

Track: Student Access and Educational Success

Session Title: Increasing Student Access and
Education Success through Financial Aid Awareness

Global Financial Aid Services, Inc.

Discover how proactive financial aid outreach, best practice tools, and speedy processing can help students obtain access to college.

Session Objectives

1. Review the importance of financial aid to student access
2. Key statistics
3. Discuss ways to break down the barriers of perceived affordability
4. Understand what member institutions are doing to create financial aid awareness

The Barriers:

- Work responsibilities and attending college can be overwhelming to students.
- Parent and student perceptions of affordability and lack of knowledge about financial aid
- Not enough capacity for student services and advising. The solution is allowing staff to proactively support students become more familiar with the role of financial aid and the application process.
- Complexity of aid eligibility system makes it difficult to communicate specific information about aid eligibility early in the preparation process.
- Complex aid application and aid offer notification process can be overwhelming to students

Key Statistics

- The Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance reported that, “ due to record- high financial barriers, that over 400,000 college qualified high school graduates will be unable to attend college.”
- An American Council on Education study found that 850,000 students who have been eligible for federal financial aid, did not complete necessary forms to receive such aid. The Commission on the Future of Higher Education recently acknowledged problems with the current aid process by concluding that some students, “ don’t enter college because of inadequate information and rising costs, combined with a confusing financial aid system. “

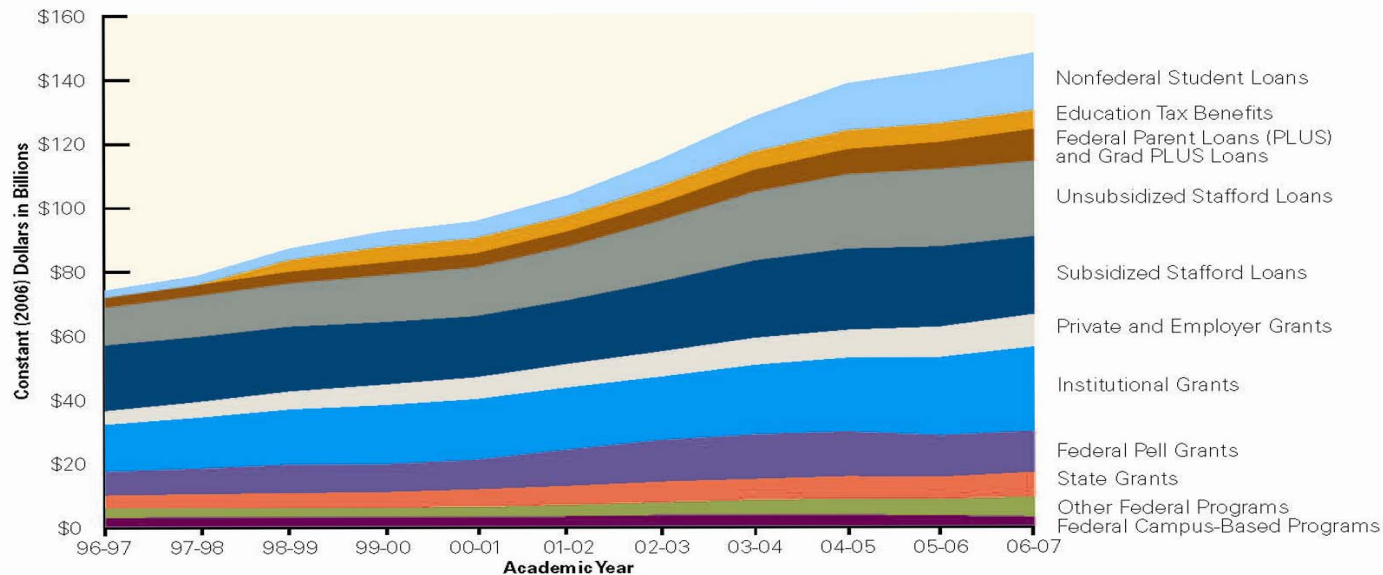
Key Statistics

- According to the College Board, the federal government annually provides more than \$90 billion in student aid and higher education benefits. State governments provide an additional \$6.8 billion each year in direct aid to college students.
- The College Board’s Trends In Education Series for 2007 states that, “ During the 2006-07 academic year, more than \$130 billion in financial aid was distributed to undergraduate and graduate students in the form of grants from all sources and federal loans, work-study, and tax credits and deductions. In addition, these students borrowed more than \$18 billion from state and private sources to help finance their education.”

Key Statistics:

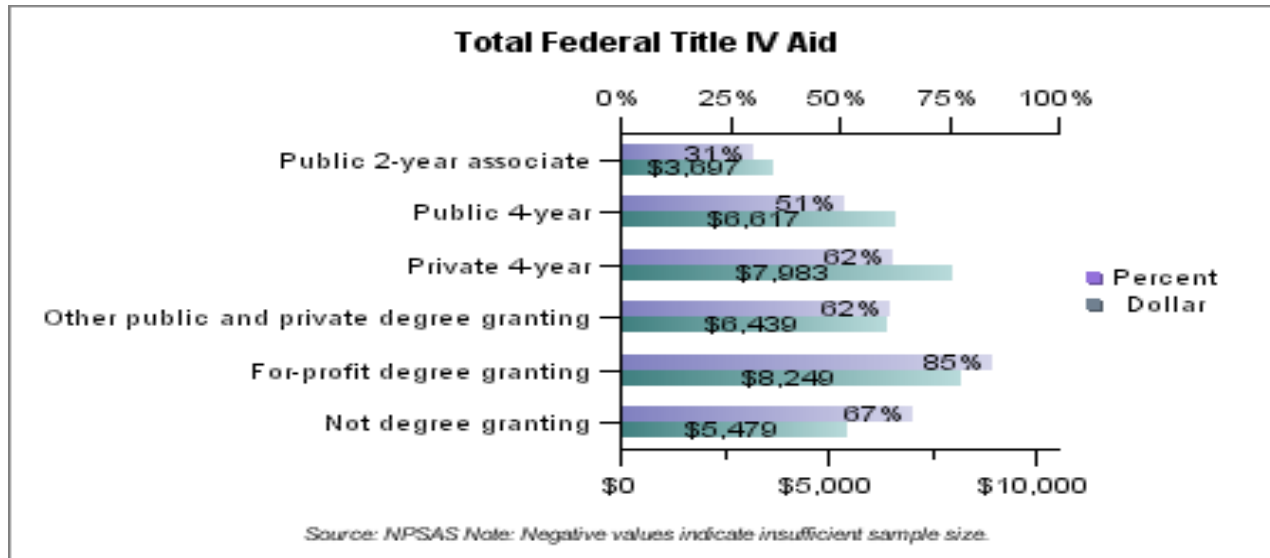
- Because of financial aid, the published price of college overstates what most students and families actually pay for college. About two-thirds of all full time college students receive grant aid to help them pay for their education. This graph shows how funds are used to finance education expenses:

Ten-Year Trend in Funds Used to Finance Postsecondary Education Expenses in Constant (2006) Dollars (in Billions), 1996-97 to 2006-07



Key Statistics

- The American Association of Community Colleges 2006-2007 study of students that are receiving Federal Title VI and the average amount per recipericant. The statistics show:



How to breakdown barriers: Awareness & Outreach

- Identify programs and students that are eligible for financial aid.
- Increase awareness of financial resources.
- Proactively reach out to students that express interest in your Institution, before they apply, with a financial aid awareness message.
- Proactively contact students that apply with counseling and financial aid estimates.

How to breakdown barriers: Awareness & Outreach – con’t

- Speed Wins! Contact students in minutes not hours or days.
- Create a standardized process for warm transferring students to/from Admissions and Financial Aid.
- Track where students are in the process and reach out during key milestones and/or periods of inactivity.
- Create reports measuring where students are in the process and manage to goals of improving ‘package complete’. Success should impact staff performance reviews.

How to breakdown barriers: Speedy Processing

- ‘Speedy processing’ is a combination of proactive outreach, online tools and automation.
- Create a process flow that maps the student lifecycle from ‘prospective student’ to ‘awarded student’ to ‘continuing year financial aid award complete’.
- Deploy online applications and campus kiosks.
- Large, multi-campus systems can create an internal Shared Service Center to provide consistent back office compliance and awarding services. The Shared Service Center can grow to provide a central, financial aid counseling center.
- Automate the financial aid awarding process.
- Automate the repackaging of students for continuing award years.

How to breakdown barriers: Retention – Listening & Messaging

- Students on financial aid have higher retention than ‘cash pay’ students.
- Automate the continuing year, financial aid process.
- Proactively contact students when a new award year FASFA is due.
- Utilize the call to listen to other potential retention issues (e.g., Childcare, program issues).

Financial Aid can be a service differentiator!

Discussion:

- What methods or processes have worked for your Institution to breakdown perceived and actual affordability barriers to College?
- What is the outlook for financial aid at your Institution?
- Does your Institution have enough/the right resources to proactively reach out with financial aid counseling?
- What methods can you undertake to ‘free-up’ staff to proactively reach out?

Global Financial Aid Services, Inc.

Global Financial Aid Services, Inc. is a Education Process Outsourcing company that provides financial aid administration and hosted financial aid software to Colleges and Universities. Founded in 1996, we leverage people, process, and technology to optimize financial aid, improve student services, reduce administrative costs and ensure compliance.

Global is a long-term operating partner that shares risk with each client. We are not a software company, nor are we a consulting company; however we have significant capabilities in both areas. The client is responsible for strategy, policy and governance while Global provides day-to-day administration using best practice processes and state of the art technology.

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