

OFFICE FOR STUDENT FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Annual Report

2013-2014

A photograph of a red brick building with a white arched entrance. A student is riding a bicycle in the foreground. The building has a decorative stone archway above the entrance and a large window above it. There are palm trees and other greenery around the building.

UF UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA



Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to present the 2013-14 Annual Report for the Office for Student Financial Affairs (SFA).

This report provides detailed information about the major activities and events that have occurred in the reporting period July 2013 to July 2014.

The Annual Report also provides general information about the office.

This report is fully electronic, reflecting our efforts to reduce print publications and support sustainability efforts on campus.

Rick Wilder

Director, Student Financial Affairs



**STUDENT FINANCIAL AFFAIRS IS,
AT ITS HEART,
A SERVICE ORGANIZATION.**

Our Mission

The mission of the Office for Student Financial Affairs is to enhance recruitment and retention of students through research and support of financial aid programs while assisting parents and students in planning for and meeting higher education expenses.

SFA staff assume a proactive role, reaching out to students to educate them about the benefits of higher education and the availability of financial aid.

Our Core Beliefs

- SFA believes that financial factors should not deny any student the opportunity to attend UF and successfully pursue their degree objectives.
- SFA is committed to maximizing the resources available to its students.
- SFA recognizes that each student's financial situation is unique—we make every effort to develop policies and procedures that treat each student fairly and equitably while taking into account unusual circumstances.

Our Role

The Primary role of SFA is to provide financial resources to students who would otherwise be unable to receive a post-secondary education without assistance. SFA offers eligible students financial aid packages consisting of scholarships, grants, loans, and part-time employment, alone or in combination.



**STUDENT FINANCIAL AFFAIRS IS DEDICATED
TO HELPING STUDENTS OBTAIN FINANCIAL
RESOURCES SO THEY MAY ACHIEVE THEIR
EDUCATIONAL GOALS.**

Leading the Way

Each year, SFA continues to enhance the quality of its financial aid services and delivery capacity. UF is one of the country's leaders in providing financial aid to students, and has been frequently selected by the federal government to participate in experimental programs.

Overview

During the 2013-14 fiscal year, SFA delivered over \$556 million in student aid from federal, state, institutional, and private sources to over 46,000 students.

What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid is defined as money provided to students and their families as either “gift aid” or “self-help” to assist in paying college costs. “Gift aid,” as the name implies, is free money such as scholarships and grants, which students do not have to repay. “Self-help” programs include loans and employment and are so named because students must repay loans and work for money awarded through employment programs. Awards to students consist of scholarships, grants, loans, and employment—singly or in combination.

¹ Four two-person advising teams handle inquiries from the majority of the student body

Important Factors

SFA awards aid to students according to financial need, defined as the difference between a student's current educational costs and what the student and the student's family can afford to pay toward these costs. UF uses a federally mandated need analysis formula provided by Congress to evaluate a student's financial need, based on information on the student's financial aid applications. Students and parents have the primary responsibility for paying students' expenses. When the funds available from family, job income, savings, and other resources are insufficient to cover all of a student's educational expenses, SFA makes every effort to meet the student's remaining financial need.

Beyond the Money

SFA is, at its heart, a service organization. Besides disbursing financial aid monies, SFA strives also to assist and educate students—giving them the information, resources, and understanding necessary to become fiscally responsible and successful.

Towards this end, SFA offers financial aid advising services¹ throughout the year, comprehensive financial aid publications,

and state-of-the-art technical support including an interactive website and student aid file information through UF's ISIS (Integrated Student Information System) website.

Facilities

SFA's Student Resource Center in our main lobby in S-107 Criser is available Monday through Friday to assist students with financial aid status checks, online aid application, and scholarship searches. Counseling and outreach services include financial aid advising, workshops, budget and debt management counseling, and financial planning. SFA also provides access to alternative resources to help students who do not qualify for financial aid, or who need more assistance than SFA can provide.



SFA Departmental Achievements



**SFA STAFF ASSUME A PROACTIVE
ROLE, REACHING OUT TO STUDENTS TO
EDUCATE THEM ABOUT THE BENEFITS
OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE
AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL AID.**



- Members of SFA's Disbursement and Systems departments received a 2014 Davis Productivity Award for developing and implementing custodial scholarship deposit processes to improve efficiency, service and data integrity. These new processes not only improved service to our students but also resulted in over \$42,000 in cost savings to SFA. SFA Team members (above) included Donna Kolb, Tina Lamb, Susan Smith and Mike Dugger.
- Loans and Disbursement implemented changes to the custodial check process, resulting in a 50% improvement in efficiency.
- The Loan and Disbursement area implemented the 150% Subsidized Loan limit usage procedures. This was due to federal regulation changes for first time borrowers taking out federal Direct subsidized loans on or after July 1, 2013. The borrowers are subject to the 150% Direct Subsidized Loan Limit, which limits the amount of time a student is eligible to borrow subsidized loans to 150% of their published program length.

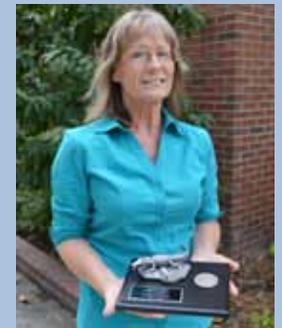
- During the 2013-14 academic year, the Loan and Disbursement area streamlined the loan process by allowing students to request a federal direct loan via the Integrated Student Information System (ISIS). The new process improved student awareness of loan borrowing and decreased the workload of SFA staff.
- SFA was successful in working with the College of Pharmacy to create a separate financial aid satellite office to serve the needs of its growing student population and specialty programs. The addition of this new position has resulted in SFA's ability to provide more individualized and responsive service to the students enrolled in the College of Pharmacy.
- SFA Senior Assistant Director Peggy Myers served as an instructor at the week-long 13-14 SASFAA New Aid Officer's Workshop.



- Susan Smith, Nadav Katz and Rodlee Ritter (pictured above) received the 2014 Superior Accomplishment award from the University of Florida. This program recognizes staff members for their outstanding and meritorious service.

- SFA created a financial aid assistant director position to coordinate financial aid for College of Medicine students and to oversee the activities of our other three health science satellite offices. The configuration of our health-related satellite offices was reorganized by reassigning responsibility for veterinary medicine students to our College of Dentistry financial aid coordinator, removing it from the responsibilities assigned to our College of Public Health and Health Professions and Nursing coordinator. This change has resulted in a more equitable distribution of student caseload and improved student access to financial aid services.
- During the spring of 2014, the university initiated a mandatory health insurance requirement for newly admitted students effective with the summer B term. This required extensive collaboration with various campus shareholders to ensure that costs associated with the mandatory health insurance fee was tracked for inclusion in the financial aid system so affected students could receive additional financial aid funding to cover these expenses.

- In Spring of 2014, SFA Records Manager Roberta Mills was honored at the UF Longevity Luncheon for her 35 years of consecutive service to the University of Florida.



- In June of 2014, Associate Director Norma Kuhr retired with over 38 years of service to UF Student Financial Affairs.



SFA By The Numbers

Summary

Total Aid Disbursed	\$556,802,884
Total Aid Recipients (unduplicated) ¹	46,193
Percentage of Enrolled Students Who Received Aid	82%
Average Undergrad Cost of Attendance (on-campus)	\$20,220
Average Undergrad Cost of Attendance (off-campus)	\$20,220
Average Undergrad Indebtedness (students graduating 12-13)	\$20,642
Federal Direct Stafford Loan 2011 2-year official Cohort Default Rate	3.6%

Breakdown by Type of Funds

Scholarships (including waivers)	\$184,056,581 (33%)
Grants	\$85,089,701 (15%)
Loans	\$267,710,131 (48%)
Employment	\$19,946,471 (4%)

Breakdown by Source of Funds

Federal	\$310,778,446 (56%)
State	\$124,371,269 (22%)
Institutional	\$91,820,958 (17%)
Private	\$29,832,211 (5%)

Florida Bright Futures

Total Bright Futures Students	25,585
Total Amount Disbursed	\$59,878,578
Percent In-State Freshman Receiving Bright Futures	92%
Percent In-State Undergraduates Receiving Bright Futures	72.38%
Academic Scholars	\$41,407,737
Merit Scholars	\$18,245,275
Gold Seal Vocational	\$70,994
Top Scholars	\$154,572

Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars

Number of Recipients	1,274
Total Dollars Paid	\$10,214,296
Average Family Income	\$18,605
Average Award	\$8,017

Fiscal Review

- SFA functioned with a \$3,836,967 operating budget in 2013-14
- 95% went to Salary and OPS¹, 5% to Operating Expenses
- State E&G funds provided 77% of the total budget
- Remaining 23% came from administrative allowance and financial aid fees
- Staffing was at 67.0 FTE² as of July, 2014, consistent with FTE as of July 2013
- Operating expenses and OPS expenditures are variable year to year, depending on departmental needs and funds available

¹Other Personnel Services ²Full-time employment



SFA Section Snapshots

Advising

- Four 2-person adviser teams handle inquiries from the majority of the student body
- Six satellite offices, primarily serving graduate and professional students
- Combined Fall/Spring walk-in total of 9,318 students during 13-14 Rush period

SFA's Financial Aid Advising Section is the initial point of contact for all students who apply for aid or who need assistance with the financial aid application process.

All UF students and aid applicants are assigned to two-member financial aid advising teams according to the last two digits of students' UFID. These teams are responsible for assisting students with all aspects of the financial aid process. They provide service to students via several methods: (1) on a walk-in basis, (2) by office appointments, (3) by telephone, or (4) by written communication.

SFA also maintains satellite offices to serve students in: the College of Business Administration's graduate programs; the Colleges of Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine; the College of Law; the College of Medicine; the College of Pharmacy; the Colleges of Public Health and Health Professions and Nursing.

In addition, the financial aid advising area is responsible for the Summer AIM program, the revision petition committee review process, and the coordination of aid for UF student athletes.



Grants

Grants are gift aid (no repayment required) awarded to students who show financial need.

25,276 awards totaling \$85,089,701 to 15,254 recipients

Federal Pell Grant	\$46,552,588
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) Grant	\$2,786,401
Florida Student Assistance Grant (FSAG)	\$6,061,458
Graduate Grants	\$4,325,444
TEACH Grant	\$34,931
I. Douglas Turner Grant	\$15,305,996
Athletic Grants	\$9,285,528
Metta Heathcote Grant	\$105,430
Other Grants	\$631,925



Scholarships

Scholarships are gift aid (no repayment required) based on academic achievement, but financial need may also be considered.

46,721 awards totalling \$162,618,619 to 36,097 recipients

Florida Academic Scholars	\$41,407,737
Florida Merit Scholars	\$18,245,275
Florida Vocational Gold Seal	\$70,994
Florida Top Scholars	\$154,572
Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars	\$10,214,296
Out-of-State Matriculation Waivers	\$13,951,177
In-State Matriculation Waivers	\$44,332,223
UF College Awarded	\$27,978,481
National Merit	\$372,000
National Merit Stipend	\$362,000
Presidential Academic	\$982,127
Presidential Achievement	\$36,000
University Academic	\$4,000
Miscellaneous Other State	\$237,309
General & Special	\$1,007,272
Dental/Disadvantage	\$585,000
Brecht	\$115,500
Miscellaneous	\$16,000
Lombardi	\$193,529
Alliance Partner	\$276,562
UF Gold	\$1,041,465
UF Platinum	\$1,035,000



Loans

Loans are considered self-help aid, as loan funds must be repaid.

35,266 awards totalling \$267,710,131 to 18,123 Recipients

UF continues to participate in the Federal Direct Loan Program. The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) acts as both lender and guarantor for Direct Loans, so only two agencies are involved: the federal government and the university. The university originates loans and disburses students' loan funds when they have been approved. Repayments are made to a USDOE Federal Direct Loan Servicer.

The Loan Certification Department administers the Direct Loan programs, including Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loans, Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans, Federal Direct PLUS Loans, and certifies alternative educational (private) loans.

Subsidized Stafford	\$35,490,513
Unsubsidized Stafford	\$174,017,104
Perkins	\$4,773,863
PLUS	\$11,006,416
Grad PLUS	\$33,096,922
Short-Term	\$563,172
UF College Awarded	892,441
Private	\$7,107,091
Dentistry	\$228,000
Medical	\$133,022
Student Aid for Education	\$210,647
Arthur I. Wallace	\$52,598
Veterinary Medicine	\$134,730
UF Long Term	\$3,012



Disbursements

\$556,802,884 disbursed to 46,193 students

\$214,282,080 in Federal Direct Loans disbursed

Disbursements monitors and controls the automated disbursement system and works with the University Bursar (UB) to ensure that the batch disbursement programs run correctly and efficiently.

Disbursements reviews student eligibility for loans, scholarships, and campus-based aid before disbursing these funds.

Disbursements receives, processes, and deposits paper checks from scholarship donors and private

lenders. During the 2013-14 fiscal year, the area processed 6,731 individual checks, totalling \$21,437,962 in custodial scholarships.

Disbursements manages monthly and academic-year fund reconciliation between UF and the federal government for all Federal Direct Loan funds. This involves transmitting and reconciling all disbursement data and repayment data (due to voluntary or obligatory repayment) and internally adjusting student files when repayment occurs.

Awarding/Pell Processing

Awarding and Pell Processing staff process all financial aid award revisions and monitor Pell Grant delivery. Requests for revisions to students' awards mostly come from financial aid advising staff when:

- students' enrollment, residency, or housing statuses change
- students receive additional outside funds
- students request revisions to awards.

Awarding staff are also responsible for monitoring and adjusting awards when students' need has been

'overmet' (outside resources such as scholarships, fellowships, etc. cause a student to be awarded more than they need). Awarding also monitors and documents students' repayments of aid funds when required.

In addition to these responsibilities, Awarding has oversight of the Pell Grant program, including recalculations and reconciliation of grant funds. The area also processes all professional judgment petitions and reviews award file updates.



members

State of Florida Programs

UF leads the state in Florida Bright Futures recipients (25,585)

UF leads the state in Florida Top Scholars recipients (136)

The Florida Department of Education offers a variety of student assistance programs that are administered by the State of Florida Bureau of Student Financial Assistance in Tallahassee, Florida. SFA's State Programs Section is the UF liaison with the Bureau of Student Financial Assistance and is the campus administrator for most state-funded student scholarships and grants.

Major state of Florida programs administered through this section include:

- Florida Academic Scholarship*
- Florida Medallion Scholarship*
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship*
- Top Scholars Award*
- Scholarship for Children/Spouses of Deceased or Disabled Veterans and Service members
- Florida Student Assistance Grant
- José Martí Scholarship Challenge Grant
- Rosewood Family Scholarship Program
- Florida Work Experience Program

* Part of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program



Student Employment

Student Employment coordinates the following programs: Federal Work Study (FWS), including the Federal Community Service (FCS) component; and Student Other Personnel Services (OPS). Employment is considered self-help aid.

\$19,946,471 awarded to 9,687 students

Federal Work Study (FWS) is funded 75% by the federal government and 25% by the institution. Awards are based on financial need.

659 awards totaling \$1,500,326

Federal Community Service (FCS) was implemented in 1994, allowing students to work with various community agencies dedicated to improving community living.

Other Personnel Services (OPS)¹ is a state-funded campus work program which is not based on financial need.

8,933 awards totaling \$18,369,607

Florida Work Experience Program (FWEP) is a state-funded, need-based student work program which is awarded by SFA.

95 awards totaling \$76,538

¹ Now known as STAS



Verification

2,862 student files selected for verification

2,447 files completed (85%)

2,418 discrepant files found

1651 files completed (68%)

Verification is a review process established to confirm the accuracy of information reported on financial aid documents. Because the University of Florida participates in the Federal Quality Assurance Program¹, it designs its own verification criteria to best target error-prone items among its unique applicant population. This is done in lieu of verifying students selected by the federal processor.

¹ See page 33

During 2013-14 items selected for verification were:

- Parents' and students' adjusted gross income
- Amount of federal income tax paid
- Nontaxable income reflected on tax returns and W-2 forms
- Household size and number of persons in college
- Excluded Income
- SNAP (food stamp) benefits
- Identity and Educational Purpose Statement



Systems & Programming

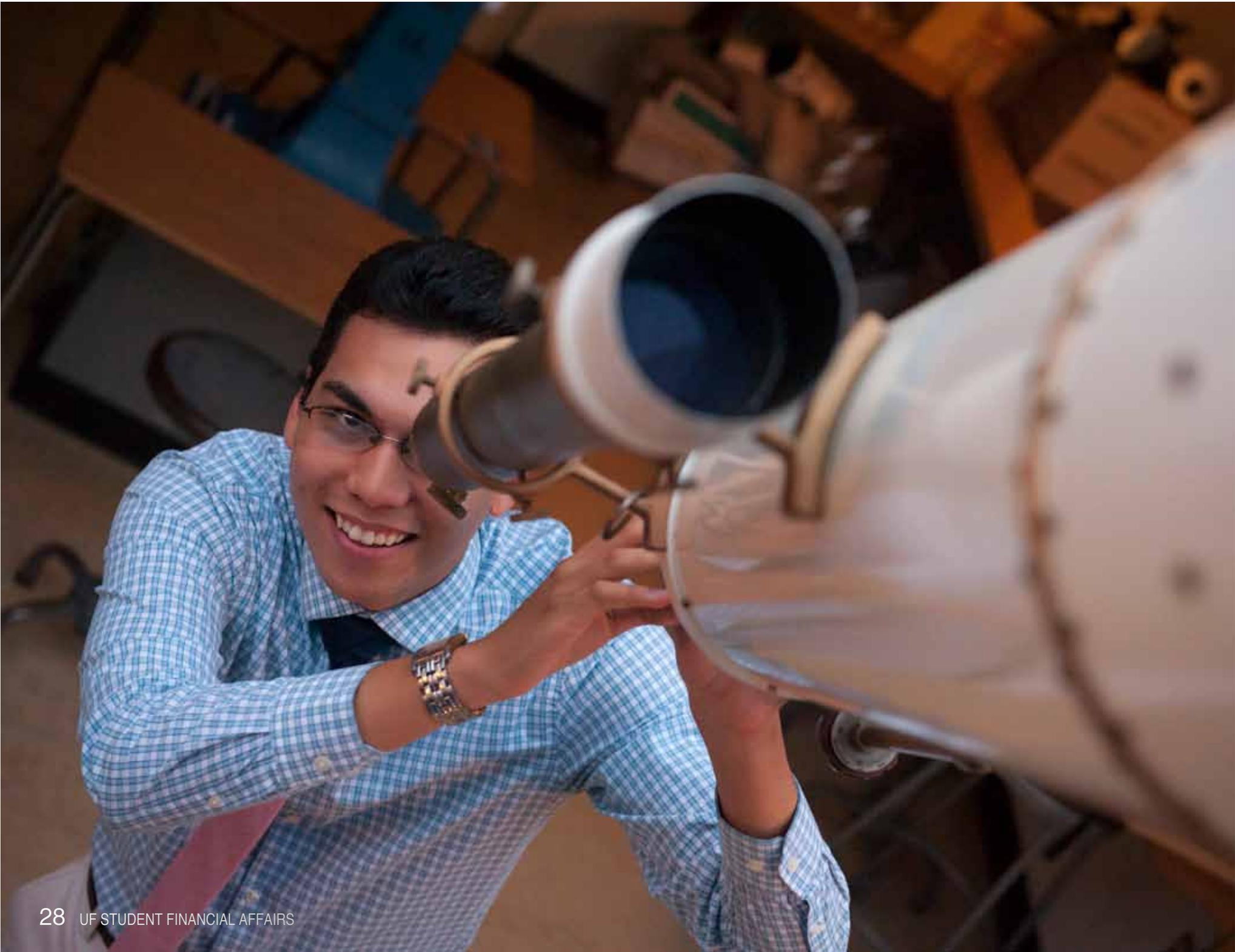
Responsible for maintaining the records of more than 85,000 financial aid applicants

Systems and Programming (S & P) develops and maintains the computer software systems needed for automated delivery of student financial aid at UF. The SFA computer system is a fully functioning, automated system comprising numerous files and/or modules, involving both batch and online processing.

S & P designs and maintains the online, web-based display system and coordinates electronic data exchange with federal, state, and local agencies to gather all information required to process students' financial aid.

Additional responsibilities include:

- Scheduled batch production & maintenance of 1,500 programs
- The online, real-time, updatable interface with the University Bursar (UB) for student award and disbursement data
- Nightly production interfaces with UF's Registrar's Office, UB, and student payroll files
- The daily, two-way, electronic transmission of student records to and from the federal and state processors
- All email communications with students
- Daily and ongoing maintenance of the network
- Production and maintenance of federal reports as needed
- Relationships with outside departments & agencies including UFIT-Enterprise Systems, Registrar/ Admissions, UF Computing & Network Services (CNS), among others.



Documents/Mailroom

Mailed financial aid packets to more than 1,650 High Schools; private, public and charter

Processed approximately 11,352 pieces of incoming mail

Processed approximately 19,591 pieces of outgoing mail

Bar coded 15,231 documents

The Document Editing Section is where the application processing cycle begins. The staff of this section receive, sort, date-stamp, and distributed an estimated 11,352 pieces of incoming mail during 2013-14, not including documents received directly by advisers, by drop boxes, or faxed documentation.

This area handles the majority of mailouts for the office, including sending financial aid application packets to over 1650 Florida high schools and community colleges at the beginning of every application year.

This area is supported by two senior clerks from the Records area.

Records/Scanning

Received & Scanned 196,437 documents

SFA's Records/Optical Scanning Section maintains an accurate, up-to-date system of records consisting of active and inactive files stored in three different file systems.

This section optically scans, edits, and indexes all records.¹ In 2013-14, this section scanned:

- Information Releases: 3,601
- Verification Checklists: 53,508

- Electronic data changes from the FAFSA: 4,511
- Pell Calculations: 22,406
- Awards and award revisions: 61,821
- Scholarship Documents: 17,508

The total number of documents received and scanned for the 2013-14 school year was 196,437, with the majority received between June and October.

¹ Staff purge the file system once a year.



Academic Progress

3,071 Files Met Conditions for Warning Status

3,194 Files Met Conditions for Termination Status

1,104 AP Petitions Approved

To comply with federal regulations, UF must ensure that all federal aid recipients maintain satisfactory academic progress (AP). This policy requires that students make progress toward their degree by maintaining a satisfactory qualitative standard (GPA) and a quantitative standard (such as credit hours earned and percent of hours earned/hours attempted). Students who fail to meet the specified standards are placed in warning status or are terminated from financial aid eligibility.

Three times a year, a financial aid academic progress program generates email communications to students not meeting required standards. A petition procedure is available for students who believe their failure to maintain satisfactory progress is due to extenuating circumstances. The academic progress coordinator reviews petitions and oversees notifying students as to their AP status. SFA advisers counsel students on the academic progress policy¹ and petition process.



Quality Assurance (QA)

A random sample of 425 students was selected and verified in 2013-14.

425 students selected

402 completed (95%)

In July 1989, SFA was selected to participate in the Department of Education's Institutional Quality Control Pilot Project, which began in 1985. This project, now called the Federal Quality Assurance Program, is a management experiment to test the feasibility of giving institutions more discretion in designing policies and procedures that will result in quality administration of Title IV student financial aid. This was one of the first initiatives on the part of the federal government to involve institutions in developing internal controls, rather than mandating them from the federal level.

As a participating institution, UF is exempt from certain verification requirements as long as it remains actively involved in conducting quality assurance

activities. The university develops and implements its own verification program, customizing it to reflect its own unique institutional setting and student population.

The Department of Education initiated a redesign of Quality Assurance (QA) practices in the 2000-2001 academic year. Beginning with 2004-05, a QA sample of approximately 350 students has been drawn almost every other year.

An assessment of the results was used to determine if any modifications should be made to 2014-15 verification practices.

Self assessments of management practices were also performed.



Information/Publication Services

The Information/Publications (IP) Services area is responsible for SFA's consumer information program, including the SFA website and the Gator Aid publications.

SFA website averaged over 64,000 hits per month in 2013-14

Information/Publication Services strives to disseminate high quality, cost-effective consumer information related to financial aid, using a variety of media, including:

- SFA website
- The Scholarship Search Engine sub-site ¹
- Gator Aid Application Guide (published annually) ²
- Gator Aid Handbook (published annually) ³
- SFA News (distributed electronically each semester) ⁴
- Student application and award materials (print/electronic)
- Various brochures (print/electronic)
- Timely, effective news releases for various news media, including Facebook and Twitter

Information/Publication Services also produces internal materials for SFA staff, including assisting with the Fact Book, the SFA Flip Charts, forms and other materials for the Enrollment Management Division including the Strategic Plan booklet, fact sheets and infographics.

¹ A comprehensive listing of college-awarded aid at UF

² 12 pages, 19,000 copies. Gator Aid Guides are mailed to the guidance office of every high school in Florida.

³ 44 pages, 2,000 copies printed. The Handbook is SFA's in-depth publication.

⁴ Emailed to every student receiving financial aid. More than 86,000 students are invited to read the newsletter.



Outreach

4,100 Potential Students Reached in Fall of 2013

61 Students Received Personalized FAFSA Assistance in their Residence Hall

UF's Outreach Coordinator continues to work in conjunction with UF's Admissions Office to actively recruit students from diverse backgrounds to attend UF. A UF team travels throughout the southeast focusing its efforts on under served areas of these states.

The primary goal of the SFA outreach adviser is to reach out to incoming freshmen and transfer students through lectures, conferences, workshops, and other recruitment functions.

SFA continues to participate in Preview, UF's summer freshman orientation program. Outreach and Training staff thoroughly brief students about financial aid before they enter UF, while providing the opportunity for financial aid applicants to check on the status of their awards and conduct business with the financial aid office.

Training

21 Financial Literacy Workshops

12 Full Staff Trainings

31 Professional Staff Trainings

12 Support Staff Trainings

Because of the large number of financial aid programs administered by SFA, the complexity of the financial aid process, and the need for compliance with federal and state regulations, ongoing staff training is critical to SFA's operation.

Training staff coordinate weekly 30-minute training sessions on timely subject matters, generally dealing

with technical training, updates on specific program areas, and personal enrichment and growth.

Training staff also provide standardized, quality training for all new employees through a comprehensive, one-week orientation program.

J. BERNARD "BERNIE" MACHEN LOBBY



STUDENT LEADERSHIP
PEER LEADER
FLORIDA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
TEACHING ASSISTANT
CASE COMPETITION TEAM
UNIVERSITY SCHOLARS
STUDY ABROAD
COMMUNITY SERVICE

BACKPACK TO BRIEFCASE



MAKE AN IMPACT

EXPERIENCE



ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

LEADERSHIP

"There's no starting of opportunity to make a thing in what you seek. There is only a scarcity of talent to make it happen."
-Walter Dill

DEFINE YOUR AMAZING

"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved."
-Helen Keller

TOP DESTINATIONS HEAVENER STUDENTS

- VERIZON
- GOOGLE
- DISNEY
- WALMART
- HARRIS CORPORATION
- AT&T
- BANK OF AMERICA
- J.P. MORGAN
- APPLE
- GENERAL ELECTRIC



GAIN THE SKILLS TO BE A LEADER

Leadership Ambassadors support vital professional development initiatives throughout Heavener, and can help you design your leadership journey.





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The Division of Enrollment Management