changing many procedures from old administrations that are an obstacle to for students to receive their federal, state, and local educational benefits.

4. Service Area Outcomes (SAO)

a. Revise if needed and provide metric data for Service Area Outcomes in the area or unit.

Service Area Outcome SAO metric

SAO #1: Students to have a better comprehension of the federal rules and regulations pertaining to their federal awards
Decrease in the number of students that are processed for Return to Title 4

SAO #2: Financial Aid Department will provide services to the maximum number of eligible students. Number of students filtered through the PVC Choice program, number of students ISIR records downloaded, number of students awarded FA, total annual amount of financial aid awarded within the district.

5. Strengths, Weaknesses & Accomplishments/Activities

a. List and comment on the major strengths of the program, area, or unit.

- Training - Staff is cross trained and supported in attending conferences and workshops to stay current with Federal regulations.
- Staff characteristics - Staff are encouraged to get involved in activities at the Main Campus, Needles Center, and off-site to help develop better work relationships. The staff is knowledgeable and approachable with a can-do attitude.
- Leadership/Team - Strong and efficient office system that tries to be proactive.
- Communication – Staff works well with each other as well as effectively keeping other departments informed about relevant issues. Staff possess well developed communication skills and are always helpful to other departments.

b. List and comment on the major weaknesses of the program, area, or unit. Discuss gaps or issues identified in section 4 and propose solutions.

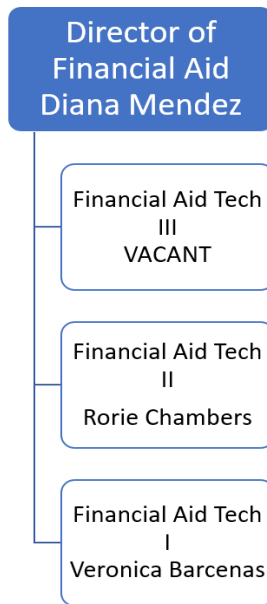
- The COVID-19 Pandemic decreased student enrollment, impacting the number of students eligible for Financial Aid.
- Workspace environment – Shortage of space within the department.
- Privacy - Lack of student privacy when meeting with students regarding certain matters.
- Lack of funding - due to lack of funding the staff is not able to attend many of the trainings and conferences to help with professional development.

c. List activities and discuss accomplishments during review period.

See attached Financial Aid Board Reports for Specific activities.

6. Human Resources and Staff Development

a. Provide current organization chart of the program, area, or unit, showing key functions and responsibilities.



b. Are current management and staff adequate to perform functions and responsibilities satisfactorily and to achieve program, area, or unit goals? Explain.

Although there is current decrease in student enrollment due to the pandemic, the department does need a part-time technician. However, if enrollment increases the Financial Aid Department will need an additional Tech II position.

c. Describe specific professional development activities in which program, area or unit members participate and explain how such activities benefit or enhance the program and support and facilitate student learning.

Due to limited funding the staff attends minimal trainings or conferences but does receive federal update notices daily from IFAP and NASFAA.

- Region IX monthly meetings from July to June
- CCCSFAAA- California Community Colleges Student Financial Aid Administrators
- CASFAA – California Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
- Department of Education training – Maintaining Institutional Compliance, Review, Refine and Replicate
- Outreach Events in Needles at the Needles Site and Needles High School
- Outreach Events at Palo Verde High School and Twin Palms
- CCCCCO webinar for MIS, FISAP, SSARC, Oscher
- Webinars for Cal Grants
- ADMIN 101

d. Describe areas of unmet professional development needs among personnel in this program, area, or unit, if applicable, and outline plans to address these needs.

Additional funding to be able to participate in trainings and conferences, including the following:

- California Student Aid Commission Training

- CHUGACUG Ellucian Colleague users group conference
- Webinars for SSCG, Foster Youth and Homeless
- NASFAA Conferences (National Association for Student Financial Aid Administrators)
- FSA (Federal Student Aid) Conference

e. Describe organizational changes that would improve program, area, or unit performance. Provide timelines for the achievement of such changes and describe measures that assess the effectiveness of such changes.

Adding additional Staff to the Department as we increase the number of students will assist with the daily workload. This will allow for staff to assist more students with completing their files, FAFSA applications, scanning, and processing incarcerated students CCPG.

7. Facilities

a. Are current facilities adequate to support the program, area, or unit? Explain.

Yes, we have an additional office that can be used to provide private services to students with sensitive confidential situations.

b. Describe plans for future changes to support facilities.

VariDesks for technicians could make a big difference in the work techs perform. Technicians must input more than 5,000 incarcerated students' CCPG manually, giving them the VariDesk Option could bring several health benefits for our staff.

8. Technology and Equipment

a. Is the current technology and equipment adequate to support the program, area, or unit? Explain.

It is, so far, we have implemented programs such as adobe sign, Campus Logic, and are in the process of implementing other platforms such as Ocelot, and Signal Vine.

b. Describe plans for future changes to support technology or equipment.

Addition of VariDesks for staff as it will help with health benefits including the reduction of back pain, as well as working comfortably and productively while standing. Furthermore, we are in the process to software and programs to communicate with students such as signal vine and Chatbot Ocelot to facilitate communication between students and the department.

9. Financial Resources

a. Provide an appropriate financial report for program, area, or unit during reporting period. Explain any significant deviations from previous reporting period.

2019-2020	Budgeted	Expended
_Revenue (Financial Aid)	\$5,447,986.00	\$0.00
_Revenue (Categorical)	\$32,175.00	\$32,121.00
Advertising	-\$300.70	-\$300.70
Benefits	\$155,934.38	\$155,934.38
Communications	\$556.48	\$556.48
Conferences	\$1,967.86	\$1,967.86
Consultants	-\$3,360.00	-\$1,080.00
Copying/Printing	\$202.94	\$202.94
Memberships	\$1,986.00	\$1,986.00
Postage	\$400.30	\$400.30

Reimbursable Categorical	\$164,921.00	\$152,907.00
Salaries	\$292,013.21	\$292,013.21
Supplies	\$1,321.70	\$1,321.70
Travel	\$989.85	\$989.85

b. Describe whether the current budget is adequate to carry out the responsibilities of the program, area or unit or operation.

Additional funds are needed to for the Financial Aid Department team to attend conferences, trainings, and regional meetings. In the review period only one staff member attended a conference. Additional funding is also needed to pay for the much-needed consultants (Annual Colleague financial aid setup, Colleague programming support, consulting in support of successfully rolling out the Self-Service Financial Aid module).

c. Describe plans for future budget changes, if any.

In order for the Department to be able to function properly, meet Federal and State deadlines and requirements, and address the issues detailed in 9b budgetary changes need to be made.

10. Four-year plan

a. Place future request for resources (human, facilities, technology & equipment, and financial) in a four-year matrix to facilitate future planning.

Future Area Needs			2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
	Human Resources			Additional Tech Part time position	Additional Tech II position	
	Fiscal Resources		Additional consulting to FA Team in relation to Self-Service to go live. Colleague programming support, and Financial Aid setup support.	Follow up on Colleague and Self-Service, Campus Logic, Ocelot Signal Vine	Follow up on Colleague and Self-Service, Campus Logic, Ocelot Signal Vine	Follow up on Colleague and Self-Service, Campus Logic, Ocelot Signal Vine
	Physical Resources		Plexiglass around technicians' cubicles for Additional protection against the spread of COVID19			
	Technology Resources		VariDesk or adjustable standing desks for staff to better assist them in their daily duties.			

Board Reports

2019-08-05-Financial Aid

- Approx. 150 students have completed their files and will receive either a CCPG/Pell or both
- We will be interviewing students to hire for the Federal Work Study program
- As of today, we have received well over 3,000 CCPG applications and we are diligently working to input all the applications into Colleague.
- We participated in Outreach events held by CalWorks at the DPSS office and assisted students with their applications and questions.
- Continue to assist students the completion of their FAFSA applications.
- Summer Pell was awarded to nineteen students.
- The first check disbursement day is scheduled August 20.
- We are working on closing out the 2018-2019 year.
- We continue to work on student files getting them ready for the next check disbursement.
- We will have a Representative from Campus Logic on Campus August 14, to demonstrate their software to assist the staff with the verification process.
- The staff participated in the summer bridge program in Blythe and Needles.
- The staff had an Outreach Event at Palo Verde High School during graduation rehearsal.
- Working on the Policy and Procedure handbook which will be submitted to the Department of Education to ensure that the F.A. Department meets the required standards.
- Assisting and Collecting CHOICE applications (assisting students with the completion of the application)

The PPA agreement has been updated with the names of all of the current Board members.

2019-09-10-Financial Aid

- Some of the Financial Aid Staff met with two of the representatives from Campus Logic. They are a company that will assisting the department with the verification process on students. Financial Aid received technology funds to support technology advancements and innovations in financial aid processing and management systems to streamline financial aid verification and to enable our department to more efficiently process state and federal financial aid grants. AB1089 Budget Act sec. 68.
- The first check disbursement was August 20, 2019 and there are no issues to report on this. Students are required to bring in a valid picture ID and their social security card when picking up a disbursement.
- The staff has been keeping track of the number of contacts they have had with students during the month of August and here are the totals.

Assisting students with completing their FAFSA applications or FA Files

820

Manual entry of CCPG applications (California College Promise Grant – formerly known as the BOGW)

738

Assisting Students at the counter/telephone calls/and emails

1229

- Diana and Adam worked together to get all the students' GPA's submitted to CSAC (California Student Aid Commission) this included student that do not have an SSN.
- Rorie participated in the Outreach Event that CalWORKs held at the DPSS office on August 7th, 2019.
- Diana traveled to Needles on August 19, 2019 to deliver the checks for the Needles students as well as a couple of cases of handbooks.
- The Financial Aid Department and ASG will have a video showing in the ASG room in celebration of Constitution Day, this is federal requirement for the Financial Aid Department.
- The CCCSE Osher report has been completed, signed, emailed and the signature page has been mailed.
- Working on cancelling checks and adjusting student's disbursements to reflect the correct award amount based on the degree applicable units (students cannot get paid for courses that do not apply towards their degree).
- Diana will be attending a Region IX meeting on September 13th in Norco. The U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General will have a representative there to provide us with information and tips on fraud.
- We are working on awarding students FSEOG (Federal Student Educational Opportunity Grant) and Cal Grants.
- We have balanced and closed out the 2018-2019 year with the Department of Education.
- We have a Cal-Vet representative on campus on August 20th. She was here to meet with our Veteran students and answer any questions pertaining to additional assistance students can receive outside of educational help.
- We participated in the interview process for new student workers on August 5, 2019 and then the new student worker orientation which was held on August 16, 2019. The Financial Aid Department was able to fund five students that were placed in different departments on campus.
- Jade Smith was presented with a check in the amount of \$1,000 on behalf of CCCSFAAA – California Community Colleges Student Financial Aid Administrators Association. Every year a different region in the state of California is given the opportunity to have students apply for this scholarship. This past year was Region IX's turn and Palo Verde College submitted two applications and Jade was the recipient selected for Region IX, there is a picture of her accompanied by Stephanie Slogan and Scott Bauer in the Palo Verde Valley Times Newspaper (August 28th).
- Financial Aid will have Colleague Consulting via telephone on September 17th, and onsite September 30, 2019 this is part of the Student Planning Implementation.
- We had an increase in the number of students that applied for the Dream Act Application, 2018-2019 total was 14.
- We continue to assist students with the completion of their files.
- Assist students with the completion of their FAFSA and Dream Act applications.
- Certifying Veteran students for the current semester (courses students take must apply toward the degree on file, the VA will not pay for other courses).

2019-11-12-Financial Aid or 2019-10-08

- The staff continues to work on student files so that they can be ready to award.
- All of the staff in the department participated in either College Day at the high school or Career Day here at the College.
- Working on the final check order for the Fall term.
- The staff continues to assist students in completing their FAFSA's for the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 year.
- The SSCG (Student Success Completion Grant) report has been submitted. This report pertains to students receiving a Cal Grant and that are enrolled in 15 units or more per semester.
- Cancelled checks for students that have completely withdrawn from PVC.
- Received the adjustment checks for students that had to have checks cancelled due to dropping courses or not enrolled in courses that apply to the degree they are working on.
- Deadline to apply for fall scholarships was November 25, 2019 at 5:00p.m., here is a breakdown of the scholarship applications received:
 - o Lena T Pond 17 applications
Student must be in an enrolled in the LVN program 3.0 GPA.
 - o The Molly Adams 21 applications
Student must have a mental, physical, or learning disability/impairment.
 - o Agatha Baxter 40 applications
Student must have a zero EFC (expected family contribution), have need and have a 3.0 GPA.
 - o Community Foundation 36 applications
Student must have 3.0 GPA.
- Fund is made up of distributions from the following endowment funds: Tillie Ayres, William Brooks, Ida Bruce, Charles Brouse, Leon Heseman, Eleanor Pearl Hunter, and Elizabeth Vermillion. They are not affiliated with our Foundation and two reports are submitted for each scholarship prior to funds being sent to PVC.

2019-12-13-Financial Aid

- The final check disbursement for the Fall term were ordered and disbursed.
- Final check adjustments for the Fall term have been done. The checks have been ordered and should be disbursed prior to the staff being out for winter break.
- Recipients for the following scholarships have been selected and will be awarded prior to winter break.

o The Community Foundation Scholarship	total award amount	\$1,915
o Agatha Baxter Scholarship	total award amount	\$1,871
o The Molly Adams Scholarship	total award amount	\$5000
o Lena T. Pond Scholarship	total award amount	\$2,000

2020-01-14-Financial Aid

- Cancelling Pell grant and Cal Grant checks.
- Reviewing files for new students that will be attending in the Spring.
- Working on the R2T4 (return to Title 4).

- Working on putting together the names of students that will be awarded the Osher Scholarship for the Fall term.
- Assisting students with the completion of their FAFSA application.
- Getting ready to start working on the IPEDS report.
- Running SAP on new and returning students.
- Planning an Outreach Event with the High School and Twin Palms.
- Working with the Consultant to get the Financial Aid year set up for 2020-2021.

2020-03-03-Financial Aid

- Continue to import student records and process students' files, getting them ready to be awarded.
- Attended an Ellucian training regarding the importing of Cal Grant files so that students can be awarded using the same process used to award Pell recipients.
- Diana Mendez participated in the Parent Project hosted by River Consortium – Financing your college education and had more than 26 parents and students in attendance.
- The Financial Aid staff participated in the Money Gras Scholarship Fair and assisted students with the completion of their FAFSA application as well as informed students of the scholarships currently available on the PVC website. It was an excellent event, there were many high school Seniors and their parents that attended.
- The Financial Aid staff will be participating in Career Day. We will have a table and will also be doing an FA presentation for the PVHS Seniors.
- Working on the second check disbursement scheduled for March 24, 2020.
- Diana will be attending the California Community College Student Financial Aid Administrators Association conference (CCCSFAAA) from March 22 – Mach 26 in Monterey, CA.

2020-05-12-Financial Aid

- We continue to process student files getting them ready for the pell disbursement.
- Working on the final check disbursement for the Spring term.
- Working with the consultant to get the new year completely set up.
- Working on a scholarship with an outside group, Dr. Bauer has more information on that.
- Printing the final scholarship applications and getting ready to do scholarship interviews (might be done using zoom).
- Forwarded the CCPG and Zero Income Statement to the Correspondence Department so that this information can be sent to out to our incarcerated students.
- The staff is working from home and when they work on campus there is only one staff member in the department.
- Putting together an application so that students can apply for the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act). The Department of Education requires that any student that receives these funds meet the required criteria: US Citizen, or eligible non-Citizen, High School graduate or GED, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress, registered for Selective Service, valid Social Security Number (SSN for work purposes only do not qualify), in a Program leading to a degree or certificate. Students cannot be taking all courses by correspondence or online.

If the student was originally in courses that were face to face and have been converted to online this does apply to them. Students taking non-credit courses do not qualify.

- Updated the Financial Aid portion in the Catalog for 2020-2021.
- Updating the Financial Aid part in the Student Planner/Handbook.

2020-06-09-Financial Aid

- Working on finalizing the set up for Campus Logic – this program will assist the FA Department with the verification process.
- Working with Colleague to get the California State Grant Interface installed so that we can start importing Cal Grant information the same as we do the Federal ISIR's.
- Working on the final check cancellations and adjustment for this year.
- The staff has been doing the Keenan trainings.
- Reviewing the CCPG applications that have been received to ensure that they are ready to be entered into Colleague.
- Setting up the CARES Act Grant award so that we can award students. We will also be putting the application back on the website in hopes to get additional students to apply. We received 72 applications but, there were many students that were not enrolled, never attend PVC or attending other colleges.
- Finalizing the new year setup so that we can start importing the 2020-2021 ISIR's.
- Replying to student emails with concerns for the upcoming year.
- Completing the final files on students for awarding.
- Working with the Counselors and assisting students with questions they have regarding their awards and SAP status for the current year.