

Mission

The Mission of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships is to award scholarships, grants, loans and employment opportunities to eligible students and provide financial literacy and guidance to our diverse population of undergraduate and graduate students.

Vision

The vision of the Office of Financial aid and Scholarships is to ease the financial burden of a college education and make it accessible for students from diverse financial backgrounds.

Department/Program: Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships

Main Contact: Susan R. Chavez Email: srchavez@nmhu.edu Phone: 505.454.3430

Strategic Goals for 2020 Planning for FY18-FY21	Unit Goals	Unit Actions/Strategies	Measurable Outcome(s)/	Person(s) Responsible	Indicators and Time Frame for Assessment	Date(s) for Review
1. Highlands University will achieve academic excellence, academic integration and student success.	1. Create a communication plan to consistently inform current about FA important information throughout the academic year. 2. Revise SAP Policy to allow for a more equitable criteria for all students by the end of the Fall 2018 semester.	1. Send group emails consistently on a set schedule during the academic year. 2. Writing new SAP policy and new processes utilizing Banner upgrades to achieve a highly effective and precise outcome.	1. We can measure if students open the email and the feedback we are getting to our emails through Slate. 2. Review data to determine the increase in student eligibility.	1. Director 2. FA Associate Director 3. FA Analyst 4. All FA Personnel	1. Monthly 2. Yearly	1. The first of every month to measure if students are opening email and responding. 2. At the end of every semester to measure how many students remained eligible for aid, primarily Pell Grant.
Action Status w/Description (Achieved, Ongoing, Stop)	Completion Date(s)	Recommendations	Challenge(s)	Budget Consideration (Yes/No)		

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<p>1. Communication Plan: Achieved.</p> <p>The Communication Plan is created and implemented for prospective students and continuing students</p> <p>2) SAP policy changes: Achieved.</p> <p>We have implemented the new SAP policy and is now in place. We are currently collecting data at the end of each semester when the program is run in Banner.</p>	<p>1) Communication Plan: November 2018</p> <p>2) SAP Policy Changes: October 2018</p>	<p>1) The Communication Plan is constantly being revised to increase our communication with students. We are being more proactive and creative in communicating with our students.</p> <p>2) At the end of each semester we will review the students who are in suspension to determine if the policy changes have positive outcomes for students.</p>	<p>1) The communication plan is a bit of a challenge in that we have to have the buy in of our local high school counselors to help us determine who our potential students are and how to reach them.</p> <p>2) SAP changes were implemented in December 2018 and it was a bit difficult working out how Banner would capture all the students necessary. There were a few barriers, but we worked around them and had great results.</p>		<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	
<p>2. <i>Highlands University will achieve strategic enrollment management.</i></p>	<p>1. Review and effectively leverage FA/ Scholarships to recruit and retain students every semester.</p> <p>2. Enhance Financial Literacy to prospective and current students by 1% by partnering with other offices.</p>	<p>1. Package FA earlier in the academic year for Freshman and February for Continuing students. Begin awarding Freshman Scholarships in November.</p> <p>2. Host Financial Literacy events as part of College Night and also during other events for potential student</p>	<p>1. We can track the number of students who accept their awards and open their emails.</p> <p>2. Track response from students and parents who attend our events and</p>	<p>Director FA Associate Director FA Analyst All FA Personnel</p>	<p>1. bi-weekly 2.. annually</p>	<p>1. Beginning January and ending in on June 30 the end of the academic year.</p>
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<p>1) Leverage Scholarships: Achieved :</p> <p>Scholarship criteria for some of the scholarships were adjusted to be more student centered and was approved by the BOR on December 14, 2018.</p> <p>2)Financial Literacy: Acheived</p> <p>We have hosted workshops on Main Campus and at the Centers. We have held FAFSA events at area high schools and created a budget sheet to give students and parents. We hosted a Financial Literacy Bootcamp for NMHU students.</p>	<p>1) December 14, 2018.</p> <p>2) We hosted a training for FAFSA completion on NMHU campus.</p> <p>3) On September 21-25, 2020 we provided the Financial Literacy Bootcamp on the student portal.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FA was packaged 6 weeks earlier than the previous year. We realized that there are many processes that have to be put into place before packaging for the new year can be completed. We continue to move toward packaging FA earlier, but will be more realistic in our time-frame. The outcomes of these changes will begin to be evident in Fall 2019 when we look at enrollment and retention rates. We hosted the Financial Literacy Bootcamp which included five webinars on budgeting, and personal finances. We will create a Financial Literacy page on our FA website where these will be housed and used as a tool for recruitment. 	<p>1) Institutional funding is limited so if we offer scholarships beginning in November we will be exhausting the funding earlier in the academic year.</p> <p>2) We have to be available to both parents and students when advancing our message on financial literacy. We have found that it is a challenge to get parents to attend an evening event. We have now moved to a virtual modality and find that there is a better engagement of students.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
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<p>3. <i>Highlands University will achieve a vibrant campus life.</i></p>	<p>The Financial Aid Office will be more active and visible on Campus.</p>	<p>1. Collaborate with Student Affairs to have FAFSA nights to ensure student wellbeing about their finances. 2. FAFSA Workshops at main campus and at the Centers. 2, College Night participation 2. High school FAFSA events.</p>	<p>This can be measured by student participation in the workshops and College Night event Survey students on their experience and suggestions for improvement.</p>	<p>All of FA staff</p>	<p>Post review after each event to collect data and lessons learned.</p>	<p>Monthly and Yearly</p>
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<p>Achieved :</p> <p>The FA office hosted more events on FAFSA completion on Main campus and all the Centers. We visited the Centers to provide FA information. We partnered with New Mexico Assistance Foundation to provide workshops on FAFSA completion for trainers and also on Student Loan Exit Counseling</p>	<p>May 2019</p>	<p>Although the FA office was more visible on campus with hosting more events and collaborating with other offices, we can always improve on our methods for assisting students. We continue to work to be better at being responsive to student needs.</p>		<p>We find challenges on being able to engage with students at different times of the year. We find they are not interested in completing the FAFSA as soon as the application is available.</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p>4. <i>Highlands University will be a community partner.</i></p>	<p>1. Work with HS Counselors to assist prospective students with FAFSA completion and Financial Literacy education to increase preparedness for college by 1%</p>	<p>1. Host Community Events inviting parents and student for college financial literacy opportunities in the Fall while they are looking at Colleges to attend. 2. Participate in events hosted by NM College Connect to be visible to the financial aid community</p>	<p>1. We can measure the impact by the number of students who attend our events and open the emails we send through SLATE.</p>	<p>Director FA Associate Director FA Analyst All FA Personnel</p>	<p>At the end of each semester Yearly looking at recruitment data.</p>	<p>1.December May June</p>
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<p>Achieved:</p> <p>FA office hosted a FAFSA Completion event where HS counselors and community members were invited to learn how to assist students with completing the FAFSA.</p> <p>The Scholarship banquet was held in April 2019 and was successful in helping students with determining whether to attend NMHU. Parents and prospective students were invited to have dinner and learn about current student experiences. Faculty also attended to enhance the student experience.</p>	<p>March 2019</p> <p>April 2019.</p>	<p>We will collaborate with NMEAF to host another training for HS Counselors on FAFSA Completion in Fall 2019.</p> <p>We will continue to improve on this annual Scholarship event with additional opportunities for students and parents to learn about NMHU. We plan to invite additional faculty and provide an opportunity for the students to possibly register at the event. This is a valuable PR event for our community.</p>	<p>The challenge is to get HS counselors to attend training on how to assist students in completing the FAFSA.</p> <p>We do not see much of a challenge with this event other than the work it takes to prepare. This was the 3rd annual event and the Sub ballroom was full.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>		
<p>5. Highlands University will achieve technological advancement and innovation.</p>	<p>1. Continued process improvement initiatives within my office.</p> <p>2. Purchase of Ellucian's "On Demand Library" to use as a professional development tool.</p> <p>3. Fully implements Banner 9 FA module.</p>	<p>1. Implementation of Student Employment module in Banner for use in the 18/19 academic year.</p> <p>2. Purchase tool that allows staff a means of accessing a video library to have the ability to train and implement processes in Banner that have never been used.</p>	<p>1. Allows for monthly reconciliation of student employment funds using Banner.</p> <p>2. This effort can be measured by the increase in new processes and more efficiencies.</p>	<p>1. FA director, FA Analyst, IT staff</p> <p>2. FA director/ IT staff</p>	<p>1.October2018</p> <p>2.October 2018</p>	<p>1.monthly</p> <p>2.yearly</p>

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<p>Achieved:</p> <p>The goal was met by implementing Banner 9 in the FA office. We also purchase the on demand Ellucian library which we reference when needed. Our process have improved significantly allowing for time to achieve other goals.</p>	<p>Banner 9 was implemented by September 2018 for the FA office. The Ellucian on demand library was purchased in October 2018.</p>	<p>We continue to improve processes for more efficiency in the FA office. The student employment module will be completely implemented in 2019 but it has taken significant time because of the collaboration needed from HR, Payroll, ITS, and our FA office.</p>		<p>The challenge has been in working with other offices and allowing for them to update their processes. We work well with other offices and we continue to move forward.</p>		<p>Yes</p>
<p><i>6. Highlands University will achieve enhanced communication and efficiency.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a Financial Aid communication plan for prospective students. 2. Customer service training for staff. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send group emails consistently on a set schedule during the academic year. 2. Provide professional development opportunities for staff to learn customer service techniques. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 We can measure if students open the email and the feedback we are getting to our emails through Slate 	<p>1.FA director/staff</p>	<p>1.end of each training Fall/ Spring</p>	<p>1.semi-annually</p>

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<p>Achieved:</p> <p>The Communication Plan for prospective students is complete and implemented. We can now send out emails through SLATE and track them for data purposes.</p> <p>All of the FA staff has attended customer service training provided by our HR department. We also discuss customer service on a regular basis to be responsive to student needs.</p>	<p>November 2018</p> <p>April 2019 and continuous professional development.</p>	<p>The Communication is constantly being updated to include additional information to students. We are collaborating with the other SEM offices to communicate with students in a more streamlined manner.</p> <p>The FA office continues to improve on customer service by training and utilizing tools to make processes more efficient.</p>	<p>The challenge is to be strategic about the messages to avoid having oversaturation of messages to students. We are collaborating with Recruitment to merge communication with students.</p> <p>The FA office mainly works with students who have issues of suspension or conflicting information for federal aid. Our training includes tools to deescalate hostile situations and avoid conflict.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

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