

## Basic Program Information

Department Name: Financial Aid

Program Mission(s): To ensure full access to college for those, who due to financial disadvantages, might be denied the opportunity for post-secondary education. The Foothill College Financial Aid Office (FAO) maintains a financial aid delivery system to provide timely disbursement of federal, state, and private funds to those eligible students to assist them in entering and remaining in college. The FAO believes that each person has self-worth, is entitled to college access, and the right to develop his or her potential through quality education and learning opportunities. We hope access to these financial aid programs help to achieve this goal. While the FAO tries to actively seek out eligible students, it is our hope that students in financial need also seek out and take advantage of the services that the FAO offers.

Program review team:

Name	Department	Position
Kevin Harral	Financial Aid	Director of Financial Aid

## Section 1. Data and Trend Analysis

### 1.2. Department Data

Dimension	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Unduplicated Student Recipient Count	3992	4920	5862
Unduplicated Student FAFSAs Received	4754	6412	7915
Total Awarded Amount	\$7,398,546	\$9,884,812	\$13,985,620
Full-time FTEF	0	0	0
Part-time FTEF	0	0	0
Full-time Staff	8	7	6
Part-time Staff	0	0	1

1.3 Using the data and prompts, provide a short narrative analysis of the following indicators.

1. Enrollment trends over the last three years: Is the enrollment in your program holding steady, or is there a noticeable increase or decline? Please comment on the data and analyze the trends.

-Financial aid applicants up 66% (based on FAFSAs received at conclusion of 08-09 compared to 10-11 end of year)

-Headcount of recipients up 47% (over 1850 more students) from 08-09 to 10-11, based on Institutional research as of conclusion of 10-11 (September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011)

-Financial aid dollars awarded up 89% from 08-09 to 10-11, based on Institutional research as of conclusion of 10-11 (September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011)

-There have been enormous increases in overall usage of our financial aid programs and services. These increases are greater than anytime within the past decade for Foothill College. The implications are that a fully staffed office is necessary to maintain the level of service and programs that we currently provide, which is already less than ideally we would be providing. We are federally compelled to process all applicants' applications and some of our limitations are merely staffing shortages.

2. Completion Rates (Has the number of degrees/certificates held steady, or increased or declined in the last three years? Please comment on the data and analyze the trends.

N/A

3. Productivity: The college productivity goal is 546. (Please analyze the productivity trends in your program and explain factors that affect your productivity, i.e. GE students, size restrictions)

N/A

4. Course Offerings (Comment on the frequency, variety, demand, pre-requisites.) Review the enrollment trends by course. Are there particular courses that are not getting the enrollment or are regularly cancelled due to low enrollment?)

N/A

5. Curriculum and SLOs

N/A

6. Basic Skills Programs (Please describe your Program's connection to this core mission, if applicable):

We fully support and fund students going through basic skills and working their way into financial aid eligible certificate, degree, and transfer programs, if not already in one. While basic skills students can cover the full socio-economic spectrum, they tend to be coming out of educational systems that did not prepare them for college level work. Lower socio-economic families are often disproportionately represented in this category.

7. Transfer Programs: Articulation (Please describe your Program's connection to this core mission, if applicable):

We fully support and fund students going through the process of preparing for transfer. Transfer students range across the entire socio-economic spectrum. We also often are able to support their financial aid transition to the 4-year colleges, both public and private, in state and out of state.

8. CTE Programs: Labor/Industry Alignment (Please describe your Program's connection to this core mission, if applicable):

We are able to support and fund some programs in this category. There are strict federal guidelines for what is a financial aid eligible program and not all programs in this category fit those criteria, but some do and students in those programs are funded as possible.

**Section 2. Learning Outcomes Assessment Summary**

2.1. Insert – Previous year’s Four Column Report for SA/SLO Assessment from TracDat, please contact the Office of Instruction to assist you with this step if needed.

Unit Assessment Report - Four Column

Foothill College  
SA - Financial Aid

Service Area SLOs (SA-SLOs)	Means of Assessment & Target / Tasks	Assessment Findings	Reflection/Action & Follow-Up
<p>SA - Financial Aid - 1 - Obtain Funding - To determine if our students have ability to apply their knowledge to obtain funding for their education and follow the rules established by the Department of Education.</p> <p><b>Year(s) to be Assessed:</b> 2010-2011</p> <p><b>SA-SLO Status:</b> Active</p>	<p><b>Assessment Method:</b> We developed a survey in conjunction with District Research that was administered via an e-mail link that took the participant to a web survey tool. The participants were selected based on who had applied for financial aid using a FAFSA.</p> <p><b>Assessment Method Type:</b> Survey</p> <p><b>Target:</b> Increase the student understanding how to obtain funding.</p>	<p>10/12/2011 - The results were compiled by District Research and presented to the Financial Aid Office (FAO). The survey had 24 questions, 9 of which were demographic in nature and 411 Foothill College participants completed some portion of the survey.</p> <p><b>Result:</b> Target Met</p> <p><b>Year This Assessment Occurred:</b> 2010-2011</p>	<p>10/12/2011 - The results were fairly telling. The majority of respondents knew how to apply for aid and how frequently to apply. They knew what to do next and how to determine if a document was still pending. However, at the point of awarding and disbursement, only 35% knew how to determine their disbursement date. Only 23% knew their disbursement amount could vary based on enrollment levels. Only 48% knew the satisfactory academic progress requirement to maintain eligibility. This was all the more disturbing because the vast majority were returning students, not new college students. This will help guide our information dissemination process to include disbursement and maintaining eligibility information to the already abundant how to apply information.</p>
<p>SA - Financial Aid - 2 - MyPortal - To determine if our students have ability to navigate the new financial aid system for 10-11 ? MyPortal. This is a major and significant change from 09-10.</p> <p><b>Year(s) to be Assessed:</b> 2010-2011</p> <p><b>SA-SLO Status:</b> Active</p>	<p><b>Assessment Method:</b> We developed a survey in-house that was administered to students coming through the FAO. The participants were selected based on who had the financial aid tab in their MyPortal, which is initiated by a FAFSA application being received.</p> <p><b>Assessment Method Type:</b> Survey</p>	<p>10/12/2011 - The results were compiled by District Research and presented to the Financial Aid Office (FAO). The survey had 14 questions, with a 15th open-ended ?suggestions? box and 87 participants from Foothill College completed some portion of the survey.</p> <p><b>Result:</b> Target Met</p> <p><b>Year This Assessment Occurred:</b></p>	<p>10/12/2011 - The vast majority (82%) of students knew how to initiate their MyPortal account. While they were not as sure on getting financial aid information from MyPortal, they knew what to do and give attention to once there. There was a major lack of knowledge on what awards could be accepted and</p>

2.3 Please provide observations and reflection below.

2.3.a Service Area Student Learning Outcomes

What findings can be gathered from the SA-SLOs assessments?

In reflection we believe the FAO does a good job of informing students up-front about the application process. Essentially how to do the FAFSA and whose information and what types should be used to complete the application. However, we also recognize that students get lost along the way in regards to finding financial aid in the first place both through our office and the financial aid tab in MyPortal and maintaining eligibility from term to term and year to year. We also found that our students could successfully navigate and apply for scholarships via our online process.

2.3.b Does any of the data suggest that revisions might be necessary in order for students to successfully achieve the SA-SLOs?

Yes, the data might indicate we do a good job getting a student through the application, but not as good a job finding ‘needy’ applicants and teaching them the skills to continue each year without additional assistance from the FAO. We will need to revisit this point as we get our staffing up again and should be addressed in the next cycle.

2.3.c Do the SA-SLOs reflect the knowledge, skills and abilities students need from those services in order to succeed?

Yes, while the SA-SLOs can always be refined a little, it appears the SA-SLOs were crafted to represent the knowledge, skills and abilities students would need to obtain, maximize, and maintain their services from the FAO.

2.3.d How has assessment of SA-SLOs led to improvement in student success at the institution?

We have adjusted our in-reach tactics to include ESL and Basic Skills class presentations above and beyond the Orientation to College courses (Coun 50 and 175). We also invested in physical Banners that fly on three major points of the campus to reach additional students with information. Finally, we are improving our advertising and communicating dates and deadlines to our student population, including posting information on instructor green sheets.

2.4 Annual Action Plan and Summary: Using the information above, list the program’s action steps, the related [Core Mission objective](#), SA-SLO assessment data and the expected impact on student success.

Action Step	Related SA-SLO assessment (Note applicable data)	Related ESMP Core Mission Goals (Basic Skills, Transfer, Work Force, Stewardship of Resources)	How will this action improve student learning/success?
1 Increasing our visibility/accessibility on campus, primarily by increased targeted course presentations and events.	SA-SLOs 1 & 2 assessment tools could be used to assess this action step. Students who are part of a presentation/event will have greater knowledge on how to apply and maintain eligibility for fin aid.	Basic Skills, Transfer & Work Force	Students will learn how to fund their education which allows for timely access to books and supplies to allow greater success and persistence.
2 Continue to advertise and utilize our online scholarship process. Increase visibility of system.	SA-SLO 3 assessment tool could be used to assess this action step. Students who use the online application process are able to better self-identify an additional funding source for college.	Basic Skills, Transfer & Work Force	Students will learn how to supplement their existing funding stream(s) for education which allows for timely access to books and supplies to allow greater success and persistence.
3 Make incremental	SA-SLOs 2 assessment	Basic Skills, Transfer &	Students will learn how

enhancements to the MyPortal information provided from financial aid to further guide and inform our student populations.	tool could be used to assess this action step. Students who fully utilize their MyPortal account and its bells and whistles will be better positioned to react to needs/offers from the Financial Aid Office, thus maximizing their aid opportunities.	Work Force	proactively take steps and quickly react to financial aid needs. From this they will learn about our technology, requirements, and aid opportunities before funds expire.
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**Section 3: Program Goals and Rationale**

Program goals should be broad and incorporate some sort of measurable action that connects to Foothill’s core missions, [Educational & Strategic Master Plan \(ESMP\)](#), the division plan, and SLOs.

3.1 Program relation to college mission/core missions

Financial aid permeates and is interwoven with virtually all of Foothill College’s core missions. Providing financial assistance to students to fund their education is the main core mission of financial aid, but we are also educating students about how to fund their educations. The core missions of basic skills and transfer remain our highest priority, but we also intersect with several of the career technical education programs.

3.2 Previous Program Goals from last academic year

Goal	Original Timeline	Actions Taken	Status/Modifications
Increase the number of students completing the FAFSA and additionally the number of successfully completed files.	End of 10-11 academic year for financial aid – September 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Expanded office walk-in availability and appointments for students.</li> <li>-Additional outreach to our FH classes.</li> <li>-Front counter personnel training to review paperwork for completeness &amp; accuracy.</li> <li>-Timely reviewing of files with personalized assistance - follow-up emails &amp; phone calls.</li> <li>-Reviewers accept some explanations of discrepancies, missing</li> </ul>	Complete and successful – increases of 23% in FAFSAs from 09-10 to 10-11. Adding enhancements for 11-12.

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		information, etc. documented through phone conversations with students.	
Outreach by staff to ensure all segments, particularly under-represented student populations have access to financial aid resources to assist them in achieving their academic goals.	End of 10-11 academic year for financial aid – September 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-FH class presentations and workshops</li> <li>-Tables and/or workshops at on-campus events</li> <li>-Cash For College event at Middlefield</li> <li>-Early outreach to high schools through financial aid evenings</li> <li>-Integrate with campus outreach (Day on the Hill, Parent Orientation)</li> <li>-Designated foster youth liaison</li> <li>-Provide and maintain resources like reference brochures and handouts in lobby and post information on bulletin board.</li> <li>-Keep other departments/programs and instructors informed of deadlines, workshops and events through flyers.</li> <li>-Resource binders for counselors</li> </ul>	In progress and incrementally successful. We expanded our classroom presentations, but still need to enhance our targeted outreach further. Adding enhancements for 11-12.

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3.3 New Goals: Goals can be multi-year

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Timeline (long/short-term)</b>	<b>Supporting Action Steps from section 2.4 (if applicable)</b>	<b>How will this goal improve student success or respond to other key college initiatives</b>
<p><b>1</b> Increase the number of students completing the FAFSA and additionally the number of successfully completed files.</p>	<p>This is a continuing goal from year to year.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By increasing our visibility/accessibility on campus, primarily by increased targeted course presentations and events.</li> <li>2. Make incremental enhancements to the MyPortal information provided from financial aid to further guide and inform our student populations.</li> <li>3. Fully staffing the reviewer side of the office to allow timely processing and follow-up on incomplete files.</li> </ol>	<p>This will provide financial options for those struggling to afford college. This is doubly important as the CA economy is not turning around yet and registration fees continue to be increased.</p>
<p><b>2</b> Outreach by staff to ensure all segments, particularly under-represented student populations have access to financial aid resources to assist them in achieving their academic goals.</p>	<p>This is a continuing goal from year to year.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By increasing our visibility/accessibility on campus, primarily by increased targeted course presentations and events.</li> <li>2. Follow-up with clubs or groups that cater to the targeted student populations and build rapport with those students to rebuild those relationships.</li> <li>3. Dispel financial aid myths that keep students away from our office or the financial aid process as a whole.</li> </ol>	<p>This will help inform students of their financial aid options for paying for college. This is important as the CA economy is not turning around and registration fees continue to be increased, but federal aid is still available and strong.</p>

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**Section 4: Program Resources and Support**

4.1 Using the tables below, summarize your program’s resource requests.

Full Time Faculty and/or Staff Positions

Position	\$ Amount	Related Goal from Table in section 3.3	Possible funding sources (Lottery, Measure C, Basic Skills, Perkins, etc.)
None – need to fill vacancy (in progress) and need working-out-of-class employee back in office.	\$0	Goal 1 and 2	BFAP – Fund 21

Reassigned Time

Position	\$ Amount	Related Goal from Table in section 3.3	Possible funding sources (Lottery, Measure C, Basic Skills, Perkins, etc.)
N/A			

B Budget Augmentation

B Budget FOAP	\$ Amount	Related Goal from Table in section 3.3	Possible funding sources (Lottery, Measure C, Basic Skills, Perkins, etc.)
None			

Facilities and Equipment

Facilities/Equipment Description	\$ Amount	Related Goal from Table in section 3.3	Possible funding sources (Lottery, Measure C, Basic Skills, Perkins, etc.)
Computer and peripherals are reaching end of normal lifespan – normal tech refresh will suffice.	?	Goal 1	?

One-time/Other: (Release time, training, etc.?)

Description	\$ Amount	Related Goal from Table in section 3.3	Possible funding sources (Lottery, Measure C, Basic Skills, Perkins, etc.)
None			



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**Section 5: Program Strengths/Opportunities for Improvement**

5.1 Use the matrix provided below and, reflect on the program relative to students' needs, briefly analyze the program's strengths and weaknesses and identify opportunities and challenges to the program. Consider external and internal factors, such as demographic, economic, educational, and societal trends. Some considerations may include current and future demand for the program, similar programs at other comparable institutions, and potential auxiliary funding.

	INTERNAL FACTORS	EXTERNAL FACTORS
<b>Strengths</b>	Staff has maintained ability to absorb 3 years of double digit percentage increases in applicants without major time delays. We also had budget cuts to staffing over those years.	Financial aid has partially repaired its image on the campus. Improved service leads to more positive word-of-mouth and more applicants. CA economy helps to keep the applications coming in strong.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	Over the past 4 ½ years there has been consistent and impactful staff absenteeism, turn-over, and working-out-of-classification vacancies. Lack of staffing consistency has strained each member, not allowing full attention to be given to the niceties and possibilities of student services.	Financial aid negative word-of-mouth information and myths spread faster and hang on longer than good feedback and truthful info. The FH FAO has been digging out of a 'negative' hole. There is a lack of understanding of what we do and how we do it by campus as a whole.
<b>Opportunities</b>	1) We are looking at moving to a new location and that presents the opportunity to do an 'info blast' to the campus, putting us back on the forefront. 2) We are getting closer to having staff stability with only one long-term vacancy (a working-out-of-class situation) that we are still struggling with. This will allow better outreach and fulfillment of the financial aid promises we try to make.	The campus is finally realizing the importance of our program as more and more students need the assistance. We are gaining respect from upper administration as we continue to deliver on the financial aid promise to students. We are poised to be a leader in Banner usage and technical proficiency. With more stable staffing we can finally focus more on the college's core missions.
<b>Threats</b>	While the state of CA budget has not proven to be a direct threat; it is the way the college and Student Services management react, that poses a threat. Financial aid is relatively self-sufficient after salary and benefits.	The major external threats are the federal and state regulations that continue to change that add administrative burdens, with no additional funding, that must be shouldered above and beyond serving students and getting funds to them. State legislature could alter BFAP funding model that would impact us.

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5.2 Are there any critical issues you expect to face in the coming year? How will you address those challenges?

Unless we are not able to staff the established positions in the office, I do not foresee any critical issues that we would need to address. If we have staffing shortages or have our staff funds redirected, then we will experience other processing slowdowns.

5.3 What statements of concern have been raised in the course of conducting the program review by faculty, administrators, students, or by any member of the program review team regarding overall program viability?

Faculty, administrators, staff, and students often do not understand the volume of work that we do on a daily basis, the steps we must take to maintain administrative capability, and the time it takes. There can be unrealistic expectations of what can and cannot be done and the time it takes to do our work. We are also occasionally seen as 'gatekeepers' instead of 'pro-student', a problem/image we are working to lessen.

5.4 Address the concerns or recommendations that were made in prior program review cycles.

N/A – no prior concerns or recommendations have been made in my prior review cycles.

5.5 After reviewing the data, what strengths or positive trends would you like to highlight about your program?

Over the last couple years as the college has whittled back class offerings, staffing, and refocused on its core missions, due to state and District budget issues, the Foothill College FAO has seen double digit percentage increases in applicants, files completed, recipients, and dollars paid out. These are all historical highs for the Foothill College FAO. In the 11-12 year we are still experiencing double digit percentage increase in applications over last year, despite all the course and enrollment decreases.

### **Section 6: Feedback and Follow Up**

This section is for the Dean to provide feedback.

6.1 Strengths and successes of the program as evidenced by the data and analysis:

As noted above, Financial Aid has seen an exponential increase in demand and dollars awarded in the past three years. They have struggled to meet demand while staffing has been in flux. For the most part, they have been able to make awards but as noted in a recent audit, sometimes with a significant delay.

6.2 Areas of concern, if any:

The potential of significant changes in federal regulations coupled with a push in California to review course-taking patterns and GPA requirements for financial aid will once again require us to review how we operate. In light of these pending issues, the willingness, or lack thereof, to

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rethink how one does business by some of the existing staff is a concern that needs to be addressed.

### 6.3 Recommendations for improvement:

I recommend that Financial Aid undergo an Out-of-Cycle in-depth program review to address the concerns above. We must correct or alter procedures that have led to audit exceptions as well as prepare ourselves for policy changes that will force changes in the way we do business.

### 6.4 Recommended next steps:

Proceed as planned on program review schedule

Further review/Out of cycle in-depth review