11-14-2002


University of South Florida St. Petersburg. Division of Student Affairs.

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ASSESSMENT RECORD FOR
DEPARTMENT/UNIT
OF

Financial Aid/Veterans Services
(Name of Administrative or Educational Support Department/Unit and Campus)

May 1, 2002 – April 30, 2003

November 14, 2002

(Assessment Period Covered)

(Date Submitted)

Submitted by: Jennifer Fraser
(Unit Assessment Representative)
Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose Linkage: USFSP Campus Mission

**Institutional Mission/Goal(s) Reference:** The USF St. Petersburg, as an autonomous, urban campus of the University of South Florida commits to excellence in teaching, research and service as it provides accessible educational opportunities to the diverse populations, businesses and institutions throughout Pinellas County and beyond.

**Administrative or Educational Support Unit Mission Statement:** The primary purpose of the Office of USF St. Petersburg Financial Aid and Veterans Services is providing guidance to students in understanding the requirements necessary to establish financial aid. The staff encourages students to explore all avenues for researching financial aid options and keeping track of their status via Internet locations. Information about scholarship searches, online Free Application for Federal Student Aid and OASIS are available to students to assist students in their quest for financial assistance. It is the goal of the office to help students become familiar with how to use and interpret these resources. The staff provides general information and individual counseling, as needed, to students with respect to their individual financial aid and to process paperwork in a timely manner.

**Intended Administrative Objectives:**

Write at least three objectives that will be the focus of assessment activities.

1. To work toward decreasing the processing time of Financial Aid verifications.

2. To improve student satisfaction with services

3. To reduce the processing time of Veterans benefits applications for Veterans on the St. Petersburg campus by decentralizing the process.
Intended Administrative or Educational Support Objective:
NOTE: There should be one form C for each intended objective listed on form B. Intended unit objective should be restated in the box immediately below and the intended objective number entered in the blank space.

To decrease the processing time of Federal Financial Aid verifications.

First Means of Assessment for Objective Identified Above:

a. Means of Unit Assessment & Criteria for Success:
The Director and staff of the Financial Aide department will compare chronological reports of verifications from last year and this year during the same time frames to determine if we were able to complete the verification process an average of one week faster this year than last year.

a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:
Reports that show the length of time it took to conduct federal verifications were compared for three target weeks in 2001 and 2002. For these three target weeks, the verification process took from 6 to 33 days less in 2002 compared to 2001. On the average, the length of time it took to process verifications dropped from 45.74 days in 2001 to 26.09 days in 2002. This represents an average decrease of 19.65 days, 43% faster than in 2001.

a. Use of Results to Improve Unit Services:
The time to process Federal Financial Aid verifications was reduced by over 2.5 weeks, far exceeding the departmental goal of one week. The department will continue to monitor verification time in the coming year to evaluate the efficiency of office processes.
Intended Administrative or Educational Support Objective:
NOTE: There should be one form C for each intended objective listed on form B. Intended unit objective should be restated in the box immediately below and the intended objective number entered in the blank space.

To improve student satisfaction

First Means of Assessment for Objective Identified Above:

a. Means of Unit Assessment & Criteria for Success:
80% of the students completing a point of service satisfaction survey will be satisfied or strongly satisfied with the service they have received at the Financial Aid counter.

a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:
A point of service survey of student satisfaction was conducted in 2001-2002 and again in 2002-2003. In 2001/02, 79% of students were “very satisfied”, and 5% of students were “somewhat satisfied” in response to the question “How satisfied are you with the level of service you received at the Financial Aid Office?”. Also, when asked to indicate their impression of the person who assisted them, the percentage of students who either agreed or strongly agreed that the person seemed interested in their question was 85%. 87% indicated that they agreed that the person seemed patient in answering questions, and 88% indicated that the person seemed very knowledgeable of Financial Aid policy/procedures.
Results of the survey conducted in 2002/03 indicated that there was a slight increase in the level of satisfaction with level of service and with the evaluation of the interest, patience and knowledge of the person who assisted them.

a. Use of Results to Improve Unit Services:
Despite the overall favorable evaluation of service and personnel, some students still indicate that they are misinformed at the front counter. As a result of this, the office reorganized the counselor’s schedules to provide back up support for the front counter by designating shifts during which each counselor was available to assist front counter workers. This reorganization has resulted in better support for the front counter people and better utilization of the counselors’ time.
In addition, plans are in place to develop a more comprehensive and in depth training program for counter staff in 2003-2004.
### Intended Administrative or Educational Support Objective:
NOTE: There should be one form C for each intended objective listed on form B. Intended unit objective should be restated in the box immediately below and the intended objective number entered in the blank space.

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To reduce processing time of Veterans benefits applications for veterans on the St. Petersburg campus by implementing the plan for decentralization.

### First Means of Assessment for Objective Identified Above:

**a. Means of Unit Assessment & Criteria for Success:**
Pull a sample of students’ files from last year and compare processing time to this year once we start processing on the St. Petersburg campus and see if we have decreased the processing time by an average of one week.

**a. Summary of Assessment Data Collected:**
It was not possible to implement this goal since it was not possible to secure necessary reports from the USFSP Registrar’s Office and the position to certify enrollment of veterans was not funded due to budget cuts.

**a. Use of Results to Improve Unit Services:**
This goal is deferred until the USFSP Registrar’s Office is autonomous and able to provide the necessary reports and until personnel to certify enrollments is funded. Until that time, this office will continue to counsel students and resolve problems with processing, but all processing will continue to be done on the Tampa campus.